

AGM Report 2019/2020



Enriching futures together





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Vision

Enriching Futures

Values

- Quality early learning and education
- Respect and diversity
- Ethical practice
- Collaborative relationships
- Innovation and sustainability

Strategic Objectives

- Enrich the lives of all children, families and communities through quality learning
- Provide relevant, effective training for the early childhood sector
- Employ committed, professional staff who practice our values
- Through strong governance, provide organisational and sector leadership
- Implement environmentally responsible and sustainable practice
- Practices reflect our commitment to reconciliation



The Organisation

ECTARC is the business name of Illawarra Area Child Care Ltd, a not for profit community owned organisation. The company was established in May 1984 and incorporated in 1985. In 2020, the organisation was rebranded to bring our early childhood education and training services operations under one business name to be known as ECTARC.

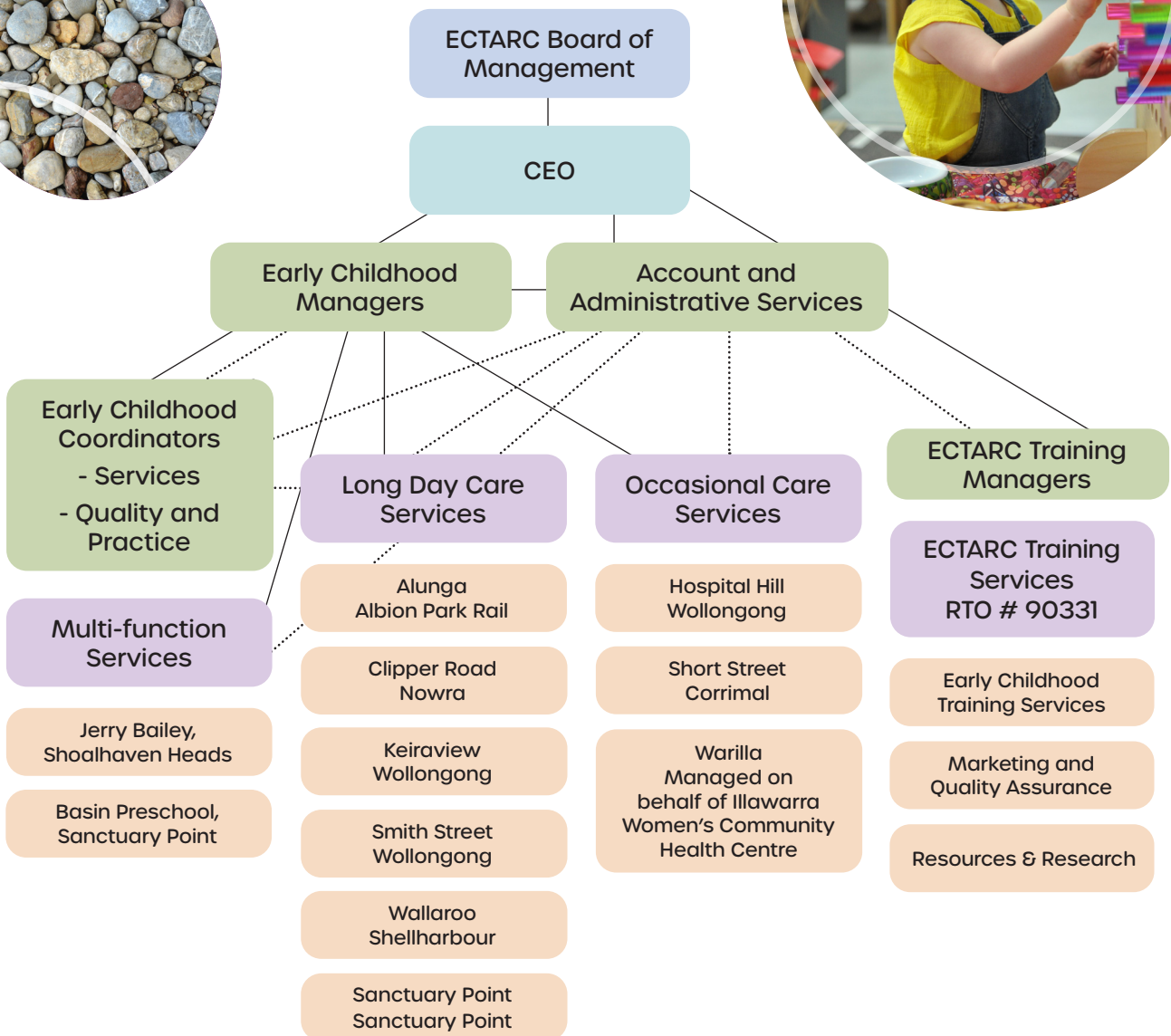
ECTARC manages six long day care services, three occasional care services and two multi-function services in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

ECTARC also manages, a Registered Training Organisation that specialises in early childhood training and professional development.

The Board provides management services to the Warilla Occasional Care Centre on behalf of the Illawarra Women’s Health Centre, who is the Approved Provider for this service.

ECTARC provides support, training, information and advice to its services, employees and families.

A key objective of ECTARC is to work collaboratively with associated organisations to provide excellence in early childhood and training services.



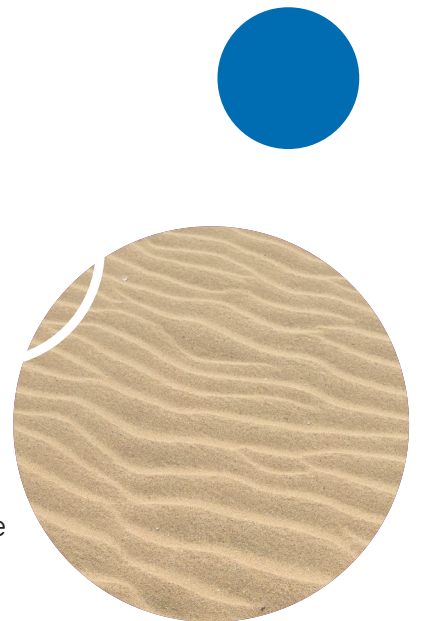


The Board

The board comprises of parents from ECTARC's early childhood services and the local community, board directors bring a diverse range of relevant skills to the governance of the organisation.

The board's role is to provide the overall governance for the organization, with the aim of furthering the organisation's strategic direction and upholding its values.

