

BEDROCK

issue 3 | Vol 27 | 2022



**New Federal
Government 'a
breath of fresh
air' for sector**

Uluru Statement from the Heart

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty. It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are aliened from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. *This is the torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a *rightful place* in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution.

Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: *the coming together after a struggle*. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

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times a year and has
a circulation of around 3000.
Intending subscribers and
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BEDROCK

This is a joint publication
of the IEU.

Print Post number 100007356
ISSN 1326-7566

TERMINOLOGY

The union acknowledges regional
differences in some terms. Please
bear these in mind as you read:

QNT – Kindergarten

NSW/ACT –
Preschool/Early childhood centre



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Hope for the future

The recent election of a new federal government has brought hope and opportunity for the early childhood education sector.

In this edition, our journalists speak to IEU Federal Secretary Christine Cooper and the new Early Childhood Education and Youth Minister Dr Anne Aly about our union's federal agenda and outline why the new government must urgently address key issues impacting the sector (p6).

We examine what needs to be changed to restore balance to Australia's industrial relation system and hear from IEU members who attended Parliament House in Canberra to tell MPs firsthand how the broken bargaining system affected their everyday lives (p8).

Early Education Leadership Coach Sarah Moore shares how members can rediscover their 'why' to renew their connection to and love for the early childhood education profession after a difficult few years (p14) and IEU members detail how they helped develop and strengthen preschool students' oral language skills during the height of the pandemic (p20).

We hear from experts in perinatal and infant mental health about how members can build resilience in children and help them cope with emotional and behavioural difficulties arising from traumatic events (p16),

Long-term IEU member Erna Mikic reflects on her 42-year career in the sector and how things have changed ahead of retirement (p18) and counsellor Emily Rotta reminds members about the importance of self-care and establishing healthy boundaries to prevent burnout and compassion fatigue (p12).

We hope you enjoy the final edition of *Bedrock* for 2022 and feel refreshed and optimistic about the future of our sector, driven by a new federal government committed to listening to our union as the voice of early childhood education professionals.

Terry Burke
IEU-QNT Secretary

Mark Northam
IEUA NSW/ACT Secretary



Qld employers attacking union-won pay and conditions

Members in Queensland should remain vigilant after multiple early childhood education employers attempted to cut the pay and key working conditions and protections of hard-working employees.

Our union has been made aware of instances in which employers have tried – and in some cases succeeded – to freeze wages, cut redundancy provisions and exclude new administrative staff from collective agreements altogether.

IEU-QNT Organiser Nicole Lakidis said this was the latest in a series of kindergarten employers trying to quietly roll back key working conditions and deliver a pay cut.

“It means the provisions revert to the award and because community kindergartens are usually a business of less than 15 employees, they are not obligated to provide a redundancy severance package,” Nicole said.

“Once a provision is removed, it is extremely hard to win back.

“It is symptomatic of how broken our bargaining system is: employees in critical sectors such as early childhood education should be able to bargain collectively as a sector, like their school-based colleagues.

“Members should contact our union immediately if their employer has proposed a new agreement so that we can double check critical working rights and conditions have not been removed.”



Executive Director of The Parenthood Georgie Dent (far left) and Christine Cooper (3rd from left) meet with Early Childhood Minister Anne Aly (8th from left) and other stakeholders.

IEU in round table discussions with Minister

IEUA Federal Secretary Christine Cooper recently met with the Federal Minister for Early Childhood Education Anne Aly and other stakeholders for the first of a series of round table discussions to address the workforce crisis in the sector.

Christine said it was refreshing to hear a Federal Government Minister value early childhood education as vital to children's early learning and development and not purely as an economic mechanism for workplace participation.

"It has been too long since this type of appreciation and respect has been shown to our members," she said.

"Our union called on the government to develop a guaranteed funding stream for the sector which would deliver and safeguard pay and conditions equitable to those received in schools.

"The sector must have access to a less adversarial mechanism to negotiating wages and conditions than currently exists.

"Members employed in the sector have struggled under collective bargaining laws that fragments the sector into single site/employer group agreements and disempowers members' capacity to negotiate, handing over control to employers.

"The IEU has high expectations of the new federal government to deliver respect, security and certainty for the early childhood education sector and our members, which is long overdue," she said.

New funding announcement a step in right direction

The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch welcomes the state government announcement of a \$15.9 billion investment in early learning.

The government is to be congratulated for recognising the important role that early childhood services play in the development of our youngest and most vulnerable citizens.

This funding commitment aims to provide families with affordable and accessible quality childcare, creating more places in local communities and investing in the workforce.

It will also include prenatal support, health checks for all

children and additional hours of pre-kindergarten.

While extra funding in the sector is always welcome, the IEU would like to see details of how it will be implemented, particularly in the pre-kindergarten year.

Investing in more centres creates the need for more teachers and educators to work in them. With the current workforce crisis, there isn't enough staff for the existing services.

This workforce crisis must be addressed by investing in the people who work in the sector, attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers with improved pay and conditions.



Part of the NSW Government's package includes \$25,000 scholarships to study early childhood degrees. But again, what incentives will there be to encourage graduates to take up a career in early childhood education?

Graduates qualified to teach 0-12s can achieve much higher salaries teaching in primary schools.

"Until we recognise that degree-qualified early childhood teachers must be paid the same as their colleagues in schools, the drain from the early childhood sector to primary schools will continue," IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Mark Northam said.

"We look forward to seeing further details from the NSW Government on just how it plans to 'grow and support' our workforce," Mark said.

For more information on the government's announcement see: education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/early-years-commitment

A woman with long reddish-brown hair, seen from the back, is painting a map of Australia onto a cloudy sky. She is wearing a white dress with a black floral pattern and holding a paint roller. The map is painted in a light blue color, contrasting with the grey and white clouds.

New Federal Government ‘a breath of fresh air’ for sector

With a new Federal Government and Minister for Early Childhood Education committed to improving the working lives of Australians, it is pertinent to reflect on our union’s federal agenda and key priorities for the early childhood education (ECE) sector.

Emily Campbell asked Minister for Early Childhood Education and Youth Dr Anne Aly and IEUA Federal Secretary Christine Cooper about what’s next for IEU members employed in the sector.

Minister’s attentiveness refreshing

The prospect of a change in federal government in the lead-up to the recent election brought hope for opportunity and change in the early childhood education (ECE) sector, IEU Federal Secretary Christine Cooper said.

“With the commencement of the 47th parliament, this hope will now turn to strong expectations,” Christine said.

Christine said Anne Aly had already consulted the IEU and other unions on a range of matters relating to ECE policy and reform.

“Since the new Federal Government has been elected, our union has

already been consulted more than we were during the entire tenure of the previous Coalition government,” Christine said.

“Minister Aly met with IEU representatives within the first few weeks of the new government being formed, and we have established a commitment to continue to meet with our union regarding issues in the sector.

“It’s a breath of fresh air that the views of education unions are now being genuinely listened to and considered by government, becoming more central to the early childhood education portfolio.

“Up until now, the coalition government relied on advice from actors external to ECE and the realities faced by our members employed in the sector.

“As a result of our union being sidelined and ignored by the Coalition, education policies that have been implemented over the past decade fail to support or reflect the realities of the professional practice of ECE professionals.

“Ultimately, we are the voice of ECE practitioners, including teachers and assistants, and should be respected as such,” she said.

Key priorities moving forward

Major priorities IEU members are calling on the government to improve in the ECE sector include:

- certainty of funding tied to the delivery of professional salary and conditions
- strategies to attract and retain quality staff
- industrial relations reform to fix the broken collective bargaining system.

“The current ECE crisis is due to decades of disinterest, irresponsibility and the ‘for profit’ strategies of the previous Coalition government,” Christine said.

Minister Aly said the Federal Government is committed to reforms which will benefit the sector.

“The Federal Government is committed to high-quality, accessible and affordable early childhood education to support working families and give all Australian children the best possible start in life,” Minister Aly said.

“We understand that early childhood education employees play a vital role, not just for children and families but also the wider economy, and they deserve to be recognised and valued consistent with that critical role.



"It's important to acknowledge that more needs to be done to develop, recognise and support a high-quality early childhood education workforce," she said.

Minister Aly said her government is committed to working with all states and territories to deliver universal access to high-quality preschool for all children in Australia.

