



Northern Area Community & Youth Services Inc

NACYS Long Day Care

*A unique holistic approach to
Early Childhood Development
in low
socio-economic areas*

RAISON D'ÊTRE

To service the most vulnerable and 'at risk' members of our community

About NACYS

NACYS exists to service the most vulnerable, at risk and disadvantaged members of our community.

Established in 1981, NACYS has evolved in response to identified community need from 2 part time staff members in 1981 to 43 staff members in 2008. Its primary aim is community capacity building which occurs using Crisis Intervention, Social Inclusion, Human and Social Development and Community and Adult Education.

NACYS has three departments; Children's Services, Youth Services and Community Services. A multi-modal, cross departmental approach is utilised to service the needs of a client group that faces complex, intergenerational disadvantage. Collaboration with a range of organisations occurs as a means of value adding to an under resourced area.

Our reason for being and our approach to issues has given rise to a range of unique and innovative projects which includes the Long Day Childcare Centre.

Point of Difference

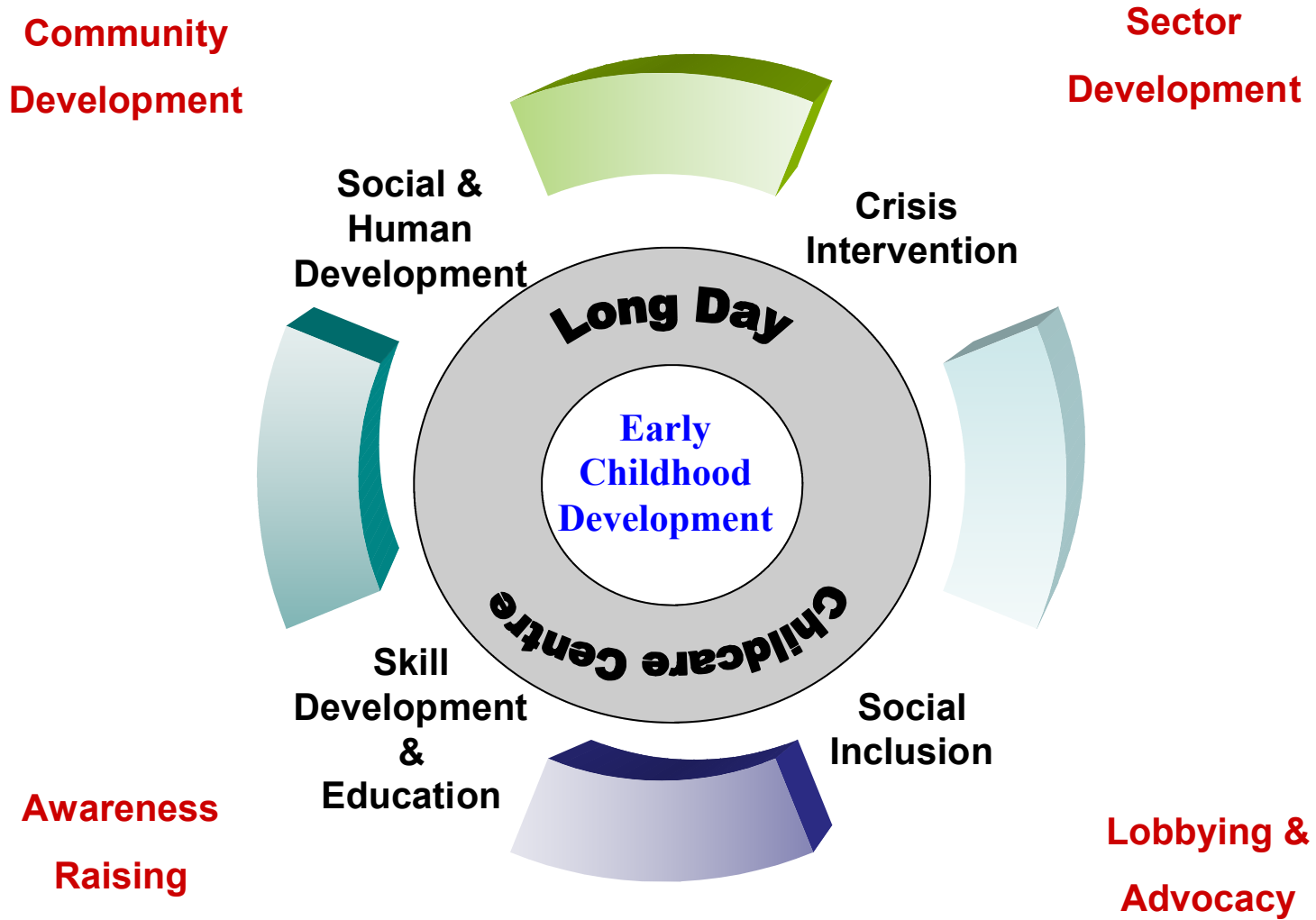
The question here is what makes NACYS Long Day Childcare Centre different from other Long Day Childcare Centres?

