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OUR MISSION
To develop the capacity of the early childhood education and care sector, families and the community to support children’s wellbeing, learning and development.

OUR VISION
We have a vision of a community where children grow, thrive and reach their full potential.

OUR VALUES
INTEGRITY:
We are honest, trustworthy and accountable. We take responsibility for our actions. We do the right thing each time we face a difficult decision. We learn from our mistakes.

RESPECT:
We treat each person as we expect to be treated. We value diversity. We communicate openly, uphold professional boundaries, maintain relationships and keep confidentiality. We look after our shared resources and property.

RECOGNITION:
We acknowledge and celebrate the efforts and achievements of our staff.

COLLABORATION:
We work together on common goals and look for opportunities to work collaboratively and in partnership with others. We appreciate the value of multiple perspectives and diverse expertise.

COMMITMENT:
We are determined and complete what we set out to do. We follow through on decisions and promises - we do what we say.

INNOVATION:
We look for the best solution. We think outside the box and challenge ourselves to do things differently. We take responsible risks and continuously improve our services and practices.
About Child Australia

Child Inclusive Learning and Development Australia (Child Australia) is a leading not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving developmental outcomes for children through professional education, early childhood services, community and family support as well as sector advocacy.

As an organisation at the forefront of support for early year’s development, educators, and families we actively pursue opportunities to work with others to provide early childhood development, research and services across Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Our extensive on-ground presence can be found in our portfolio of services and programs which span metropolitan as well as regionally remote locations;

- Early Learning Centres
- Out of School Hours Care
- Mobile Children’s Service
- Parent Support
- Professional Learning Support

It is of no surprise that this reach has enabled us to grow into an organisation that is known as leading the way in early year’s development and support for educators and families. With humble beginnings in 1987 (known then as the Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs or RUCSN) with an original objective to include children with disabilities into child care services, we have grown significantly and now offer a wide range of programs and services for the benefit of all children. In November 2008, the expansion and evolution of our programs and services led to our name change to Child Inclusive Learning and Development Australia (Child Australia).

With a highly skilled workforce our practice is guided by research evidence from contemporary early childhood education and care. We provide innovative professional development programs and support services for industry professionals to enact the building of nurturing and stimulating early childhood learning environments.

We strongly believe that every child should have the chance to reach their full potential and understand the importance of high quality programs and services in achieving the best long term outcomes for communities, family and children.
Dear colleagues and Child Australia staff

The 2015-16 financial year was characterised by the continued growth of Children’s Integrated Management Services (CIMS), a subsidiary of Child Australia that sees operation of our childcare services. We successfully tendered for Larapinta Early Learning Centre located in Alice Springs on the Larapinta Primary School site which further expands our footprint in the NT. We also launched ‘Wraparound’, a new social enterprise business venture that supports the early to middle childhood learning and development sector.

This year was also one of transition and change. The Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP) contract that Child Australia managed for 10 years came to an end in June. While it was disappointing to see the IPSP funding discontinued by the Commonwealth Government, the most difficult part was some of our excellent staff leaving the organisation.

Despite the cessation of the IPSP program, we continue to support the Education and Care (EC) sector with the new Wraparound suite of services. Wraparound is a fee for service social enterprise initiative that includes consulting with education and care services and schools around their pedagogical, professional development, governance and service management needs, providing them with a tailored solution to help meet their unique needs. The steps that we took two years ago to develop the Wraparound approach has placed us in a position to continue with our goal of building the capacity of the sector – albeit with a different approach and funding model.

The Wraparound social enterprise continues the strategic direction set by the Child Australia Board in 2009 when it established CIMS, a Company Limited by Guarantee that began operating our first Long Day Care service in Lockridge WA. The reasons for doing this was to have direct experience in operating education and care centres so that we could better support our sector and diversify our income streams.

Seven years after forming CIMS it was pleasing to win the contract to operate our 5th Long Day Childcare centre, Larapinta Early Learning Centre which is located in Alice Springs. The Larapinta centre will operate from a new purpose built Child and Family Centre located on the grounds of the Larapinta Primary School. This is a similar arrangement to our Palmerston ELC service that also operates within an NT government funded Child and Family Centre.

In August, we hosted our most successful Early Childhood Education and Care Conference since Child Australia established this biennial event in 2009. The conference attracted approximately 900 delegates, the largest number of registrations to date. The Western Australian ECEC conference has become the biggest event of its kind on the WA education and care calendar. The conference brings with it an exciting range of international and national speakers with new ideas and cutting edge research contributing to stimulating professional conversations.

Child Australia continues to support the formation of Collective Impact initiatives in Western Australia and Northern Territory. Collective Impact is an innovative service delivery approach that is a framework for organisations working collaboratively with the intention of solving complex social problems. Child Australia was instrumental in introducing Collective Impact in 2012 and 2013 respectively and is now involved in several initiatives.
The principles underpinning Collective Impact reflect many of Child Australia’s priorities: the importance of deeply engaging the community, multi-agency collaboration, creating positive social impact and better more efficient use of funding with the goal of improving the wellbeing and developmental outcomes of children.

Child Australia’s profile and services continue to grow in the Northern Territory. Our collective impact work has resulted in the establishment of Grow Well, Live Well program. This began in 2014 with a group of community organisations that agreed to collaborate around the goal of improving the wellbeing and developmental outcomes of children and young people in Palmerston. A key outcome of this initiative was the Palmerston State of Children Report which was launched by the Northern Territory Government’s Deputy Chief Minster the Hon Nicole Manison. Our child and family services located on the Bagot Aboriginal community continues to have a positive impact.

During this period we successfully launched ‘childHR’, a cloud based human resource product that assists education and care services across Australia with their human resource, service management, governance and compliance needs. This product is the result of a partnership between Child Australia, providing the professional expertise, and Diffuze HR who created the universal HR software platform that hosts the childHR product.

Child Australia is also extending its digital training capacity with a new online learning platform that includes a suite of self-paced online courses and webinars. These new digital training platforms and communication portals provide professionals with more options around their training needs to suit all budgets and time constraints. The digital training platform remains fluid and adaptable to meet the ongoing needs of the sector.

During this reporting period we started the electronic publication eChild Times. This publication is designed for all educators and teachers working with children in various settings. It contains informative, thought-provoking articles, regulation updates, and quality evidence-based research that aims to strengthen and develop professionals within the sector. It reaches over 15,000 Education and Care Services across the country along with Primary Schools, Tertiary Institutions and other organisations interested in child learning and development. With an open rate that averages over 40%, this publication has fast gained traction since inception and has become a relied upon resource. Alongside the electronic publication has been a focused direction towards engagement with various social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram giving Child Australia a strong online presence and increasing our profile nationally.

Child Australia ended the year in a sound financial position and even more pleasing is the modest surplus that CIMS ended the year with, a positive sign that the education and care business venture is positioned for long term financial sustainability.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Child Australia staff for their incredibly hard work and commitment to the organisation during this time of growth and change. The children and families that are in the services we operate and the services that we support, have continued to benefit from our collective dedication.

David Ansell
Chairperson

Dawson Ruhl
Chief Executive Officer
Our Board

David Ansell - Chairperson
David is a Senior Consultant in Public Policy and a former Director General of the Department of Culture and the Arts. David has also held roles as a senior officer in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, The Department of Education, a School Principal and a teacher. His roles included the Executive Director of the Office for Early Childhood Development and the Director of Participation when he was responsible for establishing programs for highly at risk young people when the school leaving age was raised in Western Australia. Additionally, from 2001 to 2005 David was the General Manager of The Smith Family in Western Australia and prior to this has worked and studied in the United Kingdom. With his partner Amanda he has four children and enjoys swimming, cycling and writing. David joined the Board in 2014.

Elaine Pavlos - Board Member
Elaine is the Chief Executive Officer of Glengarry Private Hospital and has a wealth of experience in Executive and People Management within the health care sector. She has a Master Degree in Nursing and a MBA from the University of Western Australia, and she is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is an active member of The Executive Connection (TEC). She has three adult children, is a budding Masterchef and keen golfer. Elaine joined the Board in 2011.

Karen Murcia - Vice Chairperson
Karen is an education professional with over 25 years experience in the field. She holds a Masters degree and PhD in education and has directed a range of research projects in which she facilitated improvement strategies and evaluations. These projects have involved working collaboratively with schools and teachers to improve learning outcomes and to evaluate the processes used for this purpose. Karen is the chair of the Faculty of Education and Arts Ethics Committee at Edith Cowan University and a director of one of the University’s research centres. She was previously the coordinator of the Women in Leadership program at Murdoch University and has presented and published numerous papers on education innovations both nationally and internationally. Karen joined the Board in 2012.

Jason Hughes - Board Member
Jason is a partner of international accounting firm KPMG and an Executive Director of KPMG Corporate Finance (Aust) Pty Ltd. Jason has over 14 years advisory experience providing specialist corporate finance advice, focusing on valuation assignments, completing both private valuations and public expert reports to corporations operating in a wide range of industries. Jason previously had over 8 years experience in providing corporate recovery and assurance and advisory services in both Perth and Melbourne. Jason has two school age children.

Elaine Pavlos - Board Member
Elaine is the Chief Executive Officer of Glengarry Private Hospital and has a wealth of experience in Executive and People Management within the health care sector. She has a Master Degree in Nursing and a MBA from the University of Western Australia, and she is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is an active member of The Executive Connection (TEC). She has three adult children, is a budding Masterchef and keen golfer. Elaine joined the Board in 2011.
Our Board

Partha Nag - Board Member
Partha, CPA, Master of Accounting (Curtin University) and B. Bus (University of Notre Dame) is the Executive Director and co-founder of Strategic Business Alliance (SBA), a firm offering innovative consulting and outsourcing solutions to a wide range of clients. His previous roles include Group CFO for a listed recruitment entity, Divisional Commercial Manager for a listed recruitment company and CFO of one of Australia’s fastest growing ports. Partha has extensive experience in Accounting, Finance, Information Technology, Corporate Strategy, Governance and Risk Management. He has forged lasting relationships with stakeholders in his senior executive roles, and, in the process, enhanced organisational value. Partha joined the Board in 2011.

