



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

Newsletter

ECA TASMANIA BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

President:

Lyn Woolley

Vice President:

Tania Ackley

Secretary:

Annette Barwick

Treasurer:

Ros Cornish

Public Officer

Kathryn Laing

Executive Committee

Members

- Shirpa Khan
- Kathy Cripps
- Stephanie Rubock
- Chris Symons

Introducing Office Bearers of ECA:

Lyn Woolley - Lyn is in her second year of her term as President of the Branch. In this role Lyn has attended the ECA National Council for the past two years. Having worked in the early childhood sector for many years. Lyn brings a wealth of practical experience and knowledge to the committee. Lyn is the Director of Stewart Children's Service's in Launceston.

Tania Ackerly - Like Lyn, Tania is also in her second term of office. Having worked as an educator, Assistant Director, Director and now in a General Managers' role in the early childhood sector she brings a wealth of knowledge to the committee. Tania juggles a busy professional life with being a mother to three young children.

Annette Barwick – Annette commenced her early childhood career as a Family Day Carer. During this time she undertook a pathway to qualifications culminating in achieving her Degree from Charles Darwin University. She is currently the General Manager of the PSC and IPSU in Tasmania.

Ros Cornish – Having worked in the early childhood sector for thirty years. Ros has been committed to ECA for most of this period. She is currently the Deputy national President of ECA and an active member of the ECA National Board of Directors along with being a member of many national working parties.

Kathryn Laing - Kathryn is the current Tasmanian Director on the ECA Board. Having worked in Family Day Care, Centre Based Care and school environment,; Kathryn has a strong understanding of the early childhood sector and is currently the CEO of Phoenix Children's Services on the eastern shore in Hobart.

Stop Press: The next ECA National Conference will be in Western Australia in 2012

“Consulting the Compass – defining directions”

Perth Convention Exhibition Centre

3-6 October 2012

Conference Themes:

Networking – Sustainability – Engagement – Wellbeing

Next Statewide Meeting of ECA Tasmanian Branch

Tuesday 9 November 2010

Tattersall's Park Race Track Glenorchy

10.30-3.30PM (parking available)

Lunch available \$20.00 per person RSVP ecatas@earlychildhood.org.au (by 2/11/2010)

Open to current Branch Members. Non Members can join on the day!!

THE ELECTION IS OVER AND WE HAVE NOT ONE.....BUT TWO MINISTERS!

After some wait, Australians now finally know which party is to govern Australia. In terms of early childhood, the Education and Care sector was to learn what appeared to be a separation of the child care and education portfolios. Given the Federal Government's vision of the National Early Childhood reform agenda which recognized the important role played by high quality early childhood services in children's early learning, the apparent separation caused dismay, particularly those who see this as a step backwards.

Government representatives have been quick to allay fears by indicating that Minister Peter Garrett and Minister Kate Ellis will work in collaboration to support the reforms for early childhood education and care. So that instead of a splitting of portfolios it appears that two Ministers will work on complementary agendas in the one broad portfolio. In fact representatives indicated that instead of one Minister the sector has gained an additional Minister making two to focus on our sector.

With details of the relationship Ministers Garrett and Ellis yet to be delineated, the National Reform Agenda will progress full steam ahead. Already the Early Years Learning Framework is in place, and the National Quality Standards are due for implementation from January 2011, the sector is keen to view the tools which will be used to determine the system.

There has been some press over the past weeks indicating that the reforms will increase the cost of care to families. Despite reports of large fee increases, the government is firm in their view that any increases will be minimal and gradual.

Whilst the reform agenda will impact through some increase, other mandatory aspects of service delivery have had a bigger impact. Take for example the food legislation - food safety training, annual audits, upgrades of facilities and equipment. Whilst these matters are important to safeguard the health of young children, initiatives such as better adult: child ratios and higher levels of qualifications for educators are the key determinants to improving the quality of early childhood education and care for young children.