"Quality preschool education sets the foundation for all children to realise their potential.

"Investment in preschool education is also a critical part of this government's economic reform agenda.

"The Preschool Reform Agreement builds on the work started by Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard 15 years ago when they committed funding to the first National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education.

"Our \$2 billion investment through the Preschool Reform Agreement will support state and territory governments to deliver universal access to 15 hours of preschool a week to over 300,000 children a year for the next three years," Minister Aly said.

Tackling staff shortages

Christine said Minister Aly and the Federal Government will need to

take action and consider strategies to tackle the widespread teacher shortage crisis plaguing the sector.

"We have been in round table stakeholder discussions held by the Minister and continue to advocate the same thing we have been for years," Christine said.

"Teacher shortages in the ECE sector are a massive issue and pay rates for qualified early childhood teachers in some states and territories remain inferior to teachers in many primary and secondary schools.

"There is an urgent need to attract and retain qualified ECE teachers in our sector, because we are losing them due to burnout, unsustainable workload, insecure work, inferior pay and working conditions.

"In order to cope, centres are closing rooms, manipulating ratios, combining age groups, rearranging session days and requesting staff to work additional hours.

"IEU members are struggling to deal with workload and exhaustion, unable to take sick leave due to the lack of replacement staff.

"This is a vicious cycle and one that can only be broken by leadership from the Federal Government," she said.

Christine said she was alarmed by the number of waivers granted to ECE centres across Australia allowing them to operate without suitably qualified staff.

"The number of ECE centres with waivers and exemptions from the regulations is on the rise and allows providers to operate without tertiary-qualified ECE teachers.

"Concerningly, there has been a push from actors external to education to reduce the qualifications needed to work in ECE, which devalues the professional work being performed.

"This idea is a knee-jerk reaction to the teacher shortage crisis which will actually reduce the quality of education provided to children," she said.

Teacher workforce, wages and conditions ACECQA priority

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) Workforce Strategy plan has elevated teacher workforce, wages and conditions as the number one priority – although discussions on how that will be achieved and what it will look like are yet to be had.

Minister Aly said the Workforce Strategy aims to support the recruitment, retention and sustainability of the early childhood education workforce.

"I believe as a society we need to do more to recognise that early childhood education teachers are professionals with exciting and rewarding career pathway opportunities.

"The strategy includes practical actions aimed at promoting careers in the sector and improving the experiences of early childhood teachers and assistants.

"The early childhood sector will also benefit from Labor's commitment to improve workforce supply through fee-free TAFE, additional university places, and the establishment of Jobs and Skills Australia to support workforce planning," she said.

Industrial relations reform overdue

Christine said fixing Australia's problematic industrial relations structure and broken bargaining laws would be crucial to addressing the teacher shortage crisis.

"Members employed in the ECE sector have struggled under a collective bargaining legislation which not only fragments the sector into single site agreements but also disempowers employees' capacity to negotiate, and hands over control to aggressive employers determined to make no real concession," Christine said.

Currently, IEU members and all Australian workers are dealing with an IR system characterised by:

- lack of consistent conditions weighed down by bargaining restrictions
- employers having the balance of power
- onerous and costly limits to taking industrial action.

"This must change to restore a balance of power," Christine said.

While specific details of the government's industrial relations reform plan remain to be seen, the government has agreed the system must be improved to get bargaining moving and help tackle the current low wage crisis.

Christine said our union looks forward to continuing to work with Minister Aly and the Federal Government to provide long overdue reform to ECE in Australia.

"The IEU holds strong expectations the new Federal Government will move expeditiously to make the necessary changes to ensure quality early childhood education is safeguarded and supported into the future," she said.

The system is

BROKEN

It's time for change

Unions and peak bodies are calling for changes to the industrial landscape to make it easier to negotiate a better deal for early childhood teachers and educators, Sue Osborne writes.

In August, the ACTU invited workers from several sectors to attend Parliament House in Canberra to explain to MPs how the broken industrial relations system affected their everyday lives.

Early childhood IEU member Janene Rox, accompanied by IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Organiser Tina Smith, attended the event in Canberra. Janene told her story to nine different parliamentarians.

Janene, from the southern suburbs of Sydney, wants a brighter future for all early childhood professionals.

"My daughter wants to be a teacher. I am fighting for the future of the profession."

Janene and Tina joined representatives from nursing, aged care, transport and others who spoke about the problems they face seeking better outcomes in the current industrial climate.

Tina said, "The industrial relations system and the *Fair Work Act* have been broken for a long time. Employers are not shy about exploiting the loopholes in the current system when it comes to getting what they want and pushing down on teachers' rates of pay and working conditions.

"The process of bargaining can be laborious when the union has to bargain separately with each early learning centre.

"Sector bargaining for the early childhood sector would capture the teachers who cannot bargain for better outcomes because of the limitations of the *Fair Work Act* and our industrial relations system.

"Our early childhood teachers choose early education and care to make a difference in young children's lives.

"They didn't sign up to be industrial relations change agents. When they join their union that is what we do for them, fight for better working conditions and remuneration."

In her early childhood career spanning 30 years, Janene has at times had to work second jobs as a swimming instructor, casual university lecturer, tutor and election scrutineer to make ends meet.

"I told them how much I love my job, how it's an amazing sector to work in, but how over 30 years it has been difficult to get ahead in life," Janene said.

"I come from a hard background of public housing. My mum and dad did a fantastic job. My teachers were great,

and I went to university, but low pay made it difficult to break the cycle.

"To reach my goal of giving my own family better opportunities in life, I have had to give up the time with them.

"Trying to bargain for increased wages in the early childhood sector is hard when many early childhood teachers don't even have pay parity with school teachers, and they do not earn a great wage for what they do.

"Most early childhood services are stand alone, private or community run centres. To try and go through a bargaining process with a committee is challenging.

"It would make much more sense if there were sector-wide enterprise agreements and industrial laws that covered us across the country."

Janene is not alone with this wish. Several organisations have put forward workforce strategies for the early childhood sector, acknowledging that there is a crisis, and change is needed, including a different approach to the industrial system.

Workforce strategies

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) Workforce Strategy plan, *Shaping our Future*, has elevated teacher workforce, wages and conditions as the number one priority.

It states: "A 10-year National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy, *Shaping our Future*, aims to foster a sustainable and high-quality workforce of early childhood teachers and educators.

Community Early Learning Australia, Early Learning Association Australia and Community Child Care Association have joined forces with a six-point plan submitted to government to improve the sector.

Points 5 and 6 call for: "The creation of a national industrial instrument for the education and care sector to provide educators with fairer levels of pay" and "a National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy".

Also in August, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Organiser Kate Damo went to Canberra to attend the media launch of Thrive by Five's Workforce Action Plan which calls for early learning workforce action to be at the top of the agenda to address Australia's jobs and skills shortage.

The plan outlines key priorities to tackle the workforce shortages affecting the sector, including amending the *Fair Work Act* to allow for effective equal pay cases and sector level bargaining.



Top left: Kate Damo & Thrive by Five CEO Jay Weatherill
Above: ACTU Secretary Sally McManus with ACTU President Michele O'Neil
Right: Tina and Janene during their Canberra trip
Below right: Janene (right) with Sally McManus and other union representatives at Parliament House
Below left: Janene and other unionists at the event



Key priorities include:

- funding an immediate pay rise for early childhood educators and teachers
- amending the *Fair Work Act* to allow for a pay review in line with the professional value of the workforce
- progressing implementation of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Strategy as part of the Jobs and Skills Summit agenda
- establishing a collaborative process for a longer-term early childhood education workforce reform.

Starting Now is another strategy for early childhood education by the Centre for Policy Development.

It suggested the Federal Jobs and Skills Summit should table a national approach to early childhood education, including unions, governments and employers, to deliver new career pathways and improved remuneration for early childhood professionals.

