

Senate Committee: Education and Employment

**QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017**

Outcome: Early Childhood and Child Care

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ17-000107

Senator Hanson-Young, Sarah provided in writing

Also refer to previous hearing Question No. SQ15-000957

Safety net - 2 days of care

Question

The current proposed package has a safety net of 12 hours per week for children from families earning under \$65,000 a year. Does that constitute two days of care per week? How many hours per week would constitute two days for most families?

Answer

The Child Care Safety Net will support families earning less than around \$65,000 who do not meet the activity test by providing up to 24 hours of subsidised early learning opportunities per fortnight. That is the equivalent to two weekly six-hour sessions, and will be subsidised at the highest 85 per cent rate.

Under the *Jobs for Families* Child Care Package, providers will have flexibility in the hours per day and days per week they must open, which is something many have called for. In return, the Australian Government is encouraging the child care sector to offer more flexible sessions of care as an alternative to the 10 to 12 hour sessions currently charged, and to consider changes that deliver flexible, cost-effective care and early learning services for families, especially where the primary purpose of attendance is early learning. Some services are doing this already.