

JIGSAW

THE MAGAZINE OF FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA

Starting out safely with
Road Safety

The Importance of
Inclusion

40 Years of Love,
Strength and Laughter

Excellence
in Family Day Care
Awards 2023

Family Day Care
Celebration Days



Safe Sleep with Red Nose + Therapeutic Storytelling + Grab a Cuppa
+ Updates to the NOF with ACECQA + Recruitment Insights + The Magic of Family Day Care
+ Business Insights + Story time + Win prizes for your family day care

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JiGSAW

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Editorial Policy

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.

Advertising Policy

FDCA will publish advertisements which seek to positively support the wellbeing of children, their families, the early childhood profession and the maintenance and growth of the family day care program. For advertising rates and copy deadlines please contact the FDCA Marketing Department JiGSAW, PO Box 571 Gosford NSW 2250. Phone 1800 658 699. Email marketing@fdca.com.au.

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- Personal Accident Insurance for Children
- Management Liability Insurance
- Home and Contents Insurance
- Motor Vehicle Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- Family Day Care Legal Services
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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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A word from the ceo

Welcome to our winter edition of JiGSAW!

During what has been an incredibly busy time for the entire family day care sector, I am pleased to bring you our 102nd edition of JiGSAW!

In this edition we are excited to launch the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards for the 12th year running. The awards are a unique and very special opportunity to celebrate and shine a light on outstanding practice and the critical role that family day care plays in the lives of children, families and communities across Australia. The awards are also a very important element of our public relations strategy and are an ideal mechanism to share the family day care story with the broader community, I urge you all to get involved! To find out how be sure to check out pages 12 – 16 in this edition of JiGSAW.

We are excited to have contributions from both services and educators in this edition, including features from Baw Baw Family Day Care on the importance of Road Safety, in addition to a profile on Celebration Days with Wynnum Family Day Care and Education Service, and how Nature Alliance Family Day Care is focusing on inclusion to better support educators and their families.

An exciting announcement for Family Day Care Australia featured on page 9 of this edition, is the launch of our new myFDCA App, placing member benefits in the palm of your hand; anywhere, anytime and ensuring you receive locator enquiries in real-time – be sure to download the app today. We have also recently made some exciting new upgrades to our Family Day Care Locator that can help you build and promote your business, and you can read about these on page 7.

In our winter edition we pause to celebrate and share the stories and wonderful memories of some of our longest serving family day care professionals. Julia Reynolds and Sonia Menzell's inclusions can be found on page 23 and in our Grab a Cuppa section on pages 31 – 33.

Our regular additions from Be You and ACECQA can be found on pages 25 – 28 and explore the importance of Therapeutic Storytelling and an overview of updates to the National Quality Framework.

We are grateful to those who contributed to this edition of JiGSAW and those who continue to promote the wonderful work that family day care does across the country every day. By participating in surveys, joining our Online Engagement Series webinars and sharing your images online you are contributing to raising the image and profile of our sector and to positioning family day care as the natural choice in quality early childhood education and care.

Andrew Paterson
Chief Executive Officer
Family Day Care Australia

Cover image provided by Alecia Richards
 - Bush Retreat Family Day Care



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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SUMMARY UPDATE

The latest quarterly Child Care in Australia statistics were recently released by the federal Department of Education. The report for the June quarter 2022 shows that:



14,142

approved child care services operated in Australia during that period, comprising:

8,827

Centre-based day care services (62.4 % of all services)

417

Family day care services (2.9 %)

4,861

Outside school hours care services (34.4 %)



1,356,550

children attended approved child care in the June 2022 quarter. Of these:

787,500

or 58.1%, attended centre-based day care services

81,550

or 6 %, attended family day care

516,920

or 38.1%, attended outside school hours care services



The total number of families nationally using child care in the June 2022 quarter was

959,290

Of these:

649,140

or 67.6% used centre-based day care services

57,980

or 6 % used family day care

379,680

or 39.6% used outside school hours care services

INDUSTRY SNIPPETS



\$10.90

The average hourly fee across all care types (excluding In-home care) was \$10.90, with the average hourly fee for family day care sitting at \$11.30. This compares to \$11.35 for centre-based day care services and \$8.05 for outside school hours care services.



172

In the June quarter 2022, a total of 172 (or 41.2 %) of family day care services charged above the family day care fee cap of \$11.40. This compared to 21.4 % of centre-based day care services charging above the fee cap of \$12.31, and 16.1% of outside school hours care services charging above the fee cap of \$10.77.

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

Debbie Adamson and the Magic of Family Day Care!

Sometimes, something special happens in the world of early childhood education – a phenomenon we have dubbed, the Magic of Family Day Care!

Debbie Adamson has been running her family day care for nearly 23 years. Thanks to social media, she has watched children who she once cared for in her home grow up and have their own children, knowing she played a special role in it. Her own children grew up in family day care and she loves to watch them, and many others, thrive in their lives.

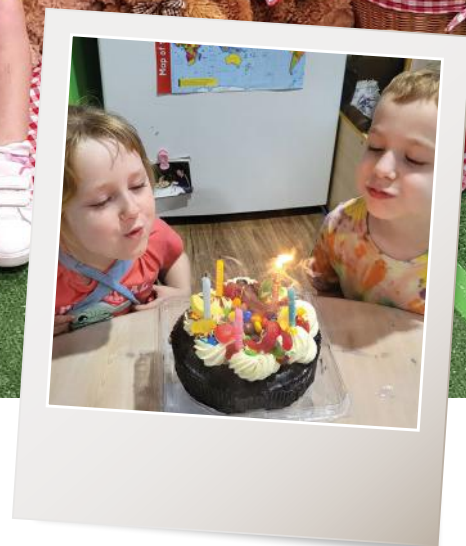
For educator Debbie, it was a shock to one day realise that she had welcomed into her care two children, from separate families, born on the same day, just one hour apart.

"I have had one child in my care from the time he was 6 months old and another from 2 years old. I realised that they share the same birthday when doing enrolments. They also share the day with my husband," said Debbie.

"One afternoon the parents started talking, as it was coming up to the special day, and they had worked out what times the babies had been born and it was one hour apart. It was such a shock as you think to yourself "what are the chances?". It became that little bit more exciting for all."

Debbie says having the children in care is fun and exciting, especially when it's getting close to the special day.

"Lots of anticipation builds. The children like to ask me we "can we have double of everything, including cake?", they could even pass for twins with the same colour hair and exact same height, it's uncanny."



The children recently celebrated their 5th birthday together and Debbie made sure the day was a special one.

"I decorated the room the night before with balloons and steamers and a happy birthday sign. I even placed balloons outside on the door for their arrival the following day. Their friends brought gifts, we had a mini party and a yummy cake to share," Says Debbie.

When asked what her thoughts are on the children sharing the special day and going to the same family day care Debbie said, "I think it's wonderful. What a beautiful experience and something for the children and parents to remember forever, the beauty and uniqueness of family day care in my opinion."

One of the many benefits to the family day care environment is

the ability to celebrate special occasions, such as birthdays, in a small group setting, which has such a positive influence on both the children and carers.

"The children have built wonderful friendships and have become quite close over the years whilst in my care. Having someone to share their special day with is exciting, it creates conversation with the families, as well as my own - even my husband gets involved by celebrating with the children," says Debbie.

Deb's Family Day Care is located in Townsville, with Enhance Townsville and regions Family Day Care scheme.

Zoe Support Australia – Assisting Local Families Through Family Day Care

Zoe Support Australia is a not-for-profit community service organisation in Mildura, VIC that began in 2013, dedicated to supporting young mothers aged 13 to 25. Offering a culture of connecting, inspiring and learning, Zoe Support aims to re-engage mothers in education, employment, and social programs.

Currently supporting 69 clients with 76 children, Zoe Support services and programs aim to break cycles of welfare-dependence, increase mother-child attachment and family stability, improve mental health and physical wellbeing, decrease incidents of family violence and substance abuse, encourage engagement in higher education, and find employment.

Over the past five years some of their most significant achievements have been:

- Improved employment outcomes for young mothers, increasing from 9% of clients employed in 2017 to 28% in 2022.
- Engagement in pre-accredited programs increasing from 33% in 2017 to 64% in 2022.
- Decreased reported substance use from 18% in 2017 to 9% in 2022.
- Decreased family violence from 23% in 2017 to 15% in 2022.
- Decreased child protection involvement from 13% in 2017 to 7% in 2022.

Zoe Support has established four Zoe Centres and the Little Sprouts Op Shop social enterprise to provide a wraparound support service for young mothers. Zoe Support's family day care program is facilitated at three of these Centres and overseen in partnership with Mildura Rural City Council as the registered childcare provider.



It is a crucial component of Zoe Support services, supporting children on their learning and developmental journeys. It also provides opportunities for mothers to engage in social programs, education, and employment. Currently, 32% of clients access this service and are provided with transport on one of the 'butterfly buses' to attend, as well as support to complete enrolments and childcare subsidy applications.

