



Early Childhood
Intervention Australia
(NSW Chapter) Inc.

24th ANNUAL ECIA NSW CONFERENCE



**Building capacity in early childhood
intervention practice: How do we do it?**

27th – 28th October 2011

Novotel Sydney Brighton Beach

President's message



On behalf of Early Childhood Intervention Australia (NSW Chapter) I welcome you to our 24th Annual State Conference.

This is a period of growth and change for the early childhood intervention sector which is supported by state and federal funding increases. We have the opportunity to shape this growth, based on over 20 years of experience in delivering family-centred services in NSW. The conference theme, ***Building capacity in early childhood intervention practice: How do we do it?***, provides a focus for us to share information from: research projects; family & professional experience; innovative programmes and practice-based evidence. Together, we can build capacity in early childhood intervention practice, to support the well-being of children with disabilities and their families.

I would like to thank the conference committee for their work in organizing this event. On behalf of the committee and ECIA NSW, I hope the next two days provide you with many opportunities to build and strengthen relationships and to share rewarding ideas on one of the most important issues facing the early childhood intervention sector today.

Sylvana Mahmic
President

Conference Committee

Robyn Brice
Janelle Burke
Rani Dibley
Karen Edwards
Rosemary Flavel (*ECIA NSW Executive Officer*)
Joy Leach
Susan Macgillicuddy (*Conference Convenor*)
Jenny Nalder

Much support was also provided by Jane Martin
(*ECIA NSW Administrative Officer*)

We wish to thank the NSW Government Departments of:

- Education and Communities
- Family and Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care



Their support has assisted in a number of ways, including helping to provide sponsorships and ensuring a wide range of participation.

DISCLAIMERS

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The views and / or material presented at this conference are those of the individual presenters or exhibitors and do not necessarily reflect the views of, or imply endorsement by Early Childhood Intervention Australia (NSW Chapter) Inc.

In the event of industrial disruptions or service provider failures, the Early Childhood Intervention Australia (NSW Chapter) Inc. conference organising committee members accept no responsibility for losses incurred by delegates and partners.



**Early Childhood
Intervention Australia**
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Graphic Design by Wendy McEvilly



General Information

Registration and Information

The Registration and Information desk is located outside the Endeavour Grand Ballroom on the Conference Floor (Level 2), and is open from 8am to 5pm daily.

Conference Committee

Members of the committee are wearing black, and can be identified by their special badge. Please do not hesitate to approach them if you have any questions, or need help finding your way around.

Name Tags

Delegates are reminded that, for security and identification reasons, name badges must be worn at all times during the conference opening hours.

Keynote Addresses

All Keynote Addresses are being held in the Endeavour Grand Ballroom, Conference Floor (Level 2).

Concurrent Sessions

All presentations are taking place in break-out rooms on the Conference Floor (Level 2). Pre-booking of concurrent presentations is not required. However, room capacities for individual sessions vary, and all have an upper limit on the number of delegates who can attend. This is for your safety and comfort, so admittance to all concurrent sessions will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The Conference Committee cannot predict the popularity of any session; if there is a presentation that you particularly want to see, we strongly suggest you arrive early to secure a seat.

Trade Displays

Exhibitors will be spread across the area adjacent to the Endeavour Grand Ballroom. We encourage you to take some time to explore the displays and meet the exhibitors during the refreshment and meal breaks.

Poster Presentations

Posters are located in the foyer and display area near to the Endeavour Grand Ballroom and can be viewed throughout the conference. On both Thursday & Friday, poster authors will be available in this area during Morning Tea time to discuss the content of their material.

Catering

The table-service conference breakfast will be served in the Endeavour Grand Ballroom on Friday morning.

Morning and afternoon tea will be served in several locations on the Conference Floor (Level 2).

Lunch will also be served in several locations in this area. Delegates are welcome to then take their meal to eat at tables in the Endeavour Grand Ballroom.

People who notified special dietary requirements on their registration form should ask at the Registration and Information desk regarding catering arrangements.

Toilets

These can be found in 2 locations on the Conference Floor: on the far side of the Pre-function area (beyond the Lobby stairs); and behind the main hotel lifts, near to the La Perouse rooms. This location includes an accessible toilet.

Networking Opportunities

Conference is always a great opportunity to network with other early childhood intervention professionals and parents. We have set aside a time for those interested in participating in a directed networking group. Please join this facilitated session at 12.30 on Friday in La Perouse 1. It will focus on inclusion, the Early Years Learning Framework and what it means for ECI.

Messages

During the conference, urgent messages can be forwarded to delegates through an ECIA mobile number: 0449 702 789.

There will also be a message board located next to the Registration and Information desk. Delegates can use the board to make contact with other delegates. Messages can be collected from the board throughout the conference. It is recommended that delegates check the message board regularly.

Luggage Storage

Luggage can be checked in at the Novotel's main desk on the Ground Floor on Thursday and/or Friday, for collection in the afternoon.

Mobile Phones

In consideration of presenters and other attendees, please ensure mobile telephones are switched to silent during all sessions.

Smoking

The Novotel Sydney Brighton Beach is a non-smoking venue within all internal areas.

ECIA NSW Chapter Review of Activities 2010-11

This will take place on Friday morning during breakfast from 8:30am – 9:15am in the Endeavour Grand Ballroom. All conference delegates are invited to attend.



Transport

By Rail – Rockdale Station, on the Eastern Suburbs/Illawarra line, is 1.9 kms from the venue. Take Bus No. 478 or 479 (Brighton-Le-Sands) down Bay Street from Bus Stop C, to the Moate Avenue & Bay Street stop, close to the Novotel. Taxis are also available from Rockdale station.

By Air – Sydney Domestic Terminal is approximately 4 kms from the venue.

By Bus from the Airport – Sydney Buses No. 400 (Burwood) or 410 (Rockdale Station) both go from the Domestic Terminal to Rockdale Station (1.9 kms from the venue). Bus Nos. 478 or 479 (Brighton-Le-Sands) leave from Bus Stop C at Rockdale Station and go down Bay Street. The closest stop to the Novotel is the Moate Avenue & Bay Street stop. Taxis are also available from the station.

By Taxi from the Airport – The venue can be reached by taxi in approximately 10 minutes.

By Car – The Conferences page of the ECIA NSW website: www.ecia-nsw.org.au has links to maps to assist with planning the best route for reaching the venue.

Parking

Novotel

There are 3 levels of parking located directly under the venue, with internal lift access to the lobby & function rooms. This parking area is independently operated by Bayside Plaza Parking. The following rates apply:

- Day Delegates: \$10 per car, per day

- Overnight Delegates: \$25 per car, per night

(Note that overnight parking charges are valid for 24hrs from the first point of entry into the carpark and include unlimited entry and exit).

