

BEDROCK



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role in
preventing
violence** *P18*

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Early Childhood Educator

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Addressing callous traits in kids 10

Uncaring traits in children
can be difficult to manage
– especially when teachers
are expected to address the
problem on top of performing
their core duties.

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Exciting times ahead

These are exciting times for early childhood teachers. The IEUA's Equal Remuneration Orders (ERO) and concurrent work values cases are due to resume in June, with a new approach offering more hope that teachers, especially in NSW/ACT, will finally be paid what they deserve.

Initially the IEUA NSW/ACT approached the Fair Work Commission to argue that rates of pay are too low for early childhood teachers because they are mostly women, but the commission suggested that the rates of pay in the *Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2010* may be set too low for the value of the work being performed. So the Union has made an application to increase these rates and to run this case concurrently with the equal pay case.

This provides the IEUA NSW/ACT with another opportunity to argue that early childhood teachers' pay should be fairer and more relevant, regardless of the education sector they are employed in. We hope the case, set down to be heard between June and August, will have a positive and timely outcome.

Politicians of course, play a crucial role in supporting our profession, and on page six we hear from both major parties about what they have lined up for our sector federally. Hear from your own colleagues on the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Early Childhood Council dealing with the challenges of limited state government funding (p20).

Find professional learning on page 10 about dealing with children with callous traits and on page 12 about how to get involved with research at your service.

Explore the development of the brain in early childhood with Professor Stuart Shanker (p14) and – very topical right now – look at how you can help reduce gender based violence (p18).

We hope you enjoy this edition of *Bedrock* and as always welcome your feedback: bedrock@ieu.asn.au

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UPFRONT



Educators are multi-taskers

The investigation by Charles Sturt University, *Exemplary Early Childhood Educators at Work*, has analysed 3000 hours of data from 260 participants. Interim findings show participants recorded a high level of job satisfaction across their day, with more stress at the beginning and end of the day. Educators indicated being with children is how they spend most of their day, followed by routine care/transition and intentional teaching. Least amount of time was spent on professional learning. Fifty per cent of participants said they worked on a secondary activity for every primary activity and switching activities was frequent, with most activities only lasting six minutes. Room leaders were slightly more likely to record being rushed or stressed. This study continues into 2019/20.



Preschool promotion

The NSW Government has launched a new campaign highlighting the importance of early education. The campaign highlights the benefits of preschool education to parents. Two IEUA NSW/ACT members Kathy Hatcher from KU Chatswood and Jane Moran from KU Grevillea participate in the video which is part of the campaign <https://bit.ly/2DXOzmr>.

Call for state government support

A number of peak bodies, including the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch, Goodstart Early Learning, Uniting and others have joined forces in sending a letter to NSW State Premier Gladys Berejiklian asking for a firm commitment to affordable high quality early learning, in the face of overwhelming evidence of its benefits.

The letter requests all NSW children have access to two days a week high quality learning for two years before school; that vulnerable and disadvantaged children receive support allowing them to fully participate in early learning and; that a 10-year workforce strategy is developed to better remunerate and recognise early childhood professionals.



Learn with TLN in 2019

In 2019 IEUA members in NSW and the ACT can continue to access free online training through the Teacher Learning Network (TLN). All courses are registered with NESA and can be used for accreditation purposes. Send an email to pd@ieu.asn.au or verena@ieu.asn.au for more information. Some examples of online courses include: Building Warm Relationships with Preschool Families; Including Literacy throughout the Preschool; Creating Inviting Play Spaces in Preschools; Human Leadership in Early Childhood – Building the Skills of your People; Human Leadership in Early Childhood – Building the Skills of your People and Storytelling in Preschools.



Attacks on conditions show why we need to Change the Rules

Recent attacks on working conditions in the Queensland early childhood education sector have reinforced members' determination to Change the Rules.

The most serious of these attacks is an application by Kuranda Community Kindergarten near Cairns which has applied to the Fair Work Commission (FWC) to terminate the current collective agreement.

This is the first time an employer in our sector has sought to use Australia's current, unfair industrial laws against employees.

If successful, this would force the kindergarten's employees to rely on the award for their minimum conditions - stripping many of their current protections, including the limit on the hours of work for teachers.

It would also mean a pay cut for the kindergarten's teacher/director of more than \$20,000 per annum.

IEUA-QNT is now assisting members from the Kuranda Community Kindergarten to fight this application in the Fair Work Commission – the only recourse they have under the current laws.

Other recent attacks on early childhood education employees' working conditions have included a Brisbane kindergarten which attempted to deny early childhood assistants their right to be paid for 52 weeks of the year – an entitlement that has existed since 1990 – during recent collective bargaining negotiations.

In this case, members' collective action prevented the employer from removing this entitlement for assistants; however, such shameful employer actions are allowable under the current laws.

This is a fact that employers know, and are increasingly seeking to use, in a bid to reduce employee working conditions.

Australia's industrial laws are clearly broken: the balance of power has tipped heavily in favour of employers and it is time to return a fair share of power to employees.

Members are taking action through the union-wide Change the Rules campaign ahead of the next Federal election.

To be part of protecting our working conditions by ensuring we change the rules, go to:

<https://changetherules.org.au/>



Members celebrate 100 years strong

In 2019, IEUA-QNT members celebrate 100 years of providing security, protection and better working conditions for education professionals in the Queensland and Northern Territory non government sector.

As we celebrate our centenary as a strong collective, we acknowledge the hard-fought battles and campaigns of previous generations of IEUA-QNT members.

Thanks to the sacrifice and determination of these members, we have won many significant working rights over the last 100 years including:

- 1920s-1970s: Wage rates consistent with public sector
- 1970s: Equal pay for women in Catholic primary schools
- 1990s: Paid maternity leave and carers' leave
- 2000s: Superannuation co-contribution, and
- 2010s: Domestic violence leave and natural disaster leave.

In doing so we have made, and continue to make, a difference and change the lives of our members for the better each and every day.

IEUA-QNT members will be celebrating our achievements of the last 100 years throughout 2019. To stay up to date with our centenary celebrations go to: www.qieu.asn.au/100years

FEDERAL ELECTION

ANALYSIS

In light of the forthcoming federal election, *Bedrock* asked Labor and the Liberal/National Party to answer a number of questions about early childhood education.

Questions from IEUA to the Federal Government

Your government has only committed to fund ACEQA until 30 June 2020? Why? What do you envisage happening after this date? Will the states then revert to individual 'state quality authorities'? How will we ensure consistency in the National Quality Authority? What will be in place to prevent individual states from seeking to undermine the current National Standards?

Your government has indicated you will not renew the National Partnership Agreement, which

provides access to 600 hours of preschool education led by a qualified teacher. This was due to expire on 30 June 2019. Are you aware of the benefits of early childhood education and care (ECEC) and that it has been shown to be an investment that returns significantly more than is invested? How are you going to guarantee access to early childhood education and care to all children (particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds) from 2019 onwards?

What guarantee do you have that the states and territories can and will continue to provide funding to ensure children have access to ECEC in the year before school? Given that research shows lifelong benefits of ECEC and that 90% of the brain develops before age 5, if the number of children accessing ECEC decreases as a result of the loss of this funding, what does this say about your commitment to giving children a positive start to learning?





