



EARLY  
LEARNING  
ASSOCIATION  
AUSTRALIA

The voice for parents and service providers

# PRE SCHOOL MATTERS

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION  
PREPARING CHILDREN FOR LIFE  
TERM TWO 2019

'EXCELLENT RATING'  
SUCCESS STORY

BIG CONFERENCE  
WRAP UP

NEW 2020 STAFFING  
REQUIREMENTS







## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*In this edition of Preschool Matters ...*

Term 2 is just about done and I hope it has been a successful one for all our members and supporters.

The first half of 2019 has seen ELAA focussed on the Federal election – promoting the advocacy resources on 'Early Learning We Are Counting on You' campaign page; presenting an Election

Submission to the Federal Minister for Education; and supporting the sector-wide Early Learning Everyone Benefits Federal Election campaign.

We have also successfully recruited a number of new roles to our Service, Delivery and Growth Team to enhance our capacity to deliver greater benefits to members, develop relationships with external partners (to create even more benefits for members) like Buntings, and provide expert industrial relations advice to members.

The 2019 Early Childhood Education Conference was also delivered in Term 2 and I think everyone would agree there was a great atmosphere at the Crown Conference Centre, Melbourne, over the two days. This year's Conference introduced a number of positive changes to the event including a new, purpose-built venue; 'streamed' speaker program; four (instead of one) keynote speakers, poster

competition and more. It was particularly pleasing to take part in one of the panel sessions – Early Childhood Education and Care sector strategic scan – with a number of fellow ELAA Board members.

Speaking of the ELAA Board, it is also timely to welcome a recent new member to the Board – Paul O'Halloran (from Colin Biggers & Paisley law firm) who brings valuable legal and industrial relations experience. Also, a belated welcome to three Board members who joined in late 2018 – Grant Boyd (Bethany) and Tracey McKay (Best Chance) bring expert early years service management knowledge and Ian Sanders (CBA) who provides the Board with additional financial management experience and business acumen.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Preschool Matters: there's a great success story from Albert Park Kindergarten about their journey to an ACECQA 'Excellent' rating; a full wrap up on the Conference; great tips on managing the safety of children at drop off and pick up; important information on new mandatory staffing levels for 2020 and much more.

All the best for Term 3.

**Lee Cath, President, ELAA**

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This digital version of *Preschool Matters* includes live links to other online content. Just click whenever you see an underlined link like this [example.com.au](#).



**COVER:** Kausser Maaruf (Early Childhood Centre Director at Flemington Childcare Co-operative) and Daniela Kavoukas (Policy Advocacy Coordinator at Community Child Care Victoria) were among hundreds that benefited from the new-look speaker program and networking opportunities at this year's Early Childhood Education Conference.



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*Preschool Matters* is a quarterly magazine which communicates issues and developments that concern and assist members in the effective management of early childhood services.  
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LEARNING WITH A DIFFERENCE  
ELAA's 2019 approach to professional development

Remaining Professional Learning and Development sessions for 2019 on pages 14 and 15

"Thank you for the time, preparation, execution of all presentations. A relaxed and comfortable atmosphere was created, resulting in terrific discussions and sharing."  
– Janine, Kindergarten Teacher



## CEO'S REPORT



It is timely, with the recent release of the report [A Smart Investment for a Smarter Australia](#) by The Front Project Report and PwC, that we should reflect on the amazing work that is being done across the early years sector in Australia to advocate for better early years programs for preschool children, better conditions for early years teachers and educators, better support for early years service providers and parents, and better access to quality programs for children from disadvantaged families and communities.

The Report provided a number of updated economic indicators that prove that what we advocate for as a

sector is not only founded on demonstrable developmental benefits for children (that are founded in research) but also on sound principals of growth and productivity. Key findings of the report indicate that universal access to a quality preschool program in the year before school will benefit our economy in multiple ways (periods are variable depending on the benefit):

- for every dollar invested into early childhood education in Australia two dollars is recovered over a child's life
- with more families accessing early childhood education, families can realise a collective \$1,463 million boost in earnings by having increased capacity to return to work or increasing working hours
- the Australian economy will see a \$319 million increase in productivity from a more educated workforce
- children will see a collective \$997 million increase in lifetime earnings
- governments could realise increased tax revenue of \$313 million annually and \$1,194 million in

reduced health, welfare and justice spending.

The Report also echoes a number of messages already familiar to our sector, including:

- the importance of governments committing to ongoing funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education
- the benefits of extending universal access to two years before school
- the need to ensure consistent levels of acceptable quality across services by resourcing the regulation of the National Quality Standard
- 'knock on' effect of quality early childhood education on later school performance and personal development
- the potential for investment in early childhood education to reduce longer term social welfare, health and justice system costs.

It's great to see another national analysis validating the advocacy work of many contributors to the early years sector over the

A Smart Investment for a Smarter Australia: Economic analysis of universal early childhood education in the year before school in Australia

The Front Project  
June 2019

pwc

Preschool – Two Years are Better Than One

Developing a universal preschool program for Australian 3 year olds – evidence, policy and implementation

OCTOBER 2016

Stacey Fox  
Myra Geddes

M

LIFTING OUR GAME

REPORT OF THE REVIEW TO ACHIEVE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTIONS

Susan Pascoe AM  
Professor Deborah Brennan

DECEMBER 2017

past decade. This includes peak bodies like ELAA, ECA and Community Child Care; unions such as the AEU and United Voice; multi-stakeholder campaigns such as [Early Learning Everyone Benefits](#), state government commissioned reports like the 2018 ['Lifting Our Game Report'](#) and more.

With Victoria leading the nation in early years education policy – with its unprecedented investment in the State's 3-year-old kindergarten expansion program – and other states, such as New South Wales, introducing full or partial funded access for 3-year-olds, it's clear that policy makers at state level have heeded the research and data driven advocacy initiatives from our sector.

