



Child Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land.

We pay respects to Elders past and present for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation.

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\* Child Australia follows the Australian Privacy Principles and respects the privacy of the children and families we work with. As a result, names or referring images used within this report may have been changed.

# Message from the Chairperson and the CEO

As we look back on the past year, we are deeply proud of what has been achieved together. Across every corner of our organisation, our teams have shown extraordinary commitment, ensuring that high-quality education and care reached children and families across Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Each person, in their own way, has strengthened our collective impact, and for that, we extend our heartfelt thanks.

This year has been one of meaningful progress at Child Australia, not just in outcomes, but in how we show up for children, families, and each other. Together with our Board and Executive, we have remained focused on what matters most, supporting our people, growing sustainable services, and leading sector change that makes a genuine difference in communities.

For the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector, 2024–2025 was a defining period. The Fair Work Commission's acknowledgment that ECEC has been historically undervalued was both significant and long overdue. The resulting 15% wage increase for Educators under the Children's Services Award marked an important recognition of a workforce that has for too long carried more than its share. Through the approval of our Alternative Fee Growth Application and the Worker Retention Grant, we were able to ensure our own Educators also received the wage uplift they so richly deserve, a tangible reflection of the value we place on their work.

Our Thriving Futures initiative, proudly funded by BHP, continued to demonstrate what's possible when long-term investment meets local partnership. Childcare access waitlists have halved in Hedland and are almost non-existent in Newman, proof that place-based, sustained action works. The renewal of our multi-year agreement through to 2028 ensures this important work continues, building pathways that create lasting impact for children, families, and communities.

We were again honoured to lead the distribution of the Supporting Children in ECEC WA Grants Program (Round 2) funding on behalf of WA Government, and to see the extension of the Empowering Early Childhood Education and Care in Regional WA initiative. Both programs strengthen governance, build workforce capability, and ensure more children in regional and remote areas have access to high-quality early learning experiences.

This year also brought exciting growth, with Out of School Hours Care services established at Gray and Wulagi Primary Schools, expanding our footprint in the Northern Territory and providing much-needed support for working families. These new services build on our established relationships in the region and reflect our ongoing commitment to accessible, community-focused care. They also form part of a broader, long-term growth approach designed to strengthen service access in communities where need continues to outpace supply.



We were also proud to lead and deliver major sector events including the WA Early Childhood Learning & Development Conference, WA Sector Awards, and the NT Little People, Big Dreams Conference and NT Sector Awards. Together, these events brought together more than a thousand educators, leaders, and advocates from across the country. Each celebration reignited professional pride, recognised excellence, and reminded us of the profound impact educators have on children's lives and community well-being.

Child Safety remained at the heart of everything we do, not as compliance, but as culture. The national focus on safeguarding children has created both urgency and opportunity, and we have embraced both with conviction. More than 2,000 participants joined our national webinar Safer Together, delivered in collaboration with government, regulators, and child protection experts. This collective dialogue strengthened our shared accountability for creating safer systems and environments for children.

We also launched our See It. Stop It. Say It. initiative, a bold, visible commitment to naming harm, breaking silence, and empowering educators to act. This campaign is more than awareness, it's about shifting the culture toward one that is unafraid to speak up. Our Board reinforced this commitment through a Child Safety Statement of Commitment, uniting the organisation under one clear message, that safety is something we live every day. Across recruitment, induction, policy, and governance, Child Australia continues to embed this belief through systems that protect children and uphold the trust families place in us.

To our Educators and staff, we extend our deepest gratitude. Your compassion, professionalism, and resilience are the foundation of every success we celebrate. To our partners, funders, and supporters across government, corporate, community, and philanthropic sectors, we sincerely thank you for your trust, collaboration, and shared commitment to improving outcomes for children. Together, we are creating stronger communities and brighter futures.

This year reminded us that progress is built through shared purpose, courage, and heart. It lives in the everyday moments where our teams go above and beyond, where partnerships turn into genuine collaboration, and where collective effort creates impact that lasts. As we look ahead, we do so with immense gratitude and renewed energy, deeply committed to children, families, and the sector we are so proud to serve. Together, we'll continue to champion quality, equity, and the belief that every child deserves the very best start in life.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elaine Pavlos".

Elaine Pavlos  
Chairperson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tina Holtom".

Tina Holtom  
Chief Executive Officer

# Our Vision, Mission and Values

## Vision

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

## Mission

To support children's well-being, learning and development by advocating for and developing the community of professionals working for them.

## Values



**Integrity**  
We are honest, trustworthy and accountable. We take responsibility for our actions.



**Collaboration**  
We work together on shared goals, seeking opportunities to work with diverse expertise and perspectives.



**Recognition**  
We acknowledge and celebrate the efforts and achievements of our staff.



**Respect**  
We treat each person as we expect to be treated. We value diversity.



**Innovation**  
We look for the best solution. We think outside the box and challenge ourselves to do things differently.



**Commitment**  
We follow through on decisions and promises – we do what we say.

# Who we are

Child Inclusive Learning and Development Australia Inc. (Child Australia) is a not for profit organisation dedicated to improving outcomes for children.

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 to improve outcomes for all children.

Child Australia's practice is guided by evidence-based research and provides innovative professional development and support to the sector. We aim to facilitate the development of nurturing and stimulating early childhood learning environments and support families in helping their children thrive.

Through professional education, the provision of early childhood services, community and family supports, and sector advocacy, we actively pursue opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders across Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Child Australia's programs and services span metropolitan, regional and remote locations and include:

Early Learning Centres

Out of School Hours Care

Bagot Community Program

Community Support

West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service

HIPPY Geraldton and Hedland

Sector Development and Support

ECEC Sector Conference and Awards



# Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Over the past year, Child Australia made significant progress in their journey towards reconciliation and in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives throughout the organisation.

## Deepening Cultural Learning

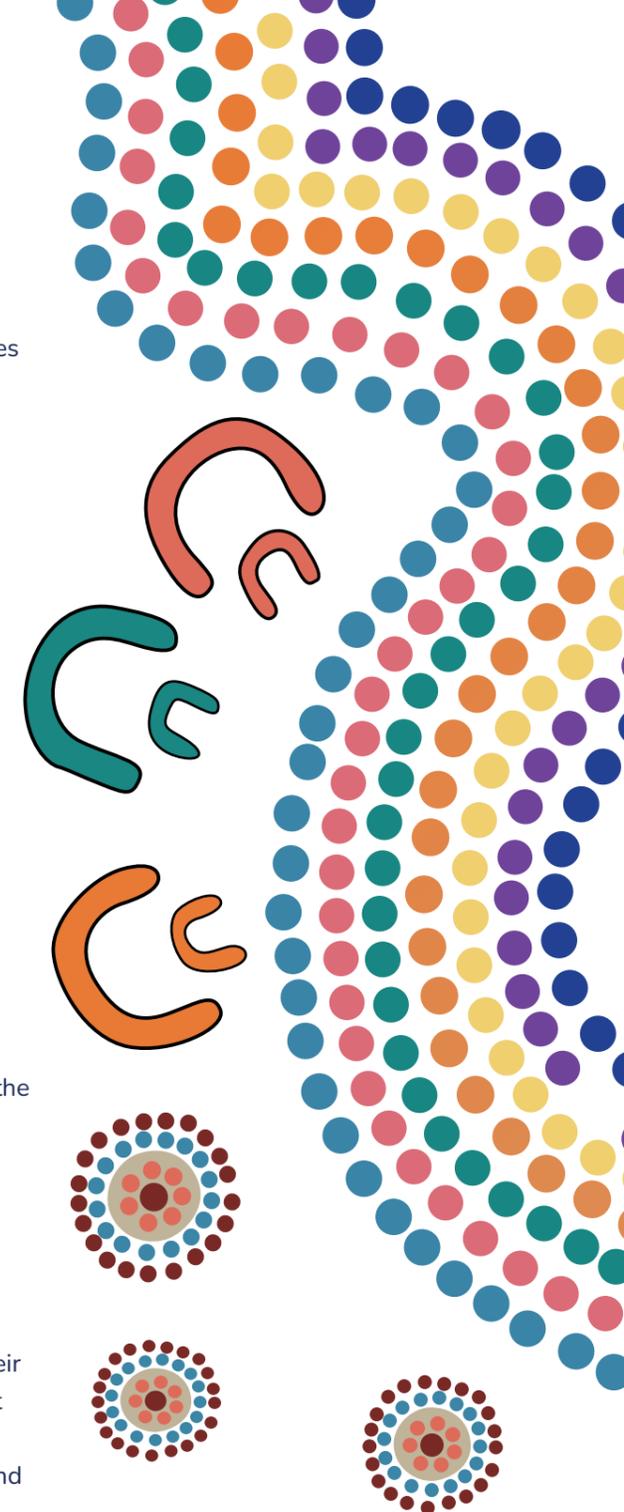
Child Australia's Head Office team participated in cultural weaving and storytelling sessions with Emma Jane, providing meaningful opportunities for reflection and cultural learning. This experience deepened the understanding of Aboriginal culture and strengthened their ongoing commitment to reconciliation.

