

ELLIOT COLBURN MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

13 January 2021

Our Ref: EC9890

Dear Rishi,

RE: Wraparound Childcare Sector

I write on behalf of Junior Adventures Group UK, a leading provider of children's wraparound care in the UK and one with services in my constituency at the Westcroft Leisure Centre, who have contacted me with their concerns that the wraparound childcare sector is at risk of collapse without urgent financial support.

I am concerned about what this would mean for the vulnerable and key worker families in my constituency who would immediately lose their much needed childcare support.

I know that you would agree with me that the sector plays an essential role in caring for children outside of school hours, however it has received no direct financial support. I am told by providers and service users in my constituency that the current lockdown is likely to have severe consequences. The ongoing restrictions, and the subsequent school and wraparound care closures, are heavily impacting parents' ability to work.

According to the Junior Adventures Group, almost four million people, or 17.9 per cent, cited childcare responsibilities as the main reason for work interruptions. Without urgent action to save services, this could become the new normal. If the sector collapses, key workers who are still heavily reliant on wraparound care services will not be able to do their crucial work and vulnerable children will be at risk.

In the longer term, I am concerned that when my hard working constituents return to their previous working patterns, the loss of the sector would result in families being without childcare and therefore unable to play their vital role in the economic and social recovery of the country. This would mean millions of working parents being left without care, and over 3 million children without their much loved clubs that support learning and development, social skills, mental health and sporting activity which reduces childhood obesity.

With an increasing number of services shutting each day and closing for good, the sector requires emergency funding to retain its staff and keep services open while they have reduced demand. This will allow services to remain open and ensure continuity of employment, so that when we get to the other side of this crisis, services are ready to immediately ramp up and we can play a part in helping to put the UK economy back on track.

Wraparound care is a vital pillar of support for working families and we must ensure its survival.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elliot Colburn', written over a horizontal line.

Elliot Colburn
Conservative Member of Parliament for Carshalton and Wallington

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