Zoe Support can get clients into the family day care program quickly, responding to their emerging needs. This is extremely beneficial for vulnerable families in Mildura as there are currently waitlists of up to six months at many local childcare centres.

The family day care program provides engaging learning and play for Zoe Support children. The educators go above and beyond to meet the needs of the children in their care, many of whom are facing increased vulnerabilities. Some of this year's highlights have included planting and taking care of kitchen gardens, learning to cook, and attending Zoe Support weekly playgroup. Children are supported

on their journeys to grow and learn in a welcoming and nurturing family environment.

Other services provided by Zoe Support include:

- Practical and housing assistance, including the provision of clothing, furniture and baby items, as well as support to complete rental and public housing applications.
- Pre-accredited courses in a wide range of subjects, including cooking, baking, art, job readiness, beauty, literacy, numeracy, retail, and hospitality.
- Advocacy and referrals with valued partners in health, education, welfare, employment, and housing.
- Support to enrol in and complete accredited education.
- Study Hubs with computers, internet, and printing.
- Supported playgroup.

You can find more information on Zoe Support and the amazing work they are doing in their community on their website www.zoesupport.com.au

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

Level Up Your Business with FDCA's new Family Day Care Locator Upgrades

FDCA's Family Day Care Locator generates over 1,600 leads each month from parents seeking education and care in their area, making it a key marketing tool for FDCA members.

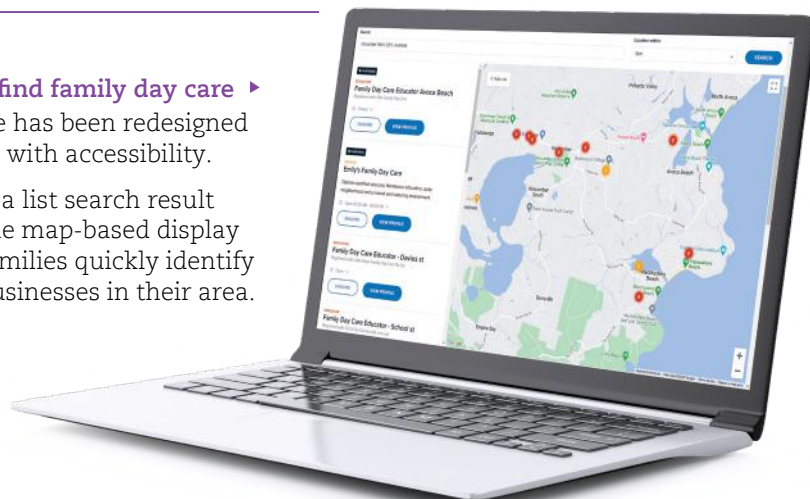
It's also the only national platform dedicated exclusively to showcasing family day care educators and services, which means every search is an opportunity for your business to be seen.

That's why we've ramped up our Family Day Care Locator offerings, giving you the power to boost your enquiries and promote your business your way!

Easier ways to find family day care ▶

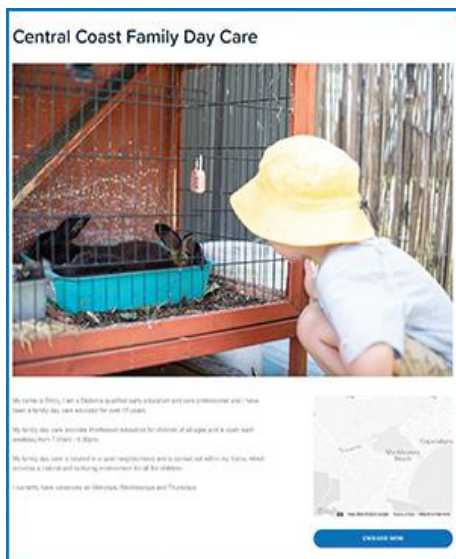
Our search page has been redesigned to balance style with accessibility.

The addition of a list search result compliments the map-based display and will help families quickly identify the details of businesses in their area.



▼ Profile pages for all members

When marketing your family day care, it's crucial to communicate your unique value proposition to potential families: whether that be your business philosophy, your operating hours or your educational program.



The new upgrades to the Family Day Care Locator means that all members now have access to their own unique profile page as part of their listing.

Your new profile page will give you the ability to tell prospective families all about your family day care business and include a profile image* that showcases your environment. Your profile will also allow you to display vacancy and opening hours information.

Your Family Day Care Locator profile will have its own unique URL that you can use to promote your profile on any digital platform.



Three marketing support packages to suit your needs

Along with the upgrades to the Family Day Care Locator we've introduced three Marketing Packages to allow you to level up your locator listing. With three new packages to choose from, members can choose what benefits will best support their family day care.

THE ESSENTIAL PACKAGE

The Essential Package* will provide you with a free listing on the Family Day Care Locator and accompanying profile page. When subscribed to the Essential Package, you can personalise your business name, vacancy and opening hours along with the addition of one photo and text to your profile page. By default, all members receive a subscription to the Essential Package at no additional cost to their FDCA membership.



THE PROFESSIONAL PACKAGE

If you want to level up your locator listing and profile page, the Professional Package is for you.

With the Professional Package, your locator listing and profile page link will surge to the top of the search results in your area as one of FDCA's Featured Listings.

You'll also unlock full access to additional marketing and promotional features.

For only \$7.95 per month (that's less than \$1.85 per week[^]), the Professional Package will allow you to add an image gallery and video content to your profile page along with specific information about your business such as specialisations, qualifications, fees, age ranges and other inclusions.

You'll also be able to embed links to your social media accounts and pages, your website and include an extra description about your family day care business that will appear on the search results page!

The Professional Package is ideal for educators who are looking to welcome new families, or educators that are starting out and want to dip their toe in the water for a month with a Marketing Package upgrade.

THE ENTERPRISE PACKAGE

The Enterprise Package has been created for those who want their digital footprint to dominate their local area.

The Enterprise Package will include everything from both the Essential and Professional Packages, as well as your own Google Ads campaign that will direct traffic from Google straight to your Family Day Care Locator profile page.

This fully automated Google Ads campaign means you don't need to worry about setting budgets, keywords or any other settings; you'll receive all the benefits of a Google Ads campaign while being able to focus on the business of providing quality education and care.

At \$49.95 per month, the Enterprise Package is the ideal option for educators looking to start their career off with a bang, and those with a steady turnover of children. It's also a great option for educators looking to fill vacancies throughout the year.

No lock in contracts

There are no lock in contracts for the Professional or Enterprise Marketing Packages, which means you can switch them on and off when it suits you. To upgrade to the Professional or Enterprise Package today, simple log into your FDCA Member Zone, click on My Locator Listing and select the Marketing Packages tab to make your selection.

If you would prefer to upgrade your Marketing Package over the phone, please contact us on 1800 658 699 and we can help.

*Placeholder text and an image will be used on profiles that haven't been updated by members **All members have been placed on the Essential Package by default. [^]The listing options available to you will be dependent on the Marketing Package that you are subscribed to.

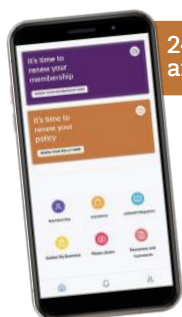
FDCA is excited to announce the launch of the new

myFDCA App!

We're putting our range of exclusive member benefits in the palm of your hand to access anytime, anywhere.

Available to members on both Apple and Android devices, the FREE myFDCA App is available to download now via the App Store and the Google Play store.

FDCA WORKING FOR YOU



24/7 access, anytime, anywhere!

The myFDCA App means that you can access your FDCA member benefits via your mobile device anytime, anywhere!

This means no more having to log into your laptop or PC to access your member benefits and resources.

Best of all, the myFDCA App is free and is available to all FDCA members.



Never miss an enquiry!

With the myFDCA App you'll be notified instantly* when potential families submit an enquiry through FDCA's Family Day Care Locator.

This will allow you to respond immediately and secure more placements for your business!

You can even manage your Family Day Care Locator listing via the app.

**Ensure you have notifications enabled on your device to receive notifications from the myFDCA App.*



Access your favourite resources!

The new myFDCA App will place all your favourite FDCA resources within arm's reach.

You will be able to access resources such as the FDCA Learning Hub, the latest Online Engagement Series episodes and Jigsaw magazine, plus much more.

You will also be able to access your membership and insurance information through the app.

How do I get the myFDCA App?

To get the myFDCA App today, all you need to do is visit the App Store (Apple devices) or the Google Play store (Android devices) and download the app.



Logging into your myFDCA App

Once you have downloaded the app, all you need to do is log in using the same email address and password that you use to access your FDCA Member Zone.

To make things easier and ensure you have 24/7 access to your FDCA member benefits and resources, your device will keep you logged into the app unless you choose to sign out.



Scan and download the myFDCA App today!

Apple and the Apple Logo are trademarks of Apple Inc. Google Play and the Google Play logo are trademarks of Google LLC.