Response from Education Minister Dan Tehan's office:

States and territories have always been responsible for regulating the operation of child care services. The Australian Government has provided \$141.5 million since 2010 to state and territory governments to support the transition of the previously fragmented regulatory systems into a single nationally consistent National Quality Framework (NQF). The NQF has been in place since 2012 and has done a good job in driving continuous improvement in service delivery quality.

The Australian Government is providing around \$870 million to support states and territories in delivering universal access to preschool throughout 2018 and 2019. Universal access aims to ensure that every child participates in a quality preschool program for 15 hours a week, or 600 hours a year, in the year before they start school. The Government understands preschool helps prepare children for school and is particularly beneficial for disadvantaged children. This funding will benefit around 340,000 children each year.

The Morrison Government's priority is working with the states and territories on lifting preschool participation rates, especially for disadvantaged and Indigenous children. The most current national data shows 30 per cent of children are not attending for the 15 hours on offer. This increases to 35 per cent for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and up to 41 per cent for

Indigenous children. We want to ensure that our children enrolled in preschool actually attend preschool.

The Federal Government does not own or run child care centres and does not set minimum wage rates in the industry, just as it doesn't set minimum wage rates for any industry in the private sector. The Fair Work Commission is the authority created by the Labor Party when last in Government to deal with these issues. This matter is currently before the Commission for consideration.



IEUA questions to Labor and responses from Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education and Development Amanda Rishworth's office.

Will Labor commit to ongoing funding for ACEQA to ensure the National Quality Standards are not undermined in any way?

Labor was appalled that the Government's 2018-19 Budget has abolished the National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education.

The quality agenda established by Labor in 2009 is a success story. Through it, 57% of services have improved their quality rating when reassessed – and 75% of services are now meeting or exceeding the National Quality Standard.

The Liberal Government has now decided to shift the cost of implementing and regulating the quality framework wholly onto the states and territories. Jobs and access to quality early learning services are now at risk, as the funding for inspections and audits of services is now gone.

In October, Labor announced it will restore this funding if it wins government at the next election.

Why has Labor committed to \$1.75 billion to give three and four year old children access to preschool or kindergarten programs? Attendance by Australian three year olds at early childhood education is low compared to the OECD average. How will Labor's policy ensure increased attendance of three year old children? What will Labor do to ensure that children from disadvantaged and vulnerable families are able to access early childhood education? Will Labor ensure that some of this is targeted funding for vulnerable three and four year old children? Does Labor have any priorities in regard to which type of services are allocated Universal Access funding?

Labor believes investment in early education is one of the smartest investments we can make. It's good for kids – it sets them up for a better start at school and has been proven to translate to better results in the classroom. We've made good progress with four year old preschool, but when the benefits of early education are so clear, we need to look to the future.

Current enrolment for four year old children is sitting at around 93%. Only 57% of three year old children are currently in the early education and care system, which is well below the OECD average of almost 80% – we need to get this number up to 90%.

Labor will invest \$1.75 billion in the new National Preschools and Kindy program. Labor will work in partnership with the states and territories to deliver preschool and kindergarten to three year old children. It won't be a blank cheque. We will expect the states and territories to match our commitment and will expect them to meet enrolment and attendance targets, particularly for Indigenous and vulnerable children. If they don't, they will be penalised funding. In particular, we know the children who will benefit the most from early education are the children who won't be accessing it – this is about changing that trend.

Labor will demand that Commonwealth funding directly supports the delivery of this program or is used to ensure fees are kept as low as possible. We will not accept cost being a barrier to participation in the program.



Will Labor commit to ensuring Universal Access funding is ongoing, rather than the current short term arrangements to give certainty to ECEC services?

In government, Labor will look at providing more certainty to Australia's preschools and kindies. Our \$1.75 billion National Preschools and Kindy Program includes a commitment to ongoing funding for the existing four year olds program. Under the Liberals, preschools and kindies don't have any funding commitment from the federal government after the 2019 school year.

The constant uncertainty over preschool funding under the current government is jeopardising the gains made in the last decade since Labor introduced Universal Access to preschools:

- the increase in enrolment of four year old children to 93%, and the increase in attendance for 600 hours up from 12% to 91%
- the implementation of the National Quality Standard, including the Quality Framework and minimum educator qualifications and staff ratios, and
- the Early Years Learning Framework, which staff and providers all value.

It has been almost a decade since the first National Partnership Agreement was signed, and the

first National Early Childhood Development Strategy was endorsed. It is well and truly time to have these conversations again.

Given the difficulties of bargaining in the sector due to the large number of small employers, what will your government do to ensure that teachers and other staff receive fair and reasonable wages and conditions in recognition of the importance of the work that they perform – not only for children and parents but in preparing children for entering the school sector?

Labor recognises that quality early education and care can only be provided by a skilled, professional and well paid workforce.

Labor has supported the industrial action taken by early educators this year and I have twice met with a delegation of early educators in Parliament to discuss the strike and the need for fair pay.

Labor does not think it is right that those who educate our youngest minds earn less than half the average national wage.

As skilled professionals, it is right that those educators who we trust to shape our youngest citizens are paid a wage which is in line with the quality we expect from them.

That's why Labor will, if elected, strengthen the ability of the Fair Work

Commission to order pay increases for workers in female dominated industries, including early childhood. Labor will give the Commission greater capacity and funding to conduct Pay Equity Reviews and order pay increases in undervalued feminised industries. Low paid workers should not have to rely on fighting complex, expensive legal cases to secure a decent wage rise.

If the Morrison Government was serious about a fair wage for our early childhood educators they would be sitting down and talking with them about a pathway forward. Instead the government are not giving our early childhood educators and their representatives the respect they deserve.

This government has form when it comes to neglecting issues facing our early education workforce. Their hit list includes:

- allowing the Early Years Workforce Strategy introduced by Labor in 2012 to expire in 2016,
- abolishing the Long Day Care Professional Development Program, and
- ending funding for the Professional Support Coordinators.

Our early educators and the important work they do deserve to be properly valued.

Project Sunshine on the rise



“Project Sunshine is about helping the children develop a deeper sense of belonging as we explore the interdependence between land, people, animals and plants.”

Durrah Cook, Educational Leader at WillowBee Early Learning Centre 1, explains how winning an environment grant has impacted their centre.

Winning the IEU grant for our Project Sunshine was such a privilege. Our centre is perched on top of an industrial/commercial building and we desperately wanted to inject some sustainable movement in our centre. We have some sustainable initiatives in our centre, such as a worm farm and collecting rain water. However, this was not enough, and we could do more for the environment.

We decided to take advantage of the abundance of sunshine in our yard to dry our laundry. Being in a long day care centre, our washing machine is always going – there are sheets, face washers and tea towels to wash and dry every day. We had always relied on the dryer, and what a shame that was, especially with lots of space in the yard for hanging our washing. We bought a clothes horse and the children assisted in hanging the washers and tea towels. The children showed a sense of pride as they assisted their educators in drying their little washers.

Project Sunshine is also about helping the children develop a deeper sense of belonging as we explore the interdependence between land, people, animals and plants. We invited Uncle Jimmy from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council and learned about the Aboriginal culture of this land as well as native plants and their significance. Uncle Jimmy joined us on an excursion to Warrane Reserve in Willoughby NSW, with families also invited to come along. He pointed out all the native plants

as well as suggesting which could be planted in our yards and used as bush medicine.

