

Public Policy Changes Past, Present and Possible Future



Overview of Presentation

- View of Australian women, children and carers
- Policy tools used to develop family day care
- Impact of ABC and COAG
- Future family day care provision
 - public good, private or hybrid

Why women need child care

- 1900's Welfare – loose women and neglected children
- 1950's 'Bad' mothers – childcare as a parenting intervention
- 1970's Failure as 'superwomen'; failing to care for young and elderly
- 1990's Workforce participation
- 2008 Care as education

Industrial conditions prior to family day care

- 1900's Volunteers – Charitable, philanthropy, Baby Farming
- 1950's Kindergarten teachers paid from parent fees
- 1970's Equal pay cases improves kindergarten teacher conditions

Carers industrial conditions 1970 – 1990's

- 1970 First Family Day Care service established; paid enough to cover their costs
- 1988 Municipal Employees Union wins – employee status in the Industrial Commission (Victorian and Tasmanian – Carer's Association)

Carers industrial conditions 1970 – 1990's

- 1991 Federal government challenge overturns decision- carers are contractors
- 1995 NSW FDC carers earning 2/3 of Child Care award
- 1997 De-regulation of fees begins
- 2000's Carer Association representatives invited to government consultations.
- 2006 Boundaries and Cap removed

Carer industrial conditions in 1990's

“low payment, no fixed minimum income, long hours with a disproportionate relationship of payment to hours worked, uncertainty of hours, no relief from the job, no holiday or sick pay, lack of job security and lack of career structure” (Petrie, 1991:3.12)

Carer industrial conditions in 2000

Research continues to add issues:

The dichotomous role of field workers; to inspect and critique as well as mentor and support, paperwork, lack of OH&S advice, minimal access to professional development of a carer's choice, isolation, need for support when under investigation, changing risk management requirements for equipment and environment, fee collection (McInnes,etal:2008)

Valuing women's work

The traditional view of the nuclear family and the values that surround it challenged by feminist discourses.

Government ideology moves towards a rights framework and universal access to public goods.

40 years of discourse and policy making in relation to the benefits of 'stay at home mums v/s working child care using mums'.

2009 and into the future

Brain Research underpins the drive towards better services for children.

Evidence based research growth....the new mantra for child care

“Care without education is not care...” UNICEF 2008

Professionalisation of family day carers is appearing in legislative requirements and in consideration in more states...SA, Tas,

Workforce participation of Women

- **1947 = 8.6%**
- **1961 = 18.7%**
- **1971 = 32.7%**

(Brennan, 1994:59)

- **1979 = 40%**
- **2004 = 52% (ABS)**

Children Need Care:

1900's Neglected – Wellbeing

***1950's Social intervention -
Welfare***

***1970's Workforce participation –
Care***

2000's Education - brain research

FDC begins in the 70's when:

- *Women are achieving equal pay; and are*
- *Participating in the workforce in greater numbers;*
- *The trend towards contracting, consulting and home based businesses is growing;*
- *Caring for children is seen as not requiring any particular skills; (No brain research)*
- *Demand for care is quickly outstripping supply;*
- *Government is looking for cost effective models to deliver places in short time frames.*

2009 Policy Instruments

Nodality: *Information-Child care portal, hotline, pamphlets, media releases*

Authority: *Regulations, QA, State Curriculum, National Standards, Kidsafe, COAG, PAWG, EYLF*

Treasure : *Carer start up grants, new scheme grants, CCMS support grants, CCB, CCTR, EFT, RTAG, business tax deductibles, ISS, maternity leave.*

Organisation: *New legislation and movement between portfolios, CAP on places, Repeal in 1985, of section 11 of the CC Act requiring all services to employ trained staff; Operational & network funding and subsequent usage formula changes to establish and maintain schemes and influence their structure,*

The most significant authority instrument is the introduction of new legislation and its movement between portfolios — 14

Movement of Act

1972 Child Care Act is passed and placed in the Department of Labour and National Service.

1972 Child Care ACT, is moved by the Whitlam government from Dept of Labour and National services and placed with Education- within a universal access vision, and capital grants to establish NFP centres;

1975 Fraser Govt moved childcare out of Education into the Office of Child Care; When the department is reorganised it is moved to a new Dept of Social Security and named it the Children's Services Program;

