

**JODI MCKAY MP
NSW LABOR LEADER**

**DAVID HARRIS MP
SHADOW MINISTER FOR THE CENTRAL COAST
LABOR MEMBER FOR WYONG**

**LIESL TESCH MP
LABOR MEMBER FOR GOSFORD**

**NSW LABOR CALLS FOR FREE COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL
UNTIL AT LEAST END OF 2020**

The NSW Labor Leader Jodi McKay has urged the State Government to extend free community preschool across the Central Coast until at least the end of 2020 – giving more parents the flexibility to return to work during the recession.

Ms McKay visited Woy Woy Peninsula Community Childcare with the Member for Wyong and Shadow Minister for the Central Coast David Harris and the Member for Gosford Liesl Tesch to talk about Labor’s new campaign Helping Women Back to Work.

Labor has strongly criticised the Morrison Government for ending free federally-funded childcare from July 12 – which NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian failed to challenge in the National Cabinet.

But now, the Berejiklian Government is cutting off COVID support to the NSW community preschools in September, compounding an ‘economic cliff’ when JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments disappear.

“Labor was very disappointed when the Commonwealth decided to end free federally funded childcare in July. We know the impact this will have on women and families on the Central Coast,” Ms McKay said.

“Gladys Berejiklian failed to stand up in the National Cabinet then – and it’s now important

her own Government continue its commitment to community preschools until at least the end of 2020.”

“One of the best stimulus programs we can provide in a recession is helping women back to work. Saving \$50 a day on preschool may not sound like much, but it can be the difference between a parent having the financial security to look for work or stay at home,” Ms McKay said.

“The Government is spruiking big construction projects in Sydney, supporting mostly male employment.

“But it has forgotten the people hit hardest. Women have borne the brunt of this crisis. We must provide Mums and Dads who are struggling to put food on the table the financial flexibility to re-enter the workforce.”

Ms Tesch said Central Coast families will be among the big losers when free preschool services end in September.

There are 10 community preschools in the Central Coast, offering 455 places.

“The September cutoff for JobKeeper and JobSeeker is looming. Family budgets across the Central Coast are under enormous pressure. The Government should be doing everything it can to cushion the blow and help parents get back to work,” Ms Tesch said.

Mr Harris said free preschool has been an economic lifeline for parents on the Central Coast.

“We know federally funded free childcare is ending shortly. It will be a big blow to families across the Central Coast if the Government doesn’t extend free preschool.”

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