Coles Carpark

Free all-day parking is available in the Coles supermarket carpark at 36-42 Princess Street (cnr Moate Avenue).

Street Parking

Parking in surrounding streets is free but has time restrictions (mostly 2 – 4 hour limits apply.) Please check signage.

Local Dining

Below is a sample list of local restaurants located in Brighton-Le-Sands, close to the Novotel.

Bianco (Bar & Dining-Licensed)

Cnr Princess Street & Grand Parade 9567 3345

Brazilian BBQ (Brazilian & Tapas-Licensed)

369 Bay Street 9599 1889

Brighton RSL (Licensed)

351 Bay Street 9567 5157

Botany Bay Seafood (Seafood-Licensed)

128 The Grand Parade 9599 2755

Euro Bay Café & Bar (Mediterranean / Modern-Licensed)

87 Grand Parade 9597 3300

Gecko Bar & Restaurant (Mediterranean-Licensed)

Bayside Plaza 9567 3344

In the Mood for Thai (Thai-Licensed & BYO)

88 The Grand Parade 9567 8899

Jailhouse Rock (Italian Pizza / Pasta-Licensed & BYO)

115 The Grand Parade 9599 0287

Kamari (Greek-Licensed & BYO wine)

82 Grand Parade (9556 2533)

La Rousse (French-Licensed & BYO wine)

352 Bay Street 9597 4010

Le Sands Pavilion (Seafood & Modern-Licensed)

Grand Parade 9599 2128

Luck Japanese Restaurant (Japanese-Licensed & BYO wine)

309 Bay Street 9599 0500

Mezes Café, Restaurant, Bar (Modern-Licensed)

Bayside Plaza 9567 2865

Neptune Café/Restaurant (Modern-Licensed)

87 Grand Parade 9567 8590

Nakhon Thai (Thai-Licensed)

311 Bay Street 9599 8202

Nakhon Thai 2 (Thai-Licensed)

341 Bay Street 9599 8999

Petars Seafood (Seafood-Licensed)

373 Bay Street 9567 7402

Sabia (Italian-Licensed)

Grand Parade (at Le Sands Pavilion) 9599 2128

Sahra (Lebanese / Seafood-Licensed)

88A The Grand Parade 9567 2344

Ready for the next ECIA Conference?

Join us for the 25th NSW ECIA Conference
in May 2013 and for the 10th Biennial
National ECIA Conference in Perth in
August 2012!

We look forward to seeing you at both!





Keynote Speakers



Tim Moore

Senior Research Fellow
Centre for Community Child Health
Murdoch Children's Research Institute
Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne

Dr. Tim Moore trained as a teacher and psychologist at the University of Melbourne, and has worked subsequently as an educational and developmental psychologist for over 30 years, both in Australia and England, in a variety of mainstream and specialist settings. Tim was a founder member of Early Childhood Intervention Australia (Victorian Chapter) and served as its President for 10 years. He has convened numerous ECIA state and national conferences, has taken a leading role in the development of policy and training in the early childhood intervention field, and continues to be involved in ECIA(VC) activities as a member of the Executive. Prior to taking up his present position in 2000, he was Co-ordinator at Monnington Early Intervention Centre, a statewide early childhood intervention service for deaf children, for twelve years. In his current position at the Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH), Tim works with colleagues from different disciplines in providing advice to state and federal government and non-government agencies on best practices in early childhood, and in conducting research and project work in generalist and specialist early childhood services and in service development. He has been the principal writer on numerous CCCH reviews, reports and policy briefs, including an analysis of the training needs of early childhood intervention professionals, and a review of principles and evidence for family-centred practice. Most recently, he has completed a major literature review of early childhood intervention services for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in Victoria.

THURSDAY 9.30 – 10.45am

Keynote Address: Rethinking early childhood intervention services: Implications for policy and practice

Endeavour Grand Ballroom

Drawing on a recent major literature review of early childhood intervention services, this paper will examine the aims and rationale for early childhood intervention services, and what is known about effective practices. The implications of the resulting conceptualisation of the aims of early childhood intervention services for policy and practice will then be considered. The policy implications to be explored including the question of the compatibility of the new federal funding with models of best practice. The practice implications include how to build the capacity of children, families, and mainstream early childhood services, as well as early childhood intervention services themselves.



Robyn Mildon

Director of Knowledge Exchange
Parenting Research Centre, Melbourne

Dr. Robyn Mildon's work focusses on using innovative strategies to improve the use of evidence-based information and practice in parenting education, family support and child welfare programmes; and closing the gap between 'what we know' and 'what we do' by improving the science and practice of implementation of evidence-based practices and programmes. She co-directs several national projects focussing on improving the well-being of children and families with multiple and complex needs. These include intensive family support in urban and remote areas of the Northern Territory; Healthy Start (a capacity-building strategy for practitioners, policy makers and researchers supporting parents with learning difficulties and their children); and MyTime programmes. Robyn is also a developer of Parenting Young Children, a home-based education programme for parents with learning difficulties, aimed at improving positive parent-child interactions and the parents' skills. She completed her PhD in psychology at RMIT University, focussing on use of best practice behaviour support strategies by parents with learning difficulties to decrease problem behaviours in their young children. Robyn has published numerous papers in peer-reviewed journals, edited book chapters and presented at national and international conferences, including invited keynote presentations, and invited training and other technical assistance.

THURSDAY 1.30 – 2.45pm

Keynote Address: Supporting early childhood practice: Building our capacity to better support parents with an intellectual disability and their children

Endeavour Grand Ballroom

To maximise benefits to children and their families, the use of effective practices and service frameworks needs to be supported across early childhood settings. Research in Australia and internationally has shown that parents with an intellectual disability are an especially vulnerable group of families. Professionals across a number of services sectors, including early childhood, often report significant difficulties in meeting the needs of these families. To assist with this, for more than two decades researchers and programme developers have focussed a great deal of attention on the identification of evidence-based practices and programmes which have been demonstrated to effectively support these families. However, much less attention has been paid to what is needed to build the capacity of the service sectors to effectively implement these in a range of real-world early childhood settings. Unfortunately, without proper implementation, even the most promising programmes and practices can be rendered ineffective. This presentation will provide an overview of current thinking in the use and application of evidence-based practices to support these families, including the strategies for building the capacity of the early childhood workforce to properly implement these in a way that fits the context of the service.



Keynote Speakers



Christine Johnston

Associate Professor
School of Education
University of Western Sydney

Associate Professor Christine Johnston convenes the Special Education Programmes at her university and teaches primarily in the areas of early childhood intervention and evidence-based practice. Her research interests and recent work centre around Practice-based evidence and professional expertise; and Parental and staff perceptions of pre-school inclusion. Other research work has included a focus on the efficacy of early childhood intervention; the place of early childhood intervention in the early years landscape; the development of self-concept in children who are typically developing and in those who have a disability; parental education; and developing independence in children with severe vision impairment. Christine's interest in the early identification of young children with additional needs lead to her developing and co-authoring the Does This Child Need Help? training package. She was the inaugural president of the National Council of the Australian Early Intervention Association (now Early Childhood Intervention Australia) and a founding member and former president of the NSW Chapter of ECIA.

