

MEDIA RELEASE

Michael Daley MP

NSW Labor Leader

Kate Washington MP

Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education

**SCHOOLS &
HOSPITALS**
**BEFORE
STADIUMS**

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LABOR ANNOUNCES LARGEST INVESTMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN NSW HISTORY

Michael Daley and Labor will extend funding for early childhood education to benefit every three and four-year-old as part of the single largest investment in early childhood education in NSW history.

Mr Daley and Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education, Kate Washington, made the announcement today as part of a \$500 million package for early childhood education in NSW.

Mr Daley said that under the Liberals and Nationals fewer than 20 per cent of three-year-olds receive state government funding for early childhood education.

Mr Daley said: "The experts tell us that early childhood is one of the most crucial periods for a child's learning and development. It is the time when teachers can assess a child's learning difficulty or other issues. Labor will ensure that young kids in these vital years are given the best chance of success."

Ms Washington said: "Participation in a preschool program, whether in a community preschool or long day care centre, is the strong foundation needed for success in school and in later life. We've consulted with the sector and with experts to develop these policies. We are focused on improving quality early learning outcomes, increasing access, driving greater participation and reducing fees for families."

Labor's package will be jointly funded with Federal Labor and will make early education and preschooling a priority by:

- **Immediately increasing three-year-old funding in community preschools** – doubling the Berejiklian Government's proposed funding for three-year-olds in 2019-20. This will reduce fees and support services. Currently, three-year-olds are only due to receive one quarter of the funding that four-year-olds receive in community preschools.
- **Funding three-year-olds in Long Day Care centres for the first time, and then doubling the current funding per three and four-year-olds in Long Day Care centres** – allowing providers to reduce fees, increase wages, and improve quality learning outcomes.
- **Investing \$292 million into a 'Little Kids Big Futures' fund** – driving a massive increase in early childhood education access and participation across NSW. This fund will support communities with critical service gaps, improve access for disadvantaged students, boost mobile preschool services in rural and remote areas, and invest in Playgroups NSW services as a pathway to preschooling.
- **Launching an \$18 million 'Specialist Early Intervention' trial program** – ensuring young children receive the support they need. Increasingly, early education services are crucial to the identification of learning difficulties, disabilities and other health-related issues. This trial program will boost access to allied health

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professionals such as occupational therapists, speech pathologists, and psychologists for three and four-year-olds in early education.

- **Starting a \$10 million ‘Early Childhood Education Professional Development’ program** – providing support and training for early childhood education teachers and educators.
- **Establishing an additional \$15 million capital grants fund to address critical service gaps throughout NSW** – increasing access and participation through additional and expanded services.
- **Boosting funding for assessment and rating experts by \$4 million** – slashing the Liberal Government’s dangerous assessment and rating backlog. The Government’s failures have led to early childhood education providers waiting more than five years between assessment and rating. Labor will rebuild confidence in the assessment and rating scheme, and support centres to deliver high quality education for students.

Labor has already committed to saving parents from the “double drop off” by ensuring all new public primary schools have preschool, long day care or out-of-school-hours services on site.

“Labor will always prioritise education, from preschool to school to TAFE. We won’t splurge billions on Sydney stadiums,” Mr Daley said.

The current Liberal-National Government has a long list of failures in the early education sector, with NSW having the highest fees and lowest participation rates in the country.

Labor will also:

- Establish a Ministerial Advisory Panel with broad sector representation to meet at least quarterly;
- Review and improving Before-and After-School Care and mobile preschool tender processes; and
- Develop a long-term early childhood education sector road-map in consultation with the sector.