‘It makes you think’
Engaging parents in the importance of early childhood education
The Early Childhood Education Directorate administers programs and funding streams designed to meet the goals of the National Partnership Agreements on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education and the National Quality Agenda.

The Directorate regulates the operation of approximately 5,500 ECE services for children from birth to school age across the state.
PARTICIPATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN NSW

**Government preschools** are provided by the NSW Department of Education in schools across the state. These preschools provide educational programs to children for one year prior to their enrolment in Kindergarten.

**Long day care (LDC) services** provide centre based education and care for children aged 0-6 years of age. Services operate for at least 8 hours per day, 48 weeks per year.

**Community preschools** offer an educational program for children in the year before school as well as 3 year olds from disadvantaged and Aboriginal backgrounds. Preschools traditionally operate between 9am and 3pm Monday to Friday during school terms – though many have extended their hours under start strong to ensure children receive 600 hours of early childhood education in the year before school.

**Long day care** (LDC) services
- 59,590 ECE enrolments in 2,550 services
- 65% of total enrolments

**Government**
- Department of Education Preschools
  - 4,955 ECE enrolments in 100 services
  - 5% of total enrolments

**Community Preschools**
- 27,604 ECE enrolments in 702 services
- 30% of total enrolments

Source: Preschool Education Australia 2015; NSW Department of Education 2016

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$85 million for community preschools and $30 million for long day care = Higher funding to services with Aboriginal children and children from low income families + per child funding to support all children for 600 hours in the year before full-time school
OUR GOAL: HELP PARENTS THINK ABOUT THE VALUE OF ECE

Educate parents on the benefits of early childhood education in the year before school.

Encourage behavioural change: increased 600 hour enrolments in the year before school.
At least 1 child between ages 3 and 5

Attending long day care or preschool less than 15 hours

$60,000 - $100,000 household income

4 focus group discussions (6 parents per group)
WE TESTED A VARIETY OF CREATIVE CONCEPTS
Highly distinctive and compelling

“Compelling representation of learning the benefits through exploring a child’s mind.”

“A child’s brain development and education is important, especially from 1-5 years old. We need to teach the child the best we can while in between those ages.”

“Like the interactivity of the brain, feeds my curiosity to learn more about what I can do to help my child.”

Persuasive and behaviour changing

“It would make me think yes I do need to send them an extra day.”

“They are making us ‘think’ of the importance of early childhood learning. And it does. It would make me send my child an extra day.”

“It important to get kids ready for school, now is the time to do it.”
‘IT MAKES YOU THINK’ PARENT AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

A CHILD NEEDS A GREAT PARENT AND A GREAT TEACHER

90% of a child’s brain develops before age 5

visit
startstrong.nsw.edu.au
CAMPAIGN DELIVERY

1. **Commencing 10 October 2016** - communications and public relations to generate media coverage.

2. **Commencing 17 October 2016** - influencers on social media generate interest in website.

3. **Commencing 25 October 2016** - interactive website provides key research facts within a tour of the brain, and published media stories and case studies.

Fact + Insight + Early Education = Extra Day
Being able to explore more and learn more provided a deeper level of engagement.

Facts that reinforce development of the early years further strengthened the importance of sending a child to LDC or Preschool.
IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Multi-faceted media campaign

- Social media
- Sponsored online content
- Traditional media outreach
- Online news stories developed
Phase 2 media campaign

- Celebrity ambassador Jay Laga’aia
  - Optimise audience engagement
  - Draws on real life experience
  - Raises profile of IMYT web presence
CAMPAIGN EVALUATION AND NEXT STEPS

Initial figures suggest that the campaign has resonated with the target audience.

Outreach to Aboriginal, CALD and low-socio economic families to encourage higher levels of participation.
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

Questions?