FRIDAY 9.30 – 10.45am

Keynote presentation: *Lighting the way: Inclusive communities, early childhood intervention and the role of expertise*

Endeavour Grand Ballroom

Service delivery frameworks for the early years must be designed to meet the strengths and needs of all children and families if the goal of full inclusion is to be met. Critical to achieving this is finding a way to include early childhood intervention within the general early years' landscape. One way of addressing this challenge is through the promotion of practice-based evidence and the development, maintenance and sharing of expertise. It is with considering this proposition that this paper will be concerned.



Iona Novak

Head of Research
Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Institute
School of Medicine
University of Notre Dame, Australia

Associate Professor Iona Novak oversees the research activities of the Cerebral Palsy Alliance and Australian Cerebral Palsy Register. Iona has a background in occupational therapy, with a particular interest in neuroplasticity and prevention of cerebral palsy. Her PhD was completed at the University of Western Sydney, in the area of home programme intervention for children with cerebral palsy. In her current work, she has continued her research interest in evidence-based practice, early diagnosis and intervention, goal-directed training, botulinum toxin and population studies for cerebral palsy. In the last 10 years Iona has given many presentations including invited international and national conference presentations and workshops, written several invited scientific reviews and book chapters, and had many articles published in peer-reviewed journals. She has also been successful in securing several large research grants.

FRIDAY 1.30 – 2.45pm

Keynote presentation: *Growing evidence-based early childhood intervention*

Endeavour Grand Ballroom

Medical breakthroughs in very early intervention with pregnant mothers and infants are changing the landscape of childhood disability incidence, diagnostic practices and the severity of disability. Evidence-based knowledge of these key interventions and assessments in the early years is important for informing decision-making about care for children with disabilities. In addition, there is a need for workers, managers and policy makers to think strategically about designing services that have the capacity to implement this new evidence to ensure best outcomes for children and families. This session will critically summarise the early intervention evidence, outline the new frontiers of research and the potential impact on services and propose strategies for building capacity in early childhood intervention.



8.00	REGISTRATION		
	Endeavour Grand Ballroom		
9.00	Official Opening Richard Green "Welcome to Country" Sylvana Mahmic ECIA NSW President Andrew Constance MP Minister for Disability Services		
9.30-10.45	Keynote: Tim Moore <i>Rethinking early childhood intervention services: Implications for policy and practice</i>		
10.45-11.15	MORNING TEA Poster presentations – Pre-function area		
11.15-12.15	La Perouse 1 Therapy assistants: Building capacity in rural & remote therapy services Kim Bulkeley, Kylie Irvin & Anna Minney	La Perouse 2 An introduction to KU Marcia Burgess Autism Specific Early Learning + Care Centre (ASELCC) Pamela Macrossan & Elizabeth Fulton	Endeavour 1 Developing a parent-to-parent programme: Enhancing the capacity of families Lesley Burnett, Simone Gerber, Kamle El Hawat & Peta Crafter
		Endeavour 2 Supporting children with Autism in a mainstream early childhood service – five years on Myrna Dominguez, Jacqueline Haidar & Kim Kliman	Endeavour 3 New funding models: What you need to know Sylvana Mahmic
12.15-1.15	LUNCH		
	Endeavour Grand Ballroom		
1.15-1.30	Parent Line: Tarja Malone		
1.30-2.45	Keynote: Robyn Mildon <i>Supporting early childhood practice: Building our capacity to better support parents with an intellectual disability and their children</i>		
2.45-3.15	National Disability Insurance Scheme: TBA		
3.15-3.45	AFTERNOON TEA		
3.45-4.45	La Perouse 1 Therapy transition programme: Enhancing the capacity of families to make decisions around therapy needs for their child Julie Cowmeadow	La Perouse 2 Preschool early literacy intervention: Is it necessary? Georgia Callaghan & Alison Madelaine	Endeavour 1 Innovative service delivery provides timely empowerment for parents Deb McEvoy-Herbert & Vanessa Sheer
		Endeavour 2 It takes a community to build capacity in early childhood settings: The challenging role of an Early Childhood Consultant Margaret Ross	Endeavour 3 STARTTeRS Collaborative Early Childhood Services with refugee families Rosemary Signorelli
5.00-6.00	Endeavour Grand Ballroom – Additional workshop building on Keynote Presentation: Tim Moore		

