

JIGSAW

THE MAGAZINE OF FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA



**Celebrating
38 Years**
in Family Day Care

**Specialist
Support**
with Community Vision

2023
**Awards
National
Winners**

**Kick Start
YOUR 2024**

- * Summer Sleeping with Red Nose * Dollars and Sense with Ben Mueller * Nature and Loose Parts Play *
* Recruitment: Talent Pooling * ACECOA - NQF Snapshot * Grab a Cuppa * Business Insights *
* Scholastic Storytime * PLUS Win prizes for your family day care!

24/7 ACCESS

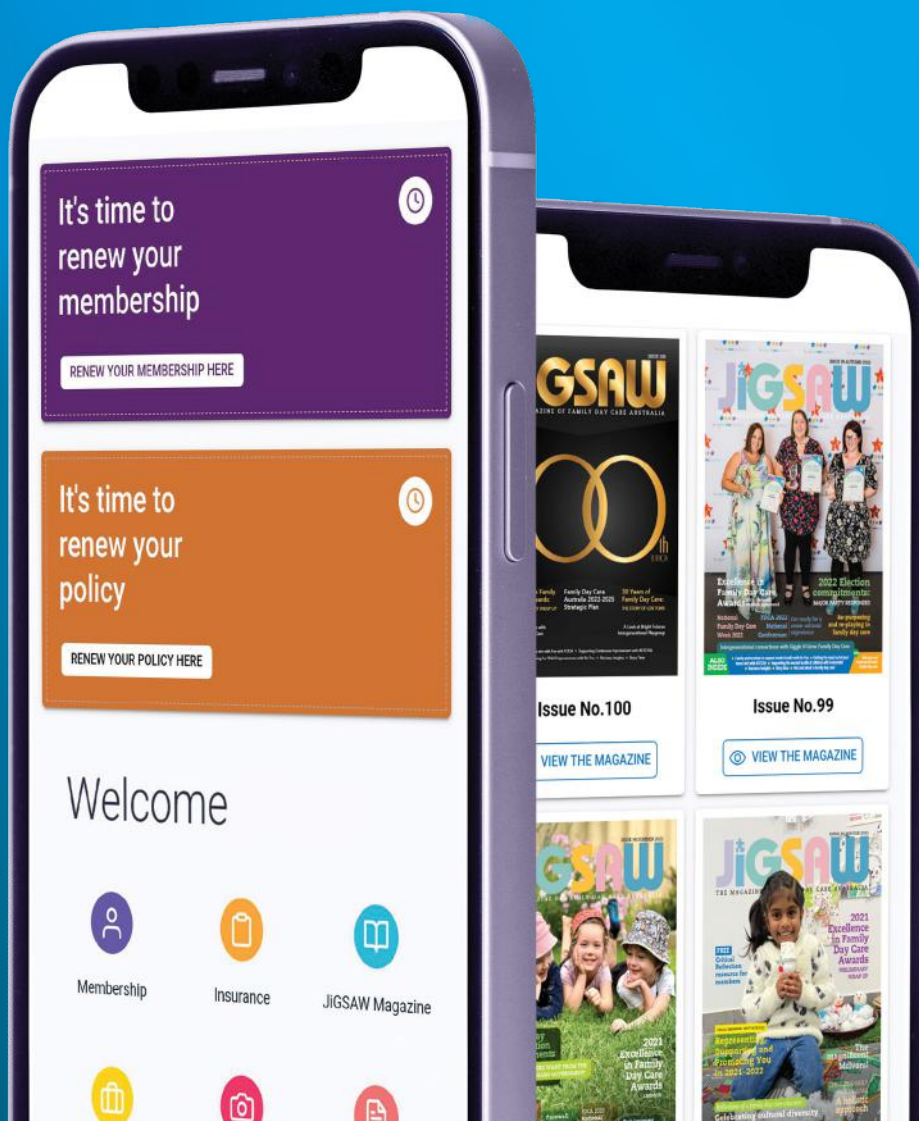
TO ALL YOUR MEMBER BENEFITS, ANYTIME,
ANYWHERE WITH THE *myFDCA* APP



Your favourite resources
in the palm of your hand



Never miss a
care enquiry



Scan and download the
myFDCA App today!



Published by Family Day Care Australia (FDCA)
 PO Box 571 Gosford NSW 2250
 ABN: 93 094 436 021
 Telephone: 1800 658 699
 Insurance and Membership Services: 1800 658 699
 Email: enquiries@fdca.com.au
 Web: www.familydaycareaustralia.com.au
 Editor: Hannah Vicary
 Advertising: FDCA Marketing
 Printer: Kwik Kopy Gosford
 ISSN 13263528

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.

FDCA Disclaimer

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily those of FDCA. The Editor reserves the right to shorten/edit submitted material. The Publisher reserves the right to alter or omit any article or advertisement submitted and requires indemnity from the advertisers and contributors against damages or liabilities that may arise from material published. Acceptance of advertisements for JiGSAW does not constitute FDCA's endorsement of the product. Copyright © no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission of the Publisher.

Membership fees and JiGSAW subscription

Individual Membership	\$49.90
Service Membership	\$299.00
Organisational Membership	\$299.00
JiGSAW Subscription (free to members)	\$35.00
All prices quoted include GST	

Products available include:

- Public Liability Insurance
- Personal Accident and Sickness Insurance for Educators
- Personal Accident Insurance for Children
- Management Liability Insurance
- Home and Contents Insurance
- Motor Vehicle Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- Family Day Care Legal Services
- Commercial Legal Expenses Cover

Freecall 1800 658 699 for more information.

Cover image: Frankie the Creative

Family Day Care Australia (FDCA) ABN 93 094 436 021 is a licensed general insurance broker (AFSL 329 616). Throughout this issue we advertise various insurance products and we receive commission and/or fees for arranging these insurances. For full details see our Financial Services Guide (FSG). The information we provide is general in nature only. You should consider your needs and read the relevant Product Disclosure Statement (PDS) or Policy Wording (PW) before making a decision to buy insurance. Please call us on 1800 658 699 for a copy of the FSG and PDS/PW.



A word from the CEO

Welcome to Edition 104 of JiGSAW Magazine and our first for 2024! As always, we endeavor to bring you quality content from within the sector to help keep you informed and up to date. This edition includes an array of inclusions from educators, services, and stakeholders, as well as the final wrap up of the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards and look at how FDCA can help you kick-start 2024.

We have a wonderful article from Ali Fleming where she discusses Nature and Loose parts incursions for both children and educators, testing boundaries and developing new skills. You can read about this in our *Keeping you up to date* section on pages 5 and 6.

In *FDCA working for you* on pages 7 and 8, we have a great inclusion from our National Recruitment Manager, Damon Somerfield, discussing the importance of Talent Pooling within the recruitment space and we share some announcements regarding new FDCA Learning Hub content and an opportunity for you to be part of our Online Engagement Series.

Jumping into this edition's features we have some bumper inclusions. On pages 9-16 you can read about the 2023 Awards nominees, winners, and a wrap up of the fantastic Gala Dinner FDCA hosted in Adelaide last November. Community Visions Family Day Care Coordinator, Samantha Folan has written a piece titled *Specialist Support for Family Day Care Educators* in which she explores funding options for inclusive practices, you will find this on pages 17 and 18. On pages 19 and 20, we catch up with recently retired former FDCA Board Director and long serving Wynnum Family Day Care Manager, Cathy Bavage. Cathy has been an inspirational leader of, and advocate for, family day care for nearly four decades, and has been a great friend, supporter and sounding board for FDCA, inside we chat about her amazing career.

To help everyone kick-start their 2024, we explore some great resources that FDCA has on offer, and as always, we bring you some great inclusions from our regulars on pages 23 – 27 including Red Nose, ACECQA, Business Insights and Ben Mueller returning with the *Dollars and Sense* section discussing motor vehicle expenses.

Taysha Worthy from Intereach Family Day Care and Fanny Wong from CASS Family Day Care are this edition's *Grab a Cuppa* contributors, discussing what they have been up to, advice they have for those new to the sector, plus much more. You will find these great articles on pages 29-32 and of course, on page 28 you can win some great prizes with our *Fun with FDCA* competitions.

I hope all our members enjoyed a wonderful holiday season. As your national peak body, we know that we have a lot of exciting work on the horizon this year, and we look forward to representing, supporting, and promoting you in 2024 – enjoy!

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.



PAGE 5

contents

IN BRIEF

- 4** Industry Snippets
- 5** Nature and Loose Parts Play
- 7** Building the Next Generation of Educators
- 8** New FDCA Learning Hub Module: Beyond the Rainbow

FEATURES

- 9** 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards – Wrap Up
- 17** Community Vision with Specialist Support for Educators
- 19** Cathy Bavage Celebrates 38 Years in Family Day Care
- 21** Kick Start Your 2024

REGULARS

- 23** Business Insights
- 24** Dollars and Sense with Ben Mueller
- 25** ACECQA - NQF Snapshot
- 27** Summer Sleeping with Red Nose
- 28** Fun with FDCA

- 29** Grab a Cuppa - featuring Taysha Worthy and Fanny Wong
- 33** Scholastic Storytime

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

Early Childhood Education and Care Summary update

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

14,528	1,009,500	1,438,150	\$12.20	137
<p>approved childcare services operated during that quarter, comprising:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9,127 centre-based day care services (62.8% of all services)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">380 family day care services (2.6%)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4,987 outside school hours care services (34.3%)</p>	<p>families nationally used approved care. Of these:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">686,460 or 68% used centre-based day care</p> <p style="text-align: center;">53,040 or 5.3% used family day care</p> <p style="text-align: center;">411,660 or 41% used outside school hours care</p>	<p>children attended approved childcare. Of these:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">839,140 or 58.3%, attended centre-based day care</p> <p style="text-align: center;">75,400 or 5.2%, attended family day care</p> <p style="text-align: center;">553,690 or 38.5%, attended outside school hours care</p>	<p>The average hourly fee charged across all approved care services (excluding In-home care) was \$12.20, with the average hourly fee for family day care sitting at \$12.40. This compares to an average hourly fee of \$12.80 for centre-based day care services and \$8.60 for outside school hours services.</p>	<p>In the September 2023 quarter, a total of 137 (or 36%) family day care services charged above the hourly fee cap of \$12.72. This compared to 22.9% of centre-based day care services charging above the cap of \$13.73, and 10.4% of outside school hours 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

INDUSTRY SNIPPETS



FAMILY DAY CARE

LEGAL SERVICES

TURN YOUR PROBLEMS INTO SOLUTIONS

12 months of support from legal experts

All from as little as **\$3.15** a week*

Access legal advice valued at **\$1,500** per enquiry**

Telephone legal advice and debt recovery services available

One of the biggest distractions when running a successful family day care business is debt recovery, with a growing number of services and educators often seeking assistance with managing cash flow and other legal matters.

As your national peak body, FDCA is committed to helping you deal with the stress of any issues related to your family day care business requiring legal assistance.

For more information about Family Day Care Legal Services, visit fdca.com.au/legal or phone **1800 658 699**.



