



## EARLY LEARNING ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA – THE VOICE FOR PARENTS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

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### ELAA congratulates the Commonwealth on making the right call to support preschools

The Federal Government has made the right call in deciding to continue its funding contribution to 15 hours of quality early learning a week for all children in the year before school.

The Commonwealth has guaranteed that it will provide \$840 million over two years to help meet the cost of providing 15 hour preschool programs in 2016 and 2017.

"ELAA congratulates the Prime Minister, Tony Abbott - and Ministers Christopher Pyne and Scott Morrison - on this decision, which has long been called for by parents, educators, service providers, academics, and peak bodies across the early childhood education and care sector," said Mr Shane Lucas, CEO of ELAA.

"The Commonwealth provides around one-third of the money for 15 hours of preschool and this announcement gives parents and service providers certainty for the next two years, so that is great news."

Since 2013, Federal funding has enabled the delivery of 15 hours of quality preschool programs for children in the year before school.

"The research is clear: a minimum of 15 hours of quality early learning per week in the year before school is critical to the development of young children," Mr Lucas said.

"The Productivity Commission inquiry into childcare and early childhood learning also came to this conclusion - as have parents and service providers who see the real outcomes for children.

"This funding also provides families with a subsidised, affordable, quality early education *and* care option, which helps parents participate more actively in the workforce prior to children starting compulsory education.

"But we don't think children and families should be stuck in a funding battle between Canberra and the States every year - or every two years.

"At least 15 hours of quality early learning is great for children, helps parents participate in work and study, and should be supported by all governments - now and into the future."

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