



EARLY
LEARNING
ASSOCIATION
AUSTRALIA

The voice for parents and service providers

PRE SCHOOL MATTERS

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
PREPARING CHILDREN FOR LIFE
TERM FOUR 2019

ENGAGING CALD FAMILIES
IN EARLY LEARNING

MEET OUR VOLUNTEER
OF THE YEAR

'CODE RED' – RESPONDING
TO BUSHFIRE



Market cycles and super – it's all about the long term

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AustralianSuper

Investing successfully for retirement relies on keeping a steady focus on the long-term, and not being distracted by the twists and turns that are inevitably part of any long journey.

For AustralianSuper global economist Mark Tierney, it's about remaining focused on your long-term retirement goals rather than on short-term gain. And that means staying the course when markets fluctuate. He explains: "While we do get significant occasional market downturns like at the end of 2018, which can be unsettling, our members can take comfort that the strategies we adopt at AustralianSuper are designed to deliver over the long-term," he says.

An investment strategy based on reading the market

Markets move in complex cycles and can be challenging to predict, especially if you're not an investment expert. So it's not surprising that being able to read the market accurately is central to AustralianSuper's investment strategy.

As an example, Tierney points to what he terms the share market's 'spectacularly good run' in the first six months of 2019 versus reports of economic growth that were generally negative.

For him, this is a prime example of the tendency for economic and market cycles to differ because of their respective time frames.

"In today's environment, central banks may cut interest rates in response to weaker economic data, but share markets

can interpret this as a positive because cuts can create a stronger economy tomorrow – and that environment provides a strong backdrop for strong investment performance."

"The skill of investing is in determining when markets have got it right," he says.

Understanding the investment strategy

AustralianSuper has built a long-term track record of managing members' retirement savings through market cycles. Its global investment team continually assess economic and investment data to help formulate and adjust its investment strategies as required.

The Fund takes an active approach to managing members' super and, for its default Balanced option, aims to generate returns that outpace inflation,

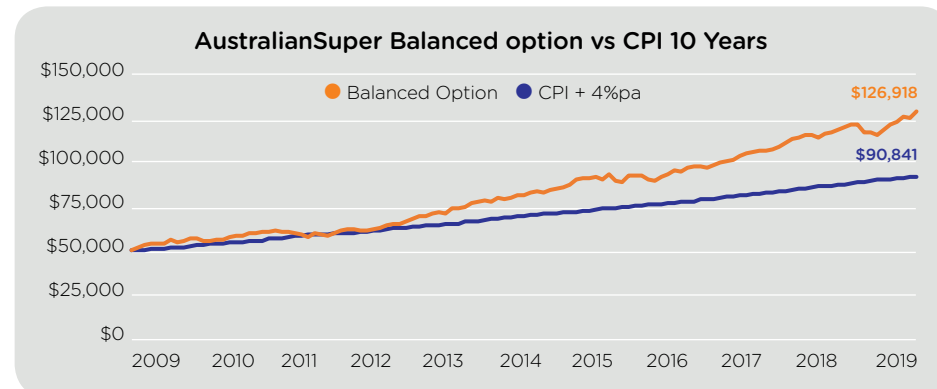
as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), by at least 4% a year over the long-term.

For more on AustralianSuper's investment strategy, visit australiansuper.com/investments.

AustralianSuper's Balanced Option

Reinforcing the benefits of staying the course, a member invested in AustralianSuper's Balanced option from July 2009 to June 2019 would have more than doubled their retirement savings.[^]

Real returns, after you take inflation into account, have been strong and well above the Balanced option's long-term objective, of outperforming Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) by 4%pa, as shown in the graph below.



Need more information?

Depending on your circumstances, getting some sound financial advice tailored to your situation and needs may be a good idea if you're with AustralianSuper and need help, call us on **1300 300 273** for more information or to be put in touch with a financial adviser.*



[^] Returns are net of investment fees and taxes, but don't include administration fees that are deducted from account balances. Insurance and other fees and costs may also apply. Returns from equivalent investment options of ARF and STA are used in calculating returns for periods that begin before 1 July 2006.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In this edition of Preschool Matters ...

Welcome to Preschool Matters end-of-year edition. This is my first Preschool Matters as President of the ELAA Board so perhaps it's appropriate to say a little about my background in the early years sector.

I am currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Bethany Group based in Geelong which provides a wide range of services in child and family support, family violence, relationships, disability, housing, problem gambling, financial counselling and, of course, early childhood education through Bethany Kindergarten Services.

Originally qualified in Education and Child Psychology, I started my career in special education for children with disabilities and developmental delay. Since then, I have worked in the health and community services sectors in leadership and consulting roles for government, private and not-for-profit organisations.

My interest in the early years centres on developing a system that provides equal access and engagement for all children in high quality early childhood education and care. In particular, ensuring that we support vulnerable children to engage in education and support families in a more effective and holistic way.

So, it's great to be involved with a diverse

information resource like Preschool Matters that focuses on news and features specifically for early years professionals. In this edition, CEO of Glen Eira Kindergarten Association, Sam Kolasa, writes about what's needed to engage CALD communities in early childhood services ([pages 8-12](#)); there's an informative Q&A about the changes to Victorian service staffing levels from January 1 ([pages 16-17](#)); and a great profile on this year's McArthur Early Childhood Education Volunteer of the Year, Liz Jowett. As President of Chelsea Kindergarten, Liz has worn many hats and provides some great tips on everything from communicating with staff to grant applications ([pages 18-21](#)). There are also some really practical features on the do's and don'ts of covering prams ([pages 22-24](#)); the experiences of a regional Early Years Management group caught in the middle of a Victorian 'Code Red' bushfire day ([pages 30-33](#)); and a great case study on a service that recently invested in defibrillator to help support its commitment to the wellbeing of its staff and children ([pages 26-28](#)).

