



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**PARENTS SUPPORT THE EDUCATORS WHO SUPPORT THEIR KIDS**

Parents across Australia will need to finish work early on Wednesday as a thousand educators at childcare centres stage a walk-off – and they don't mind a bit.

“Parents know what a tough job early childhood educators do and value the role they play in educating and caring for their children,” said The Parenthood’s Principal Campaign Manager Nicole Lessio.

That is why parents will stand in support of the educators who support them and their children.

“Parents recognise the enormous and under-valued contribution that their children’s early childhood educators make and have responded to the walk-off with support, enthusiasm and solidarity,” said Ms Lessio.

Educators will stage the walk-off on International Women’s Day to draw attention to the whopping pay gap.

“We know that early years education is crucial to our children’s development and school-readiness, but the wages these qualified educators receive in no way reflects the importance of their role,” said Ms Lessio.

As with a lot of female-dominated fields, early childhood educators’ work isn’t highly paid.

“If pay is an indicator of what we value, it would seem we place caring and educating – traditionally more female-dominated sectors – near the bottom of the pack,” said Ms Lessio. “ But, as the educators themselves say, ‘love doesn’t pay the bills.’”

Female-dominated sectors have long been underpaid, with equivalent qualifications in male-dominated sectors making almost twice the hourly rate of early childhood educators. The ‘Day of No Women’ is a way to highlight the highly valuable contribution women make to our society and economy.

“On this International Women’s Day, there has been a call for women across the globe to stop,” said Ms Lessio. “Stop doing the paid work that they do (at less than their male counterparts) and stop doing the unpaid work that they do (that disproportionately falls to them).

Just. Stop. Because what if there were no women?”

**END.**

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