Families were eager to assist us in our sustainability journey and parents gave positive feedback as well as sharing their experiences and expertise on gardening and plant identification, management and design.

Project Sunshine had a few setbacks. Initially we planned to add a vertical garden but there was no adequate water source. It was instead decided that free standing planter boxes with herbs and vegetables would be more suitable. We wanted to have a fixed clothes line and this required us to wait for it to be custom built and installed. We did not want this to delay us any more than necessary so as well as using a clothes horse in the interim, we took the opportunity to brainstorm new ways Project Sunshine could run more smoothly in the future. During this time a parent with landscaping experience agreed to assist us throughout 2019.

Since hearing about the grant and through the subsequent planning process we have learned a great deal about being sustainable. Project Sunshine is just a tip of the iceberg. Thank you to the IEUA and Teachers Mutual Bank for funding our project. The future looks bright with Project Sunshine and our dedicated families, staff and children.

ADDRESSING CALLOUS TRAITS IN KIDS

Uncaring, callous or unemotional traits in children can be difficult to manage – especially when Early Childhood Education (ECE) staff are expected to address the problem on top of performing their core duties. But studies show that, while ECE staff can play a significant role in addressing these behaviours, often it's up to the parents to take the steps to make real changes in how they interact with their children. Journalist Sara El Sayed explores the issue.

Understanding the typical signs and best practice methods – as conducted by child psychologists – can help ECE staff in directing children and their families to the right places, and subsequently allow ECE staff to continue to do what they do best: educating young people.

Callous and unemotional traits: what are the signs?

Callous and unemotional traits are evident when children show a lack of empathy, uncaring attitudes, and 'shallow' emotions.

Associate Professor Eva Kimonis from the School of Psychology at UNSW Science explained the nature of such behaviours.

"Children with these traits may exhibit uncaring attitudes towards others, as well as a lack of care about how well they perform in school or in other types of important structured activities," Kimonis said.

"They may also struggle to recognise distressed emotions in others, and have difficulty paying attention to cues of fear and sadness in others.

"Children who have shallow experiences of emotions would find it easy to turn emotions on or off to get things that they want, or might use emotions in ways that are more for their benefit.

"If they do get upset it tends to be a shallow experience of that negative emotion, so they recover quickly."

Another sign of callous and unemotional traits is a child who has a fearless temperament.

"For example, in new social situations, they might not be afraid to do things that other children would be anxious about, like climbing trees, approaching a new person, or other typical experiences that children might find frightening."

Who is responsible?

When and how children develop these traits is still an area of ongoing research.

"There's the idea that it comes from more of a temperamental feature of the child, and emerges very early in life.

"We can typically start to measure these problems in children at roughly three years of age.

"However, there is also research showing that, even at around five weeks old, babies who are more interested in objects rather than their parents' faces go on to be more likely to develop callous unemotional traits later in life."

When managing children who possess these traits, it often comes down to teachers who initially identify the problem.

"Parents may not realise that they are outside of the norm for a child of that age as they may not have other children to compare with.

"Therefore, often times it might not be until children reach preschool when a teacher, who does have other points of comparison, can see that a child shows lower levels of empathy or lower levels of caring for others."

To address the problem, Kimonis suggested a multi-faceted approach: where parents and teachers work together, especially when the

behaviours are exhibited at home and at preschool.

"When the issue is severe you tend to see behaviours across settings, as well as when there is comorbidity.

"When a child is also struggling, for example, with attention and impulsivity problems like ADHD, then it's quite common that there will be cross setting consistency in the behaviours."

Parent management training works

Kimonis said parent management training interventions were among the most effective strategies to address these issues.

"These programs teach parents skills they need to manage the child's behaviour."

One parent management training approach is Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT).

Kimonis recently conducted a successful trial of PCIT – adapted to suit the needs of children who exhibit callous unemotional traits.

As a result of the intervention, child conduct problems and callous-unemotional traits decreased, and empathy increased.

By three months post treatment, 75% of children who had completed the treatment no longer showed clinically significant conduct problems, and parents reported a high level of satisfaction with the program.

"PCIT has two phases: one phase is relationship building, working on the attachment and bond between parent and child, and the second phase is working on discipline and teaching parents how to give effective commands and to follow through to get the child's compliance.

"A therapist is placed behind a one way mirror, observing the parent and the child who are engaged in play on the other side of the mirror.

"The parent wears an earpiece so the therapist can coach the parent in the moment, in real time, as they're interacting with the child.

"They're able to get intensive feedback to help modify the child's behaviour, and to help the parent to apply the skills they've learnt."

Kimonis and her colleagues adapted PCIT for children with callous unemotional traits as they saw these children did not respond as well to best available evidence based treatment programs like PCIT.

"One adaptation was that we heavily worked on increasing the parents' levels of warmth with the child, because we know that children with callous unemotional traits tend to experience parenting that is less warm.

"The second element we introduced, as we know that children with callous unemotional traits are quite insensitive to punishment, was a reward orientated approach to change behaviour."

Families also received an additional treatment module designed to address the child's insensitivity to other people's distress cues.

"The third aspect was we heavily worked on improving the child's emotional skills."

How do teacher led approaches compare?

Kimonis outlined that there were specific approaches geared towards teacher intervention which could also be effective, but the strongest evidence of improvement was seen when parents made the change.

One teacher led approach was contingency management.

"This is where teachers use behavioural modification techniques within the classroom, or work with parents to make sure that there is reinforcement of the desirable behaviours from the classroom at home," Kimonis said.

Cognitive behavioural therapies are also effective for older school age children and adolescents.

"These are used especially when the child struggles with anger problems, and have been found to be effective when working with children in groups.

"But really, the strongest evidence base, especially for young children with these problems, is parent management training.

"Certainly combining parent management training with contingency management or cognitive behavioural skills training will likely yield the strongest results, but for young children, parent management training is a very effective approach."

Kimonis will be extending this work to early childhood centres and schools in 2019.

"We will be building a clinic space within a school accessible by preschools, where families will be able to engage in the PCIT program directly.

"This also allows us to work with the teachers so we can develop the strong partnership needed between parents, teachers and schools to address these issues in a more holistic way."

Members who are seeking support or are interested in learning more about PCIT can visit www.conductproblems.org or email preschoolparenting@gmail.com.

"Children with these traits may exhibit uncaring attitudes towards others, as well as a lack of care about how well they perform in school or in other types of important structured activities."

Action research – where everyone is involved

“Taking into account that all staff are trained and have professional experience, the viable assumption is that each person will have something to contribute to the process.”

Research – it’s a marathon not a sprint and it is not just for those who are called academics, early childhood centre director Amanda Holt writes.

Research is something we do with children, it is what we are doing when we are studying, it is a human behaviour that goes without recognition most days. While we will not all write a PhD paper, many of us have a lot to offer the early childhood profession from what we do each day.

There is a distinct lack of Australian based early childhood research, as I discovered when completing my Masters of Early Childhood Education. However those of us working in the frontline of early childhood care and education have a lot to offer our professional community and the children and families with whom we engage.

