

# United Voice union wants child care workers to get \$10 per hour pay rise <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS:

CHILDCARE workers are demanding taxpayers give them a \$10 per hour pay rise - on top of the \$300m wage increase just granted by the federal government.

The United Voice union has declared it "will not rest until every educator receives at least \$26 an hour or higher".

And it wants taxpayers to pick up the \$1.4bn a year tab - claiming the only other option is to double the fees charged to parents.

Childcare workers now earn as little as \$16 an hour - the minimum wage - but the federal government recently funded a \$3 per hour pay increase for 40 per cent of daycare staff over the next two years.

United Voice has told a Senate inquiry into the government's pay-rise plan that it is preparing to lodge an Equal Pay application with Fair Work Australia, to boost pay rates in an industry dominated by low-paid female workers.

The union wants taxpayers - and not parents - to pay for the massive wage rise to 78,000 workers.

It claims that if workers wait for childcare centres to pass on inflation-based pay rises through enterprise bargaining, they will not be "paid what they are worth" until 2050.

"If employers were expected to pay our full claim for professional wages tomorrow, it would require parents to pay nearly double what they pay now in childcare fees," the union states in its submission.

"This is simply anathema to our members.

"If Government is truly invested in the quality of education of young children then they will have to be equally invested in paying quality educators to do that work."

The union insists "society as a whole" must pay for childcare workers' wage increases.

"United Voice has no interest in increasing costs for centres and fees for parents," it told the inquiry.

"Society as a whole - through the federal government - must provide the funding to ensure that any new wage rates decided by that case are delivered to educators".

Childcare centre operators have predicted fees will rise 10 per cent due to the Gillard Government's decision in March to lift staff wages.

The government's \$300m wages fund will pay grants to childcare centres that give their workers wage rises of \$3 to \$5 per hour, depending on their qualifications.

Workers will receive \$114 to \$198 per week extra - but the \$300m is only enough to cover 40 per cent of the workforce for two years.

Childcare centres would have to pay the higher wages themselves after two years.

The United Voice submission says the 60 per cent of workers who miss out will find their low wages a "bitter pill to swallow".

Total Childcare Solutions - a chain of 40 centres across Australia - has criticised the "discriminatory" scheme.

"It is our strong belief that we will lose key members of staff (to rival centres) in favour of up to a \$190 per week salary increase and we will be unable to replace them," it told the inquiry.

-reprinted from the Herald Sun

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

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

unions <sup>[4]</sup>

#### Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/13/06/united-voice-union-wants-child-care-workers-get-10-hour-pay-rise> [2]  
<https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/australia-and-new-zealand> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/staff> [4]  
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