

Margaret Cribb Childcare Centre

Submission to the Child Care Productivity Commission

The Margaret Cribb Childcare Centre is based on the University of Queensland in Brisbane, and has been operating since opening in 1994. We have fully embraced the Early Years Learning Framework and implement it throughout our work on a daily basis. The Margaret Cribb Child Care Centre strongly believes that each and every child should have access to the highest quality Early Childhood Education, which we endeavour to provide. By implementing this care, we are laying the foundation for learning and education, greatly impacting each child's future and success in life.

Many of our staff have been employed here for over ten years and are continuously undergoing further learning by attending workshops, conferences and meetings; many of which are held outside of work hours, to increase and maintain the highest level of care we can possibly deliver. However, unfortunately our professional status is an issue in the sector. With the average Child Care Educator earning just \$18 per hour, we are often considered mere babysitters, instead of being regarded as the professionals we are encouraged to be. Industry wages result in many dedicated, long-standing professional educators leaving the sector annually as they simply cannot afford to live on a minimum wage; a wage that implies and reinforces that we are not recognised, supported or valued as professionals by the Government.

Although Government initiatives - such as free training - ease the financial pressure for those wanting to study, motivation to gain higher and additional qualifications within the Child Care Industry is limited. The financial reward of this training to the Child Care Educator is insignificant, while the added responsibility on the individual is great. Additionally, initiatives such as free training, training within the work place and online training do not ensure quality education. It does, however, allow inexperienced staff to fill the places of long-standing professional educators, and in return lowers the quality of care and education administered in the best interest of the children.

The Early Childhood Education and Care sector is in crisis now! By subsidising a pay increase and funding improved wages for all Early Childhood Educators the government will not only enable, but ensure that experienced, qualified educators such as those at the Margaret Cribb Child Care Centre remain in this essential industry. Maintaining the inferior wage of current educators will continue the cycle of inexperienced, under-qualified workers educating the future generations of Australia.

Thank you

Staff of the Margaret Cribb Child Care Centre