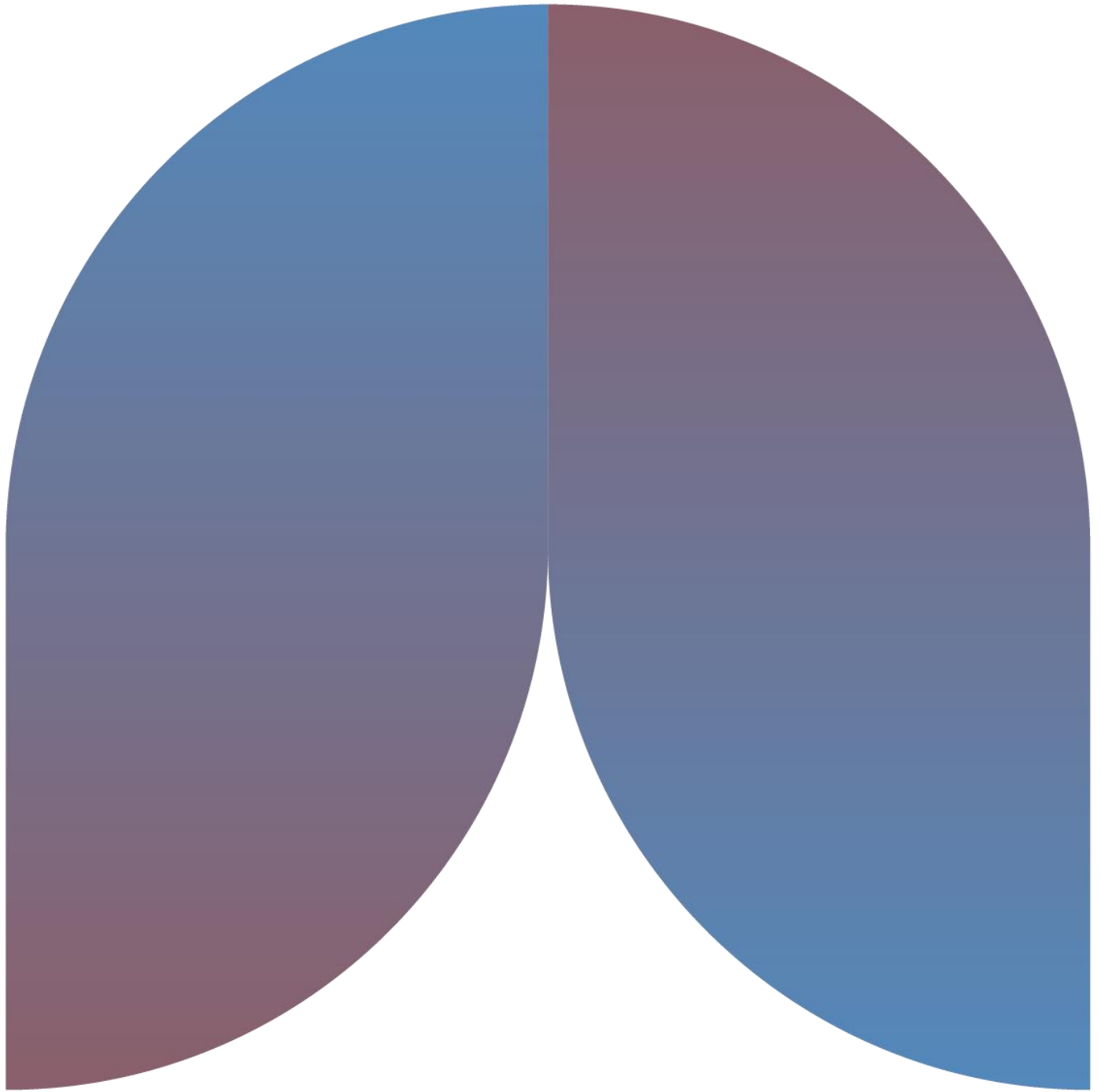


AUDAX

(latin) bold, courageous, daring

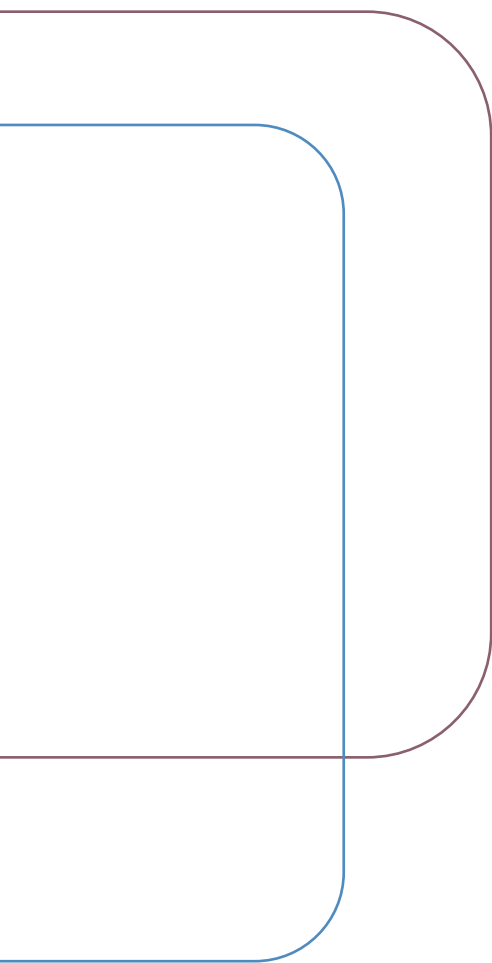


Autumn / May 2023

Journal of the Association of Graduates in
Early Childhood Studies

PO Box 12163, A'Beckett Street, Melbourne VIC 8006
info@agecs.org.au

AGECS



Acknowledgement of Country

The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies would like to acknowledge both the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung, and Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Custodians of the Lands on which we are located in Melbourne. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We also acknowledge the Aboriginal language groups across all of Victoria, whose lands we provide funding for specific projects around Early Childhood Education. We acknowledge their history, their people, and their stories. As an Association we will work together for reconciliation, a process that starts with the acknowledgement of true Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures of Australia and will always value the contribution to our community and culture, the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their families, communities and their stories.

