

Submission for:

**Education and Training Workforce: Early
Childhood Development
Commissioned study**

As an Early Childhood Teacher with a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood and while currently working in 2 Community Preschool/Kindergarten settings, I would like to contribute to the Submission above in relation to 'institutional arrangements impacting on the ECD workforce'.

Since 1985 I have worked as a Teacher, Teacher/Director and Resource teacher in a variety of early childhood settings both in NSW and Queensland. I have implemented many Guidelines and Curriculum frameworks over this time in my work with children in the 3 -5 year age range.

With continued 'hands on' implementation of the current National Early Years Learning Framework, I have observed and experienced that more is being expected of Early Childhood Teachers and Educators in the form of documentation, the implementation and documentation of OH&S strategies, the National Quality Standards, the Modern awards enterprise agreement processes, the expectation of outside of work hours training, the creation of centre tailored policies, extra curricula activities ... all of which have an impact on the Early Childhood workforce.

While many people are drawn to a vocation in Early Childhood Education because of their passion in relation to children, enjoyment and expertise is being compromised as a result of pressure to substantiate what we do as teachers of young children. Rather than employing all the skills an individual has available to them and is capable of in the form of teaching, interacting and engaging in meaningful relationships and partnerships, I have observed and felt at times that the 'requirements' take away from the ultimate goal of providing the best possible supportive learning environment for children and their families.

The remuneration received by Early Childhood Teachers and Educators does not reflect the significance of the roles played in the lives of children who effectively are 'the grass roots of society'. It also does not acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of the field nor does it impress within society the necessity to perceive teachers and educators of young children in high regard.

Resulting from this is a high staff turn over, difficulty in securing qualified and committed educators and a high stress level among teachers and educators. This in turn would impact on service quality.

With recognition of the professionalism of teachers and educators in the child care field, higher pay rates, training held within work hours, less documentation to provide 'proof' and more focus on improving and maintaining the work conditions of qualified and dedicated staff in early childhood settings, the quality of early childhood programs will continue to progress. Workers will be happier and the children and families will enjoy higher quality experiences. This will benefit all of society.

Yours sincerely,

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