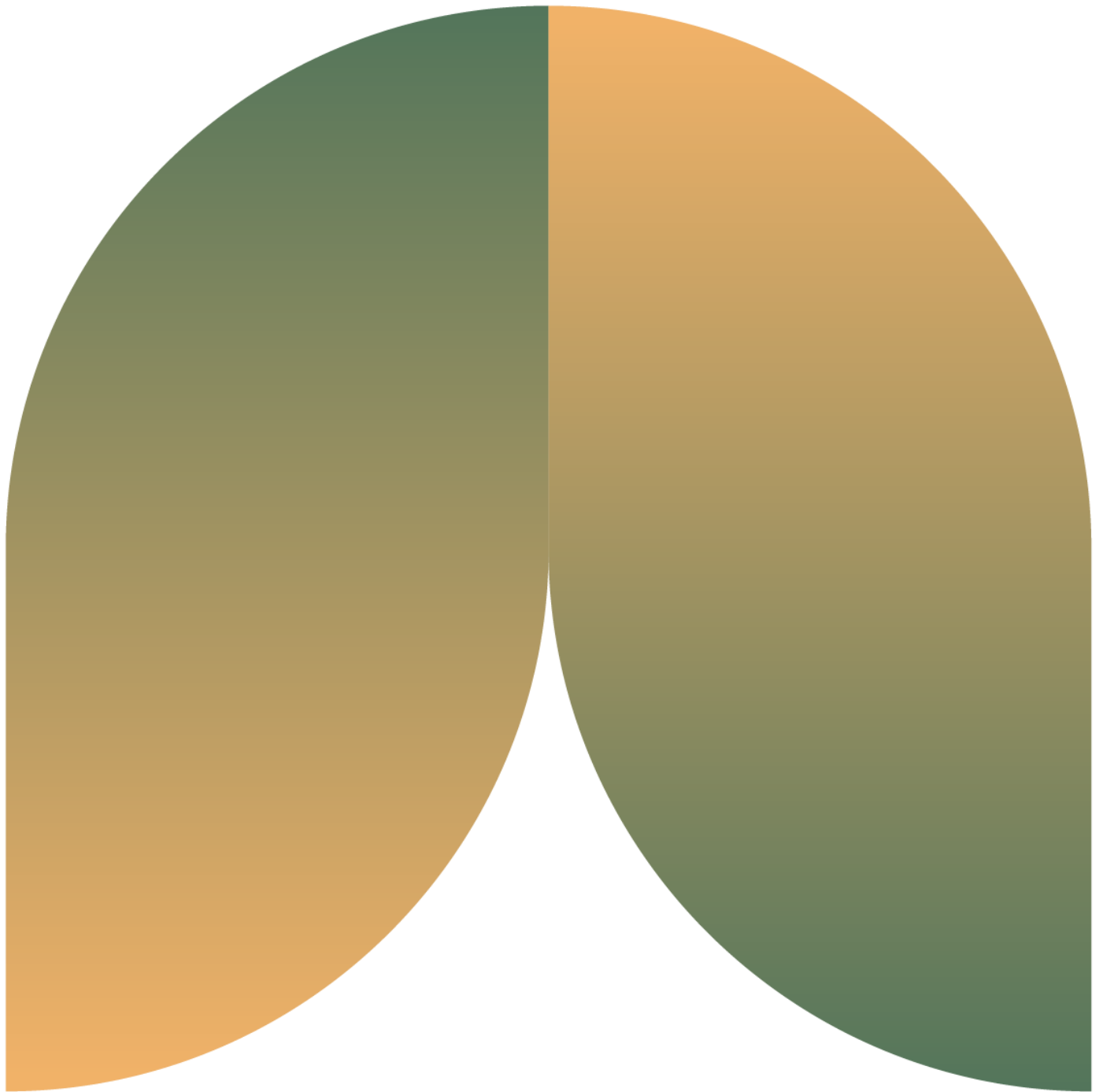


AUDAX

(latin) bold, courageous, daring



Autumn 2024

Journal of the Association of Graduates in
Early Childhood Studies
PO Box 12163, A'Beckett Street, Melbourne VIC 8006

AGECS

Acknowledgment 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

Welcome to the Autumn edition of AUDAX. As the new President of AGECS, I would like to thank all members for their continued support of AGECS over a time of immense development and consolidation. We sadly say goodbye to some of our inspirational Council members – people who have spent many years in Council roles, in leadership roles and in other support positions. Thank you, Alannah Dore, Liza Farquhar, Justeen Fitzgibbon and Nicole Talarico, for your time and shared expertise. Sarah O'Donnell has led AGECS as the President (2022, 2023), providing sage advice and support as AGECS developed a number of policies and initiatives in the last two years. I am glad to say that Sarah has remained on Council as Secretary.

