



OMEP Australia Ltd

ACN 060 578 092

Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire

## World Organisation for Early Childhood Education

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### Australian Early Childhood Educators Need Government Support Now!

Dear Minister

We are writing to express our concern about the impact of the Corona-19 virus and to urge you to increase support for the children and educators who work in the early childhood sector.

OMEP Australia's concerns focus on children, educators and families across Australia. Over 1.3 million children between 0-12 years use Australian Government Child Care Subsidy approved child care services. The educators who work in these services are the frontline of support for children and parents. They provide a vital service - the education and care of children, and support for parents' workforce participation. At a time of national crisis, and coinciding with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC), the need to keep Australian children's early childhood education and care services working is never more pressing. It requires government support for early childhood educators, in the same way as required for teachers in schools.

The current decline in the number of children attending early childhood services means there is not sufficient income to ensure educators and other staff can use paid leave to cover shutdowns. Educators also require paid leave if they are required to self-isolate for their safety, the safety of the children in their care and the wider community.

As some of the lowest paid workers in Australia, wage subsidies for educators and all workers in the early childhood sector are urgently needed to keep services operational at this critical time. Job losses and service closures will have huge ramifications for educators, children, families and the Australian economy now and in the future. Other countries have already announced such subsidies. For instance, the UK government is guaranteeing up to 80% of people's wages. If Governments guarantee to support their educators now, the flow-on effect for children, families and child care providers will be immense. It will keep people in jobs and not reliant on welfare. And it will ensure that post-COVID19 Australia will continue to have a viable and well-staffed early childhood sector.

Regards

Associate Professor Sandie Wong

President OMEP Australia

### OMEP Australia's mission is to:

*Defend and promote the rights of the child with special emphasis on the right to education and care worldwide. To this end, OMEP shall help any undertaking which could promote access to quality early childhood education and care.*

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**OMEP Australia Working for the Children of the World**