

Media Release

For immediate Release

Children, behaviour and the first year of school

Thursday 30th October, 2014

Australia's long day child care providers today expressed concern over headline reports that children who spend large amounts of time in early childhood education and care (ECEC) services develop higher instances of aggression and hyperactive behaviours when commencing formal schooling.

Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) President Gwynn Bridge said this is sending a negative message to all parents and the community when the evidence shows that only a very small percentage of children fall into this category.

"When children move from a rich, autonomous, learning environment at an ECEC service to the more rigid and structured school environment some children can be affected.

But we must also consider the culture and environment of children when determining patterns of behaviour. ECEC is only one aspect of a much bigger picture," said Ms Bridge.

ACA believes that the pressure of the NAPLAN test in year three is driving a "push down" of formal, structured learning into the very important first year of school.

"This places our youngest children under considerable pressure and has the propensity to stifle their love of learning," said Ms Bridge.

ECEC services across Australia implement to the Early Years Quality Framework, a play-based curriculum, which is designed to guide and influence children in their early years to be decision makers in their own learning

"There is considerable discussion at present about schools being ready to receive children from an ECEC service and how they can reduce structure and formal learning and establish the first year of school on a play-based curriculum".

ACA is the peak body representing the long day child care sector and their educators who care for more than 400,000 young children.

ENDS

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