From the President

A huge thank you to Wendy, the editor of AUDAX and Alex, for putting together the wonderful 100-year anniversary edition of AUDAX in 2022. The edition was such a lovely read, and I loved putting the voices to many of the stories. It was so nice to read about early childhood over the years. Hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.

This is my second year as President of AGECS and it has been an exciting time behind the scenes. As it was for many people, COVID forced AGECS to stop and reflect on the service we provide. We are highly conscious of the huge work demands on early childhood educators and wanted to be sure that AGECS value-adds to all of you professionally and to your programs.

We have developed a new strategic plan, and are currently commencing an extensive early childhood communication engagement process. We want to know what you want or need from us. When the requests come out for participants, I hope that you will be able to find a small amount of time in your already busy schedules to respond.

We hope that you have also had some time to look online at our Reconciliation series. I often visit early childhood centres and the Educators say that they are feeling unsure about where to start on their RAP or reconciliation and there are

some great resources on our website to support you.

For those of you who are thinking you would like to broaden your skills and develop your leadership skills, then I would encourage you to consider joining our AGECS Council. I would welcome the opportunity to chat to anyone who is interested.

I hope that you enjoy your 'Autumn' read, maybe tucked up with a blanket and a cuppa!

Keep warm everyone.

Sarah O'Donnell

President 2023

100 Years of Excellence Grants Projects

2022 was a year to acknowledge, support and award practitioners working in early years education. AGECS contributed over \$70,000 to 40 centres for a variety of projects and here are some of their stories. Enjoy!

Bush Kinder Project

Carolyn Hooker



My name is Carolyn Hooker and I am the 4-year-old kindergarten teacher at Nathalia Community Early Learning Centre. We applied for the 100 years of excellence grant to partially fund the Implementation of a Bush Kinder Program.

With the money from the grant we were able to purchase a camping toilet, ensuite toilet tent, first aid kit with snake kit, collapsible fire pit and embers mat. While this didn't cover our total expenses I was so thrilled to receive this grant as it was my first time ever to apply for a grant of any sort. I found the process easy and so wasn't deterred because of time taken up.

The grant and Bush Kinder program will benefit the children, families and community in a number of ways:

- The children will learn safety and risk assessment for natural bush settings

- We hope they will develop a love of the natural environment and hope they take an interest in caring for the bush.
- The children developed physical skills in a fun and natural environment.
- We hope that this time in nature will transfer to improved wellbeing.
- The service has collaborated with Parks Victoria and are hoping to connect with local First Nations people.
- The hope the families will develop an understanding of how children are able to learn without expensive resources or use of technology.

Finally, we would like to thank AGECS for supporting the Early Years.

The Little Long Walk

Karen Anderson

At Balnarring Kindergarten, we used the funds to assist in funding the Little Long Walk October 2022.



This involved the preschool working with the local primary school, Catholic school, and early learning centre. We contacted Essendon Football club to register for a little long walk. They sent First Nations Peoples to work with the children in creating banners. The children were Welcomed to Country by a Boon Wurrung person, they marched through the streets and then returned for several workshops – indigenous games and dance.

At the end we all had a dance session. This project continued our relationships with First



Peoples and their teachings. It made our learning visible to the community. It provided opportunity for several educational services to work collaboratively on including First Peoples voices into the curriculums. It strengthened relationships.

Thank you for assisting us with the costs in running this event.

A worm farm and worm juice at Ardeer Kindergarten

Karen Pinder

Funding was received to engage children more in sustainability practices and provide children with sensory materials to help with self-regulation

The project embedded high quality practices around sustainability, with the children very involved and engaged in helping to set up the worm farm, collect the worm juice to add to the garden and use water more efficiently when engaging in play in both the sand pit and the mud kitchen.

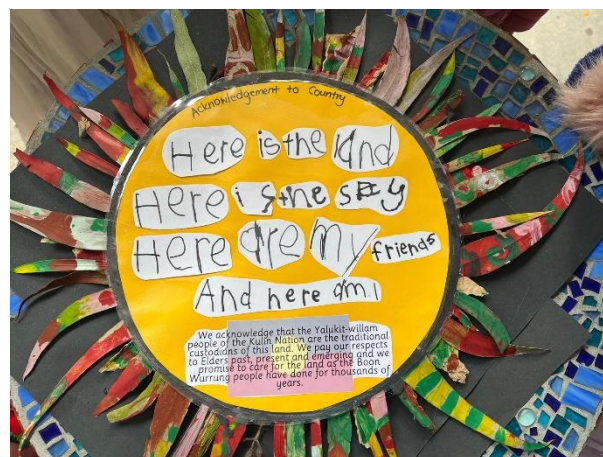
The children have continued this year to collect food scraps to add to the worm farm.