Long Day Childcare Centres exist to provide childcare for children whose caregivers are usually working or studying.

NACYS Childcare Centre is an engagement tool to ensure the development, safety and care occurs for children that are at risk of, or experiencing, abuse, neglect and developmental delay due to ineffective and poor parenting practices.

NACYS recognises that this can occur for many reasons-: learnt and modelled behaviours, intellectual disabilities, negative life experiences.

NACYS holistic multi-modal, cross departmental approach creates a total wrap-around service for the child, the parent, the family and the community.



The Target Group

NACYS Long Day Childcare Centre services primarily the suburbs of Davoren Park and Smithfield Plains which are colloquially known as the Peachey Belt due to the road that bi-sects the suburbs.

The Peachey Belt is situated in the Council District of Playford.

SEIFA 2006 Index of Disadvantaged has identified the City of Playford as the Council District in South Australia with the highest level of disadvantaged.

City of Playford - 2006 ABS Statistics

Children aged 0-4 years			
Playford Council	Davoren Park	Smithfield Plains	Adelaide Metro
7.5%	8.4%	8.9%	5.7%

No Tertiary Education			
Playford Council	Davoren Park	Smithfield Plains	Adelaide Metro
61.8%	66.6%	67.0%	50.1%

Left School Year 10 or below			
Playford Council	Davoren Park	Smithfield Plains	Adelaide Metro
40.6%	46.7%	44.4%	30.6%

Unemployment			
Playford Council	Davoren Park	Smithfield Plains	Adelaide Metro
8.6%	17.4%	17.6%	4.6%

Supporting parents			
Playford Council	Davoren Park	Smithfield Plains	Adelaide Metro
24.3%	35.5%	39.5%	17.0%

Renting Accommodation			
Playford Council	Davoren Park	Smithfield Plains	Adelaide Metro
31.7%	46.8%	50.3%	26.0%

Indigenous Population			
Playford Council	Davoren Park	Smithfield Plains	Adelaide Metro
2.6%	5.0%	5.3%	1.1%

NACYS Long Day Childcare Centre - Statistics

Couple	both not working	23%
Couple	one parent working	9%
Couple	both working	12%
Single parent family	working	21%
Single parent family	not working	29%
Single parent family	studying	6%
Working families		48%
Non working families		52%
Diagnosed Mental Health issue		38%
Consists of:-		
Bi polar		29%
Post Natal depression		43%
Schizophrenia		5%
Undisclosed		23%
Diagnosed Physical health issue / disability		14%
Families with identified multiple special needs		16%
Children with identified behaviour issues		44%
Aboriginal Families		7%
NESB		2%
Known involvement in the Welfare/ Legal systems		21%

The cost of child abuse

The longer-term, or indirect, financial costs associated with child abuse are fairly difficult to quantify and little detailed research has been carried out in Australia in an attempt to do so.

However, substantial research has discovered a number of adverse impacts of childhood abuse and neglect, many of which may have significant financial costs both for the individual and Australian society more generally. These include:

- future drug and alcohol abuse;
- mental illness;
- poor health;
- homelessness;
- juvenile delinquency;
- juvenile or adult criminal behaviour; and
- possible incarceration.

