

**ANONYMOUS 17171 - New submission from Early Years Strategy - Public Submissions**

I'm a trained and highly experienced early childhood educator, having worked across a range of settings in a range of different socioeconomic areas.

The consistent feedback I have received from parents is

1. lack of affordability in early years spaces (outside of public school)

This is especially challenging for families of children 0-5 who rely on childcare services and highly limited community playgroup places.

2. High privatisation of childcare.

Both of the above could be addressed had the government opened public owned and operated childcare services. This would also address educator wage concerns as the educators who worked in the public government owned childcare services could be listed as government employees. With government wages being higher than standard private childcare wages.

The additional services would assist in not only making places less competitive but also naturally creating market competition and reducing prices per day.

The fact remains the government invests in building and maintaining hospitals, public housing and schools. All are considered essential services and needs of a community. The government views childcare as an essential service but hasn't invested in opening a single 100% government owned and operated childcare service. This means it's been up to private investment to pick up the slack of providing childcare for Australian children.