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Preschool Matters.

Grant Boyd
President, ELAA

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LEARNING BROUGHT TO LIFE

YOUR EARLY LEARNING
EVENT 2020

SAVE THE DATE
Melbourne 31 July 2020



CEO'S REPORT



Welcome to the final edition of *Preschool Matters* for 2019.

While most of us are contemplating some time away from our workplaces over the next two or three weeks I encourage you to flip through this edition over the holiday break. It's packed with handy information for next year and features on key areas of early childhood practice.

2019 has been a big year

The May 2019 Federal Election returned the Morrison Government to Canberra. Given the Liberal / National Coalition was some distance from meeting ELAA's (and the rest of the sector's) early years policy expectations – particularly on matters such as two years of funded preschool, long-term funding of 15 hours, commitment to resourcing the National Quality Agenda (and ACECQA), and reform of the Child Care Subsidy – we knew there was a lot of advocacy work ahead for ELAA and our sector partners. Some of that work has already borne fruit with the recent announcements by the Federal Government

that it will continue funding:

- ACECQA in its important work of regulating the National Quality Framework
- The Universal Access Partnership for 2020.

This news is a welcome relief given there had been some doubtful noises coming out of Canberra on these issues. There is more to come on our advocacy outlook later in this report.

At a state level, pre-planning for the the Victorian three-year-old kindergarten roll out began in earnest this year. 2019 has seen an audit of kindergarten capacity across the state, a government communications and teacher recruitment campaign, and information sessions for services in those regions designated for the pilot rollout in 2020. ELAA will be developing new resources and support for members to assist them with adjusting their service delivery models and ensuring financial sustainability through this period of significant change.

OUR FOCUS WILL BE TO CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE TO THE FEDERAL AND VICTORIAN GOVERNMENTS FOR A QUALIFIED, HIGHLY SKILLED EARLY LEARNING WORKFORCE THAT IS ACKNOWLEDGED AND REWARDED FOR ITS PROFESSIONALISM.



A productive year for ELAA

The ELAA team has continued deliver day-to-day member support during 2019 while innovating and developing new resources and processes. There's been a lot of good work during the year – too much to list here – but a few stand out items include:

- a streamlined professional development program delivered with a new approach that drew on collaboration from experienced service providers delivering 'Stories from the Field', as well as expert panels made up of early years services and allied regulators such as Worksafe, DET and more
- major updates of two key ELAA management resources: PolicyWorks and the Early Childhood Management Manual
- a new partnership arrangement with Bunnings to deliver discounts to ELAA members across thousands of useful products for early learning services
- articulating the case for urgent additional EYM funding through the submission of our report – Early Years Management – achieving a sustainable service system. This report, along with lobbying of the Victorian Government, resulted in additional funding being provided during the course of 2019 and the Government commissioning Deloitte to examine the cost drivers affecting Early Years Managers.

Coming up in 2020

ELAA will continue to advocate on behalf of our members in pursuit of our vision of excellence in early learning for every Australian child. To that end, ELAA will continue to press for improved equity and accessibility to quality early learning for our most vulnerable and disadvantaged families by continuing to ask the Federal Government to remove the work activity test from the Child Care Subsidy.

Our second key advocacy focus will be to continue to advocate to the Federal and Victorian governments for a qualified, highly skilled early learning workforce that is acknowledged and rewarded for its professionalism.

We will also continue to negotiate with the Australian Education Union to finalise the next Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement (VECTEA). Funding remains the key outstanding issue and it is hoped this will be progressed during the first quarter of 2020. ELAA's position remains that changes to employment conditions can't be made the responsibility of providers or parents to fund through, for example, increased fees.

CEO'S REPORT

Learning Brought to Life



I'm really excited to have launched our communications campaign for our major professional development event for 2020. We have called it Learning Brought

to Life and it will be a whole day devoted to the teachers, educators, parent committee members, and Early Years Managers that bring learning to life for our children. The event will be all about giving attendees new insights, tools and resources that they

can take back to their services. There will be a big focus on the rollout of three-year-old kindergarten in Victoria and inspiring and nurturing early years professionals to continue to strive for excellence in what they do. Stay tuned for our event website launch in February and the announcement of keynote speakers and the full program.

Finally, I would like to thank all our members for the work you do for children and families and trust that in some way, small or large, ELAA has supported you in your goals for 2019. I wish you all the best for the holiday period and a smooth start to 2020.

David Worland, CEO ELAA

Funding to support provisionally registered early childhood teachers

The Department is offering early childhood services funding to support provisionally registered teachers and their mentors to work through the process to achieve full teacher registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Early childhood services can apply for \$2,872 per provisionally registered teacher.

Funding can be used to:

- provide paid time release or backfill to release the provisionally registered teacher or their mentor
- cover travel or accommodation costs for the provisionally registered teacher or their mentor
- provide professional learning for the provisionally registered teacher.

To find out more, visit:

www.education.vic.gov.au/PRT-funding



ADVOCACY YOUR COLLECTIVE VOICE

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



Budget Submission to the Victorian Government

State Budget Submission

ELAA's 2020-2021 Victorian State Budget submission has a strong focus on the successful implementation of two years of kindergarten. To date, the sector has had limited high-level input into the implementation of the roll-out. ELAA will be advocating for early years management organisations and stand-alone kindergartens to have increased involvement in the design and processes for implementation. A key concern of members is how to attract the six thousand new teachers and educators which will be needed by 2022. ELAA is arguing for a comprehensive workforce strategy which sets targets for attracting and retaining teachers and educators. The Submission also addresses the pace of sector reform, such as the introduction of the Portable Long Service Benefits scheme, and its impact on the sustainability of services remains an area of ongoing advocacy by ELAA.



