

Media release



26 September 2022

Improving early learning access for First Nations children first vital step to fixing safety net

Goodstart, Australia's largest not for profit provider of early learning and care, has welcomed today's announcement by the Federal Government that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will be automatically entitled to 36 hours per fortnight of Child Care Subsidy from July 2023.

Goodstart CEO Julia Davision said First Nations children would now be able to access at least two days of early learning, providing vital support for child development and enhancing school readiness.

"42% of First Nations children start school developmentally vulnerable, but access to early learning has been shown to reduce development vulnerability by up to half," she said.

"Combined with the additional funding for community-led learning, this measure will make a big difference to many First Nations children.

"We would urge the Government to go further and fix the child care safety net for other groups of vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

"Children from low income communities are twice as likely as children from high income communities to start school developmentally vulnerable. Yet the 2018 Child Care reforms halved access to early learning for low income families with a non-working parent.

"Australia needs to improve access for all children facing disadvantage if we are to give all children the best possible start to life and learning," she said.

First nations children are under-represented in early learning, with just 4.3% of children attending compared to 6.3% in the community. At Goodstart, 6.9% of children attending are First Nations children.



For more information

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Notes for editors

Goodstart Early Learning is Australia's largest early learning provider with 665 centres nationwide. It is a not-for-profit social enterprise committed to improving the lives of Australia's children and their families. For more information, visit goodstart.org.au.

Acknowledgement of country

Goodstart acknowledges all Traditional Custodians across Australia and recognises First Nations peoples' continued cultural and spiritual connection to the land, sky and waterways that surround us. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We're for children, not for profit

visit goodstart.org.au