



An Australian Government Initiative



## REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA EYRE PENINSULA

# Media Release: RDAEP Receives National Commendation for Childcare Study

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Regional Development Australia Eyre Peninsula (RDAEP) has been recognised for its work in advocating for greater investment in early education and care services across the Eyre Peninsula, receiving a special commendation at the National Regional Development Australia Forum held last week in Busselton WA, designed to highlight the critical need for innovative solutions to regional challenges.

Like much of regional Australia, access to early childhood education and care on Eyre Peninsula has long been a topic of concern, with anecdotal evidence implying there is a lack of available places for long daycare, occasional care, and early childhood education.

*“Access to adequate childcare services is essential to attracting and retaining families in the region. Many local communities have struggled to maintain and grow the workforce needed to support local business due to a lack of childcare services, and RDAEP in collaboration with our member councils have been determined to remove barriers and encourage investment by government and the private sector in these critical services.”* Said RDAEP Chair Bryan Trigg.

In response, and building on a Workforce Australia Discussion Paper, RDAEP convened a Childcare Forum with key local government partners and other regional stakeholders in late 2023, which led to the establishment of the Regional Childcare Taskforce. This taskforce aimed to quantify current and projected demand for childcare services across the region to encourage investment by government and private sector in childcare infrastructure and services.

To further this initiative, RDAEP co-funded a consultancy with support from the State Government’s Office for the Early Years to develop a report, including a comprehensive business case, advocating for investment in early childhood education and care on Eyre Peninsula.

The Eyre Peninsula Early Education and Care Report, produced by Community Early Learning Australia (CELA), revealed a clear need for an additional 598 childcare places across the Eyre Peninsula demonstrating the need for additional long daycare centres.

The report found that based on the level of unmet demand an additional 10 long daycare centres was required and that this investment would generate approximately \$44 million per annum in additional income through greater workforce participation, plus an additional \$11 million per annum in new jobs created in the early childhood sector.

*“If we can meet the region’s unmet demand for childcare services through investment from government or the private sector, either via for-profit or non-for-profit providers, it could facilitate up to 1,000 parents rejoining the workforce, supporting local businesses without further exacerbating the region’s existing housing shortage.”*  
Said RDAEP CEO Ryan Viney

The report serves as a strategic resource for government funding bodies, stakeholders, investors, policymakers and decision-makers, offering insights into the region’s childcare strengths, challenges, and strategic priorities.

*“RDAEP is extremely honoured to have been commended at the National RDA Forum by the Minister for Regional Development and Local Government the Hon Kristy McBain MP, as it is great recognition for the work RDAEP is undertaking in region and with the support of our member councils to remove barriers and attract investment in early childhood education and services for our various communities..... but there is still a lot of work to do.”* Said RDAEP CEO Ryan Viney.

Since the release of the report quantifying the demand for childcare services in the communities across the Eyre Peninsula there has been significant increase from both government and the private sector, and RDAEP is continuing to work with these organisations to remove barriers and encourage further investment in early education and care infrastructure and services.

#### **Media Contact**

Ryan Viney, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia Eyre Peninsula

Phone: 0407 976 156

Report for background information [Eyre Peninsula Early Education and Care November 2023](#)

Photo available attached.