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

Federal advocacy and the Universal Partnership Agreement

With the latest Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results showing a continued long-term decline in reading, maths and science skills for Australian students, the case for rolling out two years of preschool to lift academic performance has never been stronger. However, the future of kindergarten funding remains uncertain with the Commonwealth considering its position in the early childhood education and care sector through the review of the Universal Access Partnership Agreement. Much of ELAA's advocacy over the next 12 months will be focussed on the role of the Federal government. Our three key messages are:

1. improve equity and accessibility for our most vulnerable and disadvantaged families by removing the work activity test from the Child Care Subsidy
2. maintain universal access funding to ensure every Australian four-year-old can access 15 hours a week of free funded kindergarten in the year before school
3. maintain the National Quality Framework and funding for ACECQA.

Please stay tuned for how you and your service can contribute to our advocacy campaign in 2020.

ENGAGING CALD COMMUNITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

In October, ELAA made a submission on behalf of its members to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Early Childhood Engagement of Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Communities. ELAA member and CEO of Glen Eira Kindergarten Association, Samantha Kolasa, recently represented ELAA at a public hearing of the Legal and Social Issues Committee which is leading the Inquiry. Below is an extract of her speech.

Current policy reforms in the early childhood sector

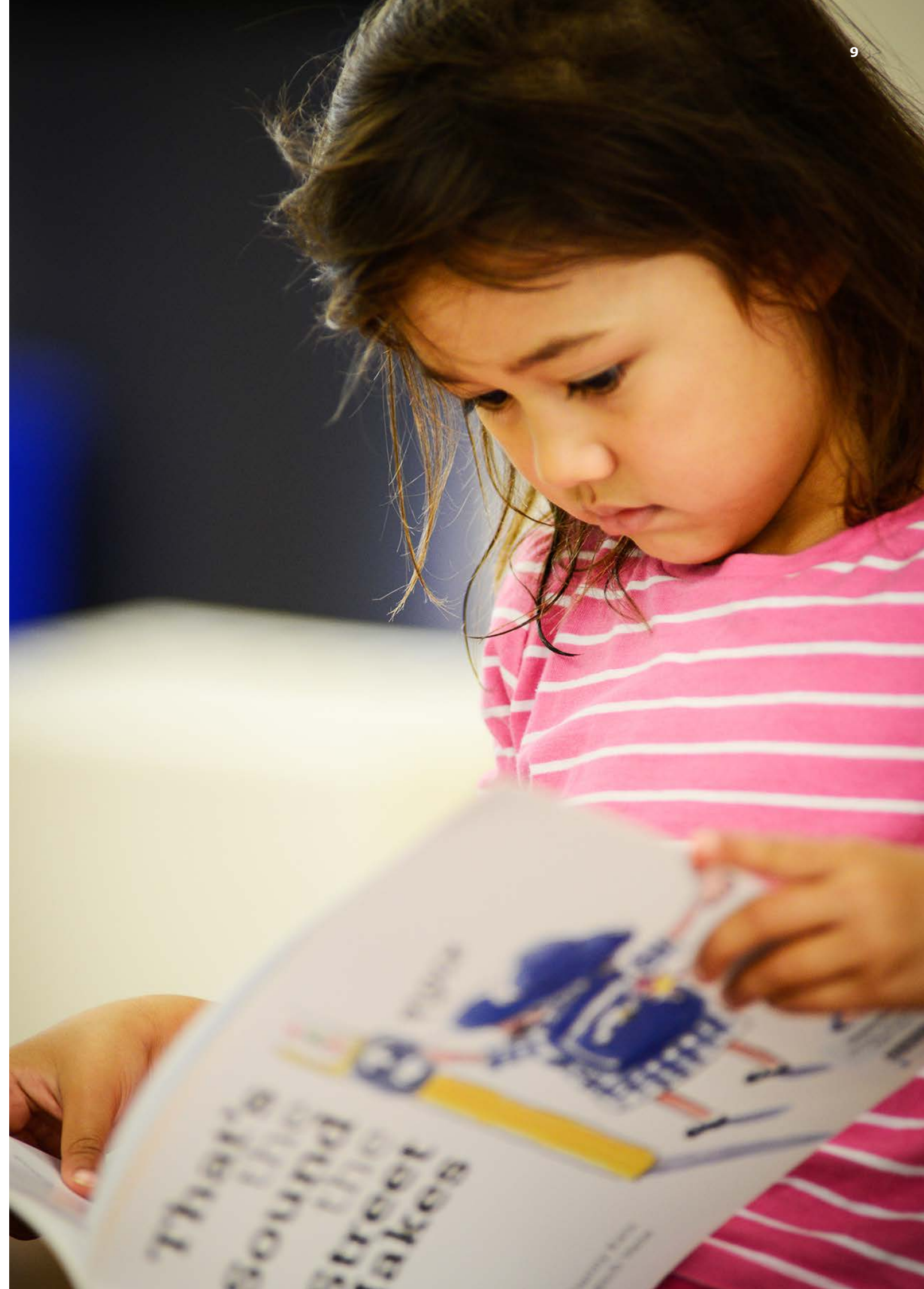
The timing of this inquiry is significant. The early childhood sector is entering a period of major and exciting reform. The roll-out of three-year-old kindergarten over the next decade clearly demonstrates that the Victorian Government is aware of the benefits that two years of high-quality play-based early learning prior to school can provide. School readiness funding is being provided to kindergartens to address educational disadvantage – particularly in the areas of communication, well-being, and access and inclusion.

The policy direction of integrated services is also a positive shift. This will

provide families with the ability to engage and connect across different services and minimise the transition at various life stages. This can often be quite daunting for families.

Current reality for many families

However, for our culturally and linguistically diverse communities – these benefits and Government initiatives are often not even realised. Families who are newly arrived to our country have often experienced significant trauma, and unfortunately, their child's participation in an early childhood service is often the last thing on their mind. Shelter and food are the priorities.



