Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

OUR VISION: EVERY YOUNG CHILD IS THRIVING AND LEARNING

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 8 August 2024

# ECA WELCOMES PAY INCREASE FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) welcomes the federal government's support for a 15% wage increase for the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce. The increase will be phased in over two years beginning with 10% from December 2024 followed by 5% from December 2025.

ECA CEO Sam Page said, 'This is a well overdue pay increase, and I am thrilled that the government has acknowledged the professionalism of our educators during Early Learning Matters Week, where so many politicians have been out seeing first-hand the great work the early childhood sector does. Early childhood educators play a crucial role in the learning and development of young children, and this recognition is a significant step towards valuing their contributions appropriately'.

To receive federal government funding for the wage increases and the additional oncosts, employers will need to enter into a funding agreement and ensure there is an industrial agreement in place.

The government's support for this wage increase is tied to a commitment from early childhood education and care services to limit fee increases, ensuring that families continue to have access to affordable early learning services. ECA supports this balanced approach, which considers both the needs of the workforce and the families they serve. Sam Page said, 'Placing conditions on fee increases offers solid protection for families and I think it is wise for the government to ensure that this investment lands in the hands of those who deserve it—the educators'.

In addition to welcoming the wage increase, we would like to emphasise the importance of including educators across service types—long day care, Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and Family Day Care (FDC) in this wage increase, acknowledging the critical role everyone plays in providing quality education and care to children and families. In addition to welcoming the wage increase, ECA looks forward to supporting the implementation of these changes, ensuring that educators receive well-deserved professional recognition and remuneration without impacting families with significant fee hikes.

This announcement marks a pivotal moment for the early childhood education and care sector, underscoring the importance of investing in the workforce that supports the growth, learning and development of Australia's children. This will soon be supported by the release of the Productivity Commission's Final Report on Universal Early Childhood Education and Care and the government's response to this.

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**ENDS**

Early Childhood Australia Chief Executive Officer, Samantha Page is available for comment. For interviews, please contact ECA on 02 6242 1800.

*Early Childhood Australia is the peak early childhood advocacy organisation, acting in the interests of young children, their families and those in the early childhood sector. ECA advocates to ensure quality, social justice and equity in all issues relating to the education and care of children aged birth to eight years.*

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