

Childcare and Early Childhood Learning
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra ACT 2601

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this submission into the Productivity Commission's inquiry into childcare. I apologise for not meeting the deadline of 3rd February 2014, I was unaware of the inquiry until I just moments ago read an article in the Newsweekly (edition Wednesday 5 February 2014). This is a free community newspaper in Albury, NSW.

I would like to make comment on the current Childcare Benefit (CCB) and Childcare Rebate (CCR). Currently, if a childcare centre is open twelve hours per day, five days a week, and your children are in childcare five days per week, you are ineligible to receive the CCB on the fifth day, due to the fact that you have reached the maximum benefit of 50 hours in four days.

If the government is trying to make it easier for women to return to the workforce, why are they limiting the number of hours to 50? Should it not be 60? I believe that it is important for childcare centres to be open 12 hours to accommodate the different working hours of parents, but either the maximum hours needs to be increased or Childcare Centres should be charging by the hours used, not full day rates at 12 hours per day.

I have two children aged 4.5 and 20 months who attend a childcare centre four days per week. I originally accepted a fulltime position but reduced my hours to four days per week because it was not financially worth it due to the cost of childcare on the fifth day. I receive both the CCB and CCR upfront as a reduction in my fees. I would like to note that I would not be able to afford childcare if I did not receive these benefits upfront.

I thank you for your time in reading my submission.

Yours sincerely

Misty Howard