Action research is an opportunity to work collaboratively across all teams in a service or as a specific team. Early childhood settings have a wide skill mix from Certificate III to Masters of Early Childhood. Taking into account the fact that all staff are trained and have professional experience, the viable assumption is that each person will have something to contribute to the process.

What if...

Everyone has a question about their current practice. It may be from curiosity or challenges or even being confronted by their profession. It’s when we start a dialogue of ‘what ifs’, that we find common ground and an opportunity to improve understanding and practise together.

Recognising that a question or interest exists about current practice is the starting point. Then forming a team of like minded professionals to share the work of investigating, analysing and implementing the findings is undertaken. It

is tantamount to quality improvement as it is a continuous process that evolves into sustained daily practice.

Our team started the action research journey in 2011 after being challenged by Dr Stuart Shanker (see p14), a research professor from Canada presenting a workshop in Newcastle to seek out an occupational therapist to do an audit on our centre in terms of supporting children with sensory processing disorders and self regulation issues. Challenge accepted!

We engaged an occupational therapist whose audit results led to further research on how the learning environment impacts children’s interactions with others and the program. This was followed by actions, eg, changing the amount of furniture, colour of the walls, lighting, etc. I have presented the research to centre families, professional colleagues and community members.

This research took over 12 months and is still used today to inform our practice. The good news is the research has been extended from this original action to other topics such as: the 0-2 learning environment and how it should look and feel; minimalistic play in the preschool group; and self regulation in the early childhood setting (3-4 age group).

Once we started the professional dialogue of research practices we were keen to look into other aspects of our work. Some though were not action research, just a piqued interest in something beyond our usual practices eg the developing brain.

Other research topics we have undertaken are:

- laps vs apps – 2-3 room
- loose parts – 3-4 age group, and
- children’s voices – how do we record and share children’s ideas – preschool group.



Integral to this process is currency. We need to be looking at what is happening in our field and community. Also important is the ownership of the research. When a team can see distinct benefits potentially coming from the work they do then there is more reason to commit to the process.

This year we have chosen to undertake the following two action research projects instead of each team having an individual inquiry. The projects are sustainability – whole service (two teams based on individual interest in topic), and outdoor learning environments. These action research projects are long term and therefore we have extended them over at least two years.

Benefits of the action research process have included acknowledgement of staff strengths, showcasing the centre as innovative and progressive. We have also been able to share practice with other services. Most recently our action research was used extensively as evidence for our assessment and rating visit across several quality areas.

Processes for action research have been refined over time to ensure we remain current and able to sustain the momentum. This has included developing a meeting agenda to keep us on track as well as a guide to support understanding of the process:

Meeting agenda

- What? Give the meeting a specific title
- End goal? What will it look like at the end (best outcome - this may change as barriers arise, it's part of the process of learning)
- Why? What is so important about this issue that it has to be researched (ie, how does the current situation

impact your practice/interactions)

- Who? What will people be doing in this project (ie, data recorder/script/photos; families, staff, children)
- Influences and data? What influenced your decision (eg, other services, new research, etc)? What data are you going to collect to support decisions – perhaps one person on your team can develop this information?

It is essential to reflect on the process, outcomes and plan for the next step. What is critical to our action research projects is the viability of our findings and actions over a long period of time after the research is finished. We also use the information to inform families of our professional skills as teachers and educators.

As a director I have found action research to be instrumental in developing stronger relationships between and with staff. Change management can be a difficult process when people feel excluded. Action research is the opposite, where every person's voice is considered. It allows the reality of something not quite working out as planned to be shared at the grass roots level. It also allows the celebration of 'different but okay' to be included in a centre's professional dialogue.

As I have already noted research is a marathon. Each action research event should be progressed at a rate of speed that suits the investigating team and be open to not achieving the big outcome. It is as much about the relationships developed and understanding gained as it is about the issue.

Knowing how our brains work helps us understand children's behaviour

Early Childhood Australia Conference 2018 keynote speaker Stuart Shanker said early childhood education is the secret to ensuring the prosperity of society, writes Lisa James, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Organiser.

Dr Shanker, founder of the MEHRIT Centre and the Self-Regulation Institute, said children's learning follows patterns entrenched in the brain by age eight, with the first year of life important in determining the behaviour pattern the child automatically follows. The scientific evidence demonstrating this comes from the disciplines of neuroscience, biology, psychophysiology and psychology.

We now have the technology to see deep inside the brain into the limbic system and according to Dr Shanker, this is the part of the brain that matters for the first five years and determines how the child responds to learning, social and emotional challenges. Once these responses have been set they can be changed later in life, but it is more difficult. The ideal time to change this trajectory is during the first six years of life, because by age six and a half the child's brain reaches 95% of adult brain size, and then growth slows down.

The study of self regulation is transforming traditional views of temperament, intelligence, attachment and personality. If a child's limbic brakes have been set through stress and/or trauma early in life, we cannot know the child's intellectual potential without releasing those brakes.

Our aim is for all children to develop healthy modes of self regulation because this leads to growth. According to Dr Shanker, behaviour problems are a signal that a child

needs help because there is too much stress in that child's life. Critically, this help is needed before age five.

Self regulation is how effectively a child deals with stressors and recovers. Prolonged or chronic stress prevents the child's brain from recovering from this energy expenditure.

Some modes of self regulation lead to growth and others do not. Teenagers may self medicate through the use of drugs and alcohol, but this simply masks the problem and does not resolve the underlying issues.

A stressor is anything that requires us to burn energy. A little stress is positive as it arouses the brain (education is the best stress as it drives growth). Children are learning to deal with stress before they are born (environmental toxins/pollution).

Sugar consumption is a stressor. Healthy glucose is used to think, run, etc, but this must be in a narrow range or it leads to toxicity/cellular damage. The hypothalamus monitors

blood sugar levels, and if it is too high, the pancreas releases hormones to stabilise the level of glucose in the blood. A child consuming too much sugar (which is all children in Australia and the US according to Dr Shanker) leads to the pancreas working even when the child is asleep, preventing glucose from being available the next day for learning. The child then feels lethargic and/or has difficulty concentrating and self regulates by drinking sugary soft drinks or energy drinks, starting the process over again.

Self regulation and autism

Autism heightens sensitivity to stressors.

Genetically, eye contact was designed to wake up the brain, so the infant would learn, but hypersensitivity in children with autism means this form of stimulation (eye contact) is experienced as painful.

Such children have an aversion to shared gazing in an attempt to remove the painful experience. However, some behaviour strategies restrict opportunities for learning. Gaze aversion is maladaptive as it prevents the learning that normally occurs in infants /young children through shared gazing. Adults should not force a child to look at them, but should instead seek to reduce the child's stress, so that the child naturally engages with them (this may include decreasing stimulation such as noise and light in the environment).

One in 59 babies are extremely sensitive to stressors. Infants (including in utero) are particularly sensitive to maternal stress from sickness, depression and being overwhelmed. Having a baby can cause stressed mothers to shut down. Premature babies have much higher



“In children aged 0-5 years, adults must turn off the alarm for them. With too much stress and nobody turning off their alarm, the alarm continues to go off all the time.”



sensitivity, eg, to noise. This means premature babies burn more energy than full term babies when placed in the same environment. Scientists can measure stress reactivity. Lower stress levels means the amount of energy directed into the infant's metabolism, growth, etc, is increased.

