

Issue 33

April 2010

Northern Area Community & Youth Services Inc Newsletter

Highlights

- Congratulations to Tamar Roberts on the successful completion of her Diploma of Children's Services.
- Congratulations to the Casey, Toni & Sharone for successfully passing the Food Safety Audit
- Michelle Caruso-Bagnato returns from maternity leave

Clare Dilliway 25 Years at NACYS

On April 5th this year, Clare Dilliway, CEO, hit the milestone of 25 years service at NACYS. In this day and age, that is an achievement in any job, but even more so when you consider the nature of NACYS work.



Casey the Cook at work

Family Learning Network / Flinders University Next Stage of Research

Flinders University has released its second study of the Family Learning Network. The study supports the Family Learning Networks belief that the collaboration has improved students behaviour, participation and engagement with school.



Tamar Roberts & Alana Wolstencroft;
Our latest qualified Childcare Staff members

The full report, titled; 'The Impact of a School Community Partnership on its Stakeholders', can be accessed on NACYS website; www.nacys.asn.au

"...it's all about collaboration, because I think if we're all working separately we're going to be going on an upstream battle...it's about making sure that we're working together as much as we can".



Flinders
UNIVERSITY

NACYS Contact Details

Location

Oldford Rd; Davoren Park

Postal

PO Box 1518; 45 Peachey Rd; Davoren Park 5113

Email

nacys@nacys.asn.au

Website

www.nacys.asn.au

Main Office Phone

8252 2474

Children's Service Phone

8287 1866

The Studio

0422 640 022

FAX

8287 3434

The making of an Internet Cafe



The upgrade to the Elizabeth Downs Family Learning Network Centre is well underway thanks to funding from DEEWR.

Calling a Spade a Spade !

In 1990 when Rosie Wickert produced her Seminole work on research into the state of literacy, language & numeracy (LLN) in Australia, that is over 1,000,000 Australians with low LLN, there was an outcry & programs were funded in response to what was seen as an urgent need of the whole community. Because of this report that 'outed' an education system that had not worked for a lot of people it was seen by many as legitimising having low literacy skills. People walked into their Community Centre and asked for literacy help; and received it.

Over time the community programs became federally funded training programs that targeted the most disadvantaged & placed them into classroom style training which are outcomes driven. Literacy again became a stigmatised problem with the 'victim' rather than the system often being blamed.

I, in no way, want to suggest that support & good work done by educators in this program are not valuable or valued – and they do achieve great personal outcomes for their literacy clients; however for those who need one to one mentoring it is not an ideal program. Literacy at community level needed to re-badge itself and so all programs offered – from cooking to gardening groups – were noted in funding applications as 'literacy imbedded'. Whilst this is as it should be, literacy needs to be at the very heart of all learning. I now wonder how far we have come with this. Now we have programs with literacy so deeply imbedded as to almost be invisible.

After conversations today with Family Workers about applying for a grant to offer Parenting training courses (again one of the core learning programs Centre's traditionally offer); and being told that parents will not come to anything that infers their parenting skills need up-skilling. But they may attend an art group or go on an outing where workers can use the time to run a parenting program cleverly disguised as 'parent games' etc. The question is should we hide the core of what we offer under the current trendy terminology or should we call the spade the spade and not a shovel or digging implement ?

There are changes happening in childcare across Australia

The new National Quality Standard will deliver:

- Lower staff-to-child (great for those wanting to enter into a career of childcare!) ratios so each carer has more time to spend with each individual child.
- New qualification requirements for all early childhood education workers so staff can lead play-based activities that help children learn and develop.
- A new transparent quality rating system, which will allow families to easily compare the quality on offer at different child care services so informed decisions can be made about the best care for your child.
- A new national body established between the Australian Government and the states and territories to oversee the new standard.

Lower staff-to-child ratios will mean each staff member can give more care and attention to each child, ensuring that there are more highly qualified staff is also important as research shows that staff with higher qualifications are usually better able to get improved outcomes for children and are more able to guide each child's individual learning. The new quality rating system will provide parents with transparent information about the level of quality a service is providing. All services will be required to comply with the new framework by 1 January 2012, with staff-to-child ratio and staff qualification changes occurring gradually over a period of time, to give the sector time to adjust.

In total, the Australian Government is investing \$16 billion in early childhood education and child care over the next four years, including more than \$13 billion to assist families with the costs of child care through the Child Care Rebate and the Child Care Benefit.

So what does all this mean for Australia's child care industry and early childhood education on the whole?