



media release

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Victorian Community Services Call for Investment in Quality Education and Care

“With the federal government now considering the final report of the Productivity Commission’s Childcare and Early Learning Inquiry, the future of education and care is at a crossroads. Victorians want to know that, no matter what is decided at a federal level, access to quality education and care services will not be compromised in this state.”

Dr Anne Kennedy Chairperson Community Child Care

Victorian community organisations have launched the following Joint State Election Statement:

‘As Victorian community organisations, we share a belief that quality education and care services are vital for the well-being, learning and development of all children. We believe these services help build strong communities and provide immeasurable support to families. They can make a positive difference in the lives of vulnerable children and families. This is of particular importance to Aboriginal children and families. While there has been improvement in recent years, the rates of Aboriginal children accessing preschool remains significantly lower than for non-Aboriginal children. In Victoria just under one quarter of Aboriginal children in the year before school are not accessing preschool. Culturally appropriate programs for Aboriginal children support their participation in preschool and provide opportunities for early intervention to address developmental problems.

We need the next Victorian Government to commit to:

- By 2020 halving the gap in developmental outcomes, according to the Australian Early Development Census, for children from Victoria’s most disadvantaged communities
- Prioritising investment to increase access to quality education and care services for vulnerable and disadvantaged families and children
- Ensuring the full benefits of quality education and care services are available to Aboriginal families and children including through expanded Aboriginal services and programs
- Full implementation of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care as scheduled
 - Maintaining current minimum staffing qualification requirements for education and care services – including Diploma level qualifications for 50% of educators working with children under 3 years
 - Maintaining current minimum educator : child ratios in education and care services and moving to a ratio of 1 : 11 for children 3 – 5 years by 2016
 - Ongoing inclusion of preschools in the National Quality Framework
- Ensuring long term provision of funding for 15 hours of kindergarten
- Investment in Outside School Hours Care
- Maintenance of pay roll tax exemptions for not for profit education and care services.

We are proud of the progress Victoria has made in implementing the National Quality Framework. Let's keep moving towards a Victoria where every child is supported to flourish.'

Organisations participating in this joint action are Berry Street, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Early Learning Association Australia, Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Gowrie Victoria, Children's Protection Society, Early Childhood Intervention Australia (Victorian Chapter), FKA Children's Services, Victorian Council of Social Service and Community Child Care.

"Together with family support services, child care centres and preschool are vital services for all families. They are the front line support for vulnerable children"

Deb Tsorbaris CEO Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

"15 hours of quality early learning is critical for children in the year before school – and it is important that this be funded through a long-term, transparent agreement between the Commonwealth and State Governments."

Shane Lucas, CEO ELAA

"We need to ensure all our Aboriginal children grow up strong; ensuring access to quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education is key to providing a head start for life."

Adjunct Professor Muriel Bamblett, AM: CEO VACCA

For More information or Comment

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