



## Coffs Harbour Celebrates Family Day Care Week



FDC Educator Gail Riddell with children

"To celebrate Family Day Care week educators, children, parents and staff enjoyed a sunny morning at the jetty foreshore park in Coffs Harbour. Children came dressed as their favourite hero, star or character to celebrate the uniqueness and individuality of all children in the Family Day Care community. We chose the theme "Every child is a superstar". This year marks the fifth annual celebration with services, educators and families across Australia joining in the festivities. During the festivities children enjoyed getting their face painted by Kylie (CDO) and having their photo taken at the 'photo booth' using various props (masks, glasses, feathers). Children also left with 'crazy hair' as they had their hair sprayed with glitter and various colours. The playground was also popular with superman and batman climbing, using the swings and balancing on the logs. Everyone enjoyed the sausage sizzle. It was a wonderful way to celebrate Family Day Care and the quality care that our educators provide to children and families. It was a great opportunity for families to network with educators and see Family Day Care in action." *Liz Parker, Nominated Supervisor*

"We celebrated Family Day Care Week by visiting our local library for story time. To start story time we sang the welcome song 'Hello my friends won't you sing with me' using sign language. We then settled in for today's story 'Bear and Chook

by the Sea' by Lisa Shanahan & Emma Quay. Lily, Ulrik and Eden sat very quietly during the story, listening and watching the other children in the room. We sang 'Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' together before collecting our craft equipment to create a bear by the sea side. Part of our experience today helped us to participate in social groups, promote our communication and interactions, and recognising that we are all part of our local community." *Kylie Ford, Educator*

"To celebrate FDC week the children and I decided to invite our friends at Melissa's FDC to join us at the park. The weather was beautiful and the children were very excited to breathe in the fresh air, enjoy the freedom of lots of space and explore their new environment. They worked together digging for lost treasures in the sand whilst practicing their social skills. They added tree branches and sticks to make a pretend fire sitting around it to warm their hands. Lots of arm and leg movements balancing as they manoeuvred the stepping stones and stretched their muscles. They practised their hand-eye coordination climbing the rock wall to get to the top of the slide and calling for their friends to join them. The older children were very careful of the younger ones when using the climbing frame and slide assisting them to make sure they were safe. When they heard a plane fly over, they all looked up to the sky pointing at it. Children need the freedom and time to play. Play is not a luxury. Play is a necessity." *Gail Riddell, Educator*



FDC Educator Kylie Ford with children

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# Educator Spotlight

## Amanda Lockwood - Cabonne/Blayney FDC

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**Amanda with her FDC children**

“It all began with my childhood memories when my family promoted the ‘Do It Yourself’ approach. My dad built our family home and my mum grew our food. I was educated to be sustainable and to show respect to our environment. I was born in Sydney, and my family decided to move to the bush

when I was a toddler. I spent a lot of time exploring the natural environment. Mum worked hard growing the different vegetables; while dad milked the cow and looked after the chickens. Now I have four children and two adorable grandchildren.

I first looked into Family Day Care in the year 2000. I did a course at the Council where I was living at that time but chose to go back to university to become a qualified high school teacher. I worked as a teacher for 13 years, and then I decided to join Family Day Care.

I choose to work in Family Day Care after my daughter gave birth to a beautiful baby boy and I was reminded how wonderful small children can be. I also wanted to have time to care for my own family and with Family Day Care you can choose your own flexible hours. I have now been an educator for nearly three years now. It has gone by so quickly! I love watching the children grow and learn new skills. One week a child is toddling about and the next they are trying to run. They show so much enthusiasm to learn and practice. I love being able to work outside. Children love the outdoors, we explore and investigate everyday as we see the birds, bees and butterflies - what more could you want?

My favourite thing about educating children is to help them learn to play together, consider each other's feelings and become good friends. I love getting them into the veggie patch too, as they all love to dig and plant seeds then forage on the produce. It is very satisfying to see all four children harvesting and eating broccoli straight from the bush. Of course, the strawberries are the most favourite, even when the children eat them before they're ripe.

The way I implement the EYLF into my program is quite easy. If you like children, you talk to them, listen to them, give them space to show you what they know and time to explore. I want to show the children how to cook, draw, paint, roll dough, read and garden. There is plenty of jargon used like holistic learning but it is also common sense. Children learn by imitation and exploration so as an educator I must set a good example with variety and allow a safe environment to explore.

My training and professional development belongs to online forums on early childhood education and I attend training days. I have completed TAFE training but I also read a lot of articles and books. What stands out in my career in Family Day Care is the families. I build relationships with parents, siblings, grandparents and it is a privileged to be accepted into their lives. Family Day Care involves sharing your life; people are in your home every day so you get to know each other well.

My advice I would give to educators who are thinking about joining Family Day Care is that it is a great job. You have to work hard though and get up early to prepare for the day. Supervision has to be constant, follow all the safety rules and to remember to have fun!

