

MEDIA RELEASE

Urgent need for early childhood education support for VIC community providers



5 August, 2020

Early childhood education centres across Melbourne are operating in the dark at present, as they await further advice from the Government on which children will be permitted to attend early childhood education as part of the Stage 4 lockdown.

Many distressed providers have reached out to Community Early Learning Australia, concerned that they will not be viable if their numbers reduce to 5 or 10 percent as of Thursday.

“Our not for profit community and small providers have already expended their reserves in the last lockdown. Their casuals left their employment. They are telling us they have nothing left to carry them through,” says Michele Carnegie, CEO of Community Early Learning Australia (CELA). “One owner we spoke to had been running early childhood education services for 25 years. He started a new, high quality service this year, but is fearing he may now need to close his doors permanently.”

We are aware that the Minister for Education Dan Tehan is planning on announcing a triple guarantee for childcare today and urge the Minister to consider the needs of community not for profit centres and small providers.

“It is important the Government listens and responds to a range of early learning providers. Small and community providers deliver quality early education but don’t have the resources to simply bounce back. If we lose these providers, they will be gone forever.”

Ms Carnegie wrote to Minister Tehan earlier this week highlighting the very likely scenario that centres will need to stand down workers as of Thursday, and the impact this will have on both the female dominated workforce and on children and families.

There is also a pressing risk that centres will close immediately and not meet the current needs of essential workers.

Carnegie is urgently asking the Minister to announce the details of the Triple Guarantee and at minimum, increase the current 25% transition package to 50% on top of the Child Care Subsidy. This is vital to support services to keep their doors open, engage educators in outreach to children who cannot attend, and play an integral role in rebuilding the economy once the lockdown eases.

END

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About CELA

Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) is the peak body for Australia’s early and middle childhood education sector. CELA’s mission is to amplify the beneficial effects of early learning by informing families, influencing policymakers, and inspiring educators through sharing evidence-based research, conducting grassroots consultation, and advocating common sense action. www.cela.org.au | 1800 157 818 | F: facebook.com/communityearlylearningaustralia