

Education (General Provisions) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024

Submission No: 1924
Submitted by: Hayley Beal
Publication: Making the submission and your name public
Attachments: See attachment
Submitter Comments:

From: [Hayley Beal](#)
To: [Education, Employment, Training and Skills Committee](#)
Subject: Ensuring Inclusive Education for Children with Disabilities: A Call for Action
Date: Monday, 25 March 2024 9:16:37 AM

Hayley Beal



Dear Committee Members,

As a homeschooling parent of a child with several disabilities, I am deeply disappointed by the proposed changes to homeschooling legislation. For many children with disabilities and neurodivergences, homeschooling is not just a choice but a necessity—an opportunity to create an environment where they can thrive at their own pace and in their own unique way.

My child whom I educate at home has Autism Level 3, ADHD and is very much pathologically demand avoidant. My son could not cope in the mainstream schooling environment when he started Prep in 2020 and right from the start he struggled in the classroom which was extremely sensory overwhelming and being in with rotating support staff who were barely in the room for an hour across a week, it was an extremely triggering environment. My child was often put in a small "reading room" off the main classroom and permitted to play the "education version" of Minecraft on his own designated school provided iPad instead of being adequately supported and encouraged to engage in learning activities his peers were. Rapidly school refusal behaviours increased to the point I was having to utilise his NDIS support worker funding for hours in the morning to try and get him medicated, dressed, transported to and then finally try and get him in to the school each morning with extreme difficulties and quite severe behaviours of concern displayed by my son. We would then have to collect him earlier from school, and again have support staff to help us deal with the post school melt downs and behaviours in the afternoons. It got to the point living like this while having other children to care for and a husband in the Defence Force I could not continue down this path for my own mental health and the health and wellbeing of my child. We made the decision to pull him out after three terms of constantly

advocating, meeting with the school, engaging with my son's therapists and psychologists and spending thousands of dollars on NDIS funded supports just around trying to attend school and the fall out that school was causing. We have not looked back at all, it took over a year to help our son reach a state of baseline where he would even engage in a somewhat structured learning activity but now at age 8 and just over 2 years at home my son is reading fluently and enjoying his Pokemon chapter books, he is writing in full sentences, he is amazing at maths and science and very much loving doing art work and cooking all on his terms and in his way he is learning and achieving so much more than I had ever hoped for. He never did sight words or home readers or even the work sheets the school sent home where he had barely made a mark on.

It is disheartening to see a focus on making homeschooling more rigid rather than addressing the systemic barriers that prevent many children with disabilities from accessing quality education in mainstream schools. Instead of imposing restrictive measures on homeschooling families, the committee's efforts would be better directed towards making mainstream schools more accessible and inclusive for all students, regardless of their abilities or differences.

Children with disabilities often face significant challenges in traditional school settings, where rigid structures and standardized approaches may not accommodate their diverse needs. Homeschooling provides a lifeline for these children, offering the flexibility and personalized support they require to learn and grow in a safe and nurturing environment.

Rather than limiting the options available to families, we should be working to ensure that all children have access to a range of educational opportunities that meet their individual needs and preferences. This includes advocating for greater resources and support for inclusive education practices within mainstream schools, as well as providing alternative options like homeschooling for those who require a more tailored approach.

In conclusion, I urge the committee to reconsider its approach to homeschooling legislation and to prioritize the needs of children with disabilities and neurodivergences.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Hayley Beal
Homeschooling Parent of a Child with Disabilities