*Based on upfront payment for an educator Legal Services package. **Based on a limit of 4 hours billable time per enquiry. Family Day Care Australia ABN 93 094 436 021 AFSL 329 616 receives a fee for referring this service. Because we don't know your legal needs, we can't advise if this service will suit you. The legal advice scheme is delivered by Wotton + Kearney Pty Ltd ABN 94 632 932 131.



Nature and Loose Parts Play

Educators and children recently took part in a professional development event with Glenn from Mobile Junk and Nature Playground, where attendees are encouraged to engage with and learn from hands-on nature play. Important lessons on sustainability and problem solving, as well as love and respect for nature are all front of mind throughout the experience.

Risky play, loose parts play, and outdoor learning have gained recognition and support for their numerous benefits in child development and education. These approaches encourage children to explore, experiment, and take calculated risks in a natural and unstructured environment. The freedom to engage in these activities fosters a range of physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional skills that are essential for a child's overall growth.

One of the primary advantages of risky play is that it helps children develop resilience and self-confidence. When children are allowed to engage in activities that involve manageable risks, like climbing trees or building makeshift forts, they learn to assess their abilities and make decisions about what they can and cannot do safely. This builds their self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment as they overcome challenges.

Loose parts play, which involves open-ended materials like sticks, rocks, and other found objects, encourages creativity, problem-solving, and resourcefulness. Children have the freedom to manipulate these materials in

countless ways, which stimulates their imaginations and helps them develop critical thinking skills. It also promotes social interaction and cooperation as children collaborate on projects and share ideas.

Learning outdoors, in a natural and dynamic environment,



KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE

Thank you to Ali Fleming from Nature Play DECD Family Day Care for this inclusion.

offers a holistic and sensory-rich experience. It allows children to connect with the natural world, fostering a love of nature and environmental stewardship. Outdoor learning also supports physical development as children engage in physical activities like running, climbing, and jumping. Exposure to the outdoors has been linked to improved mental

health and reduced stress, benefiting the overall well-being of children.

A big thank you to Glenn from Mobile Junk and Nature Playground for sharing his expertise with us in our 3-day professional development event. Children and educators alike enjoyed testing their

boundaries and developing new skills. Congratulations to Educators who stepped outside their comfort zone. Learning something new can be confronting. Modelling this to our students, supporting their ability to successfully navigate change and to leaning into trying something new.

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



Building the next generation of family day care educators

Planning for the future to support the next generations in the family day care sector is vital to supporting the sector.

There is immediate pressure on the family day care and wider ECEC sector to support the national childcare crisis. However, when it comes to recruiting Educators, in most cases there is unfortunately no immediate fix.

So, we are left with two options: to either to buy or build our future Educator workforce.

The buy option is unfortunately not always a feasible option due to migration/ sponsorship and salary costs involved. So, we are left with option two, to build our future family day care Educator workforce!

Key areas that can assist in building your educator workforce pipeline for the medium to long term future are:



1. Connect with local Registered Training Organisations (RTO'S) who facilitate qualifications in Early Childhood Education and Care.

The journey to become an Educator starts in the classroom with study and practical experience. Those Educators who are working towards their ECEC qualifications are the next generation of Educators therefore, connecting with them now and educating them on the benefits of family day care will encourage them to consider it as a great career choice.



2. Early Career Planning.

One step before RTO's would be to engage with local high schools to support and educate those students who are considering working in the ECEC and family day care sector in the future. There are examples of local communities using this as a way of engaging with students who later go on to complete a Certificate III or Diploma in ECEC and then go on to set up a family day care.



3. Build a talent pool of potential Educators.

Have you ever had a call from a potential employer about a perfect job, or even an old friend you have not spoken to in a very long time, feels good right?

Talent pooling could be as simple as retaining the information (with their approval) of a strong candidate and contacting them to follow up with in the future, either by email, letter, or phone call.

For many prospective Educators who are keen to start a family day care, the timing is simply not right. Their dwelling might not be appropriate, or there might be other circumstances preventing them from starting in family day care. Keeping a list, database or, as we call it in recruitment, a passive or non-active talent pool, is a good way to re-connect with them over time for when they are ready.



If you would like further information regarding recruitment or to chat to our National Recruitment Manager, Damon Somerfield, please reach out to FDCA on enquiries@fdca.com.au.

FDCA LEARNING HUB: New Module Released - Beyond the Rainbow: Making a Difference for All Families

FDCA is pleased to advise members that a new module is available on the FDCA Learning Hub, *Beyond the rainbow: Making a difference for all families*.

This new module is one of more than 46 professional learning modules that you can access as part of your FDCA membership at no extra cost via the FDCA Learning Hub.

In this new module, you will learn about the diversity of families, LGBTQ+ parented families specifically and how diversity is a positive part of Australian society. You will learn how to create learning opportunities for birth to eight-year-olds that enable children to explore family diversity in an education and care setting.

In this module you will:

- Have increased awareness that all families are different and all families need to be supported.
- Have increased awareness of factors that contribute to discrimination against and disadvantage of children and families.
- Have the ability to develop, create and sustain environments that are inclusive to all families.
- Learn how to create learning opportunities for children to learn about family diversity.

Available through your Member Zone and backed by one of Australia's most respected early childhood professional development and advocacy organisations, Early Childhood Australia, the FDCA Learning Hub offers members contemporary and meaningful professional development opportunities that can be completed from the comfort of home, at a time that suits you.



Early Childhood Australia
Professional Learning



rainbow families
connecting • supporting • empowering

FDCA Online Engagement Series: Call for Panellists in 2024!

Would you like to feature as a guest on an episode of the FDCA Online Engagement Series in 2024?

We're calling for expressions of interest from FDCA members that would be interested in participating as panellists and sharing their knowledge on specific subject matter.

Following a successful launch in 2023 and episodes that covered a range of topics specifically curated for family day care, we're looking for new guests for 2024.

Your chance to participate



If you have a passion or expertise in particular areas, we're inviting you to express your interest in participating in 2024. To express your interest, all you need to do is scan the QR code and complete the online form.

Once you have completed the form, FDCA will keep your details on file and if an opportunity arises, we will contact you about the possibility of participating in an episode of the FDCA Online Engagement Series.

View previous episodes

To view previous episodes of the FDCA Online Engagement Series, simply enter your FDCA Member Zone, where recordings of all episodes are available 24/7.



FREE FOR FDCA MEMBERS



TAILORED FOR FAMILY DAY CARE



STREAMED LIVE ONLINE



LIVE Q&A



FDCA Online Engagement Series

Download your FREE 2024 WALL PLANNER



FDCA's 2024 Wall Planner is now available for download!

The planner captures important dates including school and public holidays, key events and celebrations.

Two sizes of the Wall Planner are available to download:

- A large A1 landscape sized version which displays all 12 months of the year (this version is best printed using a professional printer or through a retailer such as Officeworks); and
- A smaller A4 portrait version which displays one month per page (this can be printed at home or at the office).

To download your FREE Wall Planner, log in to your FDCA Member Zone and click on the Resources and Factsheets subheading.

EXCELLENCE IN FAMILY DAY CARE AWARDS 2023

National Winners Announced

Following an amazing Awards Season that saw more than 5,000 nominations placed, FDCA was honoured to announce the 2023 Educator, Coordinator and Service of the Year National Award winners at the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards Gala Dinner.



Profiles of our National Finalists and a full listing of all Award Winners can be viewed on pages 11-16.

In our first stand-alone Awards Gala Dinner since 2019, over 120 guests created an amazing atmosphere as we celebrated everyone that was nominated and participated in the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards.

Making the evening even more special was the fact that a piece of history was created across all three categories.

- West Country Family Day Care Scheme's Stephanie Hoy became the first South Australian Educator to take home the title of National Family Day Educator of the Year.
- Chamalee Prathiraja, from Communities@Work Family Day Care, became our first ACT finalists to take out the National Coordinator of the Year award.
- Nature Alliance Family Day Care made it two years in a row that a Western Australian service has taken out the National Service of the Year!

FDCA Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Paterson, spoke about the incredible achievements of this year's Award winners and the importance of the Awards program.

"This year's winners demonstrate essential and unparalleled dedication to their roles in the early childhood education and care sector. Having been selected from over 5,000 awards nominations, it is a testament to the irreplaceable role they play, as well as the broadscale relevance of the Awards program," said Mr Paterson.



The Awards continue to play a key role in recognising the achievements of those working in the family day care sector on a national level and provide an opportunity to promote the unique benefits of family day care to Australian families.



THANK YOU

FDCA would like to thank all the families, Coordinators, Educators, Services and staff who got involved in the 2023 Excellence in Family Day Care Awards. We congratulate everyone that was nominated or won an award. We would also like to thank our sponsors, The Department for Education South Australia and Early Childhood Australia. Without the generous support of these organisations the awards program would not be possible.



2023 NATIONAL WINNERS



COORDINATOR OF THE YEAR
Chamalee Prathiraja – ACT/NSW
 Communities@Work Family Day Care
 (ACT)

Chamalee has been an early childhood professional for 11 years and is passionate about building relationships with Educators, children, families and service staff.

Chamalee loves to help Educators genuinely understand how children think, feel and wonder, so they can incorporate this into their pedagogical practices. She promotes a curriculum that fosters empathy, inclusion, the rights of children and global citizenship where children are given the knowledge, skills and tools to make real differences in their community. She believes that the principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework should be the foundation of everything that early childhood professionals do.

Chamalee loves to bring out the best in every Educator, empowering them through her mentorship as well as constantly learning from them. She is passionate about mentoring Educators in a way that supports their individuality and diversity through flexibility and focuses on a strong culture of self-reflection to ensure her personal growth continues to evolve.

Chamalee has high expectations for her own professional practice, she inspires others to have the confidence to show initiative, take on new challenges and improve practice, which ultimately provides quality education and care for children.



EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR
Stephanie Hoy – SA/WA
 West Country Family Day Care
 Scheme (SA)

Stephanie runs Little Creatures Family Day Care and believes that relationships are the glue that holds everything together. Forming strong relationships with children and families that attend her service is the key to its success and deepens a sense of security and trust for all parties.

Believing that the first five years of a child's life is pivotal for future health, happiness and success. Stephanie chose family day care as it provides opportunities of greater control and flexibility in programming. She understands that building a deep connection with a child and family cannot be underestimated, nor can the ability to nurture and to scaffold a child in her care.

Stephanie is constantly seeking out learning opportunities to inspire, create and energise. She prides herself in catering to children's individual and group needs and ensures each day that she holds space for children to feel secure and belong. She chooses professional development that challenges and inspires her to grow her vision and expand program offerings.

Including not only parents but extended family, grandparents and pets into her service means she is able to have a better understanding of family dynamics when conversations arise with children, creating a sense of belonging and community at Little Creatures. She is also proud of the environment she has created, that was specifically built with family day care in mind.



SERVICE OF THE YEAR
**Nature Alliance Family Day Care
 Scheme (WA)**
 SA/WA Representative

With the core values of trust, empathy, honesty and respect, Nature Alliance in Western Australia maintains consistency in delivering high quality support and practices to their Educators, and in turn children and families.