Peter Naim - Board Member
Peter is currently the Manager Employee Services and HR Systems at BHP Billiton Iron Ore and has previously held Head of HR Processes, Systems and Analytics, and Head of HR WA Operations positions. Peter brings a wealth of human resources experience to the Child Australia Board in organisation design, labour relations, HR processes and systems, remuneration and organisational development across a range of large and small organisations. With his partner Susannah, Peter has three children. Peter joined the board in 2014.

Helen Creed - Board Member
Helen is the Executive Director for the Community Legal Centres Association (WA), and has previously worked in numerous roles including the Executive Director of Children and Family Services in the Department for Communities, and Policy Manager, Vulnerable People at the WA Council of Social Service (WACOSS). Helen has also held many Board positions including WA Tourism Commission, Perth Zoo, Royal Perth Hospital and State Theatre Company of WA and chaired a range of committees including the Community Services, Health and Education Industry Training Council and the State Advisory Committee on Family Friendly Initiatives (for WA Minister for Health).

Liz Humphrey - Board Member
Liz is a Senior Associate at Clayton Utz and practices in commercial and corporate law, with a particular focus on energy and resources law, securities, and regulation. She has acted for a wide range of leading Australian and international organisations with regard to mergers and acquisitions, business structuring, projects and operational matters, foreign investment and Australian regulatory compliance issues. Liz has also conducted comprehensive corporate governance, compliance and due diligence programs.

Liz is currently an active member of The Law Society of Western Australia, Australian Mining and Petroleum Law Association and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.
Our Management

Dawson Ruhl
Chief Executive Officer

Dawson was appointed to the role of Chief Executive Officer of Child Australia in 2008 and has worked in the human service field for over thirty years holding numerous senior management and executive roles in the Not-for-Profit and Government sectors. In his current position he is guiding the organisation’s growth and development with the aim of building the capacity of the early childhood education and care sector, strengthening families, community and supporting children’s wellbeing, learning and development.

Prior to joining Child Australia, Dawson was the CEO of Marymead Child and Family Centre in Canberra where he established their first early childhood programs including an attachment clinic. He joined the Commonwealth Senior Executive Service and held the position of Principal Mediator of the Family Court of Australia. Dawson was also the Director of the Family Court of Western Australia’s Counselling Service where he established the Columbus Project, an innovative and collaborative case management approach to child protection and domestic violence issues.

Dawson has instigated and led large scale innovative collective impact initiatives throughout his career. One such project involved a domestic violence criminal justice reform initiative in Western Australia that led to measurable social and institutional change.

Dawson has a Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Psychology and Social Work, is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds a Certificate in Public Sector Management. He has worked as a practitioner and managed programs in the areas of substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, child protection, sexual abuse and early childhood development.

Dawson is committed to a vision of a just and equitable society that seeks to raise the status of children.

Marc Spradbury CPA
Executive Manager, Corporate Services

Marc joined Child Australia in 2007 as the Chief Financial Officer and currently oversees the management of finance, human resources, work health and safety, information technology and infrastructure.

Marc has over 28 years experience in the accounting and auditing field. His career started as an auditor in public practice and then expanded into other senior finance positions within the commercial sector in South Africa and Botswana. His first experience with a “not for profit” organisation was with the YMCA of Perth, holding the position of Finance Manager for 7 years. Marc enjoys the family-friendly culture of the “not for profit” sector and the positive impact that it has on the wider community. Marc has a Bachelor of Commerce and is a Certified Practicing Accountant.
Our Management

Sara Hinchley
Executive Manager, Service Delivery and Programs

Sara has worked with Child Australia since 2006 and her Executive Manager role oversees Service Delivery located Darwin, Alice Springs and Perth and funded Programs located in South Hedland and Geraldton and the Midwest. Sara has extensive experience in the Early Childhood Sector working in various roles throughout her career.

Sara has international experience developing and managing sponsored children's services in the United Kingdom. Her professional interests are quality care provision and pedagogical leadership. Sara holds post graduate Qualifications in Business Leadership, Diploma in Children Services and Cert IV (TAA).

Tina Holtom
Executive Manager, Professional Learning, Sector Development & Communications

Tina's position oversees the direction of the organisation's professional learning, sector development, and supports the CEO and senior leadership team on executing the communications strategy. Tina brings a wealth of experience to Child Australia with her extensive involvement in the Education and Care Sector. She has previously owned and operated her own Early Learning Services and has consulted widely on best practice models throughout the sector, schools, and various agencies.

Her career background has also included senior business management, teaching, and lecturing positions. Tina has tertiary qualifications in Business Management, Education, and is currently completing her Masters in Mental Health Science (Child Psychology).

Randall Cook
General Manager, Northern Territory

Randall joined Child Australia in September 2013 as the General Manager, Northern Territory with responsibility for our Inclusion and Professional Support Program across NT, and all programs and services. Randall is originally from Victoria and moved to NT in 1985. He has lived and worked in both urban communities and very remote aboriginal communities across the NT.

Randall has worked in the education sector for many years, primarily in the Northern Territory, as a teacher and School Principal and more recently as a Director in the Education Department with a focus on Indigenous Education.

Randall holds a Diploma in Education (Primary), Bachelor of Education (Teaching) and Graduate Diploma in Executive Management.
Financial Performance 2016

Child Australia improved its operating results over the previous year showing consolidated surpluses of $302,000 for 2016, (2015 - $230,000). Revenue increased from $9.2million to $11million and associated expenditure increased from $9.0million to $10.7million. Revenue was derived from State and Federal funded programs and fee for service.

Fee for service continues to grow strongly and represents 45% of total revenue (2015-38%). Overall staffing costs comprise 70% of total expenditure (2015 -69%) and was the organisation's largest expenditure.

Funding indexation for programs continues to be below CPI increases, placing additional pressure on program and service delivery expenditure. During the financial year Child Australia supported further investment in information technology, infrastructure and staffing with a continued focus of broadening its fee for service arm and becoming less reliant on government funding.

We have reduced our carry forward unexpended program funds to $0.6million (2015 -$1.2million), a portion of which has been returned to funding bodies and the remainder to be employed within the programs.

All staff entitlements were accrued in full at year end and program funding received in advance held over to the new financial year.

A challenging year lies ahead for the organisation as it looks to broaden its revenue and asset base in a climate of reduced government funding. Overall the financial position is strong and sufficiently robust to undertake future activities.
Inclusion and Professional Support Program

2015 – 2016 saw the final year of the delivery of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program. Funded by the Department of Education and Training we continued to deliver professional learning and support services to a wide range of eligible Education and Care professionals.

During this period Child Australia continued its extensive sector support as:

- the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) for both Western Australia and the Northern Territory
- the Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) for six of the eight West Australian ISA regions

Through our work, we continued to help to:

- increase the skills of education and care professionals to meet and exceed National Quality Standards of service provision, and
- improve access to early childhood education and care for children with additional needs

Professional Support Coordinator Overview

Key deliverables focussed on building the capacity of eligible early and middle childhood education and care services and were provided through the PSC program via:

- Professional development and support activities: including face to face calendar workshops, in-services, full day forums and conferences and consultancies.
- Bicultural support: assisting the inclusion of children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Specialist equipment: aiding the inclusion of children with a disability.
Bicultural Support

Requests for bicultural support were consistently received during the period of July 2015 – June 2016:

- **88 children received support from 45 requests**
- Languages supported were Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Hindi, Korean and Spanish

Referrals were accepted via all components of the IPSP and a notable achievement was the development of an online bicultural support resource. This resource was developed in response to feedback from the sector and fellow WA IPSP providers and focuses on reflective practice to better support and include children and families from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background. The document is housed on the Child Australia website here: [https://www.childaustralia.org.au/Resources/Resources-for-Bicultural-Inclusion](https://www.childaustralia.org.au/Resources/Resources-for-Bicultural-Inclusion)

IPSP Online Library

The online library housed on the PSC Alliance website continued to be a popular resource utilised by services nationally with the following statistics showing great utilisation:

- Visits (sessions) 22,124
- Unique visitors (users) 13,704
- New visits % 57.6%
- Bounce rate 42.92
- Pages per visit 3.72
- Average visit duration 4.02
- Page views 82,315
Specialist Equipment

Child Australia’s extensive Specialist Equipment service included items that services could borrow, free of charge, to help support the inclusion of children with additional needs. Expenditure on large purchases and maintenance to the value of $6244 was spent to allow for the repair, duplication and upgrade of equipment that was of a high need. 72 items were loaned out and streamlined internal management processes continued to allow for high quality service provision, such as being able to service very remote areas of WA including Christmas Island.

Professional Development and Support Statistics

1207 education and care professionals from 1151 services state-wide engaged in over 300 professional development and support activities.
Outside School Hours Care Conferences
Saturday November 14, 2015 and Saturday May 7, 2016

In collaboration with the Outside School Hours Care Association of Western Australia (OSCH WA), Child Australia hosted two very successful and well received Outside School Hours Conferences during the 2015-2016 period. The first, which took place on Saturday the 14th of November 2015 at the luxurious Pan Pacific Hotel in Perth attracted over 160 delegates and focussed on relevant topics at the time such as:

- Connecting with Community (OSHC WA)
- Autism Strategies (Autism Assoc of WA)
- Nutrition (Child Australia)
- Assessment and Rating (Education and Care Regulatory Unit)
- Supervision for Quality Practice (Education and Care Regulatory Unit and OSHClub WA)
- Engaging Environments (Caroline Fewster)

The second, which took place on Saturday the 7th May 2016 again at the luxurious Pan Pacific Hotel in Perth attracted just over 120 delegates and focussed on relevant topics at the time such as:

- Resilience and wellbeing in children (Maggie Dent)
- Strategies for engaging OSHC Staff (OSHCWA)
- Documentation (Caroline Fewster)
- Inspiring Learning and Leisure Projects and Investigations in OSHC (Caroline Fewster)
- Risky Play (Niki Buchan)

A strong comradery was felt throughout on both days as educators reflected upon the context of education amidst the change in society, needs of families and the hunger in all of us to improve outcomes for children while navigating the quality agenda. The setting was nothing but sensational, plush furnishings, fabulous food and much networking. The scene matched the value of OSHC education and the learning experiences throughout the day.
Due to a growing wait list from our 1Voyage Conference Study Tour and due to a huge demand for another event of its kind, our Road to Excellence Study Tour on 19th of November was another successful event feeding the sectors appetite for unique professional learning opportunities.

