



NEWS RELEASE

Sharon Bird MP
Federal Member for Cunningham

35 new university places for early childhood education

Federal Member for Cunningham, Sharon Bird, today welcomed the announcement by the Minister for Education, Julia Gillard, of funding for 35 new Commonwealth supported higher education early childhood education places at the University of Wollongong.

The new places will be available from 2009, and represent the Australian Government's commitment to high-quality early childhood care and education.

"The extra 35 early childhood education places will help meet demand for degree-qualified early childhood education teachers," Ms Bird said.

"These new places support the Government's commitment for all Australian children in the year before formal school to be able to access quality early learning programs for 15 hours a week, for a minimum of 40 weeks a year, delivered by degree-qualified teachers."

Ms Bird said the new places are part of the Government's \$126.6 million package of initiatives announced in the 2008-09 Budget to train and retain a high-quality early childhood education and child care workforce.

"It's never too early to invest in our children's education, and the children of Cunningham, like all other Australian children, deserve the best possible start to their learning life," Ms Bird said.

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