With over a decade in operation, Nature Alliance believe in empowering and fostering mutually respectful relationships with their Educators. Their vision centres around supporting Educators to build successful, financially secure businesses, enabling them to create environments that promote children as capable individuals, where learning and the rights of the child are at the core of their programs.

Nature Alliance has a flexible approach with their Educators by encouraging them to program in a manner that suits their experience and ability and arms their staff with the skills to support Educators with any mode of planning used.

Nature Alliance continuously strive to improve practises through ongoing professional development for their staff and Educators, actively seeking feedback from Educators, staff, families and stakeholders to identify areas of improvement and have a strong focus on inclusion.

Operating under a Distributed Leadership model, Nature Alliance prioritise relationship building and teamwork, which fosters trust and empowerment. Staying connected with their Educators is vital, especially for those in regional areas.



2023 COORDINATOR NATIONAL FINALISTS



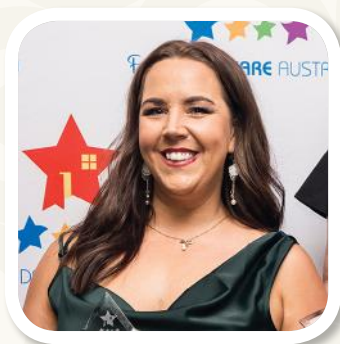
Victoria Edmond – NT/QLD
Rainbow Bridge Family Day Care (QLD)

As a Coordinator it is important for Victoria to share her professional skills and to put her knowledge of Early Childhood pedagogy to good use. Strong lines of communication, firm core values and collaboration guide all decisions Victoria makes in her role.

With 10 years of experience as an early childhood professional, Victoria loves interacting with children and getting to know them through her monthly visits with Educators. A true highlight of her role is helping Educators to overcome challenges they may face, and supporting the professional growth of staff by providing them with resources to keep growing and learning.

Building empowered and mutually respectful relationships with Educators and service staff is a top priority for Victoria, who believes in creating an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels valued and heard. She is passionate about involving Educators in every step of the process, encouraging ownership and commitment. She recognises the importance of celebrating achievements and expressing gratitude.

Victoria displays exceptional leadership qualities, guiding and supporting a team of Educators with clarity and vision. She is a staunch advocate for high-quality early childhood education and care and ensures that Educators maintain the highest standards and provide safe, enriching, and developmentally appropriate experiences for the children.



Samantha Folan – SA/WA
Community Vision Family Day Care (WA)

After nine years as an Educator, Samantha made the change to become a Coordinator which has been extremely rewarding and has helped to strengthen her passion for family day care.

Samantha likes to encourage Educators to think outside the box, celebrates their strengths, and aims to offer individualised support through strengthening relationships with each interaction. She is passionate about developing her knowledge base and prides herself on being able to support her Educators. Through efficiently providing current and correct information, Samantha helps to build on the Educator's knowledge of the early childhood sector.

Samantha's experience as a family day care Educator allows her a unique understanding when working with her Educators and this in turn makes the Educators feel more understood. Her approach to all aspects of her job has helped to create a strong coordination team and reassures Educators that their aim is to support them in every area of their business.

Freedom of play is a high priority within Samantha's Philosophy and is how her curriculum evolved as an Educator. She has seen firsthand how many opportunities become available to the children when their restrictions are reduced, and their ideas are given the chance to flourish.

Samantha is described as bubbly, positive and knowledgeable and despite just completing her first year as a coordinator, has achieved so much, excelling in her role.



Donna Klitscher – TAS/VIC
Uniting Family Day Care - Wimmera (VIC)

Donna believes connecting and establishing positive relationships with not only Educators, but also families, children and the coordination unit is crucial in professional practice. She likes to think of herself as a 'why not' Coordinator instead of a 'no' Coordinator, embracing flexibility in her role.

Fostering empowered, mutually respectful relationships with Educators and service staff is key to creating a positive and collaborative work environment for Donna, who has seen a large increase of Educator numbers in her tenure at Uniting Family Day Care.

Donna has in-depth knowledge of the family day care sector and always offers valuable support, guidance, and mentorship to all Educators. She takes on feedback and goes above and beyond to assist families in need. She enjoys stepping into a child's world to discover how they absorb information and finds it a privilege to be alongside children as their unique personalities emerge and their identities form in a learning environment.

Open communication is very important to Donna when building relationships. She believes the more open you are, the more Educators will react positively to any new changes or any issues that may arise. Donna believes context is very important when implementing and reflecting on practices. Having Educators feel able to communicate openly with Donna allows her to offer the right support, especially if they are struggling in a particular area.



2023 EDUCATOR NATIONAL FINALISTS



Josephine Mesiti – ACT/NSW
Camden Family Day Care (NSW)

With a teaching style that is heavily influenced by the Reggio Emilia Approach, Josephine who runs Mulberry Kids Family Day Care believes in learning that is child led, interest based and then deeply reflected upon.

Josephine believes that parents and carers are a child's first teachers in life, Educators are their second, and their environment is the third teacher. Because of this belief she has close bonds with all families that attend her service to easily entwine the three and in turn greatly influence the outcomes for the children.

She believes in regular communication, incorporating feedback directly into her service and keeps the adage 'it takes a village to raise a child' at the forefront of her mind always. Her curriculum is heavily influenced by the children's voices, which leads to rich and meaningful interactions and discussions.

Diversity is deeply embedded into Josephine's service, where children are exposed to diversity every day and it is both embraced and celebrated. One example is the use of Auslan within her service. She believes that through knowledge comes acceptance.

Through hard work and commitment Josephine offers a curriculum that exceeds expectations. Mulberry Kids is highly regarded within the community due to its inclusive practices and promotion of diversity.



Cecile Miel – NT/QLD
Kentish Family Day Care (NT)

Cecile believes in open communications with children and families that attend her service, this includes encouraging feedback to continuously improve her family day care business. She advocates for nature and risk through associated play and has embedded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in her program.

Cecile's service has a strong alliance with professionals within the community and empowers children to be resilient and confident, while owning responsibility towards their own learning and guiding them in becoming responsible citizens within society.

Planning regular excursions and attending events with the children means they are often out within their community and gaining firsthand life experience. Within her home, Cecile showcases gender diversity and applies debriefing techniques to critically reflect on her practice and pedagogy. Through this exercise she ensures continual improvement to her service.

Immaculate Heart Family Day Care is named after Cecile's village and is the only service in the Northern Territory that opens at 5am. Offering extended hours to her community is something Cecile is very proud of, helping families to return to work and ensuring their children are in a secure, loving and happy place.

Cecile is described as an enthusiastic and positive person who is passionate about her job and treats the children who attend her service as her own.



Martha Smith – TAS/VIC
Baw Baw Shire Family Day Care (VIC)

Martha's passion for family day care has led her to become a mentor for new and existing Educators where she provides an open space for others to observe a working family day care environment. She believes that becoming an Educator with no children of her own allowed her the time to focus on what direction she wanted to head and what Educator she wanted to be. Fourteen years and a toddler later, she is still learning and growing every day.

With a growth mindset and an open-ended outlook, the children in Martha's care benefit from an Educator who is always eager to explore opportunities and expand their knowledge. The relationships she shares with the children and families of her service is deeper than just a professional affiliation and are built on trust, honesty, empathy, respect and communication.

With the understanding that children need supportive adults who nurture and help them to gain confidence to learn and develop, Martha is fostering strong relationships by communicating, nurturing and respecting. She believes that her family day care is unique in its exceptional commitment to community and social wellbeing which in turn grows confident, caring and creative young children.

Martha celebrates the uniqueness of each child as this is how they know that she is listening to them and believing in their ways of knowing and being.



2023 SERVICE NATIONAL FINALISTS



Greater Hume Children Services (NSW)

ACT/NSW Representative

Initially opening its doors in 1994, Greater Hume Children Services is committed to professional practice through reflection, both individually and as a team, a genuine drive to provide the best possible outcomes for children and a robust selection and orientation process for Educators.

Relationships, connections and mutual respect are at the core of their practice, and they pride themselves on being a 'safety net' for their Educators, understanding firsthand the challenges they face.

Greater Hume Children Services is proud of the wonderful diversity that exists among their Educators and the services they provide, celebrating each one for their unique offering and encouraging business models that suit the Educator and their families.

Professional development is a key pillar of Greater Hume's success, who offer sessions to their team regularly, as well as the implementation of a practice mentor program, where Educators are paired with experienced and highly motivated Educators, so they understand what high expectations look like in practice and Greater Hume's excellent reputation and standards are maintained.

Greater Hume Children Services encourage social networking, collaboration and team work amongst their Educators and are well respected within their local community.



Beenleigh Family Day Care (QLD)

NT/QLD Representative

Operating for almost 45 years, Beenleigh Family Day Care operates on an individualised, respectful, and strength-based approach that they hope their Educators will utilise within their services.

Through modelling this practice, their hope is that so too will their Educators within their homes and staff within their communities. They recognise that each of their Educators is different, with varying strengths, knowledge, experience and use this to inform their practice and support.

Beenleigh have a strong focus on First Nations within their service, inclusion and recognition being a focal point over the past few years. Events such as dreamtime stories and NAIDOC Week has helped Educators, children and families to develop their knowledge and respect for First Nations culture by embedding this into their daily lives. A particularly proud aspect of the recent NAIDOC Week celebrations for Beenleigh was their ability to foster new relationships between community members and Aboriginal Elders, helping Indigenous members make connections with their cultural history after losing family connections.

Beenleigh are passionate about modelling a culture that celebrates individuality from the very top, all the way through to the Educators, children and families.



Windermere Family Day Care (VIC)

TAS/VIC Representative

Windermere Family Day Care ensure their Educators, staff, children, families and community are at the forefront of decisions they make and projects they implement.

Windermere pride themselves on the personalised relationships developed and maintained between Educators and staff, ensuring Educators are equipped with autonomy, authority, and flexibility in all areas of their business, complimented by ongoing support from the coordination unit.

A strong sense of community is maintained throughout Windermere programming and ethos, as is their desire to continually develop their philosophy, never allowing it to become static and instead ensuring it is always evolving to best serve all stake holders of the service.

Diversity is celebrated at Windermere as it allows for families to connect with an Educator that suits their needs, and that they relate to. Educators are given the flexibility to operate their business in a way that meets their own unique requirements, resulting in a sense of empowerment, belonging for Educators and children.

Windermere's refined philosophy encapsulates a welcoming approach, families that are connected through Educators and the Windermere team, respect for diversity and the creation of communities where everyone is someone and children can grow, explore and feel safe to be heard.

