

Ten policy principles for a national system of early childhood education and care ^[1]

Author: Work + Family Policy Roundtable

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AVAILABILITY

Report in Word ^[2]

Excerpts from the report:

This report documents a national workshop 'Childcare: A Better Policy Framework for Australia' sponsored by the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA) and convened by the University of Sydney and University of South Australia, 13-14th July 2006, through the 'Work +Family Policy Roundtable'.

The workshop brought together twenty-one Australian and international researchers on early childhood education and care and related policy perspectives, from a diverse range of disciplinary backgrounds, including economics, sociology, paediatrics and child health, early childhood, political economy, psychology, government and working life. Five experts from the community sector and governments also attended.

This group of experts discussed the current research evidence about early childhood education and care in Australia and internationally. Fifteen papers were presented. The workshop will result in an edited book to be published by end-2007 by Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) edited by Dr Alison Elliot, Dr Elizabeth Hill and Professor Barbara Pocock.

The workshop's researcher participants agreed on a statement of principles that arise from the existing body of research on early childhood education and care, in the Australian context and the presentation of research at the Workshop.

To summarise, the group of experts agreed on the need for a new nationally coordinated, planned approach to an integrated system of early childhood education and care (ECEC). Discussion supported an ECEC system that gives priority to the needs of children and their well-being, places the issue of high quality care and education more centrally on the policy agenda, and recognises the pressing need for increased public funding to ensure universal access to early childhood education and care services for all children from birth to school entry. Discussion also recognised the need to locate good ECEC policy alongside other important policy initiatives like paid parental leave and a progressive individual tax system.

Related link: Work + Family Policy Roundtable main website ^[3]

Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[4]

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