

# Put yourself in their shoes

Industrial Relations Commission  
blames WorkChoices for child  
labour exploitation.



The Howard Government must be held accountable for these laws.

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The full bench of the NSW Industrial Relations Commission has found that children employed by some corporations are being exploited in a “most unconscionable way”.

The full bench found that many well known franchisors had adopted a ‘template’ AWA provided by an IR consultancy company that was designed solely to reduce wages and working conditions of children by using the WorkChoices legislation.

In evidence the full bench heard that 13 per cent of those aged 12 to 16 years participated in an unpaid period of trial work; while 78 per cent were required to work additional hours and there was a widespread incidence of those hours being unpaid.

In other evidence the full bench heard about the 'Subway Maroubra Employer Greenfield's Agreement 2006-2007' which 'cashed out' certain penalties, loadings allowances and other award entitlements but provided no compensation for the loss of award conditions and reduced the hourly rate.

It also provided for highly flexible part time employment, with limited or no rostering conditions, thereby negating the need for casual employment, which used to attract either an award loading of 24 per cent or the *WorkChoices legislation* statutory minimum of 20 per cent.

The Howard government’s new IR laws make it legal to offer new workers AWAs that are inferior to existing conditions. How is it fair to young people entering the workforce for the first time?

How is it fair to school students who have casual or part-time jobs when they are faced with a ‘take it or leave it’ AWA?

The NSW Industrial Commission has been able to provide some protection for children. This is not the case in the rest of Australia. Put yourself in their shoes.