

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2015-16 Budget Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 2.4 Support for Child Care System Question No: SQ15-000500

Topic: Indigenous access and Closing the Gap

Hansard page: Written

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah asked:

This package will clearly reduce service access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and set back the Government's efforts to meet Closing the Gap targets. Has there been any examination of the extent to which this package will reduce service access for Indigenous 4 year olds or undermine the school attendance target? Can you please provide any information gathered on the impact of this policy on Indigenous children?

Answer:

The Child Care Assistance Package will provide significantly increased funding to deliver additional assistance to improve access to child care for disadvantaged or vulnerable children, including Indigenous children.

The Budget Based Funded Programme is capped and closed, meaning that while services are block funded, they are not able to expand in response to community need, and services are not able to be established in new communities. Through access to the Child Care Subsidy, and the Child Care Safety Net, new services will be able to establish in communities where there may not be any services. Existing Budget Based Funded services will be able to expand where there is demand for more places and be properly funded for the services they deliver, particularly where they are working to reduce barriers to access for Indigenous children. In addition, families who are paying fees will be able to access fee relief through the Child Care Subsidy, which they are currently not able to access.

Within the Child Care Safety Net, the Community Child Care Fund is expected to support around 4,000 child care services across the country to implement innovative solutions to improve access for disadvantaged children and ensure their viability.