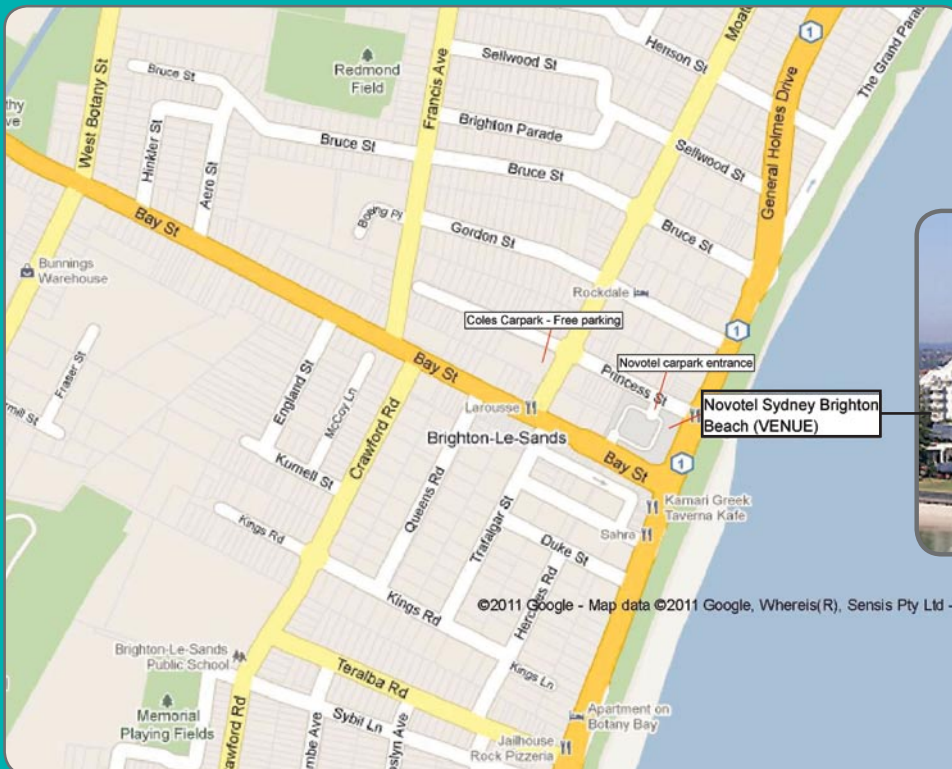
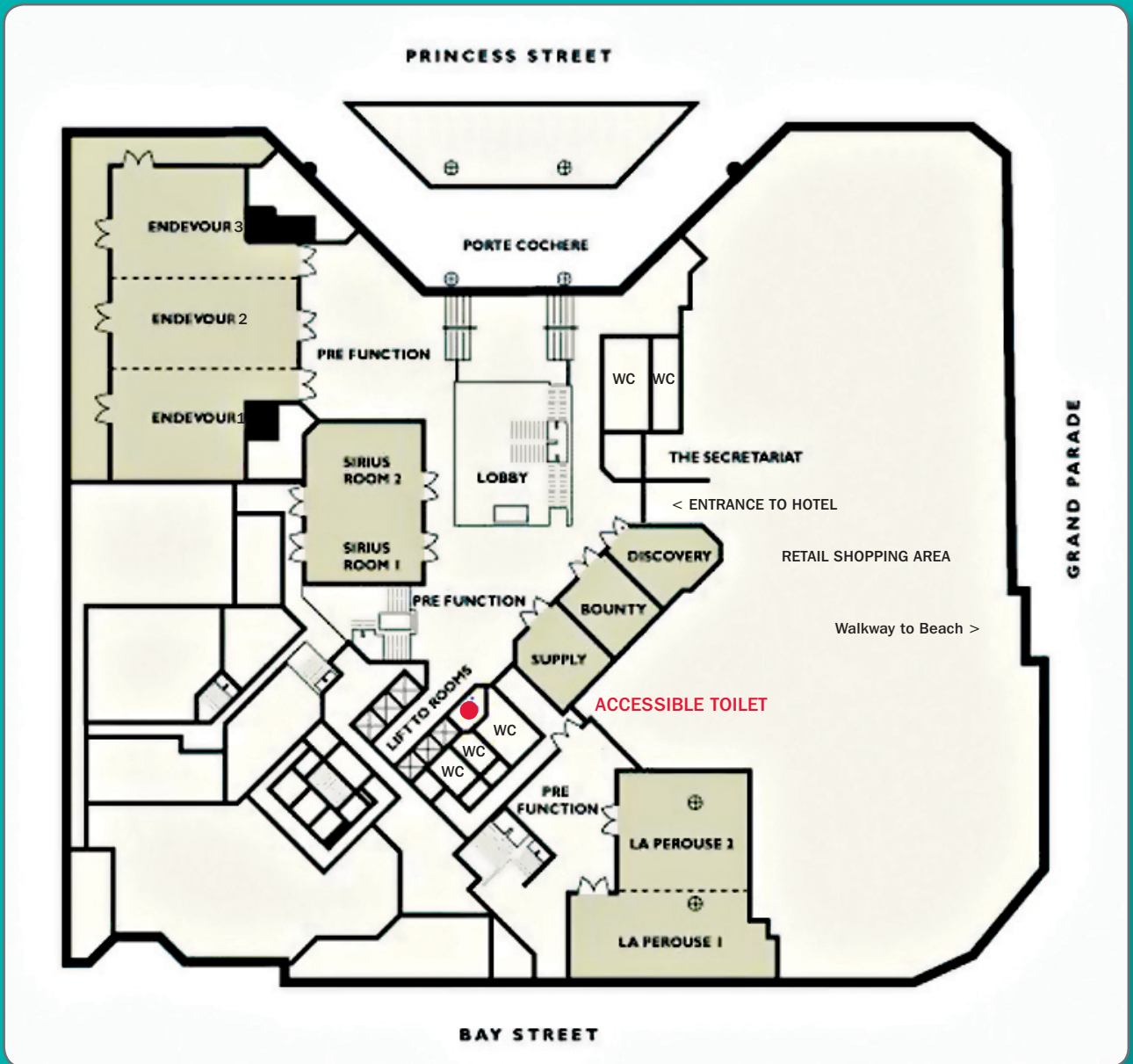


Friday 28th



Conference Programme

7.45-8.00	REGISTRATION					
	Endeavour Grand Ballroom					
8.00	BREAKFAST					
8.30-9.15	ECIA (NSW Chapter) Review of activities 2010-11					
9.15-9.30	Exhibits					
9.30-10.45	<p>Keynote: Chris Johnston <i>Lighting the way: Inclusive communities, early childhood intervention and the role of expertise</i></p>					
10.45-11.15	MORNING TEA Poster Presentations – Pre-function area					
	La Perouse 1	La Perouse 2	Endeavour 1	Endeavour 2	Endeavour 3	
11.15-12.15	Supporting children's communication development Christine Morandini & Rebecca Manning	Working together: Meeting everyone's needs Janelle Gallagher	Making a difference: the importance of embracing the ordinary in encouraging lives of meaning and connection Kim Roots & Marianne Brazier	Building staff, agency and community capacity: Leading through competency frameworks and practitioner and parental expertise Chris Johnston & Helen Lunn	Ngroo mentoring programme ("Being included" in Yorla Yorla dialect) Jan Wright, Rita Wright, Maureen Silleri & Sheryn Turvey	
12.15-1.30	LUNCH Networking Group – La Perouse 1					
	Endeavour Grand Ballroom					
1.30-2.45	<p>Keynote: Iona Novak <i>Growing evidence-based early childhood intervention</i></p>					
2.45-3.15	AFTERNOON TEA					
	La Perouse 1	La Perouse 2	Endeavour 1	Endeavour 2	Endeavour 3	
3.15-4.15	SIBS art projects Karen Fermin & Jessica Kean	Volunteering in early intervention services: Strengthening communities Kerry Dominish	Developing a culturally appropriate early child language screener for use within an Aboriginal early childhood context Gwendalyn Webb	The art and science of supporting parents at diagnosis Iona Novak	Supported playgroups: How do we measure the benefits? Jane Warren & Mandy Pincham	
4.15-5.00	Endeavour Grand Ballroom – Plenary discussion with Keynote presenters: Christine Johnston, Tim Moore & Iona Novak					



Day 1, Thursday 27th October

Morning Concurrent Sessions

Morning

11.15am – 12.15pm

La Perouse 1

Therapy assistants: Building capacity in rural & remote therapy services

Kim Bulkeley

Project Officer, Wobbly Hub & Double Spokes Project, Community Based Health Care Research Unit, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney

Kylie Irvin

Speech Pathologist, Ageing, Disability & Home Care (Western Region)

Anna Minney

Therapy Assistant, Ageing, Disability & Home Care (Western Region)

The Wobbly Hub and Double Spokes project is a four year National Health & Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) partnership project with the University of Sydney, Faculty of Health Sciences and Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC), Western Region. One element of this multi-phase project explores the delivery of physiotherapy, speech pathology and occupational therapy to people with a disability and their carers in rural and remote western NSW. This includes investigating policy, workforce and service design impacts.