The different enrolment processes for three and four-year-old kindergarten can be confusing. Some municipalities offer central enrolment – some don't. Some municipalities manage both three and four-year-old enrolments. In some areas, this is the role of the individual kindergarten or early years manager. When families are struggling with their own levels of vulnerability, and perhaps – cannot even speak our language, it is no wonder that there is little understanding of how to access early childhood services and the benefits this can bring.

Within Glen Eira, we have several families who leave our service at the end of term three to return home until the new year. Whilst connection to country is important, these children are

not able to experience the full year (or two) of benefits that an early childhood education can bring. We know that one in five children start school with a developmental vulnerability in one or more areas. Children who speak a language other than English and are not proficient in English are more than 90% likely to be vulnerable in one or more areas. The participation in an early childhood service provides many positive benefits for families.

These include:

- the opportunity for those children who are behind in their learning to catch up to their peers
- the ability for parents to enter the workforce thereby increasing Australia's productivity
- turning around Australia's declining school performance
- more children going on to further education, to be employed, and earn more (there is a direct correlation here).



The focus needs to be on engagement, and making early childhood education a less complex, and more welcoming space. Whilst we cannot mandate families to send their children to an early learning service as we can with school, we can promote the importance in a way that all families understand.

Successful models of intervention

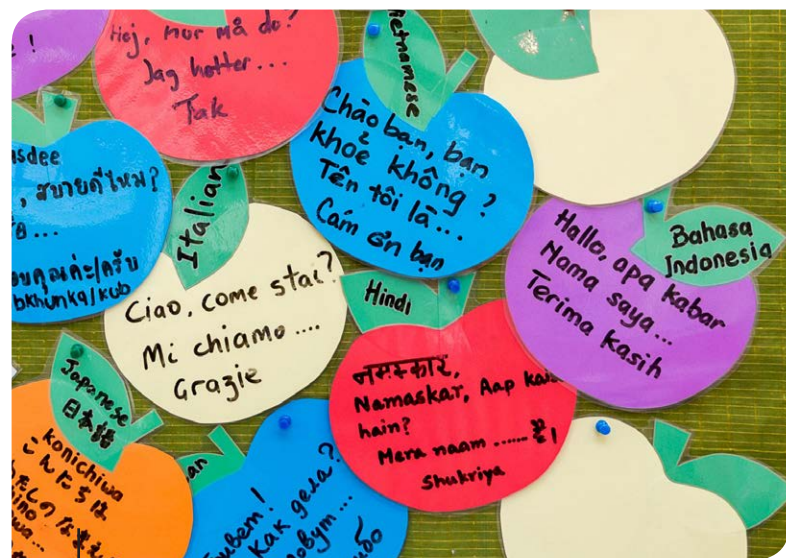
There is an educational and community hub in the outer south-east of Melbourne providing services to many newly arrived immigrants who have suffered significant trauma. Many are uneducated, many do not speak English. The service has established a beautiful and safe space for these families. Not only does the school offer children an education from Prep to Year 12 but they also offer childcare and kindergarten. There are English classes for the parents.

There are social groups. They have visiting allied health professionals who see the children requiring intervention. They have on-site interpreters. Families that come from CALD backgrounds have their needs met in one safe space. Whilst we cannot roll-out this model across the country due to the significant cost, much can be learned from this service and how they have helped to engage this important cohort of Australians.

A focus on quality and staff

New migrants are likely to live in areas of the lowest quality services; in Victoria roughly one in five services are rated as 'working towards'. The quality of interactions between staff and children is what determines the learning outcomes. The children who stand to benefit the most from early childhood education are the least likely to have

NEWS & EVENTS



AN ELAA MEMBER IN ST ALBANS HAS CHILDREN FROM 37 DIFFERENT LANGUAGE GROUPS. THE STAFF WHO WORK THERE SPEAK A TOTAL OF 28 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.



access to the highest quality which would make the biggest difference. Driving improvements in quality in areas of disadvantage will increase engagement of CALD families and help children on their lifelong learning journey.

We will need 6,000 additional staff over the next four years to support the roll-out of three-year-old kindergarten. Having a diverse workforce is critical to engaging and welcoming families. An ELAA member in St Albans has children from 37 different language groups. The staff who work there speak a total of 28 different languages. The managing director there says that families who have a staff member speaking their

language are happier with the service and they work hard to engage with the remaining 25 percent of children and their families, but it is challenging.

I want to acknowledge the work that is being done in the early childhood space. The policy initiatives are positive and it's an exciting time to be working in the sector. My message today is to reinforce that in implementing these reforms we have the opportunity to set the sector up to successfully engage with families, including recognising that a diverse workforce is essential to this outcome. We need all families to recognise the benefits, and to have access to quality early childhood services. It's often those that need services most that we do not reach.



McArthur
Best People Fit

Refer an early childhood teacher with a chance to be rewarded with \$1000

ELAA partner, McArthur Early Childhood Education, is working with the Department of Education and Training in recruiting Early Childhood Educators and Teachers for regional areas in Victoria for 2020. The rollout of 3-year-old kindergarten in regional Victoria means there's great opportunities and incentives for qualified early childhood teachers.

As a qualified early childhood teacher, you will receive professional development, mentoring and financial incentives of up to \$9,000 to teach in a location where programs for the Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Reform will roll out in 2020.

You will also enjoy all the benefits an affordable, regional Victorian lifestyle.

To hear about these opportunities, contact Tracie Burwash 0417 366 927 or Fiona Bain 0404 204 372 at McArthur.

