

Turn it up

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Early
Childhood
AUSTRALIA INC.
... voice for young children
www.earlychildhood.org.au

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear ECA members and friends,

Welcome to 2009. I have spent the past week meeting 40 new Kindy children and their families. I know which children will need help wiping their bottoms; who will need reminding to go to the toilet; which children are frightened of storms; who is allergic to nuts and raw eggs; which child will object to rest time; who likes dressing up; there are two children that like to take all their clothes off before they use the toilet; some love books; some have new babies joining their family this year and so on. I am looking forward to really getting to know these children their interests, learning styles, personalities, understandings and theories about the world and spending time playing and chatting together.

Each year in January I meet children that have not been away from their parents before. As they play in the room and I chat to the parents I begin to note those that might need some language support, which child seems to hold the crayon in an awkward grip and I smile as I see some gather so many toys in their arms that they will not possibly be able to play but neither will anyone else. The responsibility of caring for someone's precious child is an enormous one and I begin to feel a little overwhelmed and daunted as I reflect on the trust that parents place in us. Then Monday will arrive, in they will all come and away we go with a new year, a new group of excited (and occasionally upset) children and knowledge, experience, instinct, love (for the job and children), routines, songs, laughter, joy and a sense of the importance of it all will kick in and we will manage the day. At the end of the

day my Aide and I will be exhausted, craving for a coffee and a toilet stop and we will know so much more about the children than their parents have been able to share in an interview.

May you enjoy your contribution to young lives (in whatever form it takes) during 2009; may you receive lots of support from colleagues, ECA, and the families you work with; may Early Childhood professionals receive the acknowledgement of the community for working in this important field and may you have a wonderful year.

Regards
Jo Darbyshire
Qld Branch President



Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care

A recent review of the evidence on drivers of quality in early childhood education and care gave support to including the three key quality variables of staff qualifications, staff-child ratios and group size in quality standards, concluding:

Evidence on the impact and effectiveness of early childhood education and care shows there is a compelling knowledge base which demonstrates that enriched learning environments are fostered by better qualified practitioners, and that better quality environments and pedagogies facilitate better learning outcomes... Quality outcomes for children are most likely when competent, qualified staff interact with small groups of children in enriched environments (Elliott, 2006, p. 31).

http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/OfficeOfEarlyChildhood/agenda/Documents/EAP_report.pdf



Hot off the press *and a must read...*

The report of the Expert Advisory Panel (EAP) on Quality Early Childhood Education and Child Care

http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/OfficeOfEarlyChildhood/agenda/Documents/EAP_report.pdf

The panel was established, to inform the Council of Australian Governments (COAG's) reform agenda for early childhood development. Membership of the panel comprises academics in the field of early childhood education, practitioners in early childhood education and care, and government representatives with experience in child care and early childhood education regulatory and accreditation arrangements. This group brings together significant operational experience in professional practice and in research and scholarly knowledge, hence the use of the adjective 'expert' to describe the panel's advice. The list of members and terms of reference for the panel are at Appendix A.

The panel was asked to advise on three key issues:

- a vision for an integrated and seamless system of licensing, regulation and accreditation within a national
- quality framework for early childhood learning and care services, options for quality standards for application in early childhood education and care settings, and
- approaches for a quality rating system for early childhood education and care services.

This report discusses the context for the development of a national quality framework for early childhood education and care, highlighting the need for change. It outlines a vision for the future informed by current research evidence and best practice in Australia and internationally, including the key drivers of quality in early childhood education and care.

The report addresses three key aspects of the framework:

- an integrated system of licensing, regulation and accreditation,
- strong national quality standards, and
- a quality rating system.

More about Universal Access...

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has ranked Australia's childcare system the third worst in the developed world. **Australia is one of the few countries without a national plan on early childhood education and care to clarify the vision of the government for investment in early years.** Hence the government initiatives and promised reforms in the area of universal access are timely:

With respect to universal access, the Queensland Government recognizes that not all children and families have ready access to high quality Early Childhood Education and Care services (ECEC). Of 53,000 children aged 4 years in 2007:

- 12,000 accessed early education through 347 community kindergarten centres and Bound for Success (Indigenous preschool initiative)
- 29,000 attended child care centres
- 12,000 did not attend any centre-based ECEC service.

