

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Budget Estimates 2012-2013**

**Outcome 1 – Early Childhood, Working Age and Indigenous Participation**

**DEEWR Question No.** EW0347\_13

**Senator Back asked on 30 May 2012, Hansard page 48**

**Question**

***Helpdesk Line***

Ms Taylor: No, we have not. But we can give statistics on the number of parents who have contacted us about a particular thing, if you like. Senator BACK: I was trying to get a handle on the degree of satisfaction you are finding from the department's point of view in programs, including but not only this one. Senator BACK: When you are able to provide some of that information on notice, it would be interesting to see how the responses by parents in the different states stack up. As usual, I would be most interested in knowing if there are any differences emerging within rural and regional as opposed to the city, as you probably know. Ms Taylor: I can take that on notice because, as I say, there is the ability for parents to respond directly to us.

**Answer**

Families may contact the Department about early childhood related issues in a number of ways including the telephone lines managed by the Department's Contact Centre, the online feedback form available on the Department's website and the Child Care Support Line (also known as the Tip Off Line).

During the period from 1 July 2011 to 26 June 2012, a total of 25,972 enquiries attributed to families, parents/guardians or the general public were received by the Child Care Access Hotline, the MyChild Line, and the online feedback form (on an early childhood topic). Of this, New South Wales and Victoria generated the most enquiries and accounted for 32 per cent and 21 per cent of enquiries respectively, while Tasmania and the Northern Territory generated only 1 per cent of enquiries each. Child Care Options and Child Care Fee Assistance were the two most popular types of enquiries, accounting for 40 per cent and 36 per cent of enquiries nationally. Statistics on these enquiries are set out in detail in Tables 1-3.

The Department's Child Care Support Line (also known as the Tip Off Line) received 3620 calls during the same period with most calls relating to Child Care Benefit or Child Care Rebate payments and account disputes. Statistics on these enquiries are set out in detail in Table 4.

**Table 1:** Enquiries received by the Child Care Access Hotline, the MyChild Line and the online feedback form (on an early childhood topic), and attributed to families, parents/guardians, and the general public by state and territory – 1 July 2011 to 26 June 2012<sup>1,2,3</sup>

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Unattributed	Total
No of enquiries	8248	5539	5028	1286	2069	378	318	931	2175	25972
% of total enquiries	32%	21%	19%	5%	8%	1%	1%	4%	8%	100%

**Table 2:** Five most popular categories of enquiries from families, parents/guardians, and the general public received by the Child Care Access Hotline, the MyChild Line and the online feedback form (on an early childhood topic) – 1 July 2011 to 26 June 2012<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Category	No of enquiries	Proportion of total enquiries
Child Care Options	7848	40%
Child Care Fee Assistance	7129	36%
Child Care Services	2259	11%
National Quality Framework	474	2%
MyChild	425	2%

**Table 3:** Proportion of enquiries from each jurisdiction against the five most popular (national) categories of enquiries – enquiries received by the Child Care Access Hotline, MyChild Line, and the online feedback form (on an early childhood topic) – 1 July 2011 to 26 June 2012<sup>1,2,3</sup>

Category	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Unattributed
Child Care Options	31%	30%	33%	35%	21%	42%	35%	42%	6%
Child Care Fee Assistance	30%	32%	28%	29%	30%	22%	22%	27%	4%
Child Care Services	9%	9%	1%	9%	10%	9%	9%	12%	2%
National Quality Framework	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
MyChild	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%

<sup>1</sup> The statistics in Tables 1-3 include enquiries transferred to the Child Care Access Hotline and the MyChild line from the Department's general enquiries line.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics on enquiries received by Text Telephone for hearing impaired (TTY) have been excluded because a breakdown of the nature of the enquiries is not available.

<sup>3</sup> The level of data collected by the Contact Centre is insufficient to categorize these enquiries by metropolitan, regional or rural classification.

<sup>4</sup> Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

**Table 4:** Calls to the Department's Child Care Support Line (Tip Off Line) – 1 July 2011 to 28 June 2012<sup>5,6</sup>

<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Number of calls</b>	<b>Proportion of total enquiries</b>
Account dispute	Parent disputes the amount owed to service or items charged	569	16%
Formalise enrolment	Service has not recorded the family's details to allow payment of Child Care Benefit (CCB) and/or Child Care Rebate (CCR)	95	3%
General	General enquiries or complaints from families	135	4%
JET	Queries about additional assistance through the Jobs, Education and Training Child Care Fee Assistance program	58	2%
Missing data	Parent queries whether all attendance and absence data has been submitted correctly	82	2%
No CCB/CCR paid	Queries about whether CCB and/or CCR has been paid correctly	135	4%
Category not specified	All other calls to this line	2546	70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>All calls to this line</b>	<b>3620</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>5</sup> Disaggregation of these calls by state or territory is not available.

<sup>6</sup> Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.