



**EARLY LEARNING ANNUAL REPORT**  
**ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA 2014–15**



EARLY  
LEARNING  
ASSOCIATION  
AUSTRALIA

The voice for parents and service providers



# **EARLY LEARNING ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA** **THE VOICE FOR PARENTS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS**



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*Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) exists to support the needs and champion the collective views of those who seek to elevate early learning to its rightful status as the foundation stage of a child's life-long learning journey – a status that is supported by educational and medical research.*

As an independent peak body with over two decades experience working with parents and early learning providers, ELAA has a grass roots understanding of the value and challenges presented by early childhood education.

We share our members' passion for delivering excellence in early learning to children before they commence school and we help them to do this by providing professional support and resources on a wide range of matters from effective governance to OHS.

ELAA also provides a united voice for parents and service-providers alike; a voice that is clearly heard and respected by policy makers, thanks to our understanding of government, relationships with early learning sector stakeholders, and advocacy experience.

### **Our vision**

Excellence in early learning for every child.

### **Our purpose**

As a national peak body, we champion excellence in early learning for children and support parents and service providers.

### **Our values**

Excellence – Learning – Inclusive –  
Enabling – Integrity – Respect

## PUTTING A VALUE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE



**\$13.3 BILLION**

FROM INCREASED  
PARTICIPATION OF  
VULNERABLE CHILDREN.\*



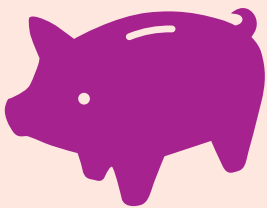
**\$6 BILLION**

FROM INCREASED  
FEMALE WORKFORCE  
PARTICIPATION.\*



**\$10.3 BILLION**

FROM CHILDREN  
RECEIVING A QUALITY  
EDUCATION AND CARE  
PROGRAM.\*

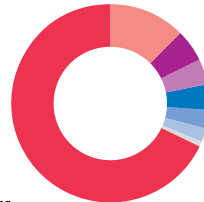


\* Source: *Putting a value on early childhood education and care in Australia*. 2014 PricewaterhouseCoopers page 4. Total GDP impact cumulative to 2050. GDP impact in 2012–13 dollars.

# 2014–15 HIGHLIGHTS

## OUR MEMBERS

OVER  
**1200**  
SERVICES

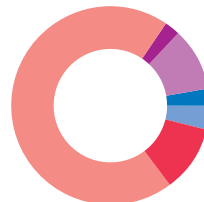


\* Cluster Manager members operate some 492 services.

- Independent kindergartens (558)
- Long day care (101)
- School sites (44)
- Local government (34)
- Cluster Managers (34)\*
- Private child care centres (26)
- Independent schools (18)
- Out of school hours care (5)

## MEMBER CONTACTS

OVER  
**9000**  
MEMBER  
ENQUIRIES



- Cluster managers (11.1%)
- Independent services (69.5%)
- Services on school sites (2.6%)
- Long day care services (10.3%)
- Individuals (2.8%)
- Local government (3.7%)

## A VISION FOR THE SECTOR



**STRATEGIC  
ACTION PLAN  
2014–2024  
LAUNCHED**

The plan outlines ELAA's long-term aspirations and short-term actions in order to improve the quality of early learning for Australia's social and economic future.

## TRAINING

**22**  
GOVERNANCE  
TRAINING  
SESSIONS  
DELIVERED



**380**  
COMMITTEE MEMBERS  
ATTENDED GOVERNANCE  
TRAINING

**133**  
ATTENDEES AT EMPLOYEE  
MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT  
TRAINING SESSIONS

**14**  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
SEMINARS DELIVERED TO  
OVER 250 EDUCATORS

## MEMBER RESOURCES



ELAA launched the *Employee Management and Development Kit* developed with funding support from the Department of Education and Training. Training was delivered in 12 locations across Victoria and was attended by 22 services in 2014 and 73 services in 2015.

## ADVOCACY



## 6000 SIGNATURES FOR OUR KEEP 15 HOURS CAMPAIGN

In a partial win for the sector, the Federal Government announced further funding of \$840 million over two years to guarantee the continuation of universal access to 15 hours of preschool (in the year before school) until the end of 2017.



ELAA also launched its Victorian State election campaign, *Preschool Matters: and Parents Vote*, calling on the parties to end the uncertainty for parents and services and continue funding for 15 hours of preschool.

ELAA made formal submissions to the following State and Federal Government reviews:

- review of the National Quality Framework (Cth)
- Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Child Care Measures) Bill 2014
- response to the Productivity Commission's draft report
- consultation on the Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) for the National Quality Framework.



## CONSULTANCY

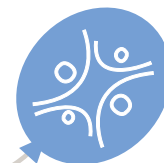
## SUPPORTED OVER 20 SERVICES WITH TARGETED CONSULTANCIES



including improving their OHS through inspections and training; organisation policy and process reviews; and mediation.

## CONFERENCE

## 2015 TOGETHER WE GROW CONFERENCE



## BIGGEST TO DATE

ROAD SAFETY  
EDUCATION

ELAA continued to deliver the *Starting Out Safely* road safety education program to early learning services, CALD organisations, Maternal and Child Health services and retailers on behalf of VicRoads. The success of the program is reflected in the fact that this year it was extended for a further three years.

## 500

PRESCHOOL SESSIONS

## 10,000

CHILDREN & FAMILIES ENGAGED

## 1000

EDUCATORS TRAINED

## 436

ATTENDEES AT CHILD CAR SEAT INFORMATION SESSIONS



## EVENTS

## ELAA PARTNERED TO DELIVER THE 13TH ANNUAL ROMP & STOMP AT MELBOURNE MUSEUM FOR CHILDREN'S WEEK

Romp & Stomp, a key Children's Week event, is especially for children between birth and five years of age to experience a number of fun play-based activities which are age appropriate and emphasise the different aspects of early childhood learning and development.



