



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**26 October 2022**

### **A Budget for playgroups: investing in community-level support for children and families**

Playgroup Australia welcomes the allocation of \$12.4 million in last night's Budget to boost the role of playgroups and toy libraries in supporting children, families and communities.

'This investment is recognition of the fundamental importance of community-level connections in helping families to thrive,' said Playgroup Australia CEO Dr Amanda Walsh.

'We know that children who engage in play at home and in community-provided settings have better educational outcomes once they reach school,' Dr Walsh said. 'Just as importantly, extended social networks – such as playgroups - improve the mental health of parents and carers and support engaged parenting.'<sup>i</sup>

'Particularly after the difficulties of COVID lockdowns and restrictions, getting back into play and social connection in the community is one of the best things that families can do to support their children's learning and development, and their own wellbeing.'

The Budget includes funding for the establishment of new intergenerational playgroups, and a pilot program for First Nations playgroups in 10 new locations, to be delivered in partnership with Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations.

'Playgroup Australia and its members look forward to working with the Government, officials and other partners to ensure that more families, in more communities, can benefit from everything that playgroups offer,' said Dr Walsh.

Playgroup Australia released Australia's first national [Playgroup Statement](#) last week, calling for greater investment in affordable local playgroups that meet the needs of all families.

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<sup>i</sup> McLean, K., Edwards, S., & Tarasuik, J. (2022). [Playgroup statement](#). Prepared for Playgroup Australia. Australian Catholic University.