The grant process was relatively easy to apply for.

Connecting with Country

Laura Pearce

Our project enabled us to make a real and meaningful connection with a local First Nations educator. The learning undertaken in one workshop was enormous for both educators and children.



Robina Scott Kindergarten is a parent managed sessional kindergarten in the heart of Williamstown, known as Melbourne's first seaport. Being part of the local community for the past 87 years, we cherish our heritage and local connections, and wanted to ensure we extended our historical understanding beyond the European settlement that dominates our local landscape. As a team we made the commitment to complete and publish our Reconciliation Action Plan which included considering and embedding Indigenous perspectives into our learning programs and practices. As part of that process we were keen on engaging a local Boonwurrung person to conduct a Welcome to Country for each of our kinder groups and our search brought us to Jaeden Williams, a proud Yalukit Willam man of the Boonwurrung and founder and director of Biik Bundjil, a Boonwurrung educational organisation.

We were thrilled to win a *100 years of excellence grant* to fund our project, and thanks to this we were able to engage Jaeden to visit each of our seven 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten groups, greeting the “bubups” (children) and performing a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony. Jaeden educated our learners on the importance of following the laws of Bundjil, the creator who travels as an eagle: to look after the land, the water and the children.



The children were invited to connect with the smoke, place it near their heart, close their eyes, place the smoke near their stomach and make a wish. Jaeden showed us his boomerang that he had made and taught us heads, shoulders, knees and toes using traditional Boonwurrung language.... learning the word for bottom “moon” being the children’s favourite word of the day! Jaeden showed us his traditional possum skin cloak that is first given to children as babies and is added to as they grow. Jaeden invited each child to put on his cloak and become a warrior, prince or whatever they wanted to be. Lastly Jaeden gifted each child a eucalyptus leaf, which he described as a passport to connect our spirits to Country. His visit strengthened our respect and Indigenous understanding through a real and meaningful connection, and we are so grateful to AGECS for the opportunity Jaeden gave our young learners.

The process was simple and straightforward, and we are so very grateful for the opportunity given to us through the grant. Our small, not for profit community kinder just does not have the money currently to afford incursions and your support is so very much appreciated!

Pope Road Reconciliation Action Plan

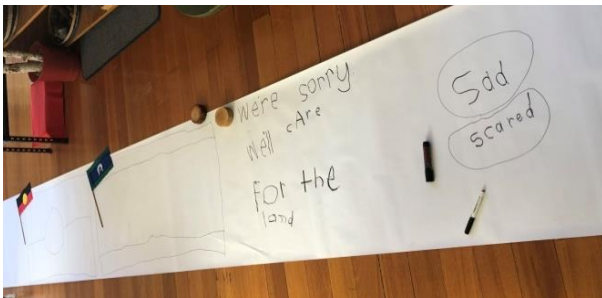
Leanne Mits



This project enabled elements of the kindergarten’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to be realised. Specifically, the project enabled us to engage with and build an ongoing relationship with a local Aboriginal woman, to support, first hand, the learning of children, families and educators, about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s history and culture. The Australian and Victorian Early Years Learning Frameworks and our kindergarten’s Reconciliation Action Plan, guides our thinking, commitment, work and learning in the space of reconciliation. These commitments, through this project, were enriched by the inclusion of connections and learning opportunities with Sandy Barber, a proud Dja Dja Wurrung-Yorta Yorta woman, with whom our kindergarten is strengthening a relationship with. Sandy connected and met with staff for meetings and professional

learning, and with the children, to share stories and extend our shared learning. Sandy also provided guidance during children's project work whenever we contacted her for her perspective, understanding and counsel on something we were unsure of.

The children learnt about respecting and seeking the voice and perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's, and learning from them, firsthand.



Sandy also participated in a local professional learning event we held for local early childhood colleagues to support the learning of other educators, in our wider early childhood community.

The community of our community based, not-for-profit kindergarten was grateful to be the recipient of an AGECS 100 Years of Excellent Grant; this enabled learning and sharing experiences at the kindergarten, with children, families and educators, and the wider community, to access learning and strengthen relationships in ways we would otherwise not have been able to.

The grant process was user friendly, accessible and very worthwhile.

ECA Learning Hub subscription Louise Triglone

We obtained a yearly subscription to online learning platform with Early Childhood

Australia Hub for our service Jack and Jill Kindergarten in Berowra.

Being online meant that we had the flexibility to do the training at our own pace; it was great the Educators were completing the courses in and around the same time. Which meant they were discussing what they were learning and putting into place. Having the subscription meant they could do a range of topics relating to all aspects of Early Childhood and our teaching practise.

It included:-

- Health and wellbeing,
- Leadership,
- the rights of the child,
- planning, documentation,
- reconciliation,
- pedagogy and curriculum.

The yearly plan we went on was a higher cost than the amount given in kind, so we paid \$325 to increase the amount of users.

This was a great opportunity for our service and we were so happy to be a part of this grant that went towards improving the practice of our educators.

Full STEAM Ahead Tanya Wilkinson

At our service NCC Early Learners in Buderim, we used the grant money to learn about programming through the use of robots, exploring simple algorithms and planning steps to move the robot to a pre-determined space. We were able to use the robots with the whole group as we had enough robots for everyone to join a group and work together. The children were engaged and it allowed them to think deeply about what they needed to do to move the robots to a space.