## Developing the Innovate RAP

During the year, Child Australia commenced the development of the Innovate RAP, which guided the organisation's continuous efforts to ensure reconciliation is embedded into the organisational strategy. Across the organisation, a range of activities have taken place to strengthen relationships and cultural awareness. This included fostering stronger relationships with Elders in Thriving Futures in the Pilbara and collaborating with the West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service. The aim was to assist local students in connecting with the Thriving Futures Academy by tailoring learning materials to address the specific needs of the community and individual students.

## Embedding Reconciliation Across Services

Child Australia actively engaged with Narragunnawali to develop service-level RAPs, ensuring reconciliation is lived and practiced at every level of the organisation. RAP Champion Connie Borg has expressed pride in seeing staff across all areas pause to reflect on their practices, prioritise inclusivity and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into their programs in ways that honour local contexts. These efforts play a crucial role in creating culturally safe and welcoming environments for all children, families and communities.



# Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Child Australia is dedicated to promoting, supporting and enhancing the quality of life and positive developmental outcomes of all children and families. In particular, those who are vulnerable and at risk, living with disability and those from Indigenous or culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## Our areas of focus:



### Sector Development

We will support and develop the community of professionals working with children.



### Advocacy and Leadership

We will actively promote the needs and rights of children, their families and the professionals working with them.



### Sustainability

We will be operationally effective and financially strong with the resources to support quality and growth.



### Quality Services

We will deliver the highest quality programs and services that improve outcomes for children, families, communities and the professionals working with them.



### Exceptional People

We will be an employer of choice and empower our people with the skills, expertise and resources to deliver high-quality services in support of our mission.



# Sector Advocacy

## Addressing the Childcare Shortage in Port Hedland

Child Australia was commissioned to conduct an independent review of the childcare landscape in Port Hedland to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers hindering the establishment of a sustainable model of care. The review revealed a significant shortage of services, which limited access for families and adversely affected workforce participation across the region. It also underscored the urgent necessity for long-term planning, the expansion of childcare and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services, as well as the development of culturally responsive programs tailored to meet the needs of Indigenous families.

The report identified a strong focus on workforce development as crucial for ensuring future growth, emphasising the need for investments to attract and retain qualified educators. These findings were presented to the Town of Port Hedland and BHP by CEO Tina Holtom.

## Continuing the WA ECEC Grant Program

Child Australia was proud to once again partner with the Government of Western Australia (WA) to deliver the second round of the Supporting Children in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) WA Grants Program as part of the Preschool Reform Agreement (PRA). This program reaffirmed a shared commitment to ensuring all children in WA have access to high-quality preschool education, with particular emphasis on children in regional and remote areas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and those experiencing significant disadvantage. The funding helped services enhance early learning environments and strengthened transitions to school, creating more equitable opportunities for children across the state. CEO Tina Holtom celebrated the success of this round, acknowledging the dedication of services that are making a lasting impact on the lives of children and families in their communities.

## Empowering Families and Educators Through SEEN

Child Australia partnered with Parent TV to support screenings of SEEN: The Film, a powerful documentary highlighting the impact of childhood trauma and the importance of being truly heard. The documentary was screened in both WA and the Northern Territory (NT) to educators and parents, creating opportunities for reflection and dialogue. The film reinforced Child Australia's mission to empower families, equip educators and advocate for children to be seen, heard, and supported. By embedding these insights into their professional learning, community services and advocacy efforts, they helped ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive.



ECEC Grant Announcemnet

SEEN: The Film Screening



# Our Early Learning and OSHC Services

At Child Australia, Early Learning Centres (ELC) and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services provide nurturing, engaging environments where children feel safe, supported and inspired to learn. From the youngest learners in ELCs to school-aged children in OSHC, the focus is on fostering curiosity, building confidence and creating strong connections with families and communities. Dedicated educators go beyond care — they design meaningful experiences that help every child thrive.

## Welcoming New OSHC Services

Child Australia was thrilled to welcome Berry Springs OSHC, Gray OSHC and Wulagi OSHC to its family of services this year. Each service provides a safe, engaging and supportive space for children to build friendships, explore interests and develop a strong sense of belonging within the school community.

### Children in our care

## 638

Children enrolled in Outside School Hours Care

## 289

Children enrolled in Early Learning Centres

#### Early Learning Centre (ELC)

- 1 Farrar ELC
- 2 Palmerston Child & Family ELC
- 11 Larapinta Child & Family ELC

#### Campus (ELC and OSHC)

- 3 Nightcliff Campus
- 12 Lockridge Campus

#### Outside School Hours

- 4 Anula OSHC
- 5 Bagot OSHC
- 6 Wagaman OSHC
- 7 Wanguri OSHC
- 8 Wulagi OSHC
- 9 Gray OSHC
- 10 Berry Springs OSHC

# Western Australia (WA)

At Lockridge Campus, every initiative was driven by one goal: to give children the best possible start in life, while supporting the families and communities around them. Over the year, the service delivered programs and partnerships that not only nurtured children’s growth but also empowered parents, strengthened community connections and created inclusive, culturally safe environments.

**Campus (ELC and OSHC):**

- Lockridge Campus

## Integrated Support for Children and Families

This year, Lockridge Campus delivered an integrated Early Intervention Hub, where children accessed on-site therapy programs in speech and occupational therapy alongside their early learning experiences. Families were supported through parenting programs such as Circle of Security Parenting (COS-P), Bringing Up Great Kids (BUGK), Gentle Sleep, Mindfulness and Toilet Learning. By combining educational practice with professional therapies and practical parenting support, Lockridge Campus created a wraparound model that gave children the best chance to thrive and parents the confidence to support their child’s journey.

Three-year-old Amira joined the Lockridge Campus coming from family day care, arriving non-verbal and anxious in group settings. Her parents had concerns about her communication and social development but struggled to access formal support. The educators established trusting relationships and tailored activities. Within a week, the educators assisted her parents in completing a referral to a local child health nurse and guided them to allied health services, while offering a spot in their COS-P program. Just four weeks later, Amira started using single words during play, making eye contact and confidently approaching peers. Her parent expressed gratitude for the support, noting improvements in Amira’s engagement at home, highlighting the importance of early, integrated support for children and families.

## Building Connections and Community

The Lockridge Campus became a gathering place for families and the wider community. Weekly “Stay and Play” sessions invited parents and children to enjoy sensory and gross motor play in a safe, welcoming space. These sessions were not just about fun; they were about breaking down isolation, building friendships and encouraging children’s social development. Alongside this, the campus strengthened community partnerships with groups such as Shalom House Women & Children’s Program, The Fathering Project and local schools, creating a strong network of support that extended well beyond their doors.



