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MEDIA RELEASE
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Parents welcome commitment to kindy and preschool funding

The Federal Government is today set to announce the extension of funding for the *Universal Access to Early Education Program* until 2017.

This is a major win for parents and the quarter of a million Australian children who attend kindy and preschool each year.

“We are absolutely thrilled to see the funding extended. This is a major win for parents around the country who care deeply about the quality of early education in Australia,” The Parenthood Executive Director Jo Briskey said.

“And most importantly this is a major win for Australia’s three- and four-year-olds having guaranteed access to an early education program the year before they start school.”

Over 8000 parent members of The Parenthood have been campaigning for the continued funding of preschools and kindergartens.

The *Universal Access to Early Education Program* guarantees every Australian child 15 hours a week of kindy or preschool in the year before commencing full time schooling.

“The early years of our children’s lives are the most formative years for their intellectual, emotional and social development. Access to kindy and preschool prepare our kids to make sure they can get the best out of formal schooling,” Ms. Briskey said.

“Although we were hoping to see a commitment to long term funding, two years continued funding will provide parents with much greater certainty and we welcome this commitment.”

Government Childcare Reform

Parents welcome a focus on helping more working mums and dads better afford high quality childcare enabling them to get back to work and work more.

However, parents still await further detail on what level of support they will actually receive and whether these subsidies will be based on a benchmark figure as opposed to the fees they actually pay.

“No matter what changes the government proposes to make what is fundamental to Australian families is that high quality childcare becomes more affordable and accessible across the board.” Ms. Briskey said.

“Parents want to see a real reduction in their out-of-pocket costs for childcare, subsidies that are a real incentive for mums and dads to return to work and that help fund the quality early learning all children deserve.”

“We hope that in all the big changes the government is set to announce they will have not forgotten that childcare is also about giving our kids the best start in life through access to high quality early learning and care,

“And that every child deserves access to high quality early learning, irrespective of their parent’s work circumstances.”

ENDS

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