The process of application was easy to follow. It is the first grant that I have applied for and it came from not having the resources (money) needed to provide high quality learning experiences. STEM is such an important enquiry area and I believe that our early learners need to be engaging and learning all they can in regards to how technologies work.

Our withdrawal hub
Tessa McGovack



The 100 years of excellence grants funded our purchase of a 'withdrawal hub' for children who find the stimulation of the room challenging for our service WSU Early Learning Penrith. Our preschool room has several children who find the environment challenging and over-stimulating at times. The withdrawal pod has provided them with a space to withdraw whilst still allowing supervision. All children in the room are more respectful of those who find the noise levels difficult to negotiate, and children can be heard telling others to "use a little voice, X is in

the pod", taking turns to access for some quiet time and generally being more aware of those who need a quiet retreat for a reset. Educators feel they are more able to recognise when children are needing to withdraw and reset, raising their awareness of when the room is becoming challenging for some children. The application process was straight-forward. As a Director, I certainly appreciated the opportunity to provide something additional for the preschool room which would not have been possible from our standard budget.

Many thanks to AGECS for the funding and for what you do to support educators in the ECEC sector.

"The latest AUDAX is a tribute to you and the committee, who must have worked very hard to produce such an interesting magazine especially for the 100 years of AGECS. I have been interested in receiving AUDAX for so many years as I graduated in 1954. I did help with AUDAX when I was on the Graduates Council for I think, 30 years. Times have changed and we are in a different era, in my time, the holiday homes were the focal point. I wish the Council continued success."

Comment from Wendy Syme on the 2022 Special Edition AUDAX.

"Today I have settled down to have a thoroughly good read, and what a feast of good knowledge it is!! So many good stories, all ending up in Kindergartens. Teachers and the things they set out to teach may change, but the children never do".

Comment from Mary Merlin on the 2022 Special Edition of AUDAX.

**Connecting to Country and
Community: Gowrie Victoria
Broadmeadows Valley**
Hannah Fruin



The aim of our Connecting to Country and Community project was to enhance our existing programs which support children's relationship with the land on which we live and learn every day. A large part of the

planned funding spending was to acquire resources which would strengthen our existing On Country Kinder program (bush kinder) so that we could provide more intentional teaching moments for children when we were playing and learning outside on Country.

Many of the children in our community live in apartments with little or no access to a safe outdoor space. We noticed that some children were unsure about playing outside on Country when the ground might be wet or muddy, and we were concerned that clothing was becoming a barrier for some children to fully engage with the learning opportunities on offer to them. The grant enabled us to purchase some high-quality waterproof pants for children to wear when we go out on Country, helping them to feel more at ease about sitting down on a wet log, kneeling on the wet grass, or experiencing the joy of jumping in a muddy puddle. This supported our families to also feel more at ease about their children playing outdoors in all weathers and enabled us to have more conversations around the benefits of time spent outdoors for their child's development.

In one of our Kindergarten programs, an interest in space and planets led to children sharing their curiosities around our planet Earth and how we can take care of it. We noticed in our local community and around the school site we are on there is often lots of litter on the ground, with the children making the connection that littering is not caring for the land. So we decided to use some of the grant to fund the purchase of adult and children litter grabbers, as well as some high-visibility vests for the children to help people in our local community see the important job the children were doing. The children chose to name this group "The Earth Cleaners", and we

are working towards inviting some of the Primary School children next door to join us to support their understanding of caring for the land and our community too.

To support children's engagement with natural loose parts found out on the land in our local community, we purchased some hessian squares to be used as inspiration for children to create transient art using the loose parts they find. This is now a regular part of our On Country Kinder program, with many children independently going off in search of leaves, sticks, feathers, and bark from the ground to be used to be carefully placed and arranged on their hessian frame to create a picture. The children are then supported to take a photo of their art and share some words or a story about their creation, before putting the loose parts back on the land where they found them.



Overall, this project has significantly supported both children's and educators' understanding of First Nations perspectives, and the importance of caring for the land that the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation have cared for some many years. We strongly believe that in order to teach children the importance of caring for the land, they need to spend time playing and exploring on Country, noticing wildlife and connecting with nature and the resources we were able to buy

through the 100 Years of Excellence grant has supported this immensely.

From our members

Teaching in The Hague Part II Lynne Byatt, 1976 IECD graduate

I began teaching at the International School The Hague (ISH) which was a fairly young school set up by the Dutch Education Department to provide education for the growing expat population in The Hague.

The School followed the English curriculum of the time. We did however begin to teach phonics. For my class, many from diplomatic families and EAL, English phonics seemed to be the last thing to teach!

For me personally, it was a culture shock, not just integrating into the Dutch culture and language, but teaching the English Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

I then moved to the European School of The Hague (ESH), there are 5 language sections running vertically through the Primary school from EY to P5. The language sections are English, Dutch, French, German and Spanish.

Besides the language sections, ESH offers students, Italian, Greek, Slovenian, Portuguese, Romanian, Czech and Finish mother Tongues classes. EY children have 30 minutes per day with their mother tongue teacher. For those children not in any of these mother tongue classes, they stay in their class with in their language section. In the English Language Section, native English speakers are about 2%. Most children come from other European countries such as Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and Croatia. There are currently 27 countries in the European Union. Parents can decide which language section their child will enter, if their mother

tongue is not one of the 5 language sections offered. When children transition to Primary, they learn a second language, L2 - French, German or English. This is pre-planned with parents as children enter the school. There is little flexibility for change, and any changes are made for the benefit of the child.

