

6<sup>th</sup> June, 2013.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Wendy Raghoobar and I am currently Assistant Director at Starkids Calliope, a long day care centre in Calliope, Central Queensland. I have my Associate Diploma in Early Education – Child Care which I completed in 1993. Since then I estimate that I have worked in Childcare for around 13 years, 2 and a half of these at my current place of employment.

In regards to the current talk of a pay rise in the Child Care industry I am totally confused and dumbfounded. After hearing about a pay rise to the industry we had a visit from United Voice in April who informed us that they would be responsible for deciding which Child Care Centres would be receiving the pay rise and that it would go first to the centres with the highest Union membership. None of our employees were happy about this, including our Director. The Union rep when later talking to employees told them that most people had signed up and that 'Kelly' our Director, was fully on-board. 'Kelly' had earlier had strong words with the rep but like the rest of us had felt strong pressure to join up, believing that this was our only way to be in the running to receive the raise. The Union told us the only other way to be in the running was to privately organise an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement which would cost us tens of thousands of dollars.

I have personally tried to find out information regarding the how, where's, why's, and whose of this whole thing and the only information I have been able to find is very vague and left me more confused.

Like most businesses in the child care field we have a struggle finding and keeping qualified and unqualified staff. Centres in the Gladstone area in particular have a hard time keeping staff because of the low pay rate and high work load. Centres cannot compete with the high wages on offer from the boom in our area, we have workers leaving to drive trucks or do industrial cleaning from upwards of \$40 an hour versus \$16-\$21 an hour in child care.

I love my job and have a great relationship with my employer but in the next year or two as my children get older I too will most likely look into leaving the sector in search of better pay.

Regards,

Wendy Raghoobar.