The early intervention support has made such a difference. My child’s speech and confidence have grown so much in just a few months!

-Parent at Lockridge Campus



## Creating Inclusive, Culturally Safe Environments

The Lockridge Campus worked tirelessly to ensure all learning spaces reflected the needs and identities of every child. Indoor and outdoor environments were continually revitalised with staff-led wish lists, ensuring educators could shape spaces that inspired curiosity and creativity. At the same time, the educators deepened their skills through training in trauma-informed practice, inclusion support and neurodiversity. Embedding Noongar culture and the ‘Growing Up Our Way’ principles was a central part of their work, celebrated through cultural events and daily practice. Together, these efforts ensured that every child and family felt welcomed, supported and valued for who they are.

# Northern Territory (NT)

## Campus (ELC and OSHC):

- Nightcliff Campus

## Early Learning Centres (ELC):

- Farrar ELC
- Palmerston Child and Family ELC
- Larapinta Child and Family ELC

## Outside School Hours Care (OSHC):

- Anula OSHC
- Bagot OSHC
- Berry Springs OSHC
- Gray OSHC
- Wagaman OSHC
- Wanguri OSHC
- Wulagi OSHC

## Ministerial Visits Highlight Our Impact

Child Australia was honoured to host NT Education Minister Hon. Jo Hersey, Chief Executive Susan Bowden and Senior Director Belinda Pearson at both Bagot OSHC and Larapinta ELC. Their visits highlighted the incredible work happening across those services, from the vibrant learning spaces to the dedicated teams who create strong connections with children and families. The positive feedback shared by the visitors serves as a wonderful recognition of the passion and commitment that the educators bring every day.



-Parent at Bagot OSHC

Seeing my children come home with a full tummy and the excitement of playing with new toys and playing a new game. I couldn't wipe the smiles off their little faces



We really appreciate the time taken by the Larapinta team. The love, care and kindness that you've shown to each child individually is commendable. We really look forward to creating some lovely memories of our child's growing journey!

-Parent at Larapinta ELC

Anula OSHC and Wanguri OSHC, placed a strong emphasis on building meaningful relationships with local schools, recognising that collaboration is essential for supporting children's transitions and strengthening community ties.

At Anula OSHC and Wanguri OSHC, educators actively participated in school life, joining events like Sports Day and helping create welcoming spaces for families. At Anula OSHC, a family-friendly "chill zone" allowed children and parents to relax and play games together. The Anula OSHC team even joined in the final race, fostering fun and community spirit. Both centres worked closely with school leaders, preschool teams and well-being staff, building positive relationships that strengthened collaboration and ensured children experienced a seamless transition between school and care.

Nightcliff OSHC contributed to school events such as the athletics carnival, Mother's Day stall, and local "rock drops," giving children opportunities to see their educators engaged beyond the classroom. These experiences reinforced a sense of belonging and connection within the wider community.

Together, these partnerships demonstrated their commitment to working alongside schools to create consistent, supportive and connected experiences for children and their families.

## Celebrating Families, Culture and Community

Across the NT, the centres turned special days into vibrant opportunities for children and families to come together, learn and celebrate. These events weren't simply dates on a calendar; they became experiences that nurtured belonging, cultural awareness and community pride.

Bagot OSHC and Wanguri OSHC embraced Harmony Day with vibrant activities that encouraged children to explore diversity and inclusion. ANZAC Day at Wanguri invited reflection and respect, while Bagot OSHC's Health Day with Danila Dilba Health Service offered families practical ways to strengthen their well-being. Territory pride shone bright at Bagot's Territory Day (Cracker Day), where children learned about fun and fireworks alongside fire safety from the NT Fire Service.

Larapinta ELC and Palmerston ELC highlighted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures during Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. Children learned through storytelling, creative arts and community-led activities which built pride in local culture and strengthened their sense of connection to Country.

One of the most memorable family events was the Dry Season Wonderland Open Day, a unique take on the Winter Solstice. Celebrated at Nightcliff Campus, Larapinta ELC and Farrar ELC, the events embraced everything families love about Darwin's dry season evenings. Families gathered for a true community night out, enjoying sausage sizzles, fresh fruit and snacks while participating in hands-on crafts. Families toured the centres and chatted with welcoming educators. What made it so special was the atmosphere, not just the laughter of children and the smell of food sizzling on the barbecue, but the sense of belonging and connection that lit up the night.

At Palmerston ELC, family engagement shone in multiple heartfelt ways. A Mother's Day breakfast and hamper reminded mothers how valued they are, while a Father's Day BBQ brought fathers together for food, fun and connection. Beyond these events, Palmerston ELC also strengthened its partnership with the Palmerston Child and Family Centre to support the Young Mothers and Strong Mothers programs. By providing dedicated childcare places, the centre ensured young mums under 25 years could continue their studies, gain life skills and access essential services. This while knowing their children were nurtured in a safe, caring environment. The collaboration empowered young mothers to take steps toward their goals, with their children's well-being at the heart of the journey.

Together these celebrations and family programs reflected a shared belief: that when families feel welcomed, valued and supported, children thrive. Whether through cultural celebrations, community gatherings or parenting support, it was evident that each moment built stronger connections between families, educators and communities.

## Nurturing a Love for the Environment

Centres brought sustainability to life, turning everyday moments into opportunities for children to care for the world around them. At Palmerston, children engaged with a dedicated recycling station, discovering how everyday choices can reduce waste and protect the environment.

At Berry Springs OSHC, Clean Up Australia Day transformed the service into a hub of environmental care. With sharp eyes and caring hearts, children scoured the school grounds to collect rubbish they learned not only about the importance of keeping their community clean but also the value of teamwork and shared responsibility. Many children expressed their pride and affection for their school, showing that understanding and caring for the land starts with connection and awareness.

Through these sustainability initiatives, children learned to respect their environment. They demonstrated responsibility and saw the real impact of their actions on the world around them. This learning helped establish lifelong habits of care and stewardship.



## Sparking Creativity and Imagination

The services became vibrant spaces where children's ideas, curiosity and inventiveness were encouraged to flourish. From designing unique festival beanies to constructing complex LEGO creations, every activity invited children to experiment, take risks and bring their imaginations to life. These creative experiences not only sparked joy and self-expression but also nurtured problem-solving, collaboration and confidence, which are essential skills that grow alongside their creativity.

At Larapinta ELC, the Beanie Festival celebration became a canvas for children to express their ideas and designs, encouraging them to explore new ways of thinking and creating. Each child's beanie became a unique reflection of their imagination, fostering confidence in their creative choices.

At Palmerston ELC, the Easter Hat Parade offered children the joy of showcasing their designs along the bike path. From playful bunny ears to intricate hat decorations, the event not only celebrated creativity but also allowed children to take pride in their individual contributions, sharing their excitement and ideas with peers and families.

Wagaman OSHC provided daily opportunities for creativity and imaginative play through arts and crafts stations where children made jewellery, cards and other personalised creations. Imaginative construction activities, such as building with straws and LEGO bricks, allowed children to engineer their own structures, turning a simple piece into complex creations. These experiences nurtured problem-solving, critical thinking and communication skills, as children collaborated, negotiated and shared ideas with one another.

Through these programs and celebrations, the centres demonstrated how fostering creativity and imagination supports children to flourish at their own pace. Children are building the skills and confidence that will carry them far beyond the classroom.

## Creating Spaces Where Children Thrive

Child Australia believes that every child deserves a place where they feel safe, supported and free to be themselves. Across centres, the organisation worked hard to create environments that not only meet children's needs but also nurture their confidence, independence and sense of belonging.

At Palmerston ELC, the introduction of a centre pet — Bluey the blue-tongue lizard — sparked excitement and curiosity, creating opportunities for children to learn about responsibility and care. Nightcliff OSHC developed a calming space with bean bags and sensory toys, helping children regulate their emotions and unwind after busy school days. Farrar ELC introduced weekly yoga and music sessions. Wagaman OSHC empowered children to shape their own environment by giving them a voice and choice in daily routines.

