

MEDIA RELEASE – 5 MARCH 2019

NSW LABOR OFFERS SIGNIFICANT SOLUTIONS TO LEGACY AND FUTURE EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGES

SYDNEY: New South Wales' peak body for early childhood education and care providers, the Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) NSW, is very appreciative of NSW Labor's promises offering to solve a range of legacy and future challenges facing children aged 0-5 years old.

"On behalf of ACA NSW's members and their 1,600 services, we appreciate NSW Shadow Minister Kate Washington MP for listening to our concerns, and finally more fairly funding 4-year-old children in long daycare, as well as offering new preschool funding for 3-year-old children in long daycare for the first time ever," said Chiang Lim, CEO of ACA NSW.

In addition to NSW Labor's promises of funding all 3 and 4-year-old children regardless of settings, their proposal also covers a *Little Kids Big Futures* fund, Specialist Early Interventions, and improving the Assessment and Rating of services by boosting funding.

"Previously in NSW, 4-year-old children in long daycare received NSW Government assistance of up to \$456 per child per year. Under NSW Labor's proposal, they will instead receive \$1,000 per child per year, and 3-year-old children in long daycare will also receive \$1,000 per child per year of new funding," said Mr Lim.

NSW Labor's proposed *Little Kids Big Futures* fund, amongst many things, will also be used to conduct Australian-based research so that the benefits of Australian early childhood education and care can be further developed, refined and enhanced in a manner that balances quality, affordability and operational viability.

"I am particularly grateful to NSW Labor for proposing their Specialist Early Intervention trial as there has long been a very great need to help identify and assist with young children's developmental challenges well before they go to school. This can only do wonders for them in later life," said Lyn Connolly, President of ACA NSW.

NSW Labor has also agreed to ACA NSW's request in establishing a Ministerial Advisory Panel that will meet with the Minister at least four times a year, and will receive input not only from peak bodies but also from service providers, parents, teachers and staff, along with academics and experts in the field of early childhood education.

"ACA NSW is very pleased that NSW Labor has recognised the importance of getting feedback and input directly from the sector and parents. This is a really positive outcome which we hope will help to foster and strengthen Australia's already world-class early learning sector, while making it more affordable for parents and accessible for all children," Mr Lim said.

ACA NSW, the sector and young families now await the NSW Coalition's announcement of their future plans and vision for early childhood education and care before 23 March 2019.

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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.

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