



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

Newsletter

Our Mission:

Early Childhood Australia will advocate to ensure quality, social justice and equity in all issues relating to the education and care of children from birth to eight years.

Our values are:

- The rights of children
- Leadership, excellence and respect
- Courage, honesty and openness
- Collaboration and diversity
- Justice
- Social inclusion of children

Early Childhood Australia Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of Early Childhood Australia. By publishing a diversity of opinion, we hope to provide a forum which promotes professional growth, creativity, and debate in the early childhood field.

What's On? September 2011

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			1 Disability Awareness Week	2	3 Cypriot Food & Wine Festival	4
5 Child Protection Week	6	7 Battle for Australia Day	8	9	10	11
12 Moon Festival - Chinese	13	14 ECA NT Members Meeting 6pm	15	16 Papua–New Guinea Independence Day	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28 Jewish New Year	29	30		



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Managers Report

Dear ECA Members and Friends,

The Branch is looking to involve our members more fully in discussions on topics that really interest you.

So in Darwin we are having an **open members meeting on 14th September at the ECA office in Winnellie**. We will be discussing the Early Years Learning Framework and will have a panel of educators who will share how their journey is progressing.

We are inviting members and non members alike to come and share your experiences and to hopefully go away with more ideas and a deeper understanding of how to embed the framework in your practice. This meeting is open to any educator who will be working with the Belonging, Being and Becoming Framework, no matter the setting you work in.

The EYLF talks about creating a culture of professional inquiry, where educators work together to discuss issues and explore new ideas. This process does not lead to 'quick fix' solutions but rather encourages educators to respond to all parts of the

NQF. PLP E newsletter Nos 19 *Myths and Realities*.

This will be the opportunity to have these conversations.

We will have ECA Resources on display that support the EYLF for you to look through.

The Professional Learning Program (PLP) continues to produce resources to assist educators to improve their practice. The *talking about practice series* of online videos are very useful to begin discussion about particular topics. There is supporting documentation you can download to assist you with how best to use the videos; great for staff meetings.

The online videos show educators talking about their work in a professional manner that is still accessible to the viewer. This is also good modelling for early childhood educators for when they are talking to parents or others about their work.

There are now 19 topics covered by the PLP E newsletters.

ECA welcomes suggestions for topics educators want addressed. We also value case studies of how educators are approaching the professional tasks of working with the EYLF and preparing for the NQS.

ECA would love to hear from NT educators working with the EYLF because the author hasn't yet been able to organise a visit here to capture our practice.

Go to www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/eylfplp/ to view all the resources, to sign up for the e newsletters and to access the online discussions forums and ECA's Facebook page.

Early Childhood Australia is currently reviewing our strategic plan for the next few years.

This will be passed at the annual Council Meeting being held in Hobart in early October. One area ECA has

been more active is in commenting through **Media Releases** on issues relating to young children.

We have included in this edition a copy of ECA's media release relating to the Australian Government's "Malaysia Solution" to Asylum Seekers who arrive by boat to our shores.

If you go to our website you can see what else ECA is speaking out about.

On a personal note I would like to express my thanks to the Committee, members, staff, colleagues and friends who offered their support to me over the past 7 months.

I was diagnosed with lymphoma in early March. The support including best wishes, prayer, positive thoughts etc have all helped me enormously. I am very happy to report that the treatments have been successful.

We often say our staff are our best assets, well, I can certainly say that the ECA team have proved that beyond doubt. They have been exceptional. Their practical support and ongoing thoughtfulness have been so important to my recovery. They allowed me to leave work without a second thought and to concentrate on getting well.

My sincere and lasting thanks to Gloria, Karin, Diane, Frances, Irene, Robyn, Julie, Erica and honorary staff member Morag.

Maree Toll

DEEWR would like to you know that the email inbox for queries about the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) eylf@deewr.gov.au has now closed as implementation of the EYLF is well underway.

Please direct all future messages to the email inbox ecquality@deewr.gov.au where all enquiries about the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care, including the Early Years Learning Framework, will be handled.

Dear ECA Members and Friends,

KidsMatter Early Childhood Update

The KidsMatter Early Childhood Pilot is still progressing very well!

