

Why is Cicutto worth 100 child-care workers? [AU] ^[1]

Author: The Age

Source: The Age

Format: Article

Publication Date: 28 Jan 2004

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

What value do we attach to the job of a child-care worker? According to a report in The Age it could be "as little as \$6 an hour". That's hardly a living wage. It's exploitation at its worst.

But there was at least some good news for Australia's child-care workers last year. About 1500 of them in Victorian local government centres received salary increases of up to \$150 a week. For example, those with degrees or diplomas jumped from \$31,000 to \$39,000 a year. Directors moved from \$42,000 to \$50,000.

Last year's long-overdue increases highlight the appallingly low levels of pay that have prevailed for so long in the child-care industry.

What does it say about the value we place on the care and nurturing of our children, particularly those in their formative, most vulnerable years? Look at that \$31,000 from another perspective.

Last year Frank Cicutto, the CEO of the National Australia Bank, earned a tidy \$3.34 million in cash as part of a total remuneration package of \$7.7 million. David Morgan, his counterpart at Westpac, picked up \$3.92 million cash in a package of \$7.37 million.

Even if we take just the cash components of the salaries earned by those two gentlemen, it seems that the job they do is worth more than 100 times as much as that done by a qualified child-care worker. How do we explain that? What is the logic behind it?

So let's take yet another perspective. Last year the Prime Minister earned \$267,000 and the Premier of Victoria's annual pay packet contained \$247,000. In rough terms, that values their jobs at about eight times that of a child-care worker, but only one-twelfth as important as whatever it is that Cicutto and Morgan are doing.

The values are wrong. Frank Cicutto and David Morgan do not have jobs that are 12 times more important than those of John Howard or Steve Bracks. Their work is not 100 times more vital to the future of this country than caring for young children.

It comes down to one simple rule: money talks. And big money positively shouts. The pursuit of profit can easily be translated into high salaries. (And so can the ability to lose money, as we have seen all too often recently.)

But if we turn to non-profit areas where the outcomes are those less tangible social ones - for example to child care, teaching, nursing or even politics - well, the job is their reward, isn't it? They're not in it for the money.

So it's OK to pay them peanuts. (Although when it comes to politicians' perks and their outrageous superannuation scheme, they're gold-plated peanuts.)

Another perspective? Last year Lleyton Hewitt's income was an estimated \$11.6 million. That's 374 qualified child-care workers. The male and female winners of the 2004 Australian Open will each earn \$1.2 million. That's equivalent to almost 39 child-care workers. Or 4.5 prime ministers.

And it'll only take them two weeks.

- reprinted from The Age

Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[2]

Tags: staff ^[3]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/04/03/why-cicutto-worth-100-child-care-workers-au>
Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/04/03/why-cicutto-worth-100-child-care-workers-au> [2]

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