

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2010-2011**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood

DEEWR Question No.EW0790_11

Senator Heffernan asked on 24/02/2011, Hansard page 18.

Question

ACCESS TO SPECIAL CHILDCARE BENEFIT ASSISTANCE

Mr Johnson—The only other element I would add particularly to your question—and, as Ms Paul has indicated, it does not go to childcare support arrangements per se—is that under special childcare benefit arrangements, where families experience financial hardship in meeting their costs of care, they are able to access special childcare benefit assistance where their children are in approved child care. Senator HEFFERNAN—Could you give me the details of that; I can pass it on to these people. Mr Johnson—We certainly can provide that to you.

Answer

Special Child Care Benefit (SCCB) is a component of Child Care Benefit that may be used to cover up to the full cost of care for eligible children using approved child care. It is available for families experiencing a hardship event which has substantially reduced their capacity to pay their child care fees.

If a family is experiencing hardship they may approach their child care service about obtaining SCCB. They will need to complete a Claim for Special Child Care Benefit and/or increased weekly limit of hours form in conjunction with the service and provide independent supporting documentation in support of their claim. For SCCB for hardship there is a maximum of 52 weeks for a hardship event.

Approved child care service providers can approve SCCB for up to 13 weeks in a financial year for each child where the family is conditionally eligible for Child Care Benefit by fee reduction. Additional periods of up to 13 weeks on each application may be approved by the Family Assistance Office.

Further details can be found by following the link to the Child Care Fact Sheet on the Department's website 'Special Child Care Benefit for hardship'.

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Resources/Pages/home.aspx>