Prior to the recent Federal election, the Coalition Government gave no commitment to extending universal access to preschool (for children in the year before

school) beyond 2020 nor have they seriously considered any recommendations for extending universal access to 3-year-old children. The Federal Government has not indicated any willingness to reverse the cuts to funding the National Quality Agenda that were made in the 2018 budget; there is no Federal Government commitment to funding increases to early education workforce conditions or professional development; no plans for a National Strategy on Early Childhood and no indication the Government is willing to reform conditions attached to the Child Care Subsidy, particularly around the Activity Test provisions. So there is still a lot to do in terms of advocacy at a Federal level and this will be a key focus for ELAA.

### Victorian kindergarten capacity assessment

Things are starting to move with the expansion of fund-

ed 3-year-old kindergarten in Victoria. The Victorian Department of Education and Training, in conjunction with Ernst & Young, has now commenced a Kindergarten Capacity Survey Process. The process is huge – a census gathering data (both electronically and physically) on the staffing and space capacity of every kindergarten and long day care service in Victoria. DET have consulted with ELAA prior to rolling out the survey and we are in the process of recruiting an extra staff member to provide face-to-face and telephone support to all Victorian services regarding the expansion program. ELAA is also developing supporting collateral that will further assist services during the program roll-out. Keep an eye on ELAA's [dedicated web pages](#) with information on the roll-out.

David Worland  
CEO, ELAA

SO YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT RETIREMENT,  
OR MAYBE DREAMING OF THAT LONG OVERSEAS TRIP ...



### **Are you eligible for some long service leave?**

If you have given seven years or more of continuous service in the Early Childhood sector, then you are eligible to take long service leave or receive a payout. This was one of the changes to the Long Service Leave Act that came into effect in November 2018. The new Act also allows long service leave to be taken in much smaller amounts if needed, with the minimum being 1 day.

### **What is meant by seven years of continuous service?**

Continuous service in Early Childhood means that you have not had a break from work for

more than three months over at least a seven year period. This means that you could work at one service for seven years or move from one early childhood service to another as long as you were not unemployed for more than three months between leaving one service and commencing at another. This applies to those who do casual work as well.

There are some periods of unpaid approved absences, such as parental leave, that do not break continuous service. However, during this time of absence, you will not accrue long service leave, so it has to be taken into account when doing the long service leave calculation.

### **Who is responsible for paying long service leave entitlements?**

When an employee leaves the service or wants to take long service leave, the whole entitlement (for an employee who is terminating) or part there of (for an employee who is taking long service leave and returning) has to be paid by the current employer. This means that your current employer (e.g. the Committee of Management) will have to calculate the number of weeks you have accrued in long service leave for your whole period of continuous employment and the payment required based on the number of hours you work per week, or an average number of hours over your whole employment if your hours have changed in the last two years. It is wise to keep a record of your hours, the dates on which they may have changed and your pay rates to assist your employer to do these calculations. This will allow your employer to give you an accurate entitlement. ELAA can assist your employer with these calculations if required.

### **Do previous employers have to pay long service leave entitlements?**

In Early Childhood, some employers may honour portability of long service leave. This has never been written into any relevant agreement or award but is considered a "gentleman's agreement". This means that if an employee leaves a service and doesn't receive a long service leave payout (e.g. didn't reach seven years of service with that employer) the employer will keep that long

service leave entitlement and pass it on to the future employer at the time when the employee accesses their entitlement. It is up to the current employer to ask previous employers for contributions towards the long service leave payment. The previous employers may not agree to contribute, which means that the current employer still needs to pay the entire entitlement requested.

It's important for employers, whether or not an organisation has decided to honour portability of long service leave, to keep entitlements for both present and previous employees in a provisions account. In this way entitlements will be covered if a current employee wants to access long service leave or a future employer requests a contribution towards a long service leave entitlement. It's also a good idea to have an audit of the provisions account every couple of years or so to check that there are enough funds to cover current employees and also to check if previous employees are still working in the industry or if they have broken service.

If you commenced work in the industry prior to 24/01/1994, the Department of Education and Training will hold provisions for you from the start of your employment until that date. Your employer can apply to the department for those provisions.

### **More information**

For more information about the Victorian Long Service Leave Act 2018 refer to the Comprehensive Guide to the Victorian Long Service Leave Act 2018 or call the inspectorate on 1800 287 287.





### 2019 Starting Out Safely Award announced at Conference

Congratulations Cooinda Kindergarten on being named Starting Out Safely Road Safety Education Award Winner at the 2019 Early Childhood Education Conference. Cooinda received \$500 for their service together with a road safety education resource pack.

*Kathryn Richards accepts the award on behalf of Cooinda Kindergarten including a 'Big Cheque' from Roger Chao (VicRoads) and Starting Out Safely program 'super stars' Professor Eric Speriment and ThingleToodle.*

### Free Short Term Assistance for kids under Kindergarten Inclusion Support program

Does your program have a child with a diagnosed disability or developmental delay who would benefit from extra support? Uniting, in partnership with the Victorian Government Department of Education and Training, offers a free service called Short Term Assistance as part of the Kindergarten Inclusion Support program. [Click](#) to find out more

### Annual Wage Review 2018-2019

On Thursday, 30 May 2019 the Fair Work Commission handed down its decision in the Annual Wage Review 2018-2019.

The decision increases the National Minimum Wage by 3% (to \$740.80 per week), and will also increase modern awards by 3% per week.

Wage increases and any allowance adjustments will take effect from the start of the first full pay period on or after 1 July 2019.

Modern awards, like the Children's Services Award 2010, Educational Services (Teachers) Award 2010, and the Clerks – Private Sector Award 2010, will have the increase applied.

ELAA members who would like further information on the increase may contact the ELAA Service, Delivery & Growth Team on (03) 9489 3500 or email [memberservices@elaa.org.au](mailto:memberservices@elaa.org.au)



*Each edition of Preschool Matters we report on ELAA's advocacy work to represent the collective voice of our members.*



### Federal election

In the months prior to the Federal election, ELAA and a group of members met with key politicians and Commonwealth Department of Education and Training staff to promote our [Federal Election submission](#), advocating for reforms to the Child Care Subsidy and recurrent funding for 15 hours of preschool in the two years before school. As a partner of the Early Learning Everyone Benefits campaign, ELAA supported a federal election forum held on 2 May 2019. Senator James Paterson (Liberal Party), Shadow Minister Amanda Rishworth and Senator Janet Rice, Greens presented their policies and commitments for children, families and early learning at the Forum and responded to questions from the audience.

