

Tuesday 14 November 2023

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Workforce crisis the biggest issue in Early Childhood Education and Care sector: Australian Childcare Alliance

New data from the Australian Childcare Alliance confirms once again that the sector's ongoing workforce crisis continues to deny Australian families childcare places.

The [latest survey](#) of Early Childhood Education and Care providers showed half had been forced to cap enrolment numbers, withholding a total of 11,123 places from families within the week of 9-13 October.

ACA President, Paul Mondo, said the survey would not come as a shock to anyone working within the sector, as the workforce crisis remains the biggest challenge faced by operators.

“Our members have reported for years now that staff recruitment and retention is one of the biggest issues in the sector. There is a critical need for more government support to help attract and retain early learning educators,” he said.

The latest survey of 477 early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres illustrated that staff shortages had not improved since the first two surveys, held earlier in 2023.

Across a single week in February this year, over two thirds of surveyed centres confirmed enrolments in that week had been capped — a trend which continued for more than half of the ECEC centres surveyed again in May.

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) is currently engaged in tripartite negotiations with the Federal Government, employer groups and the United Workers Union (UWU), the Australian Education Union (AEU) and the Independent Education Union (IEU) over Government-funded pay rises and better working conditions for Early Childhood Education and Care workers.

This process is the first ever supported bargaining negotiations for the early learning sector, made possible under new provisions in the Fair Work Act.

“Families are being unfairly impacted when there are not enough workers in the sector to meet the demand and regulatory requirements for the child-educator ratios,” Mr Mondo said.

“The workforce crisis will not be resolved without targeted initiatives for educator attraction and retention. Importantly, we need to do this without increasing the cost to working parents, who continue to struggle under the weight of the rising cost of living.”

ACA is the peak body for early learning (childcare) services, which provide care for 850,000 families across Australia.

The Australian Childcare Alliance calls upon the Australian Government to implement a government-funded wage increase which invests in sector longevity and value, responds to growing population needs and ensures that the stabilisation of the ECEC workforce does not come at the cost of parents.

#### ENDS

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#### Australian Childcare Alliance

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**Media Opportunity:** The Australian Childcare Alliance speaks about workforce crisis in Early Childhood Education and Care sector and need for Government-funded pay rises and improved conditions.

**Who:** Australian Childcare Alliance President Paul Mondo

**Where:** Senate Courtyard, Parliament House

**When:** Wednesday 15 November  
10am

**Media contact:** Paul Mondo 0411 587 170

#### About the Australian Childcare Alliance

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) works on behalf of early learning (long day care) service owners and operators to ensure families have an opportunity to access affordable early childhood education and care (ECEC) throughout Australia. We represent over 2,500 members which equate to over 4,500 early learning services across the country, caring for the children from over 360,000 families.

Our national and state bodies work collaboratively with all levels of government, regulatory authorities and other stakeholders with an evidence-based approach, to ensure that families are supported into the future with a sustainable, affordable and viable ECEC sector.

ACA believes that with the right policy and financial frameworks in place, we could ensure that every child in Australia has access to high quality, affordable and sustainable early learning (childcare) services, and therefore the **best start in life**.

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