

# The Parenthood

## MEDIA STATEMENT

30 January 2016

### **52,000 reasons why the Government's childcare package needs to change.**

Childcare assistance for 52,000 low income families could be cut under the government's childcare reforms according to new data and parent advocacy group, The Parenthood says families are worried.

Jo Briskey, Executive Director of The Parenthood, Australia's leading parent advocacy and campaigning organisation said far too many children are about to be forced out of early learning.

"On government data, for every ten low income families who win under the reforms, five will lose." Ms Briskey said.

"The government is proposing to cut access to childcare in half for many low income families from two days down to just a day a week. That is simply not enough time to make a difference to children's learning and development.

"This just isn't good enough and is at complete odds with the overwhelming evidence that children from low income families benefit most from access to childcare and early learning in terms of improving their later educational and life outcomes.

"Children from low income families are twice as likely as children from high incomes families to start school developmentally behind their peers. And are twice as likely to have poor performance by year three on NAPLAN reading tests.

"Yet, the evidence shows that children from low income families who have attended early learning start school on par with their peers and continue to have improved educational outcomes throughout their schooling.

"So it just does not make sense to force 52,000 of Australia's most needy children out of early learning and care.

"Australia seems to be falling behind most other countries across the developed world who are investing large sums of money in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) because of the the long term social and economic benefits of quality early learning, not just for workforce participation.

"Countries, like Britain, New Zealand, Canada, Norway and Germany are all spending up big to ensure their children can get free or close to free access to early learning. They do this to increase the skills and education of their populations.

"Australia should absolutely be following suit." Ms Briskey said.

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