The paper recommends swift and coordinated action in three key areas:

- Action to give parents the confidence to balance work and home by ensuring education and care is available and affordable. This includes accelerated changes to subsidy arrangements, measures that ensure public spending flows through to families, educators and teachers, and smarter spending coordination between governments.
- Action on rewarding, secure early childhood careers so children and families can work with early childhood professionals they know and trust. This included appropriate valuation of early educators' work; making early childhood careers a priority at the national Jobs

and Skills summit in September; a tripartite dialogue between unions, employers and government; training incentives for early childhood careers; and lifelong learning for early childhood professionals

- A national mission for a universal early childhood system. This includes a formal agreement between ministers to work together on a universal early childhood system; a reform task force to implement it; a special commissioner to lead a Productivity Commission review into universal early childhood education and care; and long-term funding agreements.

Janene is optimistic. "Attending the ACTU event gave me a sense of togetherness, with all the other unions there, supporting each other. As a collective, we can stand up for ourselves and get something done."

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Starting Now

cpd.org.au/2022/07/starting-now-centre-for-policy-development/

Supporting exemplary educators: *What it takes*

Highly skilled educators are critical for high quality early childhood education (ECE). Yet there are widespread concerns that workforce preparation is inadequate and that the longstanding problem of educator shortages has not abated, researchers write.

The present shortfall of appropriately qualified educators is expected to escalate with growing demand for ECE (Intergovernmental Support Team, 2020). A group of researchers in early childhood education writes that evidence generated by their *Exemplary Early Childhood Educators at Work* (ECE@W) study can contribute to solving these issues.

The study investigated the complexity of ECE work by researching what early childhood educators do, what informs their work, and how workplaces support exemplary care and education of young children. The research team examined what exemplary educators do across different qualifications: Certificate III, diploma and degree; and across positions: director, teacher, room leader and assistant.

Conceptual underpinnings

The ECE@W study was conceptualised using the Theory of Practice Architectures (Kemmis & Grootenboer, 2008). This theory considers both the conditions in work environments that inform educators' dispositions, actions and abilities, and the individual agency of educators, stressing their capacity to problem solve and make wise decisions.

Methods

The project recruited educators in centres rated as Exceeding the National Quality Standard on all standards and elements, to participate in each of the three phases of data collection.

In Phase 1, we developed a taxonomy of 10 categories of ECE work to construct a Random Time Sampling Time Use Diary, delivered via a smartphone app (Wong, et al. 2022).

Educators reported what work activities they did, where they were, who they were with, and rated how they felt about their work experience during the previous hour. They did this for two randomly selected hours over 10 working days.

In Phase 2, we held focus groups with educators in the same job positions about what shapes and informs their practices and decision making.

In Phase 3, we shadowed individual exemplary educators, made observations of them as they worked, and together, reflected on selected vignettes of their practice.

Findings

Phase 1

Key findings from our analyses of 3610 hours of time-use diary records were:

- rapid changes of work activity within each six-minute reporting period
- multi-tasking as a normal characteristic of educators' work
- low levels of stress and at the same time high levels of job satisfaction.

Phase 2

Our analyses of the personal, professional and organisational resources that support exemplary educators showed that:

- educators and centres engage in professional development that is strategic, purposeful with direct links to practice
- exemplary educators focus on the aesthetic environment, with attention to beautiful spaces, storage, resources and adult furniture
- centres had effective systems to enable educators' work, such as non-contact time, non-contact educational leader, role clarity and expansive teams including ancillary staff.

The networks and professional relationships that supported exemplary educators included:

- teamwork, with a strong sense of collegiality, trust and autonomy. Teams were created purposefully, with an enhanced focus on mentoring skills. Staff were valued equally for their contribution to practice and systems, inclusive of different levels of qualification.
- leadership, with leaders available and a commitment to building relationships and engaging in respectful conversations. The director was often on the floor, with a centre commitment to 'giving people a go'.

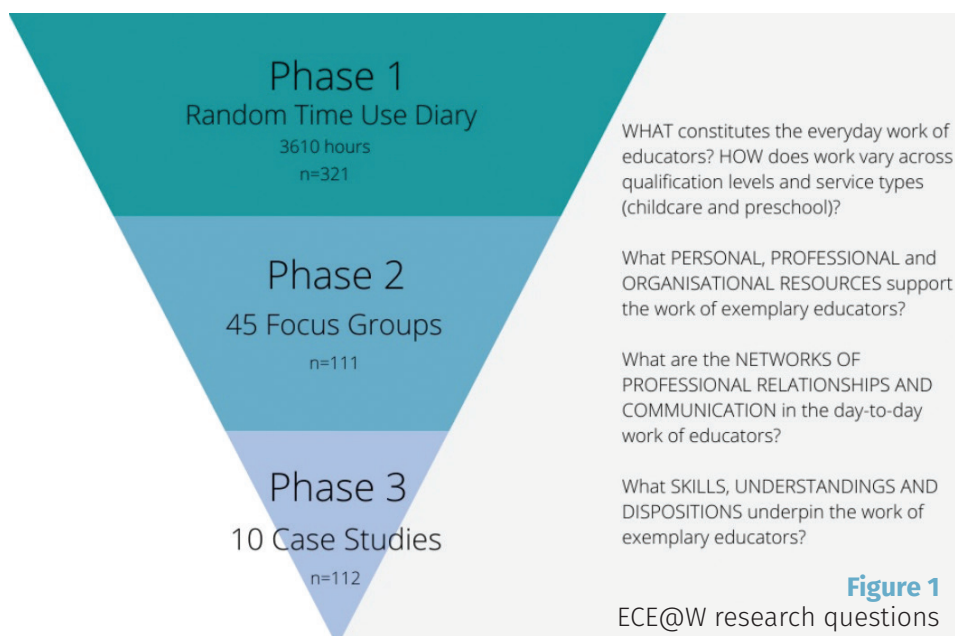


Figure 1

ECE@W research questions



Figure 2 Stakeholder Forum (illustration by Rebecca Lazenby)

- community connectedness, with a culture of community networks, for example, social events for staff and families. Connection with families was a key driver of educators' commitment to the profession.

Phase 3

Our co-reflections with exemplary educators showed that their work is underpinned by:

- **Knowledge:** professional knowledge, qualifications, ongoing learning, professional judgement, and knowledge of the regulatory landscape and ethics.
- **Skills:** expertise, intentional and incidental teaching, experience, being responsive, common sense, program clarity, flexibility, critical reflection, communication, being organised, confidence, self-regulation and being creative.
- **Values:** a positive attitude, a sense of humour, an advocate for the value of ECE, active listening, passionate, willing, reliable and dedicated, having high expectations, being a team player, professional and respectful, a sense of community, inspired, empathic.

Some considerations of qualifications

In phases 1 and 2, we found few differences between participants based on their qualifications. In phase 3 reflections, however, Certificate III-qualified educators emphasised values, diploma-qualified educators emphasised the importance of skills, and degree-qualified educators emphasised all three elements: values, skills and knowledge. This is an area we are analysing further.

Engaging with the profession

In June 2022, we convened a Stakeholder Forum with 77 policy makers, researchers, peak organisation staff, and early childhood educators. We presented our initial analyses of phases 1, 2 and 3, and had conversations to inform deeper understandings of the data. Figure 2 illustrates key discussions throughout the forum.

Next steps

The ECE@W study comes to an end at a critical juncture for ECE in Australia. The workforce pressures that first motivated the study – such as a critical shortage of educators – are now more pressing than ever.

New knowledge produced by this study can inform strategies to better prepare and sustain the ECE profession and prompt action on multiple levels – for educators, for organisations, for government – to put in place the conditions that enable the work of exemplary educators.

The research team will continue to disseminate findings to lift educators' professional status, strengthen employment practices conducive to high quality ECE, and provide evidence-based content for preservice education and in-service professional support.

Partner organisations

This project has been supported by an alliance of employers, unions and professional development agencies, including the IEU.

Further information

Published journal papers and professional articles are available at <https://exemplaryeducators.wordpress.com/>

To receive a copy of the EE@W final report, email: kim.crisp@qut.edu.au

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Article submitted by...

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Identifying burnout, compassion fatigue and prioritising self-care

“...if the oxygen mask drops down, we need to put our own on before helping others.”



Staff shortages, unsustainable workloads, insecure work and the increasing complexity of roles, along with COVID-19 have taken their toll on early childhood education teachers and assistants, writes Emily Campbell.

Counsellor and clinical supervisor Emily Rotta (pictured opposite page) says members can take steps to protect their mental health and identify burnout, compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma.

