



Canberra Preschool Society

Parents Supporting Preschool & Playschool Education

www.canberrapreschools.org.au
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The closing of Canberra Preschool Society – What it means for your Preschool Parent Association or Playschool Committee: Q&A

- **Why is Canberra Preschool Society (CPS) closing?** CPS has been funded by the Education Directorate (EDU) for many years. In 2016, EDU put forward the idea of the ACT Council of Parents and Citizens Associations (ACT P&C Council) absorbing the functions of CPS, as it recognises there are similar functions and goals across the two organisations. The absorption of CPS into the ACT P&C Council reflects a trend that has been occurring for the past 10 years. *The Towards 2020 Education Consultation Report* published in 2006, revealed strong community and professional support for the amalgamation of preschools with primary schools.
- **How has CPS considered its members in this decision?** CPS conducted a member survey in 2017 about CPS services. After an evaluation process CPS delivered a Business Options paper to EDU which examined CPS functions in line with EDU's priorities, identified cost-savings from a possible amalgamation of CPS and the ACT P&C Council, outlined ongoing alternative funding options and highlighted members concerns. This paper identified that the best outcome to allow our members to continue to be supported and ensure an early-learning voice, was for CPS to be absorbed by the ACT P&C Council.
- **How will the functions of CPS be performed by the ACT P&C Council?** Early Years Learning is a focus for the ACT Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development, Yvette Berry MLA. In view of the closure of CPS, the ACT P&C Council has already established an Early Learning Committee to support Preschool Parent Associations (PPAs) and Playschool Committees. This Committee will provide a forum for families whose children are attending or about to attend a playschool or preschool in the ACT.
- **How will the Early Learning Committee be managed?** It will have a convenor, a secretary (and a treasurer if required) who will be elected annually by the members of the Early Learning Committee. The ACT P&C Council will employ an Early Learning Officer part-time to act for and support the Early Learning Committee.
- **What will be the role of the new Early Learning Committee?** It will provide information, training and support services through the Council office and staff, to all preschool and early childhood members of the ACT P&C Council.
- **What does it mean for my Preschool Parent Association/Playschool Committee? Does it have to fold?** No, your PPA does not have to fold! Your PPA will receive the same level of support as it did with CPS, except with more resources. The ACT P&C Council has the benefit of existing networks in education and committee administration, and existing staff who will absorb the administrative



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processes of the CPS Executive Officer role. This will enable the Early Learning Officer to focus on supporting PPAs.

- **When will this change take place?** From July 2018, the new Early Learning Officer at the ACT P&C Council will be your contact to address all your PPA committee concerns and matters pertaining to early learning matters, whether it's playschool, preschool or transition to kindergarten. CPS will continue to operate until September 30, 2018, with our remaining funds. This will ensure the CPS Executive Officer is available to facilitate a smooth transition of CPS functions into the ACT P&C Council and to handover effectively to the new Early Learning Officer.
- **What happens to our insurance cover?** CPS is currently organising the paperwork for your PPA's insurance renewal for the 2018 – 2019 year. We have negotiated the best package for PPAs and playschools. Insurance documents will be issued in July 2018.

Will the cost of insurance go up? We anticipate that the cost of insurance will be very similar to your current rates.

- **What do I need to do to become a member of the ACT P&C Council?** Nothing. Your PPA/Playschool will automatically become a member this year, at no cost. CPS and the ACT P&C Council have waived all affiliation fees for 2018. CPS will provide the ACT P&C Council with its member contact details that you have provided to us. Membership of the Early Learning Committee is open to all members of the ACT P&C Council, of which your PPA will now belong from July 1, 2018. Affiliation invoices will be sent out automatically in May 2019 for next year.
- **What is the cost of membership?** From 2019, under the ACT P&C Council's payment structure, the cost of membership for your PPA will be \$1.00 per child in your preschool or playschool. This will end up in most cases being cheaper than your current membership fee. For example, under the CPS affiliation structure, members have paid \$110 (GST inclusive) per preschool/playschool group, per annum. In some preschools with multiple groups, this has meant the CPS affiliation fee has been up to \$550 per annum per PPA.
- **How do I get in touch with the Early Learning Officer at the ACT P&C Council?** From July 1, if you have a question for the Early Learning Officer or Early Learning Committee:
Phone: 02 6241 5759
Email: contact@actparents.org.au

A dedicated Early Learning section is currently being developed on www.actparents.org.au. The ACT P&C Council website has information about everything from committee procedures to fundraising, which is as applicable to PPAs as to P&C Committees.