



# NSW Children's Services Forum

Secretariat: C/- NCOSS, 66 Albion St, Surry Hills NSW 2010, ph: 02 9211 2599 fx: 02 9281 1968 email: [wendy@ncoss.org.au](mailto:wendy@ncoss.org.au)

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## NSW Children's Services Forum Platform for the 2013 Federal Election

The NSW Children's Services Forum represents peak organisations for not-for-profit children's services and state-wide children's services in NSW.

A priority for the NSW Children's Services Forum is enabling all children to access quality early childhood and middle years education and care.

Research shows that early childhood education and care makes a positive difference for children's growth, learning and development. Early childhood education and care not only helps children's transition to formal school but it is shown to improve children's educational outcomes at school and throughout their adult life. The research tells us that the children from vulnerable families and disadvantaged communities benefit most.

The evidence for investing in early childhood education and care is compelling. Supporting a strong early childhood education and care system is vital to giving all children a great start in life.

### **The NSW Children's Services Forum asks candidates in the next Federal Election to commit to:**

**1. Delivering on the objectives of the National Quality Framework (NQF) to enable all children to benefit from the internationally recognised value of early childhood education and care for their growth and development.**

The NQF is a wide-ranging and evidence-based reform agenda which raises the quality of early childhood education and care services for all children in Australia.

The NSW Children's Services Forum believes all parties should commit to continuation of the NQF as it stands and the current timeframes for all reforms including increasing the qualifications of staff and the staff-to-child ratios of educators.

**2. Significant funding of workforce measures to ensure education and care services can recruit and retain highly skilled professional educators.**

The NSW Children's Services Forum believes that workforce issues are the main barrier to continued quality improvement of education and care services. Unless the education and care services sector can recruit and retain qualified educators, the ability to improve quality provision will be limited. To do this, wage rates for educators must rise and must be funded by government.

**3. Action to ensure early childhood education and care remains affordable, especially for socially and economically vulnerable families.**

The NSW Children's Services Forum believes that access to quality education and care should be every child's right. Unless increased action is taken to ensure the affordability of education and care, especially in the early years, not all children will be able to access it. Direct Government funding of services must be undertaken to increase affordability.

## **About the NSW Children's Services Forum**

The NSW Children's Services Forum is comprised of state-wide, not-for-profit community based children's service organisations. The Forum aims to:

- Promote the role of not-for-profit children's services;
- Advise governments on the quality, range and provision of children's services; and
- Engage in regular dialogue with other stakeholders in children's services.

### **Members of the NSW Children's Services Forum:**

Australian Community Children's Services - NSW  
Benevolent Society, The  
CCSA  
Community Child Care (NSW)  
Contact Inc  
Council of Social Service of NSW (NCOSS)  
Early Childhood Australia NSW Inc  
Early Childhood Intervention Australia NSW  
Ethnic Child Care Family & Community Services  
Goodstart Early Learning  
Gowrie NSW  
KU Children's Services  
Local Government NSW Children's Services  
Mobile Children's Services Association of NSW  
Montessori Australia Foundation  
Network of Community Activities  
NSW Family Day Care Association Inc  
Occasional Child Care Association of NSW  
Playgroup NSW Inc  
SDN Children's Services Inc  
UnitingCare Children Young People and Families  
UnitingCare Children's Services