



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

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

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 16 February 2023

SHAPING AN AMBITIOUS VISION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Early Childhood Australia (ECA), the nation's peak advocacy body for young children and early childhood services, sees the National Early Years Summit as an important opportunity to identify and articulate a clear vision for the early years.

ECA CEO, Ms Samantha Page, will attend the Summit as one of the select 14 members of the Advisory Panel that will inform the development of the National Early Years Strategy. Talking about her vision for the Strategy, Ms Page said, 'This is a critical opportunity for Australians to commit to an ambitious vision for providing every child with the best possible start to life and the opportunity to realise their potential'.

With the National Early Years Strategy, the government must commit to children's long-term outcomes both through early education as well as supporting families and carers. This is an exciting opportunity to put children at the forefront of policy and program development across government portfolios such as health, education, social inclusion, housing and environment—every decision that potentially affects children should consider their best interests.

This is significant considering that most statistics indicate that we can do better. Even the latest numbers from the Report on Government Services highlights that children from key equity groups—such as non-English speaking backgrounds, low socio-economic areas, low-income families and disabilities—continue to be under-represented in crucial early learning settings, like preschool.

'The consultative approach in developing the strategy through platforms like the Summit, roundtables, online surveys and public submissions is promising, and provides a platform for the key issues to be appropriately represented. It will set the tone and pace for developing the National Early Years Strategy', said Ms Page.

'We further hope that the Summit will help identify priority actions for a more unified and integrated approach to supporting children's learning, development and wellbeing, so that all children—including those experiencing the most vulnerability—can access the system without any barriers', she added.

The National Early Years Summit will be attended by around 100 people including industry leaders, academics, advocates, peak bodies, and parents and carers who will share their insights and experiences of working with young children.

As Australia's largest early childhood peak body, ECA's Members include a diverse cross-section of employers, employees, academics and allied professionals. We put the rights and interests of young children at the forefront of our work and are well-placed to contribute to the broader conversation and ensure that children's interests are at the heart of decisions that impact them.

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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 aged birth to eight years, their families, and early childhood professionals.