



**Early Childhood
Australia**
A voice for young children

**Strategic Directions
January 2012 – December 2014**

ECA Strategic Directions and Desired Outcomes, January 2012 – December 2014

Preamble:

ECA's mission is to advocate to ensure quality, social justice and equity in all issues relating to the education and care of young children from birth to eight years. The ECA Strategic Directions & Desired Outcomes provide an agreed direction for developing operations plans for working to achieve this.

In deciding the Strategic Directions & Desired Outcomes ECA has been informed by consultations across the organisation.

Because ECA is a federated body of which the branches are the members, and ECA nationally and all Branches are separately incorporated and work in the context of their own jurisdiction, each organisation develops, implements and reports against its own Key Performance Indicators, Strategies and Actions.

In developing and implementing the Strategic Directions the national organisation and Branches act consistently with *ECA Values* to address and promote *ECA Principles* and *ECA Positions*. In doing this they are guided by the *ECA Code of Ethics* and act in a way that is consistent with *ECA's Scope of Activities* and *Governance Guidelines*. These items constitute ECA's 'Foundation Materials' and are available in the Strategic Directions 2009-2011 document at

http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/pdf/submissions/eca_strategic_directions_2009_11.pdf

The values are further explored in the ECA Values Statement at

http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/pdf/about_us/eca_values_statements.pdf

ECA is an activist organisation that is forward looking, progressive in its thinking, innovative in its solutions and actions and is informed by current evidence.

The Strategic Directions are reviewed for currency each year and considered at each National Council Meeting.

Terminology: ECA recognises that there are many different structures in Australian families, including grandparents, other members of extended families and foster parents as primary family caregivers to young children. Wherever the term 'parent' is used here it is intended to cover this range; it is used for convenience of expression. For the purposes of this document, wherever the term 'young children' refers to children aged birth to eight years.

Goal 1: ECA is a clear and credible advocate for the rights of young children

Desired Outcomes

ECA is:

- an activist organisation that leads strongly through its advocacy work. ECA is informed, articulate and forward-thinking in raising and responding to issues and campaigning for the wellbeing of young children
- an organisation that recognises the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and gives priority to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young children in its work

- an organisation that recognises the key role of parents in their young children’s lives and acts to support the strengthening of this role
- an organisation that promotes and demonstrates environmental sustainability
- an organisation that strongly promotes agreed ECA values, principles, positions and the Code of Ethics in advocating for young children
- an organisation that leads in building strategic and collaborative alliances that strengthen the early childhood sector and supports the achievement of ECA’s advocacy goals.

Goal 2: ECA advocates for and supports programs and services that deliver high-quality outcomes for young children

Desired Outcomes

ECA is:

- an organization that actively promotes and supports the development of a qualified, specialised and skilled workforce to deliver high quality early childhood programs and good outcomes for young children across the range of Australian service types
- an organization that speaks out for and supports high quality, evidence-based, strength based practice in early childhood programs
- an organisation that actively supports the development of professional standards for programs and services for young children
- an organisation that supports strategies by employees, employers, unions, peak groups and governments to achieve appropriate recognition, status and career paths for people who work with young children, and actively promotes this.

Goal 3: ECA is a strong, progressive and sustainable organisation that is future-focused

Desired Outcomes

ECA is:

- an organisation that models high standards of governance, management and planning for the future
- an organisation that is financially sustainable, independent and secure
- an organisation that has a diverse, growing and committed membership base
- an organisation that is respected by other similar organizations, in the sector and in the broader community.