If you know a qualified Early Childhood Educator who wants to make a difference, there's even the chance to be rewarded with \$1000 if you refer a friend to McArthur at kinderreform@mcArthur.com.au

Visit <http://mcArthur.com.au/kinder-reform/>

Victorian Early Childhood services should review and update emergency contact details

To ensure that the Victorian Department of Education and Training holds the correct after hours and emergency contact details for early childhood services, please log on to the National Quality Agenda IT system and check the information for your service to ensure the Department has the correct details for your service at all times. Children's services licensed under the Children's Service's Act should email licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au with updated emergency contact information.



Have you emailed your service Bunnings PowerPass details to receive a bigger discount?

Bunnings and ELAA are excited to announce MORE items have been discounted for ELAA members with over 6,500 discounted items. We have listened to our members and added Child Safety, Arts and Crafts, Security Systems, Solar Panels, Play and Garden Equipment to the discounted range.



ELAA Member Savings and Benefits at Bunnings include:

- ✓ access to exclusive commercial pricing on thousands of relevant items for your centre
 - ✓ access to our Trade Specialists in every store – competitive quotes, advice and delivery
 - ✓ choice of multiple PowerPass cards on ONE account for employees – spend, scan and save
- NEW: PowerPass App – check your price via the App. View your item discount before you buy.

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If you do not have an existing Bunnings Powerpass Account – then apply online at: www.bunningspowerpass.com.au

Step 2:

Email your Bunnings PowerPass Account (or Application) Name & Number to: ELAApowerpass@bunnings.com.au

EpiPen shortage update from the Victorian Department of Education and Training

The December edition of the Victorian Department of Education and Training Quality Assessment and Regulation Update contained important information regarding current supply of the EpiPen Jr 150mcg and EpiPen 300mcg adrenaline (epinephrine) auto-injectors. To view the update [click here](#).



THE MINISTER
PLEGGED A FURTHER
\$46 MILLION TO
“SUPPORT THE
DELIVERY OF
NATIONALLY
CONSISTENT AND
HIGH-QUALITY
EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION
AND CARE”

Federal Government announces continued funding of ACECQA

The Federal Minister for Education, the Hon Dan Tehan MP, announced on 10 December that the Australian Government would continue funding for the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) from 1 July 2020. The Minister pledged \$46 million to “support the delivery of nationally consistent and high-quality early childhood education and care under the National Quality Framework through ... (ACECQA)”.

In a media release, the Minister said “the Government's funding commitment was informed by an independent review commissioned by Education Council to ensure ACECQA remained ‘fit for purpose’”. Mr Tehan further noted, “ACECQA is integral to the delivery of quality early education and care outcomes for children throughout Australia and supports a consistent national approach to regulation across all states and territories”.

CHANGES TO STAFFING REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE NATIONAL REGULATIONS FROM 1 JANUARY 2020



What are the changes to the ratio requirements in 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 sees the final step in the schedule being rolled out including the requirement 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.

If your service has 60 – 80 children from 1st January 2020

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.

If your service has more than 80 children from 1st January 2020

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.

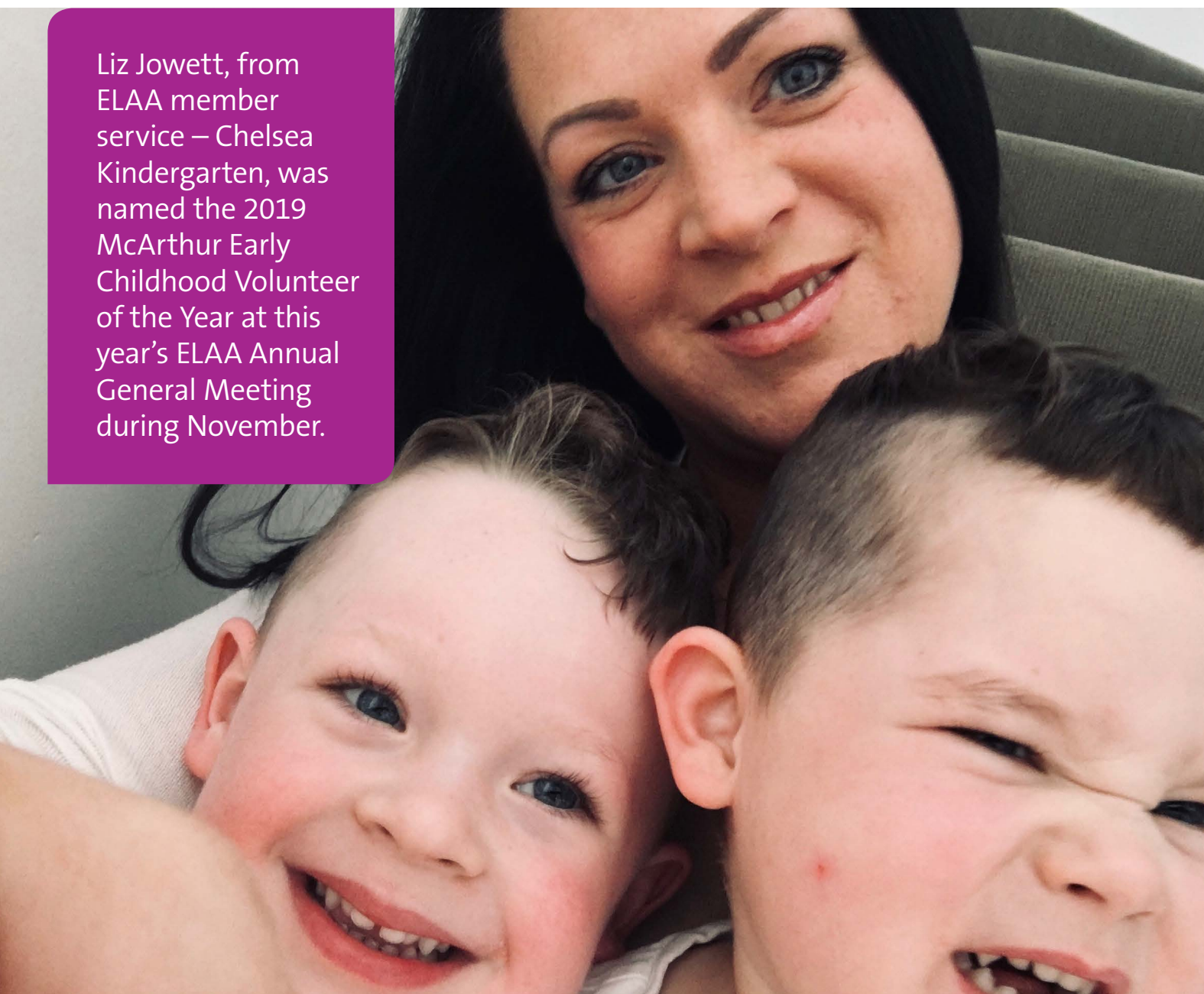
What is a suitably qualified person?

