

JIGSAW

THE JOURNAL OF FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA



Recycling

with Marlin Coast

2024 NATIONAL
Family Day
Care Week

Clean Up
Australia Day

Our Home, Your Adventure

2024
Excellence in Family
Day Care Awards

* Tummy Time with Red Nose * Ben Mueller talks Tax * ECEC Summary Update *
* Be You: Culturally Respectful Engagement for Learning Communities * ACECQA Update *
* Grab a Cuppa * Business Insights * Scholastic Storytime * PLUS Win prizes for your family day care!



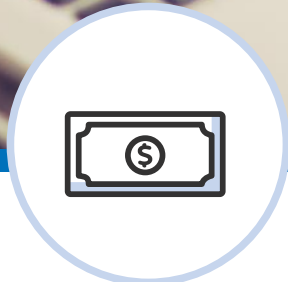
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The material published in the magazine will aim to be inclusive of all participants of the Australian family day care program (including children) wherever they live, regardless of their gender, class, culture or nature of any disability. The magazine will not publish material which runs counter to the wellbeing and equal valuing of all children, their families and those who work with them. All unattributed articles will reflect FDCA's broad policy. As far as possible the language will be non technical. The final decision about inclusion of any article will be made by the Editorial Board. As there are differing descriptors used for the direct service provider, the generic term 'educator' will be substituted in every case.

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A word from the CEO

Welcome to edition 105 of JIGSAW Magazine!

It's hard to imagine we're almost mid-way through 2024, having just concluded the 12th annual National Family Day Care Week. It was wonderful to see so many images across social media of National Family Day Care Week celebrations, all of which showcased the uniqueness of our sector and the irreplaceable role that family day care play in the lives of thousands of children across Australia each day. To find images from the week, search the hashtag #FDCWeek24 across your socials.

Moving on from National Family Day Care Week, I have the great pleasure to announce the launch of the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards for another year. You can read all about the Awards process, and how to make nominations, in our feature article that includes 'how-to' cards to give to parents. We encourage you to get involved and recognise an Educator, Coordinator or Service within our sector.

This time of year also means that the end of the financial year is fast approaching and Ben Mueller is back with valuable insights on both completing your return this year, and how you can minimise your stress at tax time by putting systems in place now, for next year. You can find Ben's insights within our *Dollars and Sense* section.

Stories from our members included in this edition have a strong theme of sustainability, the environment and celebrating the Australian landscape. They different approaches highlighted in these articles, demonstrate the many ways Educators engage the children in their care and the great work they do to engage little minds each day.

Renata's Family Day Care explain their participation in the long standing Clean Up Australia Day, with children and the wider community taking part. The following feature on a creative project undertaken by the Marlin Coast Family Day, showcases how using different resources educated the children on both how they can recycle and the cassowary which is known as 'the great recycler'.

Following these inclusions, we share an article written by Whitsunday Family Day Care about a book they recently published with their local community. The book explores the animals and landscapes in their home; it's a wonderful example of community spirit and use of funding from the Child Care Community Funding program.

Rounding off this issue of JIGSAW is our *Grab a Cuppa* section that has a fresh, new look and some wise words from Coastwide Family Day Care Service and Tasmanian Educator Sue Higgs, and of course you'll find some great content from our regular contributors and friends from ACECQA, Be You and Red Nose.

As we head into the second half of 2024, we look forward to continuing to represent, support and promote you - happy reading!

Andrew Paterson
Chief Executive Officer
Family Day Care Australia

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY:

We at Family Day Care Australia acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work, the Darkinjung People, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' continuous connection to Country, and celebrate their traditions and living cultures.



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THANK YOU

A special thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of JiGSAW.

Early Childhood Education and Care Summary update – December quarter 2023

The Child Care Quarterly Report for the December 2023 quarter was recently released by the Australian Government Department of Education. The report for shows that:

 14,584	 998,760	 1,419,380	 \$12.35	 152
<p>14,584 approved childcare services operated during that quarter, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9,222 centre-based day care (CBDC) services (63.2% of all services) • 376 family day care (FDC) services (2.6%) • 4,952 outside school hours care (OSHC) services (34.0%) 	<p>998,760 families nationally used approved care. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 693,240 or 69.4% used CBDC • 52,220 or 5.2% used FDC • 390,530 or 39.1% used OSHC 	<p>1,419,380 children attended approved childcare. Of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 850,900 or 59.9%, attended CBDC • 72,690 or 5.1%, attended FDC • 524,040 or 36.9%, attended OSHC 	<p>The average hourly fee charged across all approved care services (excluding In-home care) was \$12.35, with the average hourly fee for family day care sitting at \$12.55. This compares to an average hourly fee of \$12.85 for CBDC services and \$8.80 for OSHC services.</p>	<p>In the December 2023 quarter, a total of 152 (or 40.4%) family day care services charged above the hourly fee cap of \$12.72. This compared to 23.7% of CBDC services charging above the cap of \$13.73, and 13.6% of OSHC services charging above the hourly fee cap of \$12.02.</p>

To view the full report, visit the Australian Government Department of Education at www.education.gov.au



The safety, health and wellbeing of children is our priority

The NSW Department of Education is the Regulatory Authority for early childhood education and care in NSW

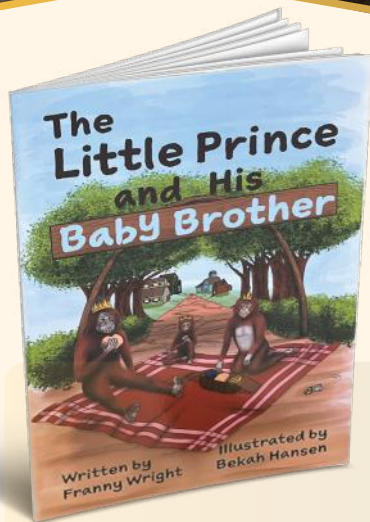
Learn how we work with services and educators to ensure every child has the best start in life. Scan below to visit education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education.



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The Little Prince and his Baby Brother

By Franny Wright

Helping parents explain new babies in the family – a children's story

The Little Prince and his Baby Brother is a book about a royal family expecting a new baby. Their little Prince is excited but nervous about this change in their family, but his parents help him work through all the feelings he is experiencing. This story is written for children aged 5-10 years who are expecting a new sibling, but how did the book come about?

Many years ago, my stepson began asking "Can I have a brother or sister?". Little did he know this was something my husband and I were dreaming of and hoping for... However, I always wondered how we were going to talk to our eldest son about any new additions to the family (if it happened!).

This led me to search for a book to help answer any questions that our eldest would have. At this stage, my stepson was 8 years of age and we struggled to find something that would appeal to him. This is how I came to write *The Little Prince and his Baby Brother*.

I have always dreamed of being a children's author but had never felt passionate enough about a story or moment to share it. However, with this potential change to our lives, the story flowed easily as I wrote. I spent time working through how I wanted the story to present the many possible emotions and fears, but also fun and magical so that it appealed to young readers.

I sent my finished manuscript to publishers with fingers crossed to be accepted for publication. I started to realise that this was a dream I wanted to achieve - I wanted to be published and to share my experiences and story. Publishing houses loved the book but they weren't in the position to take on unknown authors at the time. So my manuscript sat in my computer files, forgotten. I finally fell pregnant with our youngest son and suddenly the story I had written was coming true; the conversations I knew my stepson would want to have started happening and it was all too real and wonderful.

After my son was born, I started to adjust the manuscript so that it more closely reflected our real experience and fell in love with the story all over again. Once again, I searched for publishers that might consider my book, found AIA Publishing/ Escarpment and suddenly ... publishing my book was a reality. I experienced what it was like to publish a book myself and work with experts who really bought my story to life, including a wonderful illustrator, book designer and an editor.

