

## Our Children the Future 4

by Rebecca Heath and Kate Ryan

Congratulations to Robyn Waller, her team and committees on the delivery of an outstanding early childhood conference. The keynote and invited speakers all challenged us to critically reflect on the work we do with young children and encouraged us to use the richness of diverse perspectives to create responsive and quality early childhood 'spaces'.

The Birth-Three Symposium was well attended by early childhood educators. Margaret Sims presented her recent research which focuses on measuring stress levels (salivary cortisol) of children in child care learning environments. The purpose of the research is to access the effect of quality on stress level in young children. Dr Sims pointed out that in centres where the care was satisfactory, according to the Quality Improvement Accreditation System, stress levels were high compared to centres with a high quality rating.

Janet Robertson's presentation challenged early childhood educators to become more resilient rather than compliant and to refuse to accept the status quo. We need as educators to continue to be pro-active in lobbying our state government about the child: staff ratios. Each centre should aim to educate parents that better outcomes for their children are more likely to come about as a result of reduced group sizes and better child: staff ratios.

ECA SA Branch sponsored Dr Joy Goodfellow to present her evaluation of SDN Children's Services Parent Resource Program. This program involved supporting families in crisis to access child care and community support with the child care central to the support. Joy was the recipient of the 2004 Margaret Trembath Scholarship.



Above: The ECA display board prepared by Joan Gilbert for OCTF

## Wellbeing and Involvement Training Session

Professor Dr. Ferre Laevers is the founder of 'Experiential Education' in Belgium. He was a keynote speaker at OCTF4 and also presented two, one day workshops to early childhood educators and administrators at EDC on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of June. During these workshops, Ferre Laevers presented on the conceptual framework he developed which gauges children's emotional wellbeing and involvement.

Julia Moons, an early childhood teacher, explained how she used the framework tools and then what intervention strategies she used to assist children who demonstrated a low level of wellbeing and involvement.

Ferre Laevers is an engaging speaker and the opportunity to hear him talk further about his research was a rewarding experience for all participants.

Left: Julia Moons and Professor Ferre Laevers



Papers from the OCTF conference will be on line soon at [www.octf.sa.edu.au/octf](http://www.octf.sa.edu.au/octf)

## Health care in childcare: The parents do it – why can't we?

by Debra Kay

Manager Interagency Health Care

Department of Education and Children's Services

At any one time, approximately one in three children (aged from birth to adulthood) has a physical or psychological health care need. For example, one in four children has asthma<sup>1</sup>, six in 1000 four year olds have experienced an anaphylactic (severe life threatening allergic reaction) event<sup>2</sup> and seven per 1000 have epilepsy<sup>3</sup>. 14% of four to seventeen year olds have a mental illness, problem or disorder<sup>4</sup>, and many others will have individual personal care support needs related to developmental delay, disability or illness and injury.

Reliance by children's services on the verbal instructions of parents and the goodwill of staff will not result in the safe management of such a wide, and often unpredictable range of health care needs. Effective risk management and hence protection for children and employees, requires a quality assurance approach that also encompasses

- Policy
- Information and training for staff
- Communication and record keeping
- Service partnerships

This article looks at the approach being taken in South Australia in relation to these issues.

### Policy

In 2001, the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services released *Health support planning in schools, preschools and childcare services – Partnerships for health care and education*<sup>5</sup>.

This policy document advises employees to provide health support, in accordance with their employment conditions and training, in four areas of work:

- First aid
- Personal Care
- Supervision for health-related safety
- Infection and infestation control.

The policy states that health care is always a partnership between families and care, education and health professionals. It also acknowledges that there are some children whose care is complex and/or invasive and that this will require the direct involvement of health services.

### Information and training for staff

Policies are only as useful as the information and training available to the workers who are required to implement them. The South Australian *Health support planning* policy is supported by a wide range of written information and associated

training programs related to each of the four categories of work.

