



Connections

NSW FAMILY DAY CARE ASSOCIATION AND PEAK TRAINING NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2017

Exceeding Rating for Mission Australia South West Sydney Family Day Care

Earlier this year Mission Australia South West Sydney Family Day Care was rated 'Exceeding' under the National Quality Standard. Service manager Marlene Greenwood tells about the experience:

"To be totally honest, I was absolutely dreading assessment and ratings. When we received the letter requesting our QIP, I wanted to call and ask them if we could be rescheduled at a later date!

All of my concerns were immediately dismissed when I met the assessor. She was professional, yet approachable. She spent time with the team on the first day to explain what we could expect during the week. She let us know the day and times each educator would be visited and invited us to ask questions at any time. She spent time in the office, with the chosen educators at their homes and came to play session where she met a number of additional educators and parents. It was a huge week and everyone was running on adrenaline. Staff, educators, the Mission Australia Early Learning team and Family Day Care services in our region were all incredibly supportive. At about 11am on the first day I remember thinking it's going to be ok, we do a great job and we're ready for this.

Of course we waited with anticipation for the



results and were all over the moon to be rated as 'Exceeding'. It's such an impressive reward for the hard work educators and staff put in day after day.

Educator Stephanie was one of the 'chosen few'. She has been working as an educator for less than three years. And

here is what she had to say about the process:

"My heart sank when Marlene called to let me know that I was going to be visited. I remember that my mind was racing and I was thinking, am I ready, what do I need to do? I had to stop myself, slow down and say, OK, I can do this. In the days leading up to my visit I felt so supported and encouraged by my ESO and the Manager. I think I actually felt uplifted by their confidence in me. On the day of the visit I was telling myself positive affirmations. I reminded myself that I knew what do to and that I was going to be great. The visit went really smoothly. When the assessor arrived, I felt confident inviting her into my service. She was professional but not at all intimidating. The time with her went by really fast. I answered questions, she observed me interacting with the children and she looked around my service.

When she left, I felt so relieved. I also felt that I had really accomplished something. I was proud of myself and was really motivated to do more and be more. Continue on page 2

WELCOME

Anita Jovanovski, CEO



Hello everyone and welcome to the first Connections of the year, the autumn edition. It has certainly cooled down here in Sydney, but the weather is clearly not as bad as in Queensland and northern NSW. My heart goes out to everyone affected by cyclone Debbie and the floods.

Last month I attended the first Ministerial Advisory Council meeting of 2017 in Canberra. As always, it was a great opportunity to directly advocate for Family Day Care with the Australian Government and give advice on matters relating to the sector.

A working group was put together to prepare a submission for the Education and Child Care SEPP on behalf of the Association. The Association's feedback has now been submitted to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment. The submission has been uploaded onto our website and can be found in the About > Advocacy section for your perusal.

The updated Educator Induction Package has been made available to our full member services through PEAK Training's online learning platform. All full member services have been emailed a link and login details. If you haven't received your login details yet, please contact our Membership and Communication Officer. In my capacity as Vice Chair of NSW Children's Week, I attended the National Children's Week Forum in Adelaide and I'm happy to announce that, from this year, NSW Children's Week will be the national voice for Children's Week in the media. In 2017 Children's Week will be celebrated from 21 to 29 October.

The Board is currently investigating options to calculate our full membership fees. If you haven't already, please let us know your service's number of educators and EFT. If you have any thoughts on how to best calculate our membership fees, make sure to get in touch with the Board or myself.

The FDC Services Education and Support Project is moving into compliance information and education for Family Day Care services and educators. A new website is due to go live soon. A video and brochure about compliance for new FDC educators have been released in March.

Happy reading!

Continued from page 1

It was a great experience with the best possible outcome. To get 'Exceeding' is amazing."

Darshan, who was also visited by the assessor, shares her experience of the A&R visit:

"I was so happy to be one of the educators being assessed. The staff made us all feel special and showed that they believed in us. I didn't feel alone and knew that we were all in it together.

I wanted to make some changes for the visit so I worked with the staff to reorganise my indoor environment. The children, the parents and my own family all loved the changes and everyone was so supportive of me. My educator friends were also supportive and interested in everything that was happening.

Each day I was counting down and looking forward to the visit. I was ready and feeling confident and I wanted to be able to show the assessor what I could do. In my head I was just hoping that I would be able to answer her questions correctly.