Following the election result, Dan Tehan will continue on as the Minister for Education and ELAA will be advocating to the Government for a strengthened commitment to early childhood education from the Liberal/National coalition. →



## ADVOCACY YOUR COLLECTIVE VOICE

### Sustainability of Early Years Management

Following the release of the report: [Early Years Management: Achieving a sustainable service system](#), ELAA has been actively campaigning on the issue of increased funding for early years management organisations. Recently, Sonya Kilkenny, Parliamentary Secretary (Early Childhood Education) attended ELAA's CEO Group meeting to hear first-hand about the impact of under-funding.



### Long Service Benefits Portability Scheme

ELAA has developed a submission on behalf of its members about the planned implementation of the Long Service Benefits Portability Scheme to include early childhood services. ELAA members value their staff and want to provide beneficial working conditions; however, the scheme is narrow in its scope, applying only to not-for-profit services. In our submission, we raised a number of other significant concerns including:

- lack of consultation on the development of the scheme
- workforce impacts
- financial impacts
- timing of the roll-out of the scheme.

#### ELAA is here to listen.

ELAA is pleased to represent the interests of our members and we welcome any questions or input by contacting us at [elaa@elaa.org.au](mailto:elaa@elaa.org.au)

## MEMBER PROFILE



CKP community  
family fun day

### COMMUNITY KINDERS PLUS (CKP)

*Community Kinders Plus is an Early Years Manager organisation that has grown significantly in the past seven years. Growth has brought some challenges but also success with no less than three staff members being named Victorian Teacher of the Year.*

#### An EYM born out of collaborative partnership with two levels of government and ELAA

The Department of Education and Training provided funding in 2010 to develop a place-

based Kindergarten Cluster Management model for Frankston. The project was a partnership between DET, Frankston City Council (FCC) and Early Learning Association Australia. A steering committee and project team were established to guide the process.

Community Kinders Plus (CKP) began operation in 2012 with 10 member kindergartens from the Frankston municipality. In 2019 the organisation has 18 kindergartens across Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula







Teacher of the year 2018

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### **Delivering services that respond to community need**

The kindergartens managed by CKP provide programs for 3 to 5-year-olds. We have 3-year-old groups, mixed 3 and 4-year-old groups and 4-year-old groups. The models very much depend on the community and demand for sessional kindergarten. We have introduced more 7.5-hour sessions which have been positively received by families, children and staff. We have seen increased interest in this model since introducing it two years ago. CKP employs 130 staff across the 18 kindergartens and a pool of relievers to support the educational programs where needed. We have several kindergartens

### **How does an EYM engage parents?**

Families become involved in their kindergarten by choosing to become a member of the Parent Advisory Group with the focus being fundraising for the kindergarten and developing social connections within the kindergarten community. Parents are actively encouraged to be participants in their child's learning and information and feedback is sought from them on a regular basis from the kindergarten staff and CKP head office. Parents offer their support with the development of the Quality Improvement Plan at each kindergarten by informing the areas of strengths and areas which could be improved.

### **What challenges does CKP face?**

Working in communities where 42% of our families are on Kindergarten Fee Subsidy (KFS) can be a challenge. There is a negative gap between what DET pays for KFS and what we receive from non KFS families in fees – a constant balancing act with the budget.

### **Why are we proud to say we work for CKP?**

- Since CKP began operation in 2012 we have had three Victorian Teachers of the Year – 2014, 2016 and 2018.
- In 2018 CKP was the inaugural winner of the Emeritus Professor Collette Tayler Award for Excellence in Educational Leadership at the Victorian Early Years Awards.
- After approaching Peninsula Health Paediatric Department about the possibility of introducing a free Paediatric Program into CKP kindergartens over two years ago, it has come to fruition this year. Thanks to

the Menzies Foundation – who saw the value of having this program in the early childhood space as well as the school sector – we are now able to offer free consultations to our families twice a week.

- Our involvement with two projects, in Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula, that focus on improving oral language outcomes for children. Both these projects have given CKP the opportunity to develop strong working partnerships with local primary schools and develop communities of practice across the early childhood and school sectors.



Bush kinder at Coolart



# LEARNING WITH A DIFFERENCE

## ELAA's 2019 approach to professional development

### What is PD usually like?

Traditionally, attending a professional development (PD) session means getting away from your desk/work place for the day to acquire new knowledge, learn more about a specific area of interest and upskill so that you can do your job better. The traditional PD is often lecture-based, sage-on-stage, where the learner passively takes in the information. This is either done face-to-face or as is now common practice by attending a webinar.

### Why isn't it working?

However, the participant is often not provided with the opportunity to connect the content to their individual contexts and build

understanding. The participant is also rarely given the opportunity to reflect on their learning and work out how it will apply in their work places. Also, if the participant is the only one from their service attending the PD, the onus is on the individual to affect the necessary changes which often involves getting leadership and peers on board.

### What's so different about ELAA'S PD?

ELAA's approach to PD moves away from the traditional towards a collaborative approach to learning. Both leaders, managers and approved providers are invited to attend the PD sessions along with staff such as educators, educational leaders and teachers.

At each session, two presenters are present, each with a knowledge base that addresses the specific needs of each group. The presenters take turns to share with each group which allows the same messages to be put across in the different contexts and ample time is allotted giving participants the time to reflect, engage and plan out their learning.

