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Systemic crisis: IEU statement on Four Corners' exposé of ruthless childcare operators

The union representing teachers in the early childhood education and care sector is shocked and saddened by [ABC Four Corners' reporting today](#) on the unacceptable treatment of young children in some centres.

"We share the anger and disappointment of parents whose children have been harmed by a sector in systemic crisis through the failings of some for-profit childcare centres," said Independent Education Union of Australia NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews.

"Children should never be the victims of cost-cutting by private equity and other for-profit players to boost profits and shareholder returns."

The IEU stands with our many members in calling for the best possible education and care for young children, which lays the vital foundations for their development and lifelong learning.

"The business model of for-profit childcare providers needs reform – the focus on profits rather than high-quality education and care is behind the serious safety breaches uncovered by *Four Corners*," Matthews said.

The regulator needs to ensure that all centres meet the accreditation standards required by the law and expected by parents. Highly qualified staff are crucial.

The union has repeatedly raised issues that impact the early childhood sector such as ongoing teacher shortages leading to inadequate staffing ratios.

This low-paid sector has long struggled with an acute staffing crisis. The IEU supports the federal Labor government's move to attract and retain the right staff in this crucial sector through 15% pay rises over 2024 and 2025 for teachers and educators.

The union is also pursuing pay rises for teachers in community preschools, where there is a similar staffing crisis. These teachers have the same qualifications as their colleagues in schools, but are paid substantially less. We are fighting to change that.

"The wellbeing of children should never be sacrificed for the sake of profit," Matthews said.

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The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch represents over 32,000 teachers, principals and support staff in Catholic and independent schools, early childhood centres and post-secondary colleges.

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