We follow the European Schools, Early Education curriculum framework and harmonise our planning for each year and term. The EY language sections, plan together and once a month, and the EY team meet together to share practice, interests, information, activities and events. Daily/weekly planning is for each teacher to plan and most teachers use emergent curriculum for flexibility and response to children's ideas and needs.

All ESH teachers belong to a Professional Learning Community (PLC) at year level, meeting fortnightly. The EY team is a PLC and work on educational issues together to improve teaching and learning including professional development. Issues that the EY team has worked on have been differentiation, outdoor learning and play, digital portfolios and currently will work together on the revised Early Education Curriculum Framework and the observation child development checklist.

Our school, like ISH is a Dutch school. It is also a type 2 European School being affiliated with the European Commission, European Schools. It was established in The Hague for the children of parents who work at the European Commission agencies and organisations. These agencies include the European Space Agency; Eurojust; and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the European Medical Agency.. Other organisations including Embassies and large Corporations are category 2, and private families are category 3.

We have EY networks with European Schools - Type 1 and 2 -the Nursery PLC. Distance is an issue, but we have formed an Early Years PLC and use Teams to regularly discuss projects and developments. We also actively participate in the Early Years Dutch Independent Primary School groups (DIPS) and The Hague Independent Schools EY network - the Early Years Forum. We have recommenced our meetings and workshops. Interestingly, the DIPS teachers are very interested in children learning through play, curiosity and inquiry. One new member, a New Zealand teacher, has transformed the EY in her school and I encouraged her to tell her story of change in her setting - great journey for that ELC. She too was frustrated and the clinical approach through the UK EY Curriculum - yes it is in theory changing, but very slowly!!

Children in Early Years at ESH have 2X PE lessons - 45 minutes each per week and instruction is in English, Dutch or Spanish, depending on the PE teacher who takes the class. The dominant school language is English, and most of the staff at ESH are competent in English. Because it is a Dutch school, like ISH, each student, except for the students in the Dutch Language Section, receive 2X45 minutes of Dutch per week. Music with a specialist is 45 minutes per fortnight and children have ICT embedded in the daily planning with a variety of resources available.

EY teachers can take their children outdoors for play, games, groups, music, etc whenever and wherever they like, depending on who else is using the spaces. The Primary have other playground areas and do not use the EY playground, but the EY teachers make use of all spaces, creative as they are!!

Like ISH, ESH also celebrates the Dutch national celebrations. In November Sinterklaas, a bishop arrives in the Netherlands from Spain, usually by boat with his horse America and his helpers. The costumes are brightly coloured and the Dutch look forward to the traditions each November. Sinterklaas (St Nicholas) stays to celebrate his birthday on 5 December and all children receive gifts from Sinterklaas. There are songs, pageants, music, dancing, pepernoten and speculaas to eat.



These cookies are made of special Dutch spices and have a distinct flavour for this season. Marzipan is also very common at this time in recipes using the speculaas spices. We make the pepernoten at school with the children during the Dutch lessons. Generally a fabulous time, as the days grow shorter and very dark. The perfect time for fantasy, legends, creativity and celebrations.

The EY Team plan and share professional development together with a whole day in servicing with speakers from the UK and the Netherlands to inspire us more towards child-led inquiry through play. Prior to the pandemic, sessions with Debbie Keyte-Hartland, Ann Van Dam and Duane Smith, working towards a collective understanding of child-led learning through play and inquiry. EY staff have taken advantage of professional development in other countries; planning environments with Alistair Bryce-Clegg, UK; Play on Athens in Greece with Peter Grey,

Suzanne Axelsson, "Teacher Tom" - Tom Hobson, Greg Bottrill - author, "Can I Go and Play Now?"; and a return to Reggio Emilia Study Tour. Locally, sessions on Write Dance and Children in Balance - understanding how children's development from birth affects learning and behaviour have been recent team professional development. Saturday seminars with topics such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, selective mutism, language difficulties and understanding executive functioning, have been provided by an external provider. We continue to provide professional development for individual staff members in response to staff appraisals too.

From the research

Empowering educators to nourish children's nutrition

Audrey Elford, Dr Penelope Love and Dr Alison Spence, IPAN Deakin University

Centre-based care offers such a valuable environment for nurturing many child behaviours, including nutrition. About half of a day's nutrition is consumed during childcare hours. With around 800 000 Australian children attend centre-based care ('childcare') for an average of around 4 full days per week, centres are a "proxy home" for many families, and a very important part of their feeding and nutrition. Early childhood is a pivotal period from a nutritional perspective. Young children develop taste preferences and eating behaviours that can track through to adulthood, influencing their health throughout life.



Childcare settings are important nutrition environments. Based on children usually consuming a morning and afternoon snack and a midday meal, it is recommended that the food provided to children in childcare meets at least 50% of a child's daily dietary needs. For children eating breakfast whilst in childcare, this could be as high as 67% of a child's daily dietary needs. Meeting these nutritional benchmarks appears difficult for

childcare services, in Australia and across the world. But accessing support resources can make it easier.

How food is served can be as important as *what* food is served. This is also known as "feeding practices" or the food environment and can shape a child's eating behaviour and food preferences. For example, the age-old practice of pressuring children to finish all the food on their plate or bribing them with a dessert if they eat all their vegetables was appropriate in historical periods of food scarcity. But in modern times of food abundance, this can lead to overeating habits, and to a child disliking the food we want to encourage them to eat. Role modelling enjoyment of healthy foods is associated with better child intakes, and directors tell us they see the difference this makes in their rooms.

