

FECCA welcomes ALP's plan to tackle inequality and support early childhood

The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) welcomes the Australian Labor Party's social policy agenda, 'Our Future – Growing Together', that aims to tackle inequality.

Major national social reforms are imperative to provide unique pathways for achieving positive outcomes for all individuals. FECCA highlights the importance of child care and early childhood education for CALD children. The quality of life of migrant and refugee children is directly affected by their access to appropriate early childhood education and care services. Social reforms that are both inclusive and responsive are necessary to meet the needs of this group.

FECCA Chairperson Joe Caputo said, "We welcome Federal Labor's agenda outline targeted strategies for CALD families, to ensure children from CALD backgrounds are given the same opportunities as every other Australian child."

"We are pleased to see that the ALP's agenda recognises that families from culturally and linguistically diverse communities may require greater support in the early years of their children's lives."

Child care and preschool attendance have been consistently found to affect early child development. Children of migrants and refugees may not have much or any exposure to English language at home, so early childhood education is particularly important for the development of their language skills. Child care also provides an important opportunity for migrant children to be exposed to Australian social culture, assisting with their later transition to formal schooling.

FECCA believes that the right resources must be invested into early childhood development and education, to ensure that children from CALD backgrounds develop a sense of belonging, have access to adequate support, and are empowered to preserve and develop their cultural identity.

We are also pleased to see a focus on strengthening community engagement in policy development, including CALD communities and organisations. Migrants and their children make up a significant proportion of the Australian population. For society to be harmonious, fair, equitable and prosperous, there is a need for policies that ensure all Australians, regardless of their background, can contribute to our society and, in turn, benefit from it.

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