## CARING FOR KIDS RAFFLE

Presented by ELAA and Playgroup Victoria



## \$43,900

BACK TO SERVICE PROVIDERS AND PLAYGROUPS, RECEIVING ONE DOLLAR FOR EACH TICKET SOLD

## AWARDS

## STARTING OUT SAFELY ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION AWARD MARGARET CHUA

McKinnon Kindergarten



## McARTHUR EARLY CHILDHOOD VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS TANIA WATTS-HALL

Olympic Avenue Kindergarten,  
Cheltenham

# ORGANISATIONAL REPORT 2014–15



**JO GEURTS** President



**SHANE LUCAS** CEO

We are delighted to present ELAA's organisational report for 2014–15.

Over the past year, ELAA has continued to work with members and stakeholders at the State and national level to meet many policy and funding challenges. As an independent peak body providing services to a diverse membership, and advocating on behalf of service delivers, parents and children, we have worked hard to support the early learning sector, and to represent members' concerns to governments, in the media, and throughout the wider community.

## Advocating for our members

In 2014–15, ELAA collaborated with other peak bodies, members and large service providers to make various submissions and formal representations to the Productivity Commission inquiry into early learning and childcare; to the Federal Government regarding both the proposed Childcare Assistance Package, and the review of the National Quality Framework; and we have called frequently and consistently for the maintenance of federal funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access that delivers 15 hours of early learning to all children in the year before school.

## Educator : child ratios

A key challenge has been – and will continue to be – the implementation of changes to educator : child ratios that will come into effect from 1 January 2016 as part of the NQF. ELAA is a strong supporter of the framework, but change is rarely easy and services must grapple with issues of funding, group size, demand for places, staffing profiles, and infrastructure constraints.

We welcomed the commitment of the Victorian Government to support the implementation of new ratios through the provision of \$83.7 million over four years, and to providing additional funding support to enable ELAA to work closely with services – big and small – to devise financially viable program structures for the coming year.

We will continue to work with governments to ensure early learning services remain viable, affordable, and accessible into the future.

## Providing value to members

We have also sought to continuously improve the utility and quality of our services to members.

The ELAA Member Services team supports the sector with advice on governance, industrial relations and good management practice, responding to over 9000 inquiries in the past year. Our governance training programs were well attended while our seminar program expanded into new areas of pedagogy and practice.

## Annual conference

Our sector's commitment to quality practice was also on show in late May when over 1000 delegates and 53 exhibitors attended the 2015 *Together we grow* Early Childhood Education Conference. It was our biggest conference in ten years! The success of the conference demonstrates our ever-strengthening partnership with Gowrie Victoria, and the guidance and hard work of the Conference Reference Committee, whose members represent a broad cross-section of the early childhood sector.

## Road safety education

We are currently in the fourth year of our partnership with VicRoads to deliver Victoria's unique early childhood road safety education program, *Starting out Safely*. This program continues to grow and to deepen our community's understanding of safe behaviours on and around our roads. ELAA attended preschools, engaged children and families in road safety education, and also delivered professional development training to educators across Victoria, helping them to incorporate road safety education principles and activities into their curricula.

## Industrial agreement

ELAA continues to work with the Municipal Association of Victoria and the State Government to negotiate with the Australian Education Union to achieve a new industrial agreement for teachers and educators in our sector.



### Partners and supporters

We are always appreciative of the support of our preferred partners, philanthropic sponsors, and fraternal organisations across the education and community sectors. Developing strategic partnerships that advance our early learning sector is something that ELAA wishes to grow and this is articulated in our Strategic Action Plan: *Excellence for Every Child. A 10-year vision for excellence: 2014–2024.*

### Board and staff

We would like to thank the volunteer members of the ELAA Board for their leadership and invaluable support. The Board farewelled Katie Wyatt, who joined in 2011 and served as Secretary, while we welcomed Kate Fischer to the Board at the 2014 AGM.

We also thank the ELAA staff for their professionalism and dedication – we pride ourselves on delivering the best possible service to members.

Our regular engagement with members is a constant source of learning and inspiration for ELAA's staff and Board. The support and feedback you give helps us to continually improve the services we provide. ELAA will continue to be an influential and independent representative voice for our members, working to maintain a strong and viable early learning sector for children and families.



Jo Geurts President



Shane Lucas CEO



## OUR VISION – EXCELLENCE FOR EVERY CHILD

ELAA is in a unique position to articulate the collective voices of families and early learning service providers to governments and the community at large.

Our vision of excellence in early learning for every child is laid out in the ELAA Strategic Action Plan: *Excellence for Every Child*.  
*A 10-year vision for excellence: 2014–2024.*

The key focus of our Action Plan is on developing and supporting quality in early learning.

### OUR 10-YEAR VISION FOR EXCELLENCE

- 1 Universal access to free, high quality learning (at least 15 hours for 4-year-olds and five hours for three-year-olds).
- 2 More programs and inclusive models that address social and economic disadvantage.
- 3 Service models that better integrate early years services, from playgroups to school.
- 4 Research-based practice models that meet emerging needs.
- 5 A qualified, highly professional workforce.
- 6 Greater collaboration across the education sector leading to the extension of ELAA's influence and capacity to advocate for early learning.
- 7 A leading advocacy role for ELAA in public policy debates.

### REALISING OUR VISION



Our vision reflects that of our members. To realise this vision, ELAA's Strategic Action Plan defines four key areas, each with short-term actions and long-term aspirations.

**Build on our strengths** – the credibility and integrity of our existing services coupled with ELAA's capacity to engage with members make us a key influencer of early learning policy. We will build on this through improved member communications, a greater national focus, and a sustainable financial strategy.

**Advocate and influence** – the more ELAA is recognised as the voice of the sector, the greater value we offer to our members in terms of our capacity to advocate at State and national levels on key matters of policy.

ELAA will continue to increase its profile as a national peak body and capacity as the leading sector advocate through facilitating member and stakeholder collaboration. We will continue to provide targeted advocacy on issues such as 15 hours funding for 4-year-old pre-school and ensuring our sector remains viable and sustainable into the future.

**Support excellence** – from enquiries about Industrial Relations to quality implementation, we field over 9000 phone calls and emails annually. Our work is set to expand as our profile lifts nationally and we seek to provide greater support for rural and regional members.

