



Australian Government  
Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment

Dear Colleagues

Please see below email sent to providers and services this morning.

Kind regards  
Stakeholder Engagement and Education Team

## Fee relief for families in bushfire-declared areas and volunteer firefighters

As announced by the [Minister](#), third parties, such as state or territory governments and charitable organisations, are able to cover the cost of gap fees for families who live in bushfire-declared local government areas and volunteer firefighters who engage in bushfire fighting activities, without the family's Child Care Subsidy (CCS) entitlement being affected.

Providers are required to maintain records of any third party payments received and how they are applied. As the third parties are only covering the out of pocket costs, providers should not reduce fees charged. Session reports will remain the same.

For more information visit the [Emergency and Natural Disaster Assistance webpage](#).

## Reminder - Are any children in your service eligible for the preschool exemption?

Remember families can receive Child Care Subsidy to support their preschool-aged child to attend a preschool program at a centre based day care service even where families do not meet the activity test.

All families with children attending a preschool program in 2020 should ensure their child's expected school start date is correct and up to date with Centrelink (either in Centrelink Online via [myGov](#) or the Express Plus mobile app).

For more information about the process, please refer to the [preschool exemption fact sheet](#). Further information can also be found on the [FAQ page](#).

## Do you know anyone else who would benefit from receiving our emails?

Did you know anyone can subscribe to receive our early childhood education and care email newsletters?

It would be appreciated if you could please forward the following link to colleagues who might be interested: [Subscribe to the early childhood education and care email newsletter](#).

## Child Care Subsidy System (CCSS) maintenance 15 to 16 February 2020

Services Australia will be undertaking scheduled maintenance of their IT systems this weekend. As a result, the CCSS will be unavailable from 8:00pm (AEDST) Saturday, 15 February 2020 until 6:00pm (AEDST) Sunday, 16 February 2020.

For providers and services, this means no session reports will be processed during this period.

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