Our research has found that less than half of childcare staff responsible for preparing and serving meals to children have had any access to training in nutrition. It therefore comes as no surprise that, given the myriad of other responsibilities childcare staff contend with, following best practice nutrition recommendations doesn't always occur.

Educational resources and training on healthy food provision and the promotion of healthy eating in the childcare setting are available through government-funded support services such as:

[Nutrition Australia's Healthy Eating Advisory Service \(HEAS\)](#). HEAS provides a suite of freely available support to assist childcare staff with what and how to feed children in childcare settings. This includes a self-paced, on-line training (under an hour). Our research has

found that access to these resources improved childcare staff knowledge and skills and improved the quality of food provided to children. The access and utilisation of these resources can therefore make a big difference.

The Healthy Eating Advisory Service provides two free training courses that takes under an hour. One course covers the promotion of healthy eating in ECEC settings, and the other focuses on planning healthy menus. These can be found at <https://heas.health.vic.gov.au/training/training-early-childhood-sector>

Another initiative, VEGKIT, focuses specifically on how to encourage vegetable acceptance and consumption by young children, and provides resources where educators can learn about feeding practices, for example in 5 bite-sized videos under 5 minutes each. <https://www.vegkit.com.au/long-day-care/long-day-care-tools-resources/>

In Western Australia, another initiative, SNAC (<https://snacwa.com.au>) contains a suite of resources, including a 20-minute video for educators on how to deal with fussy eaters. This webpage will require free registration and most of the activities and resources are free. There is an evidence-based nutrition short course for ECEC staff (3 hours) which costs \$99.

Childcare staff play an important role in creating healthy childcare food environments and establishing healthy feeding behaviours from an early age. As members of the [National Nutrition Network](#), a group of researchers and practitioners supporting nutrition in ECEC, we value input from childcare staff to assist us in designing support and resources for childcare staff. There is work for us all to do in the ECEC space,

as incorporating best practice guidelines in this setting can assist in shaping life-long healthy food preferences and dietary habits of young children.

RESEARCH

CALLING ALL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE (ECEC) PROFESSIONALS!



**Share your
knowledge and skills
about child health
behaviours in an
online survey**



**To learn more and join,
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This study has Deakin University ethics approval: HEAG-H 168_2022



Team discussion topic: Fingerplays

Empowering ed What is the practice? What does it look like? How do you know it worked?

For children from infants to preschoolers, exploring the world of language while moving their fingers, arms, and whole bodies, is motivating and exciting. Fingerplays and action rhymes provide opportunities for young children to combine fun with language exploration. These entertaining activities enhance a child's word skill and vocabulary, both of which are important for emergent literacy.

How do you do the practice?

Fingerplays and action rhymes can be done frequently, offering children the opportunity to have fun playing with language and moving their bodies. Depending on which fingerplay or action rhyme is being done, children can perform them in many locations. In a car, at a bus stop, in the yard, or on a walk are just some of the places you can engage a child in fingerplays and action rhymes. They can be done while waiting for a table at a restaurant, watching a brother's soccer game, or with friends when they come over. Fingerplays allow children to become active when they are required to sit and wait. If you feel the urge to make one up, do so.

- Fingerplays and action rhymes can be about any subject that interests a child. They can be about animals, trains, food, etc. The sillier and more fun they are, the more the child will enjoy doing the rhyme over and over.

- If the fingerplay or action rhyme is a new one, demonstrate it with excitement. It does not matter if you get it right. Your

excitement will capture the child's attention.

- Repeat the fingerplay or action rhyme slowly, helping the child make the finger or hand movements.
- You can lead or demonstrate the fingerplay a couple of times. Then, encourage the child to do the rhyme with you if they have not already begun.
- Let them lead the fingerplay as much as possible, even if they make mistakes. Let them direct the rhyme and watch how proud they are. Fingerplays and action rhymes are very brief stories that may rhyme and that include finger or body motions. Fingerplays and action rhymes help children learn about rhyming and poetry. They provide opportunities for listening and speaking, and encourage the coordination of words with movements.
- Does the child do fingerplays or action rhymes more often?
- Is the child having fun doing the fingerplays or action rhymes?
- Does the child try to make up their own fingerplays or action rhymes?

Sound and Phonemic Awareness

Lots of children like to say or sing rhymes while using their fingers, hands, or bodies to "act it out." Every time they do this, they are doing a fingerplay or action rhyme.

Examples of Fingerplays:

- Incy Wincy Spider
- Where is thumbkin?
- Where are the Bees?
- Row your boat
- 5 little speckled frogs



www.earlyliteracylearning.org/pgpracts.php

Resources

Aboriginal early years activity resource



Sherry Johnstone is a passionate and proud indigenous artist who shares stories through her artwork with a focus on environment, land, animals and people from the old knowledge to the new. She loves to create artworks that take you on a visual journey and reflect her connection to culture and spiritual experiences.

Along with commissioned and original art, community projects, Sherry has also produced an Aboriginal Early Years Activity resource that is being utilised throughout Victoria within early years services.

In 2018, this useful resource was regionally launched and made available at Warrnambool Books. Sherry created this resource for teachers in the hope they gain some confidence and ideas to easily incorporate Aboriginal culture within their programs and services.

