

Media release



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Renewal of the wage subsidy great news for educators, children, families and gender equity

The renewal of funding for the 15% wage subsidy for early childhood educators is great news for Australia's 200,000 educators and for the one million families who rely on them to care for and educate their children.

Dr Ros Baxter, CEO of the charity Goodstart Early Learning, Australia's largest ECEC provider, said the extension of the payment would also help address the gender pay gap while ensuring the wage increase is not paid for by families through fee increases.

Dr Baxter said over the past two years the 15% wage subsidy had transformed Australia's early childhood sector, with educator vacancies half what they were before the subsidy.

"Children are the biggest winners from the subsidy as keeping our highly trained educators ensures that they can build stable relationships with the children they care for – that relationship is the foundation of all high quality early learning," Dr Baxter said.

"Since the subsidy began there's been a big drop in the sector asking for staffing waivers from the National Quality Standard. Linking funding to ensuring centres are meeting the quality standard will further strengthen quality across the sector.

"For Goodstart it has meant we've been able to reduce our reliance on agency and casual staff – and that means children can build strong relationships with their educators. This drives better educational outcomes.

"This is also an important win for gender pay equality as the early childhood workforce is 96% female. Last year the Fair Work Commission ruled that educators have been historically underpaid.

"Our teachers are now paid wages comparable to schools, which is fair as they have comparable qualifications.

"I also acknowledge the importance of the ongoing campaign by the United Workers Union for fair wages for educators, a campaign Goodstart has supported for over a decade.

"This is an important day for our sector, and we look forward to working through the details with the Federal Government, the union and our sector colleagues over coming months," Dr Baxter said.

For more information: 0429 553 103 or media@goodstart.org.au

Notes for editors: Goodstart Early Learning is Australia's largest not for profit early learning provider with 665 centres nationwide. For more information, visit [goodstart.org.au](https://www.goodstart.org.au). Goodstart acknowledges all Traditional Custodians across Australia, recognises First Nations peoples' continued cultural and spiritual connection to the land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We're for children, not for profit

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