

## **17178 - New submission from Early Years Strategy - Public Submissions**

I have some general suggestion regarding the early years in Mooroopna:

1. During COVID the children lost social connection. It has greatly affected their verbal, social interactive skills and how they relate to each other. Although, the government is allotting more free hours to kinder from 2030, this generation of children would have lost out on quite a bit. I have suggestions to increase the free kinder hours or to subsidise payed kinder for currently kinder and pre kinder children. Otherwise they are going to be facing a host of problems by the time they have to go to school.

2. There is an increase in the number of children who have developmental issues such as autism, Asperger's and other developmental issues. The waiting time for Speech therapists and Occupational therapists are huge. There are not enough kinder teachers who are trained for autism. The funding has not been provided by the government to train the staff to handle children with different needs. Why is kinder staff training not a priority.

3. The staff are underpaid and it is just so sad to see that some one who can look after your children and take care of them are not given enough and not appreciated enough for their contributions to the most important members of your family. If they are appreciated properly, that will flow back to the kids, if the staff are happy then the children will be happier too.