



## MEDIA STATEMENT

6 August 2018

### **Turnbull Government must not walk away from Australian children**

The Turnbull Government must not walk away from the country's three and four-year-old children, following today's shocking news that Budget papers confirm the end of the Federal Government's \$440million *National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* from next year.

The Parenthood's Executive Director, Alys Gagnon, said she was shocked that the Government would be even thinking about not renewing funding for preschool programs around Australia.

"Parents would be outraged by this cut. It creates uncertainty for parents who have no idea what their preschool fees will be. It makes it impossible for mums and dads who are trying to balance their budgets, and increases the risk that some parents will simply withdraw their children from preschool."

The benefits of two years in preschool are well demonstrated. They include stronger NAPLAN and PISA results, a greater likelihood of finishing Year 12 and higher levels of employment as adults.

"We have been calling for sustainable funding for preschool for four-year-olds for years, and for the extension of Universal Access funding for three-year-olds.

"These calls are based on extensive and consistent evidence that shows how children benefit from two years at preschool.

"The Turnbull Government has never contributed to preschool for three-year-olds and is now walking away from preschool for four-year-olds."

The cut was included in May's Federal Budget, just six months after the release of the *Lifting our Game* report, by Professor Deborah Brennan and Susan Pascoe.

Professor Brennan and Ms Pascoe clearly demonstrated the need for sustainable funding for two years of preschool for children and particularly for vulnerable

children, while modelling conducted by PriceWaterhouseCooper shows significant economic savings for the community – up to \$13 billion by 2050.

“We are not the only group to have been lobbying for commitment to early learning for children. There is broad agreement across the early childhood sector that children need at least two years in early learning.”

**END**

**Lifting our Game report is available [here](#)**

**PWC modelling is available [here](#)**

**Alys Gagnon, Executive Director, 0423 262 449**

**The Parenthood is Australia’s largest not-for-profit parent advocacy group, with more than 63,000 members nationwide.**