Towards the end of the day, the lead presenter takes on the task of gathering the two groups back to create an action plan together. This action plan, worked on collaboratively by both groups, is a practical document with actions and timelines that will keep participants accountable to the learning that they've gained while at the session. This then translates positively to positive outcomes for children, families and the learning that takes place at the service. This document can also go straight into the service's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

### We've had some great feedback about our new approach

During our first session for 2019 (Working Together to Achieve Best Practice) participants said they found useful:

- collaboration with peers
- question time with presenters
- practical examples and relevant knowledge base
- learning about the importance of critical reflection
- practical ways to implement new knowledge
- inspiration from 'stories from the field'.

### Remaining Professional Learning and Development sessions for 2019

**TOPIC:** OH&S in early childhood

**TITLE:** Safety – not just child's play

**BLURB:** WorkSafe have visited 460 Victorian early childhood services in 12 months and 75% of these services had at least one improvement notice. This session is crucial to support OH&S in the early childhood setting

**DATE:** Thursday, 15 August 2019

**VENUE:** Darebin North East Community Hub, 35 Copernicus Crescent, Bundoora

[CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

**TOPIC:** Wellbeing & Self care

**TITLE:** Wellbeing in early childhood matters!

**BLURB:** Wellbeing matters in early childhood, and not just for young children. This session looks at how early childhood services can approach wellbeing as a whole, from systems and processes at the organisational and management level, to self-care and wellbeing of those building relationships with children and families.

**DATE:** Wednesday, 11 September 2019

**VENUE:** Manningham City Council, 699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster

[CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

**TOPIC:** QAI

**TITLE:** Renewing the educational program and practice (QAI) from a term perspective

**BLURB:** Anthony Semann will challenge your current practices and thinking around Quality Area 1 which according to ACECQA reports, is an area that is stretching and challenging teams in early childhood settings. You will gain new ideas and tools for looking at QAI through a team lens, enabling you to approach the cycle of planning and critical reflection from a whole team perspective.

**DATE:** Friday, 8 November 2019

**VENUE:** Darebin North East Community Hub, 35 Copernicus Crescent, Bundoora

[CLICK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)





# PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

“The Excellent rating is the highest rating an education and care service can achieve under the National Quality Framework. The awarding of the Excellent rating by ACECQA indicates that a service is embracing continuous quality improvement and practice, and are evolving over time to improve outcomes for children and families at the highest level.”  
– ACECQA website.

In March this year, Albert Park Preschool lodged an application with ACECQA to be considered for the Excellent Rating. This is their story told from the perspective of three participants in that process: Jenny Whelan (Administration Manager), Miranda Schuppan (Parent Committee member and Mum to Ripley in the Wombats Group) and Brett Hedger (Greenhouse Programs Officer at City of Port Phillip).



**JENNY:** On receiving the news that our 2018 Assessment had resulted in an Exceeding rating across all seven Quality Areas, we made the decision to apply for the Excellent rating. After downloading the materials from the ACECQA website, we produced a written submission across the topics of excellence in practice, visionary leadership and maintaining excellence. The process itself provided a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the distance travelled both for ourselves as a service, and as the sector, since the first pre-2012 whisperings of “the NQF is coming...”.

**BRETT:** I have been involved in supporting the kindergarten through their sustainability journey as part of the local Council Seedlings Program. Over the past five years, we have come to regard Albert Park Kindergarten as committed and passionate advocates for children and the environment. We wanted to share our experience working in partnership with the kinder by writing a letter of recommendation to accompany their application for the Excellent rating.

Following the written submission, I was then invited on behalf of the City of Port Phillip to participate in the second stage of the process – the Excellent rating telephone interview. Overall, I found the process empowering and inspiring. It was uplifting just to hear everyone’s responses to the various questions. There were four of us in the room, the centre director, the Educational Leader, a parent Committee member, and myself huddled around an iPhone on speaker sitting atop of a rubbish bin for extra elevation that was needed. After two hours on the phone and a half hour debrief, I left the building feeling that there was power in our stories, beauty in our sharing and ultimately magic in our combined efforts.







**MIRANDA:** I was really pleased to participate in the Excellent rating phone interview, not least because it was a chance for me to talk about the excitement and pleasure we feel to have our family involved in the magic of the Albert Park Preschool community and culture. I wore “two hats” during the interview – that of a parent whose 4-year-old attends the kinder, and that of Communications Rep on the parent committee. But overwhelmingly, it was my role as mum that got me talking from the heart. All I wanted to do was convey the unique experience of Albert Park Kinder that my son comes home talking about and the special experiences he gets there that constantly open his eyes to ask ever more curious questions. I entered the phone interview with a sense of wanting to prepare – just like I used to when sitting uni exams. But I realised all the preparation had been done, because we live the kinder’s philosophy every day: the children are at the heart of everything we do. All decision-making stems from that sentiment. I also loved seeing the varied roles that were represented in the interview that show how much care goes into setting up our little humans for great futures.

**JENNY:** Following the telephone interview I received an email from the ACECQA Excellent team with two pages of further queries. Some of the questions were very specific – such as dates when past events took place. A learning from our 2014 assessment had been to create a folder capturing evidence of our strengths and best practice (we call it The file of gratitude and shameless pride!). This folder really came in handy as it contained the detail we needed to respond to the questions. Submitting these responses was the final stage in the process, and now we wait! Regardless of the outcome, this has been a powerful and rewarding experience for our service and I would definitely recommend undertaking this process.

### The Result ...

Albert Park Preschool Centre was successful in achieving the Excellent Rating. The case officer’s Report recognised that the centre had evidenced exceptional practice across the three themes of:

- collaborative partnerships with professional, community or research organisations
- commitment to children that respects, reflects and celebrates culture and diversity, including place of origin
- inclusive partnerships with children and families.

Based on the evidence provided, an additional theme of ‘Practice and environments that enhance children’s learning and growth’ was added by the case officer to recognise the work the service has undertaken with regard to environmental responsibility.