We were fortunate enough to have a mix of sites to visit from Long Day Care, Outside School Hours Care and School settings. The sites were:

- Stratton Outside School Hours Care
- Majella Catholic Primary School
- Leederville Early Childhood Centre
- Child Early Learning Centre Lockridge

The focus was one the ‘Road to Excellence’ and whilst it would have been easy to select services that were rated as ‘Excellent’, we acknowledged professional reflection and learning is about varied perspectives. The learning was found in sharing the journey, and with quality practice in education a continuous commitment to improvement, it was wonderful to hear so many how, what and why’s as the day went on.

Each site had its own story to share, its own experiences and like many others, challenges and constraints. Be it the high level of literacy support required at Majella Catholic Primary School, the daily set-up/pull-down of Stratton OSHC or the setup within the vast unusual outdoor space at Leederville Early Childhood we found the opportunity to learn that each service had adapted to its environment in its own way. In the Masterclass after the tour, Heather Barnes summed up the day with a valuable reminder of the implications of our visits within the context of the Early Years Learning Framework and My Time Our Place. She challenged us to see what was not obvious, the intent and the context of the services to bring about genuine authentic pedagogy. Feedback was very positive.
**Annual Key Achievements**

The breadth of Inclusion support grew during the 2015 - 2016 period. A growing demand for support with children suffering from different forms of trauma prompted our ongoing investment in the professional development of our consultants. Shared learning opportunities and in house training with a particular focus on inclusive strategies to support educators working with children with a trauma background were undertaken, which also led to the development of and delivery of a Trauma specific professional development package.

Quality Inclusion Consultants continued to build the capacity of educators working directly with children within services to take responsibility for the inclusion of all children in their individual environments. This proved to be a huge success as these educators are generally the first point of contact for parents, which helps to build relationships and ensures consistency.

**Inclusion Statistics**

393 children from approximately 600 services in the 6 inclusion support agency regions that Child Australia supported up until the end of June 2016, were supported during the 2015 – 2016 period.
Professional Learning and Support

NT Accredited Training

Child Australia has been delivering the Advanced Diploma in Community Sector Management developed by the PSC Alliance since 2014. This course is designed for the ECEC Sector with a focus on the National Quality Framework in recognition of the fact that strong leadership is linked with delivery of quality programs and improved outcomes for children. This qualification is designed specifically for directors and managers leading the implementation of the NQF. This year we have had 15 participants in Darwin and 10 in Alice Springs take up the challenge.

Northern Territory “Little People, Big Dreams” Conference

The 2015 Northern Territory Early Childhood and School Aged Education and Care Conference was held on Saturday October 10. This conference built on the success of the previous year with 400 delegates attending. The conference was facilitated by Child Australia and supported by the NT Government.

The conference attracted delegates and presenters from across the NT, working in long day care; family daycare; out of school hours care; BBF services; schools and the general community. The conference provided participants with a range of international, national and local presentations that highlighted innovation, the latest research and best practice.

The conference was held in conjunction with the 2015 NT Excellence in Education and Care Awards which were also facilitated by Child Australia on Friday October 9. This was preceded by a research symposium supported by Charles Darwin University, Menzies School of Research, Batchelor Institute and Child Australia.

The weekend culminated with four masterclasses held in ECEC venues around Darwin and Palmerston on the Sunday 11 October.
Professional Learning and Support
Supporting Services

Goodstart Early Learning Centre Banksia Grove WA

Goodstart Early Learning Centre Banksia Grove accessed Inclusion Support consistently during this period. This story is not about one child or situation specifically, rather the service’s approach to Inclusion support and how it developed over time to one of a holistic nature which encompassed not only the diagnosis or conditions child presented with, but the responsibilities of the educators to respond to children’s individual requirements. Assisting the service to reframe their approach and response to inclusion was a wonderful and uplifting experience to be a part of, and to be able to support them on their journey was incredibly satisfying.

The service implemented various strategies to ensure consistency across all the environments in regards to educator’s interactions, responses, and documentation. These strategies related to how educators built their knowledge of children and the families, and how this information was then used to inform the planning of the program and the environments. The environments were reflective of children’s needs, both as individuals and as groups, with educators drawing on research (e.g.- Self-Regulation, visual support systems) in order to provide thoughtful and responsive spaces.

Discussions around Inclusion with the educators at the service constantly referred to this information, which assisted them greatly to work both proactively and thoughtfully, planning in advance and with the best outcomes for the children at the forefront of their minds. They purchased and created resources, along with strategies for their implementation in the environments.

The centre is increasingly receiving children presenting with high emotional support needs, this is reflective of the community the centre is situated within. Educators work in consultation with the local child health nurse, the speech therapist, occupational therapist, primary school, in order to holistically support the children. The lines of communication are kept open between all parties, and support documents are shared and discussed.

Child Australia’s strength based approach, building on the capacity of the service benefited the children, the families, educators and the community as a whole. As a result the service continues to view inclusion as a shared responsibility rather than a separate, stand- alone aspect.
Working in Partnership

During the month of July 2015, Child Australia hosted Gerdamari Van Der Watt, Team Leader of the Autism Specific Early Education and Care Centre, in the town of Hedland.

Being a regional area, local specialist services are something that are naturally always at capacity. Child Australia are always adapting and evolving their inclusion support to suit the current needs of the sector, fill any gaps and support inclusion related challenges that may appear within the sector. In doing so for Hedland, a combined trip delivered by the Autism Association and Child Australia was scheduled.

Whilst visiting the services in Hedland, including Out of School Hours Care, the focus was including children with additional needs, in particular Autism. Whether a service has a child with Autism enrolled or not, building the capacity of educators to be proactive instead of reactive.

The Professional Development workshop, delivered during the evening was focused on developing the Educators understanding of Autism, how it affects a child within an Early Education and Care Service as well as, most importantly, practical strategies for the inclusion of children with Autism into any mainstream environment.

Here’s what Gerdamari had to say about her experience travelling with Jana Bartecki, Quality Inclusion Consultant from Child Australia.

‘To me it was clear what wonderful relationships Child Australia have with the different centres and how well Jana knows each service’s setting, circumstances and needs. While traveling around and appreciating the beautiful and unique landscapes of the area, I enjoyed the many conversations about the childcare sector. It was so interesting and inspiring to discuss the workforce’s current needs and dream together about ways that organisations like the Autism Association and Child Australia could make huge contributions through networking and partnerships. The full trip was so well organised and the venue, The Esplanade, was fantastic. Meeting all the lovely teams and seeing their beautiful services was a wonderful experience, but was also very informative and helpful. It reminded me what mainstream education and care environments and curriculums may look like, and also how diverse the challenges could be that children with Autism and the staff supporting them, may experience. It helped me to refine my understanding of potential barriers to successful inclusion of children with Autism, and to reflect and improve on future training and support offered to educators.’

- Gerdamari
Bagot Community Out of School Hours Care

Child Australia is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education to provide the Bagot Community OSHC (Bagot OSHC) service to the Bagot Community, which is home to over 400 Aboriginal people from around the Northern Territory, an iconic spot in the heart of Darwin, where traditional life meets suburbia.

Bagot OSHC continues to provide quality care for children in school age care and also for the families and community throughout 2016. The program is now in its 5th funding cycle. We continue to employ local community members on this project and now have young people wanting to complete their Cert III in Children Services with Child Australia in the coming year.

The OSHC uses two approaches in the delivery of our service and those are the Play work models and a trauma informed approach. The Play work model allows children to explore their surroundings and take charge of their space and their interests. Staff have found that this model gives the children freedom and autonomy in their choices and a sense of control in an unpredictable environment. This is complimented by the Trauma informed approach, which gives the staff knowledge and effective strategies to work with our children in a way that supports the developmental needs of the individual and creates an environment that is supportive and comforting. With these 2 methods and the years of work already behind us we have built a service that the community feels connected to and holds as an important space for them and their children.

Bagot Community OSHC prides itself on being current, culturally aware and collaborative in all of its approaches within the community and this is reflected by the deep and strong relationships that exist between our staff and the community. We currently employ 5 aboriginal staff; they make up the majority of our workforce in Bagot of which we have a total of 8 staff across all the programs.

Bagot Community OSHC aims to become a platform for other Budget Based Funded services to learn from and to creatively explore new approaches and innovation for this important element of the ECEC sector.
Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)

Under the IAS funding we deliver a suite of programs for the Bagot community.

The programs are:

- FFSA [Families for School Attendance]
- Walking Bus
- Mums and Bubs
- Collective Impact

The suite of programs being delivered under the IAS aims to support and enhance the relationships of children, families, and mainstream educational institutions.

MUMS AND BUBS

Our Mums and Bubs program provides families with a hands-on learning opportunity that demonstrates to families first hand, the relevance of education for children created from the atmosphere of excitement and engagement.

Families are engaged and invested in this program and we have seen a shift this year in the group who are eager to learn new things and teach their children.

We anticipated the value for families to understand brain development as well as the impact trauma has on the developmental outcomes of children. Acknowledging the community needing time to digest this thinking we have used creative and innovative approaches to meet the program objectives.

FAMILIES FOR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The FFSA program this year has worked on building child Profile for each of the children in the community 16 years and under. This has allowed us to create a model that flows between all the programs and has stored information that is updated with each intervention and conversation with the family to build a more comprehensive tool that not only drives us forward but also has a historical narrative.

