

# Three Steps That Should Be Taken to Increase Equity in Early Childhood Education and Care!

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA,  
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-- The Job Training Institute (JTI) has urged the Australian Government to take three steps to improve access to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC):

Increasing the extra hours of education and care provided under the test to all other disadvantaged Australian children while eliminating the Child Care Subsidy Activity Test of a parent or carer's hours of employment, study, or volunteering for all First Nations families.

Making infrastructural investments to lessen "childcare deserts" in Australian cities and rural areas.

Supporting the ECEC employees with appropriate compensation.

These three crucial activities make up the bulk of JTI's pre-budget request to the Australian government for 2023–24.

The benefit of providing children with access to high-quality early childhood education and care is well established, according to JTI. Australia will profit from the decreased government spending, more parental workforce involvement, and most significantly, improved school achievements that produce a workforce capable of meeting future needs.

## Improved Activity Test

JTI suggests that the activity test be eliminated entirely for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families since these children are two times more likely to be intellectually disadvantaged than non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (The Front Project, 2022).

An advertisement for the JTI Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care. It features the JTI logo at the top left with the tagline "Lifting You to the Next Level!" and contact numbers. The main text reads "CHC50113 DIPLOMA OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE". A circular inset shows a smiling woman and a young girl. A purple circle on the right says "Free\* Govt. Funded Course". At the bottom left, there is a phone icon with the number "1300 144 584" and "03 9653 4100", and a globe icon with the website "www.jti.edu.au".

**JTI** Job Training Institute Pty Ltd  
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RTO Number 122288 CRCQS Number 033736

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We also favour extending the Test's extra care hours to at least two days per week for other vulnerable Australians, such as households with members who work irregular shifts and cannot plan their schedules in advance. We know these families cannot pay for additional care hours when they are not subsidized.

### Investing in Infrastructure More Fairly

According to research, Australian parents find it difficult to get high-quality ECEC care for their kids since 35.2% of the country's residents reside in what the Mitchell Institute has dubbed "childcare deserts"

According to the CEO of Job Training Institute, "We're urging the Australian Government to budget to solve access to ECEC, depending on geography, infrastructural needs, and labour supply, to lower the access barrier that families experience.

"This would be a crucial step in ensuring that kids in impacted regions receive top-notch early education and care and don't lag behind in their progress.

"Considering that ECEC employs a staff that is predominantly female (around 92.1%), improvements to its facilities and workforce will also result in an increase in the number of women working there.

### A Better Pay

The ECEC industry continues to struggle with a labour shortage. Paying pay on a level with education might help in the issue's resolution.

However, doing so would require providers to raise their prices, which would result in costs being passed on to parents who are already trying to keep up with rising living expenses.

Victoria might be able to help with this.

Kindergarten instructors who are protected by the Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement 2020 (VECTEA) get pay subsidies from the state of Victoria.

This implies that employees at the same level of qualification can make tens of thousands of dollars extra when they work in a state-funded kindergarten classroom as opposed to a nearby Commonwealth-funded toddler classroom.

As an example, the VECTEA allows skilled full teachers in Victorian sessional preschools to make more than \$100,000 annually, whereas the Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2020 only allows for salaries between \$63,000 and \$88,000.

We request the Federal Government to take into account co-funding salaries, similar to the Victorian State Government, in the 2023–2024 budget in order to solve the labour problem and sustain the standard of care offered within not-for-profit ECEC programmes.

"To secure a brighter future for all Australian children, we urge the Albanese Government to implement the policy priorities identified in our pre-Budget report."

To know more about [childcare training courses](#) 2023, visit <https://jti.edu.au/blog/applications-open-for-2023-early-childhood-education-care-course>

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