Leanne Griffiths	Chair - Community Representative
Lisa Miller	Committee Member - Community Representative
John De Jonge	Committee Member - Keiraview Representative
Kirsty Shee	Committee Member - Community Representative
Jasmina Micevski	Committee Member - Wallaroo Representative
Jacqueline Girvan	Committee Member - Jerry Bailey Representative
Cathy Parker	Committee Member - Smith Street Representative



CEO and Chair Report



The past 12 months has been rewarding and testing for the organisation providing opportunities for growth, change and unprecedented challenge due to the South Coast Bushfires and the onset of COVID - 19. What became a global pandemic, challenged us to change and innovate to maintain effective service delivery and connectedness with our families, students, communities and each other.

and their staff for their commitment, tenacity and willingness to adapt to evolving changes in policy, process and practice. While other business types were locked down, we kept working, providing an essential and effective service to the community and we unreservedly thank all our employees for their courage, dedication, support and contribution during this period. As an organisation, all these efforts have ensured our sustainability in a difficult time, we have become stronger, with new knowledge, skills and ways of connecting with each other and stakeholders across the communities where we work.

The devastation of the 2020 South Coast bushfires, had a significant impact on our Shoalhaven services and their communities, this was felt across the organisation as we came together to support one another. As a result of the bushfires, we have worked with service teams and sought expert advice to ensure our policies, processes and bushfire plans are reflective of what each service community requires should this occur again. As the bush regenerates, we are implementing strategies such as the BeYou Bushfire Response Program to support our services and communities to heal. We thank our teams for their resilience and commitment to their children, families and communities during this time.

At ECTARC we strive to practice our values to maintain a positive, collaborative culture that enables us to function at our very best and ensures the wellbeing of and safety of our employees and all those we work with. We continue to work for social impact, enriching the lives of children, families and students through quality learning and a range of funded projects and partnerships.

It was very rewarding in October 2019, to become the official owners of our current and adjoining premises. This provides us with much needed additional space for our head office and training functions. We have engaged an architect to collaborate with us on how best to refurbish the space to optimise the potential. We are excited that Curijo, an Aboriginal owned business are leasing space in our new premises to establish and operate their Illawarra office.

Our people are incredible and their work during the pandemic has provided our families and students with consistency, support and alternative ways of teaching and connecting with each other. We acknowledge the leadership teams across the organisation

In March 2020, we launched our rebrand from IACC Early Childhood services and ECTARC Training services to one entity - ECTARC Early Childhood Services and Training. Having a single name, logo, website and so on



strengthens the organisation and better reflects the full breadth of our capability.

Our reconciliation journey continues. In the second half of 2019 we established the ECTARC Reconciliation Working Group. Members are Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal representatives from across the organisation and we have one Aboriginal community member – Tina McGhie, to support our learning and understanding as we develop a Reconciliation Action Plan for the organisation.

While taking care of others is part of our daily work it is equally important for us to take care of ourselves. We are committed to providing mentally healthy workplaces that are safe and without risk to health, including psychological health. We are implementing risk management processes for psychosocial hazards and factors in the workplace including new policies and procedures, the establishment of wellbeing champions in each service and the introduction of an annual People at Work Survey. This year 178 of 200 ECTARC employees completed the survey and it is pleasing to note that our employee satisfaction rate is 87.5%. The survey results will assist us in working with teams across the organisation to recognise and celebrate the things we do well and implement strategies and actions to address any hazards

and risks identified.

The excellent results of the ECTARC Training Services Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) Audit, confirms our commitment to providing relevant, effective training and education for the early education and care sector. The audit showed compliance with the National VET Quality Framework across all areas – a fantastic outcome. This evidence of commitment to quality training was also reflected in this year's National Centre for Vocational Education (NCVER) Student Outcomes Report. It is so pleasing to see that the number of students satisfied with the quality of training has increased from 91.0%



to 95.6% compared to all other VET providers across Australia, at 88.1%. This validates the high quality of our training, assessment and ECTARC learning resources.

Our services continue to meet or exceed the National Quality Standards. ECTARC Jerry Bailey underwent Assessment and Rating in December 2019. As part of this process, they participated in the NSW Department of Education Self-Assessment for Quality





Improvement Pilot. Congratulations to the service who achieved Exceeding across all seven Quality Areas. This experience has helped confirm our internal self-assessment tools and practice across the organisation.

Keeping children safe is everyone's business and in the next 12 months we will continue our commitment to being a child safe organisation, guided by the Child Safe Standards – a framework for making organisations safer for children.

Many thanks to the families and students who continue to place their trust in us, working together we can create opportunities where collaboration, inclusiveness, respect, innovation and learning thrives.

Thank you to the ECTARC Board for their thoughtful governance and commitment to the organisation and many thanks to the agencies and funding bodies we work with for their collaboration and support of our work

As we celebrate our 35th year, we look forward to continuing our journey as a successful, financially secure organisation where our capability and expertise is recognised across the sectors we work in.

in 2021, creating the next footsteps into our future, a new strategic plan will guide us to take on new challenges and respond to opportunities as they arise, always keeping children, families and students the core focus of the work we do.

Jan Langtry, CEO and Leanne Griffiths, Chair

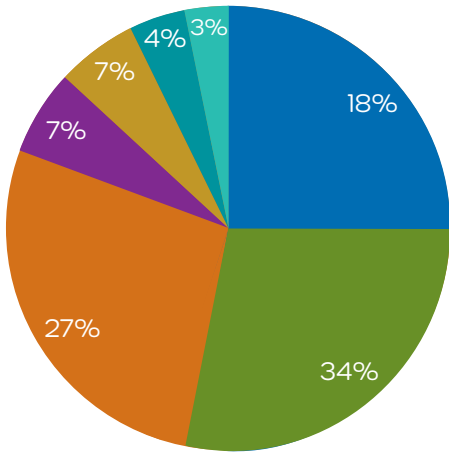
At ECTARC we recognise that our employees are the heart of the organisation, our greatest asset! We are in awe of their ability to provide relationships, environments and teaching experiences that have such a positive impact for young children, their families and our students, transforming future outcomes in a constructive way. Thank you to you all for your leadership, professionalism, resilience and care, you are indeed what makes ECTARC a great place to work.

Our People

We are committed to investment in growing and retaining our workforce and continue to invest heavily in professional learning and resources to enhance our employees' skills and knowledge to strengthen our service delivery.



