

PARENTS ARE PAYING BILLS LATE BECAUSE OF CHILDCARE COSTS

Parents across Australia are paying bills late and believe their careers are adversely impacted because of the cost of childcare according to The Parenthood's latest survey.

"The Parenthood's survey, out in today's Sunday papers, shows just how drastic things have become," said The Parenthood's Acting Executive Director Nicole Lessio.

"While this year's Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) report presents the facts, our survey shows what those facts mean in people's lives, demonstrating where the statistical rubber meets the road," said Ms Lessio.

The survey results were surprising even to The Parenthood.

"Parents have been telling us anecdotally that they're really struggling, and we know ourselves just how much of our family budget is being spent on childcare, but we had no idea how many families were late paying bills due to childcare fees, for example," Ms Lessio said.

"And the number of parents who said that their careers were affected (over two thirds) means we're just not getting this quite right," Ms Lessio said.

While the government's childcare reform has passed, it doesn't take effect until July 2018 – and that means another whole year of pain for parents.

"Maybe out of pocket childcare costs weren't an issue for the majority of politicians who decided parents could wait, but our survey shows very clearly that the rising cost is hurting families right now," Ms Lessio said.

"We're asking the Turnbull Government to bring forward one element of their childcare reform package – raising the childcare rebate cap – from 1 July 2018 to 1 January 2018 to save parents another year of pain.

"Children shouldn't have to miss out on early education because their parents hit the rebate cap – yet that is the reality because some parents simply can't pay the full fees when the rebate runs out," said Ms Lessio.

"The high cost of childcare doesn't just affect a parent's ability to work, it adversely affects a child's learning journey," said Ms Lessio. "The early years are crucial for learning, so pulling kids out of early education and care is a problem for all of us."

"That is why The Parenthood has started the #raisetherebate campaign," said Ms Lessio. "Parents need help now, not in another year's time."

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The Parenthood SURVEY DATA:

96% of respondents said they used childcare.

Of the 4% who didn't, 67% said it was because they couldn't afford childcare.

46% of respondents are charged between \$101 - \$125 per day.

20% (one in five!) are paying even more than that.

More than one in five respondents (21%) say they're basically working to pay childcare with 57% saying they're only marginally better off working.

29% say they're paying double their grocery bills in out of pocket childcare expense, 18% say triple, 21% pay the same as their mortgage with 18% saying they pay MORE than their mortgage out of pocket.

More than a third (34%) of respondents said they have been late paying their bills, mortgage or rent because of childcare expenses

Two thirds of respondents (66%) said they believe the cost of childcare is holding them back in their career.

The spread across the country of the respondents is as follows:

1% NT

33% NSW

5% ACT

23% VIC

24% QLD

7% SA

6% WA

1% TAS