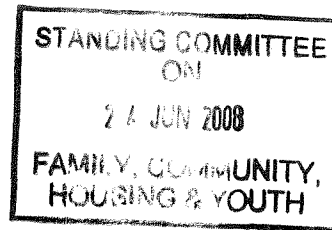


Committee Secretary
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,
Community, Housing and Youth
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission No. 423
(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O.E.



Dear Secretary

I wish to make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth's Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

I am submitting to the Inquiry because... my caring role is the most time consuming emotional encompassing role of my life. it is huge + I feel people need to know how it affects me and my family. As a carer I feel I know what is best, right + what is most helpful for me + my family to function effectively. I get sick of bureaucrats + governmental departments telling me what is best + many of the processes are so time encompassing (for time deprived carers) that it feels it is too hard to even access funds or services that may be helpful.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

1. The role and contribution of carers in society

As a carer, I feel that my role is... to care for my disabled child + the other members of my family (2 children + husband - imediate) to the best of my ability for the long haul + hopefully survive the process without being burnt out. I also believe my role is to advocate for my child (with disabilities) needs so she can love + be loved + have a role in her community. At times I feel my role is to also educate those around me, so let them see that disabilities does not need to be so scary + that we can all benefit and work along side each other.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

2. The barriers to social and economic participation for carers

As a carer, I face the following problems ...

My child has level 5 funding for schooling for a child with special needs. This is the top level, + she has a full time aid working with her as they feel this is beneficial to her safety. Yet social security doesn't see my child as needy enough for me to gain a pension, because she is not a sexual deviant, she is not tube fed (which can be much less time consuming than normal feeding) she is not harming herself continuously (because of our care + training) + she does not have a terminal condition (well this is unknown). Yet I cannot work, as I cannot get regular out of school care, + she would be too exhausted to take on extra care, yet I am still unable to access the pension, even though I care for her fulltime + more than any other 8 yr old by far. So my husband + I totally have to play tag team in order to support our other 2 children + provide them with plenty of opportunity + to get her to various appointments + contacts that she needs to function to the best of our ability. To socialise as a family can be difficult + our family relationships can be stretched

More information is attached on a separate sheet

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I need help with ... easier access to the pension so financially the stress is not so great on a family with only one average income. I would love some options and flexibility.

Would like to be able to pay good friends to be my carer rather than relying on respite services. Would love my carer based H.C.C. to be ongoing, so I don't have to ring all my electrical/water services every 6 months to tell them my card has been renewed. All those (so called) little jobs take a lot of time + energy. Would like more family based care, not interested in my child living in a respite centre in a town over 100km away with many clients of many ages. She needs family based holidays like we do. She is a child + needs the life of a child. Better transport arrangements for rural disabled children. I have a child who has low muscle tone + she is expected to sit on a bus 4hrs a day to just go to school. This is not on. My adult kids wouldn't cope let alone a little child. Better school options; Better paid + qualified teacher aids

More information is attached on a separate sheet

4. Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices

I think the Government can better help carers by ... good quality, appropriate care for children with a disability in their community, so carers can work + also have time with other family members who often miss out as carers are so busy caring.

Better accommodation + school options for older children (y. adults) with disabilities. So they can be part of a community + live + love in a small community with people of all walks of life.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing any recommendations you make to improve life for carers in Australia.

Yours sincerely

Meaghan

Date

20.5.08