7 December 2023

I would like to submit my feedback on the draft recommendations from the interim report into early learning and childcare.

1. I don't agree with the 100% for low income families as in many cases, these families are only paying $10-$20 a day which is far more achievable than people paying $70 a day. The reforms need to consider the amount that <u>all</u> families are paying, including high-income families.
2. There also needs to be consideration that if daycare is made free, what pressures does this put on centers availability for working families to get their children in? I support the change for all children to have access to early learning education, but in some areas families already struggle to get their children into centres on the required days for work, so you run the risk of more parents, mainly women, actually being out of work due to availability issues.
3. I don't think the activity test should be removed as it once again allows non-working families to put their children into care at the potential sacrifice of a working family.

Once again a report has been created and actual issues have not been addressed. Were the below resolutions even considered?

1. CCS should be based around the returning parents' income, not the family income. It should also be on net not gross wages.
2. The eligibility hours should be increased to 120 hours a fortnight, inline with long daycare hours. This will reduce the amount of parents paying for the last 12 hours of the fortnight at full fees.
3. The hourly cap should be increased in line with centre rates, or the government should be doing more to regulate daily fees. $150+ a day for daycare is unrealistic.
4. Childcare costs should be eligible for salary sacrifice without FBT since it is a work-related expense.
5. CCS should be calculated so it's fair for all families. People paying $10 a day while others pay $70 is not equal. Yes, those paying the higher rates have a higher income but that shouldn't impact on the cost for childcare.