The AGECS Council, a group of volunteers, provide their time and expertise to guide AGECS in 'providing professional learning resources and opportunities for its members and staff working in early childhood services' (agecs.org.au). In addition, the tireless work of our Program Manager, Liz Potter, and Engagement Coordinator, Alex Heard, continue to support and facilitate the efficient and effective management of all AGECS processes and procedures. So, I would like to acknowledge the work of so many people before me who have brought AGECS to the present time – a point of consolidation over the next few years.

The AGECS 2024 council members are: Coral Campbell, Emma Boag, Helen Baker, Melissa Adam, Nichola Marriott, Nicole

Lees, Sandra McCarthy-Wilson, Sarah O'Donnell, Sinead O Conaill, Sue Emmett, Wendy Grenfell. All these members contribute to a range of roles in various committees and advisory roles: Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Fellowship Award Advisory, Forest Hill Advisory, Warrawong Advisory and Foundation Trustees.

As the new President of AGECS, I know that I need to get my head around the multiple workings of this fantastic organisation. While having been a member of AGECS since 2016 and the Chair of the Fellowship Advisory Committee (2019–2023), I haven't been as fully engaged with AGECS as I would have liked. My introduction to AGECS came in 2016 when I was contacted by Maree Wiggins (then President) to see if she could use some facilities at Deakin University (where I was working) for the AGECS AGM. This was organised and I provided a guest speaker workshop relating to science in early childhood. At this point in time, I joined AGECS. My involvement increased after I was the recipient of an AGECS Fellowship to study science and STEM learning in Australia and Finland. These learnings were translated into multiple hands-on presentations for AGECS members across regional Victoria. I decided to extend my involvement with AGECS because I recognised the value of the Fellowship scheme in providing opportunities for early childhood educators to undertake their own

Council and Member Activities

(President's message continued)

professional learning around a particular focus or need that was of importance to them. If you haven't thought about the Fellowship before but have an idea that could improve your professional knowledge, please consider applying. Details are on the website.

As we move into 2024, AGECS is now in a period of consolidating many of the gains achieved in the last few years. We are hoping to move the RAP to its next stage and work on developing further community engagement with EC professionals. We call on you, our members, to help out – let us know if you have ideas or suggestions that we can investigate further. Please feel free to contact me at any time (president@agecs.com) for further information or a chat.

Coral Campbell
President

OMEP Asia-Pacific Conference 2023 Sponsorship

OMEP (Organisation Mondiale pour l'Education Prescolaire), is an organisation dedicated to the enhancement of all areas of children's wellbeing, growth and development from health, education and welfare perspectives, worldwide.

In late 2022 Kim Kinnear reached out to AGECS to seek sponsorship for a First Nations educator to attend the 2023 Asia-Pacific OMEP Conference. We were

thrilled to sponsor the attendance of Dr Rhonda Radley, Port Macquarie, who presented her own research: 'Matjarr Djuyal 'hand talk' in Practice: How Using Gestures in Teaching the Revitalised Gathang Language Helps Preschoolers Learn an Aboriginal Language'.

The use of gesture strategy was applied in the delivery of a local cultural program for preschoolers to deepen the connection to totems and cultural practices. The decline of the Guula 'Koala' population and the Guula habitat is a significant concern to Aboriginal traditional custodians especially to Aboriginal people that are kin to Guula. Guula Gimbay 'Koala as a totem/kin' program raises awareness of the importance of the use of Language to care for Country and to revive cultural practices. Guula Gimbay models how to educate preschoolers on the importance to listen to and care for Country and how cultural practices and Language can benefit Guula 'Koala' to survive and thrive.



