

# Personal reflections



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**Personal Reflections**

In Australia, the children's successful transition from birth to productive young adults has never been crucial for the country's future, however they are our most crucial resource for the future and therefore we can not neglect their early development and care.

The industrial revolution brought economic prosperity enabling greater access to opportunities, but it witnessed increasing levels of crime and social disorder, the decline of families' affinity and decreasing levels of trust - leading to an intense fear of " the other" (Vimpani, 2004, p13). Many studies have proved that the majority of juvenile crime is committed by children (termed " early starters" by Tremblay) with behavioral disorders manifested in early childhood having poor attachment with their parents. Therefore I would like to suggest that more emphasis should be given to promote mental health and parenting skills which are used to encourage parents to be more adaptive and attuned to their children's changing needs. Also we should support parents through social and community services that respond effectively to the new realities of family life.

Transforming children into productive young adults has now been moved from effective parenting to early years child centers. The early years child centers shall be developed into an effective learning network. Such centers should provide a mechanism about their services to ensure that decisions reflect the aspirations of the parents and families and establish a sustainable link with the community. Colmer in her article has outlined certain key strategies for developing early years centers into a dynamic learning network.

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“ Indigenous child care - leading the way” of Margaret Sims and co-writers is incredibly relevant here. It is identified that increasing concern about escalating poor outcomes for children are not better. The writers' recommended changes are based on overseas research about the sorts of programs and initiatives that work in the developed countries. Since childhood services in Australia are fragmented and operate from a range of authorities, So I would recommend studying the article for more in-depth understanding of the topic.

The modern Australian political, economic and social landscape is dominated by discourse of economic rationalism underlines concomitant changes in childcare policies (Sumsion, 2006, p. 8). But it needs a high degree of collaboration and coordination to address a range of issues of care and education for children (both indigenous & non-indigenous equally) below school age. It is not just about changing policy and somehow linking it with grass root people, it is also about changing the way policy is made and how it is implemented. Therefore, “ we should consider shifting our priorities from advocacy (only) to activism and from policy to politics” by adopting a holistic approach and involving all factors of childhood care and education (Sumsion, 2006, p. 3).

### **Community Reflections**

Colmer (2008) states that “ In many ways the most critical learning occurs within the focused and motivated team” (P. 110). My emphasis is on the creation of a dedicated and motivated team in an early childhood environment.

A team is always made from a set number of participants/workers. If we disturb the structure of a team by adding or subtracting the number of participants then the word 'team' loses its actual meaning. In most of the centers we have trained staff and they better know their job but they try to use a shortcut for finishing their task. I would like to share one of my personal experiences when I was working as a student during my Diploma course practical in the city centre. I observed that during lunch time sandwiches were served on the table used for painting activity instead of serving them in the plate. This is totally unsafe and unhygienic way of presenting the food.

What are the factors behind their frustration? The main reason is the poor supervision and control of staff placement in childcare centers. The team of staff members is not maintained according to the Child-staff ratio. Child-staff ratios are an important quality indicator and can lead us to a focused and motivated team.

I would recommend the article “ Measuring child-staff ratios in child care centers: Balancing effort and representativeness” for more in-depth study.

Focus: Growing up in Australia: The impact of unique social culture environment on the next generation.

The appalling living conditions endured by many indigenous Australians contribute to poor developmental outcomes of child care. In a number of social indicators of well being, such as level of education, economic and employment status, environmental health and physical health services availability, the indigenous people are several times higher disadvantaged

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than the non-indigenous. Researches confirmed that there is cumulative effect of these social indicators on aboriginal children and are vulnerable to a number of risk factors within own families and communities and society at large. The Fitzgerald inquiry (2001) highlights the needs of learning parenting skills by increasing number of young indigenous parents. A review study identified a number of protective factors such as positive attention from parents, supportive relationships with other adults and extended family, family harmony and religion faith, for preventing adverse outcomes.

I choose to further investigate the issues that indigenous children and youth face within remote communities because of their way of life is whether;

a) A direct result of poor government funding? OR

b) A flaw in our society?

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