The demands of ‘helping professions’

Emily has many years of complex case management experience – and a decade of experience working in both state and non-government education sectors.

Her history working in schools means she has a thorough understanding of the high demands and pressures of working in education.

“People working in ‘caring professions’ such as early childhood education staff, are at greater risk of burnout and compassion fatigue than the general population, so needed to prioritise self-care,” Emily said.

“When we are helpers working in helping professions, we hear the stories of others, over and over, which does have an impact on you.

“Staff in caring professions such as early childhood education tend to put the wellbeing of others and those children in your care before yourself, but it’s crucial to

prioritise your own wellbeing and make time for self-care.

“We tend to put our professional hat on first and look after everyone else, but it’s like in an aeroplane emergency: if the oxygen mask drops down, we need to put our own masks on before helping others, or we’re no good to anybody else.”

Identifying burnout vs compassion fatigue

Compassion fatigue has similar symptoms to burnout; however, they are two different things.

Emily explained that unhelpful and unhealthy coping strategies for dealing with work-related stress can be triggers for burnout.

She said compassion fatigue is not always easily identifiable and is a preoccupation with absorbing trauma and emotional stresses of others, and this creates a secondary traumatic stress in the helper.

Compassion fatigue symptoms include:

- sadness and grief
- avoidance or dread of working with certain people
- reduced ability to feel empathy
- changes in beliefs, expectations and assumptions
- headaches
- digestive problems
- fatigue
- psychological distress.

“On the other hand, burnout is being worn out and the impact of that burnout can gradually emerge over time,” Emily said.

“Burnout can easily be identified by direct links and stressors within a person’s working and personal life and is often caused by overworking and high levels of prolonged stress.

“People suffering from burnout may experience physical or mental collapse and fatigue,” she said.

“Unfortunately, if we burn out once, we have a tendency of burning out again within a couple of years if we don’t look after ourselves.

“People in helping professions and high achievers are more prone to burnout and before COVID-19, 27 per cent of Australians reportedly experienced burnout.

“However, we know the true number is much higher, given burnout is severely underreported.”

Burnout symptoms can manifest as:

- fatigue
- anger
- frustration
- withdrawal from friends, family or colleagues
- working long hours
- taking work home.

Addressing the situation

Emily said one of the most effective ways for reducing the risk of stress-related disorders was for workplaces and employers to take an active role in the wellbeing of their staff.

“Just as important as self-care are supports within your school or workplace and external supports such as professional supervision,” she said.

“Employers can do this by implementing and facilitating self-awareness, self-care and self-management education into existing organisational structures.

“Employee assistance programs (EAPs) and wellbeing and in-service training programs can help deliver many solid supports and skills available for individuals and employers which assists in preventing burnout and compassion fatigue.

“Implementing ongoing workplace wellbeing programs which are tailored to the unique needs of an organisation can be immensely helpful, and practical coping strategies are identified to enhance the personal skills of staff so they can quickly integrate their learnt skills into their daily routines.”

Emily said that increasing workplace emotional intelligence (EQ) enhances employees’ self-awareness and ability to regulate their emotions by taking responsibility for their behaviour and reactions to situations.

“The reward is improvement with workplace relationships and work satisfaction, increased morale and productivity,” she said.

“Emotions are contagious after all, and workplace EQ and wellbeing programs

leave staff feeling supported and more optimistic towards their employer, whilst developing a collegial, supportive team environment among colleagues.”

Self-reflection and self-care

Emily said ECE staff and all those working in helping professions must make time for self-care.

“Self-care may look different from person to person but taking time for things like hobbies or activities you enjoy, catching up with friends or exercising are all great for your mental health,” she said.

Self-care can include:

- performing regular exercise you enjoy
- prioritising rest and relaxation
- spending time with loved ones
- breathing exercises and journalling
- participating in hobbies you enjoy
- getting quality sleep
- reaching out for professional help
- eating a healthy and balanced diet.

Unionised workplaces improve wellbeing

In addition to Emily’s self-care advice, maintaining a strong union presence in an early childhood education setting is also instrumental to improving staff wellbeing and reducing stress, compassion fatigue and burnout.

Collective bargaining by members and workplace-level activism by IEU members are the most effective ways to intervene and make a difference for staff.

The IEU has secured wellbeing-focused provisions for early childhood education members in many collective agreements, so members should ensure they are familiar with their agreements to make the most of such provisions.

ECE members who have upcoming collective bargaining negotiations should speak to their colleagues about the importance of wellbeing provisions in collective agreements and ask their IEU organiser for assistance requesting these in the log of claims.

Although many of these issues cannot be alleviated overnight, the profession can be made more sustainable and staff wellbeing improved by addressing concerns like workload intensification, insecure work and ensuring appropriate workplace-level supports are implemented.

Your union runs several free, member-exclusive professional development sessions and workshops related to reducing and managing work-related stress.

Visit your IEU branch website or social media to check for upcoming dates.

To find out more about burnout, compassion fatigue, professional supervision and more, visit www.transitionalsupport.com.au



Self-care checklist

- Have you eaten today?
- Are you hydrated?
- Have you had a good night’s sleep?
- Are you well rested?
- Do you have something going on right now?
- Are you dealing with a personal loss?
- Are you feeling overwhelmed?
- If you’re unwell, have you taken some time off, or have you been pushing through?

Rediscover your 'why'



Sarah Moore, Early Education Leadership Coach, shares her view that rediscovering your 'why' is a crucial element to your success as an early childhood professional, especially during these times of rapid change and uncertainty.

I will share Mary's story because it provides a great example of someone who became disconnected from her 'why' and the transformation that occurred when she spent time rediscovering it.

One thing great leaders like Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, and Mother Theresa have in common is they had total clarity on their 'why'. It gave them purpose, focus and determination, even when faced with hardship, prejudice, and huge levels of uncertainty.

As a leadership coach and training facilitator, I have helped hundreds of early childhood professionals just like you clarify their 'why', and because of this work, they have created transformative shifts in their focus, energy, motivation, and engagement.

But before I get ahead of myself, let me share Mary's story as I believe it will resonate with you on many different levels.

Like so many directors I have worked with, Mary's story provides a wonderful example of how an early childhood director went from being demotivated, overwhelmed and on the verge of resigning to energised, motivated and consistently able to create a positive impact through her work as a leader.

When you listen to Mary's story, try and connect with the emotions she was feeling and reflect on whether you can relate to certain elements of her story.

Mary's story

As Mary woke, she stared at the ceiling, wondering what the day would bring.

She felt tired and couldn't understand why, because she had gone to bed early the night before, which she did all the time these days!

As she got herself ready for the day,

she stared in the mirror, wondering why she had chosen a career in early childhood.

On the outside, she looked confident, and the feedback she got from her committee was that she was doing an excellent job, but on the inside, she felt overwhelmed and exhausted most of the time.

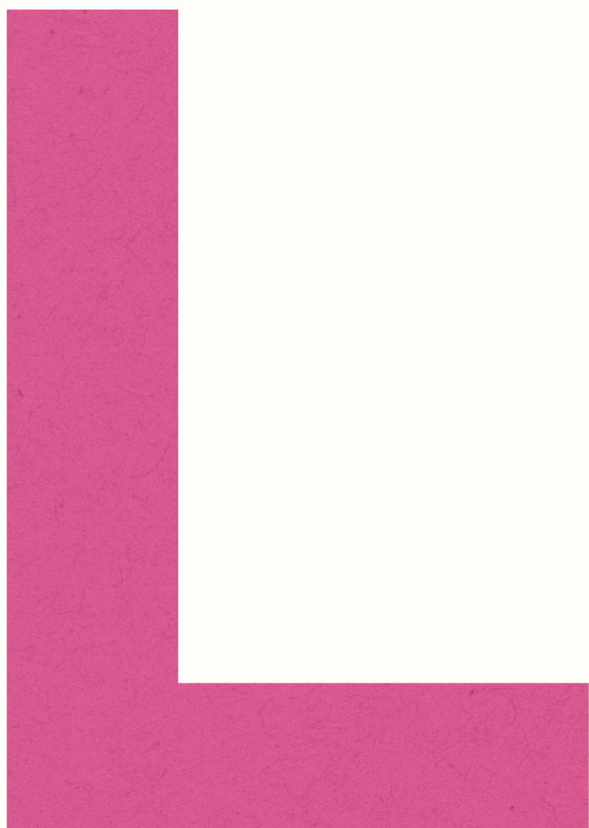
The one thing that kept Mary going was the children and families she worked with. They could shift her mood and energy with one single smile, one comment or one special hug – in an instant!

