

## The top 10 key findings in your state:

1. 814 ECEC educators from Queensland responded to our nationwide March survey of almost 4000 educators.
2. Educator retention and turnover will be a major problem for Queensland in the near future. 40% of Queensland's educators told us they intend to leave the sector long term. A shocking 76% of these educators want to leave the sector within the next three years and over a quarter (28%) in the next 12 months. All these figures are higher than the national survey results which shows 37% of educators wanting to leave in the long term, 73% in the next three years and 26% in the next 12 months.
3. Queensland's best and brightest educators are the mostly likely to leave. Queensland educators who are currently upskilling are more likely to leave than those who are not. For example, 51% of educators currently upskilling to an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) degree are intending to leave the sector compared to the 37% that are not. This intention to leave rate for those studying to be ECTs is more than 10% higher than the national figure. Only 40% of educators upskilling to an ECT degree nationwide are planning to leave. 38% of educators upskilling to a master's degree are also intending to leave the sector.
4. Like educators across Australia, Queensland educators told us that the top three reasons they want to leave the sector are:
  - 'Excessive workload and insufficient time to provide quality ECEC' (74%)
  - 'Low pay – I can't afford to stay' (59%)
  - 'Feeling undervalued' (49%)
5. Concerningly, of the Queensland educators who do intend to stay in the sector 47% say that they think about leaving 'all the time' or 'most of the time'.
6. Just over half of the Queensland educators surveyed (51%) would not recommend a career in the sector. This is significantly higher than the national rate of 46%.
7. The workforce crisis is a breaking point in Queensland:
  - Understaffing is rampant with 66% of educators saying that their centres are understaffed.
  - 70% of educators say that their workload has increased 'greatly' in the last few years.
  - Educators are not able to take leave when sick: 70% of educators said they 'often' felt pressured to avoid taking leave, and 66% said they had come to work sick or stayed at work after becoming sick due to staff shortages.
  - Over 90% of educators said they were concerned with 'under-the-roof' ratios, and that they compromise quality ECEC for children (90%), as well as their safety and wellbeing (92%).
8. Low pay is putting severe financial stress on Queensland's early educators. 68% of QLD educators surveyed said they 'always' or 'often' worry about their financial situation, and 84% said they would find it difficult to cover an unexpected, emergency \$400 expense.
9. The impact of all these issues – high turnover, understaffing, excessive workload, and low pay – is compromising the care and education of Queensland's children every day:
  - 78% of Queensland educators say they feel they do not have sufficient time to provide children with the quality ECEC they need.
  - More educators in Queensland (85%) report feeling rushed when performing key caring and/or educational tasks than educators nationally (82%).
  - Three quarters of educators in Queensland 'strongly agreed' that increased workload has compromised their ability to provide high quality early learning to children (74%) and provide them with the emotional support they need for their wellbeing (75%).
10. Queensland's educators in their own words: on feeling undervalued and understaffed and the impact of turnover on the important relationships between children and educators:
  - "I definitely feel more undervalued every year. We don't get the recognition we deserve, and this became even more obvious during COVID. We worked closely with children and families throughout the pandemic, but no one seemed to care about us at all." Educator
  - "We are constantly outside of ratio, which is highly dangerous. Staff members are pushed to the limits, exhausting themselves with longer hours and a larger workload. We have less and less time to spend with the children we're supposed to help to flourish." Educator
  - "[Staff turnover] is a big problem for the sector. Children and families need time and continuity to form bonds. It's only after bonds are formed that they are able to relax and get on with playing and learning to the best of their ability. Constant staff changes mean these bonds are broken again and again, so that children become more anxious and then parents become more anxious. And the process of building trust has to start all over again." Director