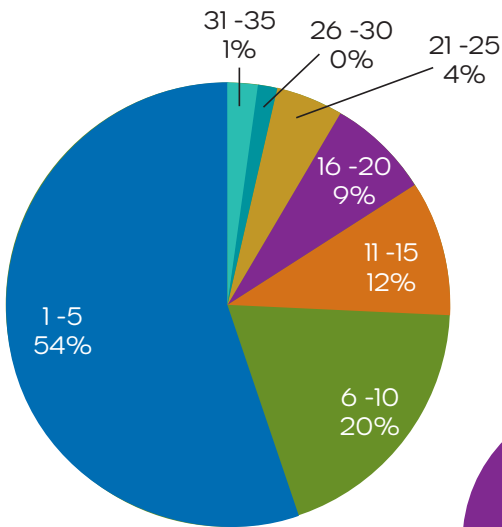
ECTARC Services Employee Qualifications



- Teacher
- Diploma
- Cert III
- Trainee
- Admin
- Cooks
- Projects



Years of Service



30 years
Jan Langtry
Michelle Sowden

25 years
Danco Stojkoski

20 years
Lisa Booth

10 years
Lauren Guevara
Kate Haydon
Megan Hill
Hayley Markham
Emma Fisher
Heather Bennett
Catherine Tauffa



Finance Report

Results

Illawarra Area Child Care Ltd is a financially strong and secure organisation based on the following strengths:

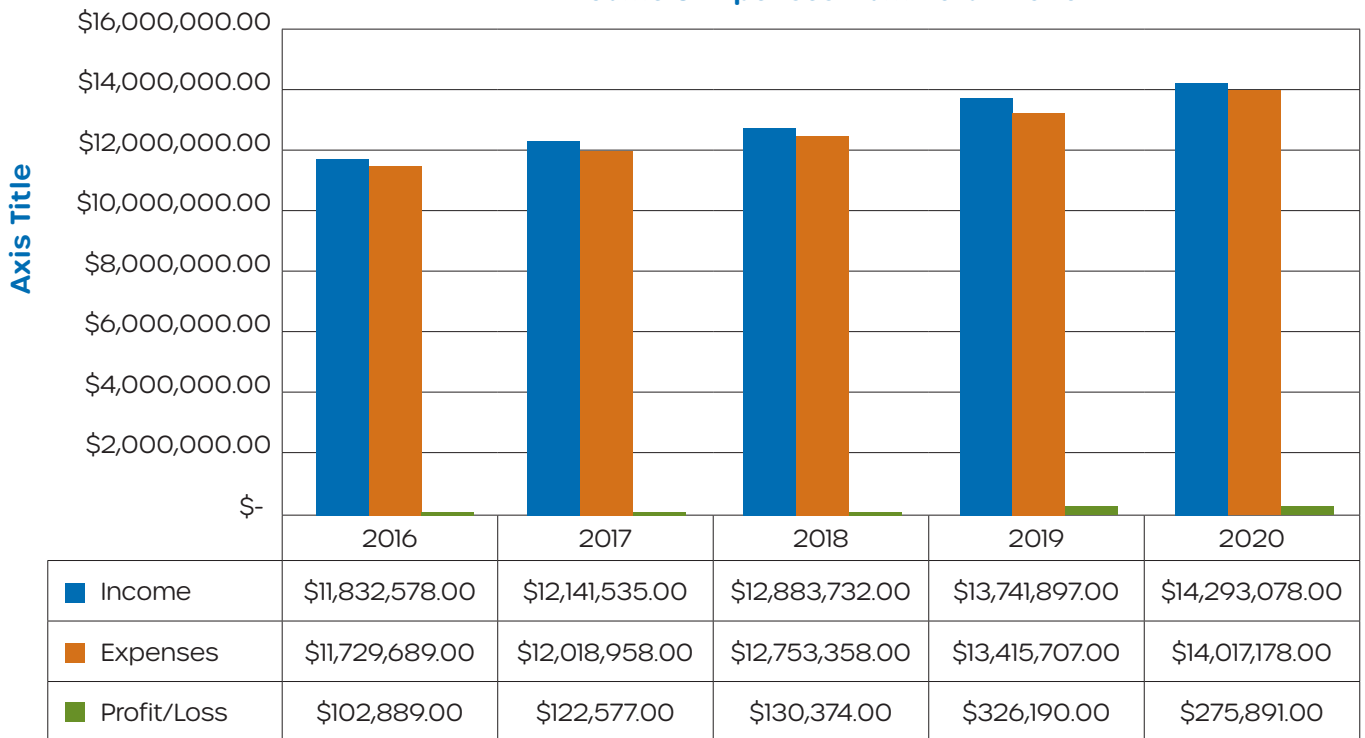
- For the last three years annual growth is around 4.00%
- All services are financially viable
- Strong financial practices and systems
- Responsive decision making on sound financial information in all areas of work
- Diverse revenue can support future development.



Strategies

- Budgets are developed that meet the needs of the service and support best outcomes for children, staff and the organisation
- Financial reports are provided to management, services and the Board for monthly review
- Each service is supported to meet optimum budget outcomes, including a surplus for future growth
- Streamlined internal control systems and spreadsheets
- Increased student direct debits for tuition fees
- Reduction in unpaid invoices
- Nearly 90% of the parent fees are one week in advance
- Implementation of a new cloud based payroll system with HR component.

Income & Expenses from 2016 - 2020

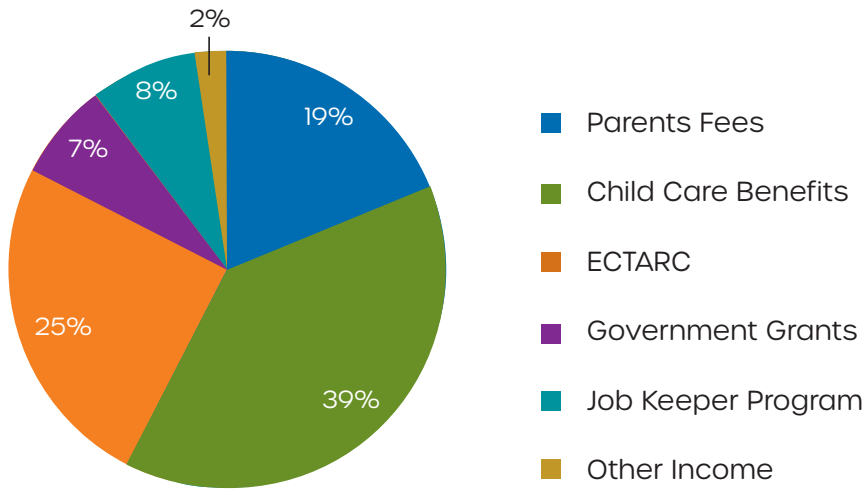


The above graph shows steady growth in Income over the past five years and an increment on profit for this year.