12th OMEP Asia-Pacific Conference

The findings of the studies contribute to a growing body of research attesting to the



Pictured: Dr Rhonda Radley & Kim Kinnear

effectiveness of gesture for improving language acquisition amongst learners. The findings provide the first detailed picture of how gesture can be effective in an Aboriginal language revitalisation context, both for the learning of preschool children in classroom settings, and as a way of involving their mainstream educators. This evidence should embolden language practitioners and linguists to include gesture in the design of language revitalisation programs since gesture also aligns with traditional Aboriginal teaching practices and offers a relatively low-cost strategy for helping teachers assist their students in acquiring Aboriginal languages.

Academic Awards 2023

It is the time of year that universities schedule their award ceremonies for the graduating class of 2023. This year AGECS has collaborated with Deakin University, La Trobe University, Monash University, RMIT and the University of Melbourne to recognise 16 exemplary graduating students from early childhood degrees

with our AGECS Academic Awards. The winners this year are Miranda Radtke, Kylie Mustard, Meredith Dobson, Blydie Meiring, Shima Roy, Cassandra Shim, Grace Burke, Lynette Chua, Alissa Theire, Sze Ming Leung, Aik Mei Wong, Anureet Kaur, Jennie Chilver, Sarah Thwaites and Consuela Van Der Velden. Congratulations to all of these graduates for excelling in their studies and placements.

In our Spring AUDAX we will share photos from the awards ceremonies being held by Deakin University, Monash University and the University of Melbourne this month, attended by Council member representatives.

Community Engagement and Consultation Survey

In 2023 AGECS undertook a survey of the Victorian ECEC community, seeking information on their professional learning wants and needs. We were able to get responses from more than 200 teachers and educators – we thank every one of them for sharing their time and perspectives. On the next page we share the visual summary of the findings. We have been using the findings already, to inform our professional learning provisions for 2024 and beyond. Watch this space!

AGECS Community Engagement and Consultation Survey Findings Summary



Typical Survey Respondent

Over 40 years old

Lives in a metro location (76.15%)

Highly qualified (75% held university degree)

Highly experienced (70% had +10 years experience)

More likely to be a teacher (49.77%), less likely to be an educator (22.17%)

Working in a NFP workplace (>89.55%)

Unlikely to identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (0.90%)

Identifying Professional Learning Needs



Mostly **community-based** and **contextual**, via local conferences (56.5%) and network meetings (57.5%), or at **work** via School Readiness Funding (50%), colleagues (51.5%), Quality Improvement Plans (45.5%), staff appraisal/learning and development plans (45.5%) or Preschool Field Officers (35%).

When **online**, it's more commonly memberships with early childhood organisations (46.5%) and email subscriptions (35%) than social media (29.5%) or academic journals (28%).

Sourcing Professional Learning Resources



Once the needs are identified, the search becomes more **targeted**, and **web-based**.

When not offered by work (75.12%) and staff meetings (43.28%), PL is sourced via email subscriptions (65.17%), ticketing websites (63.18%), early childhood organisation websites (60.20%), social media (46.27%) and web-searches (43.28%).



Computer (93%)



In-person (78.11%)



Smartphone (44%)



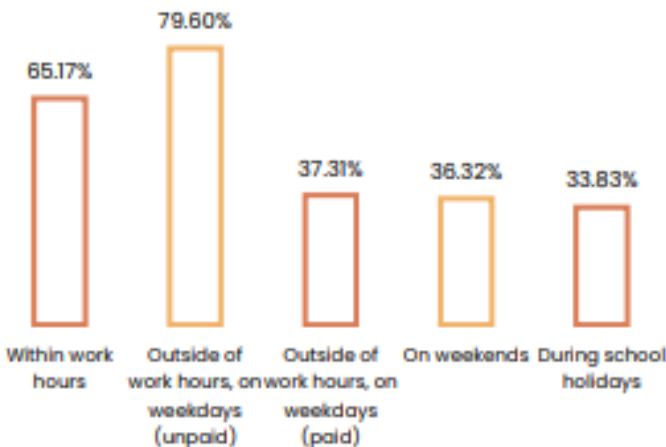
Hardcopy (33%)



iPad/Tablet (17.41%)

How?

When?



Enablers



Discussion



Instruction



Examples



Tools

Barriers



Time



No relievers



Colleagues



Cost

What do people want?

