



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

**OUR
VISION:
EVERY
YOUNG
CHILD IS
THRIVING
AND
LEARNING**

MEDIA ALERT

Monday 6 September 2021

YOUNG CITIZENS: THE RIGHT TO PLAY, LEARN AND BE HEARD

More than 2,500 early childhood educators, researchers and practitioners will meet online from 6–9 September to hear and learn from prominent international and Australian early childhood leaders at the 2021 Early Childhood Australia (ECA) National Conference.

Over the next four days, the ECA National Conference will celebrate young children as citizens with rights and explore ways to respect and support these rights, particularly through play-based pedagogy and child-informed practice. The conference will also bring together experts to share ideas, knowledge and experiences aimed at improving early childhood education and care.

Keynote speakers:

- **Sir Kevan Collins, Goodstart Early Learning Board Member:** From recovery to reform—responding to COVID disruption in early learning
- **Anne Hollonds, National Children's Commissioner:** Australia's response—COVID disruption in early learning
- **Dr Anita Heiss, Author:** Wingangarra, Yalbilinya, Marramara (Listen, Learn, Create)
- **Steve Sammartino, Futurist:** Inventing our future

Panels:

Building an identity as an early childhood profession

- **Dr Anne Kennedy, Researcher and Advocate**
- **Professor Sue Irvine, Head of the School of Early Childhood at Queensland University of Technology**
- **Belinda Rule, Director, C&K Eimeo Road Community Kindergarten**
- **Helen Gibbons, Executive Director of Early Education at the United Workers Union**
- **Aunty Denise Proud, Board Member, Reconciliation Queensland**

Children's rights