My plans for the future are to change my environment inside and out so it stays interesting for the children. As children develop, they want to explore new things, so I am always visiting the local recycling shop to look for toys. Recently I made an animal enclosure for the chickens and guinea pigs next to the verandah. This allows the children to watch them from above. I'm hoping to build a door so we can go inside and pat them. I have started to grow a live cubby house, using vines and I love planting flowers for the children to pick. I want to make my yard as challenging as it can be while staying in the safety guidelines.”



**Amanda's veggie patch**

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## Sustainability Spot

As childcare providers and educators in Australia, you have the chance to lead by example for your communities, families and children.

Small steps you can do at your service are:

1. Say no to using toxic chemicals in your service – by using environmentally friendly cleaning products, you are not only creating a healthy and safe environment on the inside, but you are helping your environment on the outside as well.
2. By purchasing water efficient and energy efficient appliances
3. Turning off power switches when not in use
4. Opening blinds and windows rather than turning on lights
5. Education is key – read, learn and then share

## Help Buy

Help2Buy works with some fantastic partners to assist services with their sustainability goals:

**Earth Renewable** – one of the few brands on the market that have 8 products with the GECA eco label – these products are environmentally preferable, address health impacts, and are cost efficient. Purchasing GECA certified products can bring benefits to your business. A healthy and sustainable work environment can improve the health and productivity of everyone.

**Sustainable Directions** – the main services provided are in the area of sustainability and safety. These services are provided via structured online programs, online training courses and in house workshops.

The **Small Green Steps** program and the **Small Safe Steps** program are both 40 step online programs designed to assist services from start to finish, and are very cost efficient.

**The Good Guys** – being a member of Help2Buy you also receive login details for using The Good Guys Commercial website – this means you can purchase your water saving and energy efficient appliances at discounted rates.

You can join Help2Buy for free and you will receive knowledge and support for your sustainability journey plus help for having healthy environments in your home. For more information and to join, go to [www.help2buy.com.au](http://www.help2buy.com.au).

## Dates for your diary

### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day Friday 4 August 2017

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day is the largest national day to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. It is a time to for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to celebrate the strengths and culture of their children.

The day is also an opportunity for all Australians to show their support for Aboriginal children, as well as learn about the crucial impact that community, culture and family play in the life of every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child.

Children's Day is held on 4 August each year and is coordinated by SNAICC – National Voice for our Children. Children's Day was first observed in 1988, with 2017 being the 30th celebration. Each year SNAICC produces and distributes resources to help organisations, services, schools, and communities celebrate.

The theme for Children's Day 2017 is *Value Our Rights, Respect Our Culture, Bring Us Home*. This year Children's Day recognises the 20th anniversary of the 'Bringing Them Home Report' and the many benefits children experience when they are raised with strong connections to family and culture. Published in 1997, the seminal 'Bringing Them Home Report' exposed the violations of fundamental human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities through the policies and practices of the Stolen Generations.

Make sure you get involved! Register your event, promote it and let everyone know how you'll be celebrating children on 4 August.

More information and resources:

[aboriginalchildrensday.com.au](http://aboriginalchildrensday.com.au)



value our rights,  
respect our culture,  
Bring us home.

# FDC Educator News

## New name for BOSTES

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) replaced the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) on 1 January 2017. NESAs is in the process of migrating content from this site to the new NESAs website: [educationstandards.nsw.edu.au](http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au).



Family Day Care educators with an ACECQA approved or recognised early childhood teaching qualification, you

can apply for voluntary accreditation with NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs), under the Accreditation of Early Childhood Teachers Policy.

## Maintaining your NESAs Teacher Accreditation

*Did you know ...*

As an Early Childhood Teacher accredited at Proficient Teacher level, you will need to complete and log a minimum of 100 hours of Professional Development (PD) over the course of the five (full time teacher) or seven (part time teacher) year cycle. This includes at least 20 hours of Quality Teacher Council (QTC) Registered PD and 80 hours of Teacher Identified PD or QTC Registered PD and/or further study.

*Good news ...*

PEAK Training is in the process of applying to become a NESAs registered approved professional development provider which will see a number of our courses become QTC registered PD.

You can however, already log our current courses as Teacher Identified PD which is PD you select, that is not registered. This PD can include formal and informal training, courses, networking, workshops, seminars, professional readings, reflections and professional activities. The activities should have a clear professional developmental focus, and occur when teachers are not teaching children in an education and care service. Teacher Identified PD can take place at work, in the wider early childhood and education community or at home.



## NQF Changes: resources available

ACECQA has released new resources to support the children's education and care sector to understand the changes to the NQF.

The new resources include:

- an **information sheet** explaining the revised National Quality Standard and other changes from 1 February 2018
- a copy of the **revised National Quality Standard**, in handout and poster formats
- a helpful **comparison of the current and revised NQS**.
- and **frequently asked questions** about the key changes to the NQF.

Visit the ACECQA website for the full range of resources and for more information:

[acecqa.gov.au/decisionris](http://acecqa.gov.au/decisionris).



