



## Making a difference

We often hear stories about the difference Bicultural Support Workers make to the lives of the children, families, staff and the services they support. **Meni Tsambouniaris**, Co-ordinator of the Bicultural Support Pool, talked to **Rosemary Franks**, Director, and **Mary Mariel**, Bicultural Support Worker, in one of the rural centres our program has touched.

Rosemary Franks, Director of Caterpillar House Occasional Child Care Centre, told of the impact the Bicultural Support Pool has had on her centre, its children and families. Caterpillar House has close connections with Sanctuary, an organisation which sponsors refugees in Coffs Harbour. Once refugees land, the older ones go to the local community college to learn English. Consequently, parents need occasional care for their children. The Centre caters for different groups of children all day, every day. Caterpillar House receives up to 20 refugee children each time an English course is held: they then continue at the Centre for a few years. This has been happening since 2002, when the first refugees arrived from the Sudan, Sierra Leone and Burundi.

The languages most commonly used by these communities are Arabic and Dinka (Sudanese). Caterpillar House is supported by Bicultural Support Worker, Mary Mariel, who speaks both Arabic and Dinka. This support has been invaluable for countless reasons: even refugee parents who are not Sudanese feel comfortable communicating with Mary. She assists parents and staff to communicate better in all areas, particularly during the enrolment period, helping complete important paperwork and providing information about centre policy and routines, etc.

Rosemary says: 'You can almost see the relief on people's faces when they walk in the door and see someone familiar. Our families relax when they see someone they can communicate with, who understands them. You can imagine what a huge ask it would be for these refugee parents to leave their children in the care of complete strangers – that familiar face just makes it easier for them, the children and us.' This has actually helped increase access to the service by families from Sudanese and other refugee backgrounds, as they feel the Centre is culturally appropriate and sensitive to their children's and families needs.

Mary currently works at Caterpillar House for four hours per week and will be there for a 10-week block. Mary has been with the Program since its days as the Casual Ethnic Workers Pool, and because she has been employed to support many different children, she has done many stints at the Centre and at other services in the area.

Mary has helped staff at Caterpillar House on a wide range of cultural issues. For example, in food practices, Mary has helped staff convey the message to parents about meal arrangements at the centre, which are very different to what they are used to. On the flip side, staff at the Centre have been

(continued on page 3)

# What is Children's Services Central?

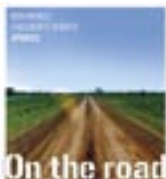
**Children's Services Central has been funded by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to co-ordinate professional support for all Australian Government Approved children's services in NSW.**

That includes training courses for:

- Long Day Care Centres
- Family Day Care Schemes and carers
- In home Care Schemes
- Occasional Care Schemes
- Mobiles
- Before and After Care Services
- Vacation Care Services
- MACS
- and other Australian Government funded non-mainstream care services

Children's Services Central is managed by The Alliance of Children's Services, which is a consortium of the seven key organisations that resource and represent the various sectors of children's services in NSW:

- **Community Child Care Co-operative NSW**
- **NSW Family Day Care Association**
- **Network of Community Activities**
- **Contact Incorporated**
- **Ethnic Child Care Family and Community Services Co-operative Limited**
- **Child Care NSW**
- **Semann and Slattery Training Consultants**



## Attention! Mobile Services

Have you noticed the special *On the Road* newsletter? Look for it in each copy of *Central*. It's funded by Children's Services Central to provide you with all the information you need.

Children's Services Central, the Professional Support Co-ordinator for Children's Services in NSW, is a program of The Alliance of Children's Services. The Australian Government, through the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA), funds the Professional Support Co-ordinator initiative as part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program.