NATIONAL FINALISTS

EDUCATORS

ACT/NSW - Josephine Mesiti, Camden Family Day Care, NSW

NT/QLD - Cecile Miel, Kentish Family Day Care, NT

SA/WA - Stephanie Hoy, West Country Family Day Care Scheme, SA

TAS/VIC - Martha Smith, Baw Baw Shire Family Day Care, VIC



COORDINATORS

ACT/NSW - Chamalee Prathiraja, Communities@Work Family Day Care, ACT

NT/QLD - Victoria Edmond, Rainbow Bridge Family Day Care, QLD

SA/WA - Samantha Folan, Community Vision Family Day Care, WA

TAS/VIC - Donna Klitscher, Uniting Family Day Care - Wimmera, VIC



SERVICES

ACT/NSW - Greater Hume Children Services, NSW

NT/QLD - Beenleigh Family Day Care, QLD

SA/WA - Nature Alliance Family Day Care, WA

TAS/VIC - Windermere Family Day Care, VIC



STAR AWARD WINNERS

EMERGING STARS

Educator Courtney Fijolek, Connections Family Day Care, WA

Coordinator Maxine Burr, Family Day Care Tasmania, TAS

Service Fraser Coast Family Day Care, QLD



PERPETUAL STARS

Educator Merylyn Hannaford, Hills Murraylands Family Day Care Scheme, SA

Coordinator Deanne Burr, Greater Hume Children Services, NSW

Service Dubbo Family Day Care, NSW



EDUCATOR REGIONAL WINNERS

NAME	REGION	SERVICE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY		
NEHA SHARMA	NORTH CANBERRA	COMMUNITIES@WORK FAMILY DAY CARE AND IN-HOME CARE
LEAH UTTLEY	SOUTH CANBERRA	COMMUNITIES@WORK FAMILY DAY CARE AND IN-HOME CARE
NEW SOUTH WALES		
TABITHA WOONINGS	ALBURY WODONGA & MURRAY	GREATER HUME CHILDREN SERVICES
MARY-LOUISE MCDONALD	BLUE MOUNTAINS & CENTRAL WEST	CABONNE FAMILY DAY CARE
ANGELIKA SHARIEV	CBD, INNER WEST & EASTERN SUBURBS	WAVERLEY FAMILY DAY CARE
SHERIDAN-LEE MOTBEY	COFFS HARBOUR & NORTH COAST	NAMBUCCA VALLEY FAMILY DAY CARE
SHIRLEY EDWARDS	DUBBO & CENTRAL	CABONNE FAMILY DAY CARE
MARYANN ZAMMIT	FAR WEST & CENTRAL NORTH	FAR WEST FAMILY DAY CARE
ANNA HALEY	GOSFORD & CENTRAL COAST	INSPIRED FAMILY DAY CARE
LOUISE MAY HILL	GOULBURN & SOUTHERN TABLELANDS	GOULBURN FAMILY DAY CARE
ALISON MAREE BARRETT	LISMORE & FAR NORTH WEST	CLARENCE CHILDHOOD SERVICES
JULIA JEFFS	NEWCASTLE, MAITLAND & HUNTER	INSPIRED FAMILY DAY CARE
MELISSA MURPHY	NORTH SHORE & NORTHERN BEACHES	FAMILY DAY CARE SYDNEY WIDE
JEONGIN YI	NORTH WEST & HILLS DISTRICT	CASS FAMILY DAY CARE
EUN JUNG HWANG	PARRAMATTA & WESTERN SUBURBS	KU-RUNG GAI FAMILY DAY CARE
MELISSA BENNETT	PORT MACQUARIE & MID NORTH COAST	KEMPSEY FAMILY DAY CARE & IN HOME CARE
EMMA TURNBULL	RICHMOND & HAWKESBURY	COLLECTIVE FAMILY DAY CARE
JENNIFER YIN	RYDE & MACQUARIE PARK	CCA FAMILY DAY CARE
JOSEPHINE MESITI	SOUTH WEST & M5 CORRIDOR	CAMDEN FAMILY DAY CARE
JILLIAN CRITCHLEY	SOUTHERN SUBURBS & SUTHERLAND SHIRE	COLLECTIVE FAMILY DAY CARE
PAULA PAULING	TAMWORTH & NORTH WEST	TAMWORTH FAMILY DAY CARE
SAMANTHA KING	TUMUT, SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS & SNOWY	NATURAL CHOICE FAMILY DAY CARE
MICHELLE FABRIS	WAGGA WAGGA & RIVERINA	COUNTRY CHILDREN'S EARLY LEARNING
ALISON BURNS	WOLLONGONG, ILLAWARRA & SOUTH COAST	EUROBODALLA FAMILY DAY CARE





NAME	REGION	SERVICE
NORTHERN TERRITORY		
NARIETA TINA IKULABU	ALICE SPRINGS	ALICE SPRINGS FAMILY DAY CARE
CECILE MIEL	DARWIN	KENTISH FAMILY DAY CARE
QUEENSLAND		
ANDREA GALLAGHER NICHOLS	BRISBANE NORTH/SUNSHINE COAST	KIDS AT HOME FAMILY DAY CARE
CHANTELLE DELLER	BRISBANE SOUTH	BEAUCARE FAMILY DAY CARE
DANIELLE CRAMOND	BRISBANE WEST/IPSWICH/BOONAH	BUILDING FUTURES CARE
SHARON EDWARDS	CAIRNS & FAR NORTH	ENHANCE FAMILY DAY CARE - BRISBANE COMMUNITY
NICOLE ARMSTRONG	LOGAN/REDLANDS/GOLD COAST	RAINBOW BRIDGE FAMILY DAY CARE
KATHERINE BEIL	MOUNT ISA/WESTERN QLD	HOLISTIC APPROACH FAMILY DAY CARE
BELINDA HACKNEY	ROCKHAMPTON/CENTRAL QLD	SOUTHERN CROSS FAMILY DAY CARE
ALECIA RICHARDS	TOOWOOMBA/DARLING DOWNS/SOMERSET/LOCKYER	CHOICES FAMILY DAY CARE
JOSEPHINE ROBERTSON	TOWNSVILLE/NORTHERN QLD	BOWEN/COLLINSVILLE FAMILY DAY CARE
SOUTH AUSTRALIA		
ALISON RAMKE	WIDE BAY/HERVEY BAY/MARYBOROUGH	KIDS AT HOME FAMILY DAY CARE
DAWN SOARES	ADELAIDE	SOUTHERN DISTRICTS FAMILY DAY CARE SCHEME
MERRILYN HANNAFORD	ADELAIDE HILLS & BAROSSA	HILLS MURRAYLANDS FAMILY DAY CARE SCHEME
RACHEL SMITH	MT GAMBIER & LIMESTONE COAST	RACHEL'S HOME CHILDCARE
ANTOINETTE LINES	RIVERLAND & MURRAY MALLEE	FOUNDATIONS FAMILY DAY CARE
STEPHANIE HOY	WHYALLA & EYRE PENINSULA	WEST COUNTRY FAMILY DAY CARE SCHEME
TASMANIA		
RACHEL MCGUIRE	DEVONPORT & NORTH WEST	FAMILY DAY CARE TASMANIA
DORKA KABAIVANOF	HOBART & SOUTH	UNITING FAMILY DAY CARE TASMANIA
SUSANNA HABERLE	LAUNCESTON & NORTH	FAMILY DAY CARE TASMANIA
VICTORIA		
MARTHA SMITH	BAIRNSDALE & GIPPSLAND	BAW BAW SHIRE FAMILY DAY CARE
ALLISON EVANS	BALLARAT & CENTRAL HIGHLANDS	WYNDHAM EARLY LEARNING FAMILY DAY CARE
ROSANNE FERDINAND	BAYSIDE & SOUTH EASTERN SUBURBS	WYNDHAM EARLY LEARNING FAMILY DAY CARE
CASEY SEIDEL	BENDIGO, GOLDFIELDS & MACEDON RANGES	BENDIGO FAMILY DAY CARE
SUMARA MCEVOY	EASTERN SUBURBS	IGNITE MINDS
TANIA LOCKE	GEELONG & GREAT OCEAN ROAD	CITY OF GREATER GEELONG FAMILY DAY CARE
SARAH MILES	HORSHAM & GRAMPPIANS	UNITING FAMILY DAY CARE - WIMMERA
MICHELLE OELLERMANN	MILDURA & MURRAY	INTEREACH FAMILY DAY CARE
JOSEPHINE PIERCE	MORNINGTON PENINSULA & BASS COAST	WINDERMERE FAMILY DAY CARE
JOANNE KONWALOW	NORTHERN SUBURBS	OUR VILLAGE FAMILY CHILDCARE
MELANIE QUINN	SHEPPARTON & GOULBURN VALLEY	MURRINDINDI FAMILY DAY CARE
ALECIA PAYNE	TRARALGON & LA TROBE VALLEY	HOLISTIC APPROACH FAMILY DAY CARE
JULIE BORNEMAN	WESTERN SUBURBS	WYNDHAM EARLY LEARNING FAMILY DAY CARE
HANNAH HARRIS	YARRA VALLEY & HIGH COUNTRY	INSPIRED FAMILY DAY CARE
WESTERN AUSTRALIA		
ANGELA JENKS	ALBANY & GREAT SOUTHERN	NATURE ALLIANCE FAMILY DAY CARE
ELIZABETH STANGER	BROOME & KIMBERLEY	NATURE ALLIANCE FAMILY DAY CARE
JACQUELIN SIMS	BUNBURY & SOUTH WEST	YMCA FAMILY DAY CARE SERVICE
FRANCES SVILICICH	CBD, INNER & WESTERN SUBURBS	WANSLEA METROPOLITAN FAMILY DAY CARE
TRACEY SALSAMAN	EASTERN SUBURBS	NATURE ALLIANCE FAMILY DAY CARE
CAROLYN MOFFATT	FREMANTLE & SOUTHERN SUBURBS	AUSSIE KIDZ FAMILY DAY CARE
SRI MORGAN	GERALDTON, GASCOYNE & MIDWEST	ELITE FAMILY DAY CARE
JESSICA O'CONNOR	KALGOORIE, GOLDFIELDS & ESPERANCE	NATURE ALLIANCE FAMILY DAY CARE
STACEY ANN GALLAGHER	MANDURAH & PEEL	CITY OF COCKBURN FAMILY DAY CARE
TANYA LEE PHILLIPS	NORTHAM & WHEATBELT	WILLI WAG TAILS FAMILY DAY CARE
COURTNEY FIJOLEK	NORTHERN SUBURBS & JOONDALUP	CONNECTIONS FAMILY DAY CARE
PATRICIA RAULF	PORT HEDLAND, KARRATHA & PILBARA	YMCA FAMILY DAY CARE
PAIGE ROWE	ROCKINGHAM & KWINANA	ELITE FAMILY DAY CARE



Helen Appelby

INCLUSION PROFESSIONAL
COMMUNICARE

The WA Inclusion Agency (WAIA) provides free support to eligible Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services throughout Western Australia.

As an Inclusion Professional (IP) at WAIA, I assist services in addressing the barriers to inclusion by providing tailored strategies and support, including accessing the Inclusion Support Portal, where services can develop a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP).

Through this portal they can also apply for funding streams through the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDFM). These funding streams assist services in mitigating barriers and creating more inclusive environments.

My collaboration with Samantha Folan, the family day care Coordinator at Community Vision, commenced in early 2022. Over several conversations and numerous meetings, we deliberated upon the various funding streams and potential support services available.

Subsequently, using the SIP we identified Innovative Solutions as one of the funding streams that could be leveraged to reduce current barriers.