### TOP TIPS:

- build a team to support the application process
- reflect as a team on the strengths of the service
- gather evidence (we keep an ongoing file capturing all the aspects we feel proud of)
- take time to complete the submission and to gather the perspectives of others
- celebrate that the Excellent rating process seeks to capture what makes each service unique and the role we can play to strengthen communities and achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

ABOVE: Jaeden from the Boonwurrung planting bush tucker with the children - part of their sustainability program





Brett and Will with sustainability mind map

## Before you apply for an Excellent Rating ...

First of all your service needs to be rated 'Exceeding National Quality Standard' in all seven quality areas before you are eligible to apply for the 'Excellent' rating.

## So how do you apply?

There is no fee to apply for the Excellent rating. To get your application off and running you first need to do three things:

1. download the criteria and application form from the ACECQA website: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/assessment/excellent-rating/apply>
2. prepare a statement addressing each of the 'Excellent' rating criteria and gather any supporting documents
3. email your application and copy of QIP to [excellent@acecqa.gov.au](mailto:excellent@acecqa.gov.au)

## What happens next?

The team at ACECQA will then:

- review the submission and your most recent Regulatory Authority Assessment and Rating report
- contact the Regulatory Authority for further information
- conduct a telephone conference (approximately two hours) with key representatives at the service
- send any further questions they might have in writing.



## REGS IN FOCUS

*This regular feature focuses on specific Education and Care Services regulations to ensure that services and staff are clear about their responsibilities*

# ADDITIONAL STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FROM 1 JANUARY, 2020

Since the introduction of Education and Care Services National Regulations on 1 January 2012, there has been a progressive schedule of revised staffing requirements. From 1 January, 2020 the final step in the schedule is being rolled out. The requirement is for a second Early Childhood Teacher or 'suitably qualified person' in attendance when 60 or more children

preschool age or under are being educated and cared for.

Approved Providers of kindergartens or long day care services will need to ensure they have two Early Childhood Teachers, or at minimum, one Early Childhood Teacher and one 'suitably qualified person' in attendance on any given day.







**60 – 80  
children**

The service must employ or engage a full-time or full-time equivalent early childhood teacher, or have an early childhood teacher in attendance for:

- six hours per day, when operating for 50 hours or more per week OR
- 60% of the time, when operating for less than 50 hours per week.

Additionally from 2020, the service must employ a second early childhood teacher or suitably qualified person in attendance for:

- three hours per day, when operating for 50 hours or more per week OR
- 30% of the time, when operating for less than 50 hours per week.

These requirements do not apply if the service has 60 to 80 approved places, and employs or engages a full-time or full-time equivalent early childhood teacher at the service, and employs or engages a second early childhood teacher or suitably qualified person for half the hours or full-time equivalent hours at the service.

**More  
than 80  
children**

The service must employ or engage a full-time or full-time equivalent early childhood teacher, or have an early childhood teacher in attendance for:

- six hours per day, when operating for 50 hours or more per week OR
- 60% of the time, when operating for less than 50 hours per week.

Additionally from 2020, the service must employ a second early childhood teacher or suitably qualified person in attendance for:

- six hours per day, when operating for 50 hours or more per week OR
- 60% of the time, when operating for less than 50 hours per week.

These requirements do not apply if the service has more than 80 approved places, and employs or engages a full-time or full-time equivalent early childhood teacher at the service, and employs or engages a second full-time or full-time equivalent early childhood teacher or suitably qualified person at the service.

***“Approved Providers of kindergartens or long day care services will need to ensure they have two Early Childhood Teachers, or at minimum, one Early Childhood Teacher and one ‘suitably qualified person’ in attendance on any given day.”***

A ‘suitably qualified person’ is an individual who is ‘actively working towards’ an approved early childhood teaching qualification and has completed at least 50% of the qualification or holds an approved early childhood education and care diploma.

Kindergartens and long day care services with 60 or more children and currently employing one Early Childhood Teacher should begin to plan for the 2020 changes, planning options include:

- recruitment of a second Early Childhood Teacher or ‘suitably qualified person’
- appoint current employee with ACECQA approved qualification currently not working in Early Childhood Teaching role
- appoint current employee who is recognised as a ‘suitably qualified person’.

REFERENCES:  
ACECQA - Additional staffing requirement from 1 January 2020  
Vic DET - Early childhood teacher centre-based services

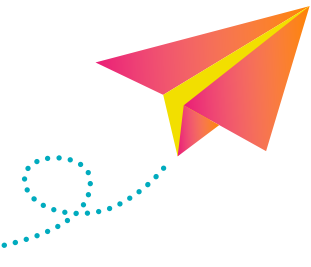




## GROWING TOMORROW



2019  
Early Childhood  
Education Conference  
*together we grow*



## New look, new program and new venue for the Early Childhood Education Conference

After 13 years, this year's Early Childhood Education Conference took on a bold new approach with a new venue and very different speaker program.

Hosted by ELAA and Gowrie Victoria and advised by a Conference Reference Committee comprising representatives from across the early years sector, this year's Conference focused on the theme of *Growing Tomorrow* with speakers considering key questions for the early learning sector such as How do we grow the best learning programs for pre-school children? How do we grow the educators to deliver those programs? How do we grow the leaders to inspire and support them? How do we grow awareness in the community about what we do and why it's important?

### Bonus free side trip for delegates

In a first for the Conference, delegates were given the option of a pre-conference side trip on the Thursday prior to the Conference opening. This was a free guided tour at the Melbourne Museum including the Pauline Gandel Children's Gallery and Road to Zero road safety exhibition. Museum staff

explained how the play spaces were created which inspired delegates to really think about how they create learning environments back at their services. At the Road to Zero exhibition, delegates were able to immerse themselves in interactive experiences and consider the importance of road safety education. A huge thank you to Melbourne Museum for partnering with ELAA and being part of the 2019 conference program.

### Opening to the beat of a drum

The Conference was officially opened on the Friday morning by Victorian Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, James Merlino, who announced \$700k to assist early years teachers to complete transition statements with the funding to be ongoing.

Then came Afrobeat who motivated everyone to get out of their seats with a massive drumming session that had the whole room moving and ready for morning tea and the first round of breakout sessions.