## Children's Services Central

**Building 21, 142 Addison Rd, Murrumbidgee NSW 2204**  
**Freecall telephone: 1800 157 818**  
**Telephone: (02) 8922 6444**  
**Fax: (02) 8922 6445**  
**Email: [info@cscentral.org.au](mailto:info@cscentral.org.au)**  
**Web: [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au)**  
**ABN: 81 174 903 921**

# ★ ROUNDUP

## Child Care Services Utilisation Report

During 2006/07, funded child care services are required to submit to FaCSIA a report on occupied places called the Utilisation Report which replaces the old Assessment and Performance Report. The first report is due on the 14 October 2006 but the report format is yet to be finalised by FaCSIA.

Children's Services Central understands that the report will be forwarded to services and posted on the Department's website before this date.

## In Home Care Review

The In Home Care (IHC) program was reviewed in May 2005. In Home Care (IHC) was initially designed for families with no access to existing child care services, or where existing child care services could not meet their needs, where one or more of the nominated eligibility criteria were fulfilled.

The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has asked the Department to develop a response to the review and a plan of action to the policy issues arising out of the IHC Review. The 2005/06 funding agreements for providers have been extended for six months to 31 December 2006 whilst this work is undertaken.

The issues that are being explored include current eligibility criteria for IHC, the funding model and quality.

## Occasional Care Review

The Australian Government has acknowledged that further analysis is needed to determine the most appropriate funding model for occasional care. The Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs has asked FaCSIA to conduct a review of occasional care, including the proposed funding model and the definition of occasional care. The occasional care sector will be consulted and informed of review outcomes by December 2006. All occasional care services' funding has been extended to 31 December 2006.

## Professional support for NSW Inclusion Support Facilitators

Semann and Slattery Training Consultants, the Professional Support Service Provider providing professional development and support for NSW Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISFs), has delivered two orientation sessions since the Inclusion and Professional Support Program began in April this year.

The sessions were delivered in June and May for 83 ISFs from the 18 NSW Inclusion Support Agency regions, and focused on the role of ISFs, use of Service Support Plans (SSPs) and Assisted Inclusion Readiness (AIR) Plans. They included presentations from Children's Services Central, Ethnic Child Care Family and Community Services, who manage the Bicultural Support Pool and Lady Gowrie Child Centre, who manage the Specialist Equipment Pool and General Resource Library.

Participant feedback indicated that the sessions clarified the use of SSPs and AIR Plans and the use of a strengths-based approach for capacity building. ISFs also commented that they gained a better understanding of the supports available for eligible services through the Inclusion and Professional Support Program.

Semann and Slattery is planning a series of regional training events to address ongoing issues for ISFs, including the Inclusion Support Subsidy and Flexible Support Funding. For more information check [www.cscentral.org.au/isf](http://www.cscentral.org.au/isf)

# OOSH: Managing for success

**Over 90 per cent of OOSH services in NSW are community managed. Many of these are managed by parent committees who are time poor and heavily reliant on a strong functioning staff team to ensure the OOSH service is successful and well organised.**

**Robyn Monro-Miller of Network advises.**

It is important that all new committee members receive orientation to their roles and responsibilities on the committee. A well-written document outlining management obligations can make the difference between a successful management structure and staff struggling to get parent support.

Network of Community Activities has learnt through 20 years of experience some key indicators that may indicate organisational problems now, or in the future.

Consider some of these indicators for your own service to ensure your service is on track:

- What is your organisation's incorporation status – have all returns been submitted to the Department of Fair Trading?
- Who is your centre's public officer?
- When was the last audit undertaken and have you seen a copy of the report?
- Who is the organisation insured with and what level of cover

does it have? Of note is the \$10 million public liability and volunteers insurance needed to cover management members.

- Who does the organisation use for worker's compensation insurance?
- When was the last Business Activity Statement sent in?
- Have staff superannuation entitlements been paid?
- When is your next Self-Study due for OSHCQA?
- Have you had any staff employed longer than five years? What financial provisions are there for long service leave accruals?

Your parent orientation kit could provide this additional information to ensure that the committee is properly informed. If you are a committee member, where possible, you should insist on an orientation process which involves previous committee members!

