

**NZEI Te Riu Roa Submission to the Education and
Science Select Committee on the
Education Amendment Bill (Number 2):
Removal of ECE regulatory requirements for
limited attendance centres**

6 August 2010

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Introduction

NZEI Te Riu Roa (NZEI) is a 127 year old professional organisation and industrial union that represents the interests and issues of its 50, 035 members. Our members include:

- teachers in the early childhood sector, primary and area schools
- support staff in early childhood and the compulsory schooling sectors
- principals in mainstream primary, kura and special schools
- advisers employed by schools and faculties of education in universities
- specialist education staff employed by the Ministry of Education.

We have an interest in the wellbeing of children.

NZEI Te Riu Roa comments on the potential impact of the Education Amendment Bill (No. 2):
Removal of ECE regulatory requirements for limited attendance centres

1. NZEI believes that under the Education Amendment Bill (No 2) the government will be taking a backward step in failing to ensure the safety of young children and babies in limited attendance services.
2. In particular NZEI is concerned that short-term early childhood services will no longer have to adhere to any licensing regulations. This has the potential to put children at risk and give parents and families unrealistic expectations about the safety of children.
3. NZEI recognises the value of services at places such as gymnasiums in terms of flexibility and convenience but believes parents deserve to know that their children are with qualified staff in a regulated environment.
4. NZEI supports the views of early childhood specialists that it would be deleterious to young babies and children to be left with unqualified people in an environment with no requirements supporting safety. This includes no requirements for police vetting, no first aid training, and no requirements for procedures for emergencies, evacuations, or for hygiene. Babies and young children are particularly vulnerable to infection in situations

where there are no rules governing, for example, storing infant formula or sanitation surrounding nappy changing.

5. Essentially the government is removing the safeguards around quality care and education for babies, infants and young children in these environments. This places them at risk.

Frances Nelson
NZEI Te Riu Roa National President

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