FDCA Your Business, Their Future: Educator Recruitment Insights

In 2021 FDCA launched the “Your Business, Their Future” Family Day Care Educator recruitment program, we have seen over 1600 applicants come through our recruitment process, over 680 phone interviews completed with potential applicants considering family day care as a career move, over 180 educators screened and referred to FDCA members, and over 50 educators start their own family day care nationally as a result of the recruitment drive.

So, what have we learnt we can share with our members?

1. Where to source applicants

Job boards are one method of attraction, yet quite often are the only one used when recruiting. Considering other areas to source applicants suitable to your local area and keeping them fresh and updated is key, other methods of attraction can include: social media campaigns, recruitment/ local community events, setting up a dedicated, simple careers page on your website, accessing local early childhood education and care RTO's, applicant referral programs, accessing resume databases, promoting to parent and other community groups.

2. Focus on the applicant experience

Starting a business can be a daunting concept, if you have ever applied or enquired about a job or new career, your first

impression, the recruitment and onboarding process can make or break your decision to progress or recommend that process or organisation to others, even if not successful, a thorough and effective communication, engagement, onboarding process will set both the service and the educator up well and provide future referrals.

3. Talent Pooling

Creating an effective talent pool of potential or active applicants is a useful recruitment strategy, the immediate recruitment need sometimes excludes applicants who maybe work towards being the perfect candidate in the future, having an active and passive talent pool and pipeline to refer to and communicate with regularly means you can always draw on it first before going externally.

4. Getting hold of applicants

Due to the nature of the childcare sector and people's day to day work/ life activity, answering a phone is not always possible during busy times, making yourself accessible with specific contact details is key, there are several diary management tools and SMS services to help applicants and the recruiter/ manager connect and arrange a suitable time to talk.

5. Educator referrals

With over 10,000 family day care educators and over 400 approved family day care service providers in operation, if 10% of this network

were to refer 1 new educator to the sector, this would lead to over 1000 potential referrals into the sector, so what are service providers doing?

In consultation with family day care providers, we have seen tiered gift vouchers systems on offer for new or existing educator leads, this ranges from \$250-\$500 per referral and is aimed at current employees and educators contracted under the provider.

Other incentives have included discounted levies or insurance premiums for a period.

LOOKING TO RECRUIT MORE EDUCATORS IN YOUR AREA?

As FDCA continues to supports its members with educator recruitment as part of the “Your Business, Their Future” educator recruitment and referral program, be sure to let us know where your service needs educators by registering your service's interest at www.familydaycare.com.au/supporting-you/recruitment.

EXCELLENCE IN FAMILY DAY CARE AWARDS 2023



FDCA is excited to announce that the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards are now open!

In their 12th year, the FDCA Excellence in Family Day Care Awards will continue to celebrate the amazing 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 provide families, educators and service staff with the 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 (6 June – 6 July) families, service staff and educators are invited to nominate their family day care educator, coordinator or approved service via a simple online nomination form.

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 their email, nominees are invited to make a supporting submission against specific questions outlined in the online submission form before the submission deadline (23 July 2023).

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 provide a platform to showcase family day care on a national scale.

In 2022 the awards generated positive media stories across Australia that reached an audience of over 243,000. By getting involved in the awards, you will not only be giving your families, educators and service the opportunity to say

thank you, but you will also be part of a national campaign to promote family day care across the country.

Awards Sponsors

FDCA would like to thank the sponsors of the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards.

Without the support in 2023 from the South Australian Department of Education 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
**EXCELLENCE
IN FAMILY DAY CARE
AWARDS2023**

To nominate visit www.fdca.com.au/awards

Nominations close **6 July 2023**

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PLEASE CUT AROUND DOTTED LINE



THE FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA

EXCELLENCE IN FAMILY DAY CARE AWARDS2023

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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To nominate visit
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PLEASE CUT AROUND DOTTED LINE



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, one coordinator and one service that have each been registered in the family day care sector for less than two years (5 years for services).

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
38,000
nominations

Reached a combined audience of more than
10.5
million people

Generated more than
1,100
positive media stories

KEY DATES

The 2023 awards program is underway and will run over the course of six months, culminating in the presentation of the national award winners at the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards gala dinner in Adelaide on 25 November 2023.

NOW Nominations open	6 JUL Nominations close	23 JUL Supporting submissions close	26 SEP Educator Regional Winners Announced
10 OCT Star Award winners announced	17 OCT National Finalists announced	25 NOV National Winners announced at Gala Dinner	



For more information about the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards and to download additional nomination slips visit www.fdca.com.au/awards.

INCLUSION IN FAMILY DAY CARE

By Nature Alliance Family Day Care

Nature Alliance Family Day Care believes that children are capable, competent and that they have the ability to lead their own learning. We believe that this learning should be supported by ensuring that educators are able to cater for children across all developmental stages of their lives, regardless of their abilities, in an inclusive practice.

For educators to support children in their care who require additional support there are a number of Inclusion Support Services available to them however, despite the importance of inclusion, many family day care services struggle to access these services.

We identified that across our 75 educators scattered throughout the state, we had none who were accessing the Inclusion Support Services available to them. We got curious as to why this might be happening, particularly because we know that when accessing the right support, educators will enhance the outcomes for children and be able to provide an inclusive practice.

The feedback from the sector suggests that there are a variety of barriers to accessing support, including a lack of awareness of available services, concerns about the workload associated with accessing support, and confusion around the roles of educators and services in providing support.

To address these barriers, we worked closely with Jenni Wrigglesworth, the Inclusion



professional at the WA Inclusion Agency, to identify the support services available to educators and develop strategies to minimise the barriers in accessing this support.

Not long after we started the process, one of our educators enrolled two children with high needs, and she reached out for support. This was a very exciting time for us as a service. With the help of modern technology, we quickly established meaningful partnerships between the family, educator support officer (ESO), educator, inclusion professionals

and physio therapists.

As a unit we built the case so that they received the best support possible for the two children. Together with the educator, we created a Support Inclusion Plan which was submitted and then approved - We had the evidence that the model could work in family day care!

We reviewed our service policies and procedures to encourage more





Inclusion Support access. We looked at strategies we could implement and actioned items we could carry out to minimise barriers that educators may experience when considering accessing Inclusion Support.

The 'Top Up Payment' is one example of support available to educators, which makes it possible for educators to reduce the number of children in care allowing for a higher educator to child ratio; and the opportunity for educator to have access to additional specialist resources. Nature Alliance Family Day Care are proud to say that we have educators who have used both services.

The partnership we have developed with Jenni, the physios, and speech specialists have provided the opportunity for educators to maximize the participation of children who experience disability in daily play and learning. They can now access and explore indoor and outdoor areas as independently as possible using specialist equipment, and by making changes to the environment the children are able to interact meaningfully with other children and adults too.

We are proud to say that working collaboratively with educators, families, children and other professionals to develop the inclusion support plans has provided children with the opportunity to access and use adaptive equipment and has assisted educators to adapt routines and experiences to

enhance children's opportunities for independent participation.

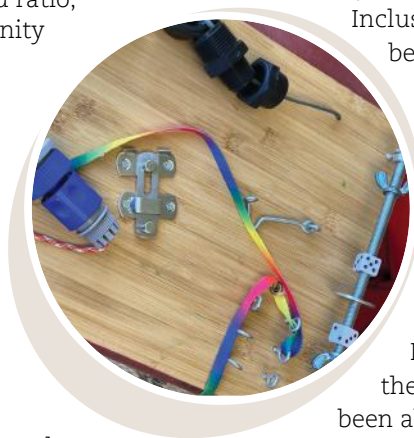
As an example, one of our educators, Jane, has secured access to a specialist trike which has allowed her to walk around the block with all the children in her care. The difference this has made is outstanding. Not only is she able to get the focus child out in nature with his friends, but his physical development has benefited immensely too.

Nature Alliance Family Day Care's journey in accessing Inclusion Support has

been a positive and empowering experience for both the service and the children they care for. Through collaboration with the WA Inclusion Agency,

the Service has been able to create fully inclusive care environments that support children across all developmental stages and abilities. This partnership has allowed educators to access specialist equipment, resources, and funding, which has enhanced the outcomes for children and provided them with the opportunity to participate in daily play and learning as independently as possible.

By sharing their story, Nature Alliance Family Day Care hopes to encourage other family day care services to consider accessing Inclusion Support and to explore the available support services and resources. We believe that by working together and building partnerships, we can create fully inclusive care environments that support all children to reach their full potential.



A Note from Jenni Wrigglesworth

The Oxford Dictionary defines Inclusion as - the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, such as those who have physical or intellectual disabilities and members of other minority groups.

Inclusion starts with the 'leaders', those who support, advise, and educate. When we have good people advocating for those who need it the most, then we see change and progress.

The team at Natures Alliance Family Day Care have done just that. Working in collaboration with organisations such as the WA Inclusion Agency, they have shown a commitment to support their family day care educators with providing fully inclusive care environments.

They have actively sort support when needed and have supported their educators with developing and implementing Strategic Inclusion Plans, leading to successful funding applications for the Family Day Care 'Top Up Payment' under the Inclusion Support Program (ISP).