The real measure of these spaces is seen in the stories of the children who grow within them. At Farrar ELC, little Savreen arrived shy and unsure, speaking very little English after her family relocated to Darwin. Through patient support and inclusive routines she slowly gained confidence, started using English words with friends and found joy in play and storytelling. Her parents spoke of their gratitude for the nurturing environment that helped her flourish.

At Nightcliff Campus, another young child faced significant separation anxiety when first enrolling. Through primary caregiving and predictable routines he gradually settled as strong family partnerships helped him build trust and find comfort.

At Anula OSHC, there were numerous stories of transformation, particularly among students with limited English proficiency. They discovered a safe space to practice new words, participate in activities and even teach their peers words from their own languages. This not only celebrated their cultural identity but also boosted their self-esteem. At Bagot OSHC, Akeal's journey from a quiet four-year-old to a confident, helpful and respected young leader showed how consistency, encouragement and responsibility can shape character and resilience over time.

These stories show the power of thoughtfully designed environments. They meet children's needs, help them thrive, build confidence and create a strong sense of belonging.

## Growing Our People: Staff Engagement and Training

Child Australia's strength lies in its people. The organisation empowers educators and staff with skills, confidence and opportunities for growth through professional development, mentoring and collaboration.

At Anula OSHC a renewed focus on staff engagement created a workplace culture, where every team member felt valued and heard. This sense of belonging strengthened collaboration and built confidence across the service.

At Bagot OSHC professional learning was a key priority. The educators successfully completed food handling training, ensuring safer and more informed practices in daily programs. At the same time, three staff members took the next step in their professional journey by undertaking their Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, reflecting their passion and commitment to the sector.

The team at Farrar ELC embraced specialised training in intellectual communication. This not only enhanced how educators interacted with one another but also created a ripple effect throughout the centre. Staff described feeling more empowered and supported and families could see the impact in the way rooms were organised and learning environments were presented.

These initiatives highlighted a shared commitment across all centres: to empower staff, nurture professional growth, and foster environments where both educators and children could thrive.

## Nightcliff Campus: NTEC Awards Finalist

Nightcliff Campus was proudly named a finalist in the 2024 Northern Territory Education and Care (NTEC) Awards for Outstanding Education and Care Program.

The centre has fostered a child-centred and engaging environment where educators support children's learning, development and well-being through high-quality play-based and intentional programs. This recognition highlights the dedication, creativity and impact of the Nightcliff team and their commitment to excellence in education and care.



We are grateful for the support and care the service has provided and appreciate all the effort from the team.

-Parent at Anula OSHC



-Parent at Wanguri OSHC

I love that my children never want to come home when I come to pick them up most afternoons. It absolutely shows me they are safe and having a great time



Just want to really thank you and the team for doing this transition so thoughtfully! We really appreciate it.

-Parent at Farrar ELC



-Parent at Nightcliff Campus

Dear Wilwilma team, Thank you so much for the beautiful poem for Riley and all his artwork. The poem made me cry it was so beautiful. Thank you for everything you have done for Riley.



-Young Mums, Strong Mums at Palmerston

Dear Palmerston Team, huge thank you for all your help and support throughout the year!



The conversations that the kids are having when we are having dinner is mostly about what they have learnt at the OSHC, and seeing the kids learning and bringing good behaviours at home is truly lovely. Thank you Bagot OSHC staff for taking the time with my children and teaching positive behaviours”

-Parent at Bagot OSHC



“Thank you to all the staff at Larapinta. Both my younger children have enjoyed being here.”

-Parent at Larapinta ELC

“We’ve noticed such a positive change in our daughter’s confidence thanks to the staff’s support”

-Parent at Farrar ELC



“The staff at Lockridge makes us feel like part of a family. They really see and celebrate my children for who they are.”

-Parent at Lockridge Campus



“Thank you so much for making my kids feel welcome and included every day they attend Wanguri OSHC”

-Parent at Wanguri OSHC



OSHC has been essential for the transition from preschool to school and work-life balance. Bec and Kyra consistently collect my daughter from class and provide engaging activities or supervised free play. She is always happy when I pick her up, reflecting how welcomed she feels.

-Parent at Nightcliff Campus



# Community Programs

## Bagot Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)

### Walking Bus: A Daily Journey of Connection and Care

Each school day at Bagot began and ended with smiles at the doorstep, where students eagerly waited to join the Walking Bus. In the morning, they walked safely to Ludmilla Primary School, where a healthy breakfast and a welcoming community awaited. In the afternoon, they were accompanied home, chatting about their day and sharing stories along the way.

What began as a simple idea grew into a cherished community ritual that connected parents, children, residents and school staff in a shared rhythm of care and belonging. The Walking Bus remained a valued program that not only supported school attendance and well-being but also built strong, lasting relationships across the community.



### FFSA: Strengthening Families and Schools

The FFSA team remained deeply engaged in delivering child- and family-centred support, ensuring that families received timely and meaningful assistance when they needed it most. Daily communication with Ludmilla Primary School staff allowed the team to respond quickly to issues and celebrate student achievements together.

This close collaboration led to stronger parental engagement, particularly around attendance and increased participation in parent-teacher events. Over this period, the team provided a range of support including swimming lessons, NAPLAN preparation, medical and NT Hearing appointments, Harmony Day celebrations, school assemblies and the well-loved Kids as Teachers night, a parent-led event that brought great pride to families and staff alike.



### Collective Impact: Building Stronger Futures

Every household in the Bagot community with school-aged children now has free WiFi extended until 2028 — a vital step in breaking down educational barriers and improving access to online learning.

The partnership with Batchelor Institute continued to open doors to education and employment through vocational training in construction, welding, WHS, machinery operation, and Early Childhood Education. A highlight during this period was watching participants use their new skills to build a cemented school pathway - a lasting piece of community infrastructure created by local hands.

Beyond education, community engagement remained strong. Initiatives such as large-item clean-ups, facility repairs, and youth activities like Blue Light Discos and cultural programs strengthened connections and pride across the community.



## Bambatj Learning: Empowering Mothers and Families

The Bambatj program flourished during this year, with more mothers eager to get involved. Excursions to the FaFT program at Ludmilla Primary gave mums the chance to see their older children learning, while also helping them build stronger relationships with teachers.

A visit to the birthing unit at Royal Darwin Hospital provided expectant mothers valuable insights into the birthing process, fostering curiosity, conversation and confidence. One mother even inquired about the possibility of having a water birth.

For many, these outings were a rare and joyful opportunity to connect, learn and experience something new. The excitement from mums and bubs during these activities continued to highlight the program's importance in building stronger families and brighter futures.



## Little Steps, Big Dreams: Max's Story

Max is a bright and curious six-year-old who had spent his whole life growing up in Bagot. His journey hadn't been an easy one - he had faced challenges from an early age and hadn't always had the stability that every child deserves. Despite these obstacles, Max's love for learning shone through every single day. School became his happy place, a space where he felt safe, supported, and encouraged to explore his potential.

Each morning, Max arrived with a smile, eager to dive into his lessons. He had a remarkable enthusiasm for writing and reading, often losing himself in stories and proudly sharing his work with his teacher and classmates. His teacher often praised his curiosity and steady progress, noting how his confidence in the classroom continued to grow.

After school, Max's energy didn't fade as he headed straight to the OSHC program, where he was a familiar face and a helping hand to both educators and friends. Whether it was joining group activities, lending a hand to set up games, or encouraging others to join in, Max brought a sense of warmth and togetherness to the group. His positive attitude and eagerness to learn made him a role model for other children.

His dedication didn't go unnoticed. At school assemblies, Max often found himself called to the front to receive merit certificates, small but meaningful acknowledgements of his hard work and perseverance. For Max, these moments of recognition showed that he was capable and valued. His story reflected resilience and hope and demonstrated how support and belonging help children thrive.