Babies develop a temperament (easy, difficult or slow to warm up). Temperament was previously believed to be genetic or predetermined but it is now known to be epigenetic (interaction between genetic and environmental influences).

Infants with an avoidant temperament do not want to interact because social interaction is perceived as a stress. By contrast, for infants who develop an easy temperament, social interaction wakes them up and focuses their attention.

There is a need to distinguish between misbehaviour and stress behaviour (most behaviours labelled as 'bad' are actually stress behaviours in under fives).

According to Dr Shanker, teachers and educators need to do the self regulation five steps (see diagram) themselves. You need to be kind to yourselves because if you are in a state of low energy and high stress how can you help young children?

Limbic and neocortex brain balance

We function best when both brains are working together. Stress causes the two brains to be out of synchronisation. If we use force (threats or punishment) to discipline a child, scientific testing shows that even if the child is outwardly compliant their blood pressure, heart rate and breathing are too high/fast. This leads to problems with learning, inability to get along with peers, etc.

The reptilian brain has only three responses to stressors/threats: fight or flight or freeze. The limbic system has its own mode of perception and if it decides something is a threat it sets in motion the reptilian brain reactions. Breathing and heart rate rise, burning available energy. In mammalian bodies excess energy is stored in fats. If a hormone is released to dig into these reserves, this leaves the person feeling empty or shattered. If this occurs only rarely, we recover.

If a child is in stress, digestion shuts down, thinking stops and the child is in a presocial state. If a child is in fight or flight state the only thing that will be accomplished by threats or demands is to send them into the 'freeze' state. Adults sometimes confuse the 'freeze' state with

compliance because the child stops outwardly resisting. To resolve this situation, the adult needs to look for something that makes a connection with the child because social engagement removes the perceived threat. When the child responds to the connection, this is their way of apologising.

In children aged 0-5 years, adults must turn off the alarm for them. With too much stress and nobody turning off their alarm, the alarm continues to go off all the time.

The adult needs to work out what the stressors are that are shutting down the child's neocortex. The child needs to learn to identify when he/she is about to go into stress. The adult soothes them and reduces the stress. Children learn what calmness is by experiencing it – and it may be rare in their home.

There is no such thing as a trajectory that cannot be changed but the time taken will be different for each child.

Adults' stress comes down when they understand that the child is overwhelmed, not deliberately defiant, etc. Parents need child development experts to teach them in order to get their own stress levels down.

Connecting kindy to Country



A swooping magpie, a swinging hills hoist, a group of curious kids, and a supportive community – *Little J & Big Cuz* is a children's program that provides audiences with the unique opportunity to learn from Indigenous perspectives. Journalist Sara El Sayed explores the series, and the complementary lesson resource pack, as it sets itself for a second season in 2019.

Through its platform on National Indigenous Television (NITV), *Little J & Big Cuz* brings traditional Indigenous knowledge to homes and classrooms across Australia.

Not only is it an engaging television show, but *Little J & Big Cuz* is accompanied by free educational resources which early childhood education staff can explore in their centres.

What's the series about?

The series highlights kinship relationships in First Nations communities, preservation of nature, storytelling and teaching, among other lessons rooted in Indigenous

knowledge and practice.

With an all Indigenous cast and writing staff, as well as a team of Indigenous educators to develop the accompanying educational resources, *Little J & Big Cuz* captures authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories, experiences, teachings and voices.

Following the lives of a young boy – Little J – and his cousin – Big Cuz – audiences watch the pair and their peers explore the world of learning, inside and outside the formal school curriculum.

Drawing on lessons from Nanna and community members, the children are guided to learn more about themselves, and more about Country. The children are then able to share this knowledge with their classmates, and their teacher Ms Chen.

Creating *Little J & Big Cuz*

Little J & Big Cuz is a joint project of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), Ned Lander Media, NITV, Screen Australia, Film Victoria, Screen Tasmania, the Australian

Children's Television Foundation and SNAICC – National Voice for our Children.

ACER Foundation Director Lisa Norris said it was envisioned for the creative drive of the project to come from Indigenous writers, directors and educators.

"It would be wrong to have it any other way.

"After all, it is their stories, culture and experiences that we are seeing reflected in *Little J & Big Cuz*."

Teacher and Indigenous Education Consultant Priscilla Reid-Loynes, along with a team of education professionals – Elizabeth Barret Jackson, Dr Sue Atkinson, and Alison Wunungmurra – reviewed the scripts and provided feedback that informed the development of the complementary educational resources.

"When Priscilla came on board with ACER we really began to understand what the overall project, and what the resources might look like," Norris said.

"Our brilliant education team drove all the content you see in the resources."



In the classroom

Foregrounded in the series is the concept that Elders, families and children are knowledge holders.

Engaging with Indigenous communities to hear their stories of Country and of their experiences fosters a sense of understanding for any ECE or school community.

Little J & Big Cuz's classroom models ways knowledge can be shared from children and families in educational settings.

"There is so much these students bring to a classroom if they have the confidence to share it," Norris said.

The resources have been designed to provide a starting point for teachers to engage children in the program's themes, but ultimately allow educators to create their own way of blending western and Indigenous knowledge that suits their school and their classroom.

The learning documents for each episode are a springboard for engaging with, and embedding, Indigenous perspectives and pedagogies in early childhood education environments by modelling and encouraging:

- embracing Indigenous knowledge and culture and how these can build on current understandings and create new learning opportunities with children, families and community
- engagement with local and broader Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities to learn from and with their communities, and to build authentic relationships
- fostering of language that shares and respects the voices of Indigenous peoples, their knowledge and their cultures

- considerations of the educational and learning transitions that take place in children's lives, and educators' roles in working with children and families to support them during these times, and
- consideration of indoor and outdoor environments and associated Indigenous knowledge of these spaces.

Watch and learn

From the first episode of the series, we see how it brings audiences along with *Little J & Big Cuz* as they learn from their community and their Country, and incorporate this knowledge into their school experience.

In episode one, season one, *Little J* participates in a game of basketball with 'the big kids', with a new found sense of confidence thanks to his pair of 'lucky' underwear. He also helps his friend present a science experiment to the class that was prepared at home.

This highlights the experiences of outdoor play and indoor play that make up the curriculum.

This episode in particular highlights programmatic elements integral to high quality transition programs, including: a broad focus on child development that prioritises capacity to learn over specific knowledge; targeted approaches to building children's familiarity and relationships with school; and family engagement and involvement throughout the school transition process.

The episode also incorporates a number of key messages rooted in Indigenous culture and knowledge, including:

- elders, families, friends and children are important in caring for themselves and each other
- elders, families and children are knowledge holders
- classrooms can be indoor environments, and outdoor on Country
- being out in Country is good for wellbeing
- things can be designed and made by re-using what children have at home
- using imagination is important, and
- Indigenous languages and communities are unique and diverse.

All episodes of *Little J & Big Cuz* have Indigenous knowledge embedded in their stories, and each episode's resource pack can help early childhood education staff guide children through learning from these stories.

To access all episodes and complementary resources for early childhood education, visit www.littlejandbigcuz.com.au





A teacher's role in preventing violence

Violence against women is a widespread problem in Australia that has significant health, social, and economic consequences for women and their children, write Dr Gemma Hamilton and Dr Naomi Pfitzner.