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.

CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR 2019 MCARTHUR EARLY CHILDHOOD VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Liz Jowett, from ELAA member service – Chelsea Kindergarten, was named the 2019 McArthur Early Childhood Volunteer of the Year at this year's ELAA Annual General Meeting during November.



Liz's contribution to the Life of Chelsea Kindergarten has been remarkable. She initially joined the Committee to take on the publicity portfolio and effectively publicised major enrolment and fundraising events at the kinder through everything from social media to 'old school' letter boxing. When the kinder's website unexpectedly crashed (with all files lost) Liz had a temporary site up in days and a whole new website operating within a month.

She has since gone on to take on the President's role while, at different times, covering for the Publicity Officer, Fundraising Officer, and Grants Officer. Sadly, the service's Vice President – Bec – passed away during this year and Liz not only took on the Vice President's duties but lead the Committee in a fundraising and support campaign to assist Bec's family. We spoke to Liz about why she volunteers and if she had any tips for parent-run Committees of Management at other services.



What motivates you to take on the work and responsibility of operating a community-based kindergarten?

My children and all children! I want them to have the best possible education and feel that a community based kinder is the way to give them this.

What achievements is the Chelsea Kindergarten Committee of Management most proud?

We are proud in general of all of our achievements – big or little – as each takes care and work. But mostly I/we are proud of the way we conducted ourselves when our Vice President and her baby tragically passed away – the kinder community and surrounding community rallied to help her family from the initiatives we created. This was a really hard time for me personally and to be able to support the family and show them the support of their community was a really lovely thing to be involved in, even under the hard circumstances. →

You have tried a number of ways to promote Chelsea Kindergarten, from good old letterboxing to social media. Are there any promotional channels that have worked best for you?

Letter boxing pamphlets for upcoming open days seems to work pretty well. But also getting to know your local community government representatives and real estate agencies to help promote your service helps a lot as their reach is great. You can't beat good old word of mouth though, making sure your kinder is well spoken of by the families that attend is paramount to having an excellent reputation.

Your service's website crashed at one point and you had to act quickly to get it operational again – any tips for committee run services on how to keep your website doing what it needs to do without spending too much time and money on it?

I am lucky that I have a background working at Digital Agencies so my knowledge of this area was great and I could take the reins and find the right places to help when this



happened and also build the new website. The council offers free website hosting for community run kindergartens and supplies a template for you to use and create a great website with free hosting. Ours was supplied through the Kingston Council IT Program. Contact your council to ask about this service if you are currently paying for website hosting.

Working with a team of volunteers on a Committee of Management can be great but it can also be vulnerable to politics and personality conflicts. What helps a Committee of Management work effectively together?

Communication is key! Ensuring your committee all feel they can share any conversations and info they have. Make them feel they are contributing and valued.



How does a Committee of Management best keep staff informed and make them feel valued and engaged?

The way we do this is to ensure we have a committee representative at each staff meeting. We have a staff member attend our committee meetings and we share our meeting agendas and minutes with all staff as well. We also do little things like acknowledge staff birthdays with a small personal gift and when a staff member(s) has gone above and beyond we give them a little gift also.

Fundraising can be hard work for a small organisation – what works? What doesn't?

Events that engage the children and their families work best from my experience, as well as keepsake fundraisers. We reach out to local businesses to donate vouchers etc. and throughout the year we use them to include in raffles and give away as prizes. The best activities for fundraising are when everyone can get involved and have a great time socialising. Those events create a buzz in our kinder community and, in turn, good word of mouth for our kinder.

You also took on the role of Grants Officer – any advice for services applying for grants?

Ensure you read the guidelines of the grant, making sure what you are applying for aligns with what the grant rules stipulate. Grants are always a bit of a hit and miss, you never know if you are going to get it or not! A helpful way of supporting your application is to ask for your local parliament representative to write a letter of support for your grant application. This doesn't always mean the grant will get approved but it certainly helps.



HOW SAFE IS IT TO COVER A PRAM WITH A BLANKET?

We know how rapidly cars heat up on a hot day, but does covering an infant's pram with a blanket or cloth create a heat hazard? Is it safe or not? ELAA 'Starting Out Safely' Road Safety Education Project consultant, Jill Green, discusses this important issue for parents and carers ...

In a nutshell: a 2014 Swedish study, which tested the temperature of a pram covered with a blanket before and after it was left in direct exposure to the midday sun, acknowledged health professionals' concerns about this infant care practice. Alarming, the temperature was seen to rise from 22 degrees Celsius to 37 degrees in an hour, creating an extremely hot and unsafe environment for an infant.

[Link to news](#)

Why are parents covering the pram, why did this practice start? Awareness of the need to protect our skin from the direct sun has led to parents 'covering up' to protect our children from being exposed to sunburn and skin damage from UV rays.