If you require further advice or information about where to access this information, contact Children's Services Central on **1800 157 818** and press 3 for OOSH. ●

**HANDY HINT:** Management meetings could be held after hours at services – and the investment in providing childcare and some nibbles after a long day at work is a great incentive to becoming a member of the committee!

## BICULTURAL SUPPORT POOL



## Making a difference (from page 1)

enlightened with information about the culture and child rearing practices. 'Sand and messy play' has been an ongoing issue with every Sudanese parent attending the service, and Mary has helped the centre to understand the parents' perspective and vice versa. Mary's presence makes parents feel comfortable to touch base with staff about cultural issues.

Mary has been invaluable in supporting the children. Most refugee children arrive with a wide variety of emotional issues because of what they have been through in their former countries. She notes that she has to spend a great deal of time comforting these refugee children, because they are afraid on arrival and, because of this, settling-in issues are exacerbated. She educates staff on the reasons for the children's fear. Most settle in to the centre once they realise they are safe, that people are nice here and there are many fun things to do. 'Having a familiar face, someone who speaks to them in their home language and helps maintain their cultural identity just makes a huge difference', says Rosemary. Mary has helped teach staff key childcare survival words, for example, 'food' and 'wash hands', and they are placed on note cards all around the Centre – this way, staff can follow through what Mary has introduced and communicate in basic Dinka with children, even in her absence.

'A beautiful thing about early childhood is that it is such an inclusive place. The Centre experiences no issues with cross-cultural friendships – this probably has something to do with Mary's work here as a Bicultural Support Worker.'

'The centre is currently working with our Inclusion Support

Agency, St Joseph's Family Services, on completing our service's AIR plan and Service Support Plan', says Rosemary. 'It is obvious in this process just how much better equipped we are to support children who are refugees because of Mary's role at the Centre.'

Mary recounts the many ways she feels she has made a difference to the children and staff at Caterpillar House. Quite often, children ask her questions about her appearance. 'Mary, why is your skin so dark? Why are your teeth so white? Your hair so curly?...' She uses these experiences to introduce cultural awareness to children at the centre, pointing out similarities as well as differences, promoting tolerance, understanding, acceptance and diversity.

Caterpillar House is overjoyed to have Bicultural Support at their service as it has made a significant difference for the Sudanese children and their families accessing the Centre. It has also enriched the lives of all the other children and families and has been invaluable support for the staff of the Centre. ●

**The Bicultural Support Pool (BSP)** is a special group of Bicultural Support Workers who assist children's services to work successfully with CALD and Indigenous children. The Bicultural Support Pool is run by Ethnic Child Care Family and Community Services Co-operative Ltd for Children's Services Central, and is funded by the Australian Government as part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program. For more information or to apply for a Bicultural Support Worker, contact Children's Services Central on **1800 157 818**, the Bicultural Support Pool on (02) **9569 1288**, or your local Inclusion Support Agency.

# ★ RESOURCES

## Specialist equipment

Children's services across NSW sometimes need access to specialist equipment to meet specific inclusion needs.

Specialist equipment includes items such as specialist seating, standing, positioning and toileting equipment and visual aids.

Lady Gowrie Child Centre is managing the specialist equipment pool on behalf of Children's Services Central. Access to specialist equipment to enable a child's inclusion should be determined by a service with their Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) and any therapists working with the child.

The catalogue of existing specialist equipment can be viewed online: [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au)

## Have you discovered online forums?

Forums are an easy way to discuss service issues with peers. From complex issues like dealing with autism, to simple queries about cleaning products, the forums are being used by people across the sector: [www.cscentral.org.au/forums](http://www.cscentral.org.au/forums)

## Inclusion subsidy

**The Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS) commenced on 1 July 2006 to help eligible childcare services improve their capacity to include children with ongoing high support needs in a quality childcare environment.**

It replaces the Special Needs Subsidy Scheme (SNSS) and Disabled Supplementary Services Program (DSUPS). By Lorraine Madden of Semann and Slattery Training Consultants.

