

For a first time parent of a young boy with limitless energy and a need for clear direction, we as a family appreciate the need for highly qualified educators, to provide high quality care, education and nurturing. This level of professionalism and concern for a child's wellbeing instils values within a child, when at this stage in their young lives it's imperative to relay such remodelling due to their spongelike characters.

Due to a geographical change our son has now been in 3 different centres, commencing 3 days per week at the tender age of 8 months and increasing to 5 days after the 12 months mark.

Fortunately 2 of these 3 centres have matched our philosophy, both as people and as parents with a keen interest in the curriculum and care that is offered to all children. On paper and in practice, both centre's housed a similar number of children and offered almost mirror like educational opportunities. In terms of educators the similarities were evident. Seemingly in both, staff are given professional development opportunities along with employing staff who have a certain level of qualification and experience, therefore creating an environment which houses multidisciplinary conversations. Conversely the 3rd centre operated as a business, with limited vested interest in the education and wellbeing of the children, the centre employing various staff with only a base level of education. The majority of the staff employed were also transient and therefore were unhappy or seeking employment for the purpose of making money, certainly not for appreciating the privileged position one is in when nurturing such inquisitive minds. Unfortunately due to limited spacing and long wait times for a high quality service, my son's placement in this centre was grossly extended however the experience has increased awareness of the need for encouragement and opportunity to be provided to ALL staff within the field.

Working in the social justice field I am aware that community members are increasingly becoming more aware of the benefits of early preventative services being provided and readily available for young people. A greater emphasis could be placed on the education and care provided to children and the benefits it supplies. For some children the respite that education and care provides can be larger than most may understand, therefore it proves great respect should be shown to the staff that are employed who have an in depth knowledge of child development and a genuine interest in supporting and educating each child.

To have your child in a centre where you see the staff are fluid and flexible in their approach and look to explore and support all means in growth and development, whether this be through parental discussion, educational training, attending various forums and conferences and seeking secondary consult, I feel assured that upon leaving my son he will have a fantastic 8 hour day. His day will be filled with various educational activities, materials and mediums and general healthy role modelling.

As I and my husband choose to work I feel safe knowing my most prized possession is with people whom I respect. His personality is largely due to the time each individual has invested in him and I am thankful.

Celeste Morath