To address this gap, the Queensland Government is working with the Australian Government to:

- Double the number of community kindergartens
- Provide for preschool education programs to be delivered through long day care centres
- Enhance family support services to reach the most disadvantaged families.

Universal access will offer a kindergarten early education program to all children aged 3.5 to 4.5 for 15 hours per week for 40 weeks a year delivered by a university-qualified early childhood teacher in a diversity of settings.

ECA also argues that universal access should

- Take into account existing community facilities
- Be offered in a variety of settings and modes (e.g. full-day, sessional)
- Be led by a qualified early childhood professional with specialised knowledge in child development and educational pedagogy
- Respond to diverse community needs.
- Ensure cultural relevance and sensitivity
- Provide choice for parents
- Be provided to a consistent group of children (this will require thought in child care)
- Be sufficiently funded to ensure quality.

ECA WebWatch Community

Early Childhood Australia's strength is determined by the strength of its members and supporters. It is only through your support that we can advocate for and on behalf of the sector.

As a reader of ECA WebWatch you can make a big difference to the sector

www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/mail

AGM Date Claimer

ECA AGM Wednesday 25th March, 2009 6-8 pm at C&K, 14 Edmonstone St Newstead. Followed by drinks and finger food. RSVP ecaql@earlychildhood.org.au by 23 March, 2009.

Guest speaker will be announced shortly. We will email you with the information and also place information on our web site www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au in the Queensland Branch section so keep a look out for this information.

We do not have email addresses for all members. So if you would like to receive emails about AGM guest speaker please send your email address to ECAQId@earlychildhood.org.au

We invite you to nominate for the committee. Remember nomination forms are due 7 days before the meeting and you must be a financial member of ECA. Proxy forms are also included.



Where have we come from?

HISTORY OF ECA ...Part 6

1960

- Parents' News Sheets – circulation increased to 11,666.
- Play Materials now out of print. Assembling of material for new edition was begun.
- Australian Pre-School Quarterly – initiative taken by first and second Alice Creswick scholars and supported by Brisbane K.T.C. graduates.
- Music for Movement records by M. de Crespigny processed by W&G Records on sale through Lady Gowrie Child Centre's by Australia Pre-school Association (A.P.A.) on commission.
- A report on pre-primary education in Australia was prepared at the request of the Commonwealth Office of Education for the International Bureau of Education.

1961

- The Ninth Conference was held in Hobart (494 members). Mr J.H. Niemeyer (U.S.A.) and Dr Edna Oakshott (Great Britain) were guest speakers.
- The Australia Pre-school Quarterly (A.P.Q.) publication is to be the responsibility of A.P.A. from August. Subscriptions for the first year were 600.
- Art for the Child Under Seven by Frances Derham was published by A.P.A.
- Tenth Conference Committee formed in Brisbane for 1964.

1962

- The office was moved to three rooms made available by Department of Health in former offices of Department of Interior then given over to Canberra Community Hospital.
- The Commonwealth grant was increased to include the salaries of the Assistant Federal

Officer and the Secretary.

- Parents' News Sheets – circulation 13,500.
- A.P.Q. Editorial Committee moved to Melbourne.
- Advice from the British Ministry of Education on their decision to accept Australian pre-school diplomas up to December, 1962, was received in November.