Educators have been supported to identify when children may need specialist equipment and have accessed the Specialist Equipment Library associated with the ISP.

I have recently worked in collaboration with the Educator Support Officers and a local service provider, Core of Wellbeing, to put together an Innovative Solutions project, another funding stream under the ISP program where all family day care educators will be given opportunities to build on their skills and knowledge around supporting children and their families who have experienced trauma and are displaying trauma-based behaviours. This project will reach up to 75 family day care educators, cover the metropolitan, regional and remote areas of the vast landscape of WA.

It is with the commitment of the Educator Support Officers, leading the way that this Family Day Care Service are able provide a commitment to ensuring inclusion is at the forefront of their daily work.



Starting Out Safely

ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION INQUIRY PROJECT

By Baw Baw Family Day Care

For young children, learning about being safe starts early. That is why Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA), in collaboration with the TAC for the Starting Out Safety program, invited Baw Baw Family Day Care to be the very first family day care service to participate in their *Starting Out Safely – Road Safety Education (RSE) Inquiry Project*.

Baw Baw Shire Family Day Care staff Carolynne Le Page and Julie Metselaar were very privileged to participate in this project over an 8-month period. They worked alongside other ECEC services from around Victoria, with the wonderful team from ELAA, facilitated by Catharine Hydon, with mentors Louise Dorrat, Karen Glancy, Gilda

Howard, and Jodie Signorino to learn more about how they can provide young children with the attitude, skills, and knowledge to be safe on our roads now and into the future.

The research evidence about vulnerability of young children as road users identifies road trauma as a leading cause of death and disabling injury for children in Australia. In fact, on average, each year 35 children (0 to 18 years old) are killed and 839 are seriously injured on Victorian roads. Early childhood education plays an important part in ensuring that children and their families know how to be safe and develop lifelong road safety habits as pedestrians, cyclists, passengers (and in the future – drivers). By connecting with

services, the RSE Inquiry Project explored how road safety education can be strengthened to ensure it meets the needs of children, families, and educators into the future. (ELAA - 2022)

During the eight-month program, Carolynne and Julie found that most educators were confident going out regularly with the children and were aware of the importance of road safety. As road safety was something they did every day, it was embedded into their daily routine, but this project enabled them to recognise that road safety was a vital part of their educational program too.

The educators created learning environments to gauge children's



EARLY
LEARNING
ASSOCIATION
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understanding of road safety concepts and the children shared their knowledge. They discovered that their focus had to encompass all aspects of road safety and they needed to come up with an idea to cover their findings - "How can we collaborate with educators, children, families, and our community partners to promote being safe and active citizens in our community?"

To do so they came up with the idea to write a book. Carolynne and Julie worked with the educators and families who happily collaborated to create "When We Go...", learning overnight how to become authors, photographers, and book editors. They are very proud of the end result.

Baw Baw Family Day Care has used this inquiry project to help

provide greater awareness of road safety issues for young children in all aspects of their community life, but especially carparks and driveway safety. One issue that they had specifically addressed was the entrance to their new playgroup venue.

Carolynne and Julie worked with Baw Baw Shire Council, the local community and other building users to create a safer carpark and entry into the playgroup building. The first step was to make it safer immediately by installing stop signs and hazard tape around the front door, installing a barrier gate to deter children from going into the foyer, and speaking to educators and children about door and carpark safety. They drafted a letter to the risk management officer at Council, inviting them to come out for an onsite risk assessment. With their help and advice, the Baw Baw Shire maintenance crew followed up on the findings of the assessment, painting lines in the carpark to mark a safer walking route. They also measured and installed a safety fence with a locking gate to be erected around the entry door.

It was a challenge to be a part of this project as a family day care service due to the spread of individual educators across Baw Baw

Shire. As field staff, Carolynne and Julie appreciated the collegiality of working with ELAA and all of the other services. They found their support and encouragement gave them the enthusiasm to bite off much more than they could chew... however they found that if you can bite it, you can chew it and they did!

At the conclusion of the project, they learnt that they could inspire educators to collaborate with each other and the families that use the service. They also learnt that educators are willing and more than capable of working as a team, even though they are physically isolated and work alone in their own environments.

The program has created many teachable moments where educators have listened to the children's voices and extended their learning. The educators have collaborated with families and created partnerships which have resulted in an increase in families understanding the importance of road safety.

Carolynne and Julie are so proud of themselves for being able to create something that can be used to inspire others to become more active and safer citizens. This project has become embedded across the whole service with each and every educator implementing road safety as a part of their ongoing programming and planning.



Celebration Days

at Wynnum Family Day Care and Education Service

by Christine Lane

My name is Christine Lane and I am an Educator with Wynnum Family Day Care and Education Service, in the bay side area of Brisbane. Like many Educators, for many years I have thought about how I could create meaningful relationships with my families and build those important links between home and the care environment.

A couple of years ago, after discussions with the children and families, it was decided that we would acknowledge the primary carers in the children's lives by having special celebration days. Over the years we have organised pamper days (where the Mum's were treated to massages, facials, etc) and catch ups through BBQs



and swim days. Families have helped me to collect recyclable cans which have been cashed in to help with the cost of running these days.

These celebration days have now become our 'tradition' within my service. Parents look forward to it each year, children become very excited





about being able to do something 'special' for their loved ones and it has helped me to build a strong and trusting relationship with all members of the family – particularly those I may not see every day!

A big part of the culture of my service is respect and humour, and I believe that acknowledging the parents in a fun and engaging way fits really well with my philosophy and approach to guiding the children's development each day.

The benefits of the celebration days have been many and varied – the parents feel involved, valued, and

feel a greater 'sense of belonging' to their child's care environment. The children feel very empowered to be involved in the decision making about the days and also have a sense of pride about being able to do something 'special' for their parent. I feel it is a wonderful way to acknowledge the parents and show how much I appreciate their cooperation and collaboration throughout the year.

This year we had organised a 'monster truck' day for the dads. The theme of the day was My Dad is a Hero, which came from the

children's LOVE of superhero outfits and play. In our service it is very important that the children's voices are heard, and the experiences are led by the children's interests and ideas.

Our day included rides for the dads and their children in the monster trucks, followed by a swim, a bar b que and games for the parents and children to enjoy together back at the Educators home. When we have events at my home, we always invite past families and children, which is a lovely way of keeping those connections going.

Safe Sleep Spaces

in Family Day Care Services



By Dr Bec Thornton – Red Nose Australia National Health Promotions Manager

One of the most important things you can do to keep babies safe during sleep is to provide a safe sleep environment for every sleep.

Red Nose describes a safe sleep space as:

- A safe cot or portable cot that meets the Australian Mandatory Safety Standards
- With a FIRM, clean, well-fitted mattress that is not tilted or elevated
- And lightweight bedding that allows for airflow and that is firmly tucked in (or choose a safe sleeping bag!)

However, we are often asked how to manage situations where babies are difficult to settle in a cot and prefer alternative sleep environments such as prams, bouncers, or other devices. It is important to remember that these devices are not designed as sleep spaces, and increase the risk of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (or SUDI), including SIDS.

Why are inclined surfaces unsafe for sleep?

Inclined or tilted surfaces such as baby swings, rockers, or bouncers, all encourage the baby's head to fall forward during sleep, into the chin-to-chest position. This position can increase the risk of suffocation as the baby's soft airway becomes compressed and obstructed. For this reason, baby should be placed on their back to sleep on a firm flat surface, with their face and head uncovered. This is also why Red Nose strongly recommends against tilting or elevating the head of the cot or bassinet, or using pillows to prop the baby up during sleep.

But my pram lays flat, doesn't that mean it's safe for sleep?

While many prams can be adjusted to provide a flat surface, the majority also have padding and/or enclosed sides. These features can increase the risk of overheating, which is a risk factor for SUDI. The soft padded sides or inserts in prams may also increase the risk of suffocation or asphyxiation if baby turns their face into those soft surfaces, blocking their nose and mouth. If babies fall asleep in their pram while out and about, they need to be closely supervised, and need to be transferred into their own safe sleep space as soon they return to the service setting.

What can I do to help babies to settle in a safe sleep space?

Settling difficulties often arise when parents are using alternative sleep surfaces at home, creating sleep associations for the baby that make it hard for them to settle in their safe cot or portable cot while in your care. Having a respectful discussion with families about safe sleep, and reminding them of the importance of babies having a safe sleep environment night and day can help keep baby safe at home and also improve settling during the day.

Red Nose recommends using responsive settling strategies with babies under 12 months, especially when babies are having difficulty settling. Hands-on strategies such as gentle, rhythmic patting are especially useful for younger babies or those with sleeping difficulties, and verbal reassurance such as soft talking, singing or shushing can also be helpful. Babies who become very upset should be picked up and comforted, and then settled back

into their cot and the responsive settling technique resumed. For babies with significant sleep issues, in-arms settling, where the baby is held and patted or rocked may need to be used initially, with the aim of gradually transitioning baby into their cot while drowsy but awake.