While driving to work, travelling on the same road that she travelled each day, she started to feel a level of anxiety well up in her.

She could predict that her day would be filled with staff being difficult, complaining parents and competing priorities and queries about future enrolments.

She said out loud to herself, "What the hell am I doing? Perhaps I'm in the wrong job, perhaps I am just not up to it, and perhaps I just don't want to be here anymore."

In a fleeting moment, she considered resigning, but then quickly took a deep breath, shifted her attention, and walked into the preschool and started her day.



Mary is an early childhood director at a large community-based service that has over 20 staff who are of mixed ages, many of whom are doing multiple jobs and juggling commitments such as children, study and other employment.

Some of Mary's biggest challenges were around engaging staff in the many changes that have taken place over the past few years and managing her young team, who she feels see the world in a different way to her.

On top of that, some of her team were stuck in the 'old' way of doing things, with no motivation to change, no matter what.

Realign your aspirations

When I met Mary, she was on the verge of resigning.

When I started coaching Mary, she had become disconnected from her 'why', and felt overwhelmed with the enormity of her role. She felt isolated and tired of constantly needing to support her team, trying to motivate and engage them in what felt like the smallest of things.

In our initial leadership coaching sessions, we focused on Mary's 'why'. Why she joined the profession and what she was aspiring to achieve.

It didn't take long for Mary to reconnect with her 'why' and share her vision, which had been buried under the day-to-day management of her service. Mary lit up when she talked about what she wanted to create at the service and her plans.

The disconnect between her passion, her 'why' and vision and the reality of her experience was vast.

So how did she bridge the gap?

Mary, like hundreds of other early childhood leaders, went through a process I developed called 'Rediscover your Why'.

Most early childhood leaders I have worked with have an amazing passion. Still, a disconnect between their passion, their 'why' and the reality of their experience is common.

This often happens because their focus becomes narrowed to the operational aspects of their job. Their focus becomes 'doing' part of their job rather than 'how' they want to lead through their 'why' and values so they can be the leader they aspire to be.

But here's the thing, when you give yourself the space to stop 'doing' and realign with your passion, your why and clarify who you need to be, great transformation occurs quickly.

Mary is a wonderful example of this, and so are the many people who have worked with me through our Conscious Leaders Online or Leadership Coaching programs.

Rediscover your 'why' tool

Download your copy at

www.earlyeducationleadership.com/rediscover-your-why-tool

IEU Webinar - 17 November 2022

Join Sarah Moore to learn about the process of rediscovering your 'why', and how you can use it to create focus, motivation and engagement.

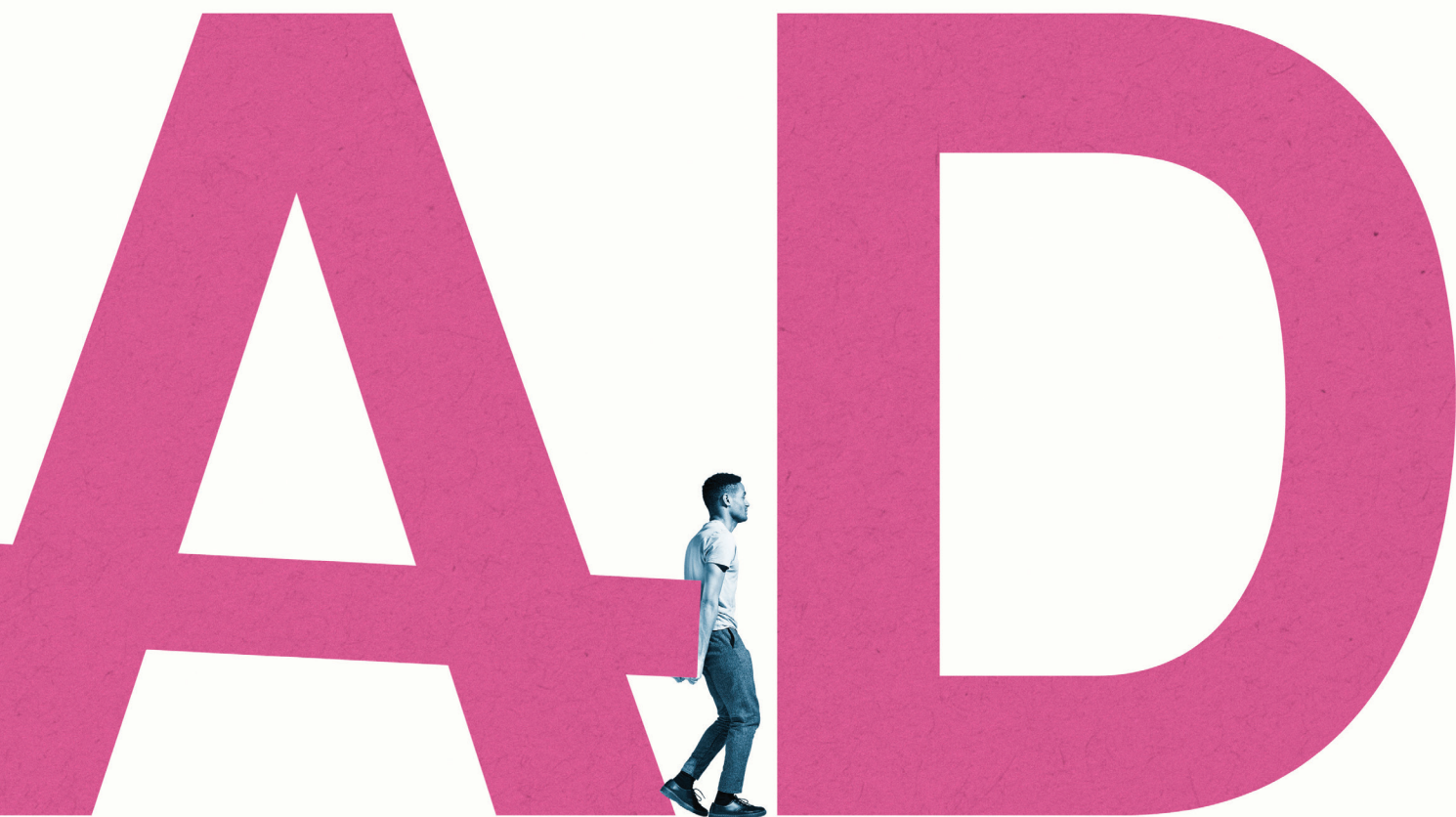
Register at www.ieu.asn.au/event-list/event-detail?eid=5484

TEAM TIP

You can do this with your team as a great way to strengthen levels of engagement!

To start the process of re-discovering your 'why', take some time to reflect on these four questions:

- 1) What gives you a sense of purpose? What lights you up? What gives you that lovely warm feeling in your belly that makes you happy?
- 2) What are you naturally good at? Something that you do with ease, and you lose yourself in it in the process?
- 3) What do people count on you for when they have problems? This comes naturally to you, and people often comment on how good you are at it....
- 4) Where do you add the greatest value? Or difference, or impact?



Supporting young children through disruptive events

When floods, fires or pandemics strike, it's common for children to experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. They may have trouble getting to sleep, wake in the night, and experience bad dreams or night terrors, Sharleen Keleher and Dr Andrea Baldwin write.

Following a disruptive event, they may eat more than usual, or not feel like eating. Many children find it harder to separate from their parents. Some children are more irritable than usual and have more tantrums, while others may become withdrawn and emotionally flat.

A common issue is temporarily delayed development, with some children seeming to regress or 'go backwards' in previously acquired skills like walking, toileting or language.

If children don't get support to adjust to changes the event has brought, and to process their big feelings, the impacts can be long-lasting. We know from the *Beyond Bushfires* report that children separated from their parents during the devastating Black Saturday bushfires are still on average demonstrating significantly lower academic scores, over 10 years on, than their peers who didn't experience separation.

Children growing up today are about seven times more likely to be exposed to a natural disaster than their grandparents' generation. More frequent and severe natural disasters mean more communities are experiencing cumulative impacts from successive disasters.