The growth of net assets is imperative to cover staff entitlements and support cash flow.

Finance Report

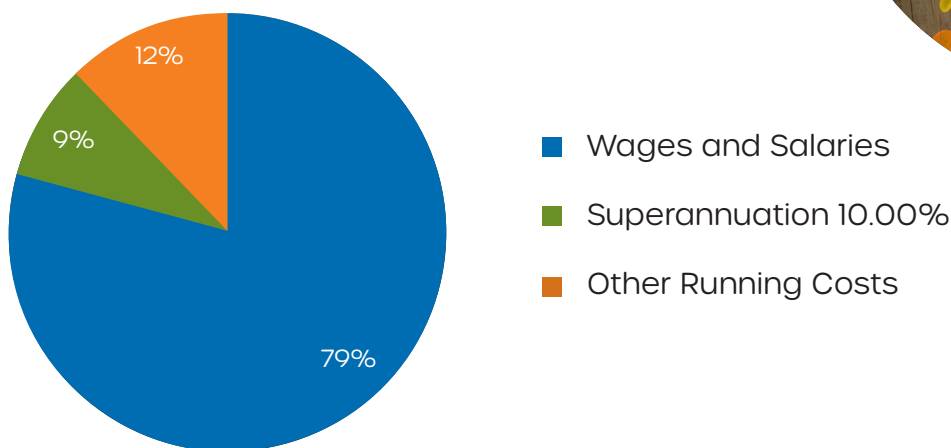
Income 2019 - 2020



The percentages above show combined parent fees, childcare benefits and government grants provide almost 73% of the total income. Approximately 99% of payments are made by electronic transfers such as direct debit, net banking, Eftpos or Bpay. The percentage of ECTARC activities is 25% and only 2% is the income from other organisation activities including interest earned from the term deposits.



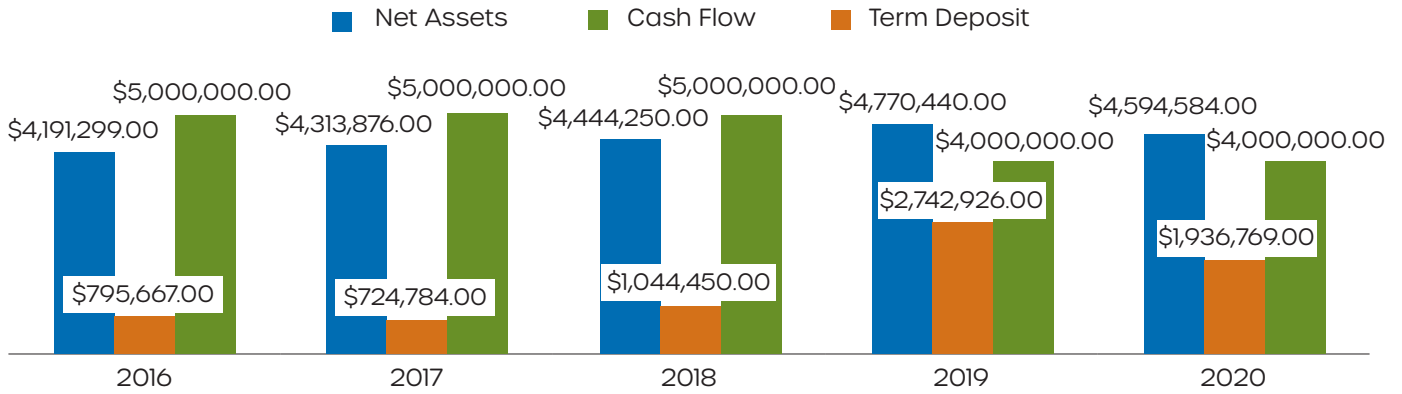
Expenses 2019 - 2020



The chart above shows the major expense for the organisation 88%, relates to staffing costs As we work through the year the Board have approved to distribute the income as follows:

- Net assets - Other financial assets of \$4,000,000.00 term deposits were reinvested and are required for staff entitlements.
- The amount of \$400,000.00 was spent on building & yard maintenance and equipment purchase.

IACC LTD - Finances



Going Forward

The annual financial statements are prepared in accordance with the International Accounting Standards and we are proud of the timely presentation of monthly financial statements to the Board of Directors, CEO and ECTARC management.

The dedicated team in the Finance Department have established a strong team work environment. ECTARC will continue to strengthen our relationships with parents, students, staff and our community partners.

Goals

- Build organisational capacity to maximise revenue growth
- To maintain efficiency of current cloud accounting systems
- To provide ongoing responsive and effective support to management and services
- Retain clients through customer service and relationship building
- Ensure financial sustainability within all ECTARC services

I would like to thank our auditors Shepherd Miller for their professionalism and support during the audit.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors, our CEO Jan Langtry and all the staff for their contribution which makes our organisation so successful.

Danco Stojkoski (FIPA)

21st October 2020




Highlights



Alunga
celebrates
30 years



Hospital Hill
celebrates
30 years



Jerry Bailey
rated as
Exceeding
NQS



ECTARC ASQA
compliance
monitoring audit-
the audit showed
compliance with
the National VET
Quality Framework
across all areas



Shayd Flegg
Illawarra Training
Awards
Winner
Trainee of
the Year



Rebrand To
ECTARC Early
Childhood
Education and
Training
Services



ECTARC NSW
Regional Training Awards
Regional Finalists
Janaya Milgate
Jacqueline Koutsoubos
Shayd Flegg
Nicole Bownas
Chey-Anne Cooper
Slade Tribe



Janaya Millgate
NSW Training Awards
Winner
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Student of
the Year

Practising our values - Quality Early Learning and Education

Training for our students

The excellent results of the ECTARC Training Services ASQA Audit confirmed their commitment to providing relevant effective training and education for the early childhood sector. The audit achieved compliance with the National VET Quality Framework across all areas - a fantastic outcome.

Training Contracts have been renewed with the NSW, ACT and QLD Governments to deliver funded early childhood qualifications and we continue to deliver high quality accredited, non-accredited and NESAs endorsed professional learning across the sector. In 2020, 120 webinars and workshops were presented to 2319 participants.