The NSW Government has endorsed *Stronger Together, A new direction for disability services in NSW: 2006-2016*. The introduction of therapy assistants is one *Stronger Together* initiative designed to extend the reach of therapy services. That initiative has particular implications in rural and remote locations.

This paper (i) critically reviews the literature on the use of therapy assistants in rural and remote jurisdictions; and (ii) explores the policy settings and implementation of the current therapy assistant initiative in ADHC's Western Region.

The literature indicates the importance of providing health professionals, services and clients with advance information about how new roles enhance and extend service delivery. The benefits that can accrue from successful integration of therapy assistants into existing services has the potential to increase access to timely and targeted therapy and support services in rural and remote locations in western NSW, leading to better outcomes for people with a disability and their carers in the region.

11.15am – 12.15pm

La Perouse 2

An introduction to KU Marcia Burgess Autism Specific Early Learning & Care Centre (ASELCC) – Establishment & Operation

Pamela Macrossan

Manager Early Learning Inclusion Team (ELIT), KU Children's Services

Elizabeth Fulton

Consultant ELIT, KU Children's Services

KU Children's Services in partnership with the University of NSW (UNSW) and Sydney South West Area Health Service (SSWAHS) has recently established the KU Marcia Burgess Autism Specific Early Learning & Care Centre (ASELCC) which is one of 6 federally ASELCCs operating nationally and the only one in NSW.

This workshop will provide an overview of the establishment of the project including:

- The Federal Government's objectives for the initiative
- Site selection, design and construction elements and processes
- Operational partnerships
- Research (Child & Family Outcomes Strategy)
- Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) as the chosen method of intervention
- ESDM as a behavioural intervention
- Evolution of the model of operation
- Current status
- Future directions

KU Marcia Burgess ASELCC delivers both family focussed child care and autism specific intervention for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families using the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM). ESDM was developed in the USA for intensive delivery of comprehensive early intervention to very young children with ASDs and is supported by gold standard research. In establishing this centre KU has the only staff trained to fidelity as ESDM therapists and the first ESDM trainer in Australia. The centre has been operating since June 2010 and is already producing very encouraging results.

The Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) is a comprehensive early intervention approach that is defined by a specific developmental curriculum combined with a specific set of teaching procedures used to deliver the curriculum. The ESDM combines several complementary foundations including developmental psychology, relationship-based intervention and pivotal response training.



Day 1, Thursday 27th October

Morning Concurrent Sessions

Morning

11.15am – 12.15pm

Endeavour 1

Developing a parent-to-parent programme

Lesley Burnett

Family Support Worker, Early Education (EarlyEd)

Simone Gerber

Director, Early Education (EarlyEd)

Kamle El Hawat

Support Parent, Early Education (EarlyEd)

Peta Crafter

Support Parent, Early Education (EarlyEd)

This presentation will look how a small early childhood intervention service responded to the needs of families of children with disabilities for informal support, by establishing a parent-to-parent support programme.

The service's family support workers offer a number of formal supports to families including: running information sessions, providing assistance in accessing resources, short-term targeted counselling, sibling support groups, fathers workshops and regular contact with families whose children attend our programmes.

The Management Committee, consisting primarily of parents, identified the need for parent-to-parent support, in addition to the formal support already offered. They identified that this is particularly important when families first bring their children to the service and are new to the early childhood intervention service system. They also identified major transitions, such as starting preschool or school, as a time when this type of informal support would be particularly valuable.

The importance of mutual support groups for families caring for children with disabilities is well-recognised. Research has suggested that the greatest benefit in terms of stress reduction is achieved when parents are able to share and compare their experiences and exchange information with other parents who are in a similar situation.

This paper will outline the development and implementation of a parent-to-parent support programme. Although in its early stages, we will look at how 'support parents' were identified, trained and matched with a 'requesting' parent. Feedback from both 'support parents' and 'requesting parents' will also be presented.

11.15am – 12.15pm

Endeavour 2

Supporting children with autism in a mainstream early childhood service: Five years on

Myrna Dominguez

Manager, Early Childhood Intervention Services, St Anthony's Family Care

Jacqueline Haidar

Occupational Therapist, Early Childhood Intervention Services, St Anthony's Family Care

Kim Kliman

Speech Pathologist, Early Childhood Intervention Services, St Anthony's Family Care

Children with autism can be challenging for early childhood professionals and their families. Deficits in developmental domains particularly in communication, social, and behavioural challenges can prevent children with autism from functioning effectively in the home environment and other settings. In order for children with autism to acquire skills, they need to be in an inclusive environment that facilitates interactions with typically developing peers who can role model appropriate skills.

Early childhood centres often face difficulties when providing effective programmes for these children. In order to successfully include young children with autism, it is vital that educators have knowledge and skills to support and guide individual children and their families. Specific practices for working with young children with autism also require early childhood educators to have adequate training toward individualised strategies that are based on current research and incorporated within a multidisciplinary approach to target the individual's strengths and abilities.

Including children with autism in mainstream centres is becoming the norm. When services say they are inclusive, what does it actually mean?

This workshop will highlight the model for including children in a mainstream early learning centre over a period of five years.

Workshop content:

- Number of children supported from 2006 to 2011 and tracking of how these children have progressed or transitioned to formal schooling.
- Staff understanding of the educational needs of children with autism.

continued ...



Day 1, Thursday 27th October

Morning Concurrent Sessions

Morning

continued ...

- Family-centred practices
- Effective instructional, behavioural management and facilitation of social interactions.
- Curriculum content and providing an appropriate teaching environment.
- Transition planning.
- Multidisciplinary teaming with other therapist.

11.15am – 12.15pm

Endeavour 3

New funding models: What you need to know

Sylvana Mahmic

Director, Pathways Early Childhood Intervention

A new funding model has arrived that has implications for practitioners, organisations and families. Individualised funding has been an international trend over the last 20 years. However in Australia, it has only emerged as an option in early childhood intervention in the last three years. Current examples include: Helping Children with Autism, Better Start and the Family Assistance Fund.

Families are directly involved with making decisions regarding the services and/or resources they purchase, giving them greater choice and control in relation to their child's early intervention programme. The NSW Government has stated that by 2014, any family can choose the individualised approach. If introduced, a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) would also be based on an individualised funding model.

Consequently, there are philosophical and practical challenges ahead for non- government organisations and the shift required to introduce a fee-based service will be a significant process for many organisations. There are also challenges for families who undertake this approach. Families will need to learn how to manage their funds, how to identify what their priorities are and what resources and services could make a difference.