Wrapping is another strategy that can be useful for young infants, as it helps to suppress their startle reflex and helps them to feel safe and contained. It is important to remember to wrap or swaddle babies in light natural fabrics such as cotton or muslin and to wrap the baby firmly but not too tightly, ensuring there is no loose fabric that could cover the baby's mouth or nose. However, it is critical that wrapping is stopped at three months, or when the baby is showing signs of readiness to roll, whichever occurs first.

White noise may also be a useful tool in helping babies settle, especially when this is used consistently between home and service settings. While evidence on the usefulness of white noise is mixed, some research suggests that white noise may act as a sleep cue, letting baby know it is time for sleep, as well as helping to mask the less consistent sounds of a busy household or service setting. Just remember to keep the noise soft enough that you can still hear the baby clearly if they stir.

Whichever settling strategies you choose, always follow the Red Nose Safe Sleep Recommendations during sleep and rest, including placing baby to sleep on their back, with their head and face uncovered, on a firm flat surface.

For more information on safe sleeping, please call the Red Nose Safe Sleep Advice Hub on 1300 998 698 (during AEST/AEDT business hours), email education@rednose.org.au or visit rednose.org.au/safesleep

Provoke deeper thinking and discussion among educators.

ECA's unique *Box of Provocations* series is designed to support critical reflection, discussion, debate and deeper thinking around a range of topics such as professional practice, leadership and sustainability. Beautifully presented and made to last, these boxes will be a popular resource in your service for many years to come.

Start the conversation today!



Order your copy



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children



Reflecting on 40 years in Family Day Care

Julia Reynolds started family day care in September 1974 when her daughter was just nine weeks old. She wanted her own money and running a family day care allowed for that freedom.

She initially started out privately operating while living in Cammeray. She joined North Sydney Family Day Care after hearing about them from her parents in 1975.

In 1976 her family moved to Armidale for work purposes, and she took a break from family day care for a few months. Julia continued privately operating from November that year until family day care arrived in the area.

In 2014, after 40 incredible years in the industry, Julia made the difficult decision to retire.

"I retired in 2014 and was very sad to not be doing the job anymore. I chose to join family day care as it had a lot of benefits and more advantages than being on my own," said Julia.

During her time in family day care Julia saw many changes, some good and some not so good. The biggest change coming from educators being recognised as educators and not "Babysitters".

"We would, as a group, get annoyed at that reference. We were trained, even from early on, to be professional carers. Lots of workshops, conferences etc. It took a number of years for the recognition to happen. One carer quoted she had 'never sat on a baby'," said Julia.

When asked what her favourite moments from working in family day care were, Julia said watching the children grow and learn in her care, as well as the friendships she formed with other educators.



I miss working with children. It's a very rewarding career.

"Lots of laughing and fun playing, learning their life skills. I still am in contact with some of my children, who are now all grown up. No one story stands out, I loved what I did. The lifelong friendships with parents, children, and other carers."

She also loved the opportunities to travel to different states for conferences to pick up great ideas that she would use in her home. A special highlight being when she got to meet Dr John Irvine. "He had lots of great advice," Julia said.

"I learnt lots about how to navigate all the different personalities. How to give my best, to get the best from the children and always have fun. Some people would comment on how I allowed the children to do my hair, "doesn't it hurt?" they would ask. "Yes sometimes, but they love creating my doos". Parents would look at me and my exotic hair styles with a smile." Julia recalls.

"I learnt how to recognise children who had problems, and work with them. Recognise and assist parents who felt guilty, stressed etc., to reassure them. I loved my job. I miss working with children. It's a very rewarding career. I'm so glad we are now recognised as professional people. I have watched family day care grow from humble beginnings to a profession, that is recognised across the board".



BUSINESS INSIGHTS

Hack attacks, ransomware and phishing

Hack attacks, ransomware and phishing are just some of the cybercrimes against small businesses that can expose them to data theft, extortion or even business failure. There are many steps businesses can take to reduce these risks and potential damage in the event of an attack.

There are many steps businesses can take to reduce these risks and potential damage in the event of an attack.

There are lots of different ways criminals attack businesses online. The Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) has categorised the three main cyber threats small businesses face as malware, phishing scams, and ransomware.

Top tips to stay safe online

Prevention is always the best form of protection. Here are some quick wins to help keep yourself and your business safe.

- Turn on automatic software updates – this helps to patch up vulnerabilities and the automatic updates mean you don't have to think about them.
- Cyber awareness – consider how to best identify common cyber scams such as phishing emails.
- Use anti-virus software – this helps protect your data from malware.
- Secure your devices – Use locks or encryption, and regularly back up your files.
- Avoid public wifi – use a secure connection, as information can be easily intercepted on public wifi.
- Regularly back up devices – recovering data can be expensive, so make sure you have your up-to-date documents backed up.
- Switch on multi-factor authentication – provide two or more proofs of identity for better security.
- Use passphrases rather than passwords – these are easier to remember and harder to crack.
- Create a Cyber Incident Response Plan – don't wait until it's too late to create a contingency plan for your business.



“ Cyberspace has become a battleground. (ACSC annual report July 2021 - June 2022)

Important note: This general information does not take into account your specific objectives, financial situation or needs. It is also not financial advice, nor complete, so please discuss the full details with FDCA if you have any questions.

Therapeutic storytelling



supporting children through challenging times



Educators in family day care, living and working in their community, are in a unique position to support children after a natural disaster or events, which result in community trauma. You can do this through telling stories using therapeutic techniques.

Therapeutic storytelling may be particularly relevant for learning communities who have experienced natural disasters, such as flood, bushfires or other events that result in community trauma, like the impact of COVID-19 or the death of a learning community member.

What is therapeutic storytelling?

Telling a therapeutic story means you are intending to help the person listening in some way. Therapeutic storytelling is about sharing and exploring a story with children to help them process an emotional experience. Using therapeutic storytelling techniques, you can help children make sense of what is happening in the world around them and support their resilience and recovery from community trauma.

Telling stories with the purpose of supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of children can support children through the three phases of community trauma:

- **Preparedness:** prepare them for what might happen before an event occurs
- **Response:** reassure them during an event that they are safe and it will end.
- **Recovery:** assist in their recovery after an event by helping them

understand and make sense of their experiences

As family day care educators, you already use stories for a variety of reasons, including promoting language, literacy and calming and settling children. As you already know, you don't have to be a therapist to tell stories to children that will have a beneficial outcome.

Therapeutic storytelling in practice

Exposure to a traumatic event in the community may affect children's sense of security and the way they see the world around them. Telling a story with the specific intention of helping the hearers, such as building the children's sense of safety, will bring focus to the planned purpose. By monitoring the children's engagement and their reactions to the story, you will be able to gauge if you are achieving your aim.

Before you start telling a story, you need to select a story which meets the specific needs of the children in your family day care setting. Having knowledge and understanding of the children's needs, consideration of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds and learning preferences is essential, as is the context in which the story is told. It's not just the physical environment of where

the storytelling is taking place, although that needs to feel safe: it's the timeline of the community trauma. Is it before, during or after the event?

Specifically written therapeutic stories are intended to help the children listening. Consider using the Birdies Tree storybooks that are developmentally appropriate and specifically developed for young children in Australia about natural disasters in their community. <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/chq/our-services/mental-health-services/qcpimh/natural-disaster-resources/storybooks/>

