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MAJORITY OF PROVIDERS BACK QUALITY REFORMS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SECTOR

Reports that early childhood education and care centres are closing as a result of pressure to meet the National Quality Framework are unfounded according to the majority of early childhood education and care providers.

CEO of peak body Early Childhood Australia (ECA), Samantha Page said service providers were committed to meeting the National Quality Framework and ensuring that every child receives a quality early learning experience.

Guardian Children's Alliance CEO Tom Hardwick said that he has seen no evidence of centres closing due to the introduction of the National Quality Framework.

"There are always a few centres that close down every year for a variety of reasons, but it is hard to believe it is due to the new quality standards. We are actually seeing the opposite occur, with a number of property developers approaching us to open new centres".

Ms Page said the latest Child Care Update from March 2012 shows that there are now 3,655 more child care services than there were in 2007.

"Recent reports that centres are facing closure are a surprise to me. The clear trend here shows that far from closing, early childhood education and care services are booming".

KU Children's Services CEO, Christine Legg said with more children attending more services than ever before (there has been an increase of 21.9% in the number of children using approved child care since 2007), a commitment to introducing new quality standards in services is more important than it has ever been.

"Everyone wants quality early education for our children. Families want quality, the Government wants quality, and we are committed to delivering quality in KU centres.

"While we all want to see increased public investment in early childhood education and care, it is important to remember that fees are heavily subsidised by government."

Julia Davison, CEO Goodstart Early Learning said the sector is committed to affordability.

"It is important that costs to attend early childhood education and care services remain accessible, particularly for low to middle income earners."

Louise Tarrant, National Secretary of United Voice, the childcare union welcomes the focus on quality.

"A great start in life lasts a lifetime and is every child's right. Professional staff and professional standards go a long way to ensuring that's what children will get in centres across our country."

"Clearly the majority of the sector is working together to provide quality learning experiences for Australian children," ECA CEO Samantha Page.

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