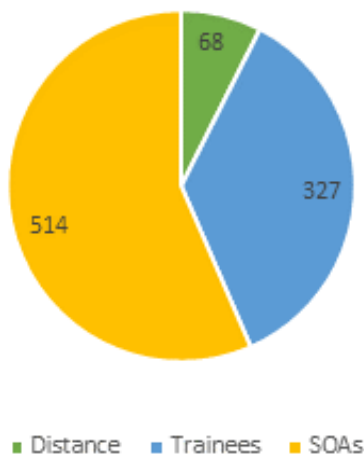


NSVER VET STUDENT OUTCOMES 2019 REPORT

98.7% to 98.9% of students responded that they achieved their main reason for doing the training compared to all training providers at 83.9%.

92.7% to 94.2% of students said they would recommend ECTARC as their training provider compared to all training providers at 88.9%.

Qualifications / SOAs issued Jul'2019 - Jun'2020

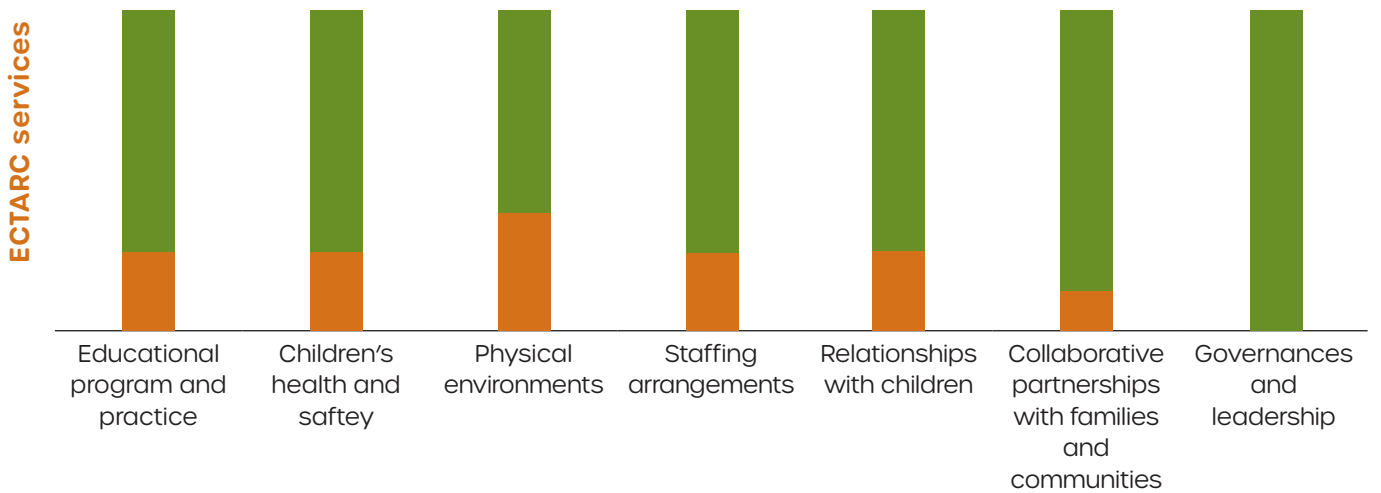


Embedding Continuous Improvement

ECTARC Early Childhood Services consistently meet or exceed the National benchmarks across all seven quality areas. Organisational leadership nurtures and supports continuous improvement, creating a culture that promotes professional discussions and critical reflection, strengthened through access to professional resources and tools.

The ECTARC Self-assessment in Action Resource launched in 2020, consolidates each service's sustained approach to the practice of self-assessment – a key indicator of quality improvement.

Embedded Continuous Improvement



Across all Quality Areas

■ Working towards
 ■ Meeting
 ■ Exceeding





Learning through play

To raise awareness and celebrate the importance of early childhood education, ECTARC Hospital Hill took part in national Early Learning Matters Week. During the week, the Children were provided with the opportunity to explore natural materials using their senses - touch, smell, sound and sight. Through their exploration, the children were able to begin to grow an appreciation and connection of natural environments.



UOW PRSIST Program - Self Regulation Learning

ECTARC The Basin have been supporting children to develop self-regulation skills through embedding group games into our daily curriculum. These are important skills for both school and life as they teach children how to wait their turn, to concentrate on the activity and to be resilient in terms of coping strategies. Each week we play a new game. One game that has made the biggest impact is 'follow the leader'. In this game the children are required to line up, follow the child in front of them, follow the instructions of the leader, wait for their turn to be the leader and keep a distance from the person in front or behind. We have noticed children transferring the concept of 'I am the leader now but then it's your turn' into their everyday play.

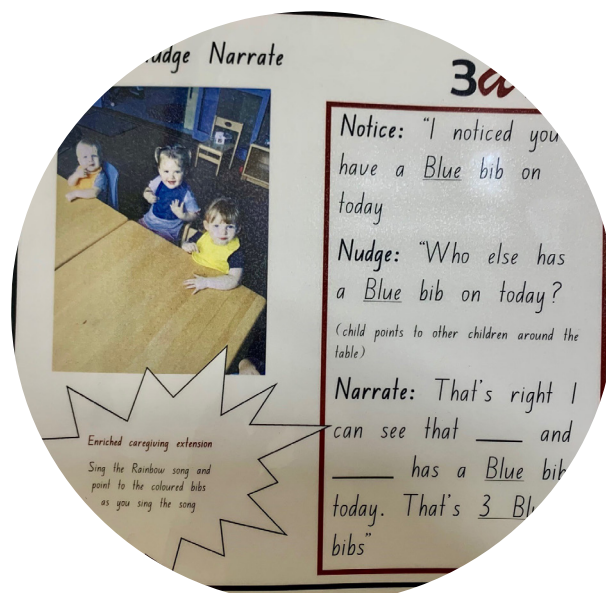


Supporting Children's language development

We recognise the huge impact Early learning and Education has on young children's early brain development. Over the past year educators at ECTARC Alunga and Wallaroo participated in the Enriching Language Through Practice Project delivered by ECTARC with Communities for Children. The project implemented the 3a Abecedarian Approach Australia Program which supports children's language development from birth to 3 years through enriched care giving. The resources and elements of the program were introduced to the early learning room to promote the 3a project, educators engaged in enriched caregiving with the children by using different strategies from the project such as, the 3N strategy (notice, nudge, narrate), conversational reading (see, show, say) and learning games.