Our staff work between families on the community and within the school on a daily basis to connect families and children with the Education system with the aim of creating sustainable relationships that help children reach their educational goals and build positive outcomes for not only the schools but for the families.

WALKING BUS

The Walking Bus continues to transport children to school daily and encourages timeliness for school and also facilitates a bridge between the community and the school environment. This program attracts between 15 and 25 children most days walking to school together with our staff.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Our collective impact program work for Bagot community has our backbone facilitator working with and in the community daily. This
work has seen the successfully establishment of our “table of 20” and are working towards the shared agenda with this group and the community. We have been working towards collecting information and data that will help create the pathway forward to achieving the goals and hopes the community have set for themselves. Our extensive community engagement strategy has positioned our staff for some very exciting and challenging work for the next few years. All of which is aimed at building a stronger community for Aboriginal families.

All our programs for the Bagot Community continue to be a outcome focussed, working towards building strength and knowledge within the community for the community.

We acknowledge that none of the work we do can be done solely by our team and that our work has always been and continue to draw it strength and success from the partnership and relationships we hold in the community.

**BAGOT YOUTH GROUP**

Child Australia is the auspicing body for the Bagot community youth group and continues to support its development and outcomes. The Bagot community youth group was initially set up with the collective impact team and has since held its own space and is now directed by a group of youth 18 – 20 years old under our supervision and guidance. It is a successful group already sourcing 2 grants in its first 6 months and holding 5 community based activities for the youth. Its aim is to give voice to the youth in the community so they can help shape the future of the community and to encourage children to stay in education systems and make better choices for themselves.

The youth group now fills a gap for youth aged 13 years and over that has existed for many years.
Farrar Early Learning Centre | Darwin Northern Territory

Assessment and Rating

In November 2015, Farrar received an Exceeding rating as a result of an Assessment and Rating visit conducted by Quality Education and Care NT. This was a great achievement for staff, families and Child Australia, it was also a wonderful end to a successful and busy 2015.

An increase in parental involvement regarding decisions affecting their children

Throughout the year families were offered the opportunity to provide feedback on areas such as indoor and outdoor play environments, celebrations, parent/educator evenings, busy bees and offering opportunities to be involved in the outdoor space upgrade. Feedback and input from families is used as the basis of the program, supporting the centre philosophy of recognizing families as the first teachers of their children in a visual and respectful way.

Environments conducive to learning

Through the development and strength of ongoing partnerships with families and community working together we achieved a refresh of the outdoor play space which was identified as a focus at Farrar. The outdoor play space now reflects a more natural outdoor play environment that provides children with many opportunities to explore, problem solve, get dirty, have fun, socialize and feel safe while still being challenged.

In the coming year we will purchase natural outdoor furniture that reflects the natural play environment.

Professional Growth & Support

Staff professional development continued to be a focus at Farrar with over 60% of staff either working towards or holding a Diploma of Early Childhood. Over the year, Farrar ELC has focused on various aspects of continuous improvement including providing staff with access and support to professional development through workshops, attendance at conferences, competency based studies and mentoring support.

The goals for the coming year 2016-2017 include:

- Continue to build on innovative practices that support quality pedagogy.
- Recruit and maintain a high quality staff team including a staff well being program.
- To seek opportunities to establish effective working relationships with the community and health professionals working at the Palmerston super GP clinic in which Farrar ELC is co-located.
Community, Families and Children

The Child Australia Lockridge Campus WA
including the Early Learning Centre and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC).

The Lockridge Campus is set in parklands near the heart of Lockridge, close to health services and a number of Primary Schools and is utilised by families from the richly diverse local community. The Campus lives the mantra of inclusion with families and staff sharing between 10 and 14 languages and cultures. The intent is to ensure that all children’s experiences are recognised and valued. (Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) P. 47)

The Campus is truly immersed in the local community with active participation in many networks such as TALK, Altone Early Years Network, Educational Leaders Association and the Perth Reggio Network.

The 2015 Annual Report identified the following goals for the Campus for the coming year;

An increase in continuing commitment to sustainability

Over the year, the campus continued to embed sustainability through all age groups. A monthly rotating roster allowed each group to take responsibility for caring for the chickens and vegetable garden and this has supported the commitment to sustainable practices. The Campus secured a grant to set up a vegetable garden and now that the plants have matured there are often plenty of edibles for children to taste such as herbs, tomatoes, peas, beans and eggplant. Kitchen prep scraps are composted, fed to the chickens to the worm farm, reducing daily waste. In the coming year the Campus aims to further develop this area, in particular with the introduction of climbing plants to give the area further shade and privacy.

An increase in parental involvement regarding decisions affecting their children

Throughout the year families were offered the opportunity to provide feedback on areas such as the food menu, excursions that they would like their children to attend, and general surveys providing overall feedback on service delivery. Each room developed a "family input board" where parents record information around the interests, abilities, abilities and recent events affecting their children. This information is used as the basis of the program, supporting the campus philosophy of recognizing families as the first teachers of their children in a visual and respectful way. In the coming year the campus aims to provide further opportunities for families to be involved in their child’s time at the service.

Community integration

The campus continued to integrate within the community in a multitude of ways including:

- The development of an MOU with Registered Training Organisation Meerilinga in supporting their culturally and linguistically diverse students attend practicum placements at the Campus. The Director attended Meerilinga as a guest speaker each quarter to speak with emerging educators on on cultural diversity, inclusion, and student expectations from a Director’s perspective.

- The ongoing engagement with the Lockridge Community Garden, with educators participating in the community garden open day. Excursions to the garden commenced in June, with children making wood fired pizzas in the garden oven, describing this excursion as their favourite excursion to date

- Ongoing engagement with the Lockridge Anti-social behaviour working group to work towards lower rates of crime and ensure that Lockridge is a safe and inviting suburb for visitors and locals alike.
- Labor representative Anne Aly attending the Campus to tour the facilities and hear of the importance of the early years and impact that early education has on children, in particular those experiencing disadvantage.

- 8 School Principals from the Northern Territory visiting the Campus for a tour to learn of how we integrate service delivery without being geographically located next to agencies.

A focus on transition to school
In the past year the Director developed relationships with local schools to facilitate positive transitions to school from the campus. This resulted in the development of a working relationship between the Campus Director and Deputy Principal of Lockridge Primary School, with a formal transition plan due to commence in 2017. The development of a shared document has resulted in teachers and educators having the ability to communicate the developmental strengths and areas needing further support of each child. In the coming year the campus hopes to use this model with other schools in the area.

Environments conducive to learning
Following on from the makeover of the ELC playground space, the campus continued to focus on both the indoor environments and the outdoor environment of the OSHC space. A garden project commenced in the initially empty plot of garden in the OSHC with a goal to develop a garden from donations from families, staff and the community, which has been, and will continue to be, an enjoyable project for both staff and children. Over the coming year the campus and community will continue to develop this space using recyclables and donations.

The indoor environments continued to develop with Play Studio 3 in particular receiving additional tables and furniture. In the coming year we will continue to upgrade furniture in each of the rooms on a basis of priority.

Professional Growth & Support
The team at Lockridge are continually developing, with 80% of staff holding or working towards a Diploma of Early Childhood. In addition to this, two staff members are Early Childhood Teachers, one educator holds a Master of Arts (Education) and a second working towards a Masters qualification. Over the coming year the campus anticipates that staff working towards qualifications will have completed them.

As a result of the Long Day Care Professional Development Program, the campus has been able to support staff in developing as professionals and attending relevant training. Highlights of the amazing opportunities presented to staff this year include:

- Two educators attending the Child Australia “Little People, Big Dreams” conference in Darwin in October. This had a
significant impact on their practice and staff set the goal of lighting a campfire with 2 year old Toddlers- no easy feat! The educators assessed the benefit of risk and carefully planned the first open fire at Lockridge in conjunction with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day in August with children still discussing the event.

- Senior educators attending a full day conference hosted by Reggio Emilia, on documentation
- The Director attending workshops on using AEDC data to inform practice and collaborative projects and collective impact, hosted by WACOSS. The director is also enrolled in Platforms Framework training over the coming 9 months.
- Inviting renowned consultant Caroline Fewster to spend a day at Lockridge providing feedback and support to educators.

Policy and Governance

A new curriculum package was developed and implemented with consultation from senior educators and key stakeholders. This has supported all educators to contribute to the planning cycle and ensured that family input is used as a basis for program development.

Reflective journals were developed and implemented with consultation from educators. These proved to be a valuable tool to support staff to think differently from multiple perspectives and acknowledge the cultural richness and complexities that families bring to the Campus.

Assessment and Rating- ELC

In January, the Early Learning Centre received their rating of 'exceeding' the National Quality Standard. This was a significant milestone for the Campus, highlighting the commitment to supporting children to achieve positive outcomes whilst at the service. Whilst this rating is an indicator of the high quality education and care that currently provided to children at Lockridge, the campus also acknowledges that the work that is still left to work towards.

The goals for the coming year 2016-2017 include:

- Quarterly parent information evenings presented by a range of agencies in the community, based on feedback from families on topics they would like to learn more about
- A formalised transition to school process with an increased number of schools participating from the local community.
- A culture of action research throughout the campus- commencing in January 2017 with service wide broad goals, contextualised for each of the age groups
- Increasing the Campus reputation within the sector as an exemplar service- continuing the philosophy of being an open door service to families and the community
Nightcliff Community ELC

Nightcliff community ELC is a 49 place Education and Care Service located in the Darwin beachside suburb of Nightcliff. Our service supports approx. 56 families in the local community, which are made up of working families who live mainly within the local school catchment area and the majority who attend care on a part time basis.

We are currently rated as Exceeding the National Quality Framework.

This year our biggest requirement for spaces has been in our Nursery (0-2 years) and Kindy rooms (3-5 years).

Our utilisation is higher than previous years, traveling between the 85-100%, but will be lower towards the end of the year as is normal in Darwin.

In 2016 we have continued to make our presence known within the ECEC sector. The most positive innovation throughout 2016 has been our sustainable staffing model, which continues to have ongoing positive impacts on service delivery.

