

Ms Fairlie Arthur  
4<sup>TH</sup> September 2014

Childcare and Early Childhood Learning  
Productivity Commission  
GPO Box 1428  
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

Dear Commission

I am writing, as an early childhood professional and as a parent, to express my extreme concern at some unacceptable changes proposed for the future of early childhood education and care.

The entire early childhood education and care sector has been on an important journey of learning and ongoing improvement since the development of the National Quality Framework, beginning with the distribution in 2009 of 'Belonging, Being, Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia' and the concurrent pilot programs that were established.

This evidence-based framework was founded on valuable global research highlighting the importance of relationship-based high-quality education and care in the early years. Research emphasised the need for all children to access this care; signifying that investment into the early years produced higher returns than government spending on remedial interventions later in life – with the result of a more-productive, healthier, enhanced future society.

The National Quality Framework addressed the issue of practicality - if high quality care for all children is to be consistently achieved in busy early childhood education and care programs, the RATIO of educator to children MUST BE MINIMISED. One educator to fifteen children from 3-5 y.o. is TOO HIGH to build consistent, high-quality relationships. Children are diverse; children have their own special characteristics; children are unique in their learning and development needs – AND NOTHING WILL EVER CHANGE THAT.

**The proposal to change the new ratios before they have even fully taken effect is ludicrous.** This is an insane waste of the tax-payers money. It is contrary to global evidence. Most importantly, it is detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the children of Australia; and to the future of this country.

Please support the ratios that have been carefully decided as part of the National Quality Framework (which must be the framework for both Pre-schools and Child care centres).

Yours faithfully,

FAIRLIE ARTHUR  
EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER, CITIZEN OF AUSTRALIA, PARENT