Educators attended the 3a training over a 6 week period and shared their training with the team by mentoring and leading professional discussions at team meetings and in daily practice. Strategies were also shared with families to use at home. Our future goal for the 3a project at Alunga is to continue to encourage family involvement in the project by providing literacy packs and learning games for families to borrow to promote children's early literacy knowledge. Educators documented their shared learning experiences and outlined how a simple cycle of "SEE, SHOW & SAY" can highlight children's success in language acquisition and stretch their verbalisations and understanding while reading a simple book.



Involving our families in children's learning

Educators at Keiraview are passionate and united in providing quality early learning experiences for children. During the COVID - 19 lockdown period they explored a variety of innovative ways to reach out to families to support early learning at home. This included educators performing well loved songs which were posted onto the ECTARC online documentation portal - ChildCarers, for all to enjoy. Using some of the children's favourite books, educators recorded story time sessions to share with children at home. The story time sessions were interactive so children could join in with the voices and actions and also say hello to their friends at home and let them know they were missing them. These activities supported children at home to feel a sense of connectedness with their peers and educators at the service and were greatly appreciated by families.



Collaborating with children on their learning

Floorbooks are now an embedded tool we use for program planning at ECTARC Jerry Bailey. Adapted from Claire Warden's talking and thinking floorbooks, we use this tool to clearly capture children's voices. We have a dedicated outdoor floorbook to support our outdoor program planning.

Reflecting on our documentation, allowed us to





Sway - Sounds, Words, Aboriginal Language and Yarning



see that children were moving different pieces of equipment, parts and pieces across the outdoor space to make things. This led to a discussion involving all team members for a consistent approach. Educators have supported the children's initiatives and have started facilitating children's play through scaffolding (Vygotsky 1967) techniques to support loose parts play in our outdoor environment.

Listening, consulting with and seeing children as competent and capable learners (outcome 4, The Early Years Learning Framework) within their own space, is important, It allows children to develop creativity, supports initiative, exploration, allows for failures and then for children and educators to delight in their successes (Circle of security).

Educators from ECTARC The Basin and ECTARC Clipper Road attended a three-day oral language & early literacy program based on Aboriginal knowledge, culture & stories. The educators were inspired after networking with other educators, early Intervention and speech therapists about how to embed a strong language & literacy program into their services whilst also incorporating Aboriginal culture.

The SWAY components (S-Sounds, W-Words, A-Aboriginal Language, Y- Yarning) are delivered in a framework with 6 units that is both practical & possible to deliver in the early childhood setting.

One of the main goals of SWAY, is to build capacity of teaching staff through training & ongoing mentoring. Mentoring is accessed by both educators & children in targeted sessions with a speech therapist on a weekly basis. These targeted sessions continue to be a great source of knowledge for educators to engage with as they continue to embed what they have learnt. They are also a great resource to access if children are having difficulties in the areas of learning covered through this program.



Supporting children through art therapy

In early 2020, ECTARC Clipper Road sought funding through the Community Grants Program to upskill educators in the use of art therapy to support children in the service, particularly those with trauma backgrounds. Art therapist and educator Elise Fenn was engaged to run a full day workshop and spend time in the service to implement learning and develop the capacity and confidence of the educators to utilise art with the children.

The project began as a one-day training workshop accompanied by five days of in-centre support by the art therapist. It's important to note that whilst this project was facilitated by a registered art therapist, it is not designed to deliver 'therapy' to children, but to up-skill educators to work in supportive ways utilising the benefits of art making in the early years.

The project raised awareness for the educators on the benefits of engaging in art with young children from a 'developmental' and 'trauma-informed' perspective, providing additional and ongoing support to children.



Educators learnt that the process of creating art could help children access areas of the brain that are locked off by trauma. Art can be used with children as a form of communication and self-expression, which is particularly important for children who have limited vocabulary or language skills. This could support children to co-regulate with the educator and self-regulate through the calming effect of tactile processes fostering a sense of belonging in the service and supporting the healing process for children.



Practising our values - Respect and Diversity

Reconciliation Commitment Statement

ECTARC Early Education and Training services is located on Dhawaral land at Warrawong NSW and provides Early Education services to children and families across the Dhawaral and Yuin nations in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven. In addition, we provide training services to students across Australia.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the lands across this country we live in and share. We recognise and value the strengths, skills and contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring to our organisation and the wider community.

Through our first RAP we aim to encourage and enable staff to gain a better understanding and respect of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and to celebrate this in our service delivery to children,



families and students. We also strive to create new relationships and nurture existing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within our workplace and broader community.

In 2019 we established a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to formalise our journey and ongoing commitment towards advancing reconciliation in our communities. The Reconciliation Working Group comprises of representatives from across the organisation including ECTARC Board members, senior management, staff representatives and external organisations (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) who will be working together to develop and support the implementation of ECTARC's first Reconciliation Action Plan.

Reconciliation Action Working Group Members

Donna Bartley	ECTARC Training Services
Jasmin Wilson	Warilla Education and Care Service
Sandi Roser	ECTARC Smith Street
Jenna Young	ECTARC Wallaroo
Caterina Sacco	ECTARC Training Services
Deb Unwin	ECTARC Clipper Road
Mary Dimou	ECTARC Jerry Bailey
Tina McGhie	Curijo
Leanne Griffiths	ECTARC Board
Jacquie Girvan	ECTARC Board
Kathryn Barker	ECTARC Early Childhood Manager -Services
Melissa Wicks	ECTARC Early Childhood Manager - Operations
Jan Langtry	ECTARC CEO





Celebrating National Reconciliation Week

ECTARC were proud to celebrate National Reconciliation Week 2020 – In This Together. Whilst COVID-19 prevented us from joining community celebrations, we were able to hold a virtual morning tea at head office with the team from Curijo, an Aboriginal owned business who we work closely with. Curijo generously provided the acknowledgement to country and lead the group in a fun quiz to strengthen our cultural knowledge and understanding. National Reconciliation Week was an opportunity across the organisation to reflect on how we can continue to contribute to reconciliation in Australia.

