

## FAMILIES ARE DOING IT TOUGH - HILDA REPORT

Parents across Australia are struggling as raising a family is becoming increasingly expensive according to the latest HILDA report out of Melbourne University.

“This year’s Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia report presents the real data to explain why families are feeling the pinch,” said The Parenthood’s Acting Executive Director Nicole Lessio.

The report found that not only have the costs of childcare doubled in real terms since 2002, but incomes haven’t been increasing to cover it.

“Parents are often working harder but not getting ahead because the bills just keep coming. They’re trying their best but they know that the family budget is getting squeezed and this report just confirms it,” Ms Lessio said.

While the government’s childcare reform has passed, it doesn’t take effect until July 2018 – and that means another whole year of pain for parents.

“Maybe out of pocket childcare costs weren’t an issue for the majority of politicians who decided parents could wait, but this report shows very clearly that the rising cost is hurting families right now,” Ms Lessio said.

Of greatest concern though, is the number of single-parent families for whom poverty is a painful reality.

“The high cost of childcare, the changes that have been made to Parenting Payments and Family Tax Benefits coupled with the fact that primary caregivers are often not receiving the child support payments they need, mean that too many children are living below the poverty line,” said Ms Lessio.

The report highlights that inequality is a growing issue, particularly for single-parent families, and that children are suffering as a result.

“It’s pretty clear that Newstart actually means ‘no start’ for these families. We know the decision to push parents off Parenting Payments when their child turned eight was made by a previous government, but it has been disastrous for families.

We call on the Turnbull Government to do the right thing, to take notice of the HILDA data and make a real change for the sake of Australia’s most vulnerable families. The government needs to restore Parenting Payments and give children the chance of a brighter future,” said Ms Lessio.

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