ISS funding contributes towards the costs of providing additional support to include a child with ongoing high support needs. This can include funding towards extra staff, releasing staff for inclusion training and specialised equipment.

Regionally-based Inclusion Support Facilitators are available to assist services to develop a Service Support Plan (SSP) to identify how a child will be supported and which resources will assist this process. ISS is one of a range of support options available. Other funded support options such as Flexible Support Funding, Bicultural Support Pool and the range of professional support services available through Children's Services Central, should also be considered before proceeding with an ISS application.

Since 1 July 2006, services making new applications for assistance are assessed under the ISS guidelines. Current SNSS and DSUPS arrangements will remain in place until their scheduled review or when their circumstances change. Where a SSP has identified that additional supports are required, an ISS application form should be completed and submitted along with the SSP. Applications will be assessed according to the eligibility requirements set out in the ISS Guidelines. ISS applications will be processed by the NSW FaCSIA office until ISS providers are operational for all Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) regions.

Contact your local ISA for further information or to request assistance with the application process. Information about ISS is on the FaCSIA website at: [www.facsia.gov.au](http://www.facsia.gov.au)

## Finding and keeping good quality staff

**Child Care NSW's Ian Weston shares his recruitment tips.**

If your centre is finding it difficult to get good staff, don't think you are alone – most peak organisations receive weekly calls from centres seeking help.

A system-wide problem is that most Australians don't understand that centre-based childcare is as much about early child development as it is about parent support.

The sector needs more trained staff who understand firstly, that the most important learning experiences happen between birth to five years, and secondly, know why the most effective early child development is connected to parenting support, and to families. Bodies such as Child Care New South Wales continue to take that message from the sector to the legislators.

In the meantime, here are some practical recruiting tips:

### Staff Selection: How to get it right

First: know and write down what you are trying to achieve *for your customers* – that is, for the child and parents. In particular, know what is required to supplement and complement existing staff, and to meet the Regulation.

Next: make your selection based on those criteria, not your gut instincts at interview.

### Resources to help you think about your service needs, and your customer needs

One basic framework is doing what the law requires.

AND SO... have a copy of the relevant childcare and industrial-relations laws...

AND THEN... know how to understand and apply them.

AND ALWAYS... know where to go to get help and advice. Be part of a professional association that can help you. ●

## COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS

### A reminder to all community-based services licensed under the NSW Children's Services Regulation 2004!

Are you aware of your obligations under Clause 108 of the Regulation to inform the Department of Community Services (DoCS) of changes in your committee (i.e. resignations/new appointments)?

The licensee must, within one week after the change in their committee, give DoCS written notice of the change.

If a new person is appointed to the committee, they must complete the following forms and submit these to DoCS within one week:

1. Personal Details Form;
2. Screening consent/request form;
3. Prohibited Declaration form.

Completing these forms will cover your service under Clauses 9, 10 and 11 of Part 2.

Forms can be accessed from:

[www.community.nsw.gov.au/documents/childcare\\_license-persondetails.pdf](http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/documents/childcare_license-persondetails.pdf)

# Getting a management perspective

In the childcare industry, we often stumble into a leadership role. As existing staff, we may seek out the role because we believe we can contribute to the organisation, or we may just be offered the job when someone leaves. As existing managers and leaders, we have to decide whether an interviewee will be suitable for a leadership role. Di Harding of Peak Training, explains why getting a management perspective is a good approach.

## Why are managers and leaders important?

- They determine direction using vision, passion and drive.
- They make things happen using influence/encouragement.

It is vital for existing staff to remember that management is not just more of the same job with a few extra tasks thrown in. Management has different challenges and a different mindset.

## Categories of management and leadership

Managers, generally, fall into four categories depending on past experience, training or preferences, which can be described as:

**Advisers** who maintain and report on methods and information.

**Explorers** who create and promote ideas.

**Organisers** who assess systems and plan for the future.

**Controllers** who inspect service organisation and production.

Workers may recognise themselves in one or more of these categories and may decide to build their competence in the other categories to improve the balance of their management.

