

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

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

As a long time worker in this broken industry all I see and hear from my colleagues is a want and need for better. Better conditions, better pay, better recognition. There is a constant narrative being spin that we are baby sitters, that we spend our days playing. I spend hours upon hours submitting paperwork regarding children learning and their development. I write reports for doctors and specialists involving children's medical needs. I enact a preschool program that sets up children for primary school.

I am a professional, I am an essential worker, but I feel like I could work in any other industry and be valued more. We are grossly underfunded but our company makes millions. I see the gender pay gap, a colleague with the same qualifications, position and experience as me payed \$3 less an hour because the company thinks they can roll over her as a young woman working in this sector. This is a female dominated industry and they still can't give equality.

I see people being used for 6 month probation periods and dumped out the week before they're up, it happened to me. They used my daughter's illness against me to turf me after they logged my carers leave as sick leave and told me I was unreliable.

People are sick of it, and I don't see how this industry can keep sinking lower and lower. Expose after expose running us down and making us look horrible. There are people in this industry that are horrible and abusive, and the constant attention we get is negative.

I was proud to work in this industry, especially as a man. Now all I get is skepticism and a lack of trust. From the people I work for, from the people I work with, and from the families I engage with. Why would I stay? Why would anyone want to work in this god forsaken industry? There's nothing to keep us here. A 15% wage grant over two years? What happens when that ends and they expect us to take a pay cut to stay in these crappy jobs? And 15% doesn't help in the long run, I make as much as someone working in a grocery store. I don't need a qualification to work in a grocery store.