

Senate Select Committee on Work and Care

Inquiry into Work and Care

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 16 September 2022

Outcome: Early Childhood and Youth

Department of Education Question No. IQ22-000014

Senator Andrew Bragg provided in writing.

CCS support for early childhood education

Question

1. In dollar terms, how much of the Child Care Subsidy supports early childhood education in long day care?
2. Of this sum, what is the breakdown between private childcare centres and community or NFP centres?

Answer

1. In the September quarter 2021 families attending Centre Based Day Care (CBDC) services received approximately \$2.2 billion in Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) entitlements.
2. The Child Care Subsidy System does not identify community-based services. The Department can advise that during the September quarter 2021, approximately \$1.6 billion in CCS and ACCS was received by for-profit CBDC services, and a further \$574 million was paid to not-for-profit CBDC services.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 16 September 2022

Outcome: Early Childhood and Youth

Department of Education Question No. IQ22-000015

Senator Andrew Bragg provided in writing.

Other child care schemes and research on child care centre efficiency

Question

1. Are there other Commonwealth schemes which support private childcare or community / NFP centres?
2. Has the Department undertaken research on ways to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the centres?

Answer

The Australian Government supports families with the cost of early childhood education and care (ECEC) through the Child Care Subsidy and provides additional support to families and ECEC services in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities through a number of other programs.

Eligible for-profit, not-for-profit and community owned ECEC services can access funding under the Inclusion Support Program (ISP) and the Community Child Care Fund (CCCF) program.

ISP assists ECEC services to build capacity and capability to include children with additional needs. Further information about this program is available at www.education.gov.au/child-care-package/inclusion-support-program.

The CCCF supports services to address barriers to ECEC participation in disadvantaged, regional and remote communities, and Indigenous communities. Under the CCCF support can be provided through:

- Special Circumstances grants which can be applied for when something unexpected happens, like a local emergency or natural disaster, and threaten threatens the services ability to stay open;
- Disadvantaged and vulnerable communities grant assist services stay open or increase their numbers and can be applied for when competitive grants rounds are open;
- Restricted grants support identified services in disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

Further information about these grants are available at www.education.gov.au/child-care-package/community-child-care-fund.

Regular reviews of the National Quality Framework (NQF) are undertaken to ensure the ECEC regulatory systems remains current, achieves its objectives and supports Australia's approved services to provide high quality education and care. The Department of Education is working with its state and territory counterparts to implement recommendations of the most recent the 2019 NQF Review.

Education Ministers have commissioned an update of Australia's two nationally Approved Learning Framework's (ALFs): Belonging, Being, Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for children aged up to five years; and My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia. The update is designed to ensure the ALFs remain fit for purpose. The Department is working with its state and territory counterparts and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) on the project.

The Australian Government funds ACECQA to work with all governments to provide resources and best practice guidance to support continuous improvement of the sector.

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QUESTION ON NOTICE

Date of hearing: 16 September 2022

Outcome: Early Childhood and Youth

Department of Education Question No. IQ22-000016

Senator Andrew Bragg provided in writing.

Child care for 4-year-olds

Question

What analysis has been done on the NSW/Victorian announcement for childcare for 4-year-olds and has any consideration been given to how this could be expanded?

Answer

The Australian Government has considered how state and territory Preschool Reforms interact with the Child Care Subsidy program and the Preschool Reform Agreement. The Australian Government continues to work closely with all jurisdictions under the Preschool Reform Agreement, to implement reforms under the Agreement that support universal access to preschool for children in the year before fulltime school.

The Productivity Commission will also undertake a comprehensive review of the early childhood education and care sector commencing in 2023.