There are some challenges that can be taken to stimulate learning, personal growth and communication skills.

## Stimulating learning

Certain types of challenges stimulate learning about perspective more than others. They can include:

- Constantly seeking new experiences to understand all aspects of the work;
- Agreeing to take on unfamiliar responsibilities to develop decision making skills, drive and purpose;
- Being involved in strategic planning to understand the broader scope of the organisation;
- Representing others in the industry to learn about influencing with authority; and
- Working with people from diverse areas to become open minded to ideas.

## Stimulating personal growth

Certain types of challenges stimulate growth in personal attributes. They can include:

- Investing time in tasks to promote patience;
- Self-evaluation exercises to promote self-awareness/humility;
- Examining differences in ideas to develop the value of differences; and
- Exploring change to develop an understanding of all the aspects that involve change.

## Stimulating communication skills

Managers and leaders need to be able to confidently express ideas, influence the organisation and understand the team through listening to them.

When managers listen to others they hear what others think, want, need and feel. Listening is also a powerful communication tool to foster candour, inquiry and dialogue for all. Some strategies are:

- Clue into non-verbal messages;
- Give people time to discuss;

- Reflect on other's feelings without agreeing or disagreeing;
- Explore and clarify questions/statements made by others;
- Restate other's ideas for clarity;
- Emphasise facts to ensure that others are on track; and
- Summarise and verbalise what you have understood.

Training to actively listen to others without interruption can assist in management and leadership skills.

## Which key actions will the leaders of the future need to be able to accomplish?

- To continuously remake the service to the customer and legislative demands; and
- To take responsive action to these demands.

## How can existing managers and leaders ensure the selection of the right people for the future?

Existing managers and leaders recruiting new managers from the ranks can incorporate learning, personal growth and communication skills in their organisation by delegating, including and encouraging their team to participate in extra or different tasks.

Existing managers who conduct selection interviews can incorporate questions in the interview that demonstrate a potential management perspective. Questions about the strategies they have used to develop a management perspective and the challenges they have set themselves to enhance their personal attributes in management.

Remember that potential managers depend on the people in the organisation to carry out the aspirations of the service now and into the future.

Finally, a great quote by L. Bossiter, an American CEO: 'At the end of the day, you bet on the people, not the strategies, to uphold the vision.' ●



NSW Family Day Care Association Inc  
**Annual State Conference**  
**2006**

**Family Day Care: 'the Potential Within'**

**Monday 23–Tuesday 24 October**  
Star City Casino Conference Centre, 80 Pyrmont St., Pyrmont NSW

**Keynote Speaker: Mr Ron Delezio** on overcoming adversity and holding the family together

■ Social Justice Panel ■ Workshops ■ Seminars ■ Lectures

**Join us to explore the 'Potential Within'— us all**

For more details contact NSW FDC Association Inc  
Tel: 02 9597 6008 Email: [nswfdc@optusnet.com.au](mailto:nswfdc@optusnet.com.au)

## Online training

The team at Early Childhood Training and Resource Centre (ECTARC) is developing eight online training modules for Children's Services Central. These units will be available through the Children's Services Central website.

ECTARC are committed to providing programs that are meaningful and relevant to the early childhood industry. Various peak bodies and other organisations, as well as practitioners from a range of services have been consulted to determine the topics of the online modules.

The topics that have been chosen are:

- Legal Issues for Licensees/Committee Members;
- Responsibilities for Authorised Supervisors;
- Recruitment;
- Nutrition;
- Maintaining Staff; and
- Marketing for FDC, IHC, OOSH and early childhood Centre-based Care.

