

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO BACK OUR KIDS: \$474.3 MILLION INVESTMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The NSW Government is investing \$474.3 million on our youngest learners in the 2018-19 Budget – a \$29.8 million increase on last year.

Minister for Early Childhood Education and Aboriginal Affairs Sarah Mitchell said the budget includes a record investment of \$197.8 million over four years to provide universal access to community preschool for three year olds across NSW.

Early Childhood Education investment in this year's budget includes:

- Extending funding to all three year olds in community preschools from 2019
- \$42.1 million in additional capital grants funding over four years to increase supply of preschool places where it is needed most
- Continuing Start Strong funding for preschool education in community preschools and long day care for all children in the year before school and equity three year old, underpinned by a demand-based funding model that responds to population growth.

“The existing NSW Government Start Strong program – which ensures all children in NSW have access to 600 hours of quality preschool education in the year before school – has already had a significant impact on families across NSW, with average daily fees in community preschools decreasing by 25 per cent,” she said.

“NSW will be the first state in Australia to subsidise all three year olds in community preschools, which will build on this Government's commitment to improving cost of living and easing the pressure on families across the state.

“It also means more children in NSW will be given the head start they deserve on their educational journeys and will start school even more equipped with the social, cognitive and emotional skills that a quality early childhood education provides.”

The NSW Government will also invest in the 2018-19 Budget on a range of Aboriginal Affairs initiatives.

“We are committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal communities to support Australia's First Peoples. This budget ensures Aboriginal communities are at the heart of decision making,” Ms Mitchell said.

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