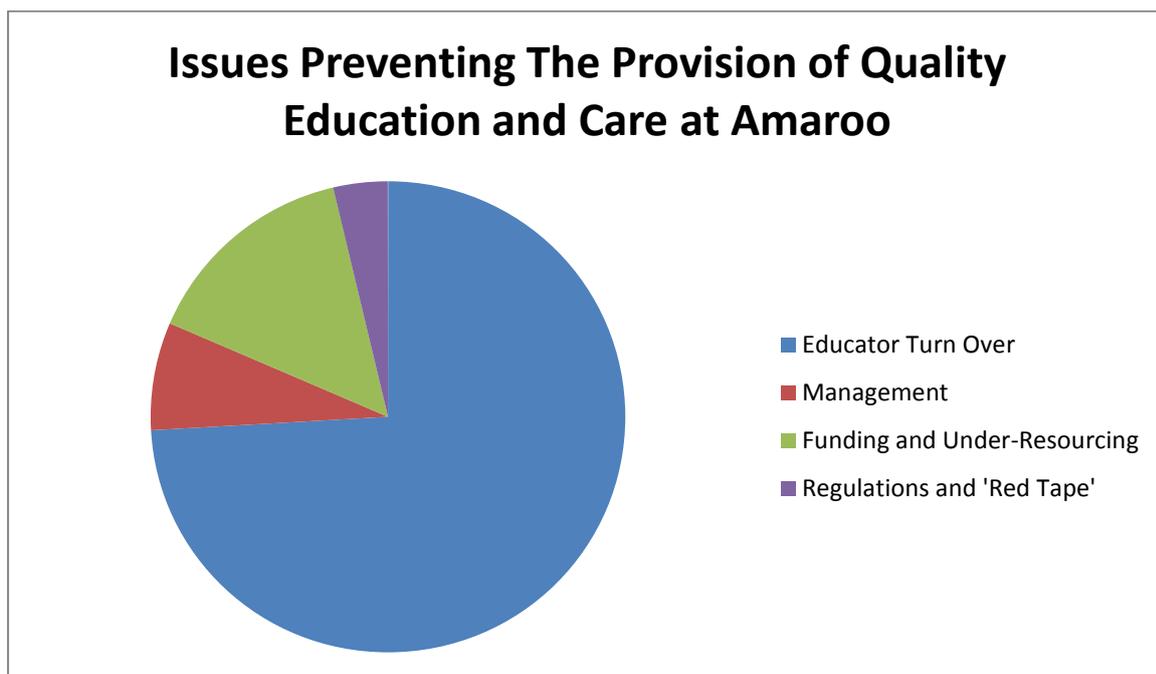
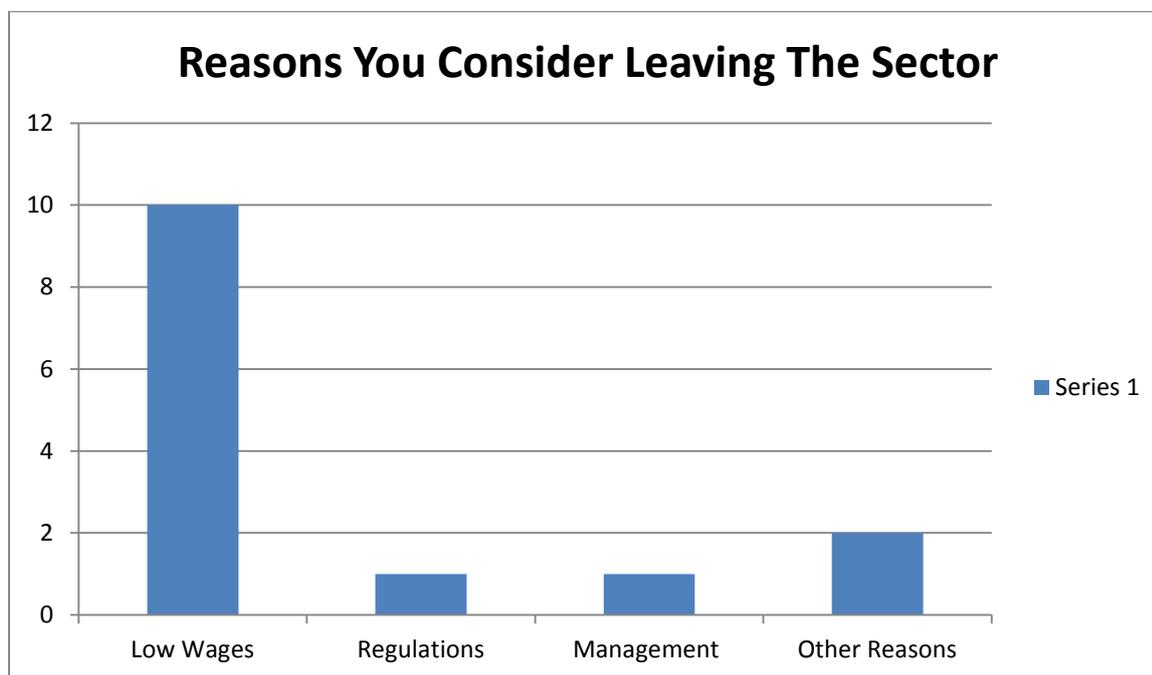