We will continue to support service providers and educators through enhanced ELAA training programs and advocacy that supports a workforce strategy where appropriately qualified educators are attracted to and retained by the early learning sector.

**Building strategic partnerships** – existing partnerships bring valuable benefits to members such as the VicRoads *Starting Out Safely* road safety project, and the annual conference with Gowrie Victoria. Our corporate partners offer ELAA members a range of products from insurance to stationery supplies at subsidised prices.

We will actively seek new partnerships in Victoria and interstate, particularly with expert organisations working with vulnerable children and those with additional needs or developmental delay.

Long-term, ELAA will partner with educational institutions to develop a shared approach to address workforce needs; develop partnerships that progress sector inclusion initiatives; and work with the community to progress our Early Childhood Education Foundation to support disadvantaged children.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Early Childhood Education Foundation (the Foundation) was established in 1997 by Dr Terry Nienhuys with an original endowment of just \$20!

ELAA was appointed as the Trustee of this endowment fund and has slowly but steadily grown the Foundation.

*Over the past 17 years, under ELAA's management, the Foundation has provided more than \$125,000 in kindergarten fee support to nearly 200 families to enable their children access kindergarten in their local area.*

The purpose of the Foundation is to:

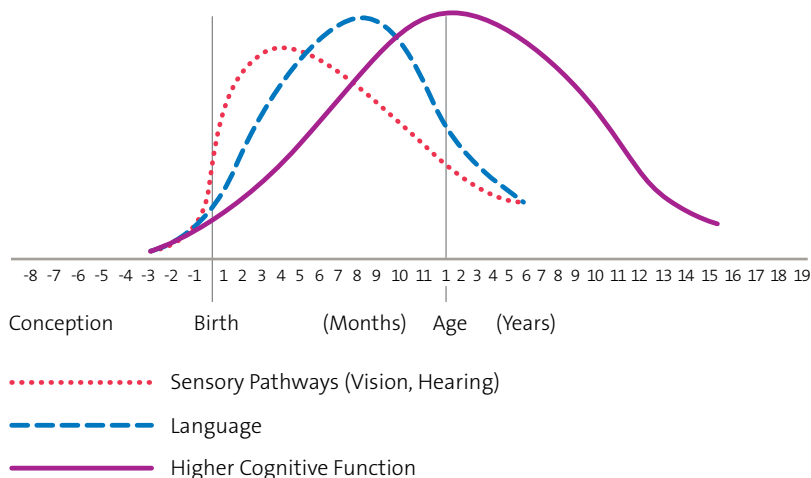
- ensure that children from families experiencing financial difficulties have access to a kindergarten program
- develop an active donor program.

ELAA strongly believes in the right of every child to access a high quality early learning program. The evidence base clearly demonstrates the benefits to all children from accessing a high quality early learning program, but more importantly for children from vulnerable families.

The Foundation receives several applications each year from families experiencing severe financial difficulties that fall short of the criteria for a health care card by a very narrow margin, and are therefore not able to access the kindergarten fee subsidy provided by government. There is a growing demand for support from the Foundation from these families.

More information about the Foundation and how to make a donation can be found on the ELAA website [www.elaa.org.au](http://www.elaa.org.au).

### CRITICAL BRAIN AND SENSORY DEVELOPMENT DURING PREGNANCY AND THE FIRST YEARS OF LIFE<sup>1</sup>



IF THE BASIC FOUNDATIONS (SEE FIGURE ABOVE) ARE NOT ESTABLISHED THEN MORE ADVANCED SKILLS, CRUCIAL TO SUCCESS IN EDUCATION AND LATER LIFE, WILL HAVE NO FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO DEVELOP.<sup>2</sup>

### CHILDREN FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE NEED THE ECEF...



Escaping domestic violence and burdened with her former partner's debts, Jack's mother could not afford his kindergarten fees while supporting Jack and his sibling. Diagnosed with PTSD, and identified as an 'at risk' child, Jack is at risk of further isolation if he cannot access a quality early learning program.

Noori's parents are asylum seekers from Africa. They had enrolled Noori in kindergarten but had to withdraw her as they struggled with providing for Noori and her two siblings (one of who is autistic). Their situation is exacerbated by temporary visa working restrictions. With developmental delays, and issues with speech development, Noori really needs access to a kindergarten program where she can interact with children her own age, develop language skills and make social connections.



1 Graph reproduced from DEECD *Early Years Strategic Plan. Improving Outcomes for All Victorian Children 2014–2020*. March 2014, p.5 with reference to Nelson, C.A 2000, 'The neurobiological bases of early intervention' in Shonkoff, J.P., and Meisels, S.J. (eds), *Handbook of early childhood intervention*, Second Edition (pp204–227), Cambridge MA: Cambridge University Press.

2 DEECD *Early Years Strategic Plan. Improving Outcomes for All Victorian Children 2014–2020*. March 2014, p.4 with reference to Heckman, J. 2008, *Schools, Skills and Synapses: IZA Discussion Paper No. 3515*, Bonn: IZA.

## OUR SERVICES

### Advocacy and policy

In 2014–15, ELAA continued to work with members and stakeholders at the State and national level to make submissions and representations to governments on critical policy and funding challenges.

### Productivity Commission inquiry

The Productivity Commission inquiry into early childhood learning and care presented an important opportunity for ELAA to restate the research evidence and practice that highlights the benefits of quality early learning for children, families – and society as a whole. We presented at the Commission's public hearing in August 2014, met again with the Commissioners in September, and lodged a final submission to the inquiry on 5 September 2014.

### Childcare Assistance Package and National Quality Framework

ELAA worked closely with stakeholders and members to develop submissions in response to the Federal Government's proposed *Childcare Assistance Package* and the ongoing review of the National Quality Framework, and we are now working with our colleagues at Early Childhood Australia and other organisations on development of a longer-term, nationally-focussed

community campaign stating the universal benefits of early learning.

### National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access – 15 hours.

Over the past year, we called frequently and consistently for the maintenance of Federal Government funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access that delivers 15 hours of early learning to all children in the year before school. Our campaign included an online petition to the Federal Minister which attracted over 6000 signatories. The Federal Government has now committed to funding the Agreement for a further two years but more work is required to ensure continued investment beyond 2017.

