



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

10 May 2005  
MEDIA RELEASE

### **GOVERNMENT'S CHILD CARE SPENDING MISSES THE MARK**

The National Association of Community Based Children's Services (NACBCS) congratulates the Australian Government for recognising that more child care is needed if the economy is to benefit from the skills and experience of parents. But the Budget child care initiatives will not solve the key problems preventing parents from accessing the care they need.

- 84,000 new subsidised child care places is a great idea - but only if the child care sector has the capacity to deliver these places
- relying on the private market to deliver essential infrastructure like child care is wrong
- Informed parents want not-for-profit community based child care, not commercial services focussed on returning a profit to distant shareholders – the Budget fails to deliver Government investment in capital to ensure growth in community based child care
- new outside school hours care (OSHC) places are welcome - most OSHC services are still community owned so this public money will mostly go where it is intended rather than into private pockets
- but many local communities don't have the facilities to provide this care – existing OSHC services are full and capital works are needed to expand the space
- in Victoria and NSW there are no state regulations setting minimum standards so this new care could be of poor quality
- there is a critical shortage of skilled OSHC workers due to poor wages and conditions
- the Budget incentives to encourage parents and older people to work in child care show a basic lack of understanding of the sector
- \$1,500 cash grants to encourage sole parents to set up a family day care service is woeful policy
- just because you have children doesn't mean you can provide a high quality child care service
- it is lonely, isolating work – a sole parent of young children often lacks the adult supports within the household that a family day carer needs so they can stay in the job
- communication strategies and increased training places will do nothing to overcome the biggest disincentive to working in child care – the appalling wages and conditions
- The 30% tax rebate on out-of-pocket child care costs is very poor policy
- it is a disaster for fairness and equity for families
- Families who don't pay tax, like student parents and sole parent pensioners will miss out completely
- Child Care Benefit is a progressive system of support for families, offering the highest assistance where it is most needed - this 30% rebate undoes all of the good work of CCB.
- Fees will inevitably go up - and the unfairness gets much worse as fees increase.  
How can the government justify this kind of inequitable use of public funds?

Not for publication

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