In terms of **formats**,

More:

- Live (online) events
- Longer form video content (webinar recordings)
- Practice guides
- Articles
- Templates

Less:

- Podcasts
- Short form video content
- Drop-in Zoom sessions
- Infographics
- Printables

In terms of **content**,

More:

- New ideas, practices and research
- Real world examples of others' practice
- Reflective practice

Less:

- Participating in research
- Refreshers on practice
- ECEC Theory

#1

Aboriginal
and Torres
Strait Islander
Perspectives

#2

Inclusive
education
practices

#3

Trauma
informed
practice

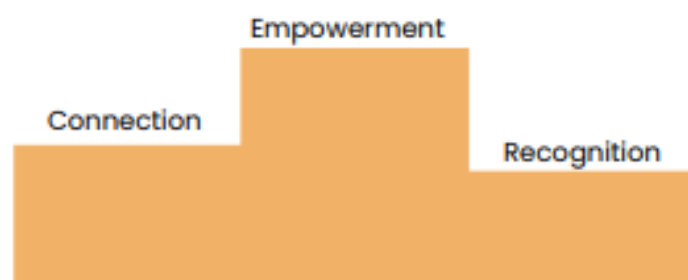
#4

Play and
play-based
learning

#5

Identifying
developmental
delays

Popular topics for professional learning



Empowerment: New ideas, tools and responsive teaching methods that work to make my role easier and more achievable

Connection: materials that features stories and practices of my peers, via articles or guides

Recognition: celebrate the experience and skill of the profession

How did survey respondents rank the impact of professional learning outcomes on their feelings of professional wellbeing?



Other AGECS resources



- o Mini-grants (63.04%)
- o Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change (42.75%)
- o Certificates of recognition (39.86%)



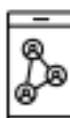
inForm (78.31%)



AUDAX (53.01%)



- o Sharing personal professional stories in AUDAX (32.61%)
- o AGECS Members creating PL content for other members (28.99%)



Social media
Facebook (63.86%)
Instagram (29.52%)
LinkedIn (14.46%)



- o Receiving awards (21.01%)
- o Writing articles for AUDAX (20.29%)



AGECS

Stories from our history

In our previous edition of AUDAX we heard from Nancy's Robertson's (1918-2015) daughter Heather, with stories from her mother's career as an early childhood teacher. Heather has kindly provided us with a continuation of this story for this edition of AUDAX.

Part 2: Kindergarten teaching and child health in the 1940s and 50s

Heather Robertson

Nancy Robertson née Broadhead (1918-2015) left written material, photos and anecdotes that give us some idea of kindergarten teaching 70 to 80 years ago. Nancy trained at KTC 1937-40.



In 1942 she was on the staff at Ware Holiday Home, later "Warrawong", where city children would come for 3 weeks, to be fed well and enjoy a taste of country life, even learning to milk a cow. The children were weighed morning and evening, and every half ounce of weight gain recorded. A staple dish was rabbit pie. When Nancy's Airforce pilot suitor Norman came visiting on leave, he proved his worth by shooting rabbits for their pies. Many children came

malnourished, nervy and with behavioural problems that improved in a surprisingly short time, and mothers even remarked on their growth. Most had never had contact with farm animals before. Today all that cow's milk and exposure to furry animals including "Sam the clever cat" may sound undesirable, but in the 1940s allergies were rare, as was childhood obesity.

Too Many Australian Babies Fed Artificially, Says Woman Doctor

THERE was far too much artificial feeding of babies in the first three months, the Director of Infant Welfare (Dr. Vera Scantlebury Brown) yesterday told the annual meeting of the Society for the Health of Women and Children of Victoria.

"We ought to be ashamed of ourselves for having any artificial feeding at all in the first three months," she said.

Dr. Scantlebury Brown quoted figures compiled by the Infant Welfare Department at various centres: They showed:—

Babies up to three months.—Naturally fed, 67 per cent.; partly natural, 13; artificially, 20.

Between three and six months.—Natural, 47; partly natural, 16; artificial, 37.

Between six and nine months.—Natural, 34; partly natural, 16; artificial, 50.

These figures were based on the

feeding at the last visit to the centre during each period.

She said that the Infant Welfare Department was trying to ascertain the causes of the very high infant mortality.

Lack of proper pre-natal care and feeding were the main factors. She advocated provision by the Government of more money for the proper feeding of needy expectant mothers.

Worry was also a factor influencing the death rate. This was not so serious and could be overcome.

"Mothers should concentrate on their babies and not worry so much about Mr. Churchill's affairs," Dr. Scantlebury Brown said.