### First aid

First Aid for Centres and Schools (FACS) is a one-day basic first aid course customised to the education and childcare sectors. An additional customised one-day bridging course to Senior First Aid is currently being trialled, to be available later this year. *First aid in early childhood centres and schools*, also released in 2001, supports this training and documents everything from basic first aid flow charts to recommended first aid kit contents and emergency response management.



### Personal care

Paediatric therapy services have developed training modules for children's services staff, for example half-day modules in *Oral eating and drinking support* and *Transfers and positioning support*. The booklet *Personal care support in schools and preschools* was released in 2001.

### Supervision for health-related safety

Worksite health information modules related to individual child health support needs have been developed. These cover a wide range of topics including anaphylaxis, epilepsy and asthma management. Modules are routinely developed and updated with work currently occurring in palliative care; acquired brain injury; mental health first aid; cystic fibrosis and oncology. A series of publications supports these sessions and covers living with conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, cancer, acquired brain injury, cystic fibrosis and anaphylaxis.

### Control of infection and infestation

Centres use the Commonwealth publication *Staying healthy in childcare*<sup>6</sup>. They can also refer to the South Australian Department of Health publication, *You've got what?* Currently being

updated, this gives web and print access to information for families about infection control<sup>7</sup>. The Department of Health has also developed training packages for education and childcare workers on standard precautions and infestation control.

#### Communication and record keeping

The *Health support planning* guidelines incorporate a wide range of health care plan proformas. These can be used by families and health professionals to detail health care requests to staff. The policy is clear that care plans must be signed by the treating health professionals as well as the parent, guardian or adult student.

#### Service partnerships

The information and training provisions outlined above refer to a wide range of consumer and health professional partnerships. Two interagency service arrangements are of particular interest.

#### Access Assistant Program

This program is funded by the Minister for Education and Children's Services and provides support for children with complex and invasive health care needs, for example gastrostomies, tracheostomies and other stomal care. In the last year, this service has been expanded from schools and preschools to also support childcare services.

#### Child Health and Education Support Services (CHESS)

The wide range of interagency partnerships that has informed the South Australian health support planning developments is currently being formalised as the Department of Education and Children's Services *Child Health and Education Support Services (CHESS)*. CHESS manages interagency service development and delivery for health promotion, prevention, early intervention as well as treatment and care.

#### References

- <sup>1</sup> www.asthmasa.org.au
- <sup>2</sup> Boros CA, Kay D and Gold MS (2000) *Parent reported allergy and anaphylaxis in 4173 South Australian children*, Journal of Paediatric Child Health 36 (36-40)
- <sup>3</sup> Harvey AS, Nolan T and Carlin B (1993) *Community-based study of mortality in children with epilepsy*, Epilepsia 34 (4)
- <sup>4</sup> Sawyer et al, (2000) *The mental health of young people in Australia*, Mental Health and Special Programs Branch, Commonwealth department of Health and Aged Care
- <sup>5</sup> Department of Education, Training and Employment - now Department of Education and Children's Services (2001), *Health support planning in schools, preschools and childcare services – Partnerships for health care and education*. Information about these and other publications can be found on the DECS website: www.schools/sa.gov.au > Student wellbeing > Health support. Publications can be ordered from the chess Hospital Education Service, e-mail: bavarom@hospitalad.sa.edu.au or waye.kerry@saugov.sa.gov.au
- <sup>6</sup> *Staying healthy in childcare* (2001), Commonwealth of Australia. See also www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/pdf/ch40.pdf
- <sup>7</sup> www.dh.sa.gov.au/pehs/

The South Australian Branch of the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health presents:

## TWO WORKSHOPS WITH DR KENT HOFFMAN

Co-developer of the Circle of Security

2 day introductory course : **UNDERSTANDING ATTACHMENT – CIRCLE OF SECURITY APPROACH**

8 day intensive course : **WORKING WITH PARENTS – CIRCLE OF SECURITY APPROACH**

ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY

Dates: 2 DAY COURSE – 13-14 FEB 2006

8 DAY COURSE – 15-24 FEB 2006

Participation in the 2 day course is a pre-requisite for the 8 day course, as current concepts of Circle of Security work will be discussed.