On average, at least one Australian woman is killed by a current or former partner a week, and about one in six women have experienced sexual or physical violence since the age of 15.

The negative effects of children's exposure to violence are well documented, with exposure in early childhood leading to adverse health, educational and behavioural outcomes. The most direct way to reduce children's exposure to violence is to prevent violence against women from happening in the first place.

What's driving this violence?

Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity are key drivers of violence against women. A large body of academic research shows that traditional attitudes towards gender are one of the strongest predictors of attitudes that support this violence.

Australia's world first national framework to prevent violence against women identifies challenging rigid gender roles and stereotypes as a key action in preventing gendered violence. To create lasting change, prevention needs to encompass multiple strategies across a range of places in our community. One key strategy is to target early childhood settings.

Start early

Early childhood is a key developmental period when children begin to learn about gender. Gender is different from a person's biological sex. A person's sex is based on physical features such as anatomy, hormones and reproductive organs. Their gender is the way they think and behave based on learned roles and social expectations.

From birth, children learn about gender-appropriate attitudes and behaviours through gender socialisation. They learn to 'do' gender through internalising gender norms and roles as they interact with people around them.

Children begin to understand and act out gender roles and stereotypes as early as 2-3 years old. The degree to which children internalise and adopt stereotyped attitudes and behaviours can have long term effects on their attitudes, behaviours and values. People who support rigid gender roles and relations are more likely to endorse attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise or trivialise violence against women, or blame or hold women at least partially responsible for the violence against them.

Not all boys who play with trucks are going to end up violent but traditional masculine gender roles and ideologies (for example, 'men need to be tough') are associated with men's violence against women.

What role do teachers play?

Children often learn about gender from significant people around them such as family members, preschool and school teachers. Teachers can influence young children (either explicitly or implicitly) via social modeling, the expression of their own attitudes towards gender, and direct teaching practices.

For example, recent Australian research shows that gender stereotypes impact how preschool teachers plan their education programs with boys and girls (eg art and language activities for girls, physical activities for boys).

Adhering to rigid gender stereotypes and providing male and female children with unequal opportunities can

impact their academic motivation, skills, achievement, and future occupational attainment.

Researchers have yet to carry out longitudinal (long term) studies to directly track the impact of early education on outcomes related to violence against women. However, research suggests early childhood teachers can play an important role in promoting gender equality and building children's resilience to rigid gender stereotypes in early childhood—a key action to prevent violence against women.

Reflect critically

Early childhood teachers should critically reflect on how gender stereotypes influence their behaviour and expectations towards children and actively seek to address and counter stereotypes. For example, when reading books where boys and girls are presented in stereotyped roles, change the genders around (eg, have a female firefighter and a male nurse).

Teachers can also promote gender equality by supporting a diverse range of activities for both male and female children. From infancy, boys are often encouraged to play with sports equipment, toy cars and tools, while girls are given dolls, kitchen appliances and dress-ups. Children often have equal and overlapping interests in toys and it is the gendered marketing of toys that subsequently influences their preferences as they age. Avoid stereotyping children and provide them with an equal opportunity to use the equipment and toys.

What resources are available?

Interactive techniques, like role playing, storytelling and games can help teach children about gender equality. For example, teachers can challenge preconceived notions about gender specific tasks by playing a game with children to match female and male characters to professions.

Teachers can also use resources from the #BecauseWhy campaign. This is an initiative launched earlier this year by Our Watch to encourage parents to challenge rigid gender stereotypes and promote diverse interests with their young children. While the campaign predominantly targets parents, the resources are easily transferrable to early childhood teachers.

The digital resources include a website, short films, online articles and an Everyday Q&A page that offers practical tips for how carers can challenge rigid gender stereotypes with their children.

For example, in situations when children might say 'tea sets are for girls', the campaign suggests prompting a conversation about why the child thinks that, and offering an alternative view. That might be 'I can see why you think that, but don't you think it would be great if we could all play with whatever we want? How about you pick any toy you want?'

Teachers can't do it alone

It is impossible for teachers alone to comprehensively change gender relations. However, when accompanied by other community interventions, for instance in the home and workplace, early childhood is a prime opportunity to create effective change.

Supporting early childhood educators to promote more diverse concepts of gender with young children may reduce rigid gender stereotypes tied to attitudes that support violence and create a more gender equitable community in the long term.

References: <https://www.ieu.asn.au/news-publications/news/2018/01/teachers-role-preventing-violence>

GIVE US

the support we need



Members of the IEUA NSW/ACT Early Childhood Services Council have written about their concerns on funding issues affecting NSW preschools and long day care centres in 2019.

Phillipa Maher
Impact of funding changes to Disability and Inclusion Program (DIP)

As outlined in the Disability and Inclusion Program (DIP) guidelines, the purpose of this program is to provide funding and support to enable children with a disability and additional needs in community preschools to participate in a quality early childhood program on the same basis as their peers.

So does this newish program achieve that? What has been the impact of funding changes to disability and inclusion on preschools?

There are now five program components: Start Strong equity

funding, high learning support needs funding, minor capital works funding, sector capacity building program and early childhood early intervention scholarships. On the up side we now have a 'one-stop shop' for funding under Start Strong, but does this make a difference?

From my experience there are still a few glitches, particularly with the Start Strong equity funding.

In many areas of NSW there are a high number of disadvantaged families, so preschools are already eligible for the maximum Start Strong base rate of \$6600 per year for each eligible child.

This means that if any of these children are also identified as having a disability or additional need, there is no additional help, as the funding is already being used to support a fee reduction for their family. But the additional funding is vital for preschools to allow children to participate like their typically

developing peers

High learning support needs funding is only provided to children that need one to one support, and although this assists preschools to support children, there is a possibility that the quality of the application, rather than the level of the child's need, could influence whether or not a child receives adequate funding. Some children need to be supported for every moment that they attend.

The sector capacity building program has been delayed and despite the announcement that it would be fully rolled out by July 2018, it is just starting.

Although the program guidelines state that levels of support will vary depending on a preschool's circumstances and needs, it is the department which has determined which preschools get the initial capacity building support.

This seems to be based on data

from the previous Preschools Disability Support Program (PDSP) where preschools with high numbers of level 1 children were enrolled. These children would all be at primary school now, and preschools have a new cohort.

This scholarship program seeks to address feedback that there may not be enough focus on early childhood development and intervention in special education studies. The Department's website states that the program is in development and further information will be provided in 2018. In January 2019 we still await any information.

Let's hope that 2019 sees all components of the Disability and Inclusion Program rolled out, and that the department looks at the flaw with Start Strong equity funding and the fact that it offers no additional support to the children of disadvantaged families who already receive the maximum funding.

Gabrielle Connell ***The need for ongoing funding***

One of the main issues facing preschools in the last 30 years has been funding certainty. NSW preschools were in a funding freeze from the late 80s until 2011.

After many years of lobbying state and federal governments by teachers, educators, families and peak bodies including the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch, we finally had an injection of funds.

The first new funding was the state Preschool Growth Program – \$88 million to be spent on redeveloping and reenergising preschools in NSW – making preschool equitable and affordable for every three and four year old child in NSW.