Historically, Darwin has a very transient population, which can impact service delivery in the form of providing consistent, quality ECEC services for families. Aiming to have consistent staffing supports children and their families.

Our staffing practices have had positive impacts on child and family engagement, program and curriculum delivery, and increased staff wellbeing and lower staff turnover, in the form of a positive and total culture shift.

Our CA Mission - to provide a community where children can grow, thrive and reach their full potential. How could we do that, if we couldn’t provide a consistent, safe and supportive place for our community? It’s our mission to provide our community with a team that families had strong partnerships with, and that children had strong attachments to. How have we done that this year?

Our community requested a shift in service delivery hours at the beginning of 2016. The decrease in hours gave us the ability to effectively have more staff present for more of the day. Not only is this a smarter option financially, saving on the cost of over-time and casual employees, this enabled us to develop a consistent rostering system with staff working the same hours each day. Inspired by our trip to Exceeding services in Melbourne on a study tour, we changed our ‘floaters’ into permanent team members in each of our rooms. This addition to each team has and continues to benefit our service and community.

For the families – by having a consistent staff team in each room, and by having each member of that team on the same shift time daily, we have been better able to form stronger partnerships with our families. Our families give us constant positive feedback about the difference drop off time or collection times have on their lives. We see families wanting to be a part of our community. We hear families wanting to join our service.

“Thanks for the support we get from your team, especially over the last few days. Dakota has thrived through this experience thanks to such a great supportive village of people and a loving environment with your team at Nightcliff”
- Kay, Parent

“I just want to say thank you for considering our needs with morning drop-offs. Heidi is always so distraught at drop off, but since the same staff have been on each morning (Emily & Sureewan) she has been so happy to stay. We have second thoughts about childcare in general, but now we can see Heidi is happy and that makes us happy”
- Paul, Parent

Community, Families and Children
For the children – We can finally say we provide continuity of care, which forms stronger attachments. Our teams have more quality time to spend with the children, more time forming strong attachments, more time capturing their learning and development which has made our programs. We can see children are happier and secure, willing to take risks and explore, we see confident and engaged learners.

For the Educators – They are happier, they are proud to be Child Australia employees. The capacity for the Senior Educators as leaders has grown immensely, with them being able to effectively lead their team autonomously – organising their teams non-contact time, planning groups, showing innovation when they implement their curriculums, at a far higher standard than seen before. The sense of ownership and dedication in our service is visible, and is easily reflected in all aspects of service delivery, in particular their own engagement things outside their role statements, like our Greening-our-spaces & sustainability projects.

“Forming strong attachments with the children is our first priority. To form secure relationships with the children enables them to grow, thrive & reach their full potential.”
- Director

For the community – we see engagement, and we hear positive reviews. We have contact from people, organisations, amazing interstate services we haven’t engaged with in the past, who want to visit our service. We have international visitors wanting to visit our service, government departments both local and national wanting to experience service delivery in the NT. We are nominated and are proud winners of ECEC awards, such as being Outstanding Achievement in Sustainable Practice, and finalists for the Outstanding Education & Care Service. Our waitlist is healthy, forecasting a full enrolment capacity in 2017.

“Having set-shifts enables us to define our job roles better. It also supports a healthy work life balance, which other services can’t offer. Having a more supportive team enables us to be a more productive team. It gives us time and flexibility to plan our days around the children’s agendas, instead of our own - which provides better outcomes for children and the community. Our workplace culture is a positive one and we are dedicated to our centre.”
- Zoey, Senior Educator & ECT

“Your centre is gorgeous. It is a credit to your staff – the surroundings and environments are so respectful to the children. Well done!”
- On behalf of 13 Goodstart Directors, Nationwide.
An ongoing commitment to sustainability

This year our service was successful in our nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Sustainable Practice award in the NT Education & Care Awards.

This was recognition that to us, sustainable practice means us all doing what we can to ensure we leave our service and community healthier and greener for another generation to enjoy. Practically that means embedding sustainable practices, until they are normal practices. We are lucky enough to be in a special part of the world where our spaces are shared with many native species so it’s important we try to support one of our most precious resources – nature.

An increase in parental involvement regarding decisions affecting their children

As an ongoing commitment to honour parents and families as children’s first teachers, our new planning format supports parent involvement and input into the planning process even further. Our family input displays in each room are a place for families to add pieces of information about their families and their children. Our team goes on to record this as an integral part of our planning cycle – Child and Family collaboration. Families have commented that it is great to see their voice in the process of learning here at day care.

Community Integration

This year we have not only been more visual within the community, we have had many community members coming into our service

- We ensure children and our service are represented in the community through regular outings around the local neighbourhood and school campus, to the beach, local parks and to the local shops.
- We enter the Royal Darwin Show every year with art & craft instalments. This year we had a theme – “Our Community”
- We had visitors from interstate and overseas – most notable Claire Warden, international nature pedagogist, as part of her trip to Darwin to keynote the 2016 ECA Conference.
- Interstate visitors, such as 15 Goodstart Directors, Educators from ECEC services from services in Melbourne, Sydney, and Singapore.
- Regular requests from the NT Education department, such as teachers from Driver Primary school and associates looking for inspiration for their own Child & Family Centre.
- Hosting regular ECEC Students from Charles Darwin University.

Our partnership with Nightcliff Primary School continues to grow as we work together to provide a place for Nightcliff children and families. Our reputation is firmly cementing itself as a leader in quality education and care in Darwin.

Our ECT continues to work with the Nightcliff preschool to try to offer complimentary programs. There are increased families in our Kindy room who are choosing to continue their preschool education here at the service instead of moving their children into the traditional NT model of enrolling in a school based preschool. This is a reflection of the standard of program provided for our 4-5 year old children.
Our learning environments continue to be a strength driven by the educators of the service. Environments are as important as the documentation – designed to work alongside our goals and the children's interests. They are natural, honest and homelike – open ended items sourced locally - things children would see at home. Home sized dining tables and chairs - No Plastic- no ‘containers’ – No high chairs, bouncers, anything that restrict the infants free movement. Providing familiar objects and thoughtful spaces for children to explore, take supported risks in, makes them feel secure. It informs children that we respect them as capable humans and contributors of their own learning.

We are working with the school to try and better our outdoor spaces, with a goal to remove the softfall and replace with grassed and gardened spaces. This is not only to green the space but to cool the space down which will then allow it to be better utilized by the children.

Professional growth & support

We have 1 Certificate III Trainee, are proud to say all educators are either holding their Diploma, or enrolled and are actively working towards completing their Diploma.

We have 1 educator who has almost completed her Bachelor Degree in Teaching & Learning, Early Childhood.

• The whole team attended the “little People, big dreams” conference held in Darwin

4 representatives from Nightcliff attended the ECA Conference in Darwin

Educators from the service have attended over 100 external professional development opportunities outside the service in the last 20 months. These are inclusive of external workshops by interstate visitors through the professional support coordinator, external conferences and presentations, and accredited training such as attendance at
- Certificate III & Diploma classes,
- Staff on work placement studying their degree in
  - early childhood,
  - Certificate IV in Training & Assessment attendance,
- and legislative development such as
  - First Aid,
  - Anaphylaxis & Asthma training,
  - Fire Safety, and
  - Mandatory Reporting.

• Reflection on Practice, Planning & Documentation, In-services by Louise Dorrat & Caroline Fewster, Partnerships with Families, Attendance at the Semann & Slattery Curriculum Conference, Malarkey workshops on Indoor & Outdoor Programs, are just some of the great professional development opportunities offered to our team this year. Having access to such fantastic professional development is one of the benefits our educators enjoy working for Child Australia.

• We have also attended compulsory PD on Protective Behaviours & Work Health & Safety

Assessment & Rating, Compliance

Our compliance visits by the regulatory authority; along with localised legislation spot checks by environmental health & the Fire Department have reported no issues to report this year, which is a reflection of the services good management.
Community, Families and Children

Nightcliff OSHC

Nightcliff OSHC is new to the Child Australia family. Our main focus in 2016 has been informing our community that Child Australia has taken over management of the Nightcliff OSHC, to bring the service up to date with compliance, employ quality staff and to develop a strong program with the purpose of creating a safe and family environment for the children in our community. Our goals to employ quality staff has been achieved which contributes to the quality of our program developed. We have undergone compliance and assessment and rating this year. We are still waiting on results of assessment and rating but expect some strong results.

Our program is utilised by the families whose children attend the Nightcliff primary school. Most families use us on a casual part time basis. This along with the full-time attendances maintains our usage at a steady rate of around 48 per week. With the development of a strong transition and junior program we hope to grow those numbers with new students in 2017. We are also beginning to market to the wider community for our vacation care program as current utilisation based only on Nightcliff school children is quite low.

Overview of our program: “Our Journey - Our Adventure”

I would first like to explain what drives our philosophy at Nightcliff OSHC and how the program will be built upon as the year progresses.

Our children are at the heart of what we do. They are why we have after school care and the reason we work so hard creating and exploring ideas. We represent this in our OSHC centre in our environment, activities, displayed on our walls and in our actions.

You will notice the trees on our walls. On the blue wall (in our senior room) our children’s photos are displayed on the leaves. This is our Living Tree. It represents the life of our centre... Our children. In the shade of this tree our children proudly display their works of art and things that are meaningful to them, sharing their stories with each other, our parents and visitors.

Then you look across to the green wall and see our Learning Tree. This tree represents the staff and management who provide a safe and welcoming environment for our children to explore and thrive. The leaves that fall on the garden represent our philosophy which nurtures our program. The garden that grows under the branches comes from the ideas of our children as they are encouraged to take ownership of their environment.

You will also notice that the Learning Tree has branches that reach all the way into our Junior OSHC room and this connects the 2 areas, the ideas and philosophy.

Our Journey - Our Adventure takes us on a year of discovery and learning. Discovering things about ourselves, our likes and dislikes. Discovering our abilities and talents. Developing friendships and leadership skills. Exploring possibilities and nature. Using imagination that will take us on wonderful adventures. Learning about the world around us, our community and most importantly appreciating family.