### Victorian pre-election campaign

In Victoria, we campaigned in the lead-up to the November State Election, and hosted a member forum with the then Minister for Early Childhood Development, and the then Shadow Minister. Our campaign called for bi-partisan support for 15 hours; for full implementation of the NQF; and for a future government (as primary funder) to “get involved” and assist employers and unions to resolve the industrial dispute by providing additional funding for teacher and educator salaries.

We have subsequently worked with the new government to reach a Heads of Agreement with the Australian Education Union, and to address the critical challenge presented by the implementation of changes to educator : child ratios.

Additionally, ELAA continued to influence the development of policy at all levels of government through our presence on State and Commonwealth advisory and stakeholder groups, and steering committees. We met regularly with Federal and State Ministers and their advisors, industry bodies and with stakeholders at a local government level.

### Our members' views are vital

ELAA's advocacy agenda each year is shaped by our understanding of the political and policy landscape, and by the experience and views of our diverse membership.

Member views are invaluable to ELAA's advocacy work and we encourage members to participate in:

- the annual member survey
- regular member forums such as the Cluster Manager Reference Group and Industrial Relations Reference Group
- issues-based member focus groups, or to
- call or email us.

At all times, ELAA remains thoroughly independent and unafraid to “speak the truth to power” on our members' behalf.

### Advice, consultancy, training and resources

ELAA offers tailored support services to the early learning sector, including non-members, while ELAA members receive exclusive services such as IR and HR support.

Key services provided by ELAA include:

- governance support for service managers including training for early learning service committee and Board members
- specialist industrial advisors assist members with industrial relations, and human resources support including payroll advice
- professional development sessions on targeted industry issues and the annual *Together we grow* early learning sector conference (in partnership with Gowrie Victoria)
- consultancy on matters including OHS, organisational processes, and development of organisation specific resources such as policy and procedure manuals



*Our advocacy played its part in ensuring that the Government has provided new funds to support the enterprise agreement, and we welcomed the Government's announcement in June 2015 of an additional \$83.7 million over four years to assist implementation of ratios.*

- print and digital resources such as the ELAA website, Facebook, *Early Talk* Blogsite, PolicyWorks Manual, Early Childhood Management Manual, fortnightly E-news, weekly Job Alert, and quarterly PreSchool Matters publication
- fundraising support.

### Service highlights 2014–15

#### Advice

The ELAA Advisory Team received over 9000 calls during 2014–15 from ELAA members and early learning sector stakeholders.

#### Consultancy

ELAA supported over 20 services with targeted consultancies including improving their OHS through inspections and training; organisation policy and process reviews; and mediation.

#### Training

This financial year ELAA delivered 22 Governance training sessions to over 380 members of committees of management. This was in addition to the development of an online governance training package designed for committees and Boards of early learning services. The online package, which focuses on NQS Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management, will be available to the sector shortly.

ELAA also delivered 14 professional development seminars to over 250 early childhood educators covering reflective practice, working with vulnerable children, learning environments (for positive behaviour), behaviour support for children with ASD, and educational leadership among others.

#### Resources

ELAA launched the Employee Management and Development Kit, developed with funding assistance from the Department of Education and Training, and supported this resource by delivering 12 training sessions delivered to 133 attendees during the year.

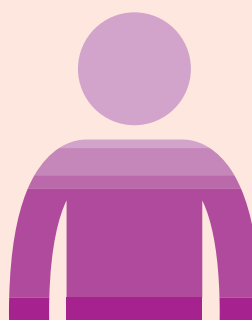
### WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT OUR SERVICES

"THAT IS HELP BEYOND ANY EXPECTATION... IN AN INCREDIBLY BUSY TIME (KINDER AND LIFE) YOU HAVE EASED MY LOAD SO MUCH."

"AN EXCELLENT PD OPPORTUNITY THAT TARGETED A BIG AREA OF NEED. I LEFT FEELING THERE WAS A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO INTERACTIONS WITH VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES..."

"THANKS FOR YOUR EXPERT GUIDANCE THROUGH A VERY TRICKY PERIOD FOR OUR COMMITTEE AND THE ADVICE YOU GUYS GAVE MEANT THAT WE MANAGED THE PROCESS WITHOUT FEAR OF MAKING ANY MAJOR MISTAKES."

### ELAA REPRESENTATION ON REFERENCE GROUPS 2014–15



Victorian Government (10)

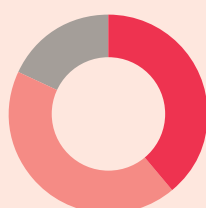
Federal Government (2)

Local Government (1)

State peak bodies and organisations (8)

Federal peak bodies and organisations (2)

### ELAA MEMBER SERVICES INCOMING ENQUIRIES BY TOPIC 2014–15



● Governance (39%)

● Industrial relations (43%)

● Payroll (18%)

## STARTING OUT SAFELY – ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION

“I FELT THAT THE MESSAGES, PARTICULARLY THE VISUAL MESSAGES, WERE EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE FOR ASSISTING OUR CLIENT GROUP (FROM THE KAREN COMMUNITY) TO UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ISSUES RELATING TO CHILD RESTRAINTS.”

SUE GHALAYINI, BENDIGO  
COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICE,  
CALD FACILITATOR.

*In 2014 the Starting Out Safely Road Safety Education project delivered by ELAA on behalf of VicRoads was extended for a further three-year contract.*



On behalf of VicRoads, ELAA delivers *Starting Out Safely*, Victoria's Early Childhood Road Safety Education (RSE) Program to preschool children, parents, carers and early learning providers.

During the past four years, ELAA has demonstrated its passion for road safety by not only meeting (and in some instances exceeding) project targets, but also in our approach to delivering effective programs.

We have combined the evidence bases of contemporary early childhood education and road safety in our RSE programs, to enhance the safety of children and their families as road users.

### Education, professional development, and policy

Our RSE professional development sessions are designed to encourage educators to view children as active collaborators with adults in their own learning rather than being passive recipients of adult's ideas.