Parents are increasingly covering prams with blankets or materials to shield their infant in a pram, whether outdoors or inside such as a shopping centre or home where sun exposure is not an issue. Reducing visual stimulation encouraging their infant to sleep and impeding waking or disturbing a sleeping child may also be factors.

The real message: Cancer Council's list of recommendations include: "Seek shade, if baby is outdoors, keep baby in the shade... check that the hood can be adjusted, so it can block out the direct sun. For the best protection, pram shade covers should completely cover the pram and be made of densely woven fabric that combines a mesh section – so the baby can see, and you can see baby and air can circulate – and a shade fabric section"[1]. Covering a baby in a pram with a "light sheet" whilst "ensuring adequate ventilation" was only recommended in circumstances when baby was exposed to direct sunlight.

Is there a danger? The practice of placing blankets or coverings over the pram or stroller can reduce ventilation and airflow and raise the temperature around the infant, increasing the risk of thermal stress (overheating), rebreathing of exhaled carbon dioxide and reduction in their ability to arouse.

Infants are safest placed on their back on a flat surface in the pram, dressed →

appropriately to the room or environmental temperature with their head and face uncovered and airways clear. Following this advice to keep your infant's head and face uncovered also allows parents /carers to observe and check their infant regularly.

Soteria Safe Sleeping Advice recommends:

- use a safe pram that complies with the current mandatory standard based on AS/MZS 2088: 2000. Read and follow the instructions and warnings supplied by the manufacturer. [Click here to find out more](#)
- if using a cover supplied with your pram, ensure it is an aerated UV cover made of mesh material so air can circulate and regularly check baby
- staying in the shade or staying indoors and out of the heat, when possible, is a safer alternative than placing a blanket or material over the pram
- always stay with your infant/child while they are in the pram or stroller and actively supervise, observe, hear and assess your baby
- place your infant on the back with five-point harness restraint fastened
- if using a capsule to transport baby in the car, take baby out of the capsule and lie them on their back in the pram on a flat surface, not elevated or tilted
- dress your infant/child in appropriate clothing and protect them from the direct sun. Dress your infant or young child as you would dress yourself to suit the weather
- if baby is showing signs of heat stress, including signs such as being sweaty, flushed in the face, hot to touch then remove some bedding or clothing. (If baby is unwell, seek medical attention.).
- always keep baby's head and face uncovered
- babies regulate their temperature through their head and face. Do not use hats
- speak to your health nurse about best ways to keep your infant hydrated in warmer weather.



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INSTALLING A DEFIBRILLATOR COULD BE PART OF YOUR STAFF WELFARE STRATEGY

Under Occupational Health and Safety legislation, employers have a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for their workers. All employers should consider whether having an Automated External Defibrillator would boost the welfare of their workers.

When South Kingsville Preschool decided to purchase an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) they sought the expertise of one of their staff, Sue, a registered nurse. They knew she had firsthand knowledge regarding the benefits of having onsite AEDs to save precious treatment time. An AED can improve survival odds because they can be used before emergency medical service personnel arrive. In the event of a Sudden Cardiac Arrest, the only thing that will restart the heart is a shock from a defibrillator.

Sue was very thorough with her research to find a suitable device. As the preschool is a shared environment with the vibrant South Kingsville Community Centre, the AED needed to be accessed by all. She factored in its suitability for adults and children. Was it compact, lightweight, portable, safe, easy to use and affordable?

What Sue found was ELAA's Mediana A15 Adult/Child Defibrillator competitively priced at \$2200. She felt it was a huge bonus that it included the Smart First Aid Kit for free.

The Defibrillator can be used simply with a flick of a switch and one set of pads and you can change the function setting from adult to child.

The defibrillator delivers a lifesaving electrical current to the heart during an abnormal rhythm or very rapid erratic beating of the heart. Electrodes are placed on the chest as a conduit for the delivery of the measured electrical shock to the heart to restore the heart back to natural rhythm. The AED analyses the heart rhythm and determines if a shock is required.

You cannot harm anyone by using a defibrillator, you can only help save their life.



The bonus Smart First Aid Kit includes a flip book with QR codes that take you straight to video instructions. The videos provide clear, measured and concise instructions on what to do for the particular medical situation you are faced with. The kits have individual PODS which are color-coded to make it

simple to find the right contents. Even the strap can be used as a sling or tourniquet. It's designed by paramedics to cover all emergencies anywhere, anytime.

WorkSafe Victoria is urging employers to consider installing a life-saving defibrillator in all workplaces.

According to WorkSafe Health and Safety Executive Director, Julie Nielson, “Very few people survive a cardiac arrest without swift assistance and the use of an AED might be the difference between life and death. Anyone can use an AED. You do not need specialised training, but you do need access to one to save a life.” An estimated 19,000 AEDs are now installed in locations across Victoria, but many workplaces still do not have this life-saving device.

Ambulance Victoria attended 6434 cardiac arrests in 2017-18 and, of those, 82 patients were successfully defibrillated with a publicly available AED.

Placing AEDs in the workplace, along with providing proper management systems and training for employees on how to use the devices, can mean the difference between life and death.

South Kingsville Preschool offers quality kindergarten programs for 3-5-year-old children and have been operating as a not-for-profit service for over 40 years. ELAA congratulates South Kingsville Preschool for leading the way in making their service and community a safer one for adults and children.

CLICK BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION

<https://elaa.org.au/product/mediana-a15-adult-child-defibrillator/>

<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/news/2019-07/call-more-life-saving-defibrillators-workplace>

<https://skps.vic.edu.au/>

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Make a difference to a child's future.

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:

1. Download the donation form from elaa.org.au/ecef
2. Print out and complete the form
3. Return the form via post or email (see form for address details).

Alternatively, call ELAA on 03 9489 3500.