I am so proud of my little book and have met so many families now who shared similar experiences and have loved reading this book and sharing it with their children.

Franny Wright had been an Educator for 10 years before making the change to family day care. Her stepson was in primary school and it fit perfectly with her life. When her youngest son was born, she was so glad to be in a position that meant she could be at home but also earning an income. Franny loved being able to help her children grow as well as watch them interact, connect and create relationships with the children in her care. She is currently a coordinator with her previously registered scheme and is loving being on the other side just as much.

"Being an Educator and a Coordinator in family day care have really opened my eyes to Early Childhood Education and changed how I think and look at the ways care can be provided!" said Franny.

NATIONAL FAMILY DAY CARE WEEK

National Family Day Care Week for 2024 took place on 6-12 May and was the 12th annual celebration of the much-loved event.

Educators, children, Services, and communities celebrated across the country with close to 150 registered events in all shapes and sizes, coming together to highlight the irreplaceable role family day care plays in the lives of 75,000 Australia children each day.

Families all around the country choose family day care for their children due to the unique benefits of small group settings, personalised educational programming and flexible hours of care, while Educators pursue a career in the sector due to the unique opportunity to run their own small business from home, supporting their local community with much needed access to high quality early learning. They are also proudly part of one of Australia's largest

networks of women in small business.

The Chief Executive Officer of Family Day Care Australia, Andrew Paterson, said, "National Family Day Care Week is a wonderful time for the family day care sector to come together nationally and reflect on the important role family day care plays in the lives of Australian children, families and communities."

"The natural home environment and one-on-one attention that family day care provides means children receive the attention they need to thrive, and Educators are able to follow their passion and educate their way," said Mr Paterson.

National Family Day Care Week also helps to shine a spotlight on the need for more child care availability throughout Australia, encouraging Educators to make the change to family day care.



Associations

Family Day Care Educators' Associations

State family day care educators' associations represent educators and provide a range of member-based services, including advice, training, resources and assistance to Educator members. Executive committee representatives work in a voluntary capacity to support fellow Educators to provide quality home-based child care services.

Family Day Care Associations

State family day care associations provide a range of member-based services including advice, training, resources and assistance to members. This support strengthens services and assists staff in their vital role of providing effective support services to Educators and families. The association works actively to promote family day care within their respective states.

Each association operates independently of FDCA.

New South Wales

- Family Day Care Educators' Association NSW Inc
0490 776 339
www.fdceducatorsnsw.com.au
- NSW Family Day Care Association
02 9779 9999
www.nswfdc.org.au

Tasmania

- Family Day Care Council of Tasmania Inc.
0439 307 273

South Australia

- Family Day Care Educators' Association of South Australia
0418 831 433
www.fdcassocsa.com.au

Western Australia

- Family Day Care Educators' Association, Western Australia, Inc.
08 9255 5290
- Family Day Care WA
08 9251 5777
www.familydaycarewa.com.au

Northern Territory

- Alice Springs Carers' Support Group
08 8952 2906

Queensland

- Family Day Care Association Queensland Inc.
07 3399 3737
www.fdcqld.org

Community Event - 5 March 2024

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA

By Renata's Family Day Care

“ Our youngest citizens will one day grow to be leaders of the community. Their involvement matters.

Armed with our clean up kit sourced from Clean Up Australia the children and I made our way down to our favourite park. A beautiful spot we often connect with local community at.

Leading up to Clean Up Australia Day there was much learning and discussions to be had. Who's role is it to care for our planet? Who's job is it to keep parks, our beaches, our schools and streets clean? What would happen if everybody threw their rubbish onto the ground? What would happen if people left their rubbish on the sand at the beach, or on the grass at the park? Where should our rubbish go?

We have quite the array of books at our service for the children to explore. We created sustainability focus area weeks in advance for the children to immerse themselves in. There's a myriad of learning involved in order for children to truly connect. Caring for Country and lessons on sustainability all come to play.

Our youngest citizens will one day grow to be leaders of the community, their involvement and understanding at a young age matters. It's an ongoing learning approach that's vital for the care and survival of our planet. We don't believe in celebrating Clean Up Australia Day for one day and then packing things up for another year.



Our Clean Up Australia Day event at the park was a huge success. We had a cart filled with gloves and bags and even a sign informing others at the park of what was happening. It didn't take long for curious children to wander over for a little closer look. After a short introduction I welcomed them to grab some gloves if they wanted to help, and advised them that they could keep the gloves for home.

We had mums involved as well as proud grandparents looking on. The children just instinctively got stuck into clean up mode. It was lovely

to see. There was plenty of litter for everyone to get involved. Whilst working we were discussing the reasons why it's important to put litter in the correct place. We talked about how it's everybody's job to keep our planet clean, and how if the wind came up that the litter could blow up into the sky and into our oceans and what would happen if the fish swallowed the litter or if the birds choked on the litter.

As I stood back and observed the connections and collaboration amongst our group within their community, it made me really proud. They were so confident in their

DAY

actions and so welcoming of others around them. Everyone just seemed to know what to do. The families that got involved were praising us on our efforts and were thrilled their children got to join in. The children were especially pumped about their new gloves!!!

A huge shout out to the team at [Clean Up Australia](http://CleanUpAustralia) for all the work



they do at www.cleanup.org.au The children at Renata's Family Day Care are invested in ongoing learning and caring for our beautiful planet and hope that we encourage you to do

the same. It's not about just the one day of the year but rather the every day, of every year that's going to make the difference.



Clean Up Australia Day is traditionally held on the first Sunday in March annually. Happy CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY to all!

Project Cassowary

Marlin Coast Family Day Care

Marlin Coast Family Day Care has always embraced the value of recycling and the importance of teaching the children in our care how recycling does make a difference for the planet.

Our hope is that by the time they are adults, we may have made a significant difference towards saving our planet.

We have celebrated National Recycling Week each year by using Cool Australia, Planet Ark, our own Cairns City Council website and the Early Years learning programs.

This year we wanted to do something out of the box to give more energy and meaning for the kids on the topic of recycling. With this in mind we created a project for the Educators and children to complete that would combine learning about a beautiful bird and it's importance to the forests growth. Using our everyday rubbish items we tasked them with constructing their very own cassowary.

In our North Queensland Region, we have the wonderfully majestic cassowary roaming our rainforests, The Great Recycler we call them. The cassowary roams the forests, eats fruits and berries

the rainforest provides and then they drop the seeds throughout the rainforest floor ensuring the continual regeneration of our tropical rainforests, recycling!

The Educators and children could only use recycled products which they collected from families, office waste and secondhand shops.

This project took the Educators and children two weeks to complete. Two weeks of planning, collaboration, problem solving, and then executing their plan. Not only did they learn about the cassowary, who lives in their backyard, they also learnt





Not only did they learn about the cassowary, who lives in their backyard, they also learnt that you can have fun creating wonderful things by reusing the items we put in the bins...

that you can have fun creating wonderful things by reusing the items we put in the bins daily that then become landfill, as well as how to distribute the different types of recyclable items.

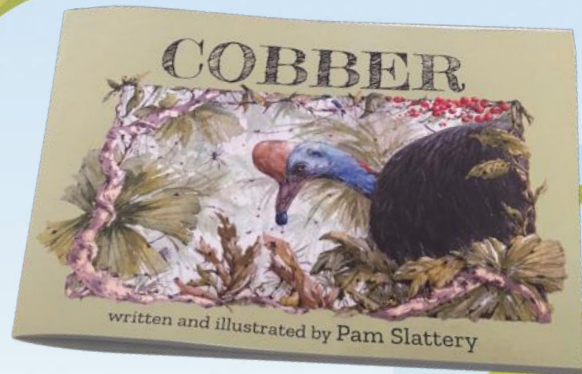
Once created, all the amazing creations were presented at the schemes play group and office for all to see.

