



Broadside BRIEFING

PAPER#3 JUL 10

CHILDCARE: AN ELECTION ISSUE

People who work with children have the privilege and responsibility of advocating for those children.

Children do not get to vote in elections, so as educators working in early education and care services we need to ensure that we speak up on their behalf.

We especially need to speak up about what happens to children in our services. When a political party forms a government it determines the minimum quality of education and care that children's services must offer.

People who work with children must also speak up on our own behalf. We need to ensure that changes that are proposed for children's services work for us.

We need to ensure that political parties consider the impact on educators of workforce issues, staffing ratios, and qualification requirements.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Community Child Care Co-op is very aware that everyone in the early education and care sector is busy at the moment, so we are keeping it simple. We are just asking everyone to:

Send one email/write one letter/ come to one forum

■ Send one email

Send one email to the Minister Kate Ellis (ALP), the shadow Minister Sharman Stone (Liberals) and to the Green's childcare spokesperson Sarah Hanson-Young telling them what the major issues are for you in childcare in the lead up to the election.

Go to www.cccnsw.org.au/federalection to send your emails.

■ Write one letter

Send one letter to your local newspaper telling them why childcare is an election issue and what you want the parties to promise.

Go to www.cccnsw.org.au/federalection to find a proforma letter to adapt and put on your letterhead.

■ Come to one forum

Go to the back page of this Briefing for more details.



WELCOME

This *Broadside Briefing* summarises the main issues around the 2010 federal election and invites you to participate in your democracy.

CCCC'S ELECTION DEMANDS

CCCC demands that all parties commit to:

- 1 Implement the NQF**
Proceed with the full implementation of the National Quality Framework as agreed by COAG.
- 2 Make childcare affordable**
Address the affordability of early childhood education and care by increasing rates of CCB and CCR and giving not-for-profit services operational subsidies.
- 3 Consult with the sector about the NQF**
Increase consultation with the early childhood education and care sector around the details of the National Quality Framework.
- 4 Integrate education and care**
The Commonwealth must take over responsibility for preschools and kindergartens from the states to enable an integrated early education and care system for all.

PARTY POSITION

| | ALP | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| QUALITY | Ratios/ qualifications | Has gained agreement from all state and territory governments on improved ratios and qualification requirements as part of the National Quality Framework. |
| | National Quality Agenda | Developed the National Quality Agenda and got all Governments to agree to this. |
| | Early Years Learning Agenda | Developed and implemented the EYLF nationally. |
| | National Rating System | Developed the proposed national rating system. |
| | Infrastructure | No substantial action. |
| AFFORDABILITY | Child Care Rebate | Will introduce changes to give parents access to the 50% rebate fortnightly from July 2011. Families will also be able to choose whether they had their rebate paid to their childcare service or continue to receive the rebate directly. Have removed indexation of rebate. |
| | More funding for NSW Services | Made the 'universal access' agreement – \$970 million for NSW. Preschools had substantial funding increases because of this and includes the early teacher costs contribution scheme, where all services receive \$6,000 or \$8,000 to offset the cost of employing a teacher. |
| | Universal Access | Funding to ensure that by 2013 every child has access to a quality early childhood education program in the year before formal school. |
| ACCESSIBILITY | Indigenous Access | An Indigenous Early Childhood National Partnership Agreement was established to help achieve the COAG Closing the Gap targets for Indigenous children. The Agreement includes spending \$292.6 million over five years to establish at least 35 Children and Family Centres across Australia by June 2014. |
| | Supply issues | Dropped the promise to build 260 new services (only 38 will proceed). |
| WORKFORCE | Workforce expansion | A \$126.6 million package of measures to increase supply and quality of the early childhood workforce by removing TAFE fees for childcare diplomas and advanced diplomas, additional ECE university places, and HECS-HELP Benefit for ECE teachers working in areas of high disadvantage. |
| | MORE INFO | See more on the Government's childcare record at www.deewr.gov.au |

ISSUES: COMPARE & CONTRAST

| Coalition | The Greens | CCCC Comment |
|---|---|--|
| The Coalition stated they 'support high quality standards for the sector': and that they will 'comprehensively consider the cost and workforce impacts of the new National Quality Agenda'. | Support nationally consistent ECEC standards with more highly qualified staff and lower carer-to-child ratios of at least 1:3 for children aged 0-2, and 1:4 for children aged over two and smaller groups. | Community Child Care believes that improvements to Ratios and Qualifications as promised through the National Quality Framework should proceed. |
| Will 'review the National Quality Agenda ... to ensure it takes appropriate account of cost and workforce impacts' on the sector. No stated commitment to the NQF. | No Policy announcement | Community Child Care believes the National Quality Agenda, as agreed by COAG, should be fully implemented. |
| No policy announcement. | No policy announcement. | Community Child Care believes the development of the EYLF was and is a positive move. |
| Will not proceed with national rating system. | | |
| No policy announcement. | Establish a Capital Grants Fund of \$200 million over four years to allow individual community centres to apply with quotes for capital grants work to build infrastructure. | Investment in infrastructure is needed. |
| Will reintroduce indexation of the Child Care Rebate. Will pay the Child Care Rebate weekly in arrears, directly to childcare centres. | Will ensure fortnightly payments of the Child Care Rebate commence as soon as possible to 'ease the burden on families'. | We need one simple system for reducing the cost of childcare. |
| No policy announcement. | No policy announcement. | The Universal Access agreement must be maintained for preschools to continue to get higher funding, and the Teachers costs contribution scheme to proceed. |
| No policy announcement. | Have called for NQF to guarantee a place for all children under 3 by 2012. | As above. |
| No policy announcement | No policy announcement | |
| Re-establish the Federal Planning and Advisory Committee to ensure that future accreditation for new childcare centres is on a demonstrated as-needs basis. | Will promote more publicly funded, community-based, not-for-profit childcare facilities, especially in areas of high unmet demand/growth and areas of socio-economic need. Have called for a Co-operative Childcare Fund of \$10 million in grants for small/medium businesses to collectively establish childcare facilities for employees. The Greens estimate this could see up to 100 new centres established for 1,500 children. | More services are needed to ensure that every family and child has access to the early education and care they require. |
| No policy announcement. | No policy announcement. | Quality improvement will only happen with a range of workforce measures in place. |
| See their full policy at: http://tinyurl.com/electioncoalition | See their full policy at: http://tinyurl.com/electiongreens | See: www.ccccsnsw.org.au/federalelection |



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THE FORUM: CHILDCARE AN ELECTION ISSUE Thursday 12 August

5.30–7.30pm

Sydney Masonic Centre, Conference and Function Centre, Ionic Room, 66 Goulburn St, Sydney

With:

Sarah Hanson-Young The Australian Greens

Sharman Stone Shadow Minister for the Status of Women, Early Childhood Education and Childcare (Liberal Party of Australia)

Kate Ellis Minister for Early Childhood Education, Childcare and Youth (Australian Labor Party)

Come and hear where the major parties stand on early education and care!

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE ELECTION!

Email Community Child Care on: info@cccncsw.org.au or call (02) 8922 6444