



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

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### **Productivity Commission says Commonwealth should continue funding 15 hours of preschool**

Early Learning Association Australia has welcomed today's release of the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report into Childcare and Early Childhood Learning.

"We are very pleased that the Commonwealth Government has listened to the sector and the community and made this important report public," said Mr Shane Lucas, CEO of ELAA.

"The Commission undertook an exhaustive inquiry and its recommendations will be critical to the development of the Government's proposed 'families package'.

"Our priority issue throughout the inquiry was that the Commonwealth needed to maintain the funding that delivers 15 hours of preschool – and to do so beyond 2015."

Since 2013, Commonwealth funding has enabled the delivery of 15 hours of quality early learning to children in the year before school. The Commonwealth funds 5 of these hours under a partnership agreement with the States and Territories, which fund the remaining 10.

"ELAA members are delighted that the Commission has concluded that 15 hours of preschool supports the improved educational, economic and social outcomes achieved by children – and provides families with a subsidised, affordable, quality early learning and care option," Mr Lucas said.

"The test will now be whether the Government listens to the Commission on this vital issue."

"The Commission has made many detailed recommendations that go to the fundamental cost of child care, the subsidies that enable families to access and afford care, and the regulatory environment that supports quality.

"We will be studying the lengthy report in the coming days and will be looking very closely at those recommendations that impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families, and on the viability of services.

"ELAA members are adamant that no child or family should be worse off in the event that the Government accepts or rejects the Commission's specific recommendations."

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