

ACCS POLICY ON ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

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ACCS Position

ACCS advocates for early childhood education and care to be accessible and affordable. We see this as best achieved by a subsidy system similar to Medicare in which 95% of the fee is covered by government for all families for at least two days per week.

For families experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage if the 5% contribution to the fee is a barrier, government should cover 100% of the fee as is currently provided through Additional Child Care Subsidy. However ACCS calls on government to ensure that the system to access Additional Child Care Subsidy is simple, streamlined, supportive and responsive to the vulnerabilities faced by eligible families.

Why Require Families to Contribute to the Cost of Early Childhood Education and Care?

All children have a right to early childhood education in a safe environment. ACCS agrees that cost should not be a barrier to participation.

ACCS believes that families should contribute to the cost of early childhood education and care where they can afford it as this acts as a motivation for families to bring their child to the service regularly including families experiencing vulnerability.

It can also discourage families from enrolling their child in multiple part time services and so blocking access for other families.

For families experiencing vulnerability who do not have capacity to contribute to the cost of early childhood education and care, free child care can be delivered through a modified Additional Child Care Subsidy:

- Additional Child Care Subsidy should be granted for unlimited hours per week for families who meet the criteria
- Additional Child Care Subsidy should be granted on an ongoing basis without the requirement for repeated justification which can retraumatise families when repeatedly collecting documentation of their trauma

ACCS is pleased to note that the influential Thrive By Five campaign is advocating for a permanent policy of universally accessible child care with cost providing no barrier. The campaign supports a funding system similar to Medicare providing a fee subsidy equivalent to approximately 95% of fees.