This presentation will: explain the individualised funding model; give examples of individualised funding available to Australian children who have disabilities; and share the experiences that one particular organisation (Pathways Early Childhood Intervention) has experienced in the first two years of introducing the individualised funding model. The presentation is based on research which is currently being undertaken as part of a PhD study into individualised funding.

Day 1, Thursday 27th October

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Afternoon

3.45am – 4.45pm

La Perouse 1

Therapy transition programme: Enhancing the capacity of families to make decisions around therapy needs for their child

Julie Cowmeadow

Speech Pathologist, Pathways Early Childhood Intervention

This paper aims to demonstrate how engaging families in a therapy programme designed to enhance family capacity can provide benefits for both the child and the family. Through this type of therapy programme families are encouraged to make informed decisions about the most useful services for their child within the context of their child's changing needs. Over the 4 years of this programme therapists have refined the programme to ensure all families are encouraged to develop their skills in this area.

This therapy programme is a one financial year programme and is divided into 4 discrete phases: orientation, early childhood intervention in preparation for school, school-based intervention during the first months of school and exit from the programme. Each stage of the programme is designed to facilitate the further development of the skills each family has already developed in directing intervention to meet their priorities. The development of carer skills is achieved by offering a range of service delivery models within an individualised service and supporting families to identify the most appropriate type of service delivery to meet each of their goals. This support occurs through the sharing of research along with individual meetings with families to identify needs. During these meetings therapy staff support families to identify the most appropriate environment in which therapy targeting the identified need can be provided.

As families move through the programme they increasingly take on the role of case manager for their child. Families frequently report an increased understanding of how a range of service delivery models may support their child. These models include: individual sessions at home, centre-based sessions and therapy at school, as well as group-based therapy and training for families and educational professionals supporting family priorities to be met. Upon exit many families demonstrate an ability to identify needs their child may have and take on the role of identifying services that meet their needs. Families who are able to take on this role are well placed to access future services, particularly within the context of disability services moving towards self-directed funding. Supporting families to develop these skills may prove invaluable in the longer term.



Day 1, Thursday 27th October

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Afternoon

3.45am – 4.45pm

La Perouse 2

Pre-school early literacy intervention: Is it necessary?

Georgia Callaghan

MultLit Consultant, MultiLit Pty Ltd

Alison Madelaine

Lecturer, Macquarie University Special Education Centre

The purpose of this presentation is to consider the importance of intervening with early literacy skills instruction at the pre-school level, especially for those pre-school children with social disadvantage or other special needs, in light of recent research. Research has found phonological awareness skills in pre-school to be one of the most robust predictors of early reading success in a child's first few years of formal schooling. The rationale for an emergent literacy skills programme, 'PreLit', is discussed.

PreLit has a phonological awareness component, aimed at teaching pre-school children in the year before school. It is designed to support the underlying factors that are deemed most important by the research in helping students acquire the early literacy skills that are related to reading competency. Some preliminary data on the efficacy of PreLit is provided through a research trial. The trial is important as it provides empirical data on PreLit and its effect on Phonological Awareness Skills learning with pre-school children. The trial occurred within a natural preschool setting, within a play-based curriculum.

3.45am – 4.45pm

Endeavour 1

Innovative service delivery provides timely empowerment for parents

Deb McEvoy-Herbert

Early Childhood Social Worker, Learning Links

Vanessa Sheer

Early Diagnosis Support Worker, Learning Links

This is an evaluation of the effectiveness of an innovative model of small group case management that focuses on empowering parents and making them the professional partner in their child's life.

The Parents as Case Co-ordinators (PACC) programme was developed by a Case Management (CM) Programme within South East Sydney for parents with a child diagnosed with a mild to moderate disability. PACC is a group CM model based on an educative framework, family-centred practice and empowerment perspective that aims to build the capacity of parents and families. The development of this model was within an engagement strategy that would meet the differing needs of families while maintaining responsive service delivery and minimising waiting list periods. In the current context of increasing individualised funding this model is extremely useful and important in developing the skills that families will need in becoming their own case managers.

PACC is based on family-centred practice as there is a strong link between this approach and two parental outcomes: satisfaction with services and better emotional well-being (King, Rosenbaum, Goffin, 1999). The development of a peer network for participants also builds resilience and therefore one of PACC's key goals is peer support and alleviating the sense of isolation that can often manifest when faced with a diagnosis for your child.

Through empowering parents to become case managers there are implications within policy development for the sector and how other services interact with these parents.



Day 1, Thursday 27th October

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Afternoon

3.45am – 4.45pm

Endeavour 2

It takes a community to build capacity in early childhood settings: The challenging role of an Early Childhood Consultant

Margaret Ross

Early Childhood Consultant, Mission Australia Miller Pre-school

This paper considers

- What is capacity building in an early childhood setting?
- Who is involved in capacity building in the inclusion of one child with special needs, the family, the child, the individual child care staff member, the childcare centre, the early intervention services and the early childhood consultant?
- What do each of these bring to the process? What is their current state of “being”? Where are they currently in the early childhood inclusion journey?
- The importance of building relationships and developing trust between all members of this community. How to engage each in the inclusion process, to establish a sense of “belonging”. Managing conflicting goals of each member of the community
- Identifying contributions, growth and development of all the community members. What are they “becoming”, support and confidence for the next stage. Has capacity been built? For whom? The child? The Family? The individual staff member? The child care setting? The early intervention service? The consultant?

These points will be explored through a case study from the perspective of early childhood consultant. The skills, knowledge and characteristics required by an EC consultant will be highlighted, as well as the necessity of service provision flexibility in building capacity.



3.45am – 4.45pm

Endeavour 3

STARTTerS Collaborative Early Childhood Services with refugee families

Rosemary Signorelli

Counsellor and Music Therapist, Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)

Refugee children may present with developmental delays arising directly or indirectly from their experiences. Their normal development may be impacted by their own traumatic experiences and those of their family members. These may include torture and other human rights violations, losses, split family situations, deprivation of food, water, shelter and medical care. Many families have spent long periods in refugee camps without schooling and services to address their developmental needs.

The parents' emotional availability to their children and the quality of their interactions may fluctuate because of their trauma symptoms, compounded by resettlement stresses. Families and community support networks have been disrupted by war, civil unrest and exile, and access to formal and informal education, including culturally normative parenting practices, may have been restricted or distorted.

At STARTTS, early observation of refugee families with infants and pre-school aged children can help to identify possible developmental issues and risk factors to enable the provision of culturally appropriate collaborative interventions and/or referrals. STARTTS' bio-psychosocial model for working with refugee families with young children will be briefly explained with reference to various trauma recovery models (Herman 1997, Scheidlinger 2004; Kinniburgh, et. al 2005), and developmental approaches (Perry 2009) (Greenspan 2010).

