



## **Ministers' Media Centre**

Education, Employment and Workplace Relations  
portfolio

# **Better Schools: before and after**

**On 5 August 2013 the government assumed a Caretaker role, with an election to be held 7 September 2013.**

Media releases, transcripts and speeches for the DEEWR Ministers and Parliamentary Secretary can be accessed via the ALP website until after the election and the conclusion of the caretaker period.

**Monday 5 August 2013 Joint Media Release**

**The Hon Kevin Rudd MP [link:/rudd]**

- Prime Minister

**The Hon Bill Shorten MP [link:/shorten]**

- Minister for Education
- Minister for Workplace Relations

## **The Hon Kate Ellis MP [link:/ellis]**

- Minister for Early Childhood, Childcare and Youth
- Minister for Employment Participation

Parents will be given help with the daily school drop-off and pick-up rush hours through a new initiative to expand outside school hours care and deliver greater flexibility and quality in these programs.

The Rudd Labor Government's Better Schools: Before and After program, a new \$450 million fund, will provide funding for up to 500 schools to offer:

- More flexible opening hours – before and after school and during school holidays
- More places – in areas where parents need access to out of school hours care
- New, high quality activities and programs for children, such as sporting activities, music lessons and homework clubs.

This will make it easier for parents to balance their work and family lives. It will also give them confidence their kids are benefiting from interesting and educational programs while they are attending care outside school hours.

Quality care outside school hours not only improves children's educational outcomes but helps increase women's employment participation.

Families benefiting from this measure will continue to be eligible for the 50 per cent Child Care Rebate – up to \$7,500 a year – and other child care assistance, helping with the cost of living.

Subject to demand for the Government's Better Schools: Before and After plan and its successful implementation in the 2014 school year, the Government would then consider rolling out an expanded program to cover all Outside School Hours Care sites over time.

Schools will apply to the Better Schools: Before and After fund based on the needs of their local communities.

Labor understands the stress working parents feel every day when they need to rush out the door at work to pick up their kids from school.

This can disrupt a child's day if mum or dad are caught in traffic, and it does nothing for the productivity of working

parents.

Our new program will change a family's weekly routine for the better.

The funding will allow new out of school hours programs to be established and existing programs to extend the hours they currently offer.

Schools would be able to open their outside school care programs earlier or later – depending on the needs of parents. For example, services could open earlier, from 7.00 am, and stay open later, until 7.00 pm.

Extra hours could also be available for vacation care during school holidays.

Schools will partner with outside school hours care providers to apply for the extended hours.

Schools could also apply for funding to improve the quality of the programs offered during outside school hours care. Grants of up to \$200,000 will be available to, for example, employ program co-ordinators to run new activities – such as homework clubs, music lessons, or sports programs.

This will deliver better services at no extra cost for parents.

Parents will have peace of mind knowing their children are not only being well looked after but are being challenged in a stimulating and enjoyable environment.

This new program will be age appropriate so parents know their children are happy and engaged.

Importantly, families involved in the program will have access to Labor's significant child care fee assistance including the 50 per cent Child Care Rebate which is not means tested.

The Better Schools: Before and After initiative builds on Federal Labor's support to help families with the cost of living, including:

- Introducing the Schoolkids Bonus;
- Boosting the child care rebate from 30 to 50 per cent, up to \$7,500 a year;
- Introducing Australia's first national paid parental leave scheme; and
- Delivering tax cuts for all working Australians earning up to \$80,000 a year.

Outside school hours care is popular with parents.

Under Labor, OSHC has grown by 64.2 per cent since 2007 with the number of outside school hours care services available having increased from 5,125 in 2007 to 8,413 in 2012.

We need to assist this sector's expansion because more parents are looking for out of school hours care. We also need to enrich the experience of children in these services so that they are getting the best start in life.

Funding provision for this program is already included in the budget.

## For more information

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