



## Secretariat National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care

### Fact Sheet for Educators

The Australian Federal election is happening on 2 July...and we need your help to advocate for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Access to quality early learning services for children experiencing vulnerability is a critical predictor of a child's successful transition to big school, lifelong education and employment outcomes. Yet, while twice as likely to experience developmental vulnerability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are only half as likely to access early learning as non-Indigenous kids.

**The Jobs for Families Child Care Package is at odds with the principles of service provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services.** 46% of families accessing Budget Based Services earning less than \$65,000 per year would be eligible for less hours than they are currently attending, with the average reduction per week of 12 hours.

While many Budget Based Services can and do collect fees (albeit in most cases, low fees) from their families, not all families - particularly those with unstable incomes - are able to consistently pay. With a fee-driven model such as the Jobs for Families Child Care Package, when families cannot pay fees, children will be forced to drop out of the service. As well the detrimental effects this will have on families and children, it will also lead to gaps in service centre budgets and cause services to operate at a loss until fees can be recovered or enrolment rates are raised.

*Reliance on fees as a service's major income would be inadequate to cover the range of costs a service incurs, without escalating fees to prohibitive levels.*

In the context of inter-generational poverty and disadvantage, collection of fees can have a negative impact on the relationship between staff and families, and on families' engagement with the service, which could put disadvantaged families further at risk.

We urge you to consider how the Jobs for Families Child Care Package will limit fundamental resources for families and children who would benefit from quality early years education and care the most.

We invite you to get in contact with us if you require more information or would like assistance with reaching out to your local Members of Parliament to advocate to amend this legislation.

Contact SNAICC if you'd like to learn more:

P: (03) 9489 8099

E: [info@snaicc.org.au](mailto:info@snaicc.org.au)