

Media Release
Monday 4th May 2015

ECMS welcomes funding certainty for 15 hours of preschool

Victoria's largest not-for-profit early childhood education provider, ECMS, welcomes the Government's commitment to fund universal access to four-year-old kindergarten for the next two years and looks forward to further details of the federal Families Package being revealed in the coming days.

ECMS Chief Executive Officer Bernie Nott says "We congratulate the Government for its continued investment in vital early learning and care services for Australian children. This investment will not only deliver positive educational outcomes for our young children, but also contributes to long-term economic, social and community gain, especially for children who are vulnerable and at-risk."

The Prime Minister's announcement yesterday provides much-needed certainty for thousands of families who access ECMS kindergarten services. Families can now make choices knowing that they have access to at least 15 hours per week of affordable, quality early childhood education and care.

ECMS can now plan 2016 services and programs with confidence. "For our 550 educators, this funding provides stability and affirmation of the important work they do each day in our kindergartens and in long day care centres," says Bernie.

"For the children in our care, 15 hours of preschool per week delivers positive educational outcomes that amplifies their development and leads to better transitions to school. Research has proven that a minimum of 15 hours is needed to lay the foundations for lifelong learning," he explains.

The ECMS vision is for a time when universal access to kindergarten is not just maintained for all four-year-old children, but extended to children of a younger age, particularly vulnerable and at-risk children. The UK's findings from the Effective Provision of Pre-school Education (EPPE) Study were so compelling that the Government's current policy is to deliver 30 hours of free early education and care to three and four-year-old children, as well as extending this to 40% of the country's most disadvantaged two-year-olds.

"In the near future, we'll need funding certainty confirmed beyond 2017 and extended into other areas such as three-year-old kindergarten, to place Australia in the same league as leading countries like Sweden and the UK."

-Ends-

Research / reference material is available on request

Interviews and photos with educators and families are also available on request

About ECMS:

ECMS is a not-for-profit community enterprise providing quality early childhood education and care for children, families and communities in 72 services across Melbourne. Our services touch the lives of approximately 6500 children and families in many varied and diverse communities each week.

Media Enquiries:

Angie Farrugia – GM, Communications
0422 929450 / afarrugia@ecms.org.au



A leading not-for-profit
provider of early childhood
education and care services

192 High Street (PO Box 182)
Northcote VIC 3070

T +61 3 8481 1100
E ecms@ecms.org.au

www.ecms.org.au
ABN 13 012 989 761