To accompany the project we read a wonderful book called Cobber by Pam Slattery, that tells of one little cassowary who tries to find out what his purpose in life is because all he seems to do is eat and poo. Of course, his purpose is to

regenerate our forests, so we have clean, green air. Each Educator received this book as a reminder of their project and for the children to revisit their fun journey about recycling and the cassowary whenever they read it.

The cassowary has a huge responsibility, and it is our social responsibility to help by protecting these amazing birds and our planet.

By engaging in and learning more about connecting and contributing to our world, and how to make our actions more sustainably sound, we can make a huge difference.





EXCELLENCE IN FAMILY DAY CARE AWARDS 2024



FDCA is excited to announce that the 2024 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards are now open!

In its thirteenth year, the FDCA Excellence in Family Day Care Awards will continue to showcase the wonderful work done by Educators, Coordinators and Services in the family day care sector to deliver high quality early childhood education and care to children across Australia.

The awards give families, Educators and service staff an opportunity to express in their own words what makes their Educator, Coordinator or approved service such an integral and special contributor to their lives and to the lives of the children in their care.

How do the awards work?

During the nomination period families, service staff and Educators are invited to nominate their family day care Educator, coordinator or approved service via a simple online nomination form, with nominations closing on 4 July 2024.

When an Educator, Coordinator or approved service is nominated they are advised of their nomination via email. During the nomination period, regular emails are sent to all nominees informing them that they have been nominated. A nomination list is also published on the FDCA website.

Inside the email, nominees are invited to make a supporting submission against specific questions outlined in the online submission form before the submission deadline (21 July 2024) to progress within the Awards.

Why should you get involved in the awards?

The Excellence in Family Day Care Awards plays a key role in FDCA's media and public relations strategy and provides a platform to showcase family day care on a national scale via a local media

campaign that targets regions across the country.

In 2023 the awards generated positive media stories across Australia that reached an audience of over one million people via print and online news. By getting involved in the awards, you will not only be giving your families, Educators and service the opportunity to say thank you, you will also be part of a national campaign that promotes the uniqueness of family day care.

Awards Sponsors

FDCA would like to thank the sponsors of the 2024 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards.

Without generous support from sponsors such as and Early Childhood Australia the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards would not be possible.



Nominees are notified of their nomination via email, so it is essential that your email address is registered with FDCA and that our email address, marketing@fdca.com.au has been added to your safe sender list.



THE FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA
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To nominate visit www.fdca.com.au/awards

Nominations close **4 July 2024**

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Your chance to say thanks...

The Excellence in Family Day Care Awards acknowledges the fantastic work within the family day care sector.

The awards recognised Educators, Coordinators and Services across a range of categories, with awards being presented to regional winners, national finalists, national winners and more.

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The Excellence in Family Day Care Awards remains the only dedicated national awards program for the family day care sector. The awards program also remains the cornerstone of FDCA's public relations strategy to position family day care as an option of choice in early childhood education and care.

AWARD CATEGORIES



Educator Awards

75 Regional Winners

4 National finalists



Coordinator Awards

4 National Finalists



Services Awards

4 National Finalists

Star Awards



Emerging Star

Awarded to one Educator and one Coordinator that have been registered for less than two years and one Service that has been registered for less than five years.

Perpetual Star

Awarded to one Educator, one Coordinator and one Service that have each been registered in the family day care sector for a period of 15 years or longer.



DID YOU KNOW?



Did you know that during its history the FDCA Excellence in Family Day Care Awards have:

Generated over
43,000
nominations

Generated more than
1,150
positive media stories

Reached a combined audience of more than
12
million people



KEY DATES

The 2024 awards program is underway and will run over the course of six months, culminating in the presentation of the national award winners at the 2024 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards Gala Dinner in Paramatta on 23 November 2024.

NOW

Nominations open

4 JUL

Nominations close

21 JUL

Supporting submissions close

24 SEP

Educator Regional Winners Announced

8 OCT

Star Award winners announced

15 OCT

National Finalists announced

23 NOV

National Winners announced at Gala Dinner



For more information about the 2024 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards and to download additional nomination slips visit www.fdca.com.au/awards.

The Whitsundays

Our Home, Your Adventure

by Whitsunday Family Day Care

Whitsunday Shire Family Day Care successfully obtained funding from the Child Care Community Funding program in 2021. This funding was sought with the specific aim of enhancing community connections, promotional initiatives and education recruitment.

We had utilised the funding engaging in various initiatives including making donations to the maternity ward in the form of bounty bags, donating toys and learning resources to our local speech therapist and donating to the Mayor's Christmas appeal, as we have always sought ways to give to our local community. Promotional materials and running targeted advertising campaigns had also been instrumental in spreading awareness about our services and engaging with families in our area with hope to increase Educator numbers.

With a substantial amount of funding still available to utilise for a community initiative, we were eager to embark on a new project. Inspired by the work of First Five Forever in Mackay, particularly their creation of a book showcasing their local indigenous language, we felt inspired to do something similar to celebrate our local culture. Unfortunately, due to localised barriers we were unable to incorporate the language as first planned but we could still celebrate our community and all the landmarks around our region where our children live, learn and play.

Through this project, we aimed to not only engage the children and families in our care but also involve the broader community in a meaningful and collaborative endeavour. We believed that by working together, we could create something truly special that reflected the essence of our community and leave a lasting impact for years to come.

To strengthen community ties, we reached out to Proserpine State High School with a proposal for a collaborative project. We suggested that their students could craft scenic backgrounds using mixed media. The school enthusiastically embraced the idea and promptly collaborated with their art department to develop concepts.

As coordinators we, Amanda and Kylie, took on the challenge of crafting the storyline for the book. This task wasn't easy; it required countless hours of brainstorming, writing, and revising. We diligently worked through numerous drafts, carefully refining each aspect of the story to ensure it captured the essence of our region and resonated with our audience.

Whitsunday Shire Family Day Care children and Educators excitedly took on the task of creating the animals. Our collective aim was to encapsulate the distinctive charm of our region while actively involving the children in every step of the creative process. They experimented with different art techniques and materials, learning new skills in a fun and interactive way. They were excited to show off what they had created and you could see how proud they were of their work. It was clear that they had a lot of fun during the process, and they were happy to have something they could call their own.

The journey from initial concept to publication took approximately 18





months. What initially started as a modest idea involving students, Educators and children evolved into something far greater. Parents and grandparents eagerly joined in, contributing to the drawing and construction of animals. One of our families owns a photography business and took all of the images, while community groups like the local history museum assisted with research and our local Elder provided invaluable guidance in planning. This collective effort served as a unifying force, bringing together the entire community in a shared endeavour.

The children at Whitsunday Shire Family Day Care, primarily under the age of five, thoroughly enjoyed every moment of the project. Engaging with their Educators in fun-filled activities, they immersed themselves in learning about local animals and indulged in delightful crafts. Creating these

animals quickly became a highlight of their daily programs, igniting their curiosity as they delved into researching habitats and more.

While the full scope of the final product may have been beyond their grasp, their enthusiasm soared upon glimpsing the finished book. The sheer joy of spotting the animals they had crafted within its colourful pages was contagious. What began as a learning experience soon transformed into sheer amazement for the children, as they marvelled at seeing their own creations immortalised in print.

The book has had a significant impact on programming and future learning activities at Whitsunday Shire Family Day Care. Inspired by the children's excitement, Educators are incorporating elements from the book into our daily routines and planning future outings centered around its themes. This ensures that the children's enthusiasm for learning about local animals and habitats continues to be nurtured, fostering a deeper connection to our community and environment.

