

My name is Hanna Jenkin. I am a single mother of a two year old. I have planned my re-entry into the workforce which coincides with my daughter starting school. At the moment I use family day care for 6 hours a week to conduct work experience in teaching yoga and groupwork.(unpaid for your info centrelink.) I intend to be on welfare for at least another 2 years. Shock horror.

I am writing this submission in a personal frank manner in response to the government's draconian punishment legislation that insists that single parents accept any work offered. Why would I waste my time pursuing a career that is not my passion or upskilling in an irrelevant area?

I recently burnt out from working a salary full time position 10 hours a day and my family fell apart, because I wasn't able to parent the way I wanted to, for wanting to stay upskilled in the health industry. As a result of not being superworking mum I lost my relationship with her dad. Money isn't everything Johnny.

I am deeply grateful that I live in a country that honours the essential work of early childhood development and quite frankly my daughter is in fantastic shape because I have sacrificed my income, lifestyle and career development instead of abandoning her to the random inconsistencies of child care centres with underpaid overworked mostly young female workers.

Yes I sound like a green voter. If this legislation is passed I will be looking at residing elsewhere. Perhaps new zealand, where there is a female leadership that respects the foundational leadership of women parents and the work we doing in laying down new grounds for our society.

I am interested in non-violent communication, parenting effectiveness training, we go to playgroups and community led parent support groups where our kids learn how to play without competition, violence or consumerism, toy free often.

Imagine that, not relying on television or material aids. Perhaps a parent led and paid enquiry into new learning models that promote anti bullying. Hmmm. theres a recommendation.

I am trying to figure out on the parenting payment, how I can afford to send my daughter to a steiner school or some alternative education model which will honour the little unique person I am blessed to know instead of some learning stat for mainstream education funding.

Maybe the money allocated in the budget could go towards alternative education models implemented in mainstream schools so I would be more interested in sending my girl there. Recommendation no 2.

I would hate to be punished for not agreeing to someone elses agenda for how I spend my time. It feels like australia is moving further and further towards fascism.

I am deeply offended that the government implies that single parents are somehow social failures needing extra assistance to pull their fingers out and get a 'real job'. I don't know any other workload that is 24 hour on call, without breaks, requiring multi-tasking, no super or sick breaks etc. Do you?

If the government chose to resource parents as leaders, looked at funding models of parenting as work, instead of ignoring the existing job we do and encouraging us back into the work force, what would our society look like?

Recommendation no 3. An enquiry into exactly what is it that we single parents do with our lives and kids. Led by us of course, quantitative and qualitative analysis. Focus groups, You could employ me as a consultant then I'd be bags not for the irrelevant job requirement to keep my parenting payment.

Perhaps people would move away from burnout and back into slow culture, real food, sustainable methods of living, they may make more conscious plans for their lives and not need the \$3000 bribe to have more kids.

They may get out of credit card desperation to fill the void for nourishment with externals by spending more time at home. They may conserve more energy and prevent further resource depletion. There may be less crime and more community capacity building, less domestic violence, and mental health. Isn't it 1 in 4 has a mental health problem? Why? isolation, isolation, drugs, addictions, lack of real relating, lack of time spent caring.

I recommend That the government begins by asking single parents to shape their own lives, the leadership of their families and our society by trusting that their current situation might just be enough.

Stop judging us. I am so sick of centrelink staff doubting my integrity in their body language, tone of voice, particularly in conservative country towns where there is a conflict about stay at home values and modern empowerment ideals that isolate the real needs of children.

I chose not to abort my child even though she was unplanned and I was a uni student. Because I took a year off I have eliminated my chances of graduating from the uni of qld, for taking too long to finish my degree, breastfeeding and doing community work as unpaid service work.

I am delighted that I serve her first instead of myself. I consider myself to be very responsible, adaptable and capable of offering some fantastic knowledge and wisdom about a balanced life.

I don't feel the slightest bit of guilt about accepting the parenting payment because this is what I am doing. I am a parent, I am not doing other work right now, and I do need to pay rent, petrol and food and phone bills and clothing costs for my daughter.

I know, why doesn't the government design intentional communities employing single parents to use public land for housing that uses permaculture, home schooling, and sustainable technology. Then you wouldn't have to pay me a benefit because I could live rent free, grow my own food, ride bicycles around, share communication networks and knit and sew my own clothes developing country style.

I know many many single mothers just like myself who live financially just on the poverty line are extremely creative, brilliant educators, cooks and leaders of their families. Don't insult them by making them do work that is not their truth or disempowering their real skillbase, offering them what a measly \$100 more a week for massive burnout. Policy leaders you try doing 2 or 3 jobs and see what it is like!

I hope you are stimulated by more honest response, I am available for token single mother media grabs but you can't use my picture on a report.