

ANONYMOUS 17371 - New submission from Early Years Strategy - Public Submissions

28/04/2023

Submission for the new National Early Years Strategy.

I am a retired Maternal and Child Health Nurse, a mother of 3 and grandmother of 5.

I worked in Maternal and Child Health in community centres in the Northern Territory and Victoria which had co-located services such as speech, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychology, dental and medical, vaccination and childcare. Co-locating services is an ideal way to support families allowing for quick and seamless referrals between services. Satellite centres can still service families locally but they need to be well connected to the central hub and if necessary services come to the satellite centres.

(Too much time was spent by these services writing submissions for on-going funding)

There are high expectations for families to do it all - parent, work, housekeeping, participate in community and it often falls on the mother who can feel a lot of pressure.

What can help?

- adequate, good, childcare centres that are affordable
- supporting family care (I reduced my working days to look after grandchildren 1 day/week)
- older people supporting and interacting with younger children like the ABC's "Old Peoples Home for 4 year olds"
- foster societal change that fathers are equally parents, workers and householders so need to step up to take on a more equal role.
- Raising children in the first five years of life needs to be acknowledged as of paramount importance by families and society, whether the care is provided by parents, family, childcare workers or kindergartens. Workers in these areas should be valued, well paid and educated. Society needs to see this as money well spent, laying strong foundations for our children, families and society. Society can also see this as an investment, money saved – prevention and early intervention being cheaper than fixing entrenched, deep-seated problems.



If a family cannot provide a loving, interactive caring for a child, high priority should be given to providing high quality, fulltime childcare while giving parents support and education.

Social isolation is often experienced by first time parents. Continue to support and promote New Parent Groups and include Dads groups in evenings or weekends. Vouchers for joining social, sports and community groups as parents often struggle financially on one wage.

Build parents' confidence through education, reassurance and community connection. Building baby

brains in the first years of life can provide a strong foundation for a better life. How a child is 'parented' can have a huge impact and is both simple and profound. Robyn Ball and I created an ebook called 'Baby brain growth' which illustrates this and is free for anyone to access through a QR code.

Holistic Approach

- Positive parenting and developmental facts focussing on early connection advertised through TV, radio, social media in short, sharp, visual snippets. Ban advertisements on alcohol and gambling- so detrimental to families and society.
- Parents need enough money for housing and the essentials of life otherwise the stress will get in the way of them being loving, caring parents. Governments have influence and responsibilities here.
- There need to be playgrounds, parks and trees in all areas, not just the leafy, well healed areas.
- Society needs to address climate change and healthy living at all levels so there is a future for all.
- Cultural, linguistic and sexual diversities should be acknowledged and supported.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

This QR code opens a link to the Baby Brain Growth book.docx

Sent from my iPhone