Don McDermid, Principal of Proserpine State High School said, "It has been such an incredible opportunity for our school. Our students showed such excitement and enthusiasm through their

work and appreciated the chance to demonstrate their artistic skill, interest in child care and ultimately their love of our Whitsunday Region. It has been an absolute privilege to work with Amanda and Kylie on the book release."

From the moment we were inspired to create "The Whitsundays, Our Home, Your Adventure" to its publication, this project has shown the strength of unity and shared goals. As we look back on the hard work, creativity, and community spirit that went into it, we're reminded of the impact we can make when we work together. Moving forward, this project will shape how we connect with our community, fostering pride and belonging for everyone involved. It's a testament to our community's strength and ability to achieve great things when we collaborate toward a common goal.





BUSINESS INSIGHTS

Information regarding Educator Assistants, Relief Educators and Dual Educators

Are you aware of the insurance implications for your Educator Assistants, Relief Educators and Dual Educators? Read on to make sure you are adequately covered.

1. Educator Assistant

An **Educator Assistant** is someone who is described as such in the Education and Care Services National Regulations – Reg 144. A family day care Educator Assistant assists a family day care Educator in providing education and care to children as part of the family day care service. They can only work unsupervised in certain circumstances as specified by Regulation 144, these are summarised below:

- during transporting or escorting (by walking) children between school, another ECEC service or the children's home;
- in emergency situations; or
- for an unforeseen or exceptional appointment less than four (4) hours where the approved provider has given approval, and the parents have been given notice.

This type of arrangement is automatically covered under every Educator's FDCA Public Liability Policy and does not need to be specifically noted. Our policy assumes that at different times you may have an Educator Assistant stand in for you and the policy is designed to encompass this without any further action from you.



2. Relief Educator

A **Relief Educator** is an Educator who assists the primary Educator. They may stand in for you whilst you attend to other appointments or catch up on paperwork or planning. They may also stand in for you whilst you go on leave or if you are ill and cannot work for a period. The guidelines around Relief Educators are that they must be listed on your policy with the dates they will be working.

Members need to let FDCA know when a Relief Educator will be standing in for them so our Insurance Team can make the necessary amendment to your policy and provide a certificate for the Relief Educator for that period. If the Relief Educator is doing multiple relief care arrangements for the same primary Educator, then we can list the name of the Relief Educator for the whole period of the

primary Educator's insurance policy.

It is important to note that the following three (3) conditions are satisfied prior to adding a Relief Educator:

- the Relief Educator must be first approved by your approved provider;
- the Relief Educator must not perform relief for more than 50 percent of the time you provide primary care; and
- the Relief Educator must predominantly only provide you with relief care.

For instance, if you work five days a week but you want to have a relief come in one day a week so you can catch up on other administration matters, then we will note the relief for that one day a week and provide documentation to your service.

If a Relief Educator provides relief care for multiple Educators at a time, they will require their own public liability policy.

3. Dual Educator

A **Dual Educator** arrangement is similar to a job share. Both Educators work similar hours with the same children at the same address. For example, Educator 1: works Monday and Tuesday 7am to 6pm and Educator 2: works Wednesday and Thursday 7am to 6pm. In this example both Educators would be named on the policy, both would be noted on the evidence of insurance. They would not be required to buy separate policies, rather they would jointly purchase a dual policy and share the cost.

Be You Culturally Respectful Engagement for Learning Communities

Be You resources supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

Be You developed these resources for Educators to use in all learning communities. The [Culturally respectful engagement for learning communities](#) resources were designed by [Be You](#), with a panel of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People from across Australia.

These resources are very timely for Educators, with the updated Approved Learning Frameworks emphasising embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the vision, principles, practices and outcomes of the Early Years Approved Learning Frameworks (EYLF) and My Time, Our Place (MTOPI).

About the resources

The resources were designed as a guide to help Educators connect with First Nations People and organisations in their local community. The practical information provided in the resources includes:

[Be You Protocols for Engagement with First Nations Communities Guide](#)

- How to connect with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- Tips for talking about culturally sensitive issues with children and families

[Creating a stakeholder list](#)

- How to create a list of people and organisations in your family day care local area

- Connecting with the 'knowledge holders' in your local area – usually Elders who know the culture, history, practices and language of the area

[Cultural responsiveness in learning communities: A focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples](#)

- Provides strategies for understanding and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing – to be culturally responsive
- Links to the National Learning Frameworks
- Outlines challenges you may find when you use culturally responsive practices

[Organisations for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples and cultures](#)

- Provides links for exploring more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and language

[Cultural Actions Catalogue](#)

- Shows how your family day care setting, or any learning community can be more inclusive and culturally responsive by including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history in everyday practice

How do you use them?

The introduction to these resources states: 'Connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities begins when connecting and reflecting with yourself.'

Why is self-reflection recommended as the starting point with these resources?

Becoming aware of your current attitudes and biases about First Nations culture and history will give you an idea of where you are on the path to being culturally responsive in your professional practice. When you embed culturally responsive practices in your program, you make your family day care service a place of cultural safety.

Use these resources as a practical guide if you genuinely want to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of your curriculum.

Learn more

Watch the recording of the Be You In Focus webinar, [Reflect, Respect and Respond: when engaging with First Nations communities](#)

Hear the panellists discuss:

- Their experiences and the process of developing Be You's culturally responsive resources
- How these resources can be used in your learning community to further connect with First Nations communities

Be You is the national mental health in education initiative delivered by Beyond Blue, in collaboration with Early Childhood Australia and headspace, supporting early learning services and schools to implement a whole learning approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Early Childhood Australia's Be You team are a diverse team of professionals who are committed to promoting the implementation of positive mental health and wellbeing in the early childhood sector.



With delivery partners



Funded by






The joys and many benefits of tummy time

Hands up if you've ever experienced a challenging tummy time?

Parents and family day care Educators alike can agree that what might seem like a simple exercise, tummy time can be one of the toughest during an infant's development stages. If you look at your infant's facial expressions, they'll resemble one of these emojis: smiley, perplexed, crying.

Red Nose explores what tummy time looks like for babies and family day care Educators, with some handy hints along the way to make tummy time an enjoyable experience for all.

**“Come see the world from my view”
– tummy time through an infant's eyes**

I secretly love tummy time. Sure, I might have my good days and be all smiles and there are days when I cry and it all seems too hard, but tummy time is really fun – I can see the world from different angles, which helps my brain develop.

In the beginning, I may be unsettled and only be able to stay on my tummy for a minute or two during playtime, but tummy time really is good for me!

This means my neck, shoulder, arm and back muscles will get stronger – I can use these muscles to move around.

Tummy time also prevents me from developing a flat spot on the head. There's been studies done about it too, but I'll let Loren Rushton from Red Nose speak more about that.

Now back to why tummy time is so enjoyable – it's super cool when you interact with me; talking, singing or having musical or textured toys for me to play with. A comfortable mattress or bunny rug, makes it a pleasant tummy time experience.

Some other tummy time ideas that have been fun for me is when it's bath time, when I'm placed on an exercise ball or on a change table. But please do supervise me closely, and don't leave me alone when I'm on my tummy. It is dangerous if I fall asleep and my face gets covered – it might stop me being able to breathe properly.

► The benefits of tummy time: handy tips for Family Day Care Educators and parents

For family day care Educators, emphasising the importance of tummy time for infants is paramount in promoting healthy development and reducing the risk of adverse sleep-related incidents.

Loren Rushton, Red Nose's National Education and Health Promotion Manager advises that tummy time plays a crucial role in strengthening vital muscles in a baby's back, neck, and arms: "This enhanced muscle development enables infants to better control their head movements, thus contributing to safer sleep practices and reducing the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related accidents," says Loren.

