

I am an Educator with 10 years experience in the child care sector and my Advanced Diploma of Children's services. In our centre we have 82 years of experience between 7 staff. All of the staff in this centre are qualified.

We are passionate about the child care industry and believe in what we do.

Through our experience we have found:

- Parents expect quality care. They expect staff who they know and who know the children. Parents often ask us for advice and appreciate when we have the knowledge to provide them with answers. In the past I have given parents advice about when to seek medical advice for their child including speech impairment, suspected learning difficulties, behaviour and routines. We are only able to provide this knowledge through experience. Unfortunately we have seen many staff leave the industry as a direct result of low wages and high stress.
- Reduced ratios = reduced stress and staff burnout, reduced serious incidents, more one on one time and higher quality care. I work in the toddler room where we have 8 children between 2 staff. In the UK 8 children requires 3 staff. I have worked in the UK and seen the difference this makes to the amount of care and time you can provide to children.
- It is difficult for educators to become qualified when wages are insufficient. I am studying to be a teacher and take leave without pay to complete my practical experience. This is very difficult financially.
- Children become distressed when left with people they don't know which is upsetting for parents also. Today we have had a family return to us after trying to move to another centre and finding their children were not settling with people they don't know. Parents also often choose child care over family day care due to continuity of care. This can only be provided when staff are willing to remain in the industry. In the last 12 months we have had 75% of staff leave this centre. Parents complain about this.
- Children love having male educators, but I have worked with 4 who all left the industry due to insufficient wages to sustain a family on as main bread winner.