To address the gaps in knowledge and develop confidence in caring for children with high ongoing support needs, we sought the assistance of a training provider, Gee from Autism Inclusion, who could tailor the training to the needs of multiple family day care Educators functioning in different settings.

Samantha, Gee, and I held multiple conversations and meetings to ensure that the project was sustainable and that the training and delivery met the needs of the family day care Educators.

In April 2023, we submitted the project, which was approved by the IDFM. The WA IA was pleased to see such a significant innovative solution project approved, providing training, mentoring, and coaching for multiple Educators.

Specialist Support

for Family Day Care Educators



Samantha Folan

EDUCATIONAL LEADER
COMMUNITY VISION FAMILY DAY CARE

Our service, Community Vision Family Day Care were recently approved for a \$40,000 funded Innovative Solutions Project (ISP). This funding is provided by the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDFM) and is available to all family day care services. It provides training in areas where services can see barriers to children's learning and development.

We have a small number of children with additional needs in care and I saw this fact being due to our Educators having their own barriers in place, holding them back from feeling able to take additional needs children in to care confidently.

When asking our Educators what they would like their next Professional Development to be focused on, we had a majority vote back for Understanding Autism. I researched Autism RTO's within Perth and sent a message off to multiple organisations to see if they'd be able to offer a one off workshop for our Educators. One response was from Gee, the owner of Autism Inclusion who said this isn't something she usually offers but does do extended projects with services, spanning over a few months or so. I was initially a little disappointed when I read on that there's usually funding available to services, but Gee had only ever seen this be approved for long day care and not family day care. Gee suggested I contact our Inclusion Professional (IP) to seek further advice.

I reached out to Helen, our IP from Communicare, and asked for her advice. She too was unsure if this could work for the family day care structure so the three of us met up and started to discuss the possibilities. I gathered information from our Educators regarding any barriers they may be noticing within their settings, or any focus children they may have in care who might benefit from their Educator being more knowledgeable in the Autism area. I then needed to create profiles for each Educator within the Inclusion Support Portal and work along side Gee and Helen to put together a project plan. This process took around eight months to complete but I feel it could have happened quicker if I'd pushed a little more. We finally got the tick of approval in April 2023.

The goal of our project was to address Educators' barriers to being an inclusive service. The project plan that we put together included five, four-hour workshops which focussed on Understanding Autism, implementing visual aids, understanding and supporting behaviour and self-regulation, sensory processing, building play and social skills and finally, reflection and planning for ongoing inclusive practice.

The project also included 90 one-to-one mentoring sessions across the 20 services that opted into the project. These mentoring sessions consisted of Gee attending the Educator's family day care service



Isis Dorado

EDUCATOR

COMMUNITY VISION FAMILY DAY CARE



and working alongside them, offering tips and tools on how to approach situations that would benefit both the child and the Educator. The bonus of having Gee work directly with our Educators is that she has vast experience working in the early years and Autism sector and can provide advice for all learning styles. Gee has also provided our Educators with numerous visual supports and is on hand to answer questions via email, call and text.

We have had positive feedback from our Educators regarding the benefits they have noticed since Gee has been sharing her wisdom with them. They feel extremely well supported by her and in turn, by us. Our coordination team also attended some of the one-to-one mentoring visits, occasionally to help supervise the children whilst the Educator works closely with Gee and other times to take the opportunity to take in the information being shared. This enables us to be able to pass on this information to other Educators who may find themselves in similar situations. Because the coordination team are also taking part in the training and gaining knowledge, our project is sustainable and has the potential to be used in the future.

If you are reading this and feel like an Innovative Solutions Project is something you may benefit from, get in touch with your coordinator and enquire about it. These projects not only cover Autism, but they can also cover culture, bilingual services, specific needs and more.



From my years in long day care I had previous experience and training for inclusion which, to some extent, served me well. Though it always felt incomplete. What we absorbed from personal development workshops was all theory and it usually flew out the window when Educators who were untrained misinterpreted or lost faith in the strategies. Lack of consistency meant we were back to square one with children who of course were dysregulated often, and Educators were burnt out. The self-care of Educators was never a focus and still isn't in long day care. It is a shame because if everyone was on the same page so much could be achieved for everyone's wellbeing.

I have been working in family day care for three years now. I have found it so rewarding and fulfilling! Though, to be honest, I feel ashamed to say that while accepting to take care of children with additional needs I felt out of my depth as this is often a solo role. Children with additional needs require extra care. So, I questioned whether I could be capable of supporting all the children in my care and meeting everyone's needs. A need was identified within our family day care services by our coordinators at Community Vision. As I, and other Educators, have children in our care who are Neurodivergent or display behaviours requiring extra support, so I was waiting with bated breath when Sam, our then newly appointed Coordinator, put the wheels in motion to apply for funding to set up inclusion workshops with the expertise of Inclusion Specialists. I can enthusiastically say that we have reaped so many benefits from these workshops. They are so much more than I ever imagined - My confidence has shot up!

The workshops have been tailored in such a way that we get theoretical and practical training. As a bonus we've had visits from our Autism Professional. These visits are not necessarily to diagnose any of the children. They are so much more! I've learned how to deal with challenging behaviours with a more empathetic and compassionate lens. Seeing Gee, our Inclusion Consultant, role model strategies have been inspiring and heartening. Even more so when I have applied it myself and positive outcomes have been achieved. Each child's needs are considered and most importantly, there is a large component that focuses on the Educator's wellbeing. Half the "battle is won" if we can role model regulating ourselves, looking after our own mental health and checking in with ourselves that our cups are full plays a big part. This honestly has been life changing for me, not only on a professional level but a personal level too. Not to mention how many families in our care are benefitting from this. A great deal of personal internal work is required but it's so worth it - I wish all Educators had this at their fingertips. I look forward to the next workshops as they are so engaging and hands on plus, it feels so good to make a difference in helping regulate someone's nervous system.

I am so grateful for Sam, Gee and Community Vision for pioneering this initiative. I believe that it should be funded to be adopted in all family day cares and any early childhood education centres.

After an incredible 38-year career in the family day care industry, former FDCA Board Director Cathy Bavage has retired. We were lucky enough to sit down with her to hear all about what the past near-four decades have been like. A big thank you to Cathy from all of us at FDCA, you will be missed...

Cathy Bavage

38 YEARS IN FAMILY DAY CARE

In 1988 I began leading the team at Wynnum Family Day Care. With around 30 Educators, I embarked on a rewarding 38-year career, with a mission to raise the profile of family day care, promote the benefits for children, the business opportunities for Educators and the overall positive impact to the lives of the Wynnum community.

Prior to starting at Wynnum, I had been working in child protection with at-risk teenagers, both in NZ and Australia, before coming to the realisation that I was unable to effect change and my impact could be more effective if targeted towards children in their early years. My work in family day care has enabled me to do this, giving safe environments to children so they can grow into resilient teenagers, setting the scene for ongoing success.

For 38 years I have been passionate about empowering women to take ownership of their businesses, creating strong relationships based on organisation, advocating for the family day care sector, inclusion, and support. I am a people person who values cultural connections and always ensure I create safe spaces

for open and honest conversations to occur. I have never shied away from feedback and strongly believe in transparent processes.

Thinking back over the years, my message has remained constant on many topics: the importance of the empowerment of women, as well as advocacy and promotion of family day care on a national level. To challenge those in a position of power and hold high expectation for inclusion and partnerships. I believe in distributed leadership, organisational change, business viability and embracing the unique nature of family day care.

What I love most about family day care is the opportunity for Educators, parents and children to have meaningful relationships. My passion for family day care is about developing strong inclusive practices with a team focus and strong relationships where open conversations can happen and have true impact.

Prior to my retirement, I managed Wynnum Family Day Care since its inception, and I am proud of the many achievements we have had throughout my career at the service.

A favourite moment from my career at Wynnum was being the first service to be awarded the Excellent Rating by ACECQA in 2013, which the service has maintained in recent assessments. The result stemmed from the entire staff body working as a team, with an outcome for everyone to be proud of.

Throughout my career I have been involved in many projects that I am extremely proud of, including a submission to the productivity commission regarding the NQF, working with Sue Irvine in developing the Distributed Leadership Model, lobbying around red tape on family day care, administrative burden, Educator payments during COVID, business viability and much more. I have been a strong advocate for family day care research during my tenure, participating in projects such as the Perspectives on Quality in Australian Family Day Care in 2016 and the Distributed Leadership Project in 2022.

I have supported the development and piloting of software such as HubWorks, WISE, Toolkit, LINK and CDI and proudly worked alongside



departments and organisations such as ECA, ACECQA, State and Federal Governments, Ministers and Departments.

Over 30 years ago I was a strong advocate for the development of a national peak body for family day care, now known as Family Day Care Australia (FDCA). In November 2021 I was appointed as a FDCA Board Director, focused on the effective governance of the company, including strategic direction, finance, compliance, and risk management.

A favourite moment from the career in the family day care sector

was the change from the term Carer to Educator, having an enormous impact on raising the professional status of Educators and recognising them as the professionals they are. This was long overdue and a much-deserved acknowledgement for the hard-working women in this career.

As well as this, an ongoing highlight throughout my career is the long-term relationships formed between children, families and Educators. These close bonds and connections will always be what I believe to be the best part of family day care. This was recently demonstrated through a video the families of one Educator made in

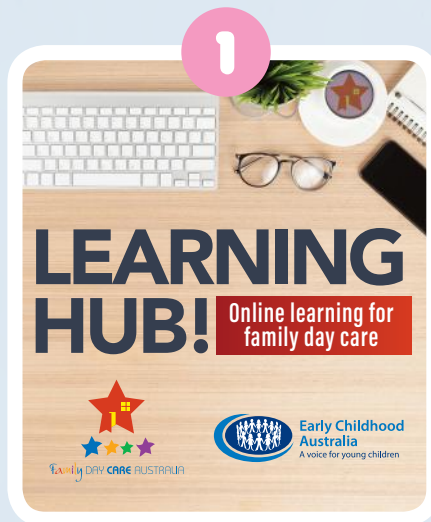
which each child who was in their care stated what they loved about the Educator. A beautiful testament to close connections and strong bonds formed in the home care environment.

After a long and rewarding career, I'm not too sure what I am most looking forward to in retirement, hopefully to slow down but how does one achieve that after focus has been on business generation, strategic planning and thinking outside the box for so long? Maybe I will sleep for a couple of months and travel.

KICK START YOUR 2024

WITH THESE GREAT FREE RESOURCES FROM FDCA! 

With the new year well underway we want to support our members in having the most successful year possible. FDCA has a great range of FREE resources available to members to help kick start achieving your professional goals in 2024. Whether it's first-class professional learning material via the FDCA Learning Hub or putting your best foot forward in promoting your business, we've got the resources to set you up for a fantastic 2024!



FDCA LEARNING HUB

Available through your Member Zone and backed by one of Australia's most respected early childhood professional development and advocacy organisations, Early Childhood Australia, the FDCA Learning Hub offers members contemporary and meaningful professional development opportunities that can be completed from the comfort of home, at a time that suits you.