Cost: 2-day course = \$320  
8-day course = \$1200

AAIMHI members at 31/3/05=\$300  
AAIMHI members at 31/3/05=\$1000

Non-member participants in the full course who wish to join AAIMHI will be offered a free membership from June 2005 – June 2006

For more detail and/or a registration form, contact Pam Linke 8303 1566 Linke.Pam@cyh.sa.gov.au

## Early Childhood News and Information

### A Picture of Australia's Children

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare has released *A Picture of Australia's Children*, the third national statistical report on the health, development and wellbeing of Australia's children aged 0-14 years.

This report has been broadened to bring together a wide variety of data, including information about individual, family and societal factors that influence the health, development and wellbeing of children. New topics include: exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, homelessness, literacy and numeracy, children as victims of violence, neighbourhood safety and parental health and disability. To view the report: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/index.cfm/title/10127>

### Warning: Star Wars III: Revenge of the Sith

Young Media Australia (YMA) reminds movie goers that *Star Wars III: Revenge of the Sith* is rated M, and is not suitable for children under 15 years. For a full review of the movie by Young Media, visit [http://www.youngmedia.org.au/mediachildren/07\\_04/07\\_04\\_162\\_star-wars-sith.htm](http://www.youngmedia.org.au/mediachildren/07_04/07_04_162_star-wars-sith.htm)

or contact the national freecall YMA Helpline on 1800 700 357 to discuss the movie's content with a trained child health professional.

### Student outcomes

Australian students: a top five or middle ranking? To find out how our students fare in various contexts according to statistic from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) see:

[http://www.acer.edu.au/research/PISA/PISA\\_reports.htm](http://www.acer.edu.au/research/PISA/PISA_reports.htm)  
[http://www.acer.edu.au/research/TimSS/TIMSS\\_02\\_03.htm](http://www.acer.edu.au/research/TimSS/TIMSS_02_03.htm)

(Source: 'Teacher', the magazine of the Independent Schools of Australia, February 2005, p.18).

### UK Government 10 Year Plan for Child Care

The UK Government's 10 year plan for childcare can be seen at:

[http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/8F5/35/pbr04childcare\\_480.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/8F5/35/pbr04childcare_480.pdf)

### A New Manifesto

The Manifesto for Wellbeing provides a new vision and a new ethos for Australia. Several prominent Australians have already endorsed it. The Manifesto is the foundation of a new politics committed to promoting our wellbeing rather than relentlessly focusing on the economy and money.

- Read the Manifesto
- See who has endorsed it
- Sign up to it yourself

<http://www.wellbeingmanifesto.net/>

## Conferences

### CWLA National Child Care Conference

The Child Welfare League of America is hosting its combined New England Region Training Conference and National Child Care and Development Conference, September 28-30, in Providence, Rhode Island, to spark a renaissance in thinking about the continuum of care and service delivery to **children, youth, and families**.

For more information, or to register, visit <http://www.cwla.org/conferences>

### Honoring the child, honoring equity 5: Reconsidering rights and relationships.

Alice Hoy Building, Faculty of Education, The University of Melbourne. 17-20th November

<http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CIEC/conf05>

### ARECE Conference 2006

Registrations are now open for the 2006 Australian Research into Early Childhood Education conference. The ARECE web site has details and registration forms.

<http://www.education.monash.edu.au/research/news/arececonference.html>

## Early Childhood Australia SA Branch

**Next meeting :15th August 6pm**

**Education Development Centre  
Milner Street, Hindmarsh**

**Guest speaker:**

**Ms Stephanie Paige**

**Director Strategic Policy Unit, DECS**

**Stephanie Paige will discuss the recommendations from the recent inquiry into early childhood services in South Australia and how they are to be developed into a 4 year plan. This is our chance to have input into what happens from here.**

**For details of the inquiry, including the report and recommendations, see the web site at**

**[www.ecsinquiry.sa.gov.au](http://www.ecsinquiry.sa.gov.au)**