

MEDIA RELEASE – 2 MARCH 2019

WHY THE NSW GOVERNMENT MUST GIVE 3 & 4-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOLERS IN LONG DAYCARE A FAIRER GO

SYDNEY: New South Wales' peak body for privately-owned early childhood education and care providers, the Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) NSW, is calling for urgent reconsideration of proper government funding for four-year-old children in long daycare, especially when NSW has the lowest participation rate and arguably the lowest preschool funding arrangements in the country.

ACA NSW is also calling on the NSW Government for proper government funding of all three-year-old children regardless of early childhood education and care settings, in anticipation of probable future Federal-State funding after the upcoming Federal election.

"NSW, just like the rest of Australia, provides a world-class early childhood education and care service to children aged 0-5 years old. In NSW, four-year-old children in long daycare receive NSW Government assistance of up to \$450 per child per year. Yet for example a Victorian four-year-old child in the same setting can receive \$3,695 per year. So why do NSW four-year-old children in long daycare in NSW get less?" asked Chiang Lim, CEO of ACA NSW.

It is important to point out that Australia's childcare is more than a place for children to be cared for while their parents work. Early childhood education and care provides opportunities for children to learn and have lasting, positive impacts on their future educational, health, social and economic outcomes.

"We should be taking advantage of the existing preschool education infrastructure that already exists across all long daycare services where the majority of NSW families already enrol their children. Providing greater government support will make access easier for this cohort of children by assisting services with the cost of delivering their preschool programs. This will lift NSW up and may even exceed national preschool participation levels," said Mr Lim.

In the lead up to the NSW state election on 23 March, it is imperative that all MPs and political candidates make funding and access to quality early childhood education and care for all NSW children a priority. There are over 189,000 children in NSW who do not access any type of formal early learning, putting pressure on primary schools to support them instead.

"It is alarming that far too many NSW parents cannot afford to enrol their children in any type of early learning environment either at all or for additional day or days. We call on the NSW Government to help as many children in NSW as possible to get a better start in life," he said.

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Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) NSW (www.nsw.childcarealliance.org.au) is the peak body for privately owned early childhood education and care services in NSW, numbering approximately 1,600 childcare services, employing over 25,000 staff and supporting over 125,000 families. ACA NSW provides advocacy, policy and regulatory and business support and advice, member services and professional development for members and their staff across the state.

**For further media inquiries, please contact
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