



AGJ BUSINESSES PTY LTD

In Home Child Care

Amanda Johnstone

OWNER

148 Maitland Rd
ABN 67144636528

49600680,49608444
Fax 49601751
agjbus@optusnet.com.au

**Childcare and Early Learning
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
CANBERRA 2601
ACT**

History of In Home Care

In home care was launched on the 1st of January 2001 by Prime Minister John Howard, as part of The Stronger Families and Communities Strategy, which was announced on the 16th of April 2000.

Access for this service was:

Who did not have access to a standard child care service or the needs of a child could not be met by an existing service.

Eligibility for this service was:

Parent/child has a disability
Families in rural or remote areas
Shift working or non standard hours
Multiple birth or two or more under school age
Breastfeeding mother working from home

Needs

As parents needed or wanted to return to employment their child care issues needed to be addressed. The traditional type of child care was from family and friends.

Parents working in positions of shift work, such as nurses, police, cleaners, train drivers etc could not access the hours of regular day care centres.

Their individual needs would be met by in home child care.

Fee relief

Cost for child care could be relieved by the CCB depending on the parents combined taxable income.

Responsibilities of the Service

Services had the responsibility to provide a carer who will support the families' needs, nurture and educate the children in their care and to support the family.

The service had the responsibility to support the carer by visiting, providing resources, offer training to further their knowledge in childcare.

The service had the responsibility to the government to show the funds are used correctly. That appropriate insurances, procedures are followed and kept up to date.

Alternative modes of care. England

The current mode of child care, in my opinion is antiquated, and confused.

There is little or no child care available for children under 2 years of age and there is no before school care.

Anyone can look after children, in their home. No registration, no first aid, no qualifications, no working tax credits is available.

Working tax credits (fee relief)

They have eight forms of recognised child care. Most of which attract working tax credits for children aged 3 years to 14 years of age.

This includes registered playgroups, and holiday schemes. As here, nannies and au pairs are not registered, and families receive no working tax credits.

The only working tax credits available for children 2 years and under is for special for circumstances. There is no specific fee relief for a parent of children with disabilities.

Only services registered (approved) with OFSTED attract the working tax credits.

It is available to single parents or couples where a parent in prison, hospital or incapable of caring for the children.

Regulatory Authority

OFSTED is their regulatory body and it has the authority to inspect the premises of child care, however this seldom happens unless there has been an issue raised.

Maternity Leave

England has statutory 39 weeks paid maternity leave. This is paid by the employer or the government.

Working tax credit

Working tax credit is paid to the registered child care scheme/provider.

Employer sponsored voucher are used in some areas. These can help with the cost of extra hours.

Ratios

Ratios of carers to children differ from service to service.

Out of school care ratios are:

Min ratio is 8 – 1 for children 4 years to 8 years and 10 – 1 is 8 years to 14 years.

Centres:

8 – 1 adult if all are over 2 years of age and 6 -1 adult if all are under 2 years of age.

Free Care

All children 3 years and over have 15 hours per week of free care in the early years education for 38 weeks per year until they reach the statutory school age.

2 year olds can get the free care at registered centres if disadvantaged.

There is a promise of hours to be increased to 25 hours for 3 and 4 year olds if labour wins the elections.

The Contribution of Child Care to the Workforce Participation.

The issue of care

Is it worth returning to work after having children? This is a question many parents ask themselves. Do I get more benefits staying at home?

This issue is often stressful and unnecessary.

After asking family and friends to help with care the next step is to see if a service has available places.

If the child is under 2 years of age the answer is likely to be no. Long waiting lists for children are expected at services as there is not enough places to cater for the growing population.

Australia's unemployment rate is not necessarily the lack of work or skills, but the lack of child care places.

Employers can be flexible to a certain extent.

Cost

As service charges cover not only the ever growing wage, but superannuation, insurances and costs to run the service the cost of child care may not be feasible.

Jet is available to some parent's, however it is limited to singles and for short terms.

Current and Future Needs for Child Care in Australia.

The population growth by natural means, refugees and immigration needs to be accounted for in the child care industry.

As employment is created the positions need to be filled. They may not be standard hours.

Parents are being told to find jobs which fit in with school hours for 15 hours per week, once the youngest turns 8 years of age to keep benefits.

The likely hood of work in these times is not impossible, but not likely either.

Suggestions:

- 1** Jet funding needs to be tailored to the individual circumstances more thoroughly.
- 2** It should be available for couples on low incomes and longer.
- 3** A training company could oversee the training and find employment.
- 4** If the parent drops out at any stage the money will need to be repaid. There would be no penalty to the child care service as care has been used.
- 5** Free child care option for children starting school in the next year. This would be available for all forms of child care.
- 6** Parents not working/studying should not receive government child care. This opens places.
- 7** The introduction of means testing for the \$7500 per child. Parents over the amount can claim this as a deduction at tax time.
- 8** This \$7500 should be higher to fit the increase in child care costs.
- 9** Parents can claim for a house keeper at tax time. This could be extended to cover nannies and au pairs.
- 10** No baby bonus. This could be used to pay for the child care.
- 11** Higher ratios of carers for older children.
- 12** Increase in hours for families of parents working in essential services.
- 13** More casual care places.
- 14** More In Home Care places to all services who ask.
- 15** Higher ccb for the essential services parents.
- 16** The service only who supplies the care can receive the payments.

Yours faithfully

Amanda Johnstone
24/1/14