



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Concerns new Childcare legislation will leave children from low income families disadvantaged**

Queensland's largest and longest established early childhood education and care provider has raised concerns about the future for children from low income families with the release today of the long-awaited 'Jobs for Families Package' from the Federal Government.

C&K CEO Michael Tizard says the Family Assistance Legislation Amendments Bill, which was introduced into Federal Parliament today, has some welcome elements, but he has serious concerns that it will leave some children very vulnerable.

"We have supported the government over the past 12 months in the creation of these new laws because we believed there were changes that needed to be made to make the early childhood sector more responsive and more flexible.

"However funding cuts to support children who are already disadvantaged, will mean the situation becomes even worse for thousands of children across the country."

The changes to funding arrangements for childcare mean that lower income families will receive subsidy for fewer hours of early education. Under the current system children can receive subsidies for up to 24 hours of early childhood education and care a week, but the activity test contained in the new laws will cut that by half to just 12 hours.

Mr Tizard says C&K has always supported exposure to quality early childhood education experiences for ALL children, not just those who can afford it.

"When a family is struggling - for any number of reasons - the "safety net" of having their child spending 24 hours a week with a familiar, reliable early childhood educator is a proven, cost-effective investment in a better future.

"Independent research by PriceWaterhouse Coopers values this at an additional \$13 billion in GDP when vulnerable children participate in quality early education and care", he said.

"We will be asking the government to review this because we think the halving of subsidised care for low income families is a step backwards. "

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