The effects of natural disasters on communities are compounded when other major disruptive events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, occur at the same time.

Children who have experienced adverse childhood events (ACEs) such as sexual abuse, family violence or the loss of a parent may be more at risk for negative mental health outcomes following a natural disaster.

COVID-19 unmasked

The COVID-19 Unmasked Young Child survey was completed by caregivers of young children (1-5 years) on four occasions between May 2020-May 2021. Key findings of this study include:

- Most young children experienced some emotional and/or behavioural disruption, with those experiencing longer periods in lockdown showing more disruption

- 30 per cent of young children experienced moderate to severe anxiety, which tended to increase as the pandemic wore on
- Children were more at risk of mental health problems if: their primary caregiver had mental health issues prior to the pandemic; the child had lower emotion regulation skills prior to the pandemic; the primary caregiver was highly distressed; the family experienced a higher number of negative COVID-related events (for example, social isolation, financial stress, disrupted routines); the family scored highly on parenting rejection.

Resilience

The good news is that most children recover quickly from a natural disaster or disruptive event with the support of caring adults. Rather than thinking of resilience as a character trait, it's helpful to consider the systems that support a child and think about how we can build more resilient communities and families.

One useful model for discussion of disaster resilience is the circle model of 'Preparedness, Response and Recovery'. This model emphasises being mindful of building resilience before or in the absence of a disaster (preparedness), while the event is occurring (response), and in the period after it occurs (recovery). It requires a 'when not if' mindset, recognising that challenging events are part of life, and that getting through hard times with support from others can help individuals learn, grow and get stronger.

Building children's resilience

Educators and teachers play an important role as trusted adults in children's lives. Early learning settings need to provide a safe, structured, predictable environment where children feel comfortable, cared for and connected. In the context of disruptive events, this helps children develop resilience, cope with stress, and recover from disruption.

What helps?

Relationships

- Supportive relationships in early childhood help protect against mental illness and a range of other negative outcomes in later life.
- As their educator, it's your supportive relationship with



“Children growing up today are about seven times more likely to be exposed to a natural disaster than their grandparents’ generation.”

the child that helps them be resilient.

Be compassionate, reassuring and understanding. You don’t need to have all the answers – you are the answer.

Provide safe spaces for children to process their experiences

- Play is a way children express emotions and process experiences. Create safe, supportive spaces where they can do this.

Acknowledge and name feelings

- Tune into the ‘big feelings’ the child is communicating through their behaviour, non-verbal and verbal cues.
- Resist the urge to say “don’t be sad/angry/worried” to reassure the child. The child’s feelings are real, and they need to feel safe expressing them. Being told not to feel a particular way can seem like criticism. It may leave a child feeling shamed, dismissed or not listened to.

Conversational reading

- Books like the *Birdie’s Tree* series can help children process their experience of specific natural disasters and disruptive events such as floods, fire and pandemic.
- Use books about feelings to build children’s emotional literacy. Having a shared language with the adults who care for them helps children express and explore their feelings, which in turn builds emotional resilience.

Supporting educator wellbeing

- Educators and their families have probably experienced the same natural disaster as the child. It’s important to take care of yourself and find ways to meet your own emotional needs, so you can support the children in your care. You can’t pour from an empty cup!

Practical strategies

- Provide quiet spaces where children (and adults!) can retreat to. Set up a small tent or cubby with comfortable cushions, books, and other toys. Create a culture within your learning community that this space is respected as a place where children can go to have some quiet time.
- Include opportunities for mindful movement during your day. A useful resource for this is *Relaxing With Birdie*, available as a print book, ebook or animation.
- Communicate with families. Check in to see how things are going at home, for example, “I noticed Jimmy has been a little unsettled at outside play time recently. Have you noticed anything different at home?”

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 Sharleen Keleher, Project Officer and Dr Andrea Baldwin,
 Service Development Officer, Queensland Centre for
 Perinatal and Infant Mental Health

‘How time flies!’

Reflecting on 42 years in the sector

Erna Mikic is a dedicated Chapter Representative and long-term IEU member, who has witnessed and experienced many changes to early childhood education during her lengthy career in the sector, writes Emily Campbell.

Having been an early childhood education assistant at Western Suburbs Kindergarten in Cairns for nearly 42 years, Erna is retiring at the end of 2022, bringing an end to an extremely rewarding career.

Erna said time has flown since she started working with three-year-old children in the early 1980s, when she quickly realised that early childhood education was the career path she wanted to follow.

“I found it was extremely satisfying to be part of a team that fostered young children’s development in a supportive, play-based environment,” Erna said.

“The families enrolled their three-year-old children in a kindy session and four-year-old children were enrolled in preschool and the sessions ran for three hours per day, some in the morning and others in the afternoon.”

Navigating sector changes

“When Universal Access was initiated in 2008, changing to 15 hours per week of early childhood education presented some challenges for our centre,” Erna said.

“Universal Access is very important, because it gives children access



“I found it was satisfying to be part of a team that fostered young children’s development in a supportive, play-based environment.”

to qualified and experienced early childhood staff and contributes towards closing the gap for disadvantaged families.

“At Western Suburbs Kindergarten we chose to pioneer ‘long day’ sessions of 7.75 hours of education and care, to accommodate the changing needs of families – although there was no advice

from our employer on this structure, as they only supported the five-day rolling fortnight consisting of six hours per day.

“When a query arose about how many hours children needed to attend a day to provide a total of 600 hours for the year, our director and administration assistant had to work it out ourselves.

“Thankfully our IEU Organiser at the time, Wendy Hutchinson, was of great assistance and support, helping us work out our hours of attendance calculations as well as supplying us with information on staff working hours and meal breaks,” she said.

IEU guidance and advocacy

Erna said the importance of IEU membership cannot be understated.

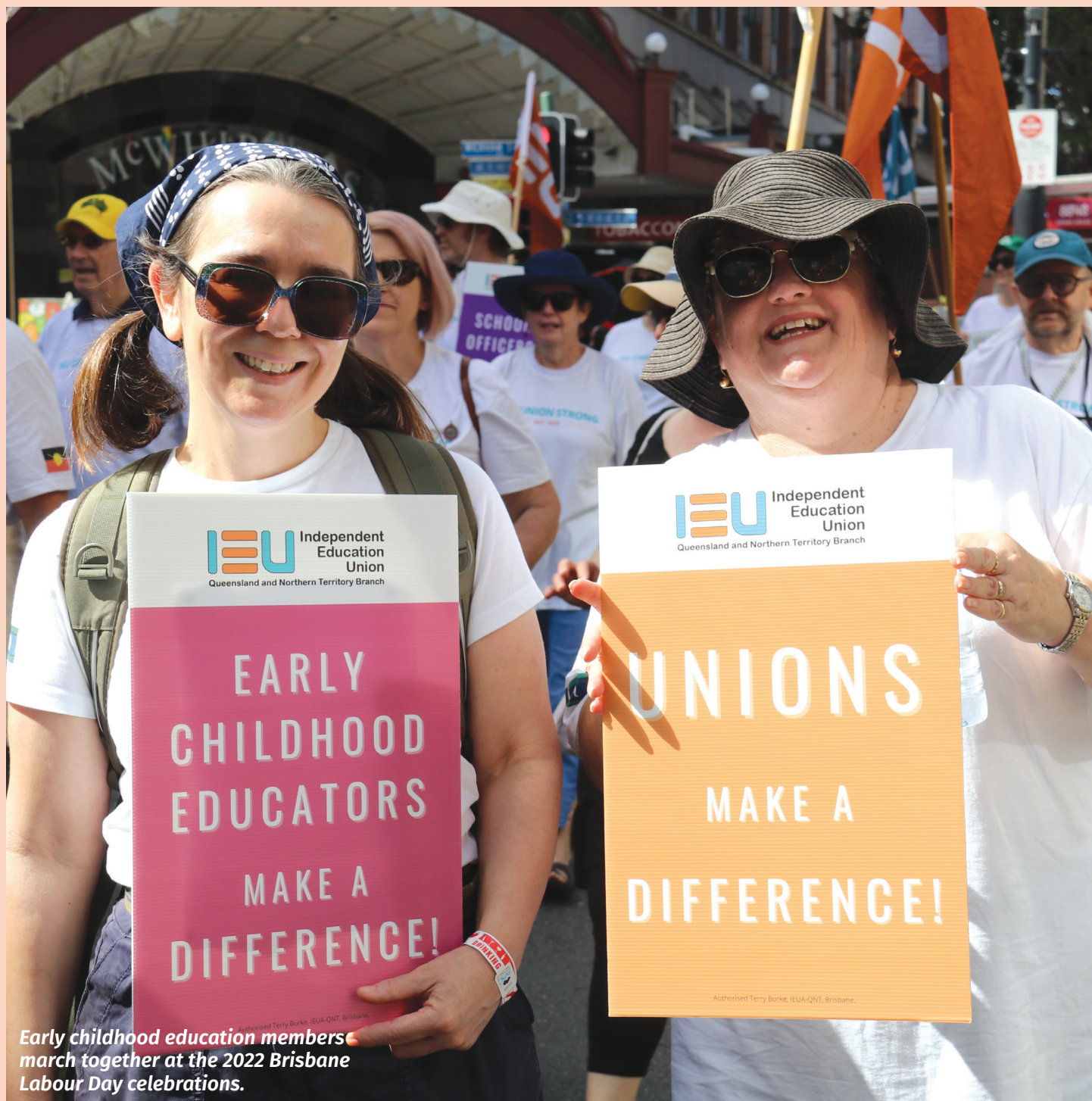
“The IEU has been the main voice that has consistently called for the protection and improvement of working conditions for educators who are essential partners in learning environments for young children,” she said.