Malnutrition In Land Of Plenty

IN a country like Australia it was terrible that so many children suffered from malnutrition, Lady Latham said yesterday at the annual meeting of the Victorian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

"The food supply is much better in Australia than in the older countries and there are not such large areas of slums," she said.

"If we can attack the problems of malnutrition and wrong environment for children, we will be doing our bit towards cultivation of a better race."

Work for children was never more important than today. It was to be hoped that when the struggle disrupting the world had ceased, something would be left for the children to build up a new and better era.

The Lady Mayoress (Mrs. A. W. Coles), who presided, said every child was entitled to free gifts of fresh air, sparkling water, sound sleep and good health.

Four hundred and twenty-eight cases involving children who were treated cruelly, grossly neglected or needed protection for other reasons were handled by the society for the year to June 30. The number in the previous year was 481.

Back then, children's health problems were the opposite of today, with very little allergy but more infections of many kinds, some life-threatening. Nancy herself had polio around 1928 and was hospitalised for 6 weeks, although the disease was not named due to the stigma. She gradually learned to walk again. In 1949, Ware Holiday Home was temporarily closed due to a polio outbreak. Nancy also worked in Redfern, Sydney, living with her sister Peggie, but we heard nothing about that time. Much later Peggie told me

there had been some kind of epidemic, and Nancy had the task of carrying out dead children. There was nothing in kindergarten training to cover this, and no counsellors to help a teacher cope. Peggie told me Nancy coped in her own way, which was to go to stables after work and ride horses very fast. Nancy's only anecdote from this time was of her choosing a new horse, unknown to her a racehorse, that took exception to his rider and bolted through trees trying to dislodge her, but she managed to stay on.

By 1950, antibiotics and vaccinations were becoming available, but infections were still seen as a normal part of childhood. In those days, most parents knew symptoms and duration of diseases such as measles, mumps and chicken pox and it was convenient if all the children in a family became ill at once. Children stayed in bed and while still infectious had many little visitors, sent by their parents to catch the disease. The idea was to get over all the main infections while young as it was more dangerous to catch them as an adult. This matter-of-fact, rather fearless attitude to infections of 1940-50, along with the rarity of allergies and obesity, contrasts with the situation today.

*Photos included (from top to bottom):
1937 photo of Kindergarten Training
College outing to Black Rock, 1940s
newspaper cuttings re infant mortality
and malnourishment.*

Images from Mooroolbeek House (circa 1938) from the Melbourne Kindergarten Training College Prospectus



Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change

Two recent Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change recipients, Hannah Fruin and Tania Sangiorgio, share their project and findings with AGECS members.

Therapy Dog Program at Gowrie Victoria Broadmeadows Valley Hannah Fruin

Our Therapy Dog Program at Gowrie Victoria Broadmeadows Valley was supported by the AGECS Fellowship Grant which funded the initial training and assessment with Lead the Way Institute. This resulted in my dog Gus and I achieving provisional 'Learner' certification in October 2022 and later, after further training and assessment, full certification in April 2023. Gus and I are



now a fully certified Visiting Therapy Dog and Handler Team and we have been able to roll out a Therapy Dog Program at our service in Broadmeadows.

The program so far has involved children being invited to go for walks in the local community with Gus, talking about road safety along the way and how we keep ourselves safe when we're out and about. The clear expectations we have set for the

children about how we need to behave around Gus to keep him and ourselves safe, have supported children to regulate themselves, as they understand that we need to be calm and gentle around Gus to make sure he is feeling happy when he is with us at Kinder. For children who need extra support to regulate their emotions, this has been invaluable. Recently, Gus has been accompanying children to go out and have a look at the excavators and bulldozers which have been busy building us a new car park at the front of

our service.



Children engaging with Gus can also read books with him, sharing their favourite stories, and brush him, providing an engaging sensory moment for children as they feel his soft coat and see the

lines the brush makes in his fur.

The program has shown many benefits to children's wellbeing and sense of belonging. Some of our children need lots of support to transition into the service, particularly if their family is being supported by a wraparound service such as domestic violence support or child protection, and having Gus there to greet children as they arrive and walk to their

rooms with them means that they can begin their day with us feeling much calmer. Many of the children who have enjoyed spending time with Gus often ask on the days he does not attend when they will see him next, with a real sense of having something to look forward to. We have created a sign-in display for Gus at the entrance to our service so that children can see on arrival if Gus is at Kinder today or if he is resting at home, similar to the children's own photo sign-



in/out displays in their rooms.

