

Unions put child care on budget agenda [AU] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is calling for the Federal Government to address the country's shortage of child care places in the May Budget.

ACTU president Sharan Burrows is concerned that the child care sector will not be able to cope with the extra pressure if a recent "baby boom" in Victoria is reflected across the country.

She says 20 per cent of parents are already being turned away from child care centres.

Ms Burrows says people need access to child care in order to balance work and family responsibilities.

Ms Burrow says recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Victorian hospitals show a sudden jump in births in Australia in the past year.

"There's no doubt that already we're more than 100,000 places short and an increase in births - we're seeing something like a 30 per cent increase in Victoria - if that plays out across the country, then we've got a real issue on our hands about workforce participation and family income," she said.

- reprinted from ABC News Online

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