

MEDIA RELEASE

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Longer paid parental leave supports families to bond, grow and play together

Playgroup Australia applauds the Australian Government's decision to extend paid parental leave to 26 weeks, providing much-needed support for children and families.

'It is such a relief to see this policy finally come to fruition in Australia', said Playgroup Australia CEO Dr Amanda Walsh. 'We know that the Budget parameters are very tight, but this is a very smart investment: the first months of a child's life are vitally important.'

'Every child needs time with their parents and carers in those critical early months, and every parent and carer deserves support to step away from workplace pressures.'

'Having a full six months together will give every working family a good foundation for building strong bonds and a bright future.'

Playgroup Australia's members will be there to support parents and carers in the first six months of their child's life. Playgroups are powerful instruments for supporting children and families, providing:

- play-based learning and social-emotional development for babies and young children;
- social support and encouragement for parents and carers; and
- connections that build communities.

'We look forward to seeing more families at playgroups, staying connected for longer periods, as paid parental leave increases to six months,' said Dr Walsh.

'And as parents start to move back into the paid workforce, we'll keep supporting them with opportunities to invest in their child's play, laughter, learning and development.'

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