We encourage the children to think about OSHC as an extension to their family, to feel welcome and comfortable in their environment. To take ownership of the spaces they will help create.
It is equally important that parents and carers have confidence in us and we encourage input and feedback...after all no one knows the children better than their families.

With this in mind we will commence the year with a focus on belonging and identity. These two areas of learning are identified in our learning framework, ‘My Time, Our Place’. We have chosen this to begin with as it is important that our children and families feel safe, secure and supported and that the children develop a sense of belonging at Nightcliff OSHC.

Accomplishments

Unique to our service - We also offer a dance program for children of all ages as a way of introducing children to the performing arts world. This offers an invaluable service to our community where parents aren’t able to take their children to extracurricular activities due to work commitments. (see attached dance information). The feedback from parents has been positive and they are grateful for the opportunity for their children to be taught dance by a qualified dance teacher in a familiar environment with their friends.

We also utilise the schools after hour’s sports program where our children can be involved in community sports teams such as football and cricket. This allows the children to experience a range of sports activities when their parents are unable to leave work to take them to extracurricular sports programs.

We also have access to the AWOF (a world of fun) program. Our OSHC children can utilise this service for free as part of our partnership with the school. The children have access to activities such as basketball, table tennis, rugby etc.

Unique to our service we have also developed a ‘Transition Seamlesss day’ program. The program provides a seamless move from school to OSHC supported by OSHC activities that complement the school program. To facilitate this, the children are kept in a familiar environment and are supported by two educators who spend the afternoon in class with the students and then continue on into the OSHC Program. These educators work in partnership with the Transition teachers to ensure that there is continuity between the school and OSHC Program’s for your child.

The principles of the Nightcliff Transition/OSHC Seamless Day

- Invisible environmental transition from school to OSHC
- Invisible relationship transition from school staff to OSHC staff
- Consistent communication with parents from both school and OSHC staff
- OSHC activities compliment the school program

These principles are underpinned by shared communication and planning between school and OSHC staff.

This program has helped develop confidence from both the transition children and their parents and there has been less tears at the start of the school day with the younger children happy and eager to go to OSHC rather than upset that their parents can’t get them early.

We have developed and maintain a strong working partnership with the school. Through this partnership we have been able to expand our program and take into consideration parent input regarding conducting a junior and senior program. This separation of the programs has been a big success with less behaviour issues and more age specific experiences. The school has extended to us the use of several areas throughout the school buildings and also dedicated OSHC rooms for senior, junior and seamless day. Working with the teachers in transition has helped develop and understanding of how each sector functions and how we can work together to benefit the children and families.

We are currently working on our external presentation and by 2017 we should have a fully identifiable OSHC based around our vision of imagination, creativity and family. The children will enter the OSHC “cave of wonders” where each day will be a journey and an adventure. Where children can grow, thrive and reach their full potential.

A quote from one of the transition teachers:

During the class Sound Waves lesson the students were practising writing using the ‘ar’ sound on the little whiteboards. Usually we say the word, stretch out the word, isolate the sounds and then write them. When we did this with the word ‘star’ an OSHC student exclaimed ‘That’s easy, we know how to write ‘star’ because we practised writing it with Miss Stacy at after school care’. The student was very excited about having this extra practice!
Community, Families and Children
Quotes from the children at Nightcliff OSHC

“I enjoy being at OSHC especially the group games, art, Library and Karaoke. Afternoon tea is always nice and I get to see my friends. It’s always fair and the staff is awesome.”
Poppy

“I love coming to OSHC because we get to do lots of different things. My favourite is library time and movie day with popcorn. I also get time to do my homework and sort out my Pokémon cards.”
Kai

“I like junior OSHC because we can play and sometimes we can dance. I like to play with the white boards.”
Charlie

“I like junior OSHC because we get food and play games and get to choose our own choices for play time.”
Ollie

Transition Children
Do you like OSHC?
Blake – Yes! Two thumbs up
Holly – Yes! Three thumbs up

What do you like about OSHC?
Blake – We get to play outside. With my friends.
Holly – Being able to choose our activities. The teachers like us.

What’s your favourite thing to do?
Blake – Playing on the playground
Holly – Making masks, colouring and cutting
At Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre we are committed to the provision of a quality-integrated service for all families. We believe that each and every child is a gift needing to be nurtured and inspired each and every day. We value communication between all stakeholders, and by utilising a variety of communication channels, Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre is able to use our community as a mechanism to build relationships that aim to instill a sense of trust, truth and respect amongst each other.

**Our year in review**

Palmerston has been focusing on getting the fundamental areas of Palmerston up and running smoothly. We have been concentrating on providing a quality service that meets the needs of the families in our community and ensuring the principles of care and compassion towards our children are rich. Focusing on each child’s individual growth and development, we are able to ensure all children feel a strong sense of belonging, being and becoming.

**Parental involvement regarding Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre**

Throughout the year families were offered the opportunity to provide feedback on all areas involving the service and their children this including all centre family events, celebrations held at Palmerston and other areas such as understanding our services curriculum’s and the vital involvement a family member plays in it. This communication was sent out via emails, surveys, text messages and face to face conversations.

“Just for the record, we are continually so incredibly impressed with Child Australia and in particular our experience with the tight ship you run at Palmerston. We have been so blessed to have our precious kids in your care and have been astounded by the perfect balance of absolute professionalism combined with a very personal and heartfelt approach to childcare. It’s outstanding as far as I’m concerned.

From my first visit to the centre I somehow felt a sense of ‘belonging’ and very quickly felt at ease with entrusting our children to the care of your team.”

- Dale Walker 30.05.2016
Community Involvement/ Integrated Service Delivery

Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre celebrated its first birthday. Palmerston’s first birthday celebration was a community event and consisted of a range of experiences for all aged children. Involving the community into this event allows us to cultivate a service and an environment built around the needs of the wider community.

The Child and Family Centre have a Young Mums Strong Mums (YMSM) program within the centre. The YMSM program focuses on indigenous / vulnerable women (under the age of 25) who are a high risk across a range of health and social factors. They may also have been disengaged with education for many years, which requires a different approach to recruitment, retention and completion of qualifications. The YMSM use our service to complete their study/ school whilst placing their children into the ELC. Team Palmerston provides ongoing support to the program and young mums.

The Child and Family Centre and Early Learning Centre hold whole staff meetings regularly. This is a strategy to enhance the educator’s knowledge of the CFC and for them to be aware in what’s happening within the CFC i.e. YMSM. Having knowledge and understanding of each other’s work contributes to the development of an integrated service delivery model.

Professional Growth & Support

Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre is committed to providing ongoing support for education, training and professional development amongst its educator team. We promote reflective practice and pedagogical research to enhance our team’s knowledge and skills so we are able to ensure continues improvement and innovative approaches to the education and care we provide. We place great emphasis on working together to improve learning outcomes for all children placed into our care. We understand the importance of advocating for the role of the educator within the community and the effect our educators have on children and their family units.

The team at Palmerston are continually developing, with 65% of staff holding or working towards a Diploma of Early Childhood. In addition to this, one staff member is studying her Bachelor of Education Early Childhood years 0-5 years.

Assessment and Rating- ELC

Being only 10 months old Palmerston Child and Family Early Learning Centre went through the Assessment and Rating process on the 22nd and 23rd June 2016. We received our Assessment and Rating report and Palmerston had 3 Quality Standards rated as ‘Exceeding’ and 4 Quality Standards rated at ‘Meeting’ which gave us an overall rating of ‘Meeting’ the National Quality Standard.

Great effort from team Palmerston and this shows the commitment and dedication put into the early stages. It’s only onwards and upwards from here.

2017 Palmerston Goals

An increase and commitment to sustainability

In the coming year Palmerston is focusing on sustainability. We have identified that this is an area for improvement so we are involving all members that make use of the entire service this including families of the ELC, members of CFC and our community to contribute to our 2017 projects. Projects have been brainstormed and some great ideas have come about i.e. we have made first steps towards a relationship with the RSPCA and helping adopt out animals from the shelter. A vegie patch has also been brainstormed in our outside environment, this will be a strategy to enhance the children’s knowledge and embed practice into caring for our entire environment. We have been focusing on donated materials that we can upcycle for example old tyres were donated from a member of the community, for an upcoming tyre garden.

Environments conducive to learning

Following on from our increase and commitment to sustainability Palmerston will be focusing on both the indoor and the outdoor environments to ensure the children are being responsible in their surroundings and learn from the experiences. Over the coming year Palmerston will continue to develop this space using recyclables and donations from stakeholders, we will continue to upcycle old furniture in each of the rooms on a basis of priority and intentions.
West Pilbara Mobile Children’s Services (WPMCS)

We offer a mobile children’s service for children and families living in remote indigenous communities of Yandeyarra and Strelley Station who have limited access to quality early childhood education and care programs. The West Pilbara Mobile Children’s service is funded through the Australia Government Department of Education and is a budget based funded program.

WPMCS implements an early childhood education program that is influenced by the early years learning framework and is reflective of the communities’ context and cultures. Our staff travel on dirt and gravel roads to remote Indigenous communities weekly and provide opportunities for children through intentional play experiences to support and develop their early learning development. Typically these children would have no access to an early childhood program prior to them entering their formal years of education at the community school. We work in partnership with the community school teaching staff to ensure that we provide play experiences that are most beneficial for the context of the community but more importantly to ensure children are given an opportunity to experience a smooth transition to school. We provide a supportive environment for children and families including extended family members to become involved in supporting their children’s early learning and to create opportunities to develop and support a sense of belonging to their community, to form friendships and to support the development of a social supportive community network.

The weekly schedule requires the WPMCS educator team to load up the mobile van and travel for many kilometres off the beaten track to communities located in the west region of the Pilbara.

The implementation of this program supports Child Australia’s mission,

A vision of community where children grow, thrive and reach their full potential.