When she came I felt nervous. The assessor was professional but nice. I felt proud to be able to show her my service. The time with her seemed to take forever! I kept watching the time and hoping that I was doing the right thing. It was busy with the children and answering the assessor's questions.

When the 2 hours were finally over and we said goodbye to her I felt like I was flying! I was so relieved and completely relaxed. I was so happy that it was all over. I felt proud of myself and felt that being assessed was like a reward for my hard work.

I went to India on a family holiday the week after. I checked Facebook every day for the news. When I saw that we got 'Exceeding' I was so happy. My mum, who lives in India, was so proud of me and what I have achieved in Australia. My family told all of their friends in India and everyone was congratulating me."

Regulations info

Minor amendment to National Regulations

Education and care providers can continue to decide who their certified supervisors are without needing a separate approval from the regulatory authority. Regulation 238A has been extended from 31 December 2016 to 31 December 2017 to allow supervisor certificates to continue to be granted to particular classes of persons, rather than to individual applicants. See more at:

acecqa.gov.au.

Upcoming changes to National Quality Standard and National Regulations

The Australian state and territory education Ministers have agreed to changes to the National Quality Framework (NQF) intended to strengthen quality in early childhood education and care while at the same time reducing red tape for the sector.

Key decisions

- A revised National Quality Standard (NQS) to strengthen quality through greater clarity, remove conceptual overlap between elements and standards, clarify language and reduce the number of standards and elements from 18 standards to 15, and 58 to 40 elements.
- Improved oversight and support within Family Day Care to achieve better compliance and quality across the whole sector.
- Removing supervisor certificate requirements so service providers have more autonomy in deciding who can be the responsible person in each service.

The changes are outlined in a Decision Regulation Impact Statement (Decision RIS). The Decision RIS provides an analysis of the regulatory impacts.

Key timeframes

- 1 October 2017– National Law and Regulations changes commence in all states and territories, except Western Australia.
- 1 February 2018– Revised National Quality Standard commences in all states and territories.

More detailed information can be found on the ACECQA website acecqa.gov.au/decisionris.

News in brief

Family Day Care Week 1-7 May 2017

Family Day Care week is around the corner and NSW Family Day Care Association would like to celebrate this and recognise all the dedicated, hardworking and amazing service staff and educators out there. Keep your eyes on your mailbox for an update on what we have planned.

Everyone's Business

The Third Action Plan of 'Protecting Children is Everyone's Business: National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009—2020' is now available. This National Framework aims to strengthen the abilities of families and communities to care for their children and young people. www.dss.gov.au/families-and-children

Play Baby

Playgroup gives babies an early start to learning through play and socialising, which we know is vital for early child development. That's why through the Play Baby initiative, Playgroup NSW is giving the gift of Playgroup NSW membership to parents with a baby under 12 months. All NSW parents who register with Playgroup NSW by their child's first birthday will receive a free 12-month family membership (valued at \$39).

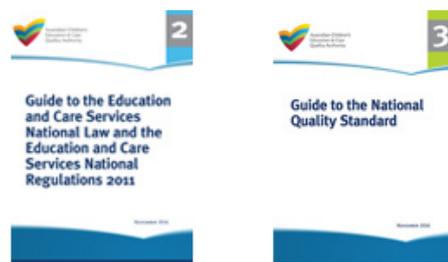
Association news

Guide to NQS and Guide to Regs & Law available now

Would you like to have a hard copy of the Guides at your service for easy reference? We have them available in our online shop. Both Guides are the latest version of November 2016. Get them now!

- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations 2011

Only \$20 (+ postage) for NSWFDCA members. Available via nswfdc.org.au/fdc-services/shop.



PEAK Training Calendar

The new training calendar for the May – August period is now available on our website.

Courses include:

- Sustainability in Early Childhood Settings
- Child Protection (Refresher)
- Work Health and Safety (Refresher)
- QIP: The 'Who, How & When' – webinar series
- Exploring Adventurous Play
- Observing Children: Beginning the Journey
- Guiding Children's Behaviour to Attain Self-regulation
- Promote and Provide Healthy Food and Drinks (Refresher)
- Walking the Talk on Inclusion – two part webinar
- Identify & Respond to Children & Young People at Risk (Accredited Training CHCPRT001)
- Social Media in Children's Services

Go to nswfdc.org.au/peak for more information and to enrol.

