

I wish to add some information to the productivity commission on primary aged students care from 5-12 years old. There is a crisis in afterschool care, there are not enough places in the OOSH centres in primary schools across the board and it is about to become dramatically worse.

**I have a solution.**

**Legislate to allow independent After School Care Programs to operate with a GST exemption that are in schools less than 5 days per week.** There would be no need for start up funding or parental rebates. I know the government is looking for cost effective options. Schools would be able to have successful afterschool programs continue in their schools. They would receive rent income from these organisations. The quality organisations would flourish due to parent and student demand and students could attend many different and varied programs that met the deemed legislation.

I am a trained teacher with over 30 yrs experience and run a small business in after school care, Visual Arts classes in a number of public schools. Due to often strong parent demands our program has been invite in to many Primary schools as we provide quality education along with an award winning reputation. One parent said to me the other day, “ we have a new Principal we can finally get your program into our school community” I had to inform her the price has gone up dramatically due to GST, she was very disappointed as she wanted to send her 3 children and the extra 10% per child made it cost prohibitive.

This year our success has seen us move over the \$75 threshold and legally we have to pass on GST to our parents simply because we are so successful and our business has grown due to its quality and the sophisticated outcomes that allows many of our students to win prestigious awards while being cared for by highly trained teachers. We are only in schools 2-3 days per week but we collect children straight after school. We do not fit the current legislation to offer a service that is GST free as we are not in schools 5 days a week.

I feel terribly upset for our hard working parents who are seeking quality after school care for their children at an affordable price. Our program is seen by some children, as a ray of light in their week as many go to their schools OOSH centres every day morning and afternoon and all through their holidays.

Some OOSH centres are completely booked out & have waiting lists of up to 2 years on all of the 5 days. This leaves parents with no other choices other than nannies or educational programs or friends & family.

OOSH centres provide very simplistic care but offer parents a GST exemption and a rebate. Programs like we offer, if successful reach the \$75,000 cut-off to become GST tax collectors. Thus our poor working parents are forced if they wish to have any other

options other than the OOSH centres (if they can even get in) is to come to our centres where we have to now pass on a 10% increase to our fee structure. So if the general fee is \$260 we add \$26+ \$286 for each of the 4 terms. Many parents send 2-3 children this then becomes cost prohibitive. It kills good small business and stops poor parents from allowing their children opportunities other than OOSH centres.

I have a solution that will not cost the government any money; the education area is a grey area when it comes to GST. I think to support parents and small business and schools and the local community successfully run and operated after school care that is proven to be educationally sound and in demand be able to be GST exempt to help with the tsunami of childcare needs in the afterschool area. We all know this is coming it is a simple and realistic and practical solution to allow vocational childcare operators to be GST free and keep the fee structure at a price point that parents can afford. This allows children to have an opportunity to gain some additional education skills in their area of interest whilst being cared for whilst their parents work.

I thank you for your time.

Michele Middleton.