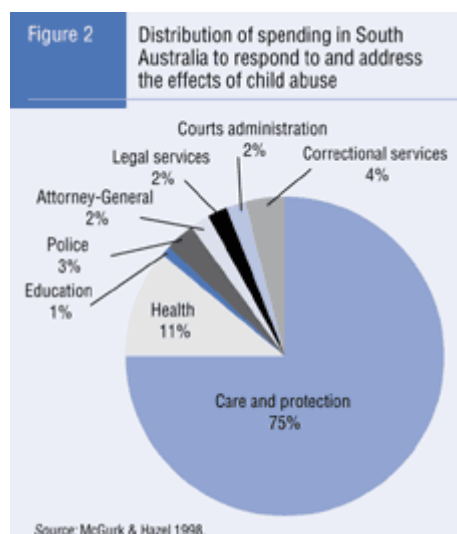
Of course, not all children who have suffered abuse go on to develop these problems.

Spending in South Australia

With regard to South Australia, a report was commissioned to make an analysis of the direct costs of child abuse in the areas of child protection responses, health, education, police and justice services across the state during the 1995-1996 financial year.

This report (McGurk and Hazel 1998) found that over the course of the year South Australia spent more than \$41.4 million responding to and treating the effects of child abuse and neglect on children and their families.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of spending in South Australia during the year 1995-1996.



McGurk, H. & Hazel, V. (1998), The Economic Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect in South Australia, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, and Office for Families and Children, Canberra

The Unique Model

No issues concerning a child can be dealt with in isolation to the family, community and environment.

It is the placement of a Long Day Childcare Centre within a holistic service that makes the model unique.

Community Services and Youth Services give 'wrap around' services to the whole family and not just the child.

However, as in the case with most community services, resources are limited, and in the Peachey Belt, the needs are enormous.

Funding

The primary issue facing NACYS Long Day Childcare Centre is funding.

The multi faceted issues faced by the children and their families that attend our service requires an increased staffing ratio to children.

The current formula for funding Long Day Childcare Centres means that once salaries and food is covered, there is approximately \$400 a week remaining for all other requirements; maintenance, materials, equipment, utilities. These additional expenses are paid for by staff fundraising, usually in their own time. Fundraising is difficult in such a low socio-economic area.

No other centre needs to have a supply of head lice lotion, nappies, bottles and spare clothes on hand. Many children receive their only daily bath with us well as their only nutritious meal in a day.

Additional training is required by staff to deal with a range of behavioural issues, special needs, abusive parents and vicarious trauma. The commitment of staff to these children is exceptional, however staff turn over rates amongst the unqualified staff are high due to the high stress levels caused by the nature of the client group.

McGurk, H. & Hazel, V. (1998), The Economic Cost of Child Abuse and Neglect in South Australia, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, and Office for Families and Children, Canberra

'The problem of child abuse is kept at a distance. The suffering of children arising from violation in the family is kept at the margins of community awareness. It can stay safely there, thus reducing the opportunities to be reminded that parents can and do harm their children.

Child abuse remains a problem that affects other people's children - not our own, but in other neighborhoods away from where we live. We prefer to believe that children are abused by strangers and protected by parents when in reality, more than 71% of abuse is perpetrated by a biological family member.'

Issues for NACYS Long Day Childcare Service

NACYS Long Day Child Care Service is a unique service and requires a unique funding model to allow it to continue servicing what is arguably the most difficult region in Australia with the most entrenched, intergenerational issues.

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) already has a funding model that can be easily adapted to the NACYS model.

Sustainability Assistance is funding currently designed to help communities retain access to childcare where the operation of the childcare service is not likely to be financially viable.

It is targeted towards small services in regional and remote areas, because of low usage, are more likely to need assistance.

Socioeconomic status of the community (as measured by the Socio economic Index for Areas) is a factor that is taken into account.

This model would allow additional funding to be used as required by the service;

- additional staff
- specialised staff
- staff training
- specialised equipment and materials for children with special needs.

Child Care Benefits and parent fees are not sufficient to allow our organisation to sustain the type of assistance our community needs. We are seeking additional funding that we are able to allocate where it is required to ensure that our children and families are given the intensive and extensive support they require and enable them to survive and prosper in severely disadvantaged circumstances, of which are not generally found in 'normal' Long Day Care Centres.

**Unique
funding
model
for a
unique**