Prue Cooper - 25 years at Nambucca Valley FDC

Nambucca Valley Family Day Care would like to recognise and celebrate 25 years of loyal service from their Nominated Supervisor Prue Cooper. During her tenure, Prue's leadership, integrity and dedication to the community based service has created quality and positive experiences for thousands of children over the years.

Prue's career in early childhood began in 1981 at Nambucca Preschool. Prue commenced at Nambucca Valley FDC as a Child Development Officer (CDO) in December 1991. Prue's passion for local community, along with her love of children and horses, saw her working two days a week as a CDO as well as running her own riding school.

As Prue took on a greater role within Family Day Care, her hours expanded. After 14 years as a CDO, she eventually took on the role of Service Coordinator. Prue reflects on this time saying, "When I first started with Family Day Care I really didn't know what I was getting myself in for." Her dedication to early childhood saw Prue upgrade her Diploma of Teaching in EC and complete a Bachelor of Teaching in EC. Some of Prue's fondest FDC memories are of the Regional Meetings: "the Regionals were a big social event where strong friendships were developed with other Family Day Care professionals. These friendships have stood the test of time and survived the many changes the industry has been through. For example, when fixed boundaries were opened up, this was a testing time in Family Day Care but we all supported each other and still do today".

"Family Day Care is all about supporting the local families and their children in providing good quality childcare. When I see the children that have used Family Day Care in the past come back to our service as parents looking for care for their own children, I'm flattered and I think how rewarding the job is. I also think, have I been here for that long?!" "I enjoy supporting our wonderful educators, with some having been with me for most of my Family Day Care journey." Prue has embraced the EYLF and how it has had a good influence on the practices of early childhood. "It's comforting to see that some aspects of early childhood have come full circle, getting back to basics. It's great to see we have moved on from the sterile, hygienic 'plastic fantastic' movement to more earthiness and a realistic approach in our everyday practise with caring and educating young children." Prue believes "keeping a healthy balance of work and family has been the key to my longevity in Family Day Care". Prue is an avid gardener and bush walker and loves spending time with her own 3 children and 7 grandchildren. "I can't believe that 25 years have passed so quickly and I still have a real passion and drive for Family Day Care. It's a huge part of my life". When asked about her future in FDC, Prue feels that, "maintaining the service's good reputation as a high-quality service for the local community is paramount and also running a service where staff are happy and want to be."



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Angela Noutafis Family Liaison Officer

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Raising funds for charity - Helen Parr

Former Family Day Care educator Helen Parr has written a picture book to raise money for two children she provided education and care for through Family Day Care.

"I worked in IT in banking for over 12 years and really wanted a complete change of career and I found Family Day Care. It seemed like the perfect opportunity to work in a job I enjoyed whilst still being at home for my child. I started with North Sydney Family Day Care and later worked for Pittwater Family Day Care. It was through them that I looked after Isla and Jude.

I did not know anything about Sanfilippo Syndrome, until I received an email from Isla and Jude's parents in 2013. Both children had been diagnosed with Sanfilippo Syndrome. I looked it up, I searched the symptoms, I checked to see if there was anything I should have spotted when Isla and Jude were with me.

Sanfilippo Syndrome is a rare, degenerative, genetic disease with a life expectancy of 12 to 20 years. It will gradually rob Isla and Jude of all those milestones we look for in children: their ability to talk, to walk, to toilet themselves, to feed themselves.

I looked after Isla from when she was 8 months until she was nearly 3, and Jude from 9 months until a year. Children with Sanfilippo Syndrome appear to develop normally in their first two to three years. Isla was a happy, sociable, active child who always arrived at my house with a smile on her face. When Jude joined us, we had twice the smiles, and Isla loved looking after her brother. 'Isla the Smiler' and 'Jude Dude' were my kids' 'favourite babies'. Sometimes children just capture a little spot in your heart. Isla did that. I think she made me feel I was doing a good job.

In hindsight, I looked for signs of the disease. I did notice Isla's speech was not up to that of her peers. She still had single words when other children the same age were forming sentences. But she could always express exactly what she wanted. 'Cheese. Please.'