KidsMatter Early Childhood (KMEC) is the first national mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention initiative specifically developed for early childhood services and is being piloted nationally in over 100 preschools and long day care centres throughout 2010 & 2011.

'Mental health in early childhood has been described as 'an ability to form satisfying relationships with others, play, communicate, learn and experience the range of human emotions' (Parlakian & Seibel, 2002). 'Research shows that the development of social and emotional skills influence and enhance children's quality of life and lifelong learning' (Denham & Weissberg, 2004).

Where are we up to in the pilot?

The KMEC pilot is now moving into **Component Four: Helping children who are experiencing mental health difficulties**. Recently we attended a workshop at the APS National Office in Melbourne about the component. Following that we delivered the Component Four Professional Learning Field Test to services who chose to take part.

Understanding mental health difficulties in early childhood using BETLS

BETLS is an acronym for 5 types of mental health information:

- B**ehaviour (what is the child doing)
- E**motions (what is the child feeling)
- T**houghts (how is the child thinking)
- L**earning (how is the child learning)
- S**ocial relationships (how is the child interacting)



Thank you to the pilot services who volunteered to be part of this field test. We look forward to hearing about the ways in which our pilot services will be helping & supporting children who are experiencing mental health difficulties.

Good mental health for children

Early childhood services with warm and responsive interactions between staff and children have a positive impact on children's development. Educators play a key role in introducing and maintaining protective factors in the lives of children. These provide children with a greater likelihood of developing good mental health which can have a positive influence throughout their lives. For example, children can have improved learning, ability to manage the transition to school and progress at school.

For further information visit the following website:

http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/ecconnections/CCH_Voll3_no3.pdf

If you have any questions about KidsMatter Early Childhood please visit our new website at

<http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/ec/>

or email/call me at

mbell@earlychildhood.org.au or 0448 408 444

Thanks, Morag
KidsMatter Early Childhood Facilitator – NT

KidsMatter Partners

KidsMatter Australian Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative has been developed in collaboration with *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*, the Australian Psychological Society, Early Childhood Australia and, with funding from, the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing and *beyondblue: the national depression initiative*.

Dear ECA Members and Friends,

A Success Story

It's been a busy year for all of us with lots of wonderful changes in the Early Childhood field happening all around us. For every Inclusion Support Facilitator, it is extremely rewarding to hear success stories from our services. They truly lend weight to our work, as they are the magical moments we all appreciate. They tell about the hard work of staff and their dedication to their role as educators, they are also evidence of achievements of young children entrusted to us who have been supported by early childhood educators to learn and grow in all aspects of their development. And there's something else those success stories convey, it's the vision early childhood educators share: To find better high quality ways of teaching young children, find out what drives them to learn and achieve and how they can be energized. Sir Ken Robinson (2009) commented on the various elements to education and emphasized the importance of the quality of teaching, which is quoted in the Educators Guide to the EYLF of Australia. He asks us to look forward and embrace change.

It takes intrinsic motivation and courage. Success will come to those who take opportunities to increase their professional competence, see choices and find relatedness in other professionals.

The following success story is a fantastic example of staff following a vision, embracing change, trusting in a child as a competent learner, opening up to latest research and networking with supporting organisations such as the Inclusion Support Agency, ECA NT Branch, Carpentaria Disability Services etc., and most of all taking the patience to facilitate unhurried learning.

My name is Susanne Gamble and I'm a group leader in a Long Day Care Centre. We have been supporting two children with additional needs in our group and have been working with Diane from the NT Inclusion Support Agency for the past 7 months on how best to support and teach them.

At the beginning of the year we began by showing the children two coloured photographs at a time. These photographs had activities on them. The aim was for the children to convey their wants and needs through the use of coloured photographs. We slowly began introducing additional coloured photographs, one at a time. In the beginning, the children wouldn't choose an activity and sometimes they would not want to accept any activities that were prompted by us, as staff.

By May, one of the children was pointing to the cards and was happy to be included in either the activity or the routines. Two weeks ago, one of the teachers was setting up a painting activity and while she went to get paper, the child went to the wall where the flashcards are hung and took the painting card, handed it to the teacher when she returned and said "Icture."