Max and his grandmother Katrina at OSHC



I really like it when we go to the Bambatj Centre with my 3-year-old daughter and 1-year-old son as the play sessions set up give them the opportunity to play with other toys. I also enjoy the healthy cooking sessions.

-Francine at Bambatj Learning



## West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service

Child Australia's West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service (WPMCS) provides quality education and care to remote Indigenous communities in the Pilbara region. Funded by the Australian Government, they provide play-based experiences that help children prepare for school. They also work closely with local schools to support each child's development and family engagement.



## Connecting with Community

WPMCS proudly took part in a variety of community events, building stronger connections with families and raising awareness about the importance of early learning. From celebrating culture on National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day and Indigenous Literacy Day, to joining the Hedland Says 'NO' to Family Violence March, WPMCS team showed their commitment to community engagement. Other highlights included the Teddy Bears Picnic, Celebrate Hedland, World's Biggest Play Day and National Close the Gap Day 2025, all of which provided meaningful opportunities for children and families to come together.



## A New Vehicle for Safer Service Delivery

A major milestone this year was the acquisition of a brand-new WPMCS vehicle, thanks to funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and a Lotterywest grant. With educators travelling up to 750 kilometres per week to deliver programs, having a safe and reliable vehicle is essential. The new vehicle, equipped with the latest technology and safety features, has reduced the program's ongoing maintenance costs while ensuring staff can continue delivering high-quality services to remote communities with confidence.



## Recognition in the 7NEWS Community Achievement Awards

WPMCS was honoured to be named a finalist in the 2024 7NEWS Community Achievement Awards Regional Western Australia for The Gowrie Early Learning Award. This recognition was particularly meaningful as the nomination came from an external party, who saw the value of WPMCS in the community. Two representatives from the program attended the Gala Presentation Dinner in Perth, where they connected with other inspiring individuals, programs and organisations working to strengthen communities across the state.

## Building Strong Relationships in Yandeyarra

A highlight of the year was welcoming a new family to the playgroup in the remote community of Yandeyarra. A mother and her 18-month-old daughter became regular attendees, forming strong relationships with both educators and peers. Beyond the playgroup sessions, WPMCS supported the family with advice on extending learning at home and provided developmentally appropriate resources tailored to the child's needs and interests. These safe, secure and reciprocal relationships showed that WPMCS was not just a playgroup, but also a vital support network for families in remote communities.

# Home Integration Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY)

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a two-year home-based, early learning and parenting program for families with young children. It fosters a fun learning environment to support a smooth transition to school and inspires a real connection to and love of learning. It also provides parents and carers with the confidence and tools to support their child's education and their relationship with their child to empower them to be their child's first educator.

## Celebrating Team Collaboration and Growth

The HIPPY team in Hedland had an outstanding year, winning the Most Collaborative Team Award twice. They also attended the Early Childhood Learning and Development (ECLD) Conference alongside the HIPPY Geraldton team in Perth. With new training in Executive Functioning and Circle of Security Parenting, as well as the addition of two new team members, the team enhanced their skills and strengthened their connections with families. These professional development opportunities allowed staff to reflect, collaborate and provide even more meaningful support to children and parents in their learning journeys.

## Building Trust and Family Engagement

One family in Hedland had struggled to engage in the previous year. The team patiently worked to understand their barriers, creating a tailored plan that met their unique needs. With consistent guidance, encouragement and ongoing support, the family became fully involved in HIPPY. The children eagerly participated in activities, sharing proud photos of their learning at home, while the parents gained confidence and strategies to support their children's development. This story highlights the power of trust, persistence and collaborative relationships.



-Parent at HIPPY Hedland

Thank you for being so patient and flexible with our deliveries, the girls really enjoy the packs and are always excited for the next ones

-Parent at HIPPY Geraldton

We have loved meeting Emily (Mentor) and learning from her. I have learnt how to communicate with my child better and with more purpose

## Supporting Families Through Life's Challenges

In Geraldton, the HIPPY program continued to grow with age 3 and age 4 families. Graduations, halfway celebrations and welcome events fostered strong community connections. The team's flexible approach allowed families to navigate challenges at their own pace. One age 4 family paused participation during a difficult period but returned when ready, supported by guidance, encouragement and connections to local resources. By holding space for families and supporting their individual journeys, HIPPY ensured children thrived while parents felt empowered to actively guide their learning.

## Nurturing Confidence and Lifelong Learning

Across both Hedland and Geraldton, the HIPPY program showed how consistent support, encouragement and tailored guidance can transform the experiences of children and families. By meeting families where they are, celebrating small wins and providing practical tools for learning at home, children have grown in confidence, curiosity and social skills, while parents have felt empowered and supported. These successes demonstrate that when families and educators work together, children's potential can truly flourish and the bonds between home and program become stronger than ever.

## HIPPY Facts



Children Enrolled

37 Geraldton

33 Hedland



Families Graduated

12 Geraldton

12 Hedland



Families Attended Regular Meetings

15 Geraldton

10 Hedland

“Thank you all so much for welcoming us into the HIPPY Family. I am truly grateful for everything the program has offered us. I loved the home visits, group gatherings, meeting new mums and having the resources to educate my kids at home”

-Parent at HIPPY Geraldton



“I love bringing my 1yr old daughter to the Bambatj Centre, we have so much fun singing and dancing together. After being away for a year I love coming back to the Bambatj Centre as it supports me and makes me feel like home.”

-Parent at Bagot Programs



“We’ve loved our HIPPY time. Have loved how every effort is made to work around our family”

-Parent at HIPPY Geraldton



“Wow you beautiful ladies are so lucky to go to work every day & it probably doesn’t even feel like work because you love it so much! It shows in the resources & the smiles on the children’s faces & your own. I really envy you & this is my dream job (passion)”.

-comment on the WPMCS Facebook from a follower

“Our son is absolutely excelling in school, he is well above where he should be for his year group academically and the teacher has commented on what we have done in the lead up to school. I am always proud to say HIPPY!”

-Former parent at HIPPY Hedland

# Sector Development

The Sector Development team at Child Australia empowers the Early Childhood Sector through targeted professional development. The team offers a suite of flexible learning opportunities including in-service workshops and online courses designed to build the capability of educators and services, ultimately enhancing quality outcomes for every child.

## Building Stronger Practice, One Partnership at a Time

This year, the Sector Development Team continued to make a lasting impact across Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Through tailored professional development, mentoring and consultancy, the team worked alongside services to strengthen leadership, enhance practice and build confident educators. One standout example came from a partnership with Buttercups, where eight customised Supervision sessions were delivered across all services. By maintaining consistent training, the team was able to identify and address gaps between practices. This helped management work together more effectively to build stronger and more aligned teams. The impact was so well-received that Buttercups requested further training as they expand in 2025.

## Empowering Educators, Strengthening Communities

In the far north, the continued connection with The Ewin Centre in Kununurra became a powerful story of growth and collaboration. When the Sector Development team first began supporting their service, they were still finding their footing. Through consistent mentoring, professional development and on-the-ground guidance, the team has transformed. From reopening their Junior Toddlers' room to rebuilding educator confidence, the progress has been incredible. As their Educational Leader shared, "The training sessions have been an invaluable resource... making complex concepts approachable and creating a safe space where learning feels supported." This partnership stood as a testament to what can be achieved when expertise and local passion come together.

## Listening, Tailoring, Transforming

Customised support remained a key focus this year. Services like Subicare experienced first hand the difference that tailored professional learning can make. The recent training on Critical Reflection was tailored to meet their service's specific needs, incorporating examples from their own practice. The result? Not only did the session align perfectly with their assessment feedback but it also highlighted how professional learning directly improves educator-child interactions. In the Northern Territory, the team worked closely with the Humpty Doo Community and Childcare Centre to deliver five workshops over several weeks. Each session built on the last and the team's enthusiasm for implementing new strategies was clear and a true example of growth through learning.