With over 46 online modules available at your fingertips, the FDCA Learning Hub provides FREE, high quality professional learning to all FDCA members, with a wide range of modules catering for early childhood professionals across various roles and levels of experience.



FDCA ONLINE ENGAGEMENT SERIES

Having launched in 2023, the FDCA Online Engagement Series has quickly become a staple for FDCA members looking to engage in meaningful discussion across a range of contemporary issues.

Covering topics such as Supporting Children's Behaviour, Wellbeing in Family Day Care and Neurodiversity and Inclusion to name a few, episodes of the FDCA Online Engagement Series unpack and tap into a wealth of experience and knowledge from leading minds in the ECEC sector.

Best of all, every episode has been recorded, catalogued and is available to FDCA members via the FDCA Member Zone!



3



FDCA FAMILY DAY CARE LOCATOR

In 2023 the FDCA Family Day Care Locator generated over 22,000 care enquiries for FDCA members, demonstrating its important role supporting the growth of members' businesses. That's why we provide every FDCA member with a FREE Locator listing that allows them to promote and showcase their business.

Ensuring your Locator listing is fresh and up to date can help your listing stand out from the crowd and deliver more enquiries for your business!

You can also choose to take your Locator listing to the next level with a range of packages to upgrade your listing and push it to the top of the search results in your area.

Visit your FDCA Member Zone to manage your listing and visit www.familydaycare.com.au/promoting-you/level-up, to find out how to upgrade your listing.

4

Critical Reflection in Practice

A simple guide to support family day care educators

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD
QAS CHILDREN'S PROGRESS & PRACTICE QAS CHILDREN'S HEALTH & SAFETY QAS PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT QAS LEARNING ENVIRONMENT QAS RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN QAS COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS & COMMUNITIES QAS GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK
VISION, PURPOSE, & EDUCATIONAL GOALS • PEDAGOGY • QUALITY OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN • A MESSAGE FOR DIVERSITY • ONGOING LEARNING & REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

WHAT?
Reflect on what happened, take vital observations.

HOW?

- What was I trying to achieve today?
- How did the learning environment support the children's interests and capabilities?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What was my understanding of each child?
- What did I notice about the children's engagement and participation?
- What were the children's interests and capabilities?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?

SO WHAT?
Ask deeper questions to better understand what happened.

HOW?

- What worked well today, and why?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?
- What did I notice about the children's learning and play?

WHAT NEXT?
Consider what improvements to make and take action.

HOW?

- How can I support what I have learned today?
- What should I continue to do tomorrow?
- What should I change about my practice?
- What should I change about my practice?
- What should I change about my practice?
- What should I change about my practice?
- What should I change about my practice?
- What should I change about my practice?

What should I know the critical reflection process?

How do you demonstrate evidence of critical reflection?

5



MARKET MY BUSINESS HUB

FDCA's Market My Business Hub is an easy way for FDCA members to access professionally crafted, customised marketing resources to promote their business. With newly updated material and more options than ever available, you can order customised digital material so that you can print your material as you see fit.

Designed on the back of extensive market research and sector consultation, so you can be sure that the material you order will resonate with your audience.

Available via your FDCA Member Zone, select from a range of posters, postcards, flyers, brochures, videos and even order your own customised family day care logo!

FDCA RESOURCE AND FACTSHEET LIBRARY

Housed within your FDCA Member Zone, FDCA's Resource and Factsheet Library provides FDCA members with a raft of information to help guide you in your day-to-day operations as an early childhood professional.

Through the Library, FDCA members can access resources such as:

- FDCA's Short Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy
- FDCA's Critical Reflection Tool and Companion resource
- FDCA's recently released Safeguarding Children resource

Members can also download and explore a wide variety of factsheets that are available in the Library.



ALL THESE FANTASTIC MEMBER BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE TO FDCA MEMBERS AT NO ADDITIONAL COST AND CAN BE ACCESSED VIA YOUR FDCA MEMBER ZONE.

SCAN HERE TO ACCESS YOUR MEMBER ZONE TODAY!





BUSINESS INSIGHTS

Educators make great tenants!

At FDCA we regularly receive enquiries from members and the public who are curious about whether or not they can carry out family day care in a rented property. Did you know that FDCA's contents insurance offers cover for Educators who rent their premises? FDCA's contents policies are designed for Educators running a family day care business and can cover your family day care business-related property regardless of whether you're renting or own your property.

We understand that when starting up or moving to a new property there are lots of things that you need to consider, one of those, if you are renting, is notifying your landlord that you will be operating a family day care business from their home. Your landlord may not understand what this will mean for them and might not be aware that their current insurance may no longer cover their home.

With this in mind FDCA has a tailored landlord policy that we can offer landlords of family day care tenants. FDCA landlord's policy can cover your landlord's house as well as additional features like loss of rent.

To assist our members communicate the unique benefits of having a family day care educator operating from their home with their landlord and also to help landlords understand their insurance obligations, FDCA has also developed a brochure titled *Tenants that Care* that can be provided to landlords.



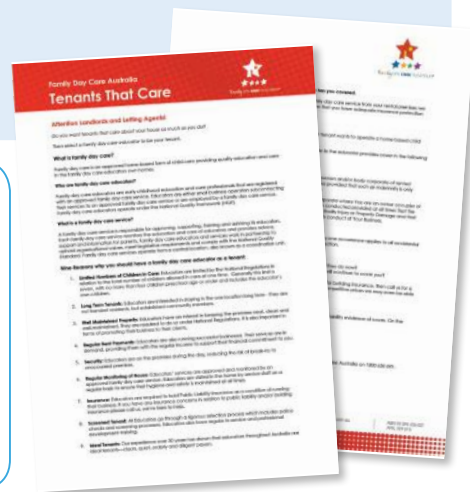
Some of those unique benefits included in the brochure are:

- 1 Limited numbers of children in care:** Educators are limited by the National Regulations in relation to the total number of children allowed in care at one time.
- 2 Long term tenants:** Educators are interested in staying in the one location long term - they are not transient residents, but established community members.
- 3 Well maintained property:** Educators have an interest in keeping the premises neat, clean and well-maintained; it

is also important in terms of promoting their business to their clients.

- 4 Regular rent payments:** An Educator running a successful business will have regular income to support their financial commitment to you.
- 5 Security:** Educators are on the premises during the day, reducing the risk of break-ins to unoccupied premises.

If you would like a copy of *Tenants that Care*, a quote to cover your contents from your rented home or if your landlord would be interested in receiving a quote for their property, they can visit fdca.com.au/insurance-services and select *Home/Contents and Landlords Insurance* within the Insurance for Family Day Care Educators section.



Dollars and Sense

with Ben Mueller

MOTOR VEHICLE EXPENSES

An often overlooked or misunderstood deduction you may be entitled to claim as an Educator is for the use of your private or business motor vehicle in your family day care business. If you use your vehicle regularly, it can be one of your largest tax deductions. Even if you use your car only occasionally, you may be entitled

to a higher claim than what you expect.

For example, even if you only travel 10 – 20 kms on average each week for your business you may be entitled to claim between \$400 to \$800 as a deduction each year. A claim for this amount of travel could be even higher if you use your vehicle exclusively for family

day care, or you have little or no other private travel, and you have maintained a logbook.

The following are answers to a number of common questions we are asked about claiming Motor Vehicle Expenses, and what records you are required to maintain in order to maximise your claim.



1. What vehicle travel am I entitled to claim?

Travel which relates directly to your family day care business activities may be claimed as a deduction. Common examples include:

- Children and school pick-up and drop offs
- Excursions
- Travel to your scheme or other location(s) for training and other tasks and events which relate to your family day care business
- Travel to garage sales and/or other locations to purchase resources and supplies



2. How do I record and report my travel and expenses incurred?

The tax office provides you with the option of either:

- Keeping a basic record of all your travel throughout the year, and/or make a reasonable estimate of your total kilometres travelled at the end of the year.
- Maintaining a detailed logbook of all travel in your vehicle, both business and private, for a continuous 12 weeks once every 5 years, or when your usage changes. You then need keep records and receipts of all of your fuel, insurances, registration, maintenance / service expenses incurred, and take note of your odometer reading at 30 June for each subsequent year you use the vehicle.



3. Which method will give me the highest claim?

Option A is the simplest method the ATO allows for calculating expenses as you only need to maintain details of how you calculated your total kilometres travelled. You do not need to maintain any expense records.

Option A is ideal, and may result in a higher claim, if the kilometres you travel for business are less than 5,000kms. Your claim is calculated at 85c per kilometre (for the 2024 tax year) up to a maximum claim of 5,000kms or \$4,250.

Option B requires more work and record keeping, but as it calculates your claim based upon your actual expenses, it can result in a higher claim depending upon the age of your vehicle, and the number of kilometres you travel for business purposes.

There is no requirement for you to keep a logbook, but if you maintain a logbook and record your expenses, you have the choice of calculating your claim using either option A or option B, and claim whichever method gives you the highest deduction. Without a logbook you are limited to the maximum claim of 5,000 kms only.

30 June 2024 is approaching fast, and in order for your logbook to be compliant it must be maintained for a full 12 weeks / 3 months before this date. If you are considering using a logbook, now is the ideal time start to ensure you maximise your claim in your 2024 tax return. Any logbook you keep now will also apply to any replacement vehicle you may purchase in the future as long as your usage of the two vehicles remains the same.



