



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

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VISION:
EVERY
YOUNG
CHILD IS
THRIVING
AND
LEARNING**

MEDIA RELEASE

14 June 2022

ECA WELCOMES NSW GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

New South Wales Premier Dominic Perrottet and Treasurer Matt Kean have announced a landmark investment in early learning of \$5 billion over the next 10 years to improve access and affordability in the sector. The announcement includes \$775 million over the next four years for capital projects to expand existing early childhood education centres and build new facilities in areas with significant low supply, as well as an additional investment of \$281 million to increase the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce through the provision of scholarships.

‘ECA welcomes the NSW Government’s commitment to early learning reforms in building capacity in the early childhood education and care sector to make early learning more accessible and inclusive. This investment is critical to solving the problem of early education “deserts” and extending the benefits to more families affected by the shortage’, said Ms Samantha Page, CEO, Early Childhood Australia.

‘We must ensure that the new services are well designed and operated by providers that can deliver high-quality play-based learning over the long term’, said Ms Page.

Access to services is a fundamental barrier in many parts of NSW, as highlighted in the ‘childcare deserts’ research undertaken by the [Mitchell Institute](#). According to the report, 568,700 children (or 35.2 per cent) in Australia, aged four and under, currently live in a so-called ‘childcare desert’, which researchers define as an area with fewer than 0.333 childcare places per child. New South Wales has lower childcare accessibility than the rest of Australia, with a median of only 0.37 childcare places per child.

‘ECA also appreciates the move to provide subsidies to early childhood education providers to lower costs for early learning, which will encourage more families to access and engage in high-quality and play-based early learning for their children. Cost has been a major barrier in women’s workforce participation and, once rolled-out, the initiative should boost their participation in the workforce, resulting in positive economic outcomes for all’, added Ms Page.

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) advocates for a strong universal platform of early childhood education and care to support all children now and into the future.

ENDS

ECA CEO Sam Page is available for comment. For interviews, contact ECA Media Officer Reshma Jayesh on 0475 554 999.

For a downloadable PDF version of the media release, click here:

www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/media/

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