



2 April 2019

STILL NO PRESCHOOL CERTAINTY FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents, carers and supporters are still seeking real commitment to Australian children from the Scott Morrison Government following the announcement of a 12 month extension of preschool investment in the 2019 Budget.

The Parenthood's Executive Director, Alys Gagnon, expressed disappointment in the lack of long-term sustainable preschool funding. "Families and early learning providers have been asking for funding certainty from the Government for years now," Ms Gagnon said.

"The rolling series of yearly funding deals have left parents without certainty, and unable to properly plan their household finances. We are very worried that this lack of certainty may mean some children miss out on preschool, and that some children may face reduced learning opportunities.

"There is absolutely no doubt. Two years of high-quality, play-based early learning does wonders for kids. Research shows children who go to preschool do better at school, are more likely to finish school and go on to higher education and are less likely to go to gaol.

"Importantly, preschool is of huge benefit to children who might otherwise face a barrier to learning when they get to school. AEDC data shows one in five children will start school facing a barrier to learning, and sadly, we know that children who start behind usually stay behind."

Parents and supporters are also still seeking a commitment to investment in preschool for three-year-olds from the Federal Government.

Extending funding to three-year-olds has been described by experts as the single most impactful reform governments can make in early childhood policy, and modelling by PWC shows it would add up to \$13 billion to the economy by 2050.

"Investment in preschool and in two years of preschool makes sense any way you look at it," Ms Gagnon said.

"Parents and carers now have a real choice at the next election. Labor has committed to making a sustainable, long-term investment in two years of preschool for all Australian children. Mums, dads and carers will be carefully considering this policy difference as they head to polling booths next month."

END

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