Liana Buchanan (Principal Commissioner - Commission for Children and Young People)



Dr Red Ruby Scarlet – activist, early childhood teacher-researcher, consultant, artist and academic



Mark McCrindle, social researcher



Manjula Waniganayake (Professor of Early Childhood Education - Macquarie University)

## Four keynotes are better than one!

New to this year's Conference program were four keynote speakers (instead of the usual one), longer breakout sessions structured across four key streams, and a poster competition.

Four keynote speakers meant each day could commence and finish with all delegates coming together in the main conference hall to listen to a keynote. This created a greater feeling of collegiality and more networking opportunities for delegates.

Our Friday morning keynote, Liana Buchanan (Principal Commissioner - Commission for Children and Young People) spoke about two recent legislative and policy initiatives in Victoria – *The Child Safe Standards* and *The Reportable Conduct Scheme* in an early learning setting. Liana discussed early

observations from administering these schemes and spoke in detail about the Reportable Conduct Scheme, which applied to the early years sector from January 2019. Her session provided some valuable high level perspectives on the intent and delivery of these two key schemes plus good tips for services still grappling with their reporting obligations and processes.

The Friday afternoon keynote, Dr Red Ruby Scarlet – activist, early childhood teacher-researcher, consultant, artist and academic – explored the terrain of cultural diversity in Australia and the extent to which this terrain is traversed in early childhood policy and practice by engaging with Aboriginal cosmologies. Her presentation *More Than a Cat Among the Pigeons: Cultural Diversity in*

*Everyday Curriculum* explored how Cultural Diversity can bring dignity and integrity to an early learning service's curriculum.

Our Saturday morning keynote was not typical of past conferences in that he really didn't have a background or direct connection to early years practice. Rather, social researcher, Mark McCrindle, sought to give the audience a snapshot of what Australia could be like by 2030 in terms of population, work habits, communication practices, professional aspirations and life priorities. Mark overlaid his presentation, entitled *Understanding the Times, Shaping the Trends: a Snapshot of the Changes Transforming Early Learning Education*, with a consideration of the technological, demographic and social change currently shaping Australian society and how it is

affecting the emerging early learning workforce of today and the next decade. His session was highly engaging, at times very amusing, and most importantly, insightful for early years leaders of today and tomorrow considering how to best work with Millennial and Gen Z staff and parents.

Our final keynote presenter, Professor Manjula Waniganayake (Professor of Early Childhood Education - Macquarie University), closed the Conference with her presentation *Leadership encounters in the modern era – Who is in charge anyway?* Prof. Waniganayake explored leadership through a lens of cultural diversity in early childhood settings, often drawing on personal experience, to help early years leaders make difference in their encounters with children, families and other professionals.





## Breakout sessions across four streams

This year, the conference speaker program was structured across four broad streams reflecting contemporary areas of focus for our sector. Each stream included six break-out sessions (three on each day) with delegates able to select sessions based on a single stream or from multiple streams. Coupled with the Keynote program, delegates therefore had the opportunity to attend up to five sessions on each day (in addition to welcoming, closing and networking sessions).

### STREAM 1 –

#### **Leadership and service management**

This stream featured a live podcast session by the Early Education Show entitled *Advocacy is Everyone's Job*. Including a live podcast was a 'first' for Early Childhood Education Conference and proved to be a

very popular session. We also welcomed members of the ELAA Board in the session called 'Early Childhood Education and Care Sector strategic scan'. Hosted by ELAA CEO, David Worland, this session took a critical look at the strategic challenges facing the sector. Other sessions in this stream focussed on capacity building in small teams, finding ethical solutions to practice issues, leadership for cultural inclusivity and more.

### STREAM 2 –

#### **Staff development and well being**

With staff attrition rates in the early years sector at unsustainable levels, staff development and wellbeing is now a priority for any early years provider. Therefore, development and wellbeing was given its own stream for this year's conference.



Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Training, James Merlino, officially opened the conference.

It then wasn't surprising that the *Mindful caring – why self-care is a social responsibility* session by Charlotte Tharup from the Mindfulness Clinic was one of our best attended sessions. It included practical mindfulness exercises as well as analysing the need and responsibility for mental wellbeing in workplaces. The stream included further workplace mental health management sessions from representatives of the (Beyond Blue) Be You initiative and the Recovre organisation.

Another session in this stream, presented by Sarah Kousal and Belinda Stewart from Moonee Valley City Council, discussed the Early Intervention and Prevention Partnership Group (EIPPG) in Moonee Valley – an initiative targeted to address emerging needs in families through integrating services and building staff capacity to address those needs.

### STREAM 3 –

#### **Education program and practice**

This stream focused on pedagogy and quality. Sessions ranged from using Information Technology in early learning (Prof Susan Edwards from ACU) to looking at the challenges and possibilities presented by the Victorian Government's commitment to expanding funded kindergarten to three-year-old children (panel including Vic DET representatives and sector consultants). The *Science made hands on and accessible* session with Ben Newsome (Fizzics Education) was highly interactive and loads of fun with some great tips and practical demonstrations on how to bring real world physics to preschool children.

### STREAM 4 –

#### **Engaging communities**

With Collaborative partnerships with families and communities being Quality Area 6 of the National Quality Standard, a stream dedicated to building connections with a service's families and the community in which the service is situated was thought essential for this year's Conference. This stream produced a varied and engaging selection of sessions. Alistair Gibbs (Windsor Community Children's Centre) spoke about the need for and challenges in engaging educators and parents in a non-biased curriculum; Gracie Munari and Kelly Sweeting discussed their experience of Gowrie Victoria projects designed to develop connections between some of our oldest and youngest members of the community; and Dr Tim Moore (MCRI) discussed the needs and challenges of families facing contemporary economic, social and technological pressures and how early years services can better understand and assist them. Other sessions in this stream looked at enhancing Child Road Safety Education through connecting with the community; community advocacy for quality early childhood education and care services; and engaging with the physical world around us through the lens of Kulin seasonal cycles.





The poster competition was a first for the conference.

