

Children's Services Strategy

ACTU Congress September 1991

1. Introduction

Congress notes the following achievements over the past two years in line with the implementation of ACTU policy for Child care and Children's services.

- An additional 50,000 places in the 1990/91 budget which subject to cost sharing by the States will bring the total places created by Labor Government since 1983 to 147,000 places
- The implementation of new classifications and rates of pay due to the Childcare Workers Test Case.
- The development of a Childcare Needs Survey and Feasibility Study by the ACTU for union employees.
- Establishment of a National Children's Services Advisory Council
- The establishment of guidelines for the implementation of Employer Supported Care in the Public Sector.

2. Properties

In line with the Children's Services Policy, Congress determines the following priorities:

2.1 Child Care Places

Increased provision of child care places across the full range of services

2.2 Employer Supported Child Care

Continued implementations of the Employer Supported program on an equitable basis and its further extension into the public sector.

Initiation of strategies to ensure that federal, state and local governments provide work-related child care for their own employees including the Higher Education Industry.

2.3 Funding of Child Care

Sufficient funding to ensure the adequate delivery of Children's Services at affordable costs for families.

2.4 Pursuit of Award Wages and Conditions

Sufficient funding to ensure payment of appropriate award wages and common industrial entitlements such as superannuation to workers employed in the Children's Services industry.

Adequate funding to allow the implementation of award restructuring and flow of Child Care Workers' National Test Case.

2.5 Family Day Care

Development of appropriate guidelines which ensure adequate support and resourcing of care givers. Including the recognition that caregivers are actually employees who should have the protection of award coverage.

The ACTU expresses concern at the failure of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission to establish award coverage for all family day care workers.

The ACTU and affiliates will continue to seek award coverage for Family Day Care workers.

The ACTU calls on the Federal Government to support the right of all FDC workers to award coverage and to provide adequate funding for award wages and conditions for FDC workers.

In achieving this objective the Federal Government is called upon to actively co-operate in seeking award coverage for such workers.

2.6 National Standards and National Regulations

Develop a set of National Standards which can be applied to all services.

Development of an agreed standard of National Regulations which will ensure optimal children's services throughout Australia.

Such National Regulations should not reduce existing standards and practices.

2.7 Accreditation

Implement a National System of Accreditation which should be mandatory for the purpose of obtaining any Government funding.

Establish a National Accreditation Board which has representatives of relevant organisations including Unions and Parent organisations.

3. Labour Market Programs

Development of childcare services as a central component of labour market programs, for the long

term unemployed and for disadvantaged job seekers, in various employment and training programs such as Newstart.