## Collaborating for a Thriving Sector

Beyond individual partnerships, the Sector Development Team also continued to strengthen connections across the sector. After the ECLD Conference, new collaborations formed including initiatives with eSafeKids founder Kayelene Kerr. These led to new online content, book readings and professional learning packages focused on child safety and play. The team's expertise was also sought by organisations such as Wanslea and Meerilinga for leadership training and consultancy. Meanwhile, the introduction of the Online Learning Specialist role has further streamlined processes and supported the growth of Child Australia's digital learning space. From delivering REED cluster manager training to advancing the Emerging Leaders program, the team continues to shape a stronger, more connected early childhood education sector.



## Sector Development Team in Numbers



### Online Learning Centre (OLC)



**19** new courses developed  
**9,206** total students enrolled  
**2,338** new students enrolled

### Top 3 Self-Paced Courses

1. Child Aware
2. Becoming a Responsible Person in ECEC
3. Supervision Awareness

### OLC Courses Sold



### Top 3 On-Demand Webcasts

1. Introduction to Child Protection
2. Supervision Essentials
3. Meaningful Interactions with Children



### Face-to-Face Training



**21** new courses developed  
**5** training delivered at Child Australia  
**249** training, mentoring and consulting delivered at services  
**283** training, mentoring and consulting delivered at services through "ECEC Support: Empowering Regional Services WA" model



**27**  
 flights taken to deliver training



Worked with **118** services

### Building a Sustainable Future for Regional Communities

Since 2020, the Thriving Futures project has been transforming the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) workforce across regional Western Australia. What began as a response to workforce shortages in the Pilbara has now expanded to the Goldfields and Roxby Downs in South Australia.

Funded by BHP and delivered in collaboration with early learning centres, schools and community organisations, Thriving Futures takes a place-based approach that meets the needs of each region, ensuring families have access to quality early learning experiences and stable, skilled educators.

### Investing in People, Not Just Positions

At the heart of Thriving Futures is a commitment to building a sustainable and community-led workforce. The program focuses on:

Recruiting and developing local talent

Providing ongoing training and professional development opportunities

Supporting career progression and job satisfaction through tailored retention strategies

Over the past year, Thriving Futures has strengthened workforce capability by offering flexible mentorship, supporting educators with nationally recognised qualifications, and fostering a culture of recognition and growth. These initiatives continue to build long-term workforce resilience and empower educators to thrive in their careers.

### Strength Through Collaboration and Growth

Over the past year, Thriving Futures has continued to evolve in response to the needs of educators, services and communities. With collaboration at its heart, the program achieved meaningful progress by:

- Launching recruitment campaigns at both local and national levels
- Providing structured mentorship to educators, academy students and service leaders
- Delivering targeted professional development and advisory support
- Supporting attraction and retention through the Educator Recognition Program
- Strengthening partnerships through engagement at the Kalgoorlie Careers Expo and Pilbara Summit

These combined efforts have deepened engagement and ownership amongst participating centres, reinforcing Thriving Futures as a trusted partner in sector development and workforce transformation.



### Growing Local Talent and Community Connections

In the Pilbara, Thriving Futures continues to make significant strides in supporting educators and services:

Over **65** educators employed through Thriving Futures since 2020

**179** educators supported through the Educator Recognition Program

Improved retention and career satisfaction through financial recognition and structured pathways

One of the year's most meaningful milestones has been the successful onboarding of Aboriginal students from Yandeyarra and Strelley. Facilitated by the Community Engagement Officer, this initiative highlights the program's commitment to culturally respectful engagement and the importance of genuine local partnerships in building strong, inclusive communities.

### Shaping a Sustainable Future

This year, Child Australia's partnership with BHP was recognised as a finalist at the inaugural Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA Diversity & Inclusion Awards, a testament to the program's lasting impact and collaboration. The partnership has led to significant outcomes, including reduced childcare waitlists across regional Western Australia, greater participation of women in the workforce and empowering First Nations women to establish meaningful careers in early learning.

By nurturing local talent and empowering educators, Thriving Futures is not only addressing workforce challenges but also shaping a more resilient and sustainable future for early childhood education. Here's to the continued impact of this partnership and the many heartwarming stories that inspire the teams to do better every day.

### The Academy

The Thriving Futures Academy provides a supportive pathway for individuals to explore and prepare for a career in Early Childhood Education and Care. Participants begin with eight free online introductory modules, gaining foundational knowledge of children's learning and development, supported by one-on-one mentoring tailored to their goals and pace. After completing just two modules, participants can undertake work experience at a participating ELC or OSHC service, gaining hands-on insight into the educator role.

The Academy also offers financial incentives at key milestones, encouraging participants to build confidence, experience and long-term career potential within the sector.



This year, the Thriving Futures Academy has continued to make steady progress in supporting participants on their journey into the early childhood sector.

**5** candidates engaged in the program

**1** Academy candidate graduated



**3** Academy candidates secured employment at one of the participating centres

# THRIVING FUTURES FACTS

**7** Early Learning Centres involved 

**19** Educators employed 



**35** Relationships established with organisations 

**2** Scholarships provided 



**120.5**

hours of consultancy



**66**

hours of professional development workshops



**106.5**

hours of mentoring





# Little People, Big Dreams Conference

## Coming Together for a Decade of Learning

On Saturday, 12 October, over 400 attendees from across Australia's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector united in Darwin for a day filled with incredible insights and thought-provoking discussions. The event opened with Chief Executive for the Department of Education and Training, Susan Bowden, who inspired the audience with her words and presence. To mark a major milestone, delegates also celebrated the conference's tenth anniversary with a cake and a cheerful Happy Birthday singalong.



## Exploring the Future of Early Learning

The conference began with an engaging expert-led keynote panel, "Reimagining the Early Years: Unravelling the Productivity Commission's Recommendations," featuring Professor Deborah Brennan, Susan Bowden, Sarah Rheinberger and Dr Georgie Nutton. The discussion offered fresh insights into the future of the ECEC sector at both state and national levels, sparking meaningful reflection among attendees.

Following morning tea, Katey De Gioa, Rachel Elphick and Kathryn Martin-Anderson from the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) presented on "Culturally Responsive Assessment for Learning." Their session challenged educators to engage deeply in self-reflection and to consider — "What can we change right now, today?"

"The highlight of the LPBD Conference for me was Jennifer Jefferies' keynote on Decompressing Stress. Her engaging presentation on such a relevant and helpful topic was exactly what we all needed."

## Inspiring Minds and Nurturing Well-being

Rounding out the keynote sessions, Jennifer Jefferies delivered an inspiring presentation on "Decompressing Stress," offering practical strategies to break the stress loop and prioritise well-being. The afternoon breakout sessions continued to inspire, with Nicole Talarico's powerful talk on empathy and family violence, Sarah Forgan's interactive session, Jacinta McInerney's exploration of play schemas and Sasha Beirne and Connie Borg's session on creating trauma-informed spaces, all earning high praise from delegates.

The day was truly jam-packed with learning, inspiration and connection, ensuring every attendee walked away energised and motivated for the year ahead.



# LPBD Conference Facts



425

Delegates

2

Keynote presentations

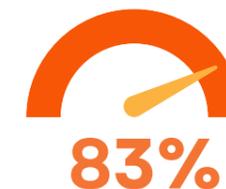
12

Concurrent presentations

18

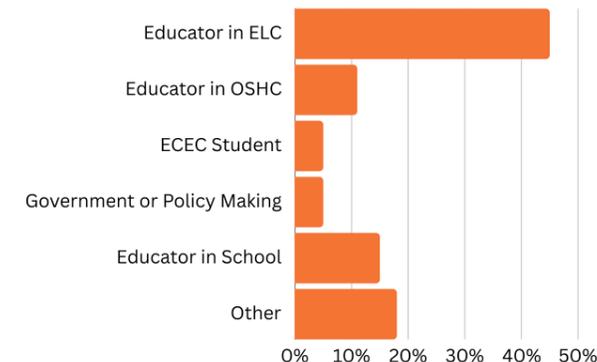
Exhibitors

## Conference Rating



Likely to recommend to a friend or colleague

## Delegate Information



"I also really enjoyed Sasha and Connie's session about creating trauma informed spaces. Specifically, thinking about children and families who are affected by trauma and making sure we are keeping them in mind when setting up our spaces"



"The speakers were all passionate & knowledgeable about their fields. Very engaging. Everything was spot on for my first LPBD conference."



