

Submission

The cost of childcare in the A.C.T. is prohibitive. My son (now three) started childcare exactly two years ago (in Jan 2012), and it was \$82 per day. In the last two days the daily rate has increased \$20 per day, to over \$100 per day. I now have two children requiring care, which equates to \$204 per day. This is \$1,020 per week, or \$53,040 per year. When you factor in the childcare rebate that takes it down to \$38,040 per year. This is prohibitively expensive for me, and I have had to take my children out of care. Canberra is an expensive city to live in anyway, and our financial situation is very dire. I am on the verge of losing my job (public service), our rent is really high and I have the responsibility of two small children. I need to keep my job, so I have hired an au pair to look after my children. This works out cheaper, but not by much. The cost is \$250 per week (for 3 days work), plus phone, food, bus tickets, board, etc. It ends up being about \$500 per week, \$26,000 per year. I think some form of government subsidy for private nannies/au pairs would be very useful, and mean that a lot of the financial stress would be taken off our family- which is affecting our relationship.

Waiting Lists

I put my son's name down on 12 centre lists when I was 3 months pregnant. When he was 13 months old I finally got 1 day per week (I was after 4 days p/w), and only because I ended up calling weekly to harass them. For my second son I was told we would be priority at our current childcare centre and so only put his name down there. I finally managed to get him 2 days pw when he was 16 months old (I wanted more days, but they had to be the same days as my eldest, which made it more difficult to find a spot). This was a very stressful time for me.

Staff salary

The staff are amazing, but the turnover is very high because of the low pay rates. My sons become attached to a staff member and then they leave- it's really traumatic for a baby/toddler. It is ridiculous how little they are paid.

Conclusion

I have a good job which is important to Australia, I love it and I am very good at it. Without the support of appropriate childcare, my workplace is suffering, my family is suffering, my career is suffering and my country is suffering. Please consider my submission.