

As a teacher in a NSW early childhood education and care service, I was happy to read that the Productivity Commission has recognised the need for long day care centres and preschools in NSW to offer salaries which have parity with primary teachers in the schools sector. The only way we can get pay parity is if the NSW Government funds community based preschools and long day care centres to increase teacher's wages. I believe the Productivity Commission should convert their finding on this issue (Draft Finding 5.1) to a recommendation, recommending that the NSW Government funds services to increase their teacher's salaries via registered industrial agreements. It is only through such a recommendation that NSW early childhood teachers will ever achieve pay parity.

Studies have shown that birth to five years is the most important time of a person's life. It is a time where foundations for learning and character are established. Investing money in the early years, through attracting and retaining highly qualified Early Childhood teachers will be of great benefit to each child and to our community as a whole. Governments need to have a long term focus - more than their term of office - and stop treating Early Childhood teachers as though they are babysitters!

Regards

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