Our ThingleToodle education sessions are specifically designed around this contemporary education theory, and encourage children to be responsible for their own and others learning of road safety messages.

We have worked with and brought together Victorian communities, educators, policy makers, retailers, and influencers in the early childhood sector to educate them about the importance of road safety for young children, and encourage them to embrace road safety for children as part of their work/lives.

This has extended to ELAA developing road safety education policies for early childhood services as well as working very closely with Family Day Care Australia to promote FDC specific road safety education and safe transportation of children policies.

### Working with CALD communities

ELAA has worked with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and other community groups to educate them about the safe use of child car seats, and to improve their knowledge and practice in relation to the use of child car seats in their vehicles.

This included identifying the need for height charts that addressed the specific cultural needs among the CALD community.

### Multilingual child car seat resources

Additionally, we successfully applied for a grant from the Transport Accident Commission to develop child car seat information in multiple languages. These resources are now available in 22 languages as well as 10 audio files.

### New RSE website

The newly developed [www.childroadsafetyeducation.org.au](http://www.childroadsafetyeducation.org.au) website houses an extensive amount of RSE information and resources for families, carers and service providers.

The *Starting Out Safely* program has highlighted to ELAA the enormous potential for road safety education to be embedded in all early childhood settings.

## STARTING OUT SAFELY PROGRAM OBJECTIVES



**Advocacy** – advocating for the value of early childhood Road Safety Education (RSE) at State and national levels to improve road safety outcomes for children.



**Professional education** – deliver RSE professional development sessions to early childhood professionals and students across Victoria.



**Child car seat education** – deliver child car seat education.



**Preschool education** – deliver RSE direct to preschool children and service providers through Thingletoodle education sessions delivered at preschools across Victoria.

“THE CHILDREN REALLY ENJOYED THE THINGLETOODLE EDUCATION PROGRAM AND GAVE US A FOCUS POINT FOR INTRODUCING AND EXTENDING ROAD SAFETY AWARENESS BOTH WITH THE CHILDREN AS WELL AS WITH FAMILIES.” **WENDY HAYNE, SARA COURT PRESCHOOL, TRARALGON.**

## THINGLETOODLE SESSIONS

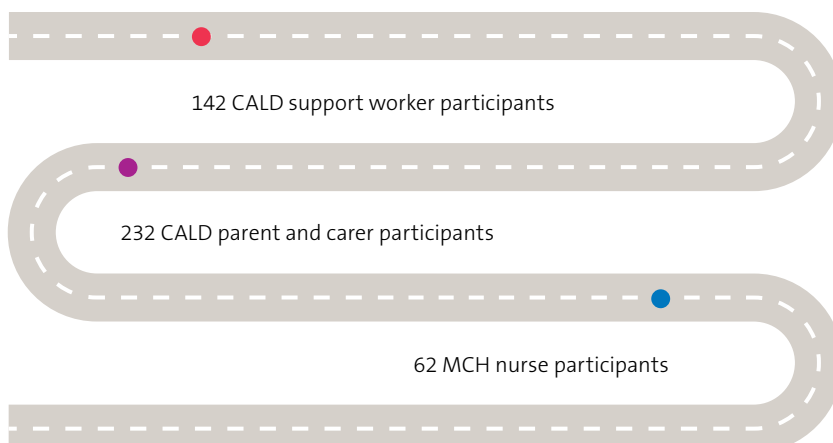
500 sessions delivered to over 10,000 Victorian preschool children (July 2014 – June 2015)



- Barwon (10%)
- Gippsland (9%)
- Grampians (8%)
- Hume (8%)
- Loddon (11%)
- Northern Metro (17%)
- Southern Metro (14%)
- Western Metro (11%)
- Eastern Metro (12%)

## CHILD CAR SEAT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Child car seat information sessions delivered in Victoria 2014–2015



## OVER FOUR YEARS...

**2150**

PRESCHOOLS  
HOSTED A  
THINGLE  
TOODLE  
SESSION

**5000**

EARLY CHILDHOOD  
EDUCATORS HAVE  
RECEIVED RSE  
PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT

**2550**

PARENTS AND  
CARERS FROM CALD  
COMMUNITIES  
ATTENDED CHILD  
CAR SEAT  
INFORMATION  
SESSIONS

**40,000**

PRESCHOOL  
CHILDREN ENGAGED  
IN A THINGLETOODLE  
PROGRAM





## SUPPORTING MEMBERS AND THE SECTOR THROUGH KEY PROJECTS

As part of its service to members, ELAA undertook the following projects during the year with funding support from various sources.

### Online learning package

*Supporting Committees of Management/Boards to tackle NQS Quality Area 7*

With funding support from the Victorian Department of Education and Training, ELAA has been developing an online learning package spread over eight short modules. This package unpacks the requirements of Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management, and provides guidance to service managers on how best to meet the requirements of the standard. The project is currently in the final stages of development.

### NQS support project

*Supporting services to implement the National Quality Framework and Standards*

In May 2013, the Victorian Government committed funding to ELAA to support funded kindergartens in implementing the National Quality Framework and Standards. The aim of this project was to support services assessed as “Working Towards” or “Not Meeting” NQS in Quality Area 7, and help them improve the quality of programs delivered, and achieve an improved quality rating. The project was also aimed at supporting committees/Boards fulfil their governance and regulatory responsibilities in providing a high quality service to families and the community.

### Strengthening the participation of children and parents in early learning and community project

*Supporting rural and regional families to access community playgroups.*

This three-year pilot project is a partnership between ELAA and Playgroup Victoria, with Playgroup Victoria playing the lead role. The project aims to grow the participation of birth to 4-year-olds and their families in community playgroups, as a pathway to promote early learning in the home, and to strengthen the role of parents as the first and most enduring educators of their children.

Operating from three sites in rural Victoria – Gippsland, Wimmera, and Ballarat and Surrounds – the project is making great inroads into promoting playgroups to rural communities, and the emotional, social and cognitive benefits to children from attending playgroups.

