

# Media release

Thursday 8 May 2025



## Goodstart celebrates 15 years of impact as Australia's largest not-for-profit early learning provider

A visionary decision by four of Australia's leading philanthropic organisations 15 years ago continues to change the trajectory of children's lives and support another generation of Australian families – with Goodstart Early Learning serving communities right across the nation.

In 2010 Goodstart was formed by a syndicate of philanthropic organisations in response to the collapse of ABC Learning. Their vision was not just to solve the immediate crisis which left thousands of people facing unemployment and tens of thousands of families looking for new childcare places, but to ensure that all children had the learning, development and wellbeing outcomes they need for school and life.

Fifteen years on and Australia's largest – not-for-profit – early learning provider is still transforming children's lives and supporting families.

Goodstart Chief Executive Officer Ros Baxter said Goodstart has so much to celebrate.

"From that crisis, we built something extraordinary," Ros said.

"Today, Goodstart supports nearly 65,000 children every week across almost 700 centres – and every dollar we earn is reinvested to improve outcomes for children, especially those who need it most.

Having not-for-profit providers in the sector is vitally important, with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) finding that not-for-profit providers deliver higher quality care, are more affordable for families, have higher retention rates for educators and teachers, and are more inclusive.

"We reinvest in workforce development, quality improvement, and inclusion programs which helps ensure children who need a little bit of extra help get what they need," Dr Baxter said.

"With almost 700 centres – including our partners at Big Fat Smile – Goodstart's team has worked hard to ensure that 99% of centres are now assessed as exceeding or meeting the National Quality Standard compared to just 50% thirteen years ago.

Since 2010, Goodstart has recorded over 154 million child attendances across its early learning centres – reflecting its scale, reach and impact across Australia.

Ros said there would always be a place for children and families experiencing vulnerability. Only one percent of children in early learning get extra help for additional needs but at Goodstart our additional educators support almost three times as many, with many parents telling us these children were previously refused entry at other services.

"Compared to the sector, we also support a higher proportion of children from regional areas, low-income families, and those with a disability or at risk of abuse or neglect," she said.

Last year Goodstart invested \$57.4 million into our social purpose – supporting inclusion programs, targeted support, and improving access to early learning for children who need it most.

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visit [goodstart.org.au](https://goodstart.org.au)



## Media release (continued)

Goodstart will continue to use our scale and size to influence critical drivers that make a difference to children's outcomes. This includes focusing on social and economic policy, increasing the value the community places on the first five years, and driving innovation in early learning.

Goodstart's journey from crisis to Australia's largest national provider demonstrates the power of a mission-driven approach to early childhood education and care. By prioritising the needs of children, families, and communities, Goodstart continues to transform lives, create positive social change and provides high quality early learning and care to Australia's children.

## Background for editors

The organisation will continue to use its national scale and influence to drive positive change in early learning – from lifting educator value, to shaping policy to championing the critical importance of the first five years. Along with our partners, Big Fat Smile, we have nearly 700 early learning centres serving communities in every state and territory.

Our founders:



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For more information contact [media@goodstart.org.au](mailto:media@goodstart.org.au).

## Notes for editors

Goodstart Early Learning is Australia's largest early learning provider with 655 centres nationwide. We're 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](https://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.

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