

A I S S A



ASSOCIATION *of*
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS *of* SA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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To Chief of Staff/News Editor
From Garry Le Duff
Ref **Preschool initiative shuns deserving families**
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OUTRAGE AS NON-GOVERNMENT FAMILIES CUT FROM PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE

Non-government preschools and families have unfairly been denied the extra preschool hours announced last week by the State Government, despite promises that they would be included.

The Executive Director of the Association of Independent Schools of SA, Garry Le Duff, said their exclusion is outrageous because the funding under the COAG national partnership agreement on early childhood education was promised as a universal entitlement before the 2007 Federal election.

"Children and parents in non-government preschools, who are just as deserving as those at government preschools and meet all the criteria for the extra four hours, are for no reason being excluded by the State Government," Mr Le Duff said.

"We're talking about children and families living in the same community with the same earnings and in the same circumstances. One family receives the extra hours because it has chosen a government provider. The other does not because it has chosen a non-government provider.

"It is fantastic that the Commonwealth and the State Government recognise the importance of early learning but it's outrageous to exclude deserving families for no reason.

"The State Government must answer to these families. We want genuine engagement with the State Government, not mythical consultation.

"This initiative must be extended to all children that meet the criteria."

The Association of Independent Schools also is working with Childcare SA to seek urgent talks with the Federal and State governments.

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