For some children, it's the simple joy found in asking Gus to 'sit', shaking his paw as he offers it, before giving him a treat – a reciprocal, respectful relationship, and the positive feeling of being heard, listened to, and valued by a

four-legged friend. For some of the children in our community, the positive relationship they have with Gus provides some consistency and reliability in their, at times, uncertain lives.

We are excited to see how Gus can support children's transition to school process later in the year. For children who need that extra emotional support during orientation and transition visits to their new school, Gus can be available to greet children outside as they arrive and walk with them to the entrance, providing children and families with a friendly familiar face in a new and uncertain environment.

As an Excellent rated service, we often have visitors from across the early childhood sector who come for tours of the centre which I lead, enabling me to share the benefits of our Therapy Dog Program and how I went about implementing it. Families have been very supportive of the program, and I have made sure to reassure anyone who is unsure around dogs that they will never be encouraged to interact with Gus if they do not want to.



Soon we are hoping to be able to purchase a GoPro camera, along with a dog harness to attach the camera safely to Gus, so that we can capture video

footage from the perspective of the children and of Gus during interactions. I hope that this will enable me to create some short films which highlight the benefits of the program for children, celebrating children's voice and perspectives. These films can be shared with families in our community, posted to Gowrie Victoria's largely followed social media channels, as well as at some of the many network meetings I attend within Hume and with the Department of Education. Following the success of our Therapy Dog Program, one of the teachers at the neighbouring primary school has been inspired to look into the possibility of beginning the training with his puppy with the hopes of being able to implement a Therapy Dog Program in the school in the future.



It has recently been confirmed that our service will be extended to include two additional Kinder rooms, meaning that from 2025 even more children in our

Broadmeadows community will be able to benefit from the support of Gus and our Therapy Dog Program.

We are truly grateful for AGECS for enabling me to begin the lengthy but invaluable process of engaging in training with Gus through Lead the Way Institute to achieve our full certification.

Training is ongoing and we attend fortnightly evening sessions to work towards further levels of certification, but without the Fellowship Grant from AGECS, I would not have been able to take the first steps towards implementing such an invaluable program for supporting the wellbeing of children in our community.

Here are some quotes from children who work with Gus and their families:

"We were going on a walk. He feels good. He feels happy." 4 years old

"Gus likes to eat dog food. Gus can drink water because its healthy for dogs. I'd like to take him camping, go swimming him, be in a tent, play with him, take care of him, I'll give him water." 4 years old.

"Gus is very gentle. I like going for a walk with Gus and giving him a treat." 3 years old.

"My children have always wanted a dog, and it has been great for them to see that a dog needs to be taken care of and that they have needs just like humans. Gus has inspired so much conversation in our home." Tash, parent

"Both my girls have had the opportunity to be a part of Gus's journey and learning, and it has made them become more confident with animals, as well as listening to instructions. One of my girls felt confident with Gus to express her emotions and her worries." Sarah, parent.

The Reggio Emilia Approach to Food – An International Study Tour

Tania Sangiorgio

As an early childhood teacher for the past 27 years, I always had a passion and desire to visit the Reggio Emilia kindergartens, particularly to understand how they embed the whole food culture into their program. This study tour was supported by the AGECS Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change, which funded the entirety of the international study tour expenses. Without the support from AGECS, it would have been financially impossible for me to attend. I have been a member of the Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies for years, and it was following this lockdown research time that I was inspired to write a project brief on why I wanted to go to Reggio Emilia and how I could transfer this knowledge to other teachers.



My study tour started on the 14th November 2022, and concluded on the 18th November 2022. We followed a particular schedule, and each day had a packed itinerary from 9.30am to 6.30pm.

Every morning all 270 study tour participants met at the Loris Malaguzzi International Centre and listened to lectures delivered by the Pedagogistas (the early childhood teachers), including the values and educational projects of the preschools within the Infant-Toddler Centres of Reggio Emilia. After each lecture and morning and afternoon breaks, teachers could socialise and plenty of opportunities to networks from

colleagues around the world. It was very community based, and very “Italian” – and the networking and opportunities to exchange emails to colleagues was truly amazing. I have now networked with teachers from Ireland and Armenia!