### NSW FDC ASSOCIATION

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## Exceeding rating for Marrickville FDC

**Marrickville FDC educator Marina Ferreira talks about her experience of the Assessment and Rating visit at her Family Day Care home.**



**Marina Ferreira with FDC child**

"The service's staff had told all the educators that our service was going through assessment and rating in the next couple of weeks. We were all waiting to hear who had been chosen. I was nervous, as I had been chosen last time and didn't really want to do it again. I got a phone call from the service's staff on a Friday, which is my day off. As soon as I saw the missed call I knew that I must have been chosen. I felt overwhelmed and thought "I can't think about this for now." and I didn't call back. Later in the day I received an email from the coordination unit telling me that I was one of the "the lucky ones".

On Monday I spoke to the service staff. They told me they had all the confidence in me and that I was going to be fine. That was all I needed to hear. After that I was feeling much better, focused and not so overwhelmed or nervous. I know that I try my hardest every day to meet the National Quality Standard.

In the weeks leading up to the visit we all attended weekly training, where we reviewed the quality areas. That was a good refresher. The other educators in the service were also a great support in the lead up. My mother is also an educator with Marrickville Family Day Care and she was

chosen to be visited as well. We worked together to share ideas and review our practices. I always try to attend any training or meetings that are run, as I believe they will make me a better educator, and I spend a lot of time reflecting on my practice. So I think I was actually preparing for the visit for the last few years.

I was so nervous when the assessor arrived that that I basically handed her all the copies of the children's observations, told her where my program was and said "Let me know if you need anything". The assessor was very calm and told me, "It's ok, I will let you know if I need anything. Just go on with your day." She looked at my program cycle and children's observations. She took photos of the documentation that was displayed in my learning areas, and looked at natural environments inside and outside. She did a lot of observing; looked for what she needed and asked questions about the things she couldn't immediately see like child protection, community involvement, transition times, meal times.

The assessor also spoke to me about the support I receive from the office staff. Having someone from the coordination unit present during the visit was great. The children arriving in the morning kept me busy and distracted which helped as well. When the assessor arrived she must have noticed I was nervous. She made me feel a little less nervous by explaining what would happen during the visit. She told me that she would ask me anything she needed to know and said that if there was something wrong she would address it straight away. That was very reassuring.

When I found out the rating result I couldn't believe it. Exceeding is an amazing result! I am extremely excited and proud of all our educators and staff. We have all worked really hard in our training and development over the last few years and it's nice to have that hard work acknowledged. It definitely gives me a lot of pleasure to be part of a wonderful exceeding Family Day Care service."

## New Mandatory Reporter Guide tool

The MRG (Mandatory Reporter Guide) tool from the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) has moved to the ChildStory Reporter website. The tool has a new look and includes new resources. A short video explaining the updates can be found on the ChildStory website [reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au](http://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au). More updates will be released and ChildStory is on track for implementation throughout NSW in 2017.



The ChildStory IT system will be introduced to the NSW Department of Family and Community

Services (FACS) districts and state-wide services, including the Child Protection Helpline, over a five-week period in October–November 2017. E-reporting for mandatory reporters will also become functional through the Reporter Community at this time.

ChildStory's Partner Community will be introduced to non-government child protection service providers, police, and the health and education sectors in early 2018. It will replace the Contracting Portal for all service providers with some additional functionality for out-of-home care service providers and targeted services.

Other functionality planned for early 2018:

1. a mobile application for FACS caseworkers
2. interactivity for young people through YOU
3. interactivity for family and carers through the Caring Community

The timing is later than previously predicted but this will ensure the system is the best it can be, including rigorous testing. The child protection work we do is critical to the lives of children at risk of significant harm, so we need to make sure any new system is robust before we implement it.

At the same time as the ChildStory IT system is being built, FACS will continue awareness briefings with FACS staff, non-government service

providers and other government agencies. These briefings will become a series of ChildStory training experiences in the run up to implementation.

There will be dedicated support services for ChildStory from implementation. More information is available at [www.childstory.net.au](http://www.childstory.net.au).



## Child Protection training

PEAK Training is offering up to date training which includes the new MRG and an overview of the ChildStory website.

- Child Protection Training (CHCPRT001 Identify and Respond to Children and Young People at Risk) via online self-paced learning or face to face classes at our office in Summer Hill or at your own service (min. 10 participants)
- Child Protection (Refresher) via webinar or at your own service (min. 10 participants)

### Child Protection (Refresher) webinar \$39.95

Date: Tuesday 4 July 2017

Time: 10am-12pm AET

### Identify & Respond to Children & Young People at Risk (Accredited Training CHCPRT001) \$180

Location: Level 1, 1 Sloane Street, Summer Hill

Date: Sat 22 Jul 2017

Time: 9am-4pm AET

There are still some places left, so book online today via [nswfdc.org.au/peak-training/short-courses](http://nswfdc.org.au/peak-training/short-courses) or call PEAK Training on 02 9779 9999.