

From Sonja

Dec 21/7/08

Submission No. 989  
(Inq into better support for carers)

To : Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing & Youth  
P.O. Box 6021  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600 AUSTR.

I wish to make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth's Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

Briefly I will categorize my situation. I am 50 years of age and have three children. I care for

- 1) Scott, 14 y/o Severely Autistic - (non verbal)
- 2) Tom, 11 y/o Oppositional Defiant Disorder plus Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- 3) John, 15 y/o Speech & Language delay (now Main Streamed).

I wish to address the Terms of Reference and hope my input will be of benefit to you.

Careers assist people of any age to live a fulfilling, worthwhile existence. This can be recognized by increasing social awareness by media and community inclusion.

As a carer I would feel more able to achieve this with Financial assistance as the government no longer provides institutions in which our loved ones could be placed, we have to look after them at home.

This greatly increases isolation, and a full time burden on the whole family.

The barriers are:

Economic, as it costs money to employ staff to assist in the caring of "your person in need."

I am very isolated from "NORMAL" society.

Practical Measures.

I believe strongly, each state should have a FACILITY, "Resort", build, so the person being cared for can go there and be sport, POOL, GYM, OUTINGS, ACTIVITIES, GARDENS, etc

For two full weeks every year so the CAREER can have a proper - stress free

break from caring - knowing their loved one is well looked after. This would give the carer TRUE RESPIRE

It should be made available to all carers an up to date list of volunteers & paid carers made available for staffing from home. I may have the funding but finding staffing, adequately trained, and training them is not included in the funding allotment. (Also the funding is not enough to get the respite need, by myself.)

Post school options is also of major concern. My sons supervision needs are high and from what I can tell the facilities "workshops" are inadequate or even non-existent.

Occasional Respite Housing for people of all ages (as I believe Scott my 16 y/o will not access Weekend Respite after 18 years of age)

Group Homes, is essential, supervised group housing is needed.

"Couple's Respite" Weekends - counsellors & social integration needed.

## Strategies

I believe the government has many good strategies in place.

To enhance these existing would require more funding, the strategy is good just not enough money to implement it/them.

Definitely more money is needed in the care industry and possibly amalgamation of services so there is no overlap.

The Local Area Co-ordinator is invaluable - they can help carers access services.

Services Needed. - (not in order)

- : Red Cross: monthly support group.
- : i.dentigwa. weekend respite
- "    personal workshops.
- "    couple workshops.
- "    autism assoc. weekend respite
- : silver chain: Commonwealth Respite Care Services. - (more funding needed)

- Silver Chain have a guide like that allows a ~~carer~~ silverchain worker to come into the home to look after the "disabled child" but will not look after my other two children - what do I do I lock them in the shed so I can go out for respite.

show me how that rule is  
practical or even fair b.

When it all comes down to it  
the government is addressing a lot  
of issues, though, not all!  
The need is more money,  
more funding to be distributed  
around already existing organisations.

I hope you can glean some  
information, I am available for  
more information

Sonja