“Being an IEU member gives me peace of mind in knowing there is support there should I need it.”

Erna said she was also grateful for regular early childhood sector branch and area meetings, which were held at centres or in the IEU office.

“Kudos must also go to union Organiser Patrick Meikle, who organised in the early childhood sector in Townsville in the 1990s.

“When I joined in 1992, regular meetings were held, and topics of



Early childhood education members march together at the 2022 Brisbane Labour Day celebrations.

discussion included funding for Universal Access, National Quality Standards, kindergarten learning guidelines and the role of central governing bodies.

“As I was employed as a full-time kindergarten assistant, I took on the role of Chapter Representative and made sure that all staff members, whether union members or non-members, were informed of any changes that the IEU forwarded to me,” she said.

Union wins make the difference

Erna and her colleagues at Western Suburbs Kindergarten, with the support of IEU Officers, are currently in negotiations for a replacement collective agreement.

“Matters under consideration include the length of the agreement, wage increases, teacher classifications, nominated supervisor allowance, severance pay, professional development, meal breaks and pupil free days,” Erna said.

“Over the years, Western Suburbs has benefited from the help of many IEU Organisers such as Ros McClellan and Brad Hayes.

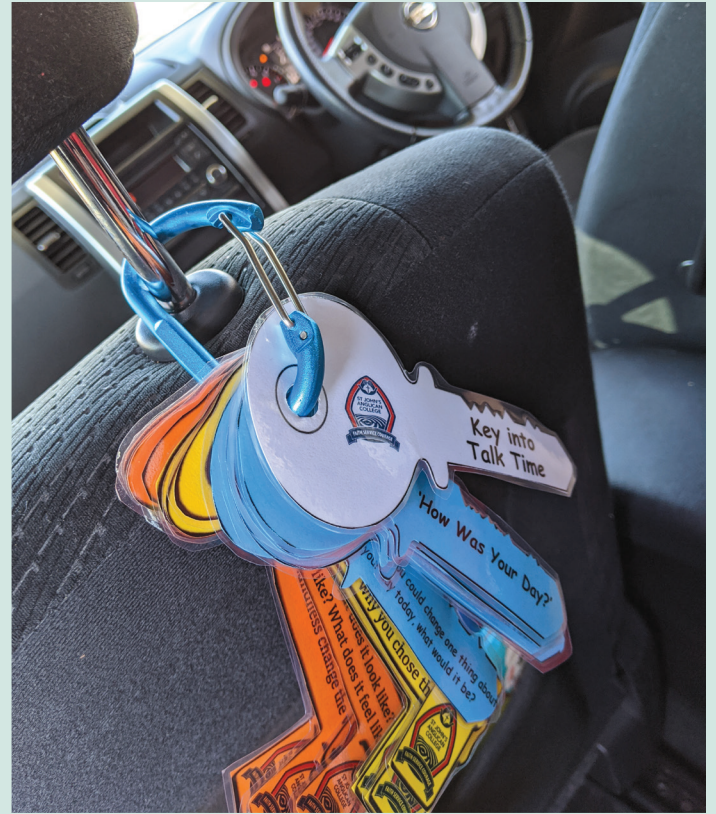
“With an active IEU to oversee working conditions and wages and provide essential training courses, early childhood members can rest assured that they are well supported.”

Erna said there have been many significant union-won conditions which have made a difference for those working in the sector.

“One of the major wins for early childhood education assistants has been the recognition of qualifications resulting in a grade and year tier system for wage increases, as well as sick leave and long service leave provisions.

“The benefit of superannuation contributions and salary sacrifice to super provisions have made my impending retirement more financially secure,” she said.

Our union wishes Erna all the best for her retirement, and we thank her for years of IEU membership and tireless dedication to unionism.



Innovative learning resources get everyone talking

IEU members and early childhood education (ECE) teachers Ronnelle Sanders and Deborah Wilson discuss how they helped strengthen students' oral language skills and development during COVID-19.

Prior to COVID-19, children had opportunities to have daily conversations with peers, interact with teachers and develop essential skills in speaking and understanding. But the pandemic has hugely impacted face-to-face social interaction between children in the past two years, and has reduced the things children learn to talk about.

With fewer experiences outside the home, there has been less opportunity for children to develop new vocabulary or experiment with language.

Although children spent a significant amount of time in the family environment, it was reported by parents that these moments weren't always quality time to develop speaking skills.

Often caregivers were working and on screens themselves, so fewer opportunities for deep conversations were available and the increase in screen time for children

was unavoidable, therefore they lost opportunities to practise their oral language skills.

The impact of declining oral language skills in early years children was present and concerning prior to COVID-19, and research shows that it is not something children will simply 'grow out of'.

Rather, it needs to continue to be addressed and can be done so through increased information given during initial teacher training, as well as reminding parents they are the first teachers in a child's learning journey.

Parents part of the process

Engaging and upskilling parents to perform this role effectively and confidently is incredibly important.

Despite online learning proving to be possible, nothing can replace human contact and face-to-face conversations in developing children's oracy.

We recently presented at the Griffith University Creating Futures Summit, detailing how we adapted our ECE resources during this difficult time.

Over the last couple of years, together with the staff at St John's Anglican College, Forest Lake, we have been experimenting with a number of parent engagement strategies to boost the oracy skills of their early years students at the college.

Undertaking research through the Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) Research in Schools project, and collating data from the St John's parent community, highlighted many opportunities where parent involvement was evident – but not necessarily parent engagement.

Blossom Bags

We reached out to Christy Chrosthwaite with our vision to create take home bags and thus, Blossom Bags™ was born.

Blossom Bags are filled with fun family literacy tasks based on a story book, with comprehension questions and fun activities and props to support the text, as well as fridge magnets and brochures with simple tips for having enriching conversations with children at home.

As well as developing these special bags, we also created some literacy brochures for parents around oracy topics and had these translated into different languages, modelling literacy strategies to parents at specially organised family events before COVID-19 put a stop to these interactions.

Talk Time Keys

We have also created the Talk Time Keys for use within children's home environments, which have had a positive impact on helping families to enhance their young children's oral language journey and maintain contact with the school community.

These laminated keys come with a range of conversation starters useful for the dinner table and car trips.

The keys are divided into colour categories, with open-ended questions, requiring a child to answer with more than just a simple 'yes' or 'no' and thereby promoting deeper, more meaningful conversations and stimulating a child's cognitive and oracy development.

This was also reflected in the feedback from their families.

During COVID-19, videos were created on how to use the Blossom Bags and Talk Keys at home and these were very helpful in continuing the oracy journey while the children were not at school.

There are now 192 sets of keys in circulation, (with more due to be released soon) in the school community (all translated into languages other than English) which parents have reportedly responded to with enthusiasm.