### Sector consultation project

*Supporting the sector to optimise Kindergarten Cluster Management (KCM)*

As part of the DET established KCM Strengthening Project, ELAA was engaged to consult with committee members and educators from a range of independent kindergarten services that are currently in KCM, and those that considered but did not pursue KCM, as a management option for their service.

The purpose of this targeted project was to gain a greater understanding of the independent kindergarten sector’s perceptions of and experiences with KCM, including benefits, risks, disadvantages and factors influencing the decision to enter or exit a KCM arrangement.

The results of this project have been made available to the Department to inform the development of the new KCM policy framework and outcome measures.

*So far ELAA has supported over 110 services in metropolitan and rural Victoria through the NQS Support Project. ELAA also provided additional intensive support to 22 services assessed by DET as “working towards” or “not meeting” the NQS.*

### Employee Management and Development Kit project

*Supporting service managers to source, develop, and retain quality staff.*

ELAA has developed an Employee Management and Development Kit (with funding support from the Department of Education and Training) to support committees of management and cluster managers with the recruitment, induction and development of educators and other staff, and to meet the requirements of Quality Area 7 of the NQS in relation to staff development.

This is a comprehensive kit outlining strategies for managing all aspects of employee development and relations.

ELAA launched the kit this year and delivered training in 12 locations across Victoria with 22 services attending training in 2014 and 73 in 2015.

## 2015 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CONFERENCE

*The 2015 Early Childhood Education Conference: Together we grow – investing in our future attracted over 1000 delegates and was the biggest in the conference's ten-year history.*



*Investing in our future* was the theme of this year's 2015 Early Childhood Education Conference hosted by ELAA and Gowrie Victoria.

Packed into two dynamic days, the event showcased a program full of high-calibre international and Australian speakers, providing fresh, research-based perspectives on the sector.

The conference was opened by the Parliamentary Secretary, Judith Graley MP, on Friday while the Minister for Families and Children, Jenny Mikakos, addressed the delegates on the Saturday. Writer and social commentator, Kaz Cooke, warmed up the audience with a delightful account of the challenges of parenthood.

### Speakers

The keynote speaker, Professor Charles E Pascal, entertained and informed the opening plenary session. Currently Professor of Applied Psychology and Human Development at the University of Toronto where he is the coordinator of the PhD in Early Learning program, Professor Pascal reflected on the importance of both pedagogical investment in learning outcomes for children, and the importance of financial investment by governments in the provision of quality early childhood

education and care services at a time when the sector has been under review by the Productivity Commission.

Saturday's delegates were treated to an interesting plenary session presented by Associate Professor, Sharon Goldfeld, who is a paediatrician and research fellow at the Centre for Community Child Health at the Royal Children's Hospital and Co-Group leader of Child Health Policy, Equity and Translation at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute. Associate Professor Goldfeld's session was called *Using a place based approach to create change for children* and looked at the challenge for children's policy in Australia, the impacts of disadvantage for children and how place can change children's chances.

Conference attendees enjoyed a choice of nearly 40 speaker sessions to choose from over the two days. Many of this year's speaker presentations are available for download as well as recordings of the plenary sessions. Visit the conference website [www.togetherwegrow.com.au](http://www.togetherwegrow.com.au).

### Thank you to our supporters

ELAA and Gowrie Victoria are grateful to the Creswick Foundation for bringing Professor Charles E Pascal to speak at this year's conference. We would also like to extend our thanks to our gold sponsors, the Department of Education and Training, for their contribution which covered accommodation costs for rural delegates, as well as our other sponsors AustralianSuper and VicRoads.



## THE 2015 CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE



**2**  
DAYS



**1040**  
ATTENDEE  
REGISTRATIONS



**39**  
SESSIONS



**53**  
TRADE  
EXHIBITORS

## CONFERENCE EVALUATION

**57%**

RATED THE CONFERENCE  
AS “**EXCELLENT**”  
while 39% thought it was “very good”.\*

**59%**

RATED THE REGISTRATION  
PROCESS AS “**EXCELLENT**”  
while 33% said “very good”.\*

**60%**

THOUGHT THE VENUE  
WAS “**EXCELLENT**”  
while 38% said “very good”.\*

**54%**

THOUGHT THE DIVERSITY OF  
SPEAKERS WAS “**EXCELLENT**”  
while 40% said “very good”.\*

\* Source: ELAA 2015 Conference evaluations.

## WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT YOUR CONFERENCE

“I HAD A GREAT TIME,  
CAME AWAY WITH  
KNOWLEDGE AND  
INSPIRATION!”

“I ONLY WISH I COULD HAVE  
ATTENDED ALL SESSIONS!  
I HAVE THOROUGHLY  
ENJOYED MY TIME!”

“INCREDIBLY ORGANISED,  
ENGAGING SPEAKERS  
AND OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR QUESTIONS AND  
DISCUSSIONS.”

“THANK YOU! LOVED  
THIS YEAR’S CONFERENCE!  
LOOKING FORWARD TO  
NEXT YEAR’S! FANTASTIC  
VENUE AS WELL!”

## FIVE MOST POPULAR SESSIONS\*

Following the lead of early  
childhood professionals

**CHARLES E PASCAL**

**SHARON GOLDFELD**

Using a place based  
approach to create  
change for children

**JO LANGE**

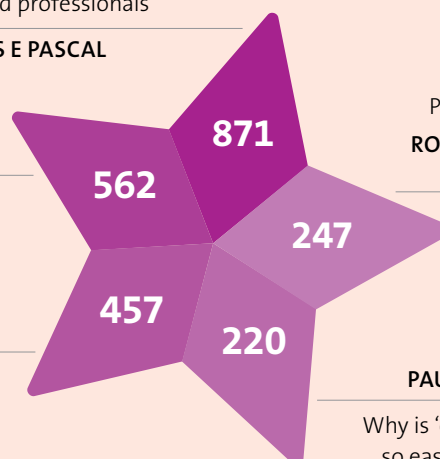
One size does  
not fit all

\* by attendee registration.

Playfully yours  
**ROBYN MONRO  
MILLER**

**PAUL PRICHARD**

Why is ‘engagement’  
so easy but so hard  
to do PROPERLY?



