

Family Day Care sector in crisis: urgent funding needed

Family day care is in crisis, needing urgent funding, otherwise 15,500 Queensland children will be abandoned along with the crucial services families rely on, especially after hours care.

Universal access to child care, a Productivity Commission recommendation for reform, will be seriously in doubt without family day care which is a vital part of the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector.

Commitment call

Family Day Care Queensland is calling on the incoming Australian Government to commit to:

- immediate action to improve the funding to the family day care sector, services and educators to address the critical viability, workforce shortages and supply issues confronting the sector
- establishing a dedicated advisory body including sector and provider representatives from the family day care and in home care sectors to co-design future reforms.

Family day care plays an essential role in the lives of children and families every day in Queensland.

It ensures that children from all backgrounds thrive by experiencing quality education and care and that parents can undertake paid work and other commitments confident in the knowledge that their children are safe and learning.

It is a vital choice for parents who prefer home-based education and care, including those needing more flexible hours outside of normal business hours, such as health and emergency service workers, teachers and other essential workers.

There are waiting lists for family day care services because supply cannot keep up with demand, lack of funding parity with centre-based care is one of the most critical reasons for the workforce shortage.

Family Day Care Pledge

Family Day Care Queensland is calling on Queensland candidates for the 2025 Federal election to pledge their support for family day care.

I pledge to support the family day care sector because:

- 5% of all Queensland children accessing ECEC are in family day care
- family day care offers more flexible hours and provides the bulk of care outside of standard hours
- family day care is the only available choice for many regional and remote families
- family day care ensures regional and remote parents can take part in paid work and helps these communities retain essential workers
- family day care caters to a high number of children with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability.

Family Day Care Queensland has identified five priority areas with 16 recommendations in its paper *Navigating the path to universal ECEC – the role of Family Day Care*. The purpose of the paper is to ensure that the ECEC reforms the incoming Australian Government develops (in response to the recent inquiries by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission and the Productivity Commission) are informed by the issues that matter to Family Day Care Queensland members for the benefit of children and families.

Family Day Care Queensland is the peak body representing the family day care and in home care sectors in Queensland and has been supporting the sector for more than 40 years. It is a not-for-profit membership-based organisation and is a member of Family Day Care Australia and Early Childhood Australia and works collaboratively with these organisations. Family Day Care Queensland looks forward to working with the incoming Australian Government.