

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

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 25 March 2025

Partially
Confidential

I am writing to share my personal experience as an early childhood educator and to highlight the critical challenges faced by many of us in the field, particularly regarding burnout, lack of support, and inadequate pay. I have witnessed and personally endured the detrimental effects of these issues, and I believe it is crucial to bring them to your attention in the hopes of inspiring meaningful change within the sector.

1. Personal Experience of Burnout

As an early childhood educator, I have poured my heart and soul into caring for and educating young children. The emotional and physical demands of the job are immense, and yet the support and recognition I receive are not reflective of this. I have often found myself working long hours, constantly juggling multiple tasks—ensuring children’s safety, fostering their development, and managing the classroom—all while trying to maintain my own well-being. Despite my best efforts, the relentless nature of the job has taken its toll, leading to feelings of exhaustion, frustration, and burnout. I have reached a point where it’s become difficult to maintain the passion I once had for my work, and I know I’m not alone in this struggle.

2. Lack of Support in the Workplace

In my experience, the support systems in place for early childhood educators are severely lacking. I have often found myself isolated, without sufficient resources, and without the backup of teaching assistants or other support staff. Professional development opportunities are few and far between, and when they do exist, they are often not financially supported or are scheduled during times when we are already stretched thin. There is little recognition for the emotional labor we provide, and at times, it feels as though the work we do is undervalued both by the public and by those in charge of policy and funding.

3. Struggling with Inadequate Pay

Perhaps one of the most frustrating aspects of my career is the pay disparity. I am deeply passionate about my role as an early childhood educator, but the reality is that the compensation I receive is nowhere near what is deserved. The work is demanding, the hours are long, and yet the pay is far below that of educators in other sectors. This has not only impacted my own financial well-being but has also created a sense of undervaluation within the profession. I know of many colleagues who have left the field due to the financial strain, and I have often questioned my future in the profession as well.

4. Impact on My Well-being and My Work

The stress and burnout I’ve experienced have impacted not only my personal well-being but also the quality of care I can provide to the children I teach. I constantly worry that I am not able to give each child the attention and support they deserve due to being overworked and emotionally drained. This, in turn, affects my job satisfaction and my ability to make the meaningful impact I entered the field to create. I know firsthand how these systemic issues contribute to a broader problem in the education system, and I am deeply concerned about the long-term effects on both educators and children.