

As a parent, my key concerns with childcare are the quality of the carers and educators who care for my children, the safety of children through child to educator ratio and the price I have to pay when choosing to return to work.

I have one (1) child, 1.5 years old, in a not for profit long day care centre at Pooraka, SA.

I am concerned with the proposal to reduce qualifications requirements for educators of children aged zero to three years. I feel this is a critical age for children and expect carers other than parents to have substantial qualification in early education and development and the ability to guide parents in how to follow on with this at home.

Accessing affordable childcare is a big challenge for many families. I welcome the recognition that the overall level of childcare assistance needs to be increased.

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds get the biggest benefit from accessing quality early learning and care. It would be a backward step if access to early learning for disadvantaged children became harder.

I expect, if I choose to entrust my children to a formal care environment that I leave them with educators who are qualified to support their individual learning and care needs at a price I can afford.

My family values quality early learning for children, particularly in the early years before they are three. We want to feel comfortable leaving our children with educators who know and understand the development of our child and who have relevant work load (child/carer ratio) to deliver the highest of care and education.

The first three years of life are a vital part of a child's development, it is critical to creating well function adults who can contribute beneficially to society. Having educators who understand and contribute to my child's development is extremely important to me.

I also want to see the new Paid Parental Leave scheme introduced. I see it as an invaluable resource to allow primary carers more time to invest in the security and development of children. I encourage the Federal Government to combine this with fortnightly workshops on early development, secure attachment and parenting skills (such as the introduction to parenting workshops run by Community and Family Health SA) as a requirement to receiving these payments.