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority®



Chris Mason

National Quality Framework SNAPSHOT

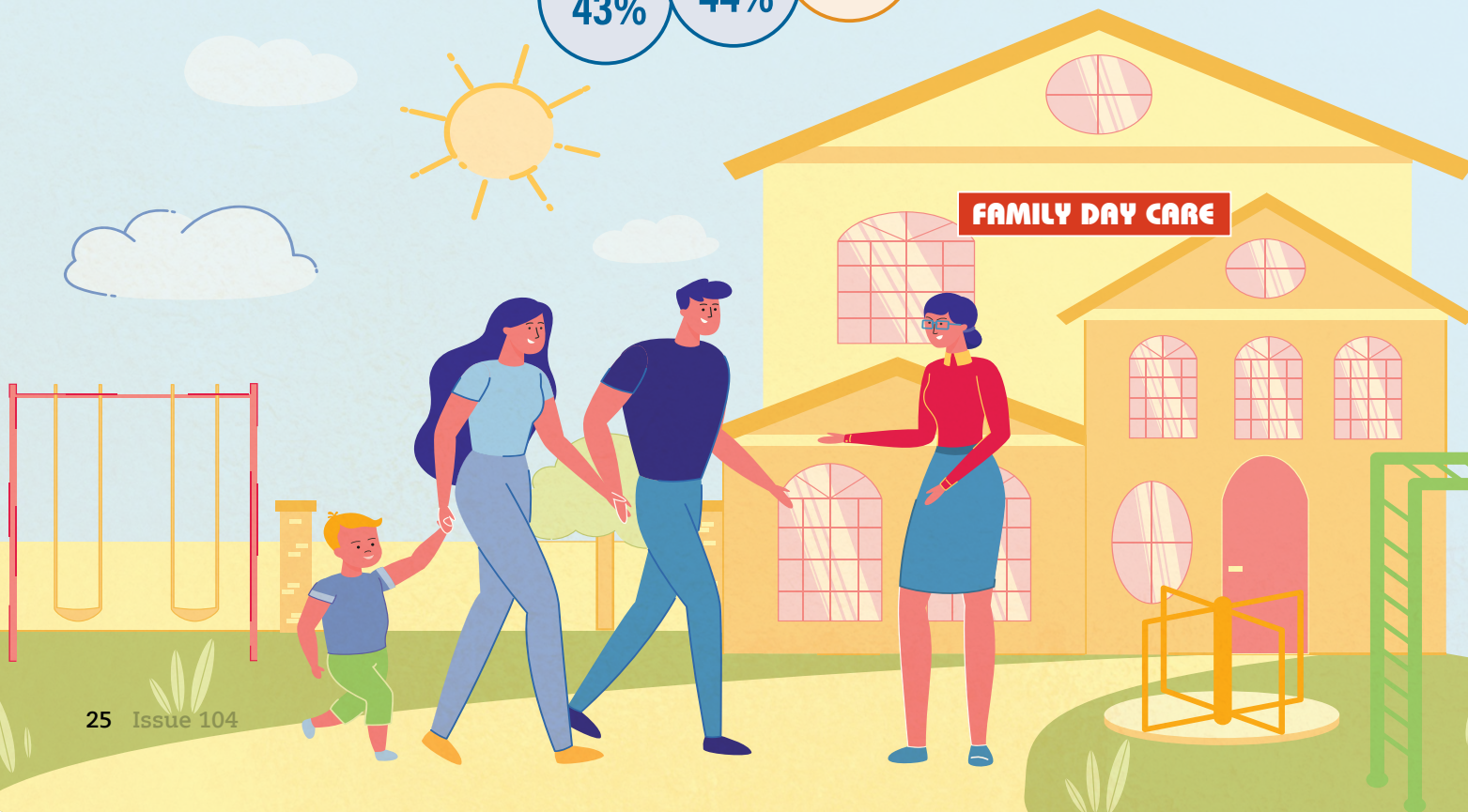
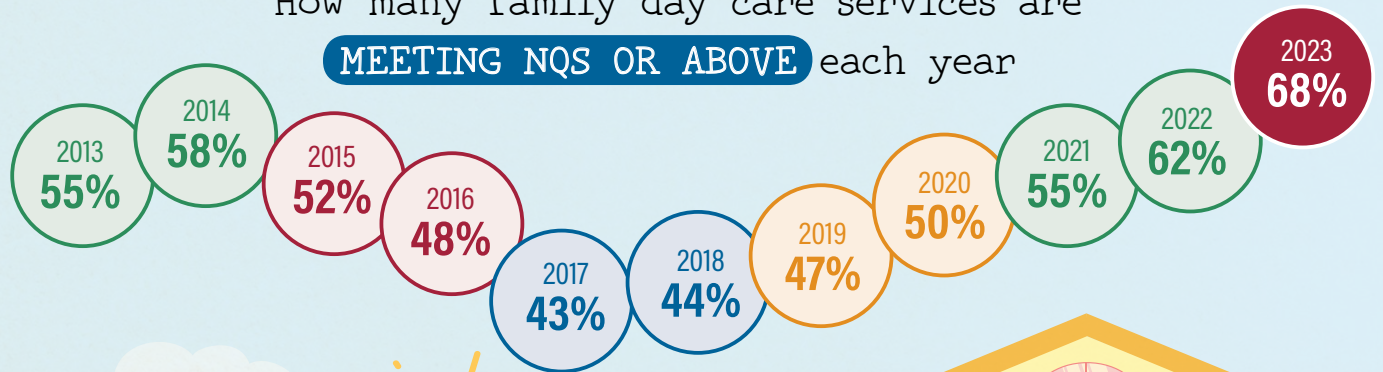
In November, ACECQA released its latest National Quality Framework (NQF) [Snapshot](#). Chris Mason, Senior Manager of Workforce, Engagement and Research at ACECQA provides an overview of the family day care (FDC) sector. The figures below are taken from the [NQF Online Snapshot](#).

As at 1 October 2023, there are 437 family day care services approved to operate under the NQF. This is the lowest figure since the introduction of the NQF in 2012

and is markedly lower than the peak of 1,100 family day care services in mid-2016.

A total of 377 family day care services have a published quality rating, with 68% rated as Meeting National Quality Standard (NQS) or above. This represents an increase of six percentage points compared to a year ago, 13 percentage points compared to two years ago, and 28 percentage points compared to three years ago. More family day care services than ever before are now rated Meeting NQS or above.

How many family day care services are
MEETING NQS OR ABOVE each year





More family day care services than ever before are also now rated Meeting NQS or above for each of the seven quality areas that comprise the NQS. Looking across those seven areas, it is Quality Area 1 (Educational

Program and Practice) that family day care services find most challenging to meet, with 27% of services rated Working Towards NQS.

Family Day Care

	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS
QA1	27%	70%	3%
QA7	22%	67%	12%
QA2	21%	75%	5%
QA3	16%	79%	5%
QA6	6%	81%	13%
QA4	5%	86%	8%
QA5	4%	86%	10%

*QA1 - Educational program and practice; QA2 - Children's health and safety; QA3 - Physical environment; QA4 - Staffing arrangements; QA5 - Relationships with children; QA6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities; QA7 - Governance and leadership.

Of the nine elements of quality associated with educational program and practice, almost a quarter of family day care services do not meet the following two:

- Critical reflection (1.3.2)
- Assessment and planning cycle (1.3.1)

Given that all elements of quality must be met for a service to achieve an overall rating of Meeting NQS or above, these two elements are significantly contributing to the overall number of family day care services rated Working Towards NQS.

Our website includes a range of resources relevant to [Quality Area 1](#), as well as resources to assist in [Meeting the National Quality Standard](#) in general, and specific guidance and support relating to [educational leadership](#).

Finally, if you haven't already, please do subscribe to our [newsletter](#) to stay up-to-date with key developments, such as the revised [approved learning frameworks](#) and the [national workforce strategy](#), including the [online dashboard](#) published in July and the inaugural biennial national workforce forum held at the end of November.



Summertime Slumbers and Safe Sleep Practices

With summer approaching, Red Nose is reminding everyone of the importance of keeping little ones cool and providing safe sleeping environments using the Red Nose Six Safe Sleep Recommendations.

Overheating is a known risk for sudden infant death (SIDS), so caretakers must ensure children are dressed for comfort and are not too hot while sleeping. This includes making sure that heads remain uncovered for sleep; removing hoodies, beanies and sunhats. Lightweight bedding like cotton or bamboo is the preferred choice, or, if children are using sleeping bags, check that it has an appropriately low TOG rating. To physically monitor a child's temperature, you can feel their back or tummy, which should feel warm. It is normal if their hands and feet feel cool. If the child displays signs of heat stress, such as flushed and clammy skin, be sure to remove some bedding or clothing and offer fluids.

Hydration is key in hotter weather. If babies in your care are being breastfed, talk to the parents about potentially supplying extra feeds. You can help formula-fed babies by offering additional feeds. Older children should be encouraged to drink water and hydrating fruits like watermelon and oranges can be offered.

Whilst water is fantastic for playing with for sensory or educational

activities, safety around water remains critical. Even a shallow amount of water poses a drowning risk for toddlers and infants. Always ensure that young children are supervised by an adult when they are near water.

Cars or vehicles can become sweltering environments. Care providers must be mindful of this when transporting children. It's imperative for caregivers who transport children in vehicles to take regular breaks and to remove babies from their restraints when arriving at their destination, even if they are sleeping.

Prams are not designed for sleep. Avoid leaving babies asleep in a pram for extended periods. If your baby falls asleep in the pram - or in a vehicle - do not leave them there. Transfer them to a safe sleeping environment like a cot.

It is essential to keep the sun off babies but covering the pram with a dry blanket or wrap is not safe, Using a damp muslin cloth is a safer option and the wrap must be checked every 20 minutes and re-wet as needed to prevent it from drying out.

Other options to reduce the risk of overheating include timing outings for earlier or later in the day when temperatures and UV exposure are lower, and sticking to shaded areas

where the baby is out of the direct sun. This helps to ensure there is good airflow to keep baby cool.

All the above are essential throughout the year, but do take on added significance in the summer heat. As well as these practices, Red Nose recommend all care givers follow their evidence based Six Safe Sleep guidelines, which are listed below, and detailed in full at rednose.org.au.

- 1 Always place baby on their back to sleep
- 2 Keep baby's face and head uncovered
- 3 Keep baby smoke free, before and after birth
- 4 Safe sleeping environment, night and day
- 5 Sleep baby in their own safe sleep space in the parent's or caregiver's room for the first 6 months
- 6 Breastfeed baby

The Red Nose [Safe Sleep Advice for Parents and Carers](#) is available between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday (AEST). Call 1300 99 8 698

Educators and care providers can also access more resources at rednose.org.au or contact the Red Nose Education team at education@rednose.org.au for more information on training opportunities.



Sudoku

Enter the Sudoku and win a dēna Rainbow set.

A larger sized dēna Rainbow in colour Neon – includes 12 pieces, making the possibilities endless. Children can use these as a teether, for stacking, as a puzzle, free play, sensory stimulation, as a bath toy or for cooking with. Suitable for babies aged 0+ months and valued at \$98.95. Competition closes 31 March 2024.

								9
6				4	3	8		
	3		1	7		4	6	
		8		5		1	3	
	1	9		8		2	7	
7	5		2			8		
5	2		7	1			9	
	7	1	6					2
3								

congratulations
to the winners from issue 103
Find the Red Star House: Karleigh Soppa, QLD
Sudoku: Jessica Laffey, QLD
Word Teaser: Cheryl Ritcher, SA

Red Star House

Enter the Red Star House competition and you can win a Jamanga Tower Set.



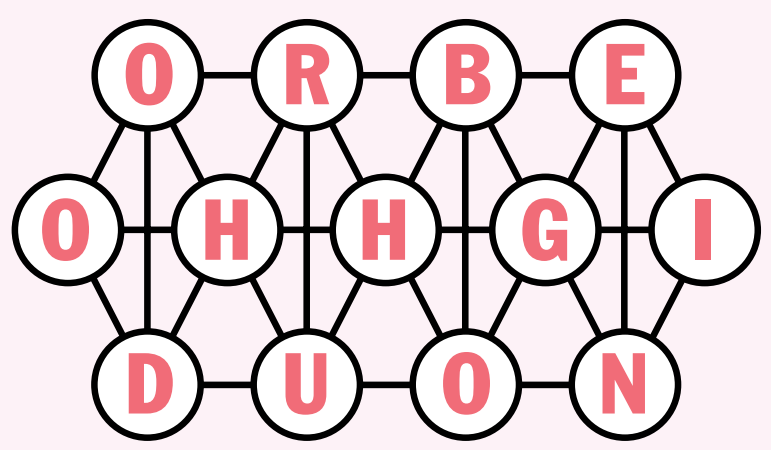
Jamanga is a massive, coloured tower game with a giant dice. A game of skill and tactic, this game is suitable for ages 3+ and encourages children to learn, develop and grow whilst having fun. This set is valued at \$169.95.

