

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the current state of childcare provision and funding in Australia

I, along with many others, have advocated for some years for a fundamental reassessment of the Australian childcare system and the Four Corners program highlighted the urgent need for systemic change. The current subsidy model which channels taxpayer funds to private businesses has resulted in many publicised issues within the system.

Nadia Mitsopoulos' interview on ABC720 on Tuesday, 18 March with Matt Grudnoff, Senior Economist at the Australia Institute articulated many solutions, including direct funding for childcare to State and Territory governments. The Federal Government is urged to prioritise this funding approach, enabling the construction of daycare centres on, or near, primary schools. Integrating childcare into the public school system is a logical step, particularly as the Government moves towards achieving its goal of free childcare. I seek your support for this initiative.

This transition would require a fundamental shift in the current funding framework. While the upfront investment in building these facilities would be substantial, the long-term cost savings would be significant. By eliminating the ever-increasing subsidies paid to private operators, the Government would be demonstrating responsible fiscal management, as the inherent efficiencies of locating childcare within existing school infrastructure are undeniable.

I urge you to seriously consider the solutions proffered by Mr Grundhoff and others. Transitioning childcare into the public school system would constitute a significant political victory. Providing affordable, high-quality childcare is a desired goal for most parents. Continuing to funnel taxpayer money into for-profit childcare is not in the Australian people's best interest.

I will watch developments in the sector with interest.