

Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee
Regarding: Paid Parental Leave Scheme Bill 2010

Back in February when Abbott attempted to trump the Governments proposed Paid Parental Leave scheme, spokeswoman for the National Foundation for Australian Women, Marie Coleman praised the move, believing Australia lags behind the international community's standard for paid leave and that six months is the minimum required after the birth of a new baby. "Indeed the scientific data on child development and the need for parental bonding would suggest that 12 months would be ideal," Coleman said.

Indeed.

Despite Unicef's recent warning that placing a baby in childcare before the age of 1 can lead to aggressive and anti-social behavior during primary school, the Government continues to award women who return to work and ignores the needs of the majority who choose to stay at home with their children.

According to leading child psychologist and parenting author, Steve Biddulph, children under the age of 3 should not be placed in institutionalized childcare, but should remain in the care of a close relative, as formal or institutionalized daycare situations can lead to separation anxiety, emotional vulnerability and stress.

So the Government continues to ignore the mounting evidence in favour of full-time parent-administered childcare during the formative years. And the Government continues to ignore the 79% of 18-34 year olds who, in a recent Galaxy poll, voted for equal funding for all mothers.

Considering that unwaged mothers represent the majority of those who receive financial assistance in the child-rearing years, one might have expected the Government to be slightly more concerned about where their votes are coming from.

Please abandon this discriminatory and detrimental scheme in favour of a universal childcare endowment which assists all families equally.

Sincerely,

Eva Van Strijp