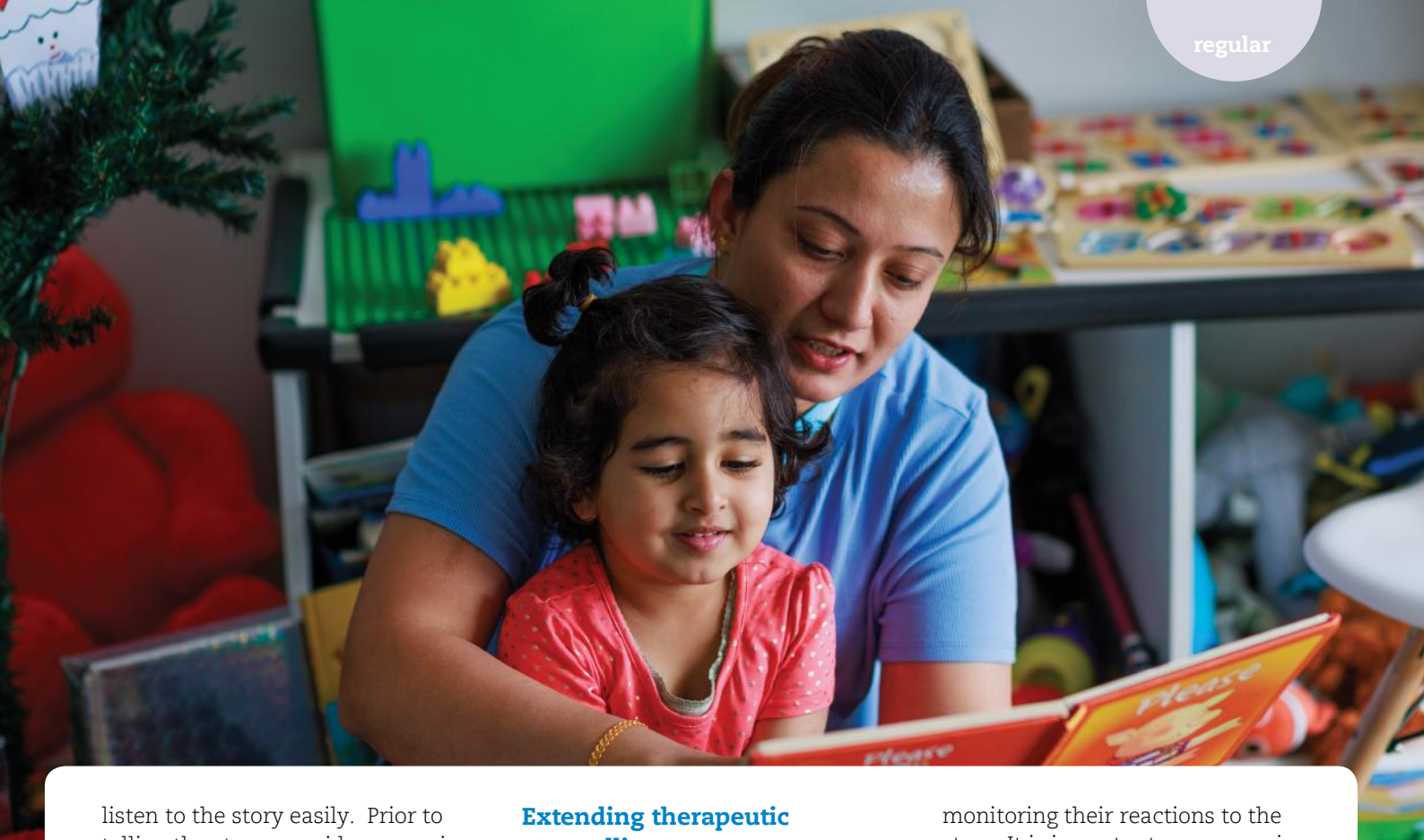
However, a story doesn't need to be specifically written to be therapeutic. A story can be adapted to suit your specific context.

The effect of the community trauma will also differ for everyone, with some severely affected by it, while others not as much. The child's ability to engage with the story may be influenced by the effect of the trauma on their family.

Therapeutic storytelling techniques

Having selected a story, you need to consider how you are going to be an effective storyteller.

Ensure you have a safe, comfortable environment where children can



listen to the story easily. Prior to telling the story, consider preparing children by introducing songs about feelings, music and movement games or a relaxation session of yoga. Then consider how you will 'tell' the story to engage everyone:

- Use facial expressions and eye contact
- Vary the pitch and tone of your voice
- Vary the pace of the story
- Act out the characters
- Point out details and features in pictures
- Use puppets or other props
- Involve the children to help with sound effects
- Ask the children to identify character's emotions

Be prepared to answer the children's questions and respond to their comments so they feel heard and valued. Enter into discussion and help them summarise the main events that occurred in the story.

While you will have monitored their reactions throughout the storytelling, their questions and comments will also give you an insight to their engagement and whether they are benefiting from the story as you had intended.

Extending therapeutic storytelling

Family day care educators understand the value of play in supporting children's learning and development.

Telling a therapeutic story may be the beginning for further exploration of their feelings because of the story telling. Children may use dramatic play to re-create the story or try different versions of it and express their feelings as they play. They may play games, use music and movement or the mediums of paint, collage, clay or playdough, or construction to express their emotions or re-create representations of aspects of the story or even the traumatic event. In providing a play environment, you have provided a safe space for the children to process their feelings.

Maintaining wellbeing for you and the children

For family day care educators, usually working on your own, it is essential to maintain your wellbeing while you are telling the story, and after, when you too may have been impacted by the community trauma.

Some children may become distressed while you're telling the story, even though you have created a safe environment and are

monitoring their reactions to the story. It is important you recognise signs of distress so you can provide support for these children by noticing the early signs.

For more information on how you can support children after community trauma see the *Natural disaster and other community trauma module* (Responding Together domain) of the Be You Professional Learning. <https://beyou.edu.au/learn/responding-together/natural-disasters-and-other-community-trauma> This module also has information on looking after your own wellbeing.

Educator wellbeing tools <https://beyou.edu.au/resources/educator-wellbeing/tools> are a selection of tools and resources to support your wellbeing.

Feel confident using storytelling therapeutically

Explore more in the *Therapeutic storytelling* module (Responding Together domain) of the Be You Professional Learning. <https://beyou.edu.au/learn/responding-together/therapeutic-storytelling>

Watch the recording of the In Focus webinar with the Birdie's Tree team: *Therapeutic storytelling: supporting children through challenging times*, <https://beyou.edu.au/resources/sessions-and-events>



Update to the National Quality Framework

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) works with all governments to provide guidance, resources and services to support the sector to improve outcomes for children.

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to the regulation of the quality of education and care services across Australia.

Based on findings from the 2019 NQF Review, Commonwealth, state and territory education ministers agreed to changes to the NQF

Regular reviews of the National Quality Framework ensure the regulatory system remains current, achieves its objectives and supports Australia's approved services to provide high quality education and care to children and young people.

The 2019 NQF Review recommended changes to the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, as well as additional guidance for the sector to enhance children's health, safety and wellbeing.

The review process included consultation with the education and care sector, families and the broader community on proposed options for change. If you're interested in a summary of the proposals and the final decisions made by Ministers, you can find this information on the **2019 NQF Review website** at www.nqfreview.com.au/.

There are a large number of NQF changes arising from the 2019 Review,

and ACECQA and all governments are leading national communications through to 2024. As the required legislative changes are made, we are releasing communications and resources to support the sector with implementation.

Key changes for services include

- New safety requirements - introducing new policies, procedures and risk assessments to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children in education and care.
- Improved oversight and compliance tools for Regulatory Authorities – increasing transparency and accountability in the sector



- New workforce requirements - such as increasing mandatory minimum qualification requirements for family day care educators and alleviating staffing requirements during short-term absences
- Improved regulatory guidance – improving educator knowledge of best practice through government developed resources, including the Guide to the National Quality Framework.

Most changes are expected to commence from mid-2023 in all states and territories

Following a process to refresh the national frameworks, updated versions of both national approved learning frameworks were released in early 2023

There have been two national approved learning frameworks in operation under the NQF since 2012, which outline principles, practices and learning outcomes that guide educational leaders and educators in their curriculum decision-making, and assist them in planning, delivering and evaluating quality programs in early childhood and school age settings.

Following a review, both national approved learning frameworks have been updated and in January 2023 we released: (see inset)

These are available for free download from ACECQA website or you can purchase hardcopies via our [secure online payment portal](#).

The updates to both frameworks are the results of a robust process to assess options and provide recommendations for change. This included reviewing contemporary research, comprehensive stakeholder engagement nationally, and piloting of proposed changes across a range of education and care settings.

The changes you will find in both framework documents comprise a mix of clarifications and expanded explanations across parts of the original Approved Learning Frameworks, and a smaller number of more substantial changes, including the addition of 3 new principles and updated practices across all relevant aspects of V2.0 of both national Frameworks.



The main differences you will see are a stronger connection between the frameworks and the National Quality Standard in areas such as transitions, sustainability, theoretical approaches, critical reflection, the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being, knowing and doing, inclusion and the addition of 3 new principles.

Approved providers and their services are now encouraged to begin familiarising themselves with the updated learning frameworks and adjusting relevant aspects of their educational program and practice where needed to reflect new or amended aspects of the frameworks.

The original national learning frameworks will remain in operation alongside the updated Frameworks, until early 2024, to enable approved providers and their services time to transition to the updated learning frameworks.

Updates to the Guide to the NQF

The [Guide to the National Quality Framework \(NQF\)](#) is a key resource we publish, designed to help education and care providers, educators and authorised officers understand and apply the requirements of the NQF.

The Guide provides information for all types of service in all states and territories. It is not intended to be read from cover to cover, nor is all of the information within it relevant to every service. Rather, it has been designed as a comprehensive reference document to be referred to when seeking guidance on particular matters, such as applications and approvals, operational requirements, and the National Quality Standard.

It is also important to note that the Guide is not legal advice and should be read in conjunction with the [National Law and Regulations](#), which take precedence over any guidance.

We are updating the Guide to the NQF throughout 2023 to support implementation of the updated national approved learning frameworks and outcomes of the 2019 NQF Review.

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▲ Red Star House

Enter the Red Star House competition and you can win a Cloth World Wall Map.



This large, World Wall Map is perfect for any classroom. The felt fabric wall map includes 67 detachable, felt pieces including, place names, animals, and iconic country icons. The large, world wall map measures 90cm wide x 120cm high and is valued at \$249.95.

Children can place the name labels and pictures into the correct places as they explore and learn about the world in which we live. This encourages an understanding of the world and the names of continents and countries.

Competition closes July 16 2023.