As well as reducing sleep-related incidents, researcher Associate Professor Alexandra Matiniuk from the George Institute for Global Health at the University of Sydney has reaffirmed another benefit of tummy time – it aids in preventing a flat head, which can develop if a baby lies with their head in one position for long periods of time.

Additionally, Red Nose highlights the cognitive benefits of tummy time – it provides infants with valuable opportunities to explore and engage with their environment from various angles, thereby supporting their cognitive growth.

Red Nose also encourages practical guidance to effectively promote tummy time both within the home and at family day care by incorporating tummy time into daily routines, such as after nappy changes, baths, or during floor play. A variety of tummy positions and engaging activities during these sessions, such as talking, singing, or using stimulating toys, can enhance the experience for both adults and infants.

For parents, Loren emphasises the importance of parental involvement and face-to-face interaction during tummy time sessions: "Tummy time can help strengthen the parent-child bond while promoting the infant's physical and cognitive development," Loren says.

While advocating for the regular practice of tummy time from birth, it's crucial for parents and family day care Educators to supervise the infant at all times to ensure the safety and well-being of infants during these activities.

Rockin' around the Red Nose Day



With hits such as the Lion King's Hakuna Matata and the Wiggles' Fruit Salad, eight little ravers from Sree Devi's Family Day Care in Victoria, danced their way into the wee hours of 7pm to raise funds for Red Nose Australia.

Last year, Red Nose aimed to raise \$1 million to help save little lives and support grieving families. As part of this major, national fundraiser Family Day Care Educators, Services and child care centres were invited to host their very own disco.

The little groovers and shakers from Sree's Family Day Care helped to raise more than \$200 and got silly for a serious cause.

Sree, a family day care operator of more than 29 years and based in Melbourne's south eastern suburbs, invited her current families to her house after hours to enjoy a fundraiser worthy of a Wiggles concert.

Armed with their red noses and best moves that would put Dorothy the Dinosaur to shame, older and younger siblings of the family day care had a wonderful time dancing to the Red Nose Disco playlist.

"It was so simple to run a Red Nose Disco Fundraiser for Red Nose Day in 2023. I just downloaded the resources like bunting and colouring in sheets from the website and created my own playlist," says Sree.

All the families that joined the disco fundraiser also enjoyed the barbeque provided with each family bringing snacks and food.

Rounding off the evening was a jovial group photo with young raver Oscar, 7, yelling out to the photographer's usual 'say cheese' line right before snapping the photo: "why don't we say 'Red Nose'".

When asked how they enjoyed the disco, little brother Felix, 4, said: "Yes, let's do it again next year!"

Red Nose provides an easy-to-use download pack which includes:

- Party Hats
- Wrist bands
- Colouring in sheets – including exclusive Wiggles & Red Nose day sheets
- Bunting
- Joke Lists and
- A Dance Spinner

To create your own Red Nose Day fundraiser visit www.rednoseday.org.au

Dollars and Sense

with Ben Mueller

WELCOME TO TAX TIME 2025!

No, this heading is not a typo! It is now time to start preparing your 2024-2025 tax return.

Huh? This is the June 2024 edition of JiGSAW. We should be talking about tips for preparing everyone's 2024 tax returns, right? Why should we even be thinking about our 2025 tax returns?

If you have these same questions, you are not alone and we will now look to answer both questions, including helping you with preparing your 2024 tax return.

Preparation = Less Stress = Tax Savings

Your stress levels in preparing your tax return, as well as the amount of tax savings you may be able to obtain at the end of the year, are dependent upon how well you have prepared your tax records throughout the year.

Delaying your 2024 preparation may mean that you now have a bit more work and cost to catch up but getting your systems better organised and implemented as part of the 2024 catch up process will set you up nicely for completing your 2025 and future year tax returns.

Starting early in the tax year is the key, so let's get started!

1. Select a good record keeping system that works for you

If your current system is a shoebox or folder of receipts, now is the time to set up a good tax record keeping system. Even if you already have a good system you and your Accountant feel happy with you should still evaluate if there is a new or better system available which may save you more time or better serve your needs. This may still include keeping your current system.

Which record keeping system should I choose?

The most important attribute of any record keeping system is that you understand and feel comfortable using and maintaining it.

Choosing a well-known accounting system such as a QuickBooks, MYOB or Xero is not a guarantee of success. In fact, using one of these systems can create a bigger mess than a shoebox if you don't understand how to use them correctly.

Research, explore and discuss options with both your Accountant and your fellow Educators.

Some popular choices include Microsoft Excel, Easy Cashbook, Harmony or Hubworks accounting systems, Family Day Care Cashbook, and Dext. Many of these have a free trial so you can check them out before making a final purchase decision.

2. Entering your Expenses

Now it is time to put your record keeping system to work because for every expense you fail to record and claim, the more tax you may have to pay. Conversely you also don't want to record and claim anything you are not entitled and risk receiving a fine and penalty.

It is therefore critical that you know:

- A. What expenses to record; and
- B. How to record your expenses correctly.

A. What expenses to record

You should be recording all expenses for which you know you are able to claim a tax deduction.

If you are unsure about recording/claiming any particular expense you have incurred, you can speak to your Accountant, the tax office, or do your own research to determine this.

To help get you started, we have prepared the following link to our example of expenses which you can use as reference when entering your expenses.

www.fdctax.com.au/exampleofexpenses

B. How to record your expenses correctly

When entering your expenses you need to:

- Enter the total amount you paid for the item including GST;
- If you are registered for GST, make sure the GST calculated by your system or the amount you have entered agrees with what is on the tax invoice;
- Always record or note either the business or private use for any shared expenses.

EXAMPLE

Sarah is registered for GST and purchased a new computer for \$2,200 including GST. She determined she uses her computer 80% for Family Day Care, and 20% for private purposes.

Sarah would record her total expense as \$2,200, and depending upon the system she uses, record or provide a comment or note that the family day care/business use is 80%.

If Sarah does not have a valid tax invoice, or the amount of GST on the invoice is \$0, then she will still

record the total amount paid of \$2,200 but will need to correct or record the GST amount as \$0.

What about my Service Levies?

The levies you pay are usually recorded on your Educator Payment History Report.

You can use your payment history report to record and provide this information but be careful not to double dip and claim your levies twice.

Double Dipping

Double dipping is when you take up the amount deposited into your bank account after levies have already been deducted, and then claim levies again as a deduction.

For example, if the total income collected by your scheme is \$1,000. They then withhold \$100 in levies and pay the remaining \$900 into your bank account.

The correct income is \$1,000, and the correct deduction is \$100. Making your profit or taxable income $\$1,000 - \$100 = \$900$.

A common error, and one which can lead to fines and penalties, is to record only the amount deposited of \$900 as income, and then claim the \$100 withheld levy. This results in your income being incorrectly reported as $\$900 - \$100 = \$800$.

3. Reports, Receipts, Diaries and Logbooks

Once you have recorded your information you can provide your Accountant with a backup file, or a copy of report(s) detailing your entered transactions. The most common reports are a Profit and Loss, and a detailed ledger listing your individual transactions.

Some systems allow you to share your system directly with your Accountant for them to backup or produce the reports themselves.

Receipts and Invoices

You do not need to provide a copy of your receipts to your Accountant or tax office unless they request it from you.

However, the tax office requires you to retain your receipts for five years for audit purposes. These can

be maintained either physically or electronically.

If stored and saved electronically in a clear and legible format (such as a picture or pdf copy of your receipt), you do not need to keep the physical copy of your receipt and it can be destroyed.

