

ANONYMOUS 17177 - New submission from Early Years Strategy - Public Submissions

Q2 Vision

- For 100% of children to be developmentally on track by the time they start school. Current 45% developmentally vulnerable/at risk is far too high.
- Identification of gaps in development early when the gaps are smaller, immediacy of intervention to close the gap. We need to empower parents to monitor their child's development and know how to seek help.
- Universal access to high quality early childhood education. Maintain a high quality workforce who educate Australia's children.
- More adequate different education settings based on developmental need. Not all children should attend mainstream class, but need options for differing levels of support.
- A vision that also looks beyond the earliest years and continues to support children into primary school years.

Q4 Priorities

- Prioritise vulnerable/disadvantaged families who are less likely to proactively seek help when their child's development does not follow a typical trajectory
- Creating working conditions that will support retention of quality staff across health and education. Both industries are losing quality staff due to poor pay and poor conditions that are not sustainable. Policy directions are worthless if there are no quality staff to implement it.

Q5 Commonwealth can do

- Universal access to high quality early childhood education regardless of where the child lives and the family's income. This includes consideration of the CSS especially for lower SES families where the out of pocket cost of childcare is equivalent to a mother's wage for that day at work, creating a disincentive for the child and the mother.
- Improve education for parents of vulnerable/disadvantaged children on the value of early childhood education in their child's developmental trajectory.
- Centralised database that parents can search based on location and developmental concern, similar to the now defunded "Resourcing Parents" website.
- Strengthen the workforce who support children's development including healthworkers and educators
- National strategy on age of commencing school with clear cut offs based on date of birth. In NSW, giving parents choice until 31 July creates too great a gap in a standard classroom.