ECTARC aims to work closely with IT specialists to ensure these training modules are aesthetically pleasing and user-friendly to facilitate access for those with either minimal or extensive computer skills. Watch out for the first online training module, coming soon at: [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au)

## Online calendars

Did you know that training calendars from a range of organisations are available through the Children's Services Central website? We are working on making our site – [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au) – a 'one-stop shop' for children's services training, so we are placing links to relevant training calendars from organisations such as Lady Gowrie, Network, ECTARC and CCWT online. If you can think of any others we should place online, please send a message to [web@cscentral.org.au](mailto:web@cscentral.org.au)

## OHS online training

Child Care NSW has developed an online program to assist management and staff understand their legal occupational health and safety obligations. The program is suitable for LDC, preschool, OOSH and FDC services. The user-friendly training is delivered online, and can be done in your own time, at your own pace – all staff can participate. For details, go to [www.childcarensw.com.au](http://www.childcarensw.com.au) or call **1300 556 330**.

## Child Care NSW Conference 2007

The conference, to be held during **27-29 April 2007**, will provide an array of entertaining speakers, industry information and interactive workshops. Planned topics include Engaging Staff, Effective Communication, Marketing, and Preparing for Accreditation and much more. A huge trade exhibition will also feature.

The conference venue is the Hilton Hotel in Sydney.

Mark the date in your diary – join CCNSW for an opportunity to connect with like-minded professionals, industry experts and suppliers to the industry.

Watch the website [www.childcarensw.com.au](http://www.childcarensw.com.au) for more information as conference preparation progresses, or call **1300 556 330** to register your interest.

## MIDDLE CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS AHOY!

The peak body of the NSW OOSH Sector, Network of Community Activities, will be holding its Biannual State Conference from **Friday, 18 May to Sunday, 20 May 2007** at Manly College of Hospitality and Management.

The theme, *Today's Children, Tomorrow's Community*, will encourage debate on some key questions:

- How do childhood experiences impact on the development of communities in the future?
- What is the role of OOSH in community development?
- How do OOSH services encourage children to participate in and learn about community?

The conference will have a wide range of workshops and seminars for everyone with an interest in middle childhood and OOSH. The workshops/seminars will be in three streams:

- Policy and Advocacy;
- Professional practice; and
- Management and Leadership.

The keynote speaker, sponsored by FaCSIA, will be Theresa Casey from Scotland, researcher of children's play and role in the community and author of *Inclusive Play*.

Network of Community Activities has successfully applied to DoCS and FaCSIA for scholarships for OOSH professionals to attend. DoCS has also generously provided funding to cover travel subsidies for rural and remote OOSH services. Details on applying for scholarships and travel subsidies for all OOSH professionals will be on [www.netoosh.org.au](http://www.netoosh.org.au) in October.

## CS Central training

Have you received the new Children's Services Central Training Calendar yet? The Calendar contains over 117 separate training events for children's services over the next few months. Go to [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au) for details.



## NSW TRAINING CALENDAR August-November 2006

# Bourke services thinktank

**Contact Inc** has commenced a 10-month project in Bourke, funded by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to explore the potential of a new management model for children's services in this community. Currently, there are three funded children's services operating as separate entities – Bourke Mobile Children's Service, Bourke Child Care Centre and the Project Enrichment of Childhood Preschool. In an agenda of maintaining effective children's services for Bourke and surrounding districts, now and into the future, the three groups have expressed a desire to work together to explore the potential options of amalgamation models.

Contact Inc will be documenting the processes undertaken and models of management explored within this project, enabling other communities to gain from these experiences in the future. ●



## MAPPING RURAL AND REMOTE SERVICE

**The Rural Education Forum Australia (REFA), a collective of national organisations which represent the consumers and/or providers of education services in rural and remote Australia, is embarking on a national mapping exercise of children's service provision in rural and remote Australia.**

The task of mapping will have two main dimensions to it – firstly, the providers of children's services and what they provide; secondly, what the consumers (that is, families) are experiencing and want to access.

Following much discussion and research, as well as input from REFA members and other experts, REFA has refined the data and information collection instrument which will collect the provider's part of the map.

Once completed, the map will be published electronically on-line, with a hard-copy backup.