Sudoku ▶

Enter the Sudoku competition and you can win an Omni People Mixed Wood Set.

Wooden Omni People are beautifully crafted out of solid wood, and purposely feature smooth faces and bodies - enabling children to adapt this wonderfully open-ended resource to their own play needs. Consisting of 24 natural pieces, in varied sizes, each day these little wooden people can represent someone entirely different. Competition closes July 16 2023.



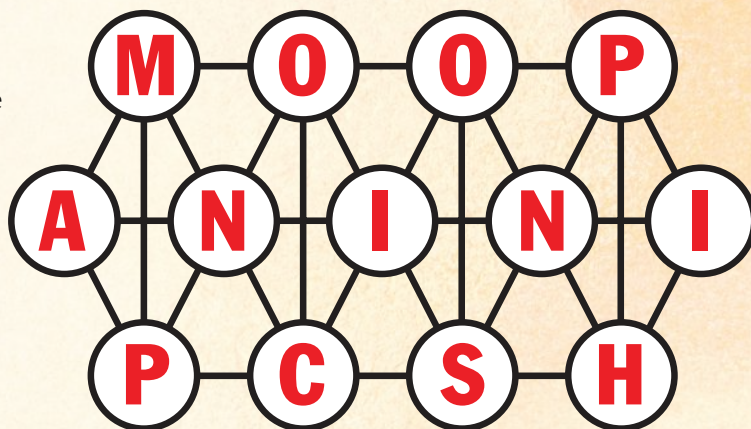
	7	3						
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Chain Letters ▶

Enter the Chain Letter 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. Enter your answer online at www.fdca.com.au/competitions by clicking on the Chain Letters competition link.

Competition closes July 16 2023



congratulations

...to the winners from Issue 101

Find the Red Star House
Michelle Klass - VIC

Sudoku
Simone Slater - TAS

Chain Letters
Savita Kumar - WA



TABITHA AND THE RAINCLOUD

A good read for all ages, 2 years to 10 years. This little book is about feelings and choices. It's okay if we are not happy or are having a bad day, but we must remember it can affect other people around us.

It's not the Raincloud ruining Tabitha's day, she can choose to make it fun by jumping in the puddles and dancing in the rain. Sometimes it is hard to see the bright and fun side, but if we look hard enough, we will find it.

AUSTRALIANS ALL LOVE EASTER EGGS

The beautiful and colourful illustrations are captivating for children. This Easter story is about animals joining together to help the Easter Bunny deliver easter eggs to Outback Australia.

We talked about the animals in the book and the animals we see at the Sanctuary. How happy we feel when we get help from our friends, or we help our friends. We followed this up with painting our own Easter Bunny. This book was a favourite of the children.



STORY TIME



ARABELLA AND THE MAGIC PENCIL



Beautiful illustrations drew us into this book immediately. It was magical and imaginative. Arabella is an only child, until her brother, Avery, arrives. Every year Arabella is granted one special wish and this year she wished for a magic pencil that could make anything she drew come alive. Although Arabella loves Avery, he does spoil her games, so with her magic pencil she erases him. Oops! Now she misses him. Can she get him back? What would you draw with a magic pencil? The children used their imagination to draw flying fire trucks and dancing beetles.

Our book reviewer, Deanne Fedden, has been an educator on the Gold Coast for the past 29 years. Deanne is registered with YMCA Gold Coast Family Day Care.



ISLA'S FAMILY TREE

This was a great book for us, as a little person in our group is going to be a big brother soon. It is a beautiful story showing us that there is room in our family for all of us.

We looked at how our families were all different - some had 3 people, some had 4 people, and some had 2. We picked some gum leaves and made up our own family tree and the people in it.

Grab a Cuppa

WITH FDCA

Sometimes it's all about the simple things in life: a good read and a cup of something warm (or cold).

With that in mind, FDCA invites you to grab yourself a cuppa and take a seat while you get to know some of your fellow family day care colleagues.

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.



Choices Family Day Care at Forest Lake QLD

1. How long has your service been in operation and where is it located?

Choices Family Day Care commenced in 2011 however, our eleven years of operation does not reflect the experience of our beautiful staff members - who individually have worked in family day care for 15 to 40+ years! Each of our staff 'shine' within their individual roles. We are very proud of all team members for their passion, dedication, and commitment to quality outcomes for children. We are located in Forest Lake, QLD.

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

I am the Manager of Choices Family Day Care however, my ECEC Journey commenced in the early 70's when I was the Director of an Ipswich based Kindergarten for 10 years. I then moved to working as Office Manager for Endeavour Foundation, which gave me an understanding of supporting children and adults with special needs and the role of the administration office. In 1988 I was offered the opportunity to move into family day care as a Coordinator. At the time I did not know anything about family day care but 'the more I learnt, the more I wanted to know' and this has continued throughout my family day care journey. I am a strong advocate for FDC and strongly believe that 'family day care is the natural choice for quality education and care'!

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

Family day care is the natural choice for high quality education and care. Children can "Learn, Inspire, Thrive," and "experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life" (EYLF) within the small group environments of family day care.

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

Following on from the State of the Children report and current AEDC data, Choices has aligned with many professionals to share suitable 'programs' within the service to assist children to 'Learn, Inspire, Thrive'. In the past year. All programs are provided free of cost to families or educators. Programs have included:

- Hey Dee Ho – Four specialized early learning programs: music, yoga, fitness & drama, which are specifically designed to nurture children's physical and intellectual development.
- Billy's Buddies - Emphasis on having fun and encourage children to develop their social skills all whilst at the same time, teaching them the fundamentals of not only rugby league, but ball sports in general.



- Get Grubby - Focuses on nature and sustainability, featuring new video content with Dirtgirl, Scrapboy and Costa the Garden Gnome, activity kits, educator guides and email editions - all created to encourage active participation in sustainability learning and fun.

5. What would you say your service is most famous for?

We strive for excellence in all that we do & all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

At Choices the child is central to our vision, values, purpose, and strategies. To improve outcomes for children, we work closely with AEDC data which guides our practices. All Choices projects and activities are developed in line with AEDC data.

At Choices we have a strong commitment to sustainability. Our administration procedures are fully sustainable – All files have been stored on web-based programs or 'in the clouds' from day one. We have no paper files!

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

Individual team members have many personal interests outside of work hours - including gyms, family gatherings, marathon running and more.

Each year we host our Celebrating Educator Conference, which is filled with interesting professional development, great presenters, together with great food and lots of fun and laughter.

Dinner Dessert and Discussion nights are a yearly event where we focus on AEDC data, plan for the next year and socialise over dinner and dessert.

Our team loves to meet for social evenings at local restaurants, where educators and staff can relax and connect with each other.

And every year or two, Choices invites staff and educators to attend a National ECEC conference together.

7. What is the best piece of advice you would give to a new educator?

Relax and always put the CHILD FIRST!

8. What is the best piece of advice you would give to a new coordinator?

Understand Choices Strategic Plan and understand our vision and goal which is central to all practices.

When a coordinator commences with a service, it is important to have a clear vision of what you hope to achieve. Coordinators should reflect on both their personal and the service philosophy to ensure their personal goals align with the service vision and goals.

It is important that all staff fully understand relevant legislation and can confidently refer to policy and legislation to ensure all practices are complaint always.

9. What's the best, and worst, advice you have received yourself?

I have always used a strength-based approach to life! I cannot recall any 'worst' advice, as all advice is always turned into a positive impact on my life.

The best advice I have received was back in 1988 when a close friend and workmate, strongly encouraged me to apply for the position as coordinator in family day care. I am grateful to this day for her introducing me to this wonderful profession.

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

In 2023, Choices is becoming familiar with the many changes that will impact ECEC providers next year, including changes to the National Quality Framework, the new Family Assistance Legislation and more. These changes will be carefully documented and discussed in two all-day staff meetings.

It is important for all services to be fully aware of all future changes. As we turn our 'Knowledge into Action' we will be able to promote a united strong, professional family day care service, that will continue to work closely with our staff, educators, families local ECEC communities and the broader state and national bodies, to provide excellent family day care for many, many years to come.



GET TO KNOW

Sonia Menzell

at Hills Murraylands/SA Family Day Care

1. How long did you work in Family Day Care for and where were you located?

36 long, amazing, incredible, and unimaginable years in family day care with Hills Murraylands/SA Family Day Care.

2. Can you tell us a little bit about your background in the Early Childhood sector?

If you know me the words... passionate, tenacious, brave, dedicated, hardworking and committed might come to mind. I've been a part of the Family Day Care Educators Association of SA for 31 years. I've worked on every policy introduced, attended hundreds of meetings, worked on many projects, obtain grants and spoken loudly and proudly for family day care. My background in family day care is surrounded by knowledgeable family day care workers, staff, management and FDCA. I'm the person I am today because of the people I've worked with. I will be forever grateful for sharing their time, knowledge, and friendships. I pride myself on being a good mentor and trainer.