A good option for storing expense records is a cloud-based system such as Dropbox or Microsoft One Drive. These are a secure and remote location and will remain safe and sound regardless of what happens to records in your filing cabinet or your computer. Microsoft One Drive is also free with a Microsoft Office Subscription.

Diaries, Logbooks, Percentages and Travel

If you have maintained the required diaries and logbooks for your car, mobile phone, internet, laundry, hours worked, or usage of any particular item or part of your home, you should collate and summarise the usage and percentages calculated, and record the odometer reading of your vehicle on 30 June 2024.

These details can be provided to your Accountant for you to discuss with them to calculate your claim for each of these expenses.

I have not kept any diaries or logbook. What should I do?

The tax office's diary and logbook requirements highlight the importance of starting your tax return preparation early and during the tax year.

Fortunately, the tax office does still allow use of reasonable estimates of your travel or usage, but your claim may be lower than if you had maintained the necessary diary or logbook before the end of the prior financial year.

If this sounds like you, you should be prepared to provide estimates of the number of kilometres travelled, as well as the number of day care and private phone calls, messages, and hours for both services, equipment or other day care areas or items.

Your Accountant can help you calculate what percentage of these costs can be claimed.

4. Prepare your Income Records

Whist it can go by different names, the most accurate and likely simplest way to prepare and provide your business income is to obtain a copy of Educator Payment History Report from your scheme.

Your Payment History report is a 1-2 page summary of all of your income and levies received and paid for the tax year.

Your Service may automatically email this report to you, or you can request a copy from them. Some systems, such as Harmony, may even let you produce this report yourself.

Before recording or sending off your report, check that your report includes all dates for the financial year. If you changed schemes or systems during the year, you may have to request and provide multiple reports to ensure you have the details for the entire year.

What about my bank statements?

Your bank statement will provide details of your income deposits, but only your payment history (or weekly remittances) will provide your levy information.

Cash is becoming less common, but using your bank statements only to calculate your income can cause confusion and lead to errors such as double dipping as outlined previously.

5. Start preparing for your 2025 Tax Return

If you were not as prepared as you would have like to have been for your 2024 year, but want to make to make your 2025 tax year experience better, now is the time to prepare.

If you start implementing the same steps outlined from 1 July, and continue to be disciplined and consistent for the remainder of the year, your records are going to be more accurate, and you will give yourself the best chance to keep your 2025 tax year bill as low as possible.

A few minutes each day or at the end of each week during the year, can save you hours and days, and potentially thousands of dollars in tax savings at the end of the year.



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority®

ACECQA's family focussed **StartingBlocks.gov.au** website is even better

As the national authority responsible for the National Quality Framework (NQF), the Australian Children's Education and Care Authority (ACECQA) provides freely available guidance and resources to help the education and care sector to improve outcomes for children and aims to find ways we can all best promote and support consistency across our national quality system.

When services build on the positive relationships they have formed with families by explaining our national quality system, and why they do what they do at their service, it helps increase families' awareness and understanding of quality education and care. Our family focused [Startingblocks.gov.au](https://www.startingblocks.gov.au) resources are ideal for this, and highly regarded by families.

It's Australia's free government website providing comprehensive information about all approved services across Australia. Brought to you by ACECQA in 2015, it provides easy to use key tools and easy to understand information to help them make informed decisions about their children's early learning and development.

In 2022 new service fees, vacancies and inclusions information and a new subsidy calculator tool were launched and now a fresh new design and user enhancements have pushed live in March 2024.

Startingblocks.gov.au website has a new look and feel



"StartingBlocks.gov.au website was really important, quality education is so important to my whole family. We've always taken a lot of time to choose the right place."

- Father of a 3 year old attending long day care and family day care services

StartingBlocks.gov.au is still the one place where families can find and compare early childhood education and outside school hours care services.

StartingBlocks.gov.au gives families the latest information from service PRODA PEP entries to support their decision making, and is the only place to find accurate information about all the approved services operating across Australia.

Services use and share the StartingBlocks.gov.au tools and information with their families to help them understand quality and our regulatory system.

- StartingBlocks.gov.au helps families learn about our regulatory system, National Quality Standard (NQS) service quality ratings, approved learning frameworks and early years development. They can find out about the different types of education and care services available in Australia, search for a service near them, calculate their expected Child Care Subsidy

(CCS) entitlement and find tips about choosing services and building relationships with services their children attend.

- StartingBlocks.gov.au provides comprehensive information about all approved services across Australia, and also explains the different types of services available in easy to understand articles and videos to help families decide what will best suits their needs, preferences and circumstances.
- StartingBlocks.gov.au shares tips for families to help them find and choose a quality early childhood education and care provider - including what to look for when visiting a service, questions to ask staff and Educators, and factors to consider when deciding.
- StartingBlocks.gov.au provides valuable information resources for families about supporting early childhood development and learning, when their child is attending a service and when they're at home.



StartingBlocks.gov.au is even easier to use

It's now even easier for families to find local services using the **Find Child Care tool**. Families can find service fees, vacancies, quality ratings and inclusions and save them to a shortlist to compare, and use the contact details to progress a visit and find out about enrolling. For family day care services, the scheme coordination office is listed for families to contact to find out about the Family Day Care Educators available.

The **Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Calculator** tool has been streamlined and runs even faster to help families estimate the amount of CCS they are eligible for and their out-of-pocket costs.

The new **testimonials** from parents published on StartingBlocks.gov.au share feedback and insights into quality children's education and care and the ways StartingBlocks.gov.au helps families and children.

The new **Resources** section features even more information, enhanced search and navigation features and engaging video content:

- [Attending a service](#) resources provide information on our national regulatory system, service quality ratings, health and safety, educational programs, what to expect and transition to school.
- [Your child's development](#) resources provide information about supporting your child's early years learning and development, parenting, health and safety.

Family day care focused resources for families include

- <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/resources/parenting-and-home/play-and-leisure-activities/play-based-learning-supports-your-child's-development>

- <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/resources/children-and-services/choosing-a-service/what-does-a-quality-service-look-like>
- <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/resources/children-and-services/educational-programs/educational-programs-for-children-and-young-people-in-school-age-care>
- <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/resources/children-and-services/types-of-services/choosing-between-family-day-care-and-long-day-care>

You can also follow StartingBlocks.gov.au updates on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

We remain committed to delivering on the shared vision that children have the best start in life through quality early childhood education and care.



Red Star House

Aboriginal Inspired Turtle Floor Puzzle

A 22-piece shaped floor puzzle depicting an Aboriginal inspired drawing of a turtle, valued at \$124!

This large floor puzzle is a great resource for encouraging teamwork and co-operation and will help children develop their communication and social skills as they discuss what they are working on. Children will enjoy the challenge of completing this colourful puzzle to see the beautiful different aboriginal patterns to the turtle.

Puzzles are a great activity for young children to develop fine motor skills, visual and memory skills, categorising and sorting skills, whilst playing and having fun.

Competition closes 31 July 2024.



Sudoku

Wooden Dough & Modelling Accessories Pack

Valued at \$76.95 this wooden dough & modelling accessory pack features a collection of rolling pins, rollers, stamps and other tools designed to be used with dough. This set also includes a wooden board.

This set is beautifully crafted using sustainably sourced wood and offers a sensory experience with tactile elements of wood. Promote imaginative and creative play as children explore and create their play dough creations. The set also helps develop fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, as children grip, roll, and manipulate the wooden tools.

Set includes a wooden board and 9 patterned rollers and tools.

Competition closes 31 July 2024.

