



A warm welcome for commitments to new support for Victorian parents

Parents of new babies in Victoria will benefit from a comprehensive package of new support, announced today by Daniel Andrews ahead of the State Election this weekend.

The Parenthood warmly welcomed the announcement of extra funding for parenting groups, Maternal and Child Health nurse visits, sleep support and new early parenting centres across the state if a Labor Government is returned this weekend.

“When my first baby was born, I had no idea what was happening. My son and I struggled to breastfeed and this caused issues with sleep and eventually my own mental wellbeing. We were well-supported by family and friends, but many, many families don’t and that lack of support can be very distressing for new mums and dads,” The Parenthood’s Executive Director, Alys Gagnon said.

“Lots of parents experience huge amounts of upheaval when a new baby arrives. Maternal and Child Health nurses, along with new parents’ groups play a big role in providing the ‘village’ that many families rely on while they care for their infant. Funding to extend those groups, and to support extra MaCH nurse home visits for vulnerable families will be very welcome.”

“Sleep is of primary concern to most new parents, and while some sleeplessness is normal in the first weeks and months after a baby is born, lots of parents need extra support to help with settling their baby. This is normal. But what is not normal is how hard it can be for parents to access the support they need to help learn how to settle their baby. A 24 hour hotline – quite literally someone to call in the middle of the night – will help many parents as they battle through those long, long nights.”

The Parenthood particularly welcomes Victorian Labor’s announcement that they will offer a payroll exemption to business’ that provide parental leave for dads and partners.

“Early bonding with a baby is critical to the wellbeing of a child and as a community we should be supporting dads and partners to spend as much time with their new baby as possible, developing a relationship with a child in their own right and supporting the baby’s primary carer in those first weeks,” Ms Gagnon said.

“We are delighted to see a state leader commit to doing what they can at a state level to support that early bonding time for dads and partners.”

END – 19 November

AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT Alys Gagnon, Executive Director. 0438379977

The Parenthood is Australia’s largest not-for-profit parent advocacy group, with reach of over 64,000 mums and dads nationwide.