

FAMILY FRIENDLY CHILD CARE

Position:

- FAMILY FIRST does not believe the child care system properly respects parents' child care choices. All families should have genuine choice about the type of care that best suits their needs;
- FAMILY FIRST believes Australia's child care system is market-friendly instead of family-friendly. The Treasurer boasts that the focus of Government policy is to get mothers back into the paid workforce which devalues the role of stay-at-home parents. Serving the market's needs is at odds with serving the needs of our children;
- FAMILY FIRST supports parents returning to work if they want to, but child care policies must be driven by the interests of children;
- FAMILY FIRST is disappointed the current system favors institutional child care by giving higher payments to parents who opt for this type of care. Parents with children at child care centres can claim benefits of up to \$7500 per child per year, while also pocketing up to \$4000 per child per year in child care tax rebate. If parents prefer a grandparent or close friend to look after their children in a family home, they can only claim up to \$1,300 per child per year and are denied any child care tax rebate;
- FAMILY FIRST supports parents who want their children to be cared for by a grandparent, friend, neighbour or nanny in a family home.

Actions:

- FAMILY FIRST calls for a child care system that treats all parents the same instead of giving a lot more to those who opt for institutional child care;
- FAMILY FIRST urges the Government to give all parents the same benefit and let them be the judge of who is best to care for their children;

- FAMILY FIRST wants a new annual Childcare Payment of \$4000 a year to be given to all families with children under five. The Childcare Payment will replace the Childcare Tax Rebate – which has been a mess and dogged by problems. Further, the Tax Rebate only goes to families which can afford exorbitant childcare fees, and many cannot. The Childcare Payment will be paid automatically and fortnightly over six months (\$308 every fortnight).