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National Association of Community Based Children's Services

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FEDERAL BUDGET 2004 A MISSED OPPORTUNITY FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

The National Association of Community Based Children's Services (NACBCS) condemns the timidity of the Federal Budget's investment in children, families and communities.

Lynne Wannan, National Convenor said tonight 'The Minister for Children claims to be ensuring Australian families have access to a range of child care choices. But a paltry \$16.3 million for up to 13 new flexible child care services will not grant choice to all families, especially when it also has to stretch to improving access for children with additional needs and for rural and remote families.'

'And 30,000 new Outside School Hours Care places will not meet the ever growing need.'

'The Budget does nothing to address the issue of affordability of child care; in the meantime we will start to see services closing down because they can't find qualified staff willing to work for the insultingly low wages on offer in child care.'

The Government must commit to making sure services are available across Australia by expanding the not-for-profit child care sector to provide:

- one community owned and managed early childhood service, offering a full range of care and developmental opportunities, for every 800 children under the age of 5 years
- capital funding for the development of community managed services in areas of particular economic and social disadvantage

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