



Media Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Playgroup NSW Welcomes Early Childhood Education Wage Increase While Advocating for Broader Recognition of Playgroups in Early Childhood Development

Playgroup NSW welcomes the 15 per cent wage increase for the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce, to be phased in over two years beginning with 10 per cent from December 2024, with a further 5 per cent from December 2025.

We recognise the value of high-quality early childhood education, balanced with the role of playgroups in early childhood development.

Playgroup NSW CEO Emily Caska states, “We know from evidence-based research that playgroups play a key role in improving early childhood development, though our dedicated and qualified staff are not part of the recent wage increase announcement, many of whom are early childhood educators bringing their skills to the playgroup sector.”

When compared to the effect of other forms of Early Childhood Education and Care, attending playgroups increases the likelihood of being on track across all 5 domains by 47%.

This effect is greater than that offered by daycare attendance and only marginally lower than preschool attendance, as found in the “Playgroups post pandemic, a snapshot of playgroup attendance and child development from 2012 to 2021” report by the University of South Australia published in 2023.

“As a sector we are facing significant workforce shortages, casualisation and a decline in volunteering. The broader early childhood development ecosystem needs to be considered, with pay rises in one area leading to workforce drainage in others. Parity of recognition and remuneration is critical to ensure that all components of the early childhood sector move forward together.”, Playgroup NSW CEO Emily Caska continued.

“Playgroups are often a first port of call for families of young children - providing timely, accessible and evidence-based development to children and families, and act as a transitional pathway into early childhood education settings. So too, some children and families do not access formal early childhood education for a range of reasons, which we will continue to work with the state and federal governments to improve through playgroups.”

“Investing in the early development of our children across all settings, including playgroups, sets Australia up for a brighter future.”, Ms Caska stated.

Playgroup NSW welcomes the parallel commitment from early childhood education and care services to limit fee increases, ensuring that families continue to have access to affordable early learning services. This has presented a barrier to children and families seeking to access early childhood education.

Playgroup NSW will continue to advocate for further investment into community and supported playgroup models, workforce and volunteering, to ensure the first 2,000 days for all children aged 0-5 years are optimal for every child to thrive, in line with the Early Years Strategy.

Read Minister for Education, The Hon Jason Clare MP's Doorstop:
[Doorstop - Sydney | Ministers' Media Centre](#)

Read the original announcement:
[Wage increase for the early childhood workforce - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)

Emily Caska
Chief Executive Officer
Playgroup NSW



About Playgroup NSW:

Playgroup NSW is a not-for-profit organisation that helps connect families and children to people and services in the community to positively impact their quality of life. For over 50 years, Playgroup NSW has delivered and linked over 65,000 families to vital services such as parent support groups and playgroups to foster early childhood development, navigate the challenges of parenting and build strong, resilient communities. With 550 playgroups operating each week and more than 26,000 sessions held annually, and support from over 500 dedicated volunteers, Playgroup NSW continues to make a significant difference in the lives of young children and their families across the state.

www.playgroupnsw.org.au

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