This money came from the Federal Government's Universal Access Program which aims to ensure every four year old child has 15 hours a week preschool in the year before school delivered by a degree qualified early childhood teacher.

We now have Start Strong in NSW. Start Strong aims to improve affordability of early childhood education and increase the number of children participating for 600 hours in a quality early childhood education program in the year before school. Initially just for children in the year before school, this now includes three year olds in a limited funding model.

The Federal Government has committed \$870 million under Universal Access National Partnership arrangements to continue federal support for preschool throughout 2018 and 2019.

But what happens after 2019? Preschools find it difficult to plan into

the future and with no assurance of the continuation of Universal Access funding after 2019 this will further exacerbate these issues:

Attracting and retaining qualified staff – most services are not in a position to offer pay parity or guarantee secure employment into the future – especially if funding is not guaranteed.

Employing the most qualified staff – will we choose less qualified staff in order to 'stockpile' money and keep fees lower in case funding is cut? Will we restructure and employ bare minimum qualified staff in order to reduce costs?

Meeting the needs of our community – how can we formulate enrolment patterns that address the educational and care needs of families if we don't know we will be funded for these children into the future – particularly three year olds?

Providing professional development for teachers – what budget cuts will be made and in what areas? To remain viable budgets are shaved to save money to remain viable in times of uncertainty.

Closing groups and rooms – if funding isn't adequate there is a danger of downsizing groups, cutting the number of teachers and reducing educational and care options for children and families.

Closing valuable services – if funding is not ongoing and viability is not guaranteed then there is a danger of services closing – a huge problem for small communities.

Lyn Connors ***Sign in, sign out***

As a new requirement of the child care subsidy system, all long day care centres are mandated to submit with their session reports/attendances the actual sign in and out times of every child attending a session. Most centres have installed a kiosk which means times are automatically populated each time the parent uses the kiosk and are sent through to the government. Centres that do not have an automated system will need to manually enter actual times for each session a child attends weekly.

Julia Cameron ***Indigenous Advancement Strategy Funding***

Our preschool received funding from the Federal Government for Indigenous families for 14 years. This funding in the past was known as Supplementary Recurrent Assistance (SRA) and in more recent years Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS). Predominantly, SRA funding at this service was used as a fee subsidy for eligible families and for

resources linked to Aboriginal culture and learning.

There were changes when IAS was introduced, particularly the encouragement of 'beyond the preschool gate' projects.

Our service applied for fee relief for Aboriginal families, a percentage of a third educator's wage to support developmental delay and to fund a qualified playgroup coordinator for an inclusive playgroup four hours per week during school terms.

We were delighted to have the three projects funded for 2.5 years. Initially the fee relief was capped at 10 families, however that grew to 18.

In 2018 half the preschool enrolments identified as Indigenous and of those, 75% attended 925 hours annually. Almost all of our Aboriginal children had a need for speech therapy or occupational therapy programs.

We were devastated in August 2018 to receive notification the fee subsidy and third educator would no longer be funded, despite the evidence of the positive effect it was having in this community.

We responded with research based evidence to IAS project managers as well as state and federal politicians and ministers. Barnaby Joyce, the local federal member, followed up our concerns with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs as did the local state member to Sarah Mitchell, Minister for Early Childhood. Apparently, it seems Start Strong is funding both the fee subsidy for Aboriginal families and the employment of staff, so there is no need for the Federal Government to assist.

Of course, since this decision families have reduced their hours.

Where does this leave families whose fees have now doubled? How does this address Closing the Gap?

Melinda Gambley ***Reinstate full funding for three year olds***

The loss of three year old funding in recent years has impacted on small regional preschools like ours. There aren't enough four year olds in our communities to ensure the viability of our preschools and so we have relied on fee and funding income from three year old enrolments. This year, we see the State Government reinstate three year old funding but at a fraction of the previous rate. If the State Government is serious about attracting three year olds, preschool must be fully funded or at least funded to the same level as for four year olds.

Your questions answered

Danielle Wilson is an industrial officer for IEUA-QNT and Tina Smith is an organiser for the IEUA NSW/ACT Branch. They answer your industrial and legal questions as they relate to state laws and regulations.



Dear Danielle

I have been employed as an assistant in my kindy for 10 years. But this year our committee has asked me to sign a new contract. It looks similar to my original letter of appointment but now there are other things included that I have concerns about. One of the clauses asks me to agree that if I resign, I will not work in other kindergartens close by within six months of my resignation. I've never had to sign something like this before. Is this right?



Janine

Dear Janine

Our Union has seen a lot of contracts like this in the last 12 months. These additional obligations have included things like the restraint on trade clause you mention, as well as over reaching clauses around confidentiality, intellectual property and conflict of interest. These types of terms are common in commercial trade contracts, but they are not common in employment contracts and they are not usually canvassed in underlying industrial instruments. The need to issue a new contract or letter of appointment to an existing employee is only necessary if there has been a variation to a person's employment arrangements and both parties agree to the changes. However, it must be noted that where an employee does agree to sign a new contract with their employer, unless there is an inconsistency with the National Employment Standards (NES), or the Award/Agreement that is in place, or unless the term is proven to be unreasonable, employees could be deemed bound by all the provisions of that new contract.

The need for such provisions can and should be contested and as a Union we will assist our members in contesting such provisions.

We are aware that committees sometimes get their industrial advice from external bodies. Committees obtain this advice in good faith and rely on it when dealing with their employees. Sometimes the advice they received is not good advice and it cannot be relied on. In all of the instances that we were made aware of where committees have asked employees to sign new contracts, they told our members that they had been advised that if they didn't get their employees to sign, they would have to readvertise their positions. This is just not true.

For this reason, we encourage our members to have any document which their employer has asked them to sign checked by our IEUA-QNT industrial team first. Our members have a right to seek advice on employment matters and employers must allow time for this to occur. In addition to being able to offer advice to members, this also helps us pick up these sorts of worrying trends and alert our members to such sector wide issues and concerns.

Danielle

Dear Tina

I have worked in a mobile preschool for 22 years. NESA does not recognise these types of early learning services and deems them to be an out of scope service under the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Due to the type of service I'm employed in my teacher status is not recognised by NESA and I am not able to maintain my teacher accreditation. What can I do to maintain my licence to teach?



Stacy

Dear Stacy

This has been a problem since early 2016 when the legislation changed to include early childhood teachers under the NESA umbrella. The legislation refers to accredited centres, and mobile preschools are not included, and only teachers working in accredited centres can seek and maintain accreditation as a teacher.

IEUA NSW/ACT Branch negotiated with NESA so teachers working outside of accredited centres/services would be able to seek accreditation and be deemed at Proficient level if they have taught at an accredited service within five years of 18 July, 2016.

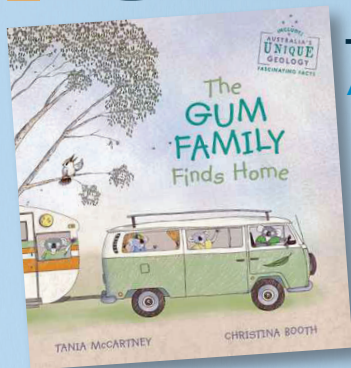
IEUA has since been in dialogue with NESA to rectify this injustice. We believe there is no lesser service quality, qualifications and outcomes to young children just because they attend a mobile service.

