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## Riding the Waves of Change

*Prue Warrilow, National Convenor*

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ACCS is holding its 3rd national conference Waves of Change on 14 and 15 May 2010. It will be held at the Novotel in Wollongong, NSW.

This will be an exciting conference that will provide opportunities for debate, learning and networking for everyone associated with community owned non-profit children's services – staff, parents, local government, church and welfare agencies, educational institutions, social policy analysts, students and policy makers.

Some of the issues that will be explored are quality for children's services including the EYLF and national early childhood reforms, thinking about after Sorry and how we work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people respectfully, children's voices and child friendly cities in relation to the broader community and social justice, and changes to the children's services landscape.

Richard Eckersley of the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at Australian National University will be presenting on well-being for children and young people drawing on his work in tracking what well-being means and the changes that have occurred in Australian society with regard to child and young persons' well-being.

There will be two panels, the first on Integrated Child and Family Services and the second focusing on the COAG

Quality Reforms and what these might mean in practise. As always we have a debate – the 2010 topic is 'Quality at any cost – No matter what cost: high quality service provision'.

Our workshops include:

- Child Friendly Cities and Children's Charter Workshop
- EYLF
- Valuing yourself and others
- Community ownership and the quality advantage
- Best practice
- A reflection on the key note speech with Richard Eckersley continuing his conversation with us
- Learning with local Aboriginal communities and promoting Aboriginal early literacy in the community

In keeping with ACCS supporting and advocating for not for profit, community-owned children's services in Australia the conference fee will be kept as low as possible.

So if this sounds like you, set aside these dates and join ACCS in Wollongong talking about these important changes and issues. [add a web link or other link to conference registrations – ask CCC NSW]

I look forward to seeing you all there.

This special edition of ACCS in Action is also available to download from the ACCS website [www.ausccs.org.au](http://www.ausccs.org.au)

# JOINT STATEMENT CALLING ON COAG TO STAND UP FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR CHILDREN

2 December 2009

We, the undersigned national peak bodies, call on the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to agree to the highest quality proposals in the Early Childhood Education and Care Quality Reform to achieve consistency in children's services and improve standards for Australia's children.

On 7 December 2009 COAG will decide whether early childhood education and care services will reflect the evidence that qualified staff and better staff:child ratios are fundamental to ensuring good quality for outcomes for children attending formal children's services.

We call on COAG to agree to:

- Improved regulated staff-to-child ratios of 1:3 for babies up to two years of age, 1:5 for two year olds, 1:10 for three to five year olds
- All services to have well trained and qualified staff including degree qualified early childhood teachers
- A quality rating system that requires these standards in ratios and qualifications as well as high standards in practice

It can be done! We need COAG to:

- Commit to quality up front
- Make a staged plan for gradual improvement so that services can get there over time
- Be open about addressing cost increases – governments need to bear some of the costs and parents will bear some; governments need to make sure that low income families can afford high quality services

Signed:

Australian Community Children's Services



National Association of Mobile Services for Rural and Remote Families & Children Inc.



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# ACCS MEDIA RELEASE

7 December 2009

## COAG DECISION IS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY FOR AUSTRALIA'S CHILDREN

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has missed its chance to make a real difference for young children in Australia.

Today's decision to adopt moderate quality as the new minimum standard for children's services is a deep disappointment.

As the peak body for community owned children's services, Australian Community Children's Services (ACCS) expected COAG to adopt the highest standards, with one carer to 3 babies, one carer to 5 toddlers and one carer to 10 pre-schoolers.

The research shows that this is the standard that will give every child a good start in life – anything less is a compromise that future generations will pay for.

ACCS acknowledges that this may result in slightly higher child care fees, but we have 10 years to manage the transition.

Working towards a ratio of 1:3 for babies by 2020 is worth the effort - especially given that four of the eight state/territory jurisdictions will have a 1:4 ratio for babies from 2010 regardless of the COAG decision.

ACCS  
would  
like to  
wish  
everyone  
a safe and  
happy festive  
season