## Don't miss out on the 2016 Conference

The planning for the 2016 Early Childhood Education Conference, *Together we grow – connecting communities*, is well underway. It's on at the Caulfield Racecourse, Melbourne, 27 and 28 May.

Keep an eye on the conference website [www.togetherwegrow.com.au](http://www.togetherwegrow.com.au) or the ELAA website [www.elaa.org.au](http://www.elaa.org.au) for further details.

## OUR BOARD



**JO GEURTS**



**JUNE MCLOUGHLIN**



**KRISHNAN RANGASWAMY**



**LEE CATH**



**KARALYNN MCDONNELL**



**NICOLE PILSWORTH**



**CHARLES POWER**



**BEN WILLEE**

### **Joanne Geurts – President**

Jo is the Chief Executive Officer of the Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc. (ECKA). With a background in retail and business management, Jo has spent the past 18 years directly involved with kindergarten management and is passionate about early education for all children.

### **June McLoughlin – Vice President**

June has extensive experience in service and policy development in the care, disability, parenting and support fields. A former Board member of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), June is also director of Family and Children's Services at Doveton College.

### **Krishnan Rangaswamy – Treasurer**

Krishnan is a risk management professional with over 25 years of experience. Currently the Head of Model Review Governance and Business Enablement at the ANZ Banking Corporation, Krishnan is passionate about sharing his extensive financial experience with not-for-profit organisations.

### **Lee Cath – Secretary**

Lee has a professional background working in the not-for-profit sector in diverse roles with the focus of much of her work – including her practice as a social worker – on children, young people and families.

### **Kate Fischer**

Kate is Director of the Public Interest Law Initiative at the University of Melbourne Law School. Kate joined the ELAA Board in 2014, bringing both her strong legal background and over ten years experience developing and delivering training programs for not-for-profit organisations.

### **Karalynn McDonnell**

Karalynn is a highly experienced Preschool Field Officer and has taught three and four-year-old kindergarten; set up an Occasional Care program and worked as a Family Support Worker. Formerly the Chair of the Victorian Preschool Field Officer Association, Karalynn is a committed early childhood advocate.

### **Nicole Pilsworth**

Nicole is an educator with over 20 years experience in child care and preschool. She has worked with local government and educators across family day care, long day care and preschool. She currently works at the University of Melbourne as a Research Fellow at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. Nicole is a member of ECA and a strong advocate for the rights of young children.

### **Charles Power**

Charles draws on over 20 years of skills, expertise and experience in workplace relations and safety law and is Editor-in-Chief of the Employment Law Practical Handbook. Charles was a former Canberra-based ministerial adviser to the Hon Simon Crean, Minister for Employment, Education & Training.



## OUR STAFF



**KATE FISCHER**



**CARLENE WILSON**

### Ben Willee

Ben works for Spinach Advertising where he helps companies large and small build effective relationships with their customers. His career has been in the advertising industry, helping corporations navigate through the complex and ever changing world of media planning and buying.

### Carlene Wilson

Carlene is currently the Director of Policy and Government Relations at the University of Melbourne. A graduate of the Harvard School of Government, she has expertise in public policy leadership and government and previously worked as a ministerial advisor in the NSW Government in the areas of health, education, training and youth affairs.

### Chief Executive Officer

Shane Lucas

### Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Sunitha Raman

### Member Services

Glenda Glover

David Haesler

Carrie McCluskey

Laura Mondon

Kathy Cross

Pat Rustad

Louise Hennessy

Sonali Le Brocque

Annmarie Cichello (until March 2015)

Paula Spenceley (until October 2014)

### Business Development and Membership

Cass Marxsen

Sue Smith

Anu Krishnan

Diana Perkins

Tina Baldwin (until July 2015)

Tania Smith (until July 2014)

### Road Safety Education

Zora Marko

Anita Valenzisi

Christina Martono

### Administration and Finance

Tania De Carli

Trevor Olsen

Janelle VanderWerf

Sarah McNeill

Andrea Foreman (until February 2015)

Sally Gross (until January 2015)



## BENEFITS TO MEMBERS THROUGH ELAA PREFERRED PARTNERS

*ELAA has developed partnerships with organisations that can help members manage their services. These companies understand the early childhood sector and are committed to making your job easier.*

### Allianz Australia

Allianz Australia is one of Australia's leading providers of workers compensation services and the recommended insurer for ELAA members.

Contact: (03) 9234 3633 or visit [www.allianz.com.au](http://www.allianz.com.au).

### AustralianSuper

AustralianSuper looks after the retirement savings for over 1.5 million everyday Australians, is run to profit members only, doesn't pay dividends to shareholders or commissions to agents.

Contact: 1300 300 273 or go to [www.australiansuper.com](http://www.australiansuper.com).

### Insurance House

Insurance House offers an ELAA contents insurance policy specifically designed for kindergartens. ELAA members receive a discounted rate, together with excellent coverage and security.

Contact: 1300 305 834 for a quotation.

### McArthur

McArthur are ELAA's preferred provider of temporary and permanent staff. They can recruit qualified child care workers, cooks, kindergarten teachers and assistants. McArthur also proudly sponsor Jobs in Early Childhood, an online Job Board, free to ELAA members.

Contact: (03) 9828 6512 or visit [www.mcarthur.com.au](http://www.mcarthur.com.au).

### Officeworks

Officeworks have all the classroom and office supplies your kindergarten needs. ELAA members who sign up to an Officeworks Education Account benefit from preferential pricing on over 100 products from paper to paints; a dedicated ELAA website for ordering; and same day delivery for orders placed before 11.30 am.

Contact: (03) 8575 1276 or email [sspivak@officeworks.com.au](mailto:sspivak@officeworks.com.au).

### Storypark

Storypark offers EC services a secure, private online platform that supports children's learning, improves practice and strengthens collaboration. Storypark offers ELAA members 10% off the monthly and annual fee.

Contact: [www.storypark.com](http://www.storypark.com)



## TREASURER'S REPORT

### Summary

ELAA continues to maintain a healthy financial position essential to its ongoing role as the leading advocate, consultancy, and support body for service providers, educators, and families in the nation's early learning sector.

