

**INQUIRY INTO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND  
CARE SECTOR IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Mrs Simone Anderson

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My name is Simone and I am a diploma trained educator with 18 years of experience in Early Education.

In order to keep children safe in Early Education we need to be making sure that educators are trained to the highest standard, especially in child safety and behaviour management.

We need smaller ratios and smaller group sizes...some of these centres are like mini schools- over 100 children at a centre is too big, how can a director possibly oversee something that big.

I have so many stories to share, I have worked as a casual across multiple centres and while most of them were beautiful places, others were far from what I believe to be a high quality centre (it's interesting though as a lot of these poor quality centres were rated as 'exceeding').

At one centre I was working at, a three year old came up to me holding a rat poison bait - asking 'what's this?'

When I notified the educators, they brushed it off - they didn't notify the director or write an incident report. All they did was ask me to wash the child's hands. The child had sensory processing issues and refused to wash his hands. The staff wouldn't help me and I had to essentially force the child to wash his hands for his safety.

I have also seen numerous incidents of verbal and emotional abuse - one educator took a one year old child into the cot room, closed the door and screamed at her in isolation for biting another child.

I have also seen an educator forcing a sleeping baby to eat...when I said that he should go to bed, she ignored me and continued to force food into his mouth even though I said it was a choking hazard.

It is obvious to me that most educators are passionate and loving and also burning out but then there are some educators who should be nowhere near young children.