

Push to axe 'childcare' PC gone mad ^[1]

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EXCERPTS.

The term "childcare" should be cut from job descriptions and names of government departments, an early childhood advocacy group says.

Pam Cahir, the chief executive of Early Childhood Australia, says it should be replaced by the phrase "early childhood education and care" in order to recognise the sector's importance.

Childcare representatives are split over the push. One group says it's political correctness "gone mad".

But the union representing early childhood workers supports a change, saying it would show staff we're more than just "babysitters".

In a report on early childhood reforms, *Our Future On The Line*, Ms Cahir says governments should lead the way in changing the sector's language.

"I want to bring an end to 'childcare' and call it what it is, early childhood education and care," Ms Cahir said.

"A change as subtle as 'disabled' to 'people living with disabilities' opens up huge potential and empowers people.

"In the same way, the early childhood education and care sector needs to be recognised for the quality education, nurturing and care it gives to children."

Child Care National Association president Chris Buck said families wanted affordable care, not political correctness "gone mad".

He said the focus should be on rewarding staff, and training more, rather than on paying for new letterheads.

"The thought police have had a brain snap," Mr Buck said.

"Stop wasting money."

But the union that represents childcare workers, United Voice, welcomed Ms Cahir's push.

United Voice assistant national secretary Sue Lines said it was about highlighting the education role in early childhood care.

"It's recognition that childcare workers are not just babysitting," Ms Lines said.

The report also notes a huge spike in the number of children at childcare centres in Australia, highlighting the need to hasten reforms.

Ms Cahir said she was concerned that changes being made, such as improving the staff-to-child ratios to 1:4 for children under two, would be delayed.

Childcare Minister Kate Ellis said the Federal Government was committed to the reforms, to provide better outcomes for children.

Ms Ellis backed the move away from the term "childcare" because it was far more than a "babysitting service".

-reprinted from the Herald Sun

Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[2]

Tags: public opinion ^[3]

children's rights ^[4]

outcomes ^[5]

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Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/11/05/push-axe-childcare-pc-gone-mad> [2]

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

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/childrens-rights> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/outcomes>