Some examples will include the exploration of collaborative approaches with early childhood and family support services, and direct work with single parent-child dyads, and groups of families. Some music and movement activities will be demonstrated which enhance attachment, self-regulation and competence and address emotional and sensory processing needs of very young traumatized children.



Day 2, Friday 28th October

Morning Concurrent Sessions

Morning

11.15am – 12.15pm

La Perouse 1

Supporting children's communication development

Christine Morandini

Education Support Manager, KU Children's Services

Rebecca Manning

Speech Pathologist, KU Children's Services

Early childhood educators often receive speech assessment reports from speech pathologists, which include recommendations and strategies which may be implemented in the service to assist in a child's communication development. This workshop explores ways of gaining information and strategies from these reports that are suitable for inclusive implementation and will assist in the development of the child's communication and enhance the communication development of all children in the programme.

There will be an opportunity to discuss the role of and collaboration between early childhood educators and speech pathologists. We will take time to read through a sample speech pathology report and then discuss speech pathologist recommendations and consider inclusive implementation within programmes. Some time will also be provided to share ideas and practical strategies.

11.15am – 12.15pm

La Perouse 2

Working together: Meeting everyone's needs

Jannelle Gallagher

Teacher Director, Kurri Kurri & District Pre-school Kindergarten Inc & Tutor, University of Newcastle Special Education Centre

The workshop will include a brief history of how I began my journey of inclusion and advocating, for families of children with a severe language delay. I will discuss the journey and barriers I encountered until finally gaining acceptance of language delay as an obstacle for the social inclusion of children, from within the pre-school community and by Family and Community Services. I will talk about the reasons that led me to look at alternate ways of providing the necessary services for children as well as building the capacity of families in a rural area where services are limited and access to any available services is difficult.

The current programme includes a Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, a Special Needs Teacher and a Childhood Physician who attend the service on a weekly basis. The team supports all the families, providing access to necessary services and resources within their child's early education centre.

I will outline how we have moved from providing assessments and therapy support to individual children, to developing a programme which embeds children's interests, strengths and provides support in the areas of need, within their individual programmes. As luck had it, I met an amazing woman who had worked in special education who shared the same vision and who guided me through the minefield, supporting me to develop a transdisciplinary team (I had never heard of that!). I will share some of the strategies I used to access funding and opportunities to make this programme a reality.



Day 2, Friday 28th October

Morning Concurrent Sessions

Morning

11.15am – 12.15pm

Endeavour 1

Making a difference: the importance of embracing the ordinary in encouraging lives of meaning and connection

Kim Roots

Advocacy and Leadership Development Co-ordinator, Family Advocacy

Marianne Brazier

Mother of a young man with disability

The purpose of the presentation is to increase awareness of professionals working in the area of early intervention around:

- the importance of people with disability having ordinary relationships and interactions
- the idea that people rather than services make up a good life
- the importance of families being supported to have a positive vision or dream for the future of their child.

The presentation will touch on how early intervention professionals can play a significant role in supporting families to have positive dreams and to value ordinary opportunities – not just disability-specific ones. The speakers will share insights around how having a life embedded in the community, complete with the interactions, experiences and connections that this brings is what makes for a good and safe life.

A parent will share her experiences of how “embracing the ordinary” has led to good things for her son. There will be discussion of some of the things that families can do to assist them in their journey – such as helping to facilitate valued social roles for their son or daughter and to establish circles of support to bring more people into their life.

There will also be discussion of some of the resources that professionals can draw on in helping families to have the knowledge, skills and confidence to facilitate a good life for their son or daughter. There will be particular discussion about a new initiative of *Family Advocacy, Resourcing Families*, that can assist families to think big and to learn from other families.

11.15am – 12.15pm

Endeavour 2

Building staff, agency and community capacity: Leading through competency frameworks and practitioner and parental expertise

Chris Johnston

Assoc. Professor and Convenor of Special Education Programmes, University of Western Sydney

Helen Lunn

Operations Manager, Child, Family and Migrant Services, Mission Australia

This workshop will draw upon recent work in Australia and overseas on quality standards and competencies in early childhood intervention, early childhood and education to develop strategies to enhance practice. It also flows from research which we are currently conducting on the nature of expertise in early childhood intervention and the role of practice-based evidence in achieving next practice. Participants will be given the opportunity to discuss and develop strategies they might utilise in their own workplace.



Day 2, Friday 28th October

Morning Concurrent Sessions

11.15am – 12.15pm

Endeavour 3

Ngroo mentoring programme ("Being included" in Yorta Yorta dialect)

Jan Wright

Director, Tregear Presbyterian Preschool and Early Intervention Service

Maureen Silleri

Educator, Ngroo mentoring programme – Tregear Presbyterian Preschool and Early Intervention Service

Rita Wright

Mentor, Ngroo mentoring programme – Tregear Presbyterian Preschool and Early Intervention Service

Sheryn Turvey

Educator, Ngroo mentoring programme – Tregear Presbyterian Preschool and Early Intervention Service

I will be presenting my mentoring programme called Ngroo: being included (in Yorta Yorta dialect). This programme is the story of our journey as a preschool in western Sydney to successfully include Aboriginal children and their families in our service and work with the proportionally high level of additional needs in these children. We will talk about:

- What is inclusion?
- Identifying long-standing barriers that exclude children
- How we broke down these barriers and enrolled 40 Aboriginal children in 2010 and 44 Aboriginal children in 2011.
- What do you see?
- Statistics
- History and the future – "open thinking"
- What is "consultative dialogue"?
- Comments from prominent Aboriginal leaders
- Music, art and dance
- Share ideas

The mentoring programme is in the form of a PowerPoint interactive presentation where participants will understand how inclusion works, what role they play and that inclusion is a powerful tool for social change in Australia.

Day 2, Friday 28th October

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Afternoon

3.15pm – 4.15pm

La Perouse 1

SIBS art projects

Karen Fermin

Occupational Therapist, Pathways Early Childhood Intervention Inc

Jessica Kean

Siblings Co-ordinator, Pathways Early Childhood Intervention Inc

When working with the whole family, consideration needs to be given to how the siblings (sibs) of children with disabilities are coping and how they can be supported so as to enhance the capacity of the family. Pathways has been running a range of activities for siblings as part of their philosophy of acknowledging and attempting to address the needs of every individual in the families who access our services.

Many children's lives are profoundly affected by living with siblings who have a disability. While the needs of children with disabilities, especially Autism Spectrum Disorders, have received considerable media and political attention, there is less awareness of impact on the lives of their brothers and sisters.

Marrickville Council has funded an important project to assist children who have a brother or sister who has a disability. The Sibs Art Project included a two day workshop led by four artists on the 18th and 19th of April. The children produced art works, which were exhibited at a local council-run gallery. The photographs and artworks in this exhibition shone a light on the many young people in the Marrickville LGA whose siblings have disabilities.