Teachers in your position have a number of steps that need to be taken to maintain their Proficient status with NESA.

1. Seek retrospective leave of absences with NESA to 18 July 2016 (or from whichever date they started in that role in an unaccredited service/centre). The form can be found here: <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/53d0f4fe-dc02-47d8-828f-d6611e3281d1/LeaveOfAbsenceApplicationForm.PDF?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=>
2. Seek to teach in an accredited centre for a minimum of one day or more within five years of becoming Proficient or the time a teacher started at an unaccredited service/centre.
3. Apply for voluntary accreditation with NESA. Further information can be found at: <http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/wcm/connect/8e7c76a4-aa58-403c-b29e-0a69b5bb8fb3/Accreditation+of+Early+Childhood+Teachers+Policy.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID>

Tina

GIVEAWAYS



The Gum Family Finds Home

Author: Tania McCartney

Illustrator: Christina Booth

Publisher: NLA Publishing

Three copies to give away

The Gum Family Finds Home is a delightful Australian story about home and family and a celebration of the stunning Australian landscape and its flora and fauna.

Join the Gum family of koalas, who hitch up their caravan and set off in search of the perfect home. Together with the Gum family, children will explore the sheer variety and imposing grandeur of the Australian geological landscape, from Uluru to King's Canyon,

from gorges and limestone pillars to precariously placed boulders and sweeping plains. Searching for that perfect home, they learn the heart-warming truth that the best home is the one you create for yourself among family and friends.

Parents, friends, carers and teachers will enjoy the age old premise that 'home is where your heart is' and smile as children try to figure out where the Gums will decide to live. At the back of the book, travel the country again through photographs of locations from the story and learn fascinating facts about their formation and history.

Benny Bungarra's Big Bush Clean-Up

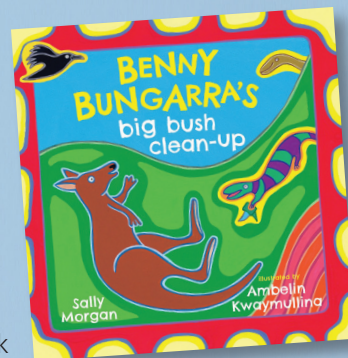
Author: Sally Morgan

Illustrator: Ambelin Kwaymullina

Publisher: Magabala Books

Three copies to give away

An environmental tale for early childhood and lower primary readers that shows how animals are affected by rubbish left in their habitat by humans. Ambelin Kwaymullina's illustrations are an explosion of colour and cleverly show the perils faced by our native animals. When the animals work as a team to come up with ways to look after the bush, they decide to ask the humans to reduce, recycle and use rubbish bins. But it is Benny Bungarra who has the bright idea of a big bush clean-up so the animals can also help look after the bush.



Ancient Wonders: Then & Now

Author: Stuart Hill

Illustrator: Lindsey Spinks

Publisher: Lonely Planet Kids

Three copies to give away

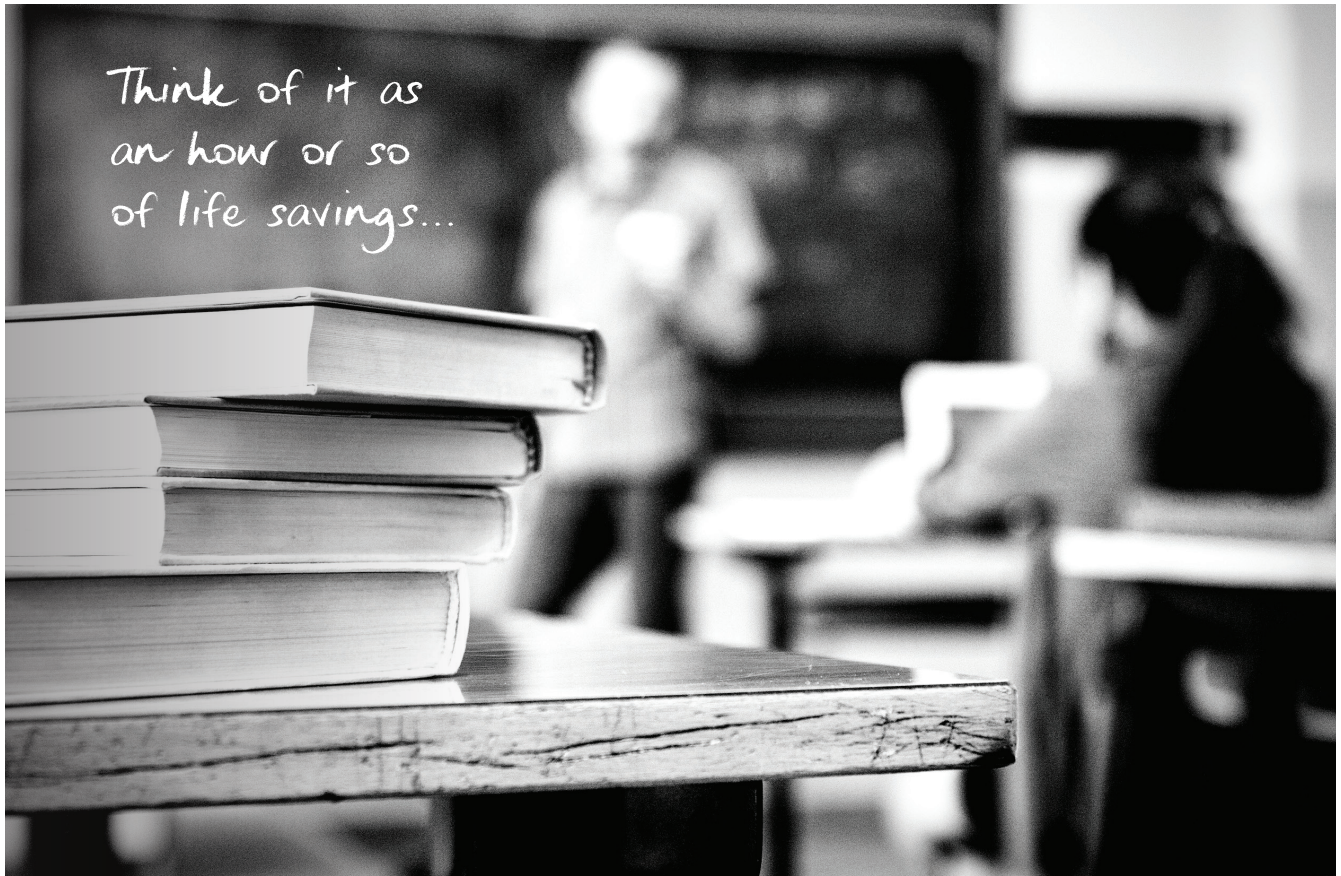
Ancient Wonders --Then & Now introduces children to some of history's most famous civilisations and the amazing palaces, temples and buildings they created. In this interactive and fact-filled tour, kids will discover all about each man made marvel, what it looks like today, and its influence on modern life. Then, by opening the gatefolds and lifting flaps, they'll find out how these wonders were built, what they once looked like, and their role in ancient

society. Kids will experience gladiatorial combat in Rome, a Chinese army built from clay, Cleopatra's sunken underwater palace, and lots more.

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