



**Early Childhood Australia**  
A voice for young children

**OUR  
VISION:  
EVERY  
YOUNG  
CHILD IS  
THRIVING  
AND  
LEARNING**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Wednesday 8 July 2020

### **ONGOING SUPPORT NEEDED FOR YOUNG CHILDREN, EARLY LEARNING AND CARE SERVICES AND FAMILIES**

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) believes supporting young children should be at the forefront of government policy and decision-making as the early education and care (ECEC) sector navigates its way through the COVID-19 pandemic.

ECA welcomes support for families in the recent announcement by Federal Education Minister Dan Tehan that all early learning and care services in locked down areas of Melbourne (and Shire of Mitchell) will be able to waive parent fees for absences related to COVID-19, from Monday 13 July.

While this decision will provide certainty to families using early learning and care services impacted by the Victorian Government's COVID-19 lockdown and relieve some stress for parents in Victoria, this measure alone won't address all of the challenges currently facing the sector.

Early childhood education and care has been at the forefront of sectors hit hard by the pandemic. The government's ECEC Relief Package ends on 12 July and JobKeeper will be withdrawn from the sector on 20 July, the return to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is imminent.

We understand that the situation for early childhood education and care is rapidly changing. While the decision to waive the gap fees for Victorian families using early learning and care services in Melbourne and the shire of Mitchell, will be welcomed by some, others will find it difficult to operate under these changed measures.

It's imperative that the Federal government ensures that early learning and care services remain viable beyond July, even in areas hard-hit by a resurgence in COVID-19 cases.

ECA is calling on all governments around Australia to place the interests of young children at the centre of their decision-making during the pandemic.

**CONTINUES OVER**

ECA CEO Samantha Page will be available for comment about the Federal government's fee relief for Victorian families and the end of its ECEC Relief Package.

**ENDS**

For interviews, contact: Katie Golding ECA Media Officer M: 0475 554 999

*Early Childhood Australia is the peak advocacy body for children from birth to eight years, their families and early childhood professionals.*