Last week this child was shown 3 flashcards to choose from: painting, drawing and puzzles. The child looked at the cards and rather than picking one she went over the wall, took the play dough card and handed it to the teacher. The teacher asked her if she wanted to play with play dough and she smiled and nodded.

I was so excited I had to call Diane and share this story with her. With the help of coloured photographs, the children now have the methods and ability to further engage in their own learning.

Susanne Gamble

Kids Brigade Childcare Centre





NT Children's Resource Library

Early Childhood Australia NT Branch
71 Coonawarra Road
(Cnr of Bombing and Coonawarra Roads)

Phone: 8986 7142
Fax: 8947 2884
Email:
erika.pickworth@ecant.org.au

Opening Hours:
Monday—Friday
8.30am—4.30pm



Welcome members,

NOTICE

There are some VHS tapes that are no longer needed and these will be put in the "Take for free" pot at the entrance of the library. They are still a valuable resource.

On the topic of CD's and DVD's – it has come to our attention that CD's and DVD's can have their memories wiped completely if they are left in the sun.

Please be careful not to leave any DVD's or CD's on the dashboard of your vehicle or on the window panes in your homes or Services.

Direct sunlight to discs is harmful for two reasons:

1. The sunlight's ultraviolet photons (the higher frequency of the sunlight spectrum) have enough energy to produce a photochemical reaction, altering the optical properties of the dye (recording layer) molecules.
2. The broad spectrum of unfiltered sunlight, infrared to ultraviolet (low frequency to high), can impart heat to the disc. The increased temperature generated by sunlight will accelerate the degradation or breakdown of the dye layer (recording layer) of the disc. The combination of high temperature and high relative humidity will further accelerate that degradation.

Please feel free to come and browse through our library. We have purchased a significant number of Teachers Resources and they are now available for loan.

Many blessings,

Erika



Dear ECA Members and Friends,

MEDIA RELEASE

8 August 2011

Malaysia solution must not extend to children under any circumstances

Sending unaccompanied children who are seeking asylum in Australia to detention in Malaysia is a breach of not only their human rights, but also their special rights as children and as refugees, according to the peak advocacy body for young children, Early Childhood Australia (ECA). ECA chief executive Pam Cahir today released a series of recommendations and said the best interests of children must be put ahead of defeating the people smuggling trade.

"It's a huge concern that children are being put into mandatory detention in this country, and even more disturbing that the Government is considering sending the latest boat, which has about 20 unaccompanied young people on it, to detention in Malaysia," said Ms Cahir.

"A compassionate Government should be promoting and protecting the rights of all children and young people, including those seeking asylum. Children are often the first casualty in war, famine or civil unrest, and by sending children who arrive in Australia by boat to Malaysia, this government is guilty of prolonging their suffering even further."

Ms Cahir said Australia's efforts to stop people smuggling – a dangerous, abhorrent industry – should never undermine our responsibility to protect and care for children.

"Imagine what these children have gone through. They have been separated from their families and made to be pawns in the people smuggling trade. Sending them on to Malaysia will only aggravate their trauma and cause them more harm.

"The government needs to show moral leadership in dealing with the complexities of this situation and place families with children and unaccompanied minors in the community

while their claims are assessed, not send them to Malaysia where it is out of sight, out of mind," Ms Cahir said.

ECA Recommendations:

1. Families with children and unaccompanied minors should be placed in the community while their claims are assessed.
2. In the event that an application for refugee status is unsuccessful and families and unaccompanied minors cannot return to their home country, families and unaccompanied minors should continue to live in the community until such time as they can return home.
3. Families should have access to the support they need to care for their children and participate in the community.
4. Unaccompanied minors should have access to the support they need to participate in the community.
5. All school-aged children should have access to the same education available to all other Australian children.
6. All young children and families should have access to the same range of children's services and funding support available to all other Australian children.
7. All children should have access to health programs and services.
8. Language support should be available in the child's home language.
9. Specialist support services should be available to help children and families cope with trauma.
10. Temporary visas must be abolished as they significantly contribute to the dislocation and the unsettled nature of the refugee status and are not conducive to the rearing of healthy children.
11. Establish an Office for the Commissioner of Children and Young People to provide a focus on the best interests of children and young people and a platform for comment and action that is in their best interests.

