



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

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

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 13 February, 2025

ECA WELCOMES THE THREE DAY GUARANTEE TOWARDS UNIVERSAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Early Childhood Australia is delighted with the passage of legislation in Canberra today that will enable access to early childhood education and care for children. The early childhood sector has long advocated for universal provision of high quality early childhood education and care for Australia's children, but most particularly those who sit outside the current system.

ECA Chief Executive Officer, Samantha Page said, *"For too long children have been effectively penalised by the unfairness of the Child Care Subsidy Activity Test which has worked to lock children out from access to ECEC based on the employment-related activities of their parents/carers. For families with insecure and inconsistent employment, the Activity Test has been a significant impediment to changing family circumstances through employment, study and training, and to enable every child to thrive and learn."*

ECA has long advocated for an early childhood education and care 'entitlement' for every child in Australia, highlighting the importance of ECEC in supporting children's learning, development and wellbeing, and its place in the everyday lives of families, enabling access to employment, training and study. ECA is focussed on what quality ECEC looks like in different places, and ensuring that quality and inclusion are embedded within the universal provision of early childhood education and care. Enduring solutions are needed to ensure that families can enrol their children in quality early childhood education and care services wherever they live, with the confidence that the service will be open, operating and staffed to ensure quality provision. ECA look forward to working with the Australian government towards an enduring and high quality universal system with in-built flexibility and ongoing investment that addresses the circumstances and complexity of communities with what is needed to establish, operate and sustain high quality early childhood services.

The Three Day Guarantee will replace the CCS activity test and provide a guaranteed minimum of 72 hours per fortnight of subsidised ECEC for all families, regardless of the time spent on recognised participation types, and a guaranteed 100 hour entitlement per fortnight for parents caring for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child.

ECA Chief Executive Officer, Samantha Page said, *"Today is a good day for early childhood. Early Childhood Australia acknowledge the commitment and investment of the Australian government, and the dedicated and ongoing advocacy of the early childhood sector. The Three Day Guarantee securing an entitlement for*

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every child regardless of the activities of their parents/carers, is a significant milestone towards a strong start for Australia's children, and rightly addresses the needs of children and families who most need consistent access to high quality early childhood education and care."

As the national peak body for young children, ECA looks forward to working with the Australian government on the now legislated path towards universal high quality early childhood education and care for every child.

ENDS

Early Childhood Australia Chief Executive Officer, Samantha Page is available for comment. For interviews, please contact ECA on [0448 883 687](tel:0448883687).