The program incorporates a strong focus on developing self-help skills, good health and hygiene practices, school readiness and language and literacy development. We actively engage with parents and family members to build and improve their knowledge, skills and capacity for parenting and sustaining family wellbeing.

For the period of January 2016 to June 2016 period we have seen a growth in attendance at our play sessions of 15% of children and families.

Principal Graeme Boyd from Yandeyarra Community School has praised the program along with some of his staff and comment that they have seen a noticeable positive change in their early year’s students that have an active and regular participation rate in the program prior to their formal school attendance.

Ann Westwrink who is a head teacher at Strelley Community School has quoted that she has seen an improvement with children’s behaviours and has also noted an improvement in children’s school attendance. Ann has also noticed a change in parents and caregivers within the community and their interests in their child education. Anne has said she is amazed how the Strelley Community children, families and teachers have linked together to embrace the WPMCS program.
Community, Families and Children

Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) | Geraldton

Education starts in the home, with parents being a child’s first and most powerful teacher. HIPPY is helping parents across Australia and the world to get their child ready for school by sharing with families the skills of lifelong learning.

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a two year, homebased parenting and early childhood program for families with young children.

Existing in 100 communities across Australia, Child Australia was selected to deliver to the communities of Geraldton and Hedland.

Home visits, group meetings, parent tutors, roleplay and a focus on everywhere learning have been key features to the programs success in Geraldton with a record 24 families graduating in 2016, a cohort of 28 families reaching HIPPY half way and a further 32 families enrolled for 2017.

HIPPY is designed to fit into the daily life of the family. HIPPY families spend around 10 – 15 minutes a day, five days a week doing educational activities together. These activities, story books and resources are intentional, aligned to the Australian Early Years Framework and National Quality Standards (NQS) and they are FUN!

Through HIPPY, children develop a love of learning with their family members:

“I do HIPPY with my mum. I like stories and making things. Now I can cut on lines and make different stories. It is so much fun and there are lots to do.”

“I do HIPPY with my mum, dad and sister. I like the stories, writing, drawing, painting, word and maths games, making and talking about me. Now I can make lots of things, love cooking and learnt all the shapes. There are lots of fun activities and very good stories.”

(5 yr old HIPPY graduates, 2016)

“HIPPY has expanded my view and knowledge of parenting. Learning that pretty much every life experience is a teaching opportunity. It is priceless and will stay with me for ever.”

“HIPPY has shown me how to be more involved with my child and to listen which will help with future involvement between us. It has been amazing for my child. She has excelled in so many ways. I can see her development and so can her teachers. I am a very proud mother of her achievements and her learning.... HIPPY is amazing and we love it!”

(HIPPY Parents, 2016)

Through HIPPY, families are empowered and engaged in their children’s learning:

This year HIPPY Geraldton worked very hard to engage the indigenous community. The success of this was supporting an indigenous tutor, who brought a wonderful cultural richness to the team and a bridge of trust for future indigenous families to participate. As a result we have 25% of our 2017 cohort come from our indigenous community. Engaging and retaining families from Malaysia, India, Bangladesh, Africa, Thailand, and Europe have also ensured Geraldton’s diverse cultural community is represented and supported in each cohort.

Through HIPPY, Child Australia has engaged tutors, parents and carers in training and employment opportunities. This year our graduating tutors have made the most of professional learning by completing Senior First Aid, Course facilitator certification/ Certificate III in Business & Leadership, resume writing, Cultural Competency and Self Regulation training.
Community, Families and Children

**HIPPY | Geraldton**

“As a tutor I have become more confident and love sharing my passion for being my child’s first teacher with other parents alike, connecting through HIPPY”

HIPPY has helped me develop much needed self confidence and skills to re enter the workforce. I truly don’t think I would be ready if it weren’t for the last two years of HIPPY.

“HIPPY has given me the training, the confidence and the time to develop skills that I can take to get a job when my child goes to full time schooling. I am very grateful to be able to make some positive changes to my career opportunities at this time in my life, with support.”

(HIPPY Geraldton team 2016)

With continued support from Child Australia, HIPPY families engage and invest in their local community through group meetings, guest speakers and enrichment opportunities:

Child Australia’s **HIPPY Geraldton** families recently celebrated their 2016 HIPPY halfway and graduation ceremonies. Acting Principal Stephanie Gadeke, with support from Geraldton University Centre, commended and thanked **HIPPY parents** for their support, desire and commitment to their children’s growth and ability to reach their full potential.

“Your children are more confident, skilled and ready to learn because of the time and effort you have taken to engage and prepare your child to be a successful life long learner.”

(Stephanie Gadeke, 2016)

“Thank you very much for inviting me to again be part of the HIPPY Geraldton Graduation. You always hold such a beautiful inclusive evening and I love seeing the pride that glows on those bright little graduate faces. Truly precious moments. Thanks to all involved for the work that you all do.”

(Fairy Jo, Face Painter, 2016)

“HIPPY has let me be more involved in community, meeting new people and trying different activities from different cultures.”

“Through home visits and group meetings I have learnt about myself and my child and being able to access what’s in our community, whether it is Speech, Occupational Therapy, Dietician or even our local hot spots- museum, Geraldton art drive).”

(HIPPY Parents, 2016)

**HIPPY Geraldton** looks forward to another wonderful year with an excited team and eager families committed to learning, active involvement in their child’s early years of development, school readiness and learning success.
Community, Families and Children

Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) | Hedland

We operate the HIPPY program in the Hedland community based in the Pilbara. HIPPY is the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

The foundation of the program not only facilitates the building and nurturing of strong relationships with families, children and within the community; it empowers families to be their child’s first educator. HIPPY fosters a fun home learning environment; encourages a positive early school experience and promotes a confident approach facilitating a smooth transition to school with a focus on the development of school readiness with an emphasis on pre-numeracy and pre-literacy experiences with the purpose of achieving improving better educational outcomes. The program provides well-resourced workbooks with activities that are designed to be integrated into daily family life and encourage an “everywhere learning” approach to prepare, support and connect children, families and the community.

We work with parents, through the delivery of the program, for the 2 year commitment of the program offering individualised delivery. Families are supported to reflect on the workbooks and supplementary materials and consider the learning environment. Through this initiative parents and children are able to build confidence and skills to inspire a real connection to and love of learning in the formative commencement of schooling as well as the aim of increasing the parental involvement and confidence within the school setting.

We deliver the program via fortnightly home visits and group meetings whereby the HIPPY workbooks and resources are delivered to parents by tutors (participants in the program). We support the tutors through tutor training to successfully deliver the packs along with the opportunity to access additional professional development and training to support their pathway to employment. This year both our tutors have engaged in the provision of training opportunity by their enrolment in Certificate III and Certificate IV courses as well as undertaking other professional learning of Cultural Competency, Senior First Aid, and various parenting workshops. We also record the program on Ipad’s provided to the tutors adding another element to their future employment prospects.

We work collaboratively with many community organisation’s and networks with the aim to connect families with early learning/parenting networks and services by means of access to additional support and networking with others in the Hedland community. Our collaboration has provided a sense of community and encouraged engagement with other organisations and community events that families otherwise may not have previously attended or felt a part of.

The Hedland community was selected to be a part of the HIPPY program as a response to AEDC data in relation to quality programs provided in the remote Pilbara location. The delivery of the HIPPY program in Hedland enables Child Australia to further demonstrate their passion in providing quality programs that promote children to reach their full potential which is a seamless alignment with CA mission.

We have relished in the accomplishment of the first year of the program in Hedland with 27 families continuing through to next year to the 2nd year of the program. We are funded for 25 although there was such a demand we were able to include an additional enrolment of 2 families this year. This achievement can be partially attributed to Child Australia drawing on the previous successes of the HIPPY Geraldton program which Child Australia also manage. We are on track to have 2017 be just as fruitful as we already have 20 of the 25 available spaces filled with enrolments.
Parent Pathways was established four years ago and is based in Geraldton, WA. The Program was established in response to a determined need for parent support in Geraldton and is funded by the Department of Local Government and Communities. Parent Pathways is a universal access program and is free for all participants.

Since the Program’s commencement, it became evident that a home visit service was of greatest benefit for most participants and this has continued to be the case. The Program Coordinator visits 95% of participants in their homes with the other 5% seen at a neutral site.

Referrals to the program have increased each year and the demand at times exceeds the program’s ability to deliver. In spite of this, regular support is still provided to participants with some requiring frequent regular contact whilst others only require weekly or fortnightly support from the program.

The type of support provided varies; however there are eligibility criteria’s, the parent and or significant adult must have a child aged 0 to 8 years who they care for in some capacity. Once the referral has been made, the Coordinator contacts the participant and makes a time to meet with them and discuss their needs in person. During this first meeting, the Coordinator initially assesses the parents to determine their level of knowledge, confidence and skills and the appropriateness in accessing the Parent Pathway program. This assists the Parent Pathways Coordinator to ensure that the Program meets the needs of individuals requesting support and reduces external expectations that is sometimes perceived of pathways being a crisis management support program.

The informal assessment approach is implemented through a conversation with the parent. Parents are encouraged to outline what they are hoping to achieve from their involvement with Parent Pathways. This information is then used to ensure that targeted information and parent education is offered. Parents are supported to self-reflect as to whether they feel they have grown in their knowledge, confidence and parenting skills as a consequence of their involvement with Parent Pathways. Parent Pathways is currently formalising the assessment process to ensure that it can provide outcome data that is measureable pre and post parental involvement with the program. This process will also ensure that the needs of the service users continue to be met throughout their involvement with this Program.
Community, Families and Children

Parent Pathways Program

Case Study 1: A Grandcarer self-referred to Parent Pathways after hearing about the service from the early learning centre their grandchild attends. During an initial phone conversation it was identified that the Grandcarer had no access or linkages to any other services in Geraldton, a decision was made to confirm a time to meet with this Grandcarer to discuss options of support available. During the individualised support visit it was identified that the Grandcarer had no support or entitlements for their grandchild from Centrelink despite having fulltime care of the grandchild for the past three months. It was recommended that the Grandcarer speak with a Social Worker from Centrelink to determine information on entitlements and access to various local organisations for counselling and other means of support. Parent Pathways made the appointment with the Social Worker for the Grandcarer.