It includes:

10 activities based on 10 children's books with a cultural context
2 games activities with one including local language names for the animals
4 symbols activities
A language pronunciation guide
8 template sheets

A page of references, recommended books and purchase details of resources not available in book stores as well as some local language links

"Connect to your inner-child when you are out in nature. Feel your senses respond to Mother Earth. Be curious. Look around you, touch, listen, smell, taste and see the beauty that surrounds us every day. The beauty that we forget to experience and feel when we are busy and stressed.

Open yourself up again to connect to your sense of wonder"

–Sherry Johnstone

A social story to download



At Starlight we know the medical world can be a scary place, so we've created our own social story to help young

children through their very first visit to the doctor.

"Social stories" use pictures and descriptive words to guide children through real-life situations.

This simple form of storytelling normalises new experiences. It helps to remove the fear of the unknown and builds confidence in kids when facing new challenges.

This easy to read and follow story explains what to expect when you arrive at the doctor's and what will happen while you're there.



Starlight.org.au

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Recommendations

Television

[Rugrats](#) is a reboot but still the same theme of the wild stuff that happens inside a child's imagination. Life from a toddler's perspective. Streaming on Foxtel.

[Frozen Planet II](#) is a six-part series narrated by David Attenborough that explores the wildlife found in the world's coldest regions: the arctic and the Antarctic. Streaming on 9Now.

Books

[Tekebash & Saba](#) by Saba Alennayah. The author not only shares the story of her migration from Tigray to Melbourne, but also her mother's recipes for the Ethiopian dishes.

[What Do You Call Your Grandma?](#) By Ashleigh Barton and Martina Heiduczek. Themes of

family, love, culture and diversity are explored, the illustrations marry beautifully with the text, and reveal further details about family life in homes around the world, offering opportunities to discuss cultures. Each grandmother is unique, but all are portrayed as vibrant women interacting with their grandchildren in a delightful array of different activities.

Movies

[The Survival of Kindness](#). Written, directed and produced by filmmaker Rolf de Heer (Dingo, Bad Boy Bubby, The Tracker) The Survival of Kindness uses allegory to analyse race and privilege, as it follows protagonist BlackWoman (South Australian Mwajemi Hussein), as she walks through pestilence and persecution, from desert to mountain to city, only to find more captivity.

Filmed across various stunning Australian landscapes in South Australia and Tasmania, Survival of Kindness is led by Australian producer Julie Byrne.

[Full Time](#). Single mother Julie works a gruelling job as a head chambermaid in a Parisian hotel. Julie's daily balance of commuting from her remote suburb, tenuous childcare and search for a new job to get her out of debt, becomes unmanageable during a transport strike in Paris. Literally running from dawn to sunset to get to her job and back home in time to fetch her children, Julie is constantly on the verge of a breakdown. When she finally gets a job interview for a position more suited to her skill set, Julie has to walk a very tight rope between keeping her current job and sneaking out while calling on co-workers to cover for her.

Activities

Chesterfield Farm

Chesterfield Farm offers farm experiences in the Eastern suburb of Scoresby. Open for families and for excursions only 45 minutes from CBD, From Milking our Cows to handling the baby animals and watching our working dog show, from feeding the deer, goats, camels and emus to tractor rides.

www.chesterfieldfarm.com.au/

Koorie Heritage Trust

Monthly for 2023, KHT are building Aboriginal Cultural competency for small groups and Individuals –

- Develop awareness of Aboriginal culture and identity
- Develop awareness of the strengths of Aboriginal culture and people
- Assist in making the connection and understanding the impact of colonisation and past policy for Aboriginal people today

www.koorieheritagetrust.com.au

Park Run

A free, fun, and friendly weekly 5k community event. Walk, jog, run, volunteer or spectate – it's up to you! We all take part for our own enjoyment. Please come along and join in whatever your pace. Check online for your closest Park Run location. Free, but book online.

www.parkrun.com.au

National Wool Museum Geelong

Little hands and feet will have a blast in this relaxing and engaging sensory art play session.

Throughout the sessions, babies and pre-schoolers will have the chance to play with paint, glitter, paste, sand, clay, slimy spaghetti, chalk, and much more.

Children will be exposed to materials and the environment around them to create art and craft that uses their entire body. Adults and children alike will get messy!

www.geelongaustralia.com.au/events/

Hurstbridge Wattle Festival

Hurstbridge Village locals celebrate the upcoming festival by 'painting the town yellow', which was done each year even when the festival couldn't run during the pandemic. Each year, the local Yarnbombing group work with community members to cover significant trees yellow and string up over 500 pom poms. The program includes heritage steam train rides between Hurstbridge and Eltham, two stages of live music, over 100 market stalls, mini train rides, camel rides, exclusive event food and wine offers.

<https://www.wattlefestival.org.au/>

Next page for Noticeboard Ideas

Why is this type
of play fine...



