CHAPTER 2
IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING

“I want my teacher to be like batman and teach me how to fly ...”
(Student quoted in the response from the NSW Commission for Children and Young People).

The core factor contributing to quality student outcomes is the classroom teacher. The teacher’s understanding of the child’s unique needs and personality and their capacity to personalise a learning program are critical. The quality of the teacher depends on training, their mentoring and supervision, their own personality and love of children and most importantly their own continuous professional development.

This chapter will focus on the special needs of children at various stages of their development and learning paths. In analysing opinion about the child’s needs it will draw lessons for the teaching process and the roles the Department of Education and Training can play in facilitating a successful education for all. Essentially, this chapter is about the child and the teaching and learning process.

The chapter will include sections on issues raised in responses addressing:

- Good Teaching
- Early Childhood Years
- Primary School Years
- Middle Years
- Secondary School Years
- Students 15 to 19 Years Old
- Information Communication Technology (ICT).

Issues related to teaching and learning in TAFE are discussed in Chapter 5.

Each section of this chapter will conclude with Key findings and some ideas for consideration. These could be the basis of future decisions and programs.

This first section will focus on professional learning as the foundation for improving teaching and learning in classrooms. There was a major emphasis in all the consultation material on professional learning based on collegial support, mentoring, current knowledge of curriculum, further formal study and good teaching practice.