Impact for students

As a result of the Blossom Bags and Talk Time Keys, oracy across the college has grown and improved.

Although difficult at first, we were already a part of an Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) Research in Schools project and had, by coincidence, started work on this project; so when COVID-19 hit, this hastened the speed of information and communication to engage parents.

The teachers at St John's felt able to recalculate and still complete the brief to ensure authentic parent engagement in oracy within the early years.

To find out more, email: christy@blossombags.com.au



Deb Wilson

During her career, Deb Wilson has been a classroom teacher, music teacher and music co-ordinator in the state, independent and tertiary education sectors. Early in her career, she developed a keen interest in the areas of music and learning support and how music can enhance the development of oral language, literacy, numeracy, fine and gross motor skills and social skills in the early years. Deb has

been nominated for a NEITA award and a Teach-X award both times for her interest in parent engagement and community involvement. She is currently upgrading her early childhood education knowledge and skills at Griffith University and teaches Prep at St John's Anglican College, Forest Lake.



Ronnelle Sanders

Ronnelle has been an early childhood education and primary classroom teacher in both state and independent school settings and is currently the EAL/D co-ordinator at St John's, where many students come from families who have English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). Language is her passion, with a key focus on the learning journey of children's oracy skills and the strong interconnection with literacy

and numeracy. She is a strong advocate for the explicit development and establishment of engaged, supportive relationships between the home and school. Ronnelle has been a finalist in the Australian Education Awards for her work in EAL/D Parent and Community Engagement and is an International Oracy Leader and LEAD teacher.

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Danielle Wilson is an Industrial Officer for IEU-QNT. 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 am a director/teacher working in a local committee-run kindy. My days do incorporate some minimal non-contact time, but under my collective agreement, I understand I'm also entitled to additional non-contact time. This works out to be just under two hours per week, to be taken in full day blocks in the last week of each term and backfilled by relief staff. I understand I'm also entitled to release time to undertake the administrative work associated with my role as a director.

This week, the committee advised us we must now get their approval to engage relief staff to fill in for any non-contact time. I'm concerned this will hinder us from exercising our entitlement under the provisions. I've always managed our non-contact days and had the authority to engage relief staff to cover any absence or release. Can the committee do this?

Brigitte



Danielle Wilson

Dear Brigitte

Where your collective agreement provides for additional non-contact time as an entitlement, your employer must provide this and take whatever actions are necessary to ensure you have access. Your non-contact time is in addition to any other release time you may be entitled to in your role. It is crucial staff assert their rights to these entitlements.

Unless there is a question over the entitlement to non-contact time, we can see no reason why the committee would want to intervene. This undermines your authority and

autonomy as the director and discourages staff from accessing their rightful entitlements. This clearly needs to be addressed with your committee.

You should raise these issues directly and formally with the committee and should do so with the support of our union. We can provide advice regarding how to make this approach. Our union can also provide support and representation should the committee not be willing to resolve this matter satisfactorily. As a community-based committee, it is possible they do not understand their obligations and it might be necessary to point this out.

We encourage you to contact our union for further advice and support with this matter.

Danielle

Dear Tina

I am a four-year trained early childhood teacher working full time in a private long day care centre. My employer pays above-award rates of pay, which I'm happy with. My employer recently told me that my attendance at after work meetings, like parent meetings, staff meetings and sometimes special meetings, are not paid as I get above-award rates. There was nothing in my contract that indicated that I was forgoing any overtime payment. Can my employer do this?

Karen



Tina Smith

Dear Karen

Your employer must pay you overtime for work you do outside of your contracted hours if you have been directed by your employer to attend the meetings. Alternatively, by mutual agreement between you and your employer, you can choose to take the

time as time in lieu. Your employer cannot use the above-award rates to cover other obligations of work you do. The above-award rate that you agreed to work for is your base hourly rate not inclusive of overtime. If you receive a new or varied employment contract, contact the IEU and we will be able to check it.

Tina

GIVEAWAYS



Welcome, child!

Author and Illustrator: Sally Morgan

Publisher: Magabala Books

Welcome, child! is Sally Morgan's beautiful and heartfelt celebration of the love we feel for a new child. Simple, elegant and adorable, this stunning board book is the perfect story to share and the sweetest way to welcome a little one to the world. Sally Morgan's colourful and beautiful artwork depict love using a bright colour palette of happy birds, dancing stars and hearts that shine and the gentle lilt of her text echoes the deep joy of new life.

Full of unconditional affection that will stand the test of time, this book is the perfect gift for a newborn and an absolute joy to read repeatedly.

Sticker World: Castle

Illustrator: Aviel Basil

Author: Kait Eaton

Publisher: Lonely Planet Kids

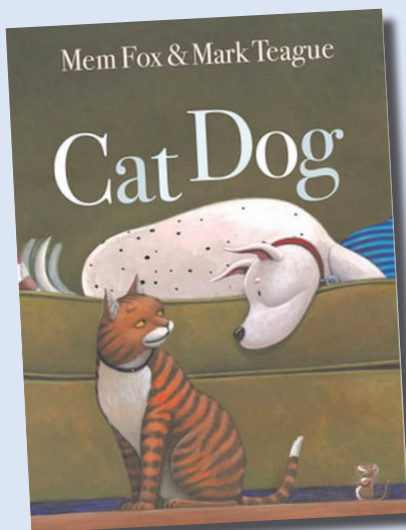
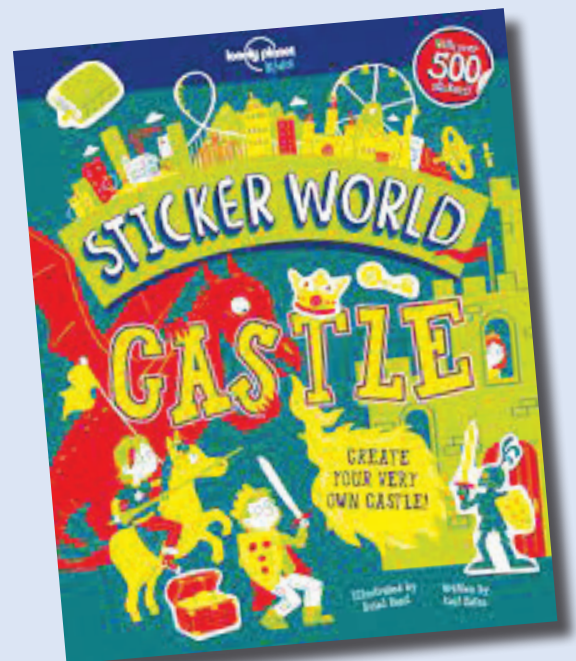
Get ready to create the best castle ever!

From designing medieval costumes and adding ghosts to your spooky dungeons, this is your chance to build the ultimate castle. Design a coat of arms, entertain friends with enormous banquets and put on a jousting competition.

Just add stickers, doodles and lots of colour to bring it all to life.

As the castle owner, you'll have loads of fun activities to do, including:

- creating a map so visitors can find their way around
- designing suits of armour and dressing up like a knight
- decorating your walls with funny family portraits
- counting all your treasure and designing a crown
- cooking up a delicious medieval feast in the kitchen
- organising an amazing birds of prey demonstration
- growing lots of vegetables and planting flowers.



Cat Dog

Author: Mem Fox

Illustrator: Mark Teague

Puffin Books

Join an unlikely animal trio for some irresistibly funny antics in this read-aloud gem from bestselling, award-winning and much-loved author Mem Fox and acclaimed illustrator Mark Teague.

There is a cat in this book.

There is also a dog.

And there is a whole lot of crazy stuff going on ...

Right?

Email entries to giveaways@ieu.asn.au with the title of the book you would like to receive in the subject line. Write your name, membership number and postal address in the body of your email. All entries must be received by 2 December.

Targets are good. Action is better.



We've divested from some of the big fossil fuel companies.

NGS Super is committed to taking action to address climate change and create a better future for our members. That's why we recently divested from some of the big fossil fuel companies. We're on our way towards our goal of a carbon-neutral portfolio by 2030.

Find out more about our decision to divest and our plans for the future.

ngs
Super

CARBON
NEUTRAL
BY 2030


Climate
Active
NETWORK MEMBER

WARMARKET
IMP. DIVISION
ESG
★★★★★
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