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congratulations

...to the winners from Issue 104

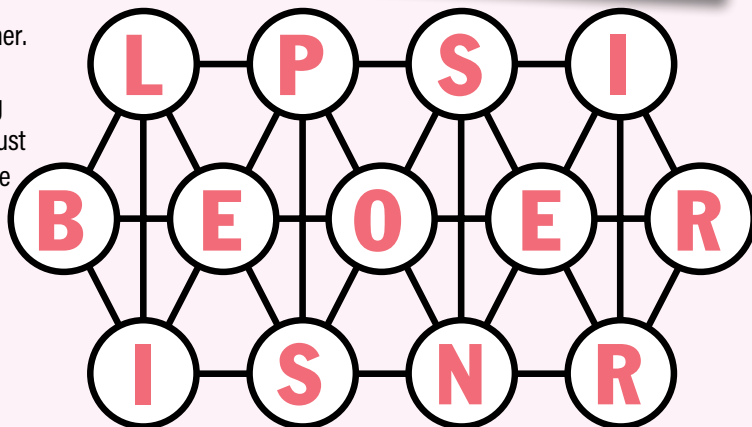
Find the Red Star House
Darpana Bhalodia, SA

Sudoku
Rachael Bach, QLD

Chain Letters
Melinda van Donselaar, TAS

Chain Letters

Enter the Chain Letters competition for your chance to win a \$50 Booktopia gift voucher. Can you find the 13-letter word hiding in the chain? You must use all 13 letters once only and can move from circle to circle only where they are connected by lines. Competition closes 31 July 2024.



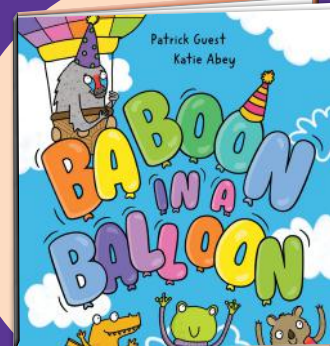


SCHOLASTIC

Storytime

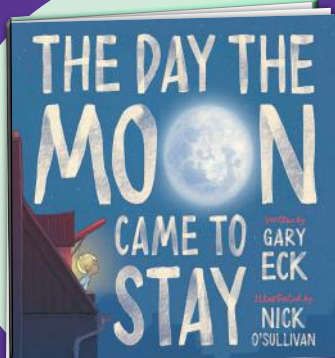
BABOON IN A BALLOON

The children found this book very funny especially the page with a 'pooping flamingo'. The story has lots of funny parts and pictures to accompany the text and the children giggled with laughter at the end when the hat got stuck on the moon. The children decided the events in the story wouldn't be funny if they happened for real, but they are funny in a book. They also enjoyed the Baboons brightly coloured bottom!



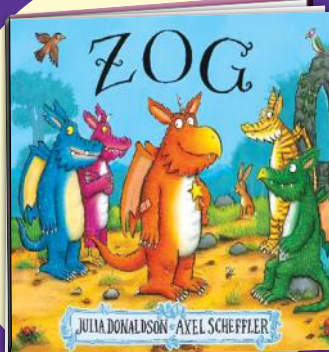
THE DAY THE MOON CAME TO STAY

The children really enjoyed this story but was maybe more targeted at children aged four and over as it had references to all the things the Moon does for the Earth. It was a great source of compassion and feelings towards others and the topics such as tides and full moons would be great to explore and extend on for children interested in space and the earth.



KEEP YOUR PANTS ON

This has already become a favourite in our service with the children requesting it and reading it on their own every day! The children found this book so funny as it discussed the reasons we need pants; especially so we don't get splinters in our bottom! This was a fantastic reference book to keeping yourself safe, keeping your bottom to yourself and personal safety.



ZOG

The children loved this book full of dragons, the repetitive words inspired the children to read along and feel part of the story. The book had a great moral story of helping others and caring for a friend. It also showed us throughout the story that if we keep practicing things that seem tricky, we get better at them and feel better about trying new challenges.

ABOUT SCHOLASTIC

Scholastic has been the market leader of Australian children's publishing for over 50 years, bringing the joy of reading to multiple generations of Australian families.

Scholastic proudly partners with Australian day cares, schools and major retailers. Scholastic products can be found in Book Club, Book Fairs, the classroom, retail chains and independent booksellers.

Scholastic believes that all children should have regular access to quality, affordable books that they have chosen for themselves. Reading ignites a spark of adventure that a child can carry within their heart well into their adulthood. Scholastic hopes to light this spark within every child.

Learn more at: scholastic.com.au

BOOK REVIEWER:

Mini Miners is a special little family day care operating in the mining town of Moranbah, Central Queensland. We have been operating for over five years and our days are filled with laughter and magical moments.

Grab a Cuppa

The "Grab a Cuppa" Concept

To develop this series, members from across the country reached out to share their unique stories and perspectives with us, outline their journey in the sector and tell us a little bit about what a day in their shoes is like.

GET TO KNOW

Coastwide Child and Family Services

West Gosford, NSW

How long has your service been in operation and where are you located?

Coastwide Child and Family Services have been in service for 41 years, with a purpose-built child and play friendly Head Office in West Gosford, NSW.

What is your role at the service and your background in the early childhood sector?

Coordination Unit at Coastwide Family Day Care - We have a combination of Diploma and Early Childhood Teacher qualifications and have all engaged in various ECEC sectors – Centre-based, OOSH, Preschool, home-based education and care and Family Support.

If you could provide one answer to the question – why choose family day care? – what would it be?

We can't provide one answer!

- The small group of mixed ages and the amazing relationship

building that occurs with the families and children.

- One group, one room and one Educator that can talk to the whole day.
- Family Day Care is the most wonderful extension of your own family.
- By choosing FDC, you are extending your village and creating long-lasting relationships.
- We have seen educators caring for the children of the children they cared for years ago!

Could you tell us a bit about what your service has been up to recently?

We have diversified in other business arms to assist in service longevity and the opportunity to support family day care to compete in the ECEC sector. We have also been focusing on assessment and rating and ensure that our approach, our learnings and



operations is consistent over all our areas for all the families and children. We have been promoting Coastwide and empowering our family day care Educators to be the best they can through continuous professional development, robust policies and procedures and celebrating all our Educators amazing achievements, such as our recent Exceeding rating. The coordinator team loves working



alongside our Educators to provide opportunities for collaboration and networking.

What would you say your service is known for?

Compliance, best practice, established connected team and excellent Educators have created our strong market reputation.

How does your team like to have fun outside of work?

Collectively - Spending time with family and friends, lots of cheering on the soccer sidelines, arts and crafts for our Madds & Mums Creation page, gardening, living an active life and enjoying the journey of motherhood alongside a community of empowered women.

What is the best piece of advice you would give to a new Educator?

Embrace the small wins and celebrate your successes, either big or small; this is a deeply rewarding and energy intense career and sometimes it can be hard to see the bigger picture in a normal day; shaping small minds is a big feat! Be kind to yourself and allow yourself the grace to make mistakes as you are learning to operate independently in a home.

What is the best piece of advice you would give to a new Coordinator or Educational Leader?

Back yourself, learn from your challenges, be your own biggest cheerleader, and celebrate your victories no matter how small.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever been given?

No matter how hard it can seem, breathe, relax, enjoy and know you have support – don't forget sometimes the hardest things can be figured out by talking them through with a child!

Is there any other information you'd like to share about your team, your families, your career, or your service?

We are known as 'strict and compliant' and whilst that is a



barrier for some Educators to join our team, we celebrate our level of quality and commitment, as we believe that is needed working in a sector that is educating our leaders of the future.


**GET TO
KNOW**

Sue Higgs
Hobart, TAS



How long have you worked in family day care for and where are you located?

I have been running my Family Day Care, near Hobart, for six years.

Can you tell us a little bit about your background in the early childhood sector?

