

## PARENTS' PRE-BUDGET WISHLIST

While most parents around the country tonight will be busy with homework, dinner, baths and bedtime, Treasurer Scott Morrison will deliver the Federal Budget. The Parenthood will provide a post-budget analysis to let members know which measures will most affect them.

“As with family budgets, what we spend our money on as a nation really does demonstrate what we value,” said The Parenthood’s Acting Executive Director, Nicole Lessio.

“With several pre-budget announcements regarding childcare reform and education spending already having been made, parents are keen to see what else might be in store from Treasurer Morrison's budget.”

Measures already announced include long-overdue changes to school funding.

“Parents are relieved to finally be talking about education, but they don’t think these measures are best for them and their children,” said Ms Lessio.

“While we know that there is additional funding for schools under the so-called 'Gonski 2.0' plan, we're yet to hear what conditions will be placed on that funding. Will the States have to agree to phonics testing of 6 year olds? NAPLAN-style testing for all grades not just 3,5,7 & 9? The *Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes* plan seems to indicate that.”

The government has also announced cuts to higher education and a lowering of the repayment threshold for HECS repayment. Minister for Education Simon Birmingham also announced a continuation of kindy funding for an additional year.

“Funding kindy for only one more year isn’t really a ‘guarantee’ – it’s more like a warranty on a toaster. Parents and services need more certainty than that.”

Speaking of certainty, one item to keep a close eye on tonight is Paid Parental Leave - PPL.

“PPL cuts were first discussed in the 2014 budget – these zombie measures were then tied to Childcare Reform in last year’s Omnibus Bill, but after the Bill was withdrawn we have heard nothing more,” said Ms Lessio.

“The cuts may not have passed, yet they've never gone away either. Parents are looking for certainty here - hopefully the Turnbull Government will realise that it isn't wise to stress out pregnant women and their families by playing games with PPL.”

Families are also looking out for any cuts to Medicare in tonight’s budget.

“Will the government go ahead with cuts to the popular home doctor visits? Will the rebate freeze finally thaw so out of pocket expenses at the doctor are reduced? These are things that really impact family budgets. Parents are looking to the Turnbull Government to ease their cost of living pressures,” Ms Lessio said.

The Parenthood is in Canberra for the Budget and will bring all the details to Parenthood members tonight.

“Parents just want to know that someone has their backs – that’s what they’ll be looking for tonight.”

**END.**

Contact: Nicole Lessio, Acting Executive Director, The Parenthood 0416 263 239.