

**national association of community based children's services**

# Post Election Action!

NACBCS will take up the challenge provided by the Federal Election result – and we need your help!

## What the Coalition Promised for Child Care

- 30% Rebate on out of pocket child care expenses for Child Care Benefit recipients (\$1.04 Billion)
- Increased access for Grandparents to CCB with relaxed eligibility and increased affordability (\$70 Million)

The Coalition's policy did not delivery on our 3 key election demands:

- **Fund community child care**
  - Provide capital funding to make sure there is at least one community owned and managed early childhood service for every 800 children up to the age of 5 years
- **Increase Wages for Child Carers**
  - By increasing Child Care Benefit (CCB) so that services can pay decent wages to attract and retain skilled and qualified staff, while charging fees that parents can afford
- **Stop Destructive Competition**
  - Bring back planning controls by setting a cap on the number of CCB places for long day care in each community to stop uncontrolled growth in areas that already have enough services
  - Retain and strengthen the planning controls for Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) to ensure that the number of not-for-profit community owned OSHC services does not drop as commercial operators move in

The Coalition policy **will not**:

- Create more community owned child care services
- Increase wages for child carers
- Increase capital funding and therefore will not build community infrastructure
- Increase social capital
- Offer any advantage to community owned services
- Relieve the pressure on low income families

The Coalition policy **will**:

- Grant some relief to the family budget especially for higher income earners
- Increase disparity between high and low income earners
- Potentially increase child care fees
- Increase cash flow to corporate chains giving them a competitive advantage over the community sector

Community ownership will survive under the Coalition government – but it will be very difficult to grow the sector. We need vigilance and ferocious advocacy on behalf of the community.

## **Where does the community sector go from here?**

We must continue to pressure the federal government for:

- Commitment to capital funding for community children's services
  - It can be done! Look at Mirboo North's \$250,000 capital grant.
- Reestablishment of planning controls to stop uncontrolled growth in areas with enough services
- Monitoring of corporate growth and intervention to avoid sector dominance
- Improvements to the regulatory and quality assurance systems
- Increased wages for children's services professionals

## **New Opportunities for Advocacy**

- Cabinet reshuffle - we can lobby the new Minister/s to highlight the value of government investment in the community sector.
- New Shadow Minister – we can lobby the ALP to put more emphasis on its willingness to invest in community infrastructure
- We can forge stronger ties with the Greens who can reenergise the debate about child care issues in the Senate
- We can encourage widespread lobbying to tell the Australian Government what is missing from their policies
- As a peak body NACBCS will continue to represent our membership and advocate to the full extent of our powers at a national level
- We will capitalise on a genuine interest in the voice of the community owned sector shown by the media during the election campaign
- We can investigate innovative ways of growing the community owned child care sector such as through non-government sources for capital funding like credit co-ops, community development financial institutions, philanthropic organisations
- We can initiate further research into the different outcomes of community and corporate models of service delivery

**Be persistent! Don't give up hope – community child care needs your voice! We need to take the opportunities now to ensure our children have access to quality, affordable community owned child care.**