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SUBMISSION

to

The House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Family & Human Services

Inquiry into Balancing Work and Family

from

Honeybrook Pre-employment Screening

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OVERVIEW

Honeybrook Pre-employment Screening is relatively new to the nanny and home carer industry. We welcome the Federal Government's commitment towards investigating and identifying strategies to assist families in balancing their work and family commitments. We hope that our submission is of value to the committee as we endeavour to outline our services and how we are helping parents with choice and flexibility when it comes to child care.

BACKGROUND

Honeybrook Pre-employment Screening is a multifaceted business catering for corporate businesses and private individuals. Pre-employment Screening or background checking is a relatively new industry in Australia; however, the U.S.A and U.K. have had very competitive markets in this area for the past 10 years. Much research has been conducted into resume fraud and the cost to businesses and individuals. Many applicants consider 'massaging' their credentials as harmless and an accepted practice. The simple truth is that exaggeration, omission or fabrication of important details on a resume is fraud. Without the facts, employers are unable to make an informed decision. Honeybrook Pre-employment Screening helps to take the guesswork out of recruitment and particularly assist those individuals with little knowledge of recruitment and background checking.

Recently, we have steered the direction of our business towards assisting private individuals in employing domestic service staff. This facet of our business was developed from our own frustration and naivety in employing a nanny to care for our, now 8 month old son. Whilst the agencies had nannies available for our needs we had no knowledge of the individual's background and we were about to let them into our home and care for our son. We wanted more control over the selection and recruitment of our nanny because of this extremely sensitive position. We aim to assist parents who require alternative and flexible child care solutions and help them make a more informed choice.

We assist parents in conducting a background check on their candidate which includes a criminal history check, Working with Children check, qualification checks, employment history & references, driving history, entitlement to work and much more. Our employment reference check is performance based and individualised depending on the industry. We verify the identity of the referees provided and make sure that we speak to actual past employers. Most checks can be completed in 3 business days and our clients are provided with a comprehensive and detailed report.

We offer parents:

- ◆ peace of mind
- ◆ a greater sense of security
- ◆ confidence and trust in their carer

More information can be found at www.honeybrook.com.au

REGULATION

Parents are facing a child care crisis and need alternative solutions and choice in the type of care their child/ren requires. The current system is unable to provide for many families and is not flexible enough for their individual needs. It has been recognised that the nanny/home carer industry is a solution that provides many mutual benefits to parents, carers and government alike. Regulation of this industry is paramount. We have found that many parents need to have the recruitment process of employing a nanny de-mystified for them. Whilst parents are able to interview and select a candidate, they are unsure about their own skills and ability in screening their candidate thoroughly. In addition, the financial incentives or rebate offered to parents using child care should be equal, irrespective of the environment and type of care.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Honeybrook Pre-employment Screening believe the following recommendations would assist in addressing the child care crisis that parents are currently facing and offer more choice to families.

Registration

- ♦ A formal registration system for nanny and home care providers.
- ♦ **Minimum** requirements for registration would be a Certificate II, CPR First Aid Certificate, Criminal History check and a Working with Children check.
- ♦ Registration is renewable every 1-2 years.
- ♦ Comprehensive education for parents regarding their choices and options for child care and the various services available to them.

We believe that both a Criminal History and Working with Children check needs to be conducted for nannies and home carers. We regard the position of a nanny/home carer as highly sensitive and similar to other positions and industries that require thorough background checks. In addition, a Working with Children check does not include convictions such as fraud, theft or motor vehicle crimes. When parents are considering employing someone to work in their own home, those elements of a person's character and history are very important.

Taxation and Rebates

- ♦ The cost of employing a nanny should be tax deductible. This includes advertising and screening costs (if applicable).
- ♦ Once nannies and home carer's are registered, parents are able to claim the child care rebate equivalent to that being introduced July 1 2006.