



GRADUATE WOMEN-NSW Inc

LG Floor, 280 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000
Phone: 9283 7878

Email: admin@gwnsw.org.au

Website: www.gwnsw.org.au

ABN: 23 098 188 689

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The Hon. Matthew Kean,
Treasurer,
Member of the Legislative Assembly,
Parliament of New South Wales

Dear Minister,

I write on behalf of Graduate Women-NSW Inc (GW-NSW), to express our excitement at the NSW budget decision to allocate money for preschool education. GW-NSW has as one of its main areas of focus a concern with government policies that have an impact on women and their education and wellbeing. Early Childhood Education is an area which has a double impact on women's education and well-being. Firstly, because support for girls' education in the early years can have a lasting effect on achievements throughout life; and secondly because opportunities for subsidised childcare can enable women and men who care for small children to undertake programs of education themselves or to engage in paid (or unpaid) work.

We are also aware that this initiative is not without potential problems. The universalisation of social programs can further disadvantage the already marginalised, so we would hope that funding and support for existing programs that provide early interventions for children from families without a history of successful schooling will be continued. Further, although this second point relates to the implementation of this pre-school year and is therefore outside of your responsibility as Treasurer, we would encourage members of the Cabinet to guard against the possibility that this year becomes a year of controlling small children in classroom settings. Support for women (and men) to become pre-school educators, with the knowledge, skills and imagination to offer vibrant programs of play, structured and unstructured will be fundamental to the success of this initiative, as will appropriate rates of pay, which have been low in this female dominated profession.

We will watch with interest the influence that this funding for pre-school education will have on women both in the short term and in the longer term, and once again, commend the NSW government at taking this step to commit funding to such an important area.

Hilary Yerbury, Education Convenor on behalf of
'Tricia Blombery

President
GW-NSW Inc

C.C. The Hon. Bronnie Taylor MLC Minister for Women
The Hon. Sarah Mitchell MLC Minister for Education and Early Learning
The Hon. Prue Car MP Shadow Minister for Education, Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Learning
The Hon. Jodie Harrison MP Shadow Minister for Women

1921-2021 A century promoting women's education

'Tricia Blombery
Email: stuart_tricia@bigpond.com
Phone: 9560 8070 mobile: 0497 783 888