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

I hear the word UNIQUE used frequently – It's a word that defines us "Like no other". We are the unsung

heroes of the childcare sector. 36 years ago, I heard the phrase "The Cinderella of Childcare" spoken at a FDCA Conference. This job has been incredibly kind to my family – work in my own home, set my own hours/days, be available to my family and children growing up, great money and all the hard work has established my business as respected and well sought after in my community.

4. Now that you've retired from being an educator, what's next?

Well at this stage in life I need to recognise that time is of the essence, not infinite as it once seemed. Sounds a bit dark doesn't it, but the realism is about utilising my time available to explore hobbies, travel, drink nice wine, eat wonderful food, enjoy family and friends, and NEVER have to get up at 6.30 if I don't want to.

5. What would you say was the trademark of your service?

Listen, Plan, Act.... Not unlike observations. I listen to families and their needs, I plan how I can incorporate that in my service delivery, I have an action plan that involves the family.

I'm never bashful at documenting what I do and ensuring my co-ordination staff are updated.

6. What do you like to do in your spare time?

I sleep, I do mosaics and creative art, garden and grow our own food. Cook beautiful food, interact with friends, and enjoy family time, travel.... I've started that bucket list.

7. What is the best piece of advice you would give to a new educator?

Create a healthy mentality and attitude to running your own business. Find the balance between family and work. Ensure your family support this business. Know the regulations and NQS expectations. Set high standards for your business success and your reputation in your community will be sought after. Get involved....as you learn you can help others.

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

Financially setting our own fees, the increase in the number of regulations, standards, and law we need to know, keeping up with paperwork and always being ready for the ever-fearful event of assessment (if I fail everyone fails).

9. What is the best advice you have received yourself?

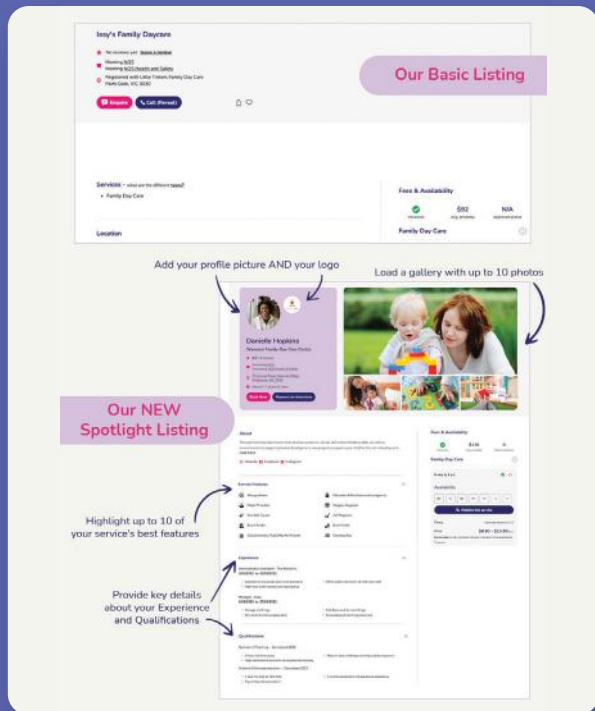
If you feel yourself slipping back, getting behind, or having a low point – don't be hard on yourself – take a deep breath and start all over again. You're only human. Be kind to yourself and seek the support of colleagues/staff.

10. What are your hopes for the FDC sector moving forward?

I want us to promote family day care as the best career path, with great small business opportunities, fantastic remuneration and tax benefits. I want childcare workers out there beating at the door to join family day care. I want to see us rebuild, have recognition and be at the table for future planning.



6 steps to search listing success with Care for kids



1 Put your best foot forward

We all know that standing out can be challenging when there's a lot of noise but we've put together a few tips on how to cut through the clutter and put your best foot forward.

2 Photo-bomb!

Show off your best bits with photos of your Family Day Care facility. Nothing showcases a service more than seeing it in action. It might take a little planning to get the right day, weather and conditions, but snapping some pics and popping them up so parents can make an emotional connection to your place is one of the easiest ways to stand out. Just be sure to get written permission from the parents if you're popping their children's photos online.

3 What's your story?

We've all got a starting point and we should be proud of how far we've come. So when you look back on your journey, don't keep it a secret - parents love to find out how it all began. Introduce yourself, tell everyone and be proud.

4 Celebrate your differences

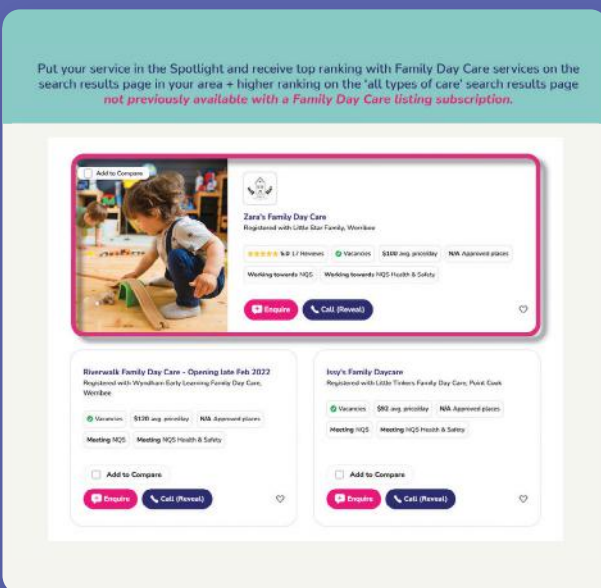
Much like every child is unique, every service too has its differences and most of the time, they're left off the list. Do you provide flexible hours or weekends? What about vacation care? Is a more healthy home cooking approach taken at your facility? Maybe your small group setting is across multiple age levels and parents love the benefit of a more sibling age-based approach. Whatever the differences are, you really need to make sure they're celebrated.

5 Don't be humble - you're better than that!

You're a fully qualified professional after all and your qualifications deserve the spotlight! You've worked hard and parents need to know just how good you are.

6 Keep it up-to-date and relevant

When you sign up to the new Family Day Care Spotlight and showcase your facility, it's important to keep it up to date with any new features, equipment and of course changes to your availability, hours of operation and any other relevant information.



Scan the QR code to learn more about how a SPOTLIGHT subscription will help you show parents the benefits of Family Day Care.

24/7 ACCESS

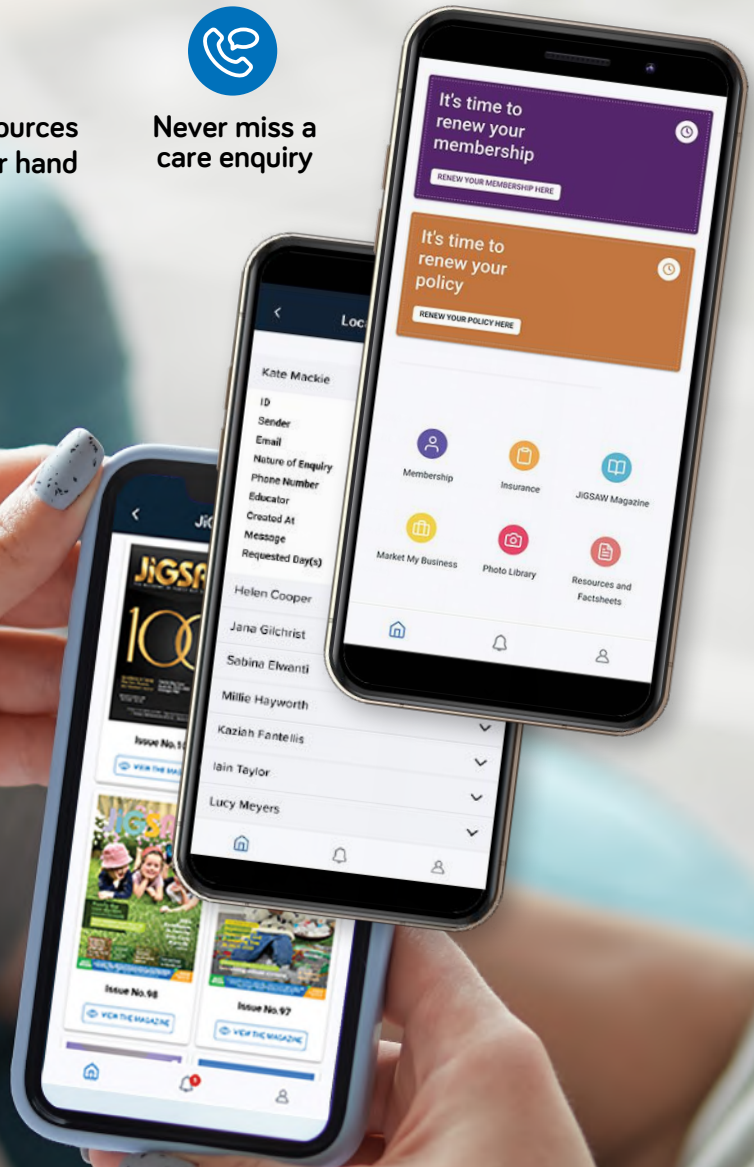
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