

Media release



1st October 2023

Goodstart welcomes ACCC's Interim Report

Goodstart, Australia's largest not for profit provider of early learning and care, has welcomed the release of the second ACCC report.

Goodstart CEO, Dr Ros Baxter, said the report captured the major challenges facing families looking for affordable, high-quality care and for the not-for-profit services working to provide quality early learning in communities across Australia.

"Goodstart looks forward to engaging further with the ACCC as it finalises its report by the end of the year.

"If adopted, the recommendation to remove or substantially change the activity test will help secure access to early learning for all children, regardless of the circumstances of their parents.

"This is particularly important for children living in vulnerable circumstances as the report finds families with lower activity test entitlements use a greater share of unsubsidised hours, leading to higher out-of-pocket expenses and potential affordability concerns.

"Importantly, the second report finds that workforce shortages must be addressed and that there are clear discrepancies between the pay and conditions of educators working in the early learning sector and their peers in primary schools.

"We welcome the ACCC's acknowledgement of not-for-profit providers who are paying our teams above award wages and employing more of them in a full-time capacity – and that the benefits are evident with not-for-profits having much lower staff turnover.

"The ACCC has recognised the crucial role of attracting and retaining qualified educators in providing the quality of care that parents want, and the low wage rates that current funding arrangements result in across the sector.

"These are issues that could be addressed immediately, and Goodstart would welcome the opportunity to work with Government to address these issues sooner rather than later.

"We look forward to engaging with the ACCC on new ways governments around the country could help to ensure children in underserved communities have access to quality early learning.

"The recommended improvements to Starting Blocks are also good news for families. They would make it easier for families to find and understand information on quality and price.



Media release (continued)

"The ACCC has also identified a number of broader reform issues that go to the heart of the role of government as the steward of delivering outcomes on access to more affordable, quality, inclusive early learning.

"We have made a detailed submission to the Productivity Commission on these broader reform issues and look forward to continuing to engage with the ACCC, the PC and the Government on the longer term reform agenda."



For more information contact 0429 553 103 or media@goodstart.org.au.

Notes for editors

Goodstart Early Learning is Australia's largest early learning provider with 661 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.

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.