Continuing with the packed schedule, daily from 4.00pm to 6.30pm we visited the infant-toddler centres (0-3) and preschools (3-6). Some Covid-19 restrictions were still being enforced, so we were allocated upon registration to specific infant-toddler centres and preschools and to particular groups of study tour participants. Shuttle buses arrived at Loris Malaguzzi International Centre in Reggio Emilia to transport us. Whilst arriving at each service, we were immersed in the infant and preschool’s history and stayed until close. Participants could ask questions and interpreters were translating to and from English. I was lucky that I could speak in Italian – and was able to talk to the cooks directly.

My objective of the project was to investigate the importance of fresh healthy food into the daily kindergarten program. My interest in the food aspect of Reggio Emilia, comes from my own rich Italian heritage and a love of cooking healthy foods in preschools over my 27-year teaching career. I'm fascinated by the role of harvesting and how Reggio Emilia's preschools use food in their early childhood curriculum.



The cooks provide fresh healthy recipes each day, and in the longer term there are food projects for the children to be immersed in. What I was able to witness was limited, as although the study tours had reopened, there were many restrictions in the wake of Covid-19. From what we were told, there are two main ways the cooks and teachers use food as a tool.

In Reggio Emilia, the children pass by the kitchen first and make a choice of food to have during the day. Each centre in Reggio Emilia employs two cooks, and their role in the educational environment and with children is embedded. Some of the ways in which this occurs includes

children exploring and helping to maintain the garden, studying the environment, and collecting vegetables and fruit for meals and snacks. They are encouraged to approach the cooks to ask what is on the menu for lunch.

Indeed, the cook has an important role in the Reggio Emilia education system in exploring the fruits and vegetables with the children. Food can be a daily connection with life, with small children, for example leaves of vegetables that are left over are used in their play, for example, they are added to the pasting table for children to explore and experiment with in their art. Waste management is taught using left-over vegetables from cooking being blended into soup for a subsequent meal. These are just two examples of the ways that these practices are embedded in the approach.

In my reflections, the whole international tour was rich and rewarding in both a professional and personal sense. One thing I wish I knew before I left was that photo opportunities were restricted. However, I was able to get a small number of photos after I spoke Italian with some of the staff, which I have shared in this article.

Thank you again to the AGECS Fellowship Program for Leadership and Change which has inspired me to adopt these practices in my 3- and 4-year-old programming.

AGECS Academic Awards

AGECS has again partnered with universities offering degrees in early childhood studies in Victoria for the AGECS Academic Awards 2024. Each year we reach out to participating universities to seek nominations for recently graduated students who excelled in their academic work or placement requirements. We accept one nomination per course per university.

The following graduates, who completed their studies in 2023, are being awarded:

Deakin University

Miranda Radtke

Kylie Mustard

Meredith Dobson

Blydie Meiring

La Trobe University

Shima Roy

Monash University

Cassandra Shim

Grace Burke

Lynette Chua

Alissa Thiere

Sze Ming Leung

Aik Mei Wong

RMIT

Anureet Kaur

Jennie Chilvers

University of Melbourne

Sarah Thwaites

Consuela van der Velden

Congratulations to the recipients for their outstanding work, and welcome to the early childhood profession.

We will share photos from the upcoming Deakin University, Monash University and University of Melbourne awards ceremonies in the Spring edition of AUDAX.

Recommendations

Television

Bluey: The Sign

Bluey is an Australian cartoon that has found worldwide success. The typical format of Bluey episodes is 7 minute short-form stories.

Bluey episodes can be used to introduce discussion points with children in ECEC settings, especially tough to talk about ones.

This special 'The Sign' is an extended 28 minute length, in which the Heeler family home is up for sale and there is a family wedding.