Whilst the Grandcarer had successfully raised their own children, they were unsure as to how to navigate various issues regarding their grandchild. An area of support identified was in the situation that the grandchild was continually asking for their parent and when would they be home? Due to the Grandcarer not knowing how to respond, they continued to avoid responding to the child. This response then escalated the grandchild’s behaviour towards being emotionally unstable. Parent Pathways recommended strategies to the Grandcarer to enable them to deal with ‘difficult’ conversations such as this example. After a short period of time following the support provided by Parent Pathways, the Grandcarer reported an increase in their self-confidence to parent their grandchild when the child was experiencing sensitive and difficult situations. The Grandcarer has maintained contact with Parent Pathways and continues to seek support when needed. Through effective referral pathways this Grandcarer was also able to access relevant support agencies in relation to raising their grandchild.
Community, Families and Children

Regional Children’s Services Plans | Peel and Mid West WA

Child Australia was responsible for developing and delivering Regional Children’s Services Plans for the Peel and Mid West regions of Western Australia. Plans were developed and implemented in the nine Regional Development Commission areas of Western Australia as a strategic response to strengthen viable children’s services.

The initiative recognised the challenges faced by organisations in providing viable education and care services for children in country areas. The plans were developed in localised contexts, including population forecasts, service mapping, community profiles, analysing the early childhood development literature, identifying alignment with other relevant local, regional, state and national strategies, and consulting with regional stakeholders. The program was administered by the Department for Local Government and Communities and funded through the State Government’s Royalties for Regions Regional Community Child Care Development Fund over four years from 2012 to 2015.

The Peel region displayed a significant number of children (one in four five year olds) who were developmentally vulnerable on one or more domains. This broadly correlated with socioeconomic disadvantage in the Peel. One in three Mid West children were considered developmentally vulnerable. Results varied considerably across the Mid West’s 17 Local Government Areas while a number of communities in the Murchison remote sub region—where there are no education and care services—are amongst the most socioeconomically disadvantaged in Australia.

Both plans focused on the addressing the AEDC, transition to school, workforce development, and cross-sector regional collaboration.

With acceptance by the Department of the Regional Children’s Services Plans in March 2015 the Peel and Mid West Regional Development Officers implemented a total of 35 responsive actions through to the end of October 2015, which supported:

- Child Australia developing new partnerships and opportunities with Local, Regional and State Government agencies and organisations.

- establishing, increasing and developing cross sector agency collaborations, partnerships and relationships within regional communities.

- improved access to the early years’ sector information and the evidence base from a local to national perspective, such as Australian Early Development Census data, to inform planning for the ECEC sector, broader children’s services and schools.

- connections made, and innovative activities between the ECEC sector and schools to support children’s school transitions and continuity of learning.

- further development and maintenance of regional network groups to assist the building of a sustainable shared regional knowledge base and language.

- ECEC services building capacity in identified areas of the National Quality Standards through a targeted and practical based professional development workshop series forum.

- the viability of community managed education and care services through data gathering to demonstrate demand for services to funding bodies; and enabling subsidised support for strategic environmental sustainability training.

- a project that was awarded funding to enable women in remote communities to receive recognition for early childhood studies through updated National Quality Standard-aligned workbooks to be delivered in playgroup settings in remote communities.

- addressing workforce participation and building sector profile in collaboration with Regional Workforce Development Plans and Strategic Blueprints.

- input into the proposed State Wide Regional Children’s Services Plan in collaboration with the other seven regional development planning coordinators and government officials.

This work has resulted in the establishment of a Peel Children’s Collective bringing cross-sector representatives together for strategic solutions around a common vision; and generated an additional Strategic Grant from the Department of Local Government and Communities Regional Community Child Care Development Fund to support services working together for children and families in the North Midlands sub region of the Mid West.
The workshop series brought together early learning educators, students, and lecturers from education and care and school sectors to learn about how to plan for children’s development incorporating local AEDC results.

Participants provided the following feedback:

- “I now have a much better understanding of the Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) child developmental domains.”
- “I will take into consideration the results of the Census when planning.”
- “I will inform the Principal and the EC staff members about what was covered in the workshop and discuss the implications of the data from 2012 on the way our school plans and implements programs.”
- “I will use the AEDC results to inform planning to prepare students for pre-primary. Link the AEDC with NQS and EYLF.”
- “I will get all the EC educators to look at the data and plan for improvement using AEDC data.”
- “I gained a greater understanding about working with the network to ensure all educators are continually working to provide quality curriculum and experiences.”
- “It has supported me to be able to utilise a more reflective approach for my practice.”
- “I will share information with other early childhood staff for programming and planning.”
- “I will be looking at how the AEDC, EYLF and NQS fit together.”
- “I will be connecting schools/ kindy teachers and child care services!”
- “I will encourage more solid communication/ links between home/ school and support parents in extending language/ communication skill with children.”
Child Australia’s Rural Inclusion Support Program (RISP) was funded by the Department for Local Government and Communities, Regional Community Child Care Development Fund. RISP provided a professional inclusion support service to rural and remote community based Occasional Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services which are not eligible for comparable inclusion supports otherwise provided to mainstream ECECs by the Commonwealth funded Inclusion and Professional Support Program. The Rural Inclusion Support Program (RISP) ceased on the 31st of December, 2015.

The overall aim of RISP was to support an improvement of services capacity toward Inclusive Practices which is reflected to have been a great success in both the Child Australia’s final RISP report and the Independent Evaluation.

The objectives of the RISP were:

1. To increase awareness of eligible child care services of available inclusion support through the Rural Inclusion Support Program
2. To provide eligible services with support and information to improve inclusion readiness at key points in the enrolment/attendance cycle (school year)
3. To facilitate increased knowledge, skills and confidence of Educators to include children with additional needs
4. To facilitate increased capacity of eligible services to include children with additional needs as a result of provision of program activities

11 services were eligible for RISP throughout Western Australia and all participated through provision of consultation, resources, access to professional development and subsidy towards inclusion of children with high ongoing needs.

45 educators participated in 20 Professional Development (PD) opportunities on topics such as; Cultural Competency, Exploring behaviour, Speech and Language Development, Playing and Learning to Socialise (PaLS) program, Inclusive Practices, Introduction to play based curriculum and Inclusive practices, National Quality framework (NSQ) and Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

RISP was able to provide direct PD and consultation with great success so much so that services got together on three occasions to network and broaden their inclusive practices facilitated by RISP staff. These gatherings occurred in the Great Southern, South West and Wheatbelt.

87 Inclusion specific consultations took place relating to identified children who needed support: 19 Disabilities, 39 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) and 29 Indigenous.

All other consultations were related to inclusive practices in general, resources and referrals to health professional.

7 children benefitted from the RISP Inclusion Support Subsidy Scheme which enable services to employ an extra educator to increase their ratio in the room where one or more children with high ongoing needs attend.
RISP had established a support network and working relationship with the Child Australia Inclusion and Professional Support Program WA, Children Services Officers, Yorganup Aboriginal services, regional Development Officers, Aboriginal Play and Learning Network and various local health professionals.

This RISP graph demonstrates the improvement in overall Inclusive Practices from the start of the RISP program to the end date of the program with one exception after a service’s key educators left the service. Significant shift is observed between the two first years and the last two years where confidence grew to the benefit of the overall inclusion practices.

This Graph from the independent evaluator reflects the above sentiment by showing the Summary Ratings of Changes in Awareness, Confidence and Capacities of Rural Occasional Education and Care Centres before accessing the RISP (blue) and after (red).

“RISP helped us stop worrying about the ‘what ifs’ because we built confidence in knowing how to respond to and support children with additional needs.”

Ratings of the RISP by Centre Coordinators where 1 was very poor and 10 was excellent.

“Our staff weren’t very confident about working with children from different cultures or language backgrounds; we had a RISP PD session and now everyone is much happier about knowing how to include them in meaningful ways.”

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CHILD AUSTRALIA and COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Community disadvantage comes about because of the complex interplay between the characteristics of residents living in a community (e.g., unemployment, low income) and the effects of the social and environmental context within the community (e.g., weak social networks, relative lack of opportunities).

The multifaceted nature of disadvantage demands a sophisticated response. Collective Impact has emerged globally as an effective framework for tackling deeply entrenched and complex social problems. It is an innovative and structured approach to taking collaboration across government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organisations and community to a higher level on order to achieve significant and lasting social change.

Child Australia has been a proponent of CI for some years now and is using it to create relational and collaborative place based foundations for addressing complex issues in both WA and the NT.

Grow Well Live Well - Palmerston, NT

Child Australia co-chairs the Grow Well Live Well CI initiative which brings together community, service providers, schools and local and state government agencies to improve the wellbeing of children and young people in Palmerston. This initiative grew out of a CI forum that Child Australia facilitated in Darwin in 2013.


Bagot Aboriginal Community CI Project – Darwin, NT

In partnership with the Bagot Community Council Child Australia are backboning a Collect Impact approach as a mechanism to strengthen community empowerment and self determination.


Connecting Community for Kids Initiative – Cockburn and Kwinana, WA

Child Australia auspices the backbone of this initiative which is funded through the Woodside Development and is directed at improving early childhood development outcomes in the Cockburn and Kwinana local government areas of Western Australia.


Peel Early Years Collective Initiative

Child Australia instigated and supported the growth of this initiative which brings together a wide range of community service providers, school representatives and state and local government departments to improve service delivery for children and families in the Peel Regions and learning and developmental outcome.

Child Australia has the knowledge and experience to facilitate the implementation of a place based collective impact approach featuring:

- Improved relationships between communities and Local, State and Federal Government agencies.
- Community input and ownership
- Co-designed, coordinated, flexible and responsive service provision
- Cross agency (both government and non government) collaboration and integrated service delivery
- A focus on prevention and early intervention
- Transparency and accountability