Facilitating training opportunities

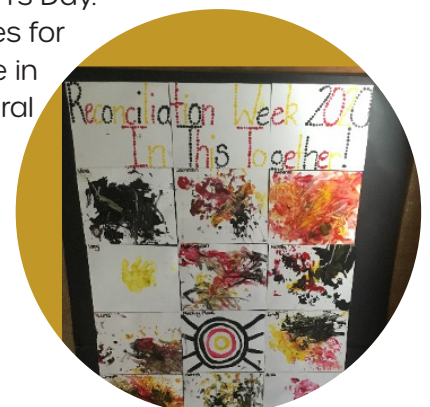
ECTARC training services has a proud history of working closely with Aboriginal communities. Currently ECTARC is delivering training and support to 71 Aboriginal students in 46 EC services throughout NSW, ACT and Qld. This year we are very proud to have two of our Aboriginal Certificate III trainees recognised as part of the NSW Training Awards. Janaya Millgate was awarded the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year at the Central and Northern Sydney Region Training Awards and Chey-Anne Cooper was awarded the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year

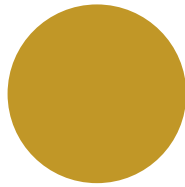
of abilities and backgrounds, supporting them to develop their skills, knowledge and improve employment opportunities.

Reconciliation in action

Our organisation has developed a strong working partnership with Gumaraa, a local Aboriginal cultural experience and education company. Each service has participated in a 10-week program engaging children and educators in weekly activities to learn Aboriginal language, song, dance, art and traditions to further our knowledge and understanding.

During the year, the children at ECTARC Hospital Hill acknowledged and celebrated National Reconciliation Week and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day. Providing opportunities for children to participate in these and other cultural experiences, upholds each child's right to have their cultures identity ability and strengths acknowledged and valued.





At ECTARC The Basin, 43% of the children and families that attend service are Aboriginal. As a service we have a strong commitment to practising respect and diversity in our work every day. We have embedded many Aboriginal cultural practices into our daily routines. Each morning our children sit in a circle for yarning time. Children and educators all sit on the yarning mat at the same level, as this is a symbol in Aboriginal culture that we are all equal and all have a voice and have a right to speak and be listened to. We have taught the children several Aboriginal Dhurga words such as Bilima (turtle) and Gari (snake) which are our room names. The children can also sing heads, shoulders knees and toes in Dhurga. Each year we go on an excursion to Booderee National Park and walk the Koori Garden Trail to learn about bush tucker, Aboriginal culture and traditions, furthering our knowledge and understanding.



At ECTARC Sanctuary Point the team reflected on information educators have gathered about how to pay their respects to the traditional landowners and ways they could introduce a

Yarning circle for morning group times. This has been implemented and the children have been responding well, learning the acknowledgement to country and then having a yarn about the daily activities and the children's interests.

During the year the children were also privileged to have one of our fathers visit the service to share his culture and knowledge with us. The children were able to see and learn about our friend's heritage and some of the artefacts used in Aboriginal culture to hunt or collect food with, or for making music. We also enjoyed acting out the movements of animals to the sound of the didgeridoo.



Practising our values - Ethical Practice

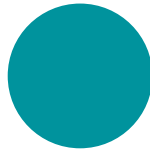
Promoting ethical practice at ECTARC Short Street

This year at our planning day educators reflected on our own personal values and how they reflect in our service practice. We wrote our goals and planted them with a tree in the garden at the end of the two planning days to grow and be nurtured this year. We developed a team treaty which is displayed along with the values we chose, that we hold and believe to be important.

At the end of the day we worked together to make 'apple pita', which three educators knew how to do using their own method. We all learnt something new, educators paired up with each other to help someone who had never done it before. It was team building and knowledge sharing at its best, learning new skills and accepting different ways of doing things.

No one could have predicted how important this sharing of culture and values would be, as a result we started the year as a strongly bonded team. Growing food and cooking with the children has always been a big part of our program and experiencing what it must be like for children to learn something new, reinforced how significant our planning day activities were to reflect on our own practice





Introducing the Focus Conversations Program

In late 2019, we commenced a review of our performance review process, which was outdated and time consuming. We were seeking a simplified process that included regular opportunities for our leaders to engage in meaningful performance conversations with our employees.

In 2020 we were excited to launch ECTARC's new performance review system **Focus Conversations**, a targeted, individualised and innovative program that promotes a positive organisation culture and professional learning community. The Focus Conversation program aligns with our vision of Enriching Futures-

enabling our employees to grow and thrive professionally.

Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic

The unprecedented arrival of COVID-19 has demanded us to work ethically and responsibly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff and community.. Despite challenges, whilst other business types were in lockdown, all ECTARC services remained operational to provide an essential service to our children, families and students.

Policy, processes and protocols in the work environment, were reviewed, to ensure ECTARC complied with government and health recommendations and guidelines. New ways of working have been established across our services, including working from home where appropriate, entry and exit protocols and using technology to conduct meetings and practical assessments for our students, connecting with families and others. All these efforts have ensured our organisational sustainability in a difficult period. We recognise the courage and commitment of our staff during this time.



Ethical practice

The excellent results of the ECTARC Training Services ASQA Audit confirmed their commitment to providing relevant effective training and education for the early childhood sector. The audit achieved compliance with the National VET Quality Framework across all areas - a fantastic outcome.



Practising our values - Collaborative Relationships

ECTARC training Services

We are delighted to continue our collaborative partnership with the NSW Office of Preventative Health (OPH).

ECTARC supported 2096 participants to complete pre recorded Munch & Move training. Due to Covid 19 face to face workshops planned for Cooks and Educational leaders and physical activity in 2020 did not proceed.

This training will be converted to be presented as webinars. We continued online forum support, providing reflective topics for discussion.



Enriching Language through Practice (ELTP)



We are proud to continue our positive, collaborative relationship with Barnardos Communities for Children Shellharbour. Over the years we have worked together to deliver a range of projects that build community capacity and strengthen outcomes for children in the Shellharbour LGA. Currently, we are funded to deliver the Enriching Language through Practice Project until June 2021. This project will deliver the 3a program to 4 ECEC services in the Shellharbour LGA focusing on children aged 0-3 years.

The 3a - Abecedarian Approach places a priority on children's language; because language, based on research evidence, is essential to early learning and school readiness.



Celebrating National Families Week

At ECTARC Smith Street we celebrated National Families Week with a family wall. The children drew pictures of their families and bought in photos of their families. The children were proud to find their families on the wall and point them out to their friends. They were excited to also see the Educators families on the wall. This created a link for our families during a time when they were unable to come into the playrooms to learn about the children's friends and their families.

We also joined with families to take on the big veggie crunch a Department of Health initiative to encourage children to have a healthier diet. We sent home challenges for families to include children in cooking activities and to count the vegetables in their meals. The children brought in photos of them cooking at home, and at the service we identified, tasted and experimented with different vegetables. Families brought in vegetables for the fruit bowl and we also planted vegetables at the service.