These children live with caring responsibilities, intense and ambivalent emotions, difficulties and concerns, and an awareness of diversity and difference well beyond their years. The exhibition provided the community with an opportunity to learn more about the effect of disability on families and young people. The Sibs Art Project showcased the work of the many siblings involved with Pathways Early Childhood Intervention. It is a celebration of what it is to be a SIB.



Day 2, Friday 28th October

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Afternoon

3.15am – 4.15pm

La Perouse 2

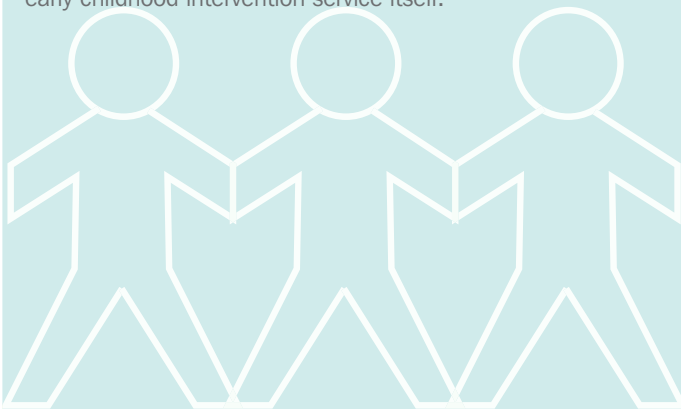
Volunteering in early intervention services: Strengthening communities

Kerry Dominish

Area Manager – Hornsby, Lifestart Co-operative Ltd

The need for and of volunteers in early intervention services has changed over the last ten years. Volunteers now come to agencies with an expectation to do more than “give back to the community”. There is now, in fact, an expectation from community, educational and corporate organisations that agencies will be actively engaging volunteers.

For the agency, the volunteers themselves become a workforce that requires orientation, training, mentoring and ongoing support, in order to best manage and to retain those volunteers. The agency’s ability to carry out these roles is limited by the very fact that involvement is voluntary. A review of the needs and experiences of volunteers in early intervention services, as well as the staff, and families that use them, will help organisations look at ways they can build their volunteering workforce. The review will include updated information on best practice in volunteering. It will then focus on some of the particular volunteering issues and benefits to early childhood intervention particularly as it relates to family-centred practice and the community. Volunteering does more than “give back to the community”. It strengthens our community way beyond the early childhood intervention service itself.



3.15am – 4.15pm

Endeavour 1

Developing a culturally appropriate early child language screener for use within an Aboriginal early childhood context

Gwendalyn Webb

Speech Pathologist, Firstchance Inc.

This paper will describe one of the preliminary outcomes of a 4 year funded project which has been in operation since October, 2008 (1, 15). The project is aimed at providing prevention and early intervention, with a specific focus on language intervention, for children within the local Aboriginal community. One of the goals for the project has been to create a culturally appropriate language screener, which staff from the Aboriginal early childhood services could use to identify children for referral to mainstream specialist services, namely speech pathology.

Consistent with research findings in the area of collaboration and project development within Indigenous communities (2 - 14), the development of this screener involved consultation between the speech pathologist and relevant Aboriginal community members. This workshop will describe the consultation process and the trial of the tool within the local Aboriginal children’s services. Participants will learn about the tool, how effective it has been during the trial period, and the modifications that were indicated following the trial. Case studies will be presented to illustrate the use of this tool. Participants will also have an opportunity to view the screening tool and practice using it in groups of simulated scenarios.

The development of this early child language screener for use by Aboriginal early childhood workers is an innovative project which focuses on enhancing the capacity of these workers to (a) identify children with extra communicative needs and (b) collaborate with families and relevant professionals to better meet the needs of these children.



Day 2, Friday 28th October

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

Afternoon

3.15am – 4.15pm

Endeavour 2

The art and science of supporting parents at diagnosis

Iona Novak

Associate Professor and Head of Research, Cerebral Palsy Alliance, School of Medicine, University of Notre Dame Australia

Introduction: Receipt of a child's diagnosis, is described by many parents as the most difficult and memorable day of their lives. Most parents can relay the shock of their experience in vivid details. The time period surrounding diagnosis is known to be highly traumatic and stress-provoking for parents. The likelihood of invoking parental stress potentially explains why many professionals take a "wait and see" approach to diagnosis. Yet, newer research suggests that withholding a diagnosis from a parent even further elevates parental risk for stress and depression.

Method: Literature surrounding the parental experience of diagnosis, parent preferences about how to receive a diagnosis and parental stress factors were critically appraised.

Results: Parents appear to "block recall" of diagnostic and prognostic details as a positive coping strategy. They remain remarkably resilient in spite of the bad news. Literature recommends that the relaying of diagnosis should involve both parents (where relevant) and that follow-up appointments should be scheduled to assist parents to ask questions and remember important details. Parents also provide professionals with advice about how to deliver news.

Discussion: After presentation of the research findings, this workshop will enable participants to practise delivering diagnostic messages using role-play and group work. Discussion will also be facilitated about effective and ineffective communication techniques for supporting parents at the time of diagnosis.

3.15am – 4.15pm

Endeavour 3

Supported playgroups: How do we measure the benefits?

Jane Warren

Co-ordinator Supported Playgroups, Illawarra Children's Services (ICS)

Mandy Pincham

Case worker, Department of Family and Community Services, Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC)

The presentation will provide an outline of how the groups have developed since the start of this initiative. We will outline current guidelines and time-frames that exist and how the different groups held each year meet particular needs of families within our area. Theoretical links will be identified to underpin the philosophy of the groups.

We will detail how play-based learning (EYLF 2009) provides the foundation for children's development. 'Being' is essential, yet often overlooked for children with disabilities, and we believe this should be celebrated. We use a variety of strategies including strengths-based learning, responsive and intentional teaching to assist each child in developing toward his or her potential. The key principles from the EYLF are crucial and we will outline how each of these principles are applied within the group.

We aim to use a DVD for practical representation of the group, including comments from family members to reflect how they have developed natural support networks, been introduced to flexible support and service options and developed confidence and competence in their parenting roles. Explicit coaching is provided through a range of community agencies as guest speakers and parent response to this will be explored. Our PowerPoint presentation will outline our format for the groups, our evaluative tools and the importance of structuring each group to meet the needs of the families and children we meet. We are very proud of our response from families and would like to share that with people in this important industry.



Trade Exhibitors

There are 15 exhibitors at the conference, with their stalls spread across the area adjacent to the Endeavour Grand Ballroom. We know you will enjoy the opportunity to browse among the displays, meet the exhibitors and take home some exciting new resources. The exhibitors look forward to meeting you!

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