



## MEDIA STATEMENT

Wednesday, 9 October 2016

# Cash Bonuses for Putting Kids in Care

### In response to the Government's Child Protection Summit today:

Summits and honest conversations are integral to the bettering of children in care, but CPSU/CSA members hold little hope for the government to actually implement any suggested changes.

As revealed to the Union, the Government has little intent to improve its Child Protection services at all, instead preferring to privatise and contract out the work – providing cash bonuses for the companies who do it.

Mimicking a scheme that has already failed in the US, the state government is currently considering a policy which would deliver a \$5000 cash bonus to any Non-Government Organisation placing a child into a permanent care arrangement, regardless of whether the arrangement holds up, proper assessment of carers or how appropriate that care is.

They have also not given assurances that these cash bonuses would be a one-off payment; with many children in care being “bounced around” to multiple carers over their period of care. Often complex care needs children see seven to eight unsuccessful care arrangements, that could mean up to \$40,000 in payments to a private company.

The Summit also comes as the Department prepares to abolish positions linked with the StrongFamilies program, a program praised in the 2007 Ford Review as forming the basis of the Department's family support role.

### Toni Walkington, Secretary CPSU/CSA:

“Once again this government is creating profits for its big business mates and turning a blind eye to actual issues that need attention.

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“They are suggesting a poorly thought out process of multiple cash bonuses for placing kids in care.

“The policy lessons have already been learnt in the US, where agencies intentionally remove children from families to receive a taxpayer provided cash bonus. It is fraught with danger.

“CPSU/CSA members can already tell you what this summit will suggest; more early intervention, preventative programs and more case workers to deal with the skyrocketing number of kids coming into care.

“Caseworkers develop enduring relationships with their kids and vulnerable families; we already know they are a crucial element to getting better outcomes for the future.

“Currently caseworkers are overwhelmed with the number of cases on their desks, plus the government cuts to preventative programs means we are seeing increases every year.

More information on the summit here: <https://news.wa.gov.au/supporting-kids-in-care-to-better-adult-outcomes/>

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**AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT:**

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