Practising our values - Innovation and Sustainability

An innovative approach to inclusion

Warilla Education and Care Service has an important focus on Collaborative relationships through the Positive Partnership Project which is funded through Communities for Children Shellharbour. Positive Partnerships is an innovative inclusion model that brings early childhood, and early childhood intervention professionals together to support children who are vulnerable, have diagnosed or undiagnosed disabilities and experienced trauma and their families. The funding has enabled educators to work alongside a Child and Family Practitioner, Occupational Therapist and Psychologist to upskill and strengthen educator capacity to support children and families at the service. Educators have completed play therapy training on the DIR Floor Time model which is a social and emotional framework that highlights the power of relationships and emotional connections to fuel development. Through a deep understanding of the "D" and the "I", we can use the "R" to promote healthy development and help every child reach their fullest potential. Educators have engaged in mentoring sessions with the Occupational therapist and Psychologist to analyse a focus child of their choice. Educators then share their analysis and educator/child goals with the team.



Educators have learnt how to be amazing playpartners, analyse behaviour, use our relationship to progress development and reduce challenging behaviour, meet children's sensory needs, make adaptations to the curriculum to meet individual children's needs and set goals for children implementing a strengths based framework.

Educators have learnt strategies to navigate challenging conversations with families and refer families to appropriate agencies as requires. Through quality early learning and education, we are helping to close the gap for vulnerable children.



Responding to Challenges

Wallaroo has reflected ECTARC's values of Innovation and Sustainability throughout the past year. COVID-19 has challenged us to become more innovative ensuring we continue to build relationships with our families and wider community, strengthening our connections through new ways of doing things.

Educators created a range of videos to share with children, families and the community. Children and educators were recorded singing songs, reading books and dancing to their favourite music and videos which highlighted the daily experiences for the children in each playroom. These videos were sent to families and our grand friends in the local nursing home who we have been unable to visit.

Children became quite aware of the impact COVID19 was having on nurses and doctors and decided to send our local hospital pictures of encouragement. This created lots of discussion which supported children's learning and understanding of COVID-19.

We continued to build collaborative relationships with all families, those who were engaged in the service and those who were self-isolating in their homes. The service organised a drive through Hello, where educators and children gathered in the front gated area of the service and danced and waved to their friends as children and their families drove through the car park and picked up an activity pack to take home. This was a wonderful way the children, families and educators to maintain a connection during this period.



Promoting sustainable practice with children

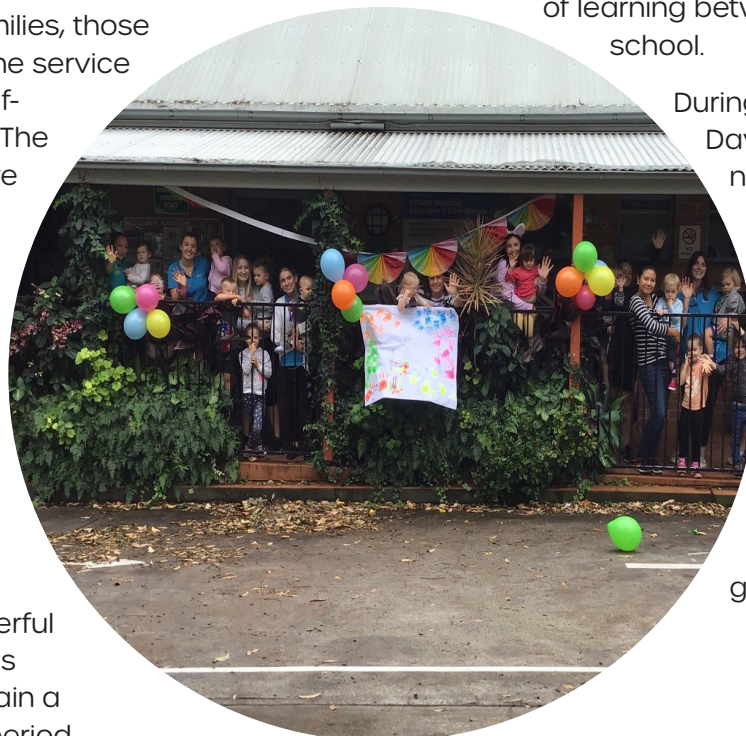
At ECTARC Short Street we have worked hard on our composting practices, using the food scraps from mealtimes to start the composting process in the bokashi bins before being moved to our compost bins.

As part of composting week, the children learnt about the different layers needed for composting to occur and make their own mini version in a clear bottle so they could see both the layers and the process. .

For Clean-up Australia Day, the educators took the children out to our Community Garden located at the side of the building to help pick up some of the rubbish, with educators help, the children were able to sort the rubbish into the correct bins.

We have also been connecting with families through gardening.

Earlier in the year we had families share plants which they have grown at home and come to help us plant in our community garden. During COVID-19 lockdown, we included a gardening pack with sunflower seeds which families could come and pick up and plant at home. The children at the service planted their seeds in our community garden. This provided continuity of learning between home and school.



During 'Pay it Forward Day' we gave our neighbouring childcare centre a card and a pack of sunflower seeds for them to grow. In return we received a whole watermelon and a pack of watermelon seeds to plant in our garden.

Innovation at ECTARC Training Services

New learning resources have been developed to support the delivery of the Certificate IV in Leadership and Management qualification. These innovative, comprehensive learning resources are designed to enhance leadership knowledge and skills in existing and aspiring leaders.

New programs were developed for the NSW Department of Education-Early Childhood Directorate, to deliver professional development sessions to early childhood educators across the sector.

- The 'Learning Through Play' program provided educators with strategies to foster children's social, communication and cognitive skills through play. 41 face to face training sessions were held across NSW and 26 webinars were delivered.
- The "Sleep and Rest program, will provide training to reduce the risk to children by building the capacity of educators about safe sleep and rest practices. This face to face program will be converted to webinars due to COVID-19.



The Permanency Support Program (PSP) was developed in partnership with Aboriginal owned business, Curijo, to

establish a Learning Hub to

provide training to caseworkers and case work managers in out of home care services across NSW. The program commenced in early 2020, ECTARC provides support around the training delivery and registration processes in addition to consultation and planning.

The ECTARC Board have continued to fund the initiative to have a Family & Community facilitator at ECTARC Clipper Road. This initiative supports engagement of vulnerable families and children at the service, identifies support needs and referral pathways through building trusting positive relationships with families.



ECTARC students in NSW



Student Map





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