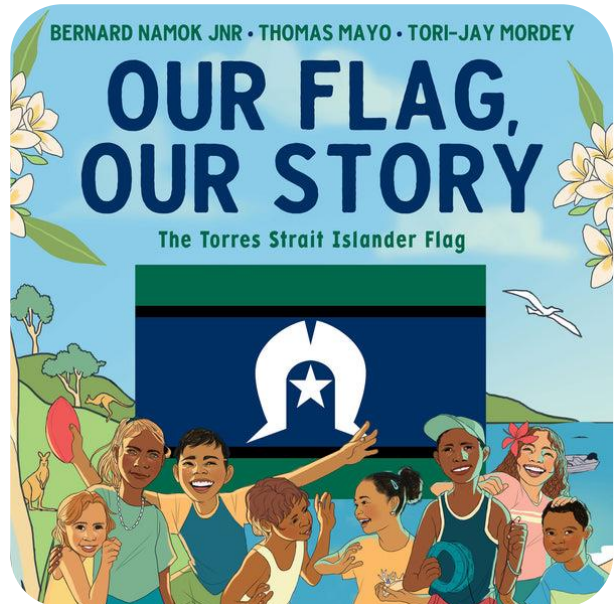
Books

Our Flag, Our Story

Bernard Namok Jr, Thomas Mayo and
Tori-Jay Mordey

When Kerry Arabeena (Meriam descent from the Torres Strait) delivered the AGECS Reconciliation Series Seminar 11: *First 1000 Days and Embedding Torres Strait Islander Perspectives into Curriculum* she emphasised the importance of purposefully including Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in early childhood curriculum, as she shared they are often left out.

This book *Our Flag, Our Story* shares the history of the development of the Torres Strait Islander flag and what it represents.



Beyond the symbolism (the green representing the land, the blue representing the water, the black lines representing the people, and in the centre the white Dhari dancer's headdress as a unifying symbol for all the Torres Strait) the book shares the perspective of the son of the designer of the flag Bernard Namok Jnr. This book would be a great addition to any ECEC setting.

Donations and Bequests

AGECS has always benefited from the charitable donations of those able to offer them. Without the significant bequests of Forest Hill and Ware (Warrawong), AGECS and the Foundation would not exist today. Indeed, our history as a graduates' association began with members rolling up their sleeves to wash cars, sell newspapers, garden, and sew, all to raise money to establish and maintain holiday homes for vulnerable children.

Whilst AGECS's charitable actions have changed over the years, our objective still remains the same: to contribute to positive change in the ECEC community in Victoria. These days this is achieved through offering funding and innovative professional learning and development opportunities for early childhood education professionals. Read on to learn how you can contribute to our cause and ensure AGECS can continue to make a difference to the lives of educators, families, and children.



What do we do with your tax-deductible donations?

Your donation supports AGECS to provide professional development for those working in early childhood education. This may include grants, such as those offered during the 100 Years of AGECS celebrations, or free professional learning seminars and training, and the development of professional learning materials and resources for AGECS members.

Your donation may also help special projects such as our digitisation project, funding the digitisation of special documents from our archives, including the back catalogue of AUDAX, honouring the hard work and history of AGECS and its members.

Leave a legacy of learning – leave us in your Will

Including AGECS in your Will means you can leave a lasting legacy that can make a difference beyond your lifetime. Your gift can allow AGECS to increase our support of ECEC professionals at a time when they need our help through grants, professional learning, and resources. Not just to do their job, but to stay in their job. AGECS recommend pursuing independent legal advice when it comes to your estate planning. However, you may wish to use the following language:

"I bequeath the Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies, ABN 80 004 275 709, the sum of ___ dollars (or percentage of residual estate), for its general purposes."

All bequests will be acknowledged, either privately or publicly, on executor's instructions.

Empower educators – Make a direct donation

Your immediate donation helps us in our vital mission of providing professional learning for high-quality and equitable early childhood education. If you would like to make a direct donation, please use the bank details below and leave your name as the 'description' of the transaction. To receive your *tax-deductible donation receipt*, contact programs@agecs.org.au and provide your full name.

Bank details: Westpac

Account name: The Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies

BSB: 033-138 **Account number:** 763 212

And don't forget to let us know as we would like to acknowledge all donors, either privately or publicly, for their generosity.

To acknowledge your generosity, AGECS would like to acknowledge your name and donation in AUDAX.

Council 2024

President Professor Coral Campbell

Vice President Melissa Adam

Secretary Sarah O'Donnell

Treasurer Emma Boag

Helen Baker

Dr Sue Emmett

Wendy Grenfell

Nicole Lees

Nichola Marriott

Sandra McCarthy-Wilson

Sinead O Conaill

Professor Bridie Raban

Thank you for reading.

This edition of AUDAX has been compiled and edited by AGECS engagement coordinator Alex Heard.

AGECS Members

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

Program Manager

Liz Potter

Engagement Coordinator

Alex Heard



Send correspondence and articles for inclusion in AUDAX to engagement@agecs.org.au or our postal address at PO Box 12163 A'Beckett Street Melbourne 8006.