

Media Release

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Queensland's largest early education provider welcomes release of PC report, but says confusion remains over Kindy funding

Queensland's longest established and largest kindergarten provider has welcomed the much-awaited Productivity Commission Report into Childcare and Early Childhood Learning which was released this morning, but says some question marks remain over funding.

Federal Minister for Social Services Scott Morrison has indicated the report will directly inform the Government's new 'Families package'.

C&K's CEO Michael Tizard says a number of the Report's recommendations appear positive however recommendations regarding funding for kindergartens remain unclear.

"The desired result after the Report's findings are considered is to provide for the needs of ALL children and to ensure they receive the highest quality of Early Childhood Education and Care."

"As a major stakeholder, C&K looks forward to the consultation process and having input into how these Productivity Commission Report recommendations will be incorporated into the new Families package," Mr Tizard said.

He says the main concern is that the focus of the report is on Childcare and organisations such as C&K, which operates 400 kindergartens around the state, remain uncertain about Universal Access funding for Kindergartens and Preschools.

"With the recent reshuffle of the Federal Cabinet separating responsibility for the preschool and childcare sectors between different ministerial portfolios, the future of Kindergarten funding is unknown," he said.

The Report recommends that the Government continues to provide per child payments to the states and territories for Universal Access to a preschool program of 15 hours per week for 40 weeks per year.

Mr Tizard says this is positive news for families as it's well acknowledged that the Kindy program plays a vital role in preparing children for the Prep year at school and is particularly important for children from disadvantaged communities.

"But we need to get a clearer picture about ongoing funding", he said.

C&K is a not-for-profit organisation which has been operating across Queensland since 1907 and Mr Tizard says it's important the organisation gets some clarity for its 400 services.

"We are pleased that the Report has recommended a single allowance and has focussed on a number of recommendations to support vulnerable and disadvantaged families.

"Another positive finding from the report is the call for a budget increase for the exponential growth in children with additional needs", he said.

"C&K has seen demand in this area triple over the past three years".

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