The financial statements presented with this report are for the year to 30 June 2015 and disclose an operating surplus of \$25,655 (2014: surplus \$188,404), and equity position of \$1,488,463 (2014: \$1,462,808).

### Income and expenditure statement

ELAA's income is derived from diverse sources such as membership fees, project income, training and consultancy services, and the governance advisory service funded by the Department of Education and Training.

In line with ELAA's Strategic Action Plan: *Excellence for Every Child. A 10-year vision for excellence: 2014–2024*, the Board and management have worked hard to diversify ELAA's income base to ensure the organisation is stable and is not overly reliant on any one source of income.

As explained in my report for 2013–14, over the last few years ELAA has built a healthy surplus with a view to investing into the future and securing the health of the organisation. This year, ELAA has generated a modest surplus of \$25,655 compared to \$188,404 for 2014, as the full complement of resources were in place and deployed effectively.

Revenue for 2015 at \$2.68M (2014: \$2.63M) was marginally higher due to membership, conference income and consultancies being higher than budget.

### Balance sheet

The balance sheet reflects a net equity position of \$1.48M (2014: \$1.46M) an increase of \$0.02M. ELAA is in a strong financial position with cash and bank balances of \$2.3M (2014: \$2.4M) and has more than adequate liquidity to meet all of its liabilities.

### Going forward

ELAA now has a strong platform on which to build and grow the organisation. The net equity position of \$1.48M ensures ELAA is well positioned to withstand any unexpected political or policy changes and has also provided ELAA the capacity to deliver against the 2014–24 Strategic Action Plan approved by the ELAA board.

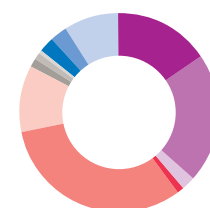
Our positive financial position means we are well placed to move forward on all the key deliverables outlined in our Strategic Action Plan and add greater value to our members in the form of increased influence on governments and early learning policy, along with enhanced consultancy and resources for members.

ELAA will continue to focus on maintaining a healthy financial position in the upcoming financial year as we consolidate our position as the national voice for parents and service providers in the early learning sector.



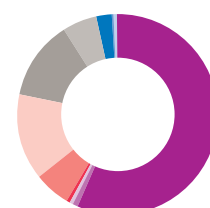
Krishnan Rangaswamy Treasurer

### TOTAL INCOME



- Conference (\$418,510)
- Membership (\$567,539)
- Interest (\$63,120)
- Advertising (\$24,931)
- Projects (\$857,922)
- Advisory service (DET) (\$291,695)
- Resource/publications (\$32,925)
- Raffle (\$36,186)
- Other (\$11,330)
- Seminars and consultancies (\$66,509)
- Sponsorships (\$71,445)
- Payroll support (\$237,940)

### TOTAL EXPENDITURE



- Employee benefits (\$1,510,784)
- Other staff costs (\$17,800)
- Depreciation (\$14,121)
- Professional fees (\$13,975)
- Occupancy costs (\$155,020)
- Conference and training costs (\$373,408)
- Program consulting costs (\$333,783)
- Office costs (\$150,743)
- Marketing and advertising costs (\$68,301)
- Finance costs (\$7361)
- Other costs (\$9108)

## AUDITOR REPORT



### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Early Learning Association Australia Inc.

We have audited the condensed special purpose financial statements of Early Learning Association Australia Inc. (the Association) contained within this report which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2015 and the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. The condensed financial statements have been derived from the annual financial report of the Association.

#### Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the information reported in the condensed financial statements is consistent with the annual financial report from which it has been derived and upon which we expressed an unqualified audit opinion in our report to the members of the Association dated the 21st of September 2015. For a better understanding of the scope of this audit these statements should be read in conjunction with our audit report on the annual financial report.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Munday".

CROWE HORWATH MELBOURNE

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Munday".

DAVID MUNDAY  
Partner

Melbourne, Victoria

Dated this Date 21st September 2015

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# INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

The Summarised Statement of Profit or Loss or other Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Financial Position are summarised from the audited financial statements. Complete copies of the audited financial statements are available on request.

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>INCOME</b>		
Revenue from operating activities	2,680,059	2,627,815
	<b>2,680,059</b>	<b>2,627,815</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Employee benefits	(1,510,784)	(1,360,245)
Other staff costs	(17,800)	(7,899)
Depreciation	(14,121)	(25,434)
Professional fees	(13,975)	(21,681)
Occupancy costs	(155,020)	(153,770)
Conference and training costs	(373,408)	(303,742)
Program consulting costs	(333,783)	(357,122)
Office costs	(150,743)	(134,498)
Marketing and advertising costs	(68,301)	(55,699)
Finance costs	(7,361)	(6,847)
Other costs	(9,108)	(12,474)
<b>Surplus before income tax expense</b>	<b>25,655</b>	<b>188,404</b>
Income tax expense	—	—
<b>Surplus after income tax expense</b>	<b>25,655</b>	<b>188,404</b>

# BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	698,173	1,112,766
Trade and other receivables	73,751	65,848
Financial assets	1,550,435	1,296,895
Other current assets	13,327	21,353
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>2,335,686</b>	<b>2,496,862</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	39,761	40,850
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>39,761</b>	<b>40,850</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>2,375,447</b>	<b>2,537,712</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	288,714	248,079
Income in advance	397,500	644,214
Employee benefits	182,942	162,905
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>869,156</b>	<b>1,055,198</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Employee benefits	17,828	19,706
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>17,828</b>	<b>19,706</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>886,984</b>	<b>1,074,904</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,488,463</b>	<b>1,462,808</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Accumulated funds	1,488,463	1,462,808
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>1,488,463</b>	<b>1,462,808</b>





EARLY  
LEARNING  
ASSOCIATION  
AUSTRALIA

The voice for parents and service providers

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**f** (03) 9486 4226  
**e** [elaa@elaa.org.au](mailto:elaa@elaa.org.au)  
**w** [www.elaa.org.au](http://www.elaa.org.au)