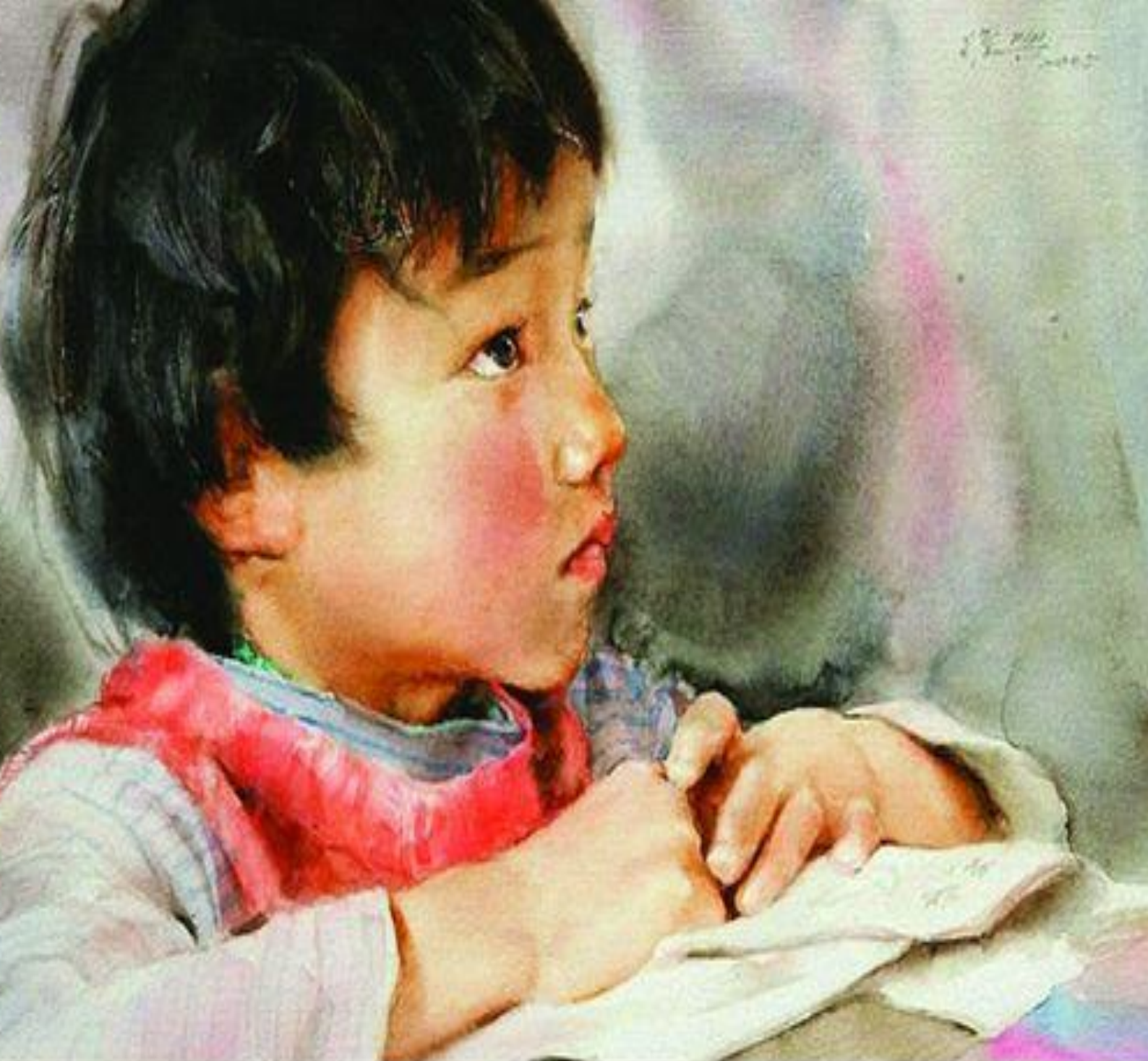
but this type
is unacceptable?



Perhaps you are simply
unfamiliar with this one?

Kids learn through play,
but that doesn't mean
we teach them how to play.





It must be frustrating to be a child in an adult world. They want deep, engaging, thoughtful conversation. We want them to tell us the colour of the pencil we're holding.

Quote: Garrett Kett • Artist: Guan Weixing

**CHILDREN LEARN KINDNESS
THROUGH EXPERIENCING
KINDNESS,
NOT BY BEING INSTRUCTED
fb@followyourrainbow
TO PERFORM KINDNESS.**

Rachel Samson

*Follow
your
Rainbow*



Obituaries

Gwenda Martin

Passed away in 2022, just one month shy of her 101st birthday! What an achievement.

Her daughter Libby said Gwenda really enjoyed her long association with the Graduates. Gwenda was Treasurer of AGECS at one time.

Kathleen Porter

Kathleen Porter (nee Fargher) was an early childhood educator who graduated in South Australia and taught at and directed kindergartens in that state and then Victoria. She was particularly engaged in cross-cultural education with migrant families and enjoyed these relationships well into her retirement. She was active and engaged until the end – she passed away in early 2022, aged 96.



Kathleen (left) at Dalton Road in 1981.

Dr Anne Bailey (née Green)

Anne received her Diploma at the Kindergarten Training College, Melbourne in 1955. She worked as a kindergarten teacher then librarian. After time taken to raise her two children, Anne focussed on historical investigation and analysis,

publishing books with her husband, Robin Bailey, on Victorian and family histories. She received her PhD degree in history at the University of Tasmania in 2008. Anne died on 25 August 2022.



1953 1st year Kindergarten. Anne is second from the left on the top/back row.

Council 2023

Thank you for reading.

This edition of AUDAX has been compiled and edited by AGECS Council Member Wendy Grenfell.

Layout and design by Alexandra Heard.

AGECS Members

If you are moving house or changing services, please let us know at info@agecs.org.au or login on the website and make the changes there.

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Program Manager

Liz Potter

Engagement Coordinator

Alex Heard



Send correspondence and articles for inclusion to
engagement@agecs.org.au

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in AUDAX do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies. Articles are published to provide a forum to share news and provide opportunities for discussion.