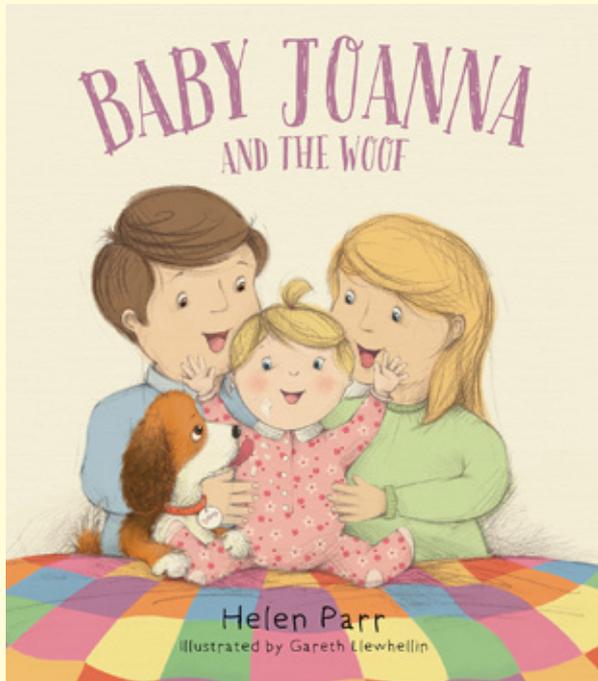
When I told my husband about Isla and Jude, he needed to confirm which child she was. He said, 'Is Isla the snotty one?' She was. She had a constantly runny nose and in hindsight, upper respiratory issues are a symptom of the disease.

Isla found it very hard to settle at nap time. I battled with naps for her for a long time. In the end, we gave up and she had some quiet time while the other children slept. She used to pull books of the shelf and sit and look through them. Looking back, I wished I'd given up the battle earlier; sleep issues are a symptom of the disease.

Isla was constantly happy. I feel blessed to have had the 'normal' years with Isla and Jude, and slightly guilty that I had that joy. If they'd known about Sanfilippo Syndrome, those first years would have been very different, but Meg and Al could have started fighting for their children earlier.

When I heard about the disease, it was the only time I wished we had not moved from Sydney to Coffs Harbour. I wanted to be there, to be able to care for them again, and to physically be able to help. I could not bear the thought of not fighting for their lives, and raising money is the only thing I can do from a distance.

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I decided I wanted to produce a product that anyone could buy and enjoy, and as a secondary benefit, they happen to be helping the Foundation. We don't have a lot of spare cash for fancy dinners, raffles or golf days, but I do buy books for my kids.

I was already writing stories, and I thought of Isla, pulling the books off the shelf and just looking through them all, and I decided I wanted to write a book for her. I had five stories ready to go, but I couldn't find an illustrator and my drawings are not up to scratch.

Eventually I chose to go with Little Steps Publishing as they produce a professional product which is properly edited. They looked at all the stories I have written and chose 'Baby Joanna and the Woof'. Then I found illustrator Gareth Llewellyn. His pictures are adorable and fitted the ideas I had in my head. He is in England, but was happy to work long distance with the publishers.

'Baby Joanna and the Woof' is about a baby's first word. So far, Baby Joanna has not said a word. Mum secretly hopes her first word will be 'Mum' and Dad secretly hopes her first word will

be 'Dad'. When they are alone with Joanna, they try very hard to influence that first word. But Milly-Woof is Joanna's best friend and babies don't always do what we expect.

At the moment, it could take me 10 years to sell all my books. Isla and Jude don't have ten years. I need to sell them quickly if I am actually going to help. I am hoping there are 1,000 educators out there, who, like me, love reading stories to the children in their care. There are lots of wonderful books out there, and I want to give them an incentive to choose mine. If I can sell 1,000 to Family Day Care educators in Australia, one lucky educator will receive \$1,000. They just need to tell me which Family Day Care service they work through.

The book can be bought online via Facebook ([facebook.com/millywoofandcharlie](https://www.facebook.com/millywoofandcharlie)). Payments are made with a credit card via Paypal. Or they can contact me directly via email (parrhelen@hotmail.com) to get bank details for a direct transfer. Individually, the books cost \$20 including postage. Buyers will receive an email receipt, which can be included in Family Day Care expenses.

Sanfilippo Syndrome is a rare disease, and as such, it doesn't get funding from Government or large pharmaceuticals. 'People Power' is the only way to fund research into a cure. Sanfilippo is also known as childhood Alzheimer's. If we can find a cure for a relatively simple genetic disease like Sanfilippo Syndrome, that same research can be used in more complex genetic diseases like Alzheimer's, so it has the potential to help many, many people."

More info about Sanfilippo Foundation

www.sanfilippo.org.au

Where to buy the book

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