

# Child-care laws horrific: US expert [AU] <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Horin, Adele

**Source:** Sydney Morning Herald

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 27 Sep 2007

AVAILABILITY  
See text below.

## EXCERPTS

A world authority on child care says Australians will one day "look back in horror" at the conditions governments have allowed to prevail in many of the nation's child-care centres.

Professor Ron Lally, co-director of the WestEd Centre for Child and Family in San Francisco, said a serious problem was the inadequate numbers of staff.

In NSW, state regulations stipulate a ratio of one staff member to five children aged under two, a ratio Professor Lally described as "ridiculous".

"Anyone who can remember taking care of babies will know it's ridiculous to think you can do a good job when one person has five babies at once," he said.

"Fifty years from now we will look back in horror at the quality of the care available to children under three in child-care centres, the same horror with which we look back on child labour laws of the 1900s."

...

His comments will bolster a new push in NSW for the state to implement a one-to-four ratio in infants' rooms in child-care centres. A coalition of child-care organisations has joined forces to begin a campaign next month, dubbed 1:4 Make It Law, despite the defeat of two similar lobbying efforts in the past five years because of the cost implications.

...

A survey of child-care workers by the Australia Institute last year found 40 per cent of community-based centres already operated at better than the legal minimum ratio. However, only 15 per cent of workers at the corporate giant ABC Childcare said the same of their centres.

...

- reprinted from the Sydney Morning Herald

**Region:** Australia and New Zealand <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** quality <sup>[3]</sup>

privatization <sup>[4]</sup>

---

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/07/09/child-care-laws-horrific-us-expert-au>  
**Links**

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/07/09/child-care-laws-horrific-us-expert-au> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/australia-and-new-zealand> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/quality> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/privatization>