

Danielle Leete

4TH September 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION DRAFT REPORT

CHILDCARE AND EARLY LEARNING

My name is Danielle Leete and I feel that it is important for me to express my thoughts on the draft report for the productivity commission into early learning and childcare.

I feel I am qualified to offer my opinion as I have worked in the sector of early childhood for over 20 years in various positions, currently I am a centre manager in a centre licenced for 88 children per day.

After reading the report I felt that the Early Childhood sector was given a monetary value in the community rather than the educational value of 0-5 year old children being the primary focus. The paper also reflected a feeling of children being "cared" for rather than the primary focus being on education. It failed to represent the children voice and it appears that children are not regarded as citizens in this political forum. Children are an investment into our future, not only an economic investment but a social and communal investment.

Points that I see beneficial for the sector

1. CCR and CCB joined together as one payment for the family, at present with 200 families I receive on average 11-15 enquiries a week about these payments. This type of combined payment will be easier for families and service providers to understand and deliver.
2. 90% rebate for low income families and children with additional needs. The ISS funding is changing to 100 hours and more funding monies will be given.

Points that I see will have a negative impact in the sector

1. No diploma qualified staff or Early childhood teachers with degrees in education staff required for 0-3year old children, is this a reflection of the thinking that 0-3year old children don't learn? In fact most developmental theories and research suggest differently. As Loris Malaguzzi wrote, it is the image of the child who, from the moment of birth, is so engaged in developing a relationship with the world, and intent on experiencing the world that he or she develops a complex system of abilities, learning strategies and ways of organising relationships.

2. At present the number of Early Childhood Teachers that is required at a service is dependent on the number of children 0-6years. If the 0-3year children were not in this calculation then the number of early childhood teachers would dramatically decline in each service therefore the quality of education would deteriorate.
3. The changing of ratio of educators over the whole week how does this work and what basis/ numbers do you set a ratio on?
4. The talk of “cost” of the NQF this is should not be looked at as solely an economic cost rather an investment into quality early learning for 0-6 year olds. If this is changed what standard does the sector have to achieve and maintain high quality early childhood education.

After reading the complete report I feel that changes that have been put forward will have a negative impact on the sector, the children in our community that are to be educated and Australian society as a whole.

Yours faithfully

Danielle Leete
Ass Dip SS CS
Bach Teach EC
Cert IV in training and assessment