



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**5 February 2016**

**Childcare activity test nightmare for 1 in 5 parents**

**One in five parents will struggle to meet the fortnightly work activity reporting under the federal governments childcare reform according to a new survey by *The Parenthood*.**

Just under 1,500 parents took part in the survey by *The Parenthood* that looked at parent's response to the federal government's new childcare package as part of the Senate Committee review currently underway.

Jo Briskey, Executive Director of The Parenthood, said while most parents welcomed the changes in the annual caps, the strict activity test continues to be a major concern for parents.

"Our national survey of close to 1,500 parents revealed that at least 1 in 10 parents won't meet the new activity test and their children will miss out on early education." Ms. Briskey said.

"This is the first time parents will be faced with the possibility that if at any point they do not meet the new activity test they will get nothing from the government to help meet their expensive childcare costs.

"This is very worrying for parents because life is unpredictable - working and earning capacity can change in an instant, but the days of childcare you need don't and once you've lost a day you don't get it back"

Under the plan if both parents are not working, volunteering or studying a minimum of 8 hours a fortnight they won't receive any childcare subsidy if their household income is over \$65,000.

Parents are also worried about how they will meet the fortnightly reporting of work arrangements, with 1 in 5 saying they would have serious difficulties.

"Day to day life for busy working parents with young children can be extremely hectic. The system needs to be flexible so parents don't have to continually report every time their activity or income changes – especially if they expect things to return to normal in a few weeks.

"The Parenthood has made it clear in our Senate Submission that whilst there are many great aspects of this new childcare subsidy system, parents are feeling confused and concerned that without extra

flexibility they may find themselves with a much bigger childcare bill, lose their childcare spot or be forced to take their children out of early learning.

“The Parenthood fundamentally believes that every child deserves access to two full days of early learning and care irrespective of their parent’s work circumstances and we are urging the government to ensure no child has the door shut on them.”

**END**

MEDIA INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE

Jo Briskey, The Parenthood, Executive Director 0423 262 449

**Note: The Parenthood will have a copy of its full senate submission up on our website {[www.theparenthood.org.au](http://www.theparenthood.org.au)} by approximately 2pm Friday 5 February 2016**

#### **The Parenthood Survey Summary of Results**

- Just under **1,500 parents** took The Parenthood’s Childcare Survey, a majority of whom use childcare because of work commitments.
- **62.42% of parents disagree** with restrictions on subsidies (despite over 75% of parents admitting they won’t be affected by the activity test)
- **At least 1 in 10 Parents** said restrictions within the new Activity Test will mean their children will miss out on early education.
- **Almost 1 in 5 Parents** said they would have serious difficulties with fortnightly reporting of work activity.
- **Over 50% of Parents** are happy with the changes in yearly caps for both under and over \$185K families.
- **Only 12% of parents agree** with the Government’s plan to fund the Childcare legislation by cutting Paid Parental Leave & Family Tax Benefits.