

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, 7 February 2006 1:08 PM

**To:** Committee, FHS (REPS)

**Subject:** Submission to the Standing Committee on Family and Human Services - Inquiry into balancing work and family.

Good afternoon,

I wish to specifically discuss points 2 and 3 in the terms of reference.

I have recently rejoined the permanent part time workforce after six years of contracting work. My children are 6, 3 and 2.

I started my family late (32) and so had an established career when I left the full time paid workforce. Recently we decided I would return to more regular work, as contracting work is hard on the family, and ad hoc child care almost impossible for us to find. We have no family support for child care, and working as a contractor is not predictable, so child care had to be permanent even if the work was not.

At this stage I have a three day per week position, using my skills as a training curriculum designer and facilitator, but only two permanent days of child care. My employer has been very flexible, but this arrangement has meant working well after the kids have gone to bed, trying to beg borrow and steal child care from friends who have their own children, or using a nanny agency that costs as much as I earn on the day.

I have had to cancel my arrangement with the nanny agency as it is ludicrous to work and give it all away in tax and child care costs – why aren't the subsidies for in home care as good as the child care centres? I would like to see child care costs as a tax deduction.

At this stage my choices are not great. I have to choose another child care centre and upset my children again, continue giving my total income on that third day to a nanny, or hope that my friends don't become utterly sick of looking after my two youngest boys for nine or so hours every week. All this whilst trying to make a commitment to my employer that I will work professionally and productively.

Some people may say – why on earth go back to work then? If you chose to have children, then surely that's your problem?

I say to those people:

- Everyone has the right to work and put their skills to good use, to feel productive and as though they are contributing to the family income, to the community and to the country
- I worked full time and paid the highest tax for many years before I had children. I feel I have the right to be supported now in my decision to return to work and contribute taxes again
- If I waited until my children were at school I would be into my 40's and probably struggle to find permanent work that I am qualified to do
- My children will be the tax payers of the future, and I believe showing them a good work ethic is important
- I studied for many years whilst I worked full time and am simply not prepared to see that go to waste – I have something to offer the marketplace and feel it would be a terrible loss if myself and other women in the same situation could not go back and use their hard earned skills.

I look forward to hearing the outcome of this inquiry.

Thanks, and have a great day.

Jenny De Lacy  
[REDACTED]