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Labor commitments mean a better deal for families and early childhood educators

Two crucial policy announcements by Labor over the weekend – on educator wages and reform of the Child Care Subsidy – go a long way to addressing a number of key reforms that Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA); the Early Learning Everyone Benefits campaign; and other early years peak bodies have been seeking for some time.

“Adjusting the Child Care Subsidy rates to provide families earning under \$65K with free or next to free childcare and providing families earning up to \$174K with better subsidies means those families have more opportunity to engage in paid work, return to study, and manage things like out-of-pocket costs for formal kindergarten programs,” said ELAA CEO, David Worland. “Supporting this policy with greater ACCC monitoring of service fee increases will mean the savings to parents remain ‘real’.”

ELAA also welcomed Labor’s pledge to further review the Child Care Subsidy System to ensure vulnerable and low income families participate in early learning and access supports like the Childcare Safety Net.

“This will help arrest the alarming drop in the number of families accessing the Safety Net which has nearly halved,” said Mr Worland. “This commitment, plus Labor’s previously stated commitment to fully fund 15 hours of preschool for children in the two years before school, will form two crucial pillars upon which Australia can build an early childhood education and care system that will ultimately be on par with other OECD countries like Britain and New Zealand.”

Labor has also announced its intention to fund a 20 percent pay increase for early childhood educators over eight years.

“This is a welcome and necessary intervention in order to pay workers a wage that reflects their professional standing,” said Mr Worland.

“Our society can’t sustain a 37 percent annual attrition rate of early childhood educators from the profession, especially if we are to extend universal access to three-year-old programs. This proposed pay increase is an essential and positive step toward ensuring we have enough qualified and motivated early childhood educators into the future. Funding it through the Commonwealth and auditing to ensure pay rises are passed on in full means the cost of the rises isn’t ultimately passed on to parents.”

ELAA’s 2019 Federal Election Submission to the major parties contesting the coming election outlined five essential priorities incumbent on any party seeking to form the next government. Three of those priorities included reform of the Child Care Subsidy; a commitment to funding two years of preschool; and a skilled, valued, and supported workforce.

Media Release



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“We are thrilled that these recent Labor policy announcements go a long way to addressing these priorities,” said Mr Worland.

For more information or to arrange an interview with ELAA CEO, David Worland, contact James Gardener 0413 483 182.

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