The Provision of Quality Education and Care During Early Childhood

The provision of quality care and education for young people is integral to the future of Australia as a society. Significant research has shown that quality education and care for children 0-5 years of age leads to better outcomes during the school years. The focus of the sector should not be entirely based around affordability and flexibility but around the provision of quality education and care. A combination of National Quality Standards (NQS), Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and Queensland Kindergarten Guidelines (QKLG) along with reduced rates of qualified educator turn over in the sector will lead to high quality care and education overall. Educators working under the NQS and current curriculums are generally satisfied with the quality these frameworks ensure is provided for children. Following an in-house survey of educators at Amaroo Early Childhood Centre, it is apparent that the issues they face in the delivery of quality care and education are based in their salary.

During the survey, the following results were found:





Furthermore, the following responses were made:

- Overall, majority of educators believe that lower wages contributed to educator turn over
- Most educators believed that consistency in educators at a service was “inextricably linked to the provision of quality education”
- Some of the reasons that providing quality education and care was linked to strong staff retention include:
 - “The ability to build positive relationships with families, children and other educators.”
 - “Continuity of care... children become stressed when an educator leaves and it effects their ability to depend on relationships with others and to socialise.”
 - “Allows for strong, trusting relationships.”
 - “Educators are happy and engaged through experience and acquired knowledge.”
 - “Allows for interesting and exciting investigations and environments.”
- One educator at the service described the link she makes between professional wages and provision of quality care and education thusly:
 - “Professional wages would provide the professional recognition this industry deserves, the financial support to the educators who currently train and work tirelessly for less than an unqualified position elsewhere in the community. Professional wages would also go a long way towards staff retention, providing confidence for parents that their children are receiving care and education from the same educators and not someone new every couple of months. “

Productivity Commission Submission

Centre: Amaroo Early Childhood Centre- Aitkenvale, QLD (ph: 07)47753559)

Submission Author: Meagan Richardson (Lead Educator, Kindergarten)

Centre Director: Coralee O'Rourke

- Other educators made the following statements about how they think the sector can be improved in Australia:
 - “Acknowledgement for the professionals that we are by the government and society.”
 - “Update and use appropriate terminology across the industry, within the community and by the government (eg. Educators instead of Child Care Workers).”
 - “Professional wages.”
 - “Wages that reflect the level of work expected and achieved.”

In closing, the majority of educators at Amaroo agree that there is a link between providing quality care and education and higher wages. The educators are happy to work under the NQS, which help to ensure that centres uphold “quality expectations and to allow services to review current practice with a view to continuous improvement.” Furthermore, educators list “lower wages than diploma qualified men in the labour industry” as the main reason they would leave the sector. This results in high turnover and reduced quality. We hope this submission will help to illustrate the sentiment of the true experts on these matters. The educators bound by the standards and curriculums are the most important sources of information regarding this commission and the majority of educators are making a link between professional wages and professional work.