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OF MAKING QUALITY EARLY LEARNING POSSIBLE FOR CHILDREN WHO MAY OTHERWISE MISS OUT

244

FAMILIES ASSISTED



PLANNING FOR A FIRE DANGER RATING OF CODE RED

Shine Bright is an Early Years Management service with 28 kindergartens in Bendigo, Echuca, Swan Hill and surrounds. Belinda Schultz, Early Years Manager at Shine Bright was interviewed by *Preschool Matters* about how Shine Bright responded to a recent Code Red day.

Photo by Joanne Francis on Unsplash

What is a Code Red Fire Danger Rating?

Code Red is the highest level of rating in Victoria. It signifies the worst conditions for grassfires and bushfires. A Code Red day is called by the Emergency Management Commissioner for days of extraordinary and extremely dangerous conditions.

When did you first learn about the Code Red Day?

In the past we have had three days notice of a Code Red fire warning. This time we found out on Wednesday 20 November at 4.00pm that a Code Red warning had been issued for the following day. Our first advice came from staff who heard the announcement. We were then contacted by Department of Education and Training staff. The warning covered the Bureau of Meteorology districts of Mallee and Northern Country which is where all our services are located.

How did you decide which services to close?

We have a number of services listed on the Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) with DET. Any schools, kindergartens and child care facilities at high risk of bushfire are placed on the register and must close on days declared Code Red in their Bureau of Meteorology district.



We also considered which other services could potentially be at risk. In our area, there are a number of kindergartens not on the BARR close to schools which were required to close. We were concerned that families may get confused messages if the school was closed but the kindergarten was open so we decided to also close those kinders.

How did you notify families of the service closure?

We have an automated system which sends text messages to families. The system was working overtime as we were notifying 16 out of our 28 services of the closure.







We also had signs at services saying that we were closed due to the Code Red day. Some services also had a telephone answering machine message saying that the service was closed on Thursday 21 November due to the Code Red fire warning.

Bushfire At-Risk Register as at 07 August 2019

Suburb: [A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

Town/Suburb	Children's Services and Schools	Address	BOM
AIREYS INLET	Aireys Inlet Primary School	Anderson Street Map	Central
AIREYS INLET	Camp Australia - Aireys Inlet Primary School OSHC	6 Great Ocean Rd Map	Central
AMPHITHEATRE	Amphitheatre Primary School	16 School Road Map	South West
ANAKIE	Anakie Primary After School Care	2125-2135 Ballan Road Map	Central
ANAKIE	Anakie Primary School	2125-2135 Ballan Road Map	Central
ANGLESEA	Anglesea Community House	5 McMillan Street Map	Central
ANGLESEA	Anglesea Kindergarten	McMillan Street Map	Central
ANGLESEA	Anglesea Primary School	85 Camp Road Map	Central

Updated

	Watch and Act - Bushfire Timbarra Settlement	2 hours ago
	Watch and Act - Bushfire Holstons, Reedy Flat, Ensay North	7 hours ago
	Advice - Bushfire Brookville, Dawson City, Dogtown, Ensay, Ensay North, Ensay South, Forktown, Kilgowar, Stirling, and 11 more...	2 hours ago
	Advice - Bushfire Buchan, Buchan South, Sunny Point	12 hours ago
	Advice - Bushfire Butchers Ridge, Murrindal, W Tree	14 hours ago
	Advice - Bushfire Callinans, Bruthen, Buchan South, Double Bridges, Nowa Nowa	20 hours ago



What else did you need to do?

We monitored the situation throughout the day using the VicEmergency app. The weather conditions were extremely concerning with high winds. One additional service did have to close during the course of the day because a fire started nearby. We had commenced an evacuation when we were advised by the Department of Education and Training who had been advised by Victoria Police that it was too late to leave and the service went into lockdown until the fire was sufficiently contained. We were in regular contact with DET staff throughout the day and DET staff followed up with us to

ensure that everyone from the kindergarten was safely evacuated when the conditions allowed it.

What have you learnt?

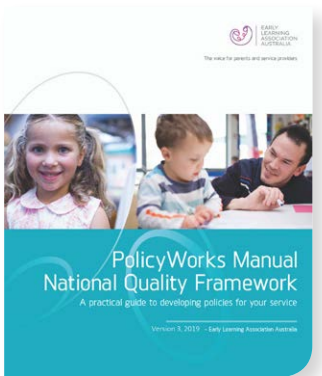
Having to contact so many families in such a short timeframe affirmed our strong practice of keeping our records of contact details up to date. We were also very dependent on having power for the automated texting system to work. Getting through such a large volume of families in a short timespan also put a strain on our usual processes where we ask families to acknowledge that they had received the text which is why we ensured that all kindergartens impacted displayed signs explaining the closure.


Another consideration is planning where services can evacuate to during a bush fire. In some cases, the designated safer place is a school, however on a Code Red day many such schools were shut.

We will review whether we have any services open on a Code Red day in the future. Having services open in such extreme weather conditions was concerning for all Shine Bright staff.

USEFUL INFORMATION

- The Department of Education and Training provides [information for early childhood services](#) about preparing for emergencies and natural disasters
- [Vic Emergency website](#) and app provides a centralised location for warnings and incident notifications
- The [ELAA PolicyWorks Manual](#) includes an Emergency and Evacuation Policy template to assist early childhood services to meet legislative, regulatory and funding requirements





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Starting Out Safely

Child Car Seats Save Lives

Road Trauma is still the number one killer of Australian children and around 3000 are seriously injured each year on our roads. Choosing the right child car seat and using it correctly can make children some of the safest occupants in your car.

Child car seats – it's all about size, not age

The law in Australia states that all children under the age of 7 years old must use a child restraint when travelling in a car. Research shows that it is a child's height, not age that determines when a child is safe to use an adult seat belt.

Remember the law is just the minimum and we can do far more than just the minimum to keep our children safe.



Go to 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 where 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.