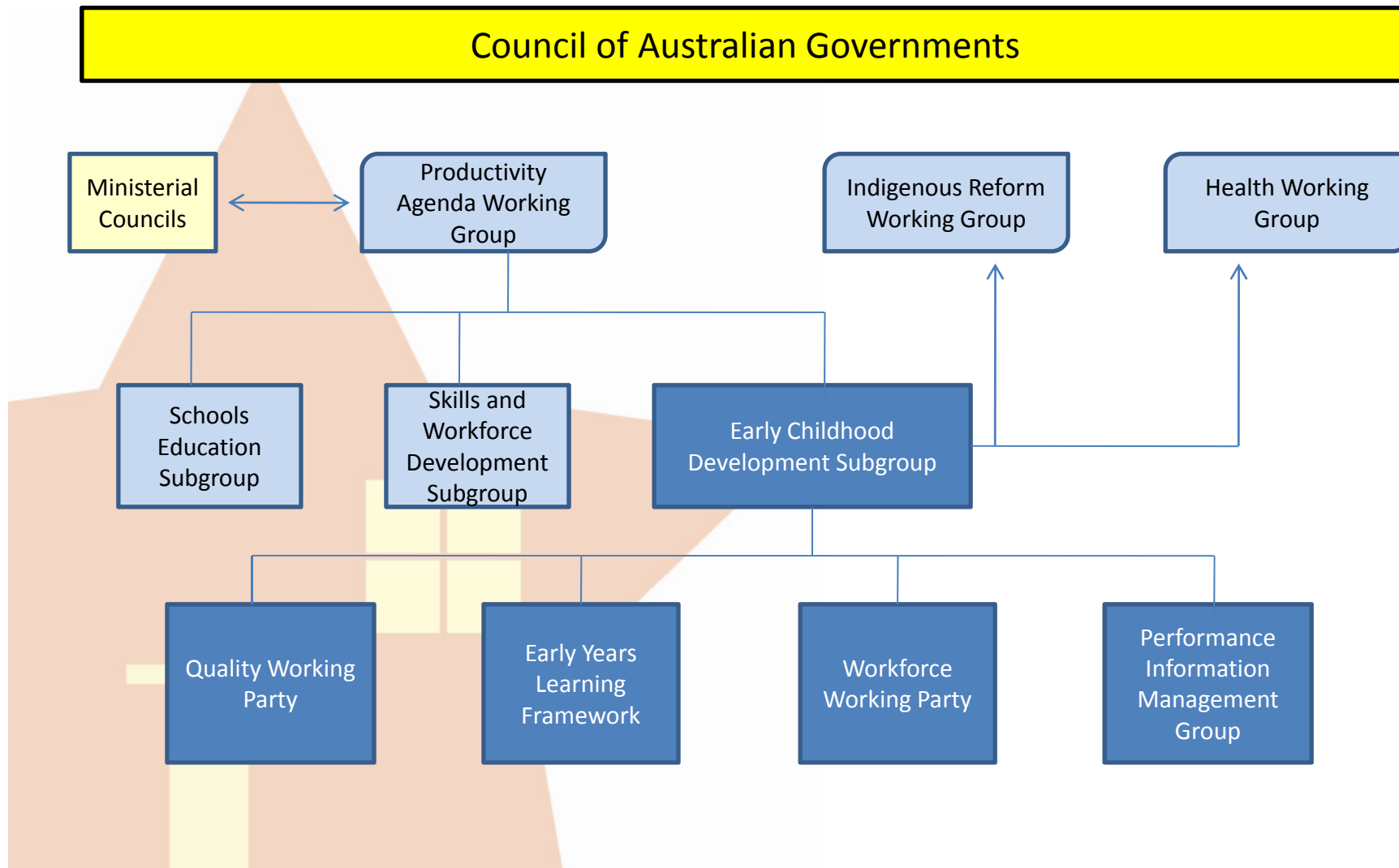
1987 Hawke Labour party- moved the Child Care Act to the Families and Community Services Department,

1996 Howard government extended the department - FaCSIA

2007 Act moved to the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations.

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COAG Structure



Labor Election Commitments

Early Childhood Development

Improving Quality and Accessibility of Early Childhood Education and Care Services

Quality	Workforce	Data	Support for Parents	Sites	Early Childhood Education	Indigenous Early Childhood Development
<p>National standards rating system Early years learning framework Streamlined regulation</p>	<p>University places HECS remission no TAFE fees National strategy</p>	<p>AEDI National Performance Information Framework</p>	<p>Home interaction program Increased CCTR Integrated services Better information about quality</p>	<p>260 early learning and care centres Children and family centres</p>	<p>Universal Access to Early Childhood education Early learning programs for remote Indigenous children</p>	<p>Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership</p>

Focus on Regulation

- COAG has established the **Business Regulation and Competition Working Group** to make improvements to regulation-making and review, including processes to ensure no net increase in the regulatory burden, and common start dates for legislation – their key goal is to:
 - ✓ Reduce the cost to business and taxpayers of Government agencies monitoring and enforcing regulation
 - ✓ Joined up Governments; streamlining to improve quality, reduce costs and sure transparency and accountability, equity, non-discrimination, opportunities, procedural fairness structures more formalised and made public (A to E)

Public v/s Private

- Rudd Government focus is on the “fundamentals of market design”, not free markets
- Outcomes important = designing the market to interact between private and public services, using the market combined with Government intervention to deliver policy outcomes (HUBS)
- Purchaser provider model continues
- Brain research is showing that our current structures of services need to change to be optimal for children and families.

Public-Private ideologies Purchaser – Provider Model

Public Choice which implies that government funded agencies are motivated by self interest and consequently should not advise on policy directions;

Agency theory which suggests that public administration may be assembled as contracts between parties;

Contestability which suggests that competition between suppliers creates more efficient and effective organisations

Discourse re public good vs private,

- **Are Children's needs met by discourses regarding who is the provider?**
- **Which public? Whose good?**
- **Collaborative approaches – HUBS – that meet social needs – breaking barriers between service types**
- **Care that contributes irrespective of the parent's relationship with the labour market**

Discourse re public good vs private,

- Can the government continue to meet demand without family day care?
- Can the government register and monitor carers nationally or directly as in WA?
- When all carers are required to be qualified what role will schemes play?
- Could government create new integrated service models for parents and carers to access specialist support?
- Is electronic communication, going to enable government to speak directly with individual carers and parents?
- What research do we need in family day care to build the evidence base around optimal models?



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Thank You!