1963

- Melbourne Lady Gowrie Child Centre burnt down in February. Rebuilding begun in November.
- Miss M. I. Swift selected as fourth Alice Creswick scholar to study in USA.
- A.P.A. monogram redesigned
- Second (revised) edition of Planning the Programme ... by M.J. Roberts was published.
- Second (revised) edition of Art for the Child Under Seven by F. Derham was published.
- Principles Underlying the Programme of L.G.C.C.'s reprinted.
- O.M.E.P. – Hazel Harrison appointed as A.P.A.'s Australian representative in Europe.
- With regard to the tenth conference to be held in Brisbane in 1964, a visit by Dr Lucile Lindberg (USA) has been confirmed and the programme has been approved.
- New Year's Honours List: O.B.E. to Miss Pendred (Federal Officer) and Mrs. E. Thomson (President C&K Association of Queensland).
- Miss M.J. Roberts was appointed as lecturer in Child Development, Hobart Teacher's College.
- Rebuilding of Melbourne K.T.C. A grant to rebuild Brisbane K.T.C. was received.
- Appointment of Mrs. E. Thomson (Queensland) as Vice-President.



Projects, Events and Conferences

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings Project

The importance of good nutrition and physical activity. The habits that children form in the first years of their life are often the foundation for their lifestyle choices well into adulthood. Therefore, healthy eating and active play in childhood can guide a lifetime of good eating and physical activity habits.

The 'Guidelines Project'

The 'Healthy eating and physical activity guidelines for early childhood settings' project, or the 'Guidelines Project', is part of the Commonwealth Government's plan for tackling obesity from early childhood. The Project will develop evidence-based guidelines and materials to support healthy eating and physical activity in children attending Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services such as child care, pre-school, family day care, etc. The Guidelines will be linked to the new National Quality Framework for ECEC services that is expected to be introduced from 1st July 2009. This project spans a number of areas, including health, children's services, education and families for the 0-5 age group. For this reason, we welcome stakeholder and interested party input from all these groups throughout the project. You can input by completing a questionnaire about your experiences, influences and issues regarding incorporating good nutrition and physical activity in your setting, please email us at Bianca.gazzola@rch.org.au

Under Eight's Week

Under Eights' Week 22nd to 29th May 2009 "CREATIVITY- LET IT HAPPEN!"

Registrations for Queensland's Under Eights' Week 2009 Program are open at www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au. Celebrate Under Eights and register your event.

Fostering Leadership and Integrated Practice in Early Years Settings Round Table

19th and 20th February 2009. For Health, Non-Government, Government, Early Childhood Professionals, Tertiary Students and Teachers working with young children in any early years setting. Speakers include Professor Collette Taylor Chair of Early Childhood Education and Care in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education and Carol Aubrey Professor of Early Childhood Studies in the Institute of Education at the University of Warwick, United Kingdom. Registration Date extended. For registration details **email: a.keevers@griffith.edu.au**

For more information contact Jennifer Cartmel <J.Cartmel@griffith.edu.au>

ECA Queensland is one of the sponsors for the 2009 Birth To Three Matters Conference: being, growing, learning

Gold Coast International Hotel, Surfers Paradise, **28th & 29th May**

Confirmed Speakers: Jennifer Sumsion- The National Early Learning Framework ; Pru Walsh - Environments for Young Children; Mem Fox - Early Literacy; Assoc Prof Caroline Fewster & Geraldine Harris - Reflections of Reggio

Themes for this years conference are: Early Childhood Practice and Development; Social Inclusion; Child Protection. Papers can be submitted to Geraldine.harris@ae.salvationarmy.org or faxed to 07 32905394. For general information about the conference please contact Joy.A.Smith@ae.salvationarmy.org or on 07 3290 5200. **Call for papers closes on 27 February.**

Announcing the new Graduate Certificate in Childhood Studies at Griffith University

http://www17.griffith.edu.au/cis/p_cat/admission.asp?ProgCode=3250&Type=overview

The Graduate Certificate in Childhood Studies is designed for applicants who have an undergraduate degree in education, human services, law, nursing, other relevant areas or a relevant three-year Advanced Diploma or equivalent. The program provides an advanced program of study for professionals who are interested in service provision including care and education for young children and their families. This postgraduate program provides a pathway into the Master of Human Services program.

For more information contact Jennifer Cartmel <J.Cartmel@griffith.edu.au>