Beginning as a nanny (in Australia and in England), I completed my BA in Early Childhood Education in WA in 1995. I have been working in long daycare until starting family day care. I have worked as room leader, director and relief in Perth, Hobart and Edinburgh.

If you could provide only one answer to the question – why choose family day care? – what would it be?

Having studied an attachment theory and interpersonal neurobiology-based play therapy model, it provides the best ability to create attachment relationships with the children in your care. Family day care is the healthiest group care model for the emotional development of children, which in turn enables them to thrive in other areas.

What has your family day care been up to lately?

We have been for a walk to the creek at the bottom of our property. It took about an hour to get there with lots of stops to look at fungi and bugs. It is all up hill back so we have to start back before they are too tired. We sing songs and play games to keep their minds off the uphill climb. We love walking on country.

Water play is a constant draw for several of the children so I have set up a water container with dam water to conserve our precious rain water. They transfer, 'cook', make potions, water the garden or make rivers and puddles.

We have loved painting and adding autumn leaves to our creations. I have been drawing around the children for life size paintings.

Hammering came out for the first time in ages. We use punches to make holes in gum leaves. So much concentration, strength and coordination required.

Helping to rake leaves and tip them around the trees for mulch. Picking tomatoes and strawberries from the garden, as well as the last of the blackberries from around the property.

There have been lots of animals to observe, the padymelons and Bennet's wallabies have been out feeding in the mornings and birds come to drink or bathe outside the window after rain. Green rosellas are popular, along with scarlet robins and blue wrens.

For Easter we followed the Scottish tradition of decorating boiled eggs and then rolling them down a hill until they smash.



What would you say your family day care is best known for?

The outdoor bush environment. I am often recommended in the natural parenting groups.

What do you like to do when you're not working?

Spend time in the garden, op-shopping, read on the deck, watching the birds, time with family.

What is the best piece of advice you would give to a new Educator?

Keep things simple. Time spent playing and being silly with the children is so valuable to them, over organised activities or intentional learning. You can document what they repeated on their own or asked you to play again. If you would like a theme, choose an executive

function or a developmental schema they are enjoying or needing to develop.

What is the biggest change you have seen during your time working in the sector?

I started before accreditation and the EYLF so those are pretty big changes. As stressful and painful the process of assessment and rating is, some centres or Educators who thought their awful standards and conduct was normal in the past, are now given a set of expectations. The standard of care has definitely improved as a result. I also feel that the EYLF is an improvement on the developmental domains/checklists and themes of the past.



What is the best advice you have received yourself?

Don't expect so much of yourself.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

When past parents thank me for being such a huge part of their child's wellbeing.

This June I am going to visit the family that I was a live in Nanny for in 1990.

Being a national finalist for the FDCA Educator of the year Award was pretty good too.



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Reconciliation in Action

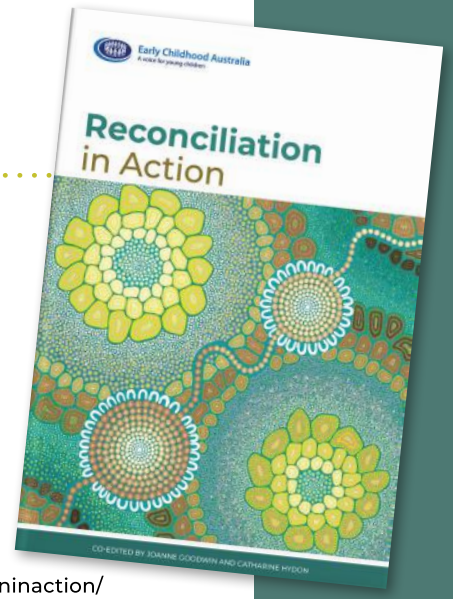
Embark on a path of understanding with *Reconciliation in Action*. Take the next step in your reconciliation journey with this curated collection of stories that paint a picture of reconciliation from multiple perspectives, as it is now and as it might be in the future.

Co-edited by Joanne Goodwin and Catharine Hydon.



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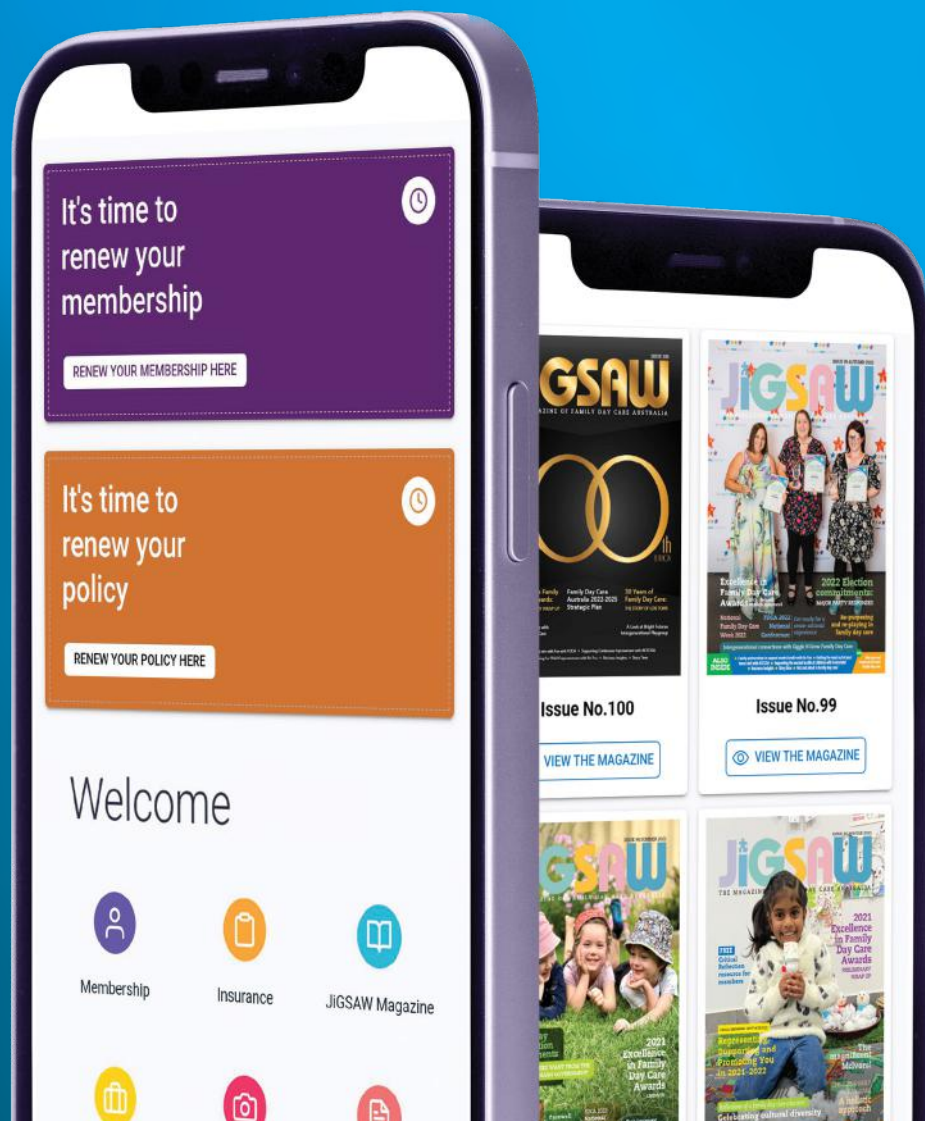
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Nathan Wallis



We are very excited that internationally acclaimed New Zealand neuroscience educator Nathan Wallis will be a keynote speaker for the conference.

As a bonus for conference delegates, on top of his keynote, Nathan will also be holding a workshop that will be available to all delegates in a plenary format!

Inspirational and charismatic, Nathan's ability to translate neuroscience into everyday life engages all audiences.



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