



Outside School Hours Council of Australia (OSHCA) launched to represent national sector

A coalition of Australia's large Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) service providers have today announced the launch of the Outside School Hours Council of Australia (OSHCA), an association established to represent, support and advocate for the interests of the national OSHC sector and the children and families receiving care.

The group of providers involved, who together employ over 10,000 workers across 1,500 services and account for more than 30 per cent of the national OSHC market, includes Junior Adventures Group, TeamKids, Camp Australia, TheirCare and YMCA.

The association will leverage its organisational reach to work collaboratively with decision-makers and the wider industry to promote an understanding of, and improve standards, practices and outcomes in, the OSHC sector.

According to Sinead Ryan, Inaugural President and Founding Member of OSHCA, "OSHCA exists to advocate for Australia's childcare system, ensuring it's innovative and robust enough to support the specific needs of the OSHC sector and advance the wellbeing and development of primary school-age children.

This will involve a strong focus on building the skills and expertise of the OSHC workforce so we can continue delivering the high-quality OSH care that Australian families need and expect," she added.

In light of the impact of COVID-19 on the OSHC sector, including plummeting attendance levels and the job insecurity faced by much of its workforce, the group recognised a strong need for a representative body to promote and advance the interests of the sector in order to safeguard its long-term viability.

"What really came to the fore this year is that the unique operating environment of the OSHC sector, compared to other segments of childcare, is not widely understood by decision-makers and the community at large. It's therefore been encouraging to see such strong engagement from governments across Australia, including their willingness to support the OSHC sector, and we look forward to continuing to build on this.

OSHC services play an essential role in the provision of supervised care and recreation for school-age children before and after school, on pupil-free days and during school holidays, which allows parents to work, study or look for work. This level of care ensures working families, particularly women looking to re-enter the workforce, are adequately supported as we transition through the recovery phase and the economy opens up again."

The Association's focus on fostering new skills and development among the OSHC workforce will also help to rebuild confidence in the vocation, which was hit hard following the shutdown of schools and the closure of some OSHC services as a result.

"As OSHC providers, we understand the unique and diverse needs of the OSHC sector, and we also recognise the significant impact that COVID-19 has had on families, children, the workforce and the providers who support the delivery of OSHC services in Australia. We very much look forward to working for and in the interests of Australian families who depend on this essential community service."



About OSHCA:

The Outside School Hours Council of Australia (OSHCA) exists to provide leadership and innovation to all stakeholders within Outside School Hours Care, leveraging organisational reach to ensure effective representation and advocacy which will enhance and promote the interests of the Sector across Australia. OSHCA members include Junior Adventures Group, TeamKids, Camp Australia, TheirCare and YMCA, who together employ over 10,000 workers and account for more than 30 per cent of the national OSHC market. Visit our website for more information: <https://www.oshca.org.au/>

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