Early Childhood Australia advocated strongly in support of the reform agenda as the improvements can only support better outcomes for young children.

Ros Cornish – Deputy National President

Announcing

The Early Years Learning Framework Professional Learning Program
The Early Years Learning Framework Professional Learning Program (EYLF PLP) provides ongoing professional support to services as they engage in the EYLF implementation process. The program is a national initiative and will take place in 2010-11.

The EYLF PLP has the following separate but interrelated elements:

- a national program of 65 EYLF workshops
- an online EYLF interactive forum available to all services and practitioners
- an online EYLF e-Newsletter
- EYLF online master classes focused on features of high quality early childhood practice
- a series of short EYLF practice and training video vignettes.

To find out more information and to keep up to date with workshop venue's, please subscribe to our EYLF PLP newsletter, by visiting www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/eylfplp.

**MY TIME OUR PLACE – THE SCHOOL
AGE CARE DRAFT FRAMEWORK NOW
AVAILABLE:**

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Policy/Agenda/Papers/frameschAGecare.aspx>

ECA NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

The annual council meeting was conducted over two days on 27/28 September 2010. Up to five representatives from each State and Territory Branch attended Council. Each Branch provides a summary of the key work undertaken over the past year. This is a great opportunity for sharing and gaining information which could be replicated in another Branch.

The CEO Pam Cahir, gave a summary of the work of the National Organisation in the Year in Review. This is a time line to acknowledge and celebrate the enormous amount of work undertaken over the past year. A key feature of the review was the Hands up for Quality Campaign which highlighted the importance of quality early childhood education and care programs during the election campaign.

It is also time to celebrate the achievements of the organisation generally. Now like never before the organisation enjoys a high profile with both governments and non-government agencies.

During the Council, Vicki Rundle from DEEWR provided an update and overview of the National Quality Standards work. Participants also highlighted issues for children which are considered to be an important part of ECA's ongoing work in the coming year. The Council Also acts as the Annual General Meeting for ECA.

The Tasmanian Representatives at the Council, Kathryn Laing, Lyn Woolley, Tania Ackerly, Annette Barwick, and Kathy Cripps have prepared written reports for the next state-wide meeting.

ECA CONFERENCE- A HIGHLIGHT!

Following Council the ECA Conference was conducted. Over 1200 early childhood academics and educators registered for the 2010 conference. This conference exceeded all records for attendance, number of exhibitors and sponsorship. The Venue, Adelaide Convention Centre, was ideally centrally suited enjoying views over the Torrens River. The Conference Dinner was a fun night – 600 (mostly women) danced the night away to a fabulous band. Early Childhood Educators certainly know how to let their hair down!!!

Claire Warden from the United Kingdom was clearly the most popular overseas keynote speaker. Claire addressed the main plenary with an inspiring and humorous presentation, sharing her 'nature forest' centre's with the audience.

She spoke passionately about moving away from 'fantastic plastic' to embrace natural materials as a resource for equipment. She also encouraged educators to 'push the boundaries' in terms of regulators so as children can experience the risks and challenges of outdoors. The audience viewed slides and videos of children experiencing the outdoors environment like never before- rocks, stones, mud, rope, pulleys, and trees for climbing, water to play in and even fire. Her passion and desire to provide children with real hands on experiences in the natural environment was inspirational.

Claire also talked about the 'fish face' educators- those who stand around with arms crossed, negative about most things and lack of appropriate interactions with children and generally disinterested and everything is too hard!! She spoke of the need to move them on and attract educators with the passion within, the will and motivation to make positive changes so as children are central to every decision and action. For some, this part of the presentation may have been confronting, but in reality by the universal nodding of heads it appeared 'fish faces' are evident in many services. With the national reform agenda aiming to improve outcomes for young children there is no place for 'fish faces' in services. Children deserve the right to have educators who are committed, motivated and indeed knowledgeable about how to support children's optimal development.

Author: Ros Cornish