## Thank you to our sponsors

### Major Sponsor





# Early Childhood Learning & Development Conference & Sector Awards

## A Celebration of Learning, Leadership and Collaboration

The Early Childhood Learning and Development (ECLD) Conference 2025 brought together more than 700 passionate professionals from across Western Australia's Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector at the iconic Optus Stadium in Perth with a celebration of learning, leadership and sector-wide empowerment.

This year's conference delivered a dynamic program featuring visionary keynote speakers, practical breakout sessions, live exhibitor showcases and invaluable networking opportunities that left delegates feeling energised and equipped with new tools and insights.



"I loved Connie and Fiona's dance party!" and "My highlight was that I enjoyed the Child Australia session most, called Navigating Emotions Together - the role of co-regulation. This was so very informative."

"Professor Selena Bartlett - Seen was my highlight. I found her to be very passionate about her subject matter, giving insight and information that was supported by research statistics."



## Celebrating the 2025 WA ECLD Sector Awards

Child Australia hosted the 2025 WA ECLD Sector Awards with support of partners REED WA, Wanslea, Goodstart, MercyCare, The Y WA, Meerilinga and EduTribe at the Optus Stadium on Friday 7 March 2025.

The awards ceremony served as a stage to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions of individuals and organisations dedicated to enhancing outcomes for children and families in the ECEC Sector.

A total of 24 finalists were selected from 8 award categories to honour individuals, who have made notable contributions to the ECEC sector. The event gathered over 250 attendees, who shared inspiring stories throughout the evening.

An independent panel of judges, made up of experts in tertiary education, independent training organisations and leading consultants in the sector, faced the difficult challenge of determining the winners.

In addition to the recognition that these awards provide, winners received tickets to the Early Childhood Learning and Development Conference along with a cash prize of \$1,500. Second and third place winners also went home with tickets to the ECLD conference and a cash prize of \$500.



## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



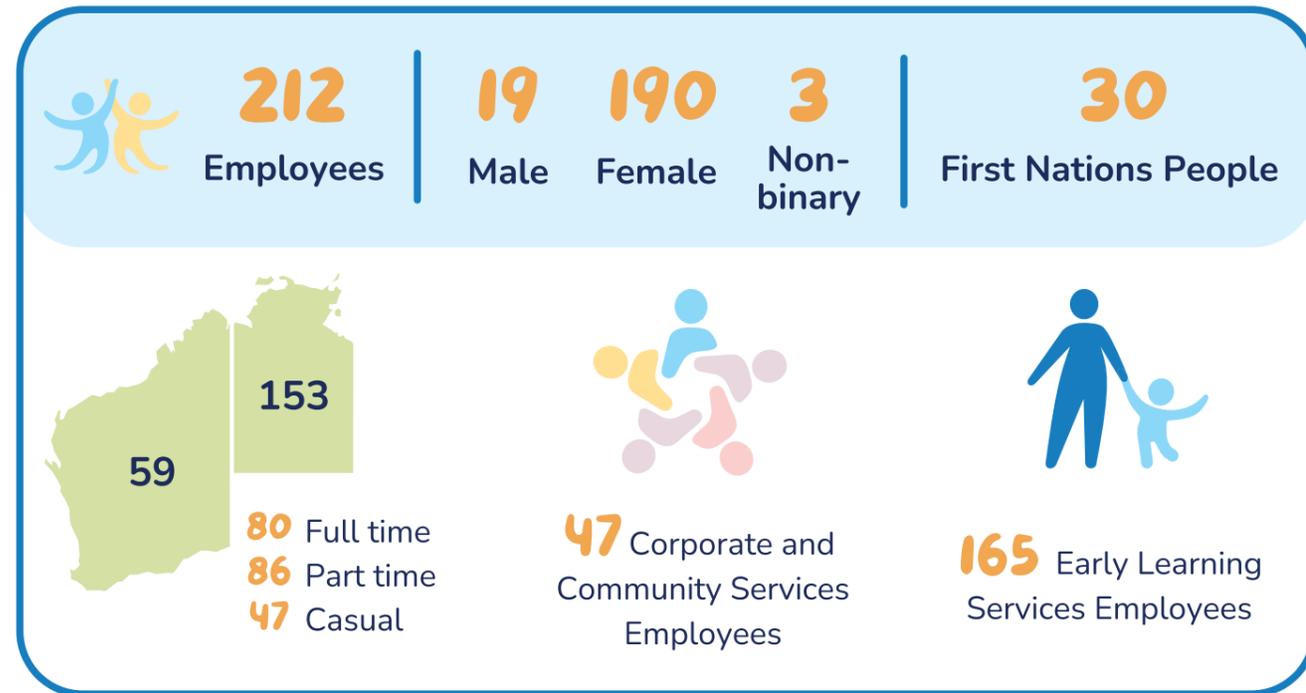
"Wow where do I begin! The whole event was AMAZING! I wish I could have packed my whole team in my suitcase. My highlight would have to be the speakers, honestly I can't begin to tell you how much inspiration they have given me. Nicole Talarico was a highlight and Jennifer Jeffries really resonated with me and left me feeling empowered."

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



# Our People

The people are the heart of Child Australia; the passionate, dedicated and resilient individuals who make their mission possible every day. This year the organisation continued to celebrate their achievements, nurture a strong workplace culture and invest in initiatives that foster well-being, connection and professional growth.



## Celebrating the People Behind the Purpose

Every success story begins with their people. Throughout the year Child Australia recognised the individuals and teams, who went above and beyond through the Aspire Awards. Sasha Beirne and Naga Prasanthi Motamarri led the way, each receiving three nominations, a testament to their outstanding contribution and commitment.

Beyond awards, the team found joy in connection. From festive celebrations to wellness activities, moments of laughter and camaraderie reminded them of the importance of balance and belonging. A memorable highlight was the “Great Duck Invasion” at Head Office, a spontaneous wave of little yellow ducks that brought daily smiles and strengthened team spirit across the organisation.

## Doing What's Right, No Matter What

When faced with ineligibility for the ECEC Wage Retention initiative, Child Australia made the decision to stand by their people, even if it meant carrying the cost themselves. This commitment led them to advocate at the highest levels of government, escalating the issue to both the Education Minister and the Prime Minister.

The perseverance paid off. Approval was granted, ensuring Child Australia’s people received the support they deserved. More importantly, this moment reaffirmed the organisation’s belief that doing what’s right for the team is always worth the effort.



## Growing Stronger, Together

This year, Child Australia’s workforce grew with the successful onboarding of three new Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services: Berry Springs OSHC, Gray OSHC and Wulagi OSHC. Each transition retained its dedicated staff, ensuring stability and continuity for children, families and the communities they serve.

Child Australia also strengthened the internal foundations through:

Comprehensive human resources audits to enhance compliance and alignment

Streamlined internal processes for greater clarity and efficiency

Partnerships providing free Mental Health First Aid training for the Organisational Leadership Team

## Honouring Dedication and Service

Child Australia takes great pride in celebrating those that have dedicated years of service to Child Australia and their shared vision. Their commitment continues to shape the organisation and inspire future generations of educators.