### Introducing the Poster exhibition – another 'first' for the Conference

In the spirit trying lots of new things this year, we decided to introduce a poster competition to give more opportunity for services to be represented at the Conference and to provide delegates with another avenue of professional learning and networking.

In all, we had 14 poster exhibitors covering subjects as diverse as Developing a Critical Incident Management Plan; Building relationships through playgroups; and STEM teaching practice to Growing community connections; Growing tomorrow's environmentally responsible

adults; and Kindergarten to Primary School 'buddy' relationship building. Conference delegates could browse the poster entries in a dedicated section just outside the Trade Exhibition Hall at the start and end of each day and during session breaks. Each participating organisation provided a 'content expert' to chat to delegates about the programs/services illustrated in each poster and delegates were given the opportunity to vote for their favourite entry. This year's 'delegates choice' award went to [Patrick Taylor, from Gowrie Clare Court](#), with his poster titled 'STEM in a multi-age setting'. Patrick's early years service won a \$400 voucher from [Bellbird Educational](#).

### A new venue right in the heart of Melbourne

This year, the Conference moved from Caulfield Racecourse to Crown Conference Centre, Melbourne. The more contemporary, purpose-built, facilities at Crown provided the event with an even greater sense of professionalism and having all the breakout sessions on one level, in close proximity to each other, made transitions between sessions much easier. Having the bulk of trade exhibitors in a dedicated exhibition hall on the ground floor made for quicker and easier access to all the exhibitors and created an atmosphere much more conducive for networking.



### Trade Exhibition welcomes the return of the Exhibition 'passport'

This year's Trade Exhibition attracted over 60 exhibitors including educational consultancies, insurance providers, superannuation funds, office products, educational resources, outdoor play equipment, enrolment management solutions, financial products, training providers, building supplies, wellbeing, parent and community engagement resources and much more. Many exhibitors provided delegates with special offers exclusive to conference attendees including free professional development consultations from Gowrie Victoria, discounted certificate and diploma courses from ITHEA, free advice from Worksafe inspectors, and discount vouchers from Teaching Solutions to name just a few.

Exhibitors and delegates also welcomed the return of the Trade Exhibition 'passport' where delegates could record visits to selected exhibitor stands on their 'passport' and then go in the running for the 'passport' prize. Congratulations to Mahnee Barry from Plenty Kids Early Learning Centre (part of Plenty Valley Christian College) on winning the Trade Exhibition Passport prize – a \$500 voucher from Officeworks.



## Thank you to our sponsors

The Early Childhood Conference does not happen without the support of our sponsors.



**Victorian Department of Education and Training** – once again, the Victorian Department of Education and Training was our major (Platinum) sponsor.



**McArthur (ELAA's preferred recruitment partner)** – provided thousands of free (barista made) coffees via the McArthur Coffee cart).



**Storypark** – thank you to leading early learning software provider, Storypark, for sponsoring one of our keynote speakers.



**Officeworks, Bunnings Warehouse and Bellbird Early Education Resources** – for being our 2019 Prize Sponsors



## A little help for families with preschool fees

In addition to keeping conference delegates 'topped up' with top notch coffee, our friends at McArthur went the extra mile for families facing financial stress by donating all the tips received at the McArthur coffee cart during the Conference to ELAA's Early Childhood Education Fund. The Fund helps parents in financial need meet out-of-pocket kindergarten fees. McArthur donated \$480 from their tip jar. ELAA also added to the Fund by thanking visiting VIPs (such as the Minister for Education and Training) and Keynote speakers by making a donation on their behalf (in lieu of a personal gift) which added another \$1000 to the fund.

Anyone interested in donating to the fund can do so by visiting [www.givenow.com.au/earlychildhoodfoundation](http://www.givenow.com.au/earlychildhoodfoundation)

*Stay tuned for more details about our 2020 conference event at [www.ecec.org.au](http://www.ecec.org.au)*

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Over 60,000 children access kindergarten programs across Victoria each year. Many of these children miss out on the opportunity to attend a quality kindergarten program in the year before they commence school because their parents are unable to afford the fees.

Since 1997 the Early Childhood Education Foundation has helped children from families experiencing financial difficulties to access a funded kindergarten program and enjoy the same opportunities to succeed in life as any other child. You can make a difference to a child's future by donating to the Foundation.

## HOW TO DONATE

The ECEF contributes approximately \$380 per term to a recipient's kindergarten fees – allowing a child to attend at little or no cost.

All contributions will be issued with a receipt and donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

If you would like to donate please go to:

[givenow.com.au/earlychildhoodfoundation](http://givenow.com.au/earlychildhoodfoundation)

Alternatively, call ELAA on 03 9489 3500.

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## RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE CHILDREN ARRIVE AND AFTER THEY LEAVE; embedding Road Safety Education in the curriculum

Article by Louise Dorrat – Early Childhood Consultant and facilitator for ELAA's Starting Out Safely Road Safety Education PD program.

Educators are aware that “every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury (Nat Law Sec 167, 2012, NQS, 2.3.2, 2018). Furthermore, educators are responsible for children while they are in care from the time that children are signed into the service or the Family Day Care (FDC) premises until the time they are signed out.

### However, what about the time before the child is signed in and after the child is signed out?

The times when children are delivered to and

collected from services or FDC premises can be challenging for all staff members, particularly where there could be a large number of children coming and going at the same time. On some occasions, parents may be talking to each other or they are on their mobile phone and not supervising the children. Children have been observed running to the car whilst the parents are distracted. Educators have a duty of care to monitor the arrival and departure of children and ensure their safety while they are on the premises. This includes the car park, driveway and surrounds.



### Children left in cars during collection and delivery of children

Occasionally children are left in the car whilst parents or the authorised nominee is picking up or dropping off other children at the service. In Victoria it is an offence for a child to be left unattended for any longer than is reasonable. The penalties for leaving a child unattended in a car in Victoria include: a fine (currently \$4,030) and/or a maximum of 6 months imprisonment ([Children, Youth and Families Act \(2005\)](#)).

