**Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review**

Submissions from women and men who have experienced discrimination at work while pregnant, or while on or on return to work after taking parental leave

**Submission Number: 159**

**Part C Submission Response**

This questionnaire is of course largely irrelevant to woman running their own business from home. Problems faced by women in this situation are being ignored.

I went back to work a week after my son was born. When I tried to get child care part time when my son was a year old I was only offered Monday or Friday, "to start with" with a promise of possibly more days. I needed Tuesday Wednesday or Thursday. Since Monday and Friday are often public holidays I often lost my day and still had to pay and was not offered a replacement day. If I did not pay I would lose my days entirely and all hope of more days. When I complained the staff said "but you get paid for public holidays". They had no understanding of what kind of job I had or why I wanted care. Perhaps they felt that since in the beginning my partner was in a public service job and got "paid for public holidays" this was how I got paid for public holidays.

In reality I used private care on work days and used my childcare days to study for my uni degree. I was not paid by my business for these days but had to pay for childcare even when the centre was closed for public holidays. After my partner was made redundant I still had to pay for public holidays.

I really struggled financially and with time for study since it was never organised to replace the day I paid for with an alternative day of care. This was supposed to be organised if a place became free in the following week but a place was never voluntarily offered. I presumed this might be because my son was impossible to put down for afternoon naps. He was not a difficult or naughty child just very alert and now at university.

Women in part time jobs and working in their own home businesses need consideration in this study too. We don't automatically have family and friends available to care for children. Trying to organise childcare for part-time of casual work is an expensive nightmare. Single parents changing location and jobs because of domestic problems are having a lot of problems.