### Over 10 Years of service

- Tina Holtom – Chief Executive Officer
- Keisha Patterson – Nightcliff Campus
- Lourdes Shanley – Nightcliff Campus
- Navdip Grewal – Lockridge Campus
- Rachel Meyerhoff – Lockridge Campus

### Over 5 Years of service

- Chia-Yin Hsiao – Palmerston ELC



# Our Executive Team

## Tina Holtom Chief Executive Officer



Tina joined Child Australia in 2014 as Executive Manager and was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 2017. With an extensive background in the Education and Child Development sectors, she is a strategic leader dedicated to innovation, continuous improvement and growth.

Tina brings in-depth expertise to Child Australia's service delivery model and has consulted widely on best practice models throughout the Education and Care sector, in schools and various agencies.

Tina has also worked extensively with children and their families in various therapy settings and has held senior business management roles, teaching and lecturing positions.

Tina is a ferocious advocate for the education and well-being of children of all ages and strives to nurture and support the parent-child relationship.

## Maria Miller Executive Director of Corporate Services



Maria is a highly experienced finance manager with particular expertise in the not for profit and childcare sectors. Maria's role at Child Australia is to provide financial expertise and guidance and is responsible for driving and administering the finance activities enabling the organisation to fulfill its mission.

Maria is a qualified CPA accountant. She is a strategic thinker with a 'big picture' focus who can question the status quo, generate new ideas and always strives to achieve best practice.

Maria is passionate to contributing towards improving outcomes for children especially with 2 teenagers at home. Outside of spreadsheets and budgets, Maria enjoys spending time with family and cooking.

# Our Board



## Elaine Pavlos, Chairperson

Elaine is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Notre Dame Australia. She holds a Master's in Nursing from Edith Cowan University and an MBA from the University of Western Australia, along with qualifications in tertiary education, counselling, and coaching. Her professional focus is on supporting individuals new to management roles. Elaine is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a member of the College of Nursing Australia. She serves as a Director on the Board of Southern Cross Care (WA) and Chair of the Quality Care and Advisory Committee. Additionally, she joined the Child Australia Board in 2011.



## Julia Millar

Julia practices in the areas of competition and commercial litigation for Clayton Utz. She acts for a number of large Australian and overseas clients in complex disputes. She has over 10 years of experience in all facets of litigation and has a specific focus on co-ordinating applications across international jurisdictions.



## Steph Shorter

Steph is the Head of Impact Consulting at Impact Seed, Western Australia's leading impact advisory. She leads a team focused on Impact and ESG strategy, measurement, and management. Previously, she led Rio Tinto's social performance strategy team and managed a \$200m fund with the Department of Communities for Aboriginal social and economic independence in the Pilbara and Kimberley. Steph established the WA arm of Social Ventures Australia, supporting social impact strategy and outcomes management. Before that, she was a senior manager at Deloitte Consulting and worked in various commercial roles in the oil and gas sector. She's a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



## Mark Fitzpatrick

Mark Fitzpatrick has been the Group CEO of People Kind Group since November 2024. He previously served as the CEO of Telethon Speech and Hearing for over seven years and led the St Vincent de Paul Society in Western Australia for five years. A graduate of Curtin University with a Commerce degree, Mark is committed to community development and holds several notable positions, including Chair of the Board of First Voice and Deputy President of the Deafness Council. He has also contributed to the establishment of the Belmont Redcliffe Junior Football Academy and mentors young people facing adversity in his spare time.



## Nick Warth

Nick is a Partner at Grant Thornton and is a qualified Chartered Accountant. Prior to joining Grant Thornton, he spent over 15 years with a Big 4 accountancy firm in the UK and Australia. Nick has international tax and transfer pricing experience, providing tax advice to multinational companies, assisting in determining and defending the pricing of their cross border transactions with related parties.



## Susan King

Dr Susan holds a PhD (Cultural Foundations of Education) and other academic qualifications, and has had broad experience across the schools, vocational education and higher education sectors. Susan is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAIDC), a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management WA (FAIM WA) and currently serves on ECU's governing Council and legislative Committee.



## Pandora Reddy

Pandora is a Director at Iuvo Group, a Melbourne consulting firm specialising in problem-solving and dynamic solutions. With over 20 years of experience in financial and management accounting, she is a FCPD with a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) and a Masters in Commercial Law. Pandora is passionate about improving children's lives and empowering women.



## Xavier Teo

Xavier has over nine years of combined experience as a Non-Executive Director, Board Chairperson and member. He actively contributes to the development and execution of business plans, ensuring robust operational and clinical governance while driving organisational performance. He builds strong relationships with stakeholders and collaborates with leaders from the various government departments to implement transformative reforms.

# Financials

Child Australia is pleased to report a positive financial outcome for the 2025–26 financial year, with a consolidated surplus of \$298,532. Our diversified funding base—comprising State, Territory, and Federal Government support, corporate partnerships, and fee-for-service activities—continues to provide a stable foundation for delivering high-quality early to middle childhood programs across the communities we serve.

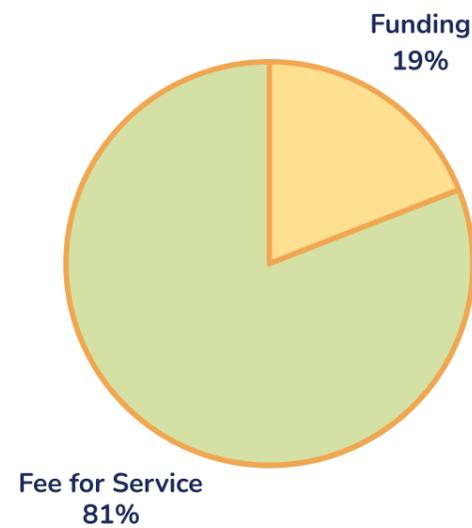
Staffing costs remain our largest area of expenditure, representing 64% of total organisational spending. Our people remain at the heart of everything we do. Child Australia’s continued investment in workforce wellbeing, capability development and leadership reflects our belief that a supported and skilled team is essential to achieving positive outcomes for children, families and communities. Over the past year, we have expanded professional learning opportunities, strengthened wellbeing initiatives and further embedded a culture of respect, collaboration and continuous improvement.

Building on our long-standing commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children, we have this year progressed the formal rollout of our child safety framework. This work is strengthening the systems, training and governance structures that underpin our culture of safety and accountability. Early investment has focused on aligning policies, upskilling leaders, and ensuring every service is equipped to embed the National Child Safe Principles in daily practice. These efforts reflect our belief that child safety is not a new focus, but a deepening of a value that has always been central to who we are.

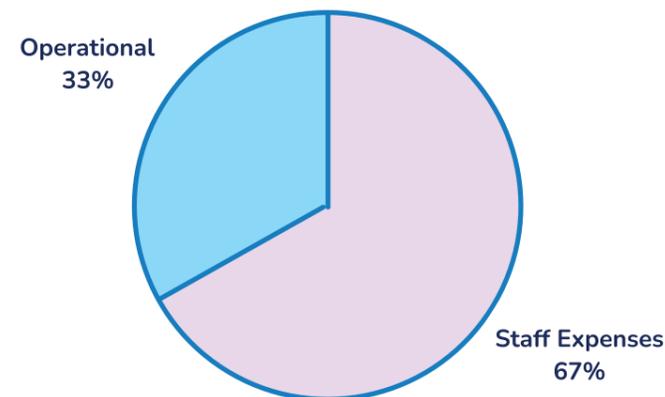
We also directed attention toward modernising systems and processes, improving integration across finance, HR and compliance platforms to enhance efficiency and transparency. These upgrades have supported more informed decision-making and allowed greater focus on frontline delivery and quality improvement.

As we move forward, our focus remains on balancing strategic growth with sound financial management. Through careful stewardship of our resources, Child Australia will continue to ensure long-term sustainability and deliver impactful, high-quality services that make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families.

## Revenue



## Expenditure



# Thank you to our partners



Contact us

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W: [childaustralia.org.au](http://childaustralia.org.au)

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