### Educators may be worried about the person collecting the child

Educators must also be aware that a duty of care exists when the child is released into the care of another person who may pose a risk to their safety, health or wellbeing. This person may be an authorised nominee on the enrolment form, however their behaviour may be cause for concern. Examples include; a person who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol (Nat Law, Sec.171).

Educators must never put themselves in danger and cannot prevent the parent or authorised nominee from taking the child, however, they should encourage the person to use an alternate form of transport or contact another authorised person to collect the child.

If educators are concerned that the child may not be safe in the care of the parent or authorised nominee, notifying the police may be required after child has left the service.

### Policies and procedures required:

- services must have policies and procedures for delivery and collection of children to the service/premises (Regulation 168 f, 2012)
- children may only leave the service/premise if the child is given into the care of their parent or an authorised nominee named in the child's enrolment record (Regulation 99, 2012)
- an approved provider can restrict a nominated person from collecting a child, for example if the service's policy does not allow children to be collected by a person under the age of 16 (NQS 2.1.2, 2018)





- child enrolment details must include any person who is an authorised nominee (a person who has been given permission by a parent or family member to collect the child from the education and care service or the family day care educator (Nat Law 170(5), Reg 160 3b, 2012).

### **Educator's role in embedding Road Safety Education in the curriculum**

Embedding Road Safety Education into the curriculum may include taking the children to the entrance and carpark of the service or the driveway of the FDC home and talk about safe ways to walk to the car. (Remember to fill in a risk assessment). It is important to talk with children about safety issues and where appropriate, involving children in setting safety rules (NQS 2.2.1, 2018).

When educators discuss safety issues with children, this information is often transferred

to the parent. This could include talking with children about:

- holding the parent's hand
- reminding the parent not to be on the mobile phone
- walking the safe route to the car
- getting into the car via the safe side (the curb side)
- bike helmets when cycling to and from the service.

### **REFERENCES**

- > Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) (2018) Guide to the National Quality Framework.
- > Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) (2009). The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. Canberra, ACT; DEEWR.
- > Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) (2018) Early Childhood Services Safe Transport and Road Safety Education Policy

### **TOP TEN TIPS:**

1. ensure services have policies and procedures on collection and delivery of children
2. include authorised nominees in the child's enrolment form
3. ensure there is active supervision during pick up and drop off times
4. conduct a risk assessment of the car park and FDC driveway surrounding the service
5. take the children out to the car park and demonstrate the safe way to walk to the car or bike
6. remind children to hold their parents' hand whilst walking to the car or bike
7. remind parents to never leave their child in the car
8. display signs in the foyer about points 6 and 7
9. include in the orientation process and newsletters the importance of safe arrivals and departures of children
10. ring ELAA to book a free Road Safety Education PD Session.

**Tel: 03 9489 3500**  
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# Growing Australia's most healthy generation with **Be You**

Be You exists because Australia has been a world leader in taking a national leadership approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing in education.

**B**e You launched November 1, 2018 and is being delivered by Beyond Blue, Early Childhood Australia and headspace. Be You promotes mental health from the early years to 18, empowering educators by helping them develop valuable mental health skills and knowledge through the evidence-based Be You Professional Learning.

## **How we support children's mental health in the early years can influence lifelong wellbeing**

Mental health issues deeply affect the learning capacity in children and young people. Almost half of all mental health issues begin before the age of fourteen years.

A review of recent research and literature confirms the importance of building the capacity of early learning services to foster mental health and assist children and families who are managing mental health issues.

The most effective approach to mental health prevention and promotion is one that involves the whole learning community – including leaders, educators, children, young people and their families, and the wider local community.

## **Be You Professional Learning supports and promotes mental health**

Be You Professional Learning is for individual educators and whole learning communities. A mentally healthy learning community is characterised by strong supportive relationships and interactions with children, young people, their families and colleagues.

Registering with Be You as a whole Learning Community means all members of the community work together to build an inclusive and positive environment, promoting resilience and enabling every member to achieve their best possible mental health.



**" The evidence-based online Professional Learning consists of 13 content modules grouped under five domains, with the content centred on Mentally Healthy Communities. "**



- professional learning for all early childhood teachers with each module aligned to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

For your whole learning community it means:

- promoting wellbeing by recognising how our own mental health and wellbeing can impact on people around us and how everyone can benefit by learning more about mental health and wellbeing
- a positive, supportive and inclusive environment that embraces diversity and supports collaborative relationships with families and the broader community
- educators will be empowered to confidently engage in discussions about mental health and wellbeing and develop a shared understanding of how to promote a mentally healthy learning community
- increased understanding of the impacts of mental health on behaviour and of common mental issues across development stages, and the supports and services available to assist.

Supporting mental health and wellbeing in your learning community is facilitated through the flexible Be You Framework which is a Professional Learning and continuous improvement process complementing existing planning processes, including Quality Improvement Plans. It can be adapted and tailored to your individual setting. The evidence-based online Professional Learning consists of 13 content modules grouped under five domains, with the content centred on Mentally Healthy Communities.

### What does starting Be You mean?

Be You offers educators and learning communities:

- access to evidence-based online Professional Learning to turn learning into action
- resources such as Fact Sheets, Always Be You material to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being, knowing and doing and much more
- Be You Consultant support to
  - assist using the Be You Professional Learning to inform practice

- guide services to meet the requirements of the National Quality Standard and work with related learning and wellbeing frameworks.
- a range of Tools and Guides such as Wellbeing tools to support educator wellbeing
- online Events that are great for learning, reflecting, sharing and connecting with networks across Australia

**Explore Be You:**  
**[beyou.edu.au](https://beyou.edu.au)**

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### Go to [www.carseatssavelives.com.au](http://www.carseatssavelives.com.au) and take the 'five-step test'

To find out if it's safe for your child to be in an adult seatbelt take the 'Five-Step Test' by visiting [www.carseatssavelives.com.au](http://www.carseatssavelives.com.au) here you can also watch ELAA's new video 'Child Restraints and Booster Seats – What You Need to Know' and access more essential information on keeping your child safe in your car.