Competition closes 31 March 2024.



Chain Letters

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 March 2024.



Grab a Cuppa

WITH FDCA

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

Taysha Worthy
Intereach Family Day Care

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

This is my first year in family daycare, I opened in January 2023. I am located in the Western Riverina, on the NSW/VIC border.

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

I have worked in the early childhood sector for 3 years, working in a long day care and community run preschools. I currently hold my Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, and I am working towards my Diploma.

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

The relationships you build with the children and their families. Working with such small groups provides opportunities to create such a beautiful bond with the children and their families, they become like an extension of your own family.

4. What has your family day care been up to lately?

We have recently been upgrading our outdoor space. We’ve just built a big, new sandpit which also includes our mud kitchen. We’re also in the process of expanding our vegetable garden. We’ve been spending a lot of time in the garden, the children enjoy searching for strawberries and checking on the progress of our vegetables. We are currently adding another three large garden beds, which the children have been helping to fill.

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

Our outdoor space. We are very fortunate to have a large backyard and we do try to spend most of our time outdoors.



6. What do you like to do when you’re not working?

I enjoy spending time in the garden and cooking.

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

Don’t give up! The first few weeks/months can be challenging and



overwhelming. Make sure you take any support offered and factor in some down time.

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

I feel that there has been lots of changes throughout this year, with changes to the EYLF & NQF, as well as changes around safe sleep and rest.

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

Make time for yourself and your own family.

10. What has been the highlight of your career so far?

Watching the children grow and develop their sense of identity and belonging and watching them form strong friendships. I am also very proud to be the only family day care service in our town and to be providing a much-needed service for our community.





GET TO KNOW

Fanny Wong
CASS Family Day Care

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

CASS Family Day Care (CFDC) is a community-based scheme operated by the non-profit organisation “CASS” for over 41 years, since 1983. Our service is located in Campsie, South West Sydney. CFDC is renowned for its unique characteristic of providing quality services to multicultural communities. Currently, we have Educators in 30 suburbs across Sydney.

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

I am the Team Leader at CASS Family Day Care with over 18 years of experience in early childhood. My familiarity with family day care services stems from my children benefiting from them. This marked my initial exploration into Australia’s early education and care system. My interest grew, leading me to study the industry. After completing the Diploma in Early

Childhood Education and Care in 2005, I began my career at CASS

Family Day Care. For my ongoing professional development and to better support Educators, I completed my Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and Care in 2016.

As a migrant with a similar journey to the majority of our Educators, who come from non-English backgrounds, I understand their needs, and I find great satisfaction in assisting Educators in setting up their own family day care services in Australia. I take pride in supporting families and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds within family day care services.

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

Family day care provides children with a close and personal environment, similar to a home setting, which is conducive to their overall growth.

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

After developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we continue to focus on supporting Educators to create an inclusive environment by integrating Aboriginal culture. We’ve adopted regular practices like acknowledging traditional custodians and incorporating an Acknowledgment of Country into the daily program. Recognising diverse Educator backgrounds, we are dedicated to enhance their understanding through research, local collaboration, the Inclusion Agency from KU, and engagement with the Canterbury/Bankstown Council. Educators actively participate in cultural activities, and we plan to invite an Aboriginal elder for knowledge sharing. The RAP is shared with Educators for reflections and future planning, aligning with our commitment to appreciating Indigenous Australian culture.

5. What would you say your service is known for?

Our organisation, “CASS”, is our brand name, and is commonly known in the community, offers diverse community services in Sydney. Our service is recognised for experienced leadership, a strong management structure, and a stable team. With a professional bilingual team, we provide reliable support



to Educators and families, actively participating in community events to promote family day care across various communities.

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

Outside of work, our team enjoys engaging in team-building activities for Educators and Coordinators, fostering better understanding and creating a lively atmosphere. We organise events like Picnic Day, excursions, end of year parties, dance performances, singing, and birthday celebrations, providing opportunities to connect, have fun, and strengthen team bonds.

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

To prioritise building strong relationships with both the children and their families. Foster open communication, actively engage with families, and create a welcoming environment. Tailor your approach to each child's

unique needs, interests, and cultural background. Continuous professional development is crucial, so stay updated on the regulation requirements and early childhood education practices. Embrace flexibility, creativity, and patience, as each day in family day care brings new opportunities for learning and growth.

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

For a new Coordinator or Educational Leader, prioritise effective communication and collaboration. Build strong relationships, foster inclusivity, encourage continuous professional development, stay attuned to diverse needs, embrace flexibility, and lead by example with passion.

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

The key advice I've received as a family day care team leader is to

prioritise continuous professional development, think creatively, be confident, and maintain a positive mindset. This guidance emphasises the importance of ongoing learning, innovation, and finding a balance between hard work and enjoying what I do.

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

We are dedicated to involving families, Educators, and staff in our community. We organise and support Educators in hosting various events such as end-of-year parties, New Year celebrations, Christmas events, traditional festivals, and NAIDOC Week. Families are invited to join us in creating a lively and connected community. We value everyone's voices and encourage everyone to share ideas and feelings. We hope that everyone feels a sense of belonging as part of the CASS big family.

regular



SCHOLASTIC

Storytime

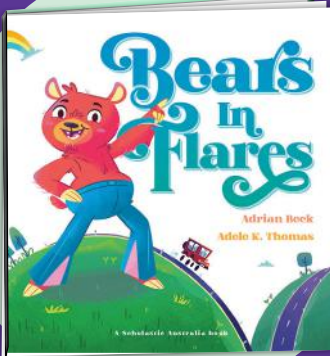
BUSH TURKEY

"Bush Turkey" presents a beautifully illustrated story perfect for children aged 2 and older, as some words may be a bit challenging for the little ones. The hilarious story follows a turkey's mission to build a large and extravagant house complete with a pool. As everyone knows, turkeys are extremely messy, and this story doesn't fail to reference that. It's a lovely story that combines laughter with the realities of being a turkey.



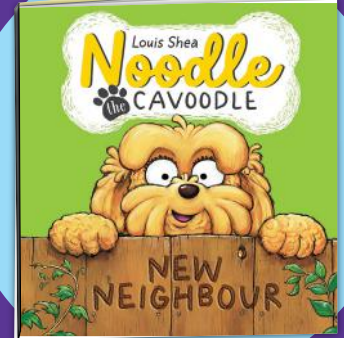
BEARS IN FLARES

"Bears in Flares" is a delightful and creative story, about a dad who embarks on a long drive with his two very bored children. A long tedious drive, turns into a wonderful adventure, when Dad captures his children's attention by pointing out wacky and imaginative scenes outside the window. The rhyming narrative and colourful illustrations of animals in amusing costumes, made this book a hit amongst the children; they truly loved it!



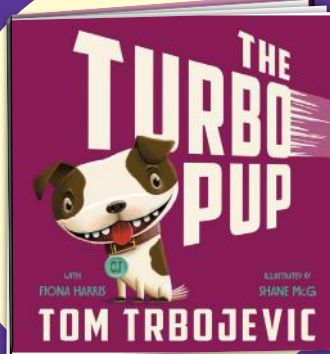
NOODLE THE CAVOODLE

"Noodle the Cavoodle - New Neighbour" proved to be a captivating and enjoyable read for the children. Their enthusiasm about the arrival of a new neighbour and Noodle's attempt to extend kindness by baking a cake, sparked engaging discussions about the importance of welcoming others. The shared conversation led one little buddy to excitedly share her own experiences with new neighbourhood friends. It's wonderful to see stories fostering such positive and meaningful conversations.



THE TURBO PUP

"The Turbo Pup" offers a vibrant and exciting reading experience for children. The suspenseful narrative captivated the children, emphasising the valuable lesson that one doesn't have to be big and strong to achieve remarkable things; even the smallest individuals, like Turbo the Pup, can accomplish great things. The story also conveyed a crucial life lesson about the significance of saying "sorry." It's wonderful to see stories conveying both excitement and meaningful messages.



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:

I'm Jackie Nugara a proud mum of three and a new grandma to Levi and Alora.

I have been running Jackie's Family Daycare in Deception Bay, QLD for 10 years, registered with Uniting Family Day Care Bramble Bay.



**ON
SALE
NOW**



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

NEW RELEASES

ECA EARLY YEARS DAILY & WEEKLY PLANNERS

Get ready for 2024 with ECA's planners!

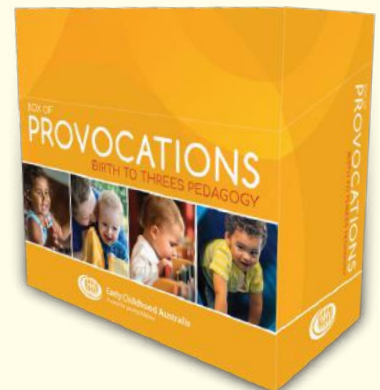


ECA's Early Years Planners are designed for educators by educators - with a practical layout with calendars, educator resources, ample writing space to record reflections, notes, meetings, weekly focus notes, routines and timetables, interactions, assessments, sketch pages, learning experiences and more. Join the community of educators who've chosen the ECA Early Years Planner as their trusted companion – order your planners today!



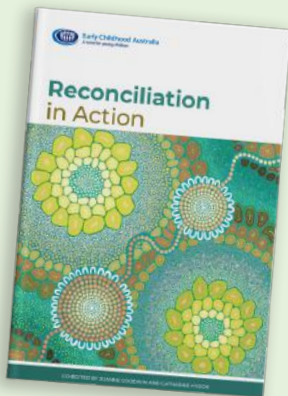
ECA BOX OF PROVOCATIONS: BIRTH TO THREES PEDAGOGY

ECA's newest box of provocations is a powerful tool to spark profound reflection, action, and evolution for educators working with young children. These cards, developed with Anne Stonehouse, foster critical conversations, debates, and deeper thinking in your educational setting. Explore themes like behaviour, curriculum opportunities, enriching environments, and more, inviting a reexamination of fundamental beliefs and principles. Order your box of provocations today.



ECA RECONCILIATION IN ACTION

Take the next step in your reconciliation journey with this invaluable resource. Reconciliation in Action is a thoughtfully curated collection of stories that offer a multifaceted view of reconciliation, both in the present and as an aspiration for the future. The practice stories, provocations, and reflections amplify voices, aiming to improve early childhood education and care systems. Order today and explore the evolving picture of reconciliation in Australia and its integration into early childhood settings.



Visit the **ECA Shop** or call **1800 256 900** to order today.
www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/jigsaw

10-MONTH
PAYMENT PLAN
AVAILABLE

FDCA 2025

MELB2025

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

PULLMAN HOTEL • MELBOURNE - ALBERT PARK • 23-25 OCTOBER 2025

INTERNATIONAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Nathan Wallis



We are very excited to reveal that internationally acclaimed New Zealand neuroscience educator Nathan Wallis has been confirmed as our first 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.



SECURE YOUR TICKET AT

www.familydaycare.com.au/2025conference