Media comment: Pam Cahir, 0407 008 524

Further information: Claire Johnston 0434 489 533

Dear ECA Members and Friends,

The Reflective Research Project has now come to a close and culminated in a workshop that was held in June during the Early Childhood Education & Care Conference in Perth. In our previous newsletters, Gloria Hackett, our Inclusion Support Co-ordinator, wrote about the journey many ISF's and other professionals had taken while participating in this project. The Perth conference provided a welcome opportunity for all stakeholders to be part of the presentation of the research results and experience Performed Ethnography as a tool for Early Childhood Educators.

Performed Ethnography is a way of using ethnographic data by turning it into scripts and dramas which are then read and performed before audiences. During trials with early childhood services, this methodology was found particularly useful, as it allows educators to explore multiple issues without personalising the incident. The workshop at the conference, which was conducted by Cristyn Davies of Semann & Slattery, NSW and Kerry Robinson, Associate Professor at the University of Western Sydney, saw a large group of professionals attending. One of the highlights was the reading of 'Jimmy's Story' with workshop participants taking turns filling the role of allocated characters in the play. The end of a critical scene was followed by a series of questions relating to the story to engage professionals in critical reflective practice.

At the end of the workshop there was a general consensus that the use of performed ethnography created non-threatening ways of engaging in critical reflection with other Early Childhood Professionals, and was extremely conducive to enhancing team work and developing professional skills within a service,

as well as overcoming challenges our own attitudes can pose at times.

The research participants of the Reflective Research Project conducted, covered, but was not limited to, bi-cultural support, mental health and wellbeing in children, Aboriginal and Indigenous child care issues, children in out of home care, children's understanding of belonging, as well as practices around policy in early childhood professional contexts.

All plays are based on action research undertaken by Inclusion Support Facilitators, Indigenous Professional Support Unit facilitators and early childhood professionals in WA and the NT, and will be made available to services once a decision has been made on how best they can be distributed.



Diane Cox

Hi, my name is Julie Cadd

I recently joined the team at Early Childhood Australia NT as an Inclusion Support Facilitator. I have just returned to Darwin after three and half years on Groote Eylandt and two and a half years in Cairns where I worked in Centre's as a Director. I am a long time Territorian of 25 years .



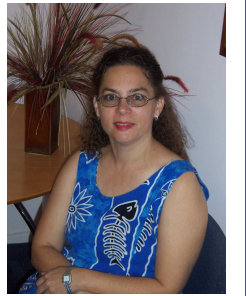
I began my career in Family Day Care and moved into the Child Care Sector, first as a Group Leader and then as a Director. I missed Darwin and had to return.

I studied my Diploma at CDU and also hold a Bachelor of Education. I have two grown up boys, one who lives in Darwin and the other in Cairns.

I am looking forward to working with the Services, particularly relating to Inclusion, and sharing some of my experience with you.

Hi, my name is Erika Pickworth.

We moved to Darwin from South Africa two years ago to be house parents at a remote school in the Litchfield National Park. I love my job as a house parent and applied for a transfer to a house in Palmerston to better accommodate my family. My husband and I are now house parents to 10 boys excluding our own son and daughter. Our oldest daughter is presently studying music at CDU. As a result of our move to Palmerston, I have been able to take up the casual position of Library Officer at ECA NT . I love working with people and resources so this is a great, satisfying position. Before our move to Australia, I worked as an Early Childhood Teacher and for the last 8 years I have home educated my own three children.



I can't wait to meet more of the library members and to be of help to you and your service.

See you soon *Erika*

2011-12 Indexation Rates: Inclusion & Professional Support Program

The new ISS funding rates are as follows:

Centre Based Services

30 th June 2010	1 st July 2011
2010- 2011 rate per hour	2011- 2012 rate per hour
\$16.19	\$16.43

Home Based Services

Tier/Out of home excursions	2010 - 2011 rate per hour	2011- 2012 rate per hour
Tier One	\$4.30	\$4.36
Tier Two	\$8.61	\$8.74
Additional carer for out of home	\$16.19	\$16.43

The new FSF rates are as follows:

Centre Based and Home Based Services

30 th June 2011	1 st July 2011
2010 - 2011 rate per hour	2011- 2012 rate per hour
\$16.19	\$16.43