To collect the consumer part of the map, REFA will design and run a series of community-based focus groups nationally using its membership network. Work on the most effective way to establish the focus groups, the format and questions, as well as the operational logistics and funding, is now taking place.

The mapping exercise will provide a valuable picture of rural and remote children's service provision nationally.

For more information on REFA members, projects, publications and useful links, go to the organisation's website [www.refa.edu.au](http://www.refa.edu.au) ●

## PHONE LINKUPS

**Contact Inc's Sue Kingwill reports on a series of 20 one-hour phone linkup support programs for NSW rural and remote children's services.**

The phone linkups are being offered throughout August and September and will provide rural services with the opportunity to discuss issues, seek information and receive updates on current events and happenings. Contact Inc is very pleased by the high level of cross-sectoral children's services interest and the amount of registrations received.

Participants are being offered two phone linkups for each topic, held about one month apart. This will allow time for the participants to think about any questions and further items that they wish to have on the next phone linkup agenda. Topics that are being offered at the different phone linkups include: Accessing Training and Professional Supports – the role of Children's Services Central; Accessing Inclusion Supports; Emerging Issues such as the impacts of the Federal budget changes to Family Day Care; and Out Of School Hours Accreditation focusing on specific quality areas.

Contact Inc will facilitate each phone linkup with a range of specialist children's services experts relevant to each area discussed. Discussion papers are being provided as background information for participants and these papers will also be made available on the Children's Services Central website for all services to access.

### Comments by participants so far include:

- 'Very good, I thought the written information was excellent ... this was my first linkup.'
- 'Excellent being able to bounce ideas off other (FDC) schemes.'
- 'Thank you; we see this as a positive communication tool'.
- 'We had no problems linking up'.
- 'Thank you – it's good to hear others are in the same boat'.
- 'It was great to listen and get feedback'.

**Central** is published by Children's Services Central.  
©2006 ISSN 1833-4288 • **Editor** Lisa Bryant • **Production** ARMEDIA  
**Manager** Children's Services Central Co-ordination Team: Michelle Fishwick  
Children's Services Central is a program of The Alliance of Children's Services. The Alliance of Children's Services is the Professional Support Coordinator in NSW. The Professional Support Coordinator is an initiative of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program, funded by the Australian Government.

**Children's Services Central**  
Building 21, 142 Addison Road, Marrickville NSW 2204  
**Phone:** (02) 8922 6444 **Fax:** (02) 8922 6445 **Tollfree:** 1800 157 818  
**Email:** info@cscentral.org.au **Web:** www.cscentral.org.au

Need to know  
something?  
ONE-STOP  
CALL CENTRE  
1800 157 818

## Children's Services Central General Resource Library

**The General Resource Library is a specialist children's services resource pool. It contains books, articles, videos, and a range of other resources children's services in NSW may wish to access. It incorporates some of the resources from the previous SUPS teams, and some of the resources of the Gowrie Library.**

The General Resources Library is being managed for Children's Services Central by Lady Gowrie Child Centre. Services need to become a member of the library to borrow resources from the Library.

Any resource in the Library can be mailed to your service on request, once you have become a member. At last count, there was over 20,000 resources, so this is a fantastic resource for children's services.

There is an online catalogue of all general resources for services with internet access (go to [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au) and then click on the 'Resources' tab). Sections of the catalogue can be mailed to those services without internet access. For more information about the Library, contact Children's Services Central on **1800 157 818**. ●



### WANTED: kids' DRAWINGS

Children's Services Central would like to receive some of the great artwork being created in children's services across NSW to use on our website, in our publications, as well as decorating our office.

**Please** ensure the painting/drawing is on A3 paper and that it includes the child's name, age and the name of the service. Ask the children what the art is about and attach a short explanation to the artwork. Ensure that your service obtains the child's and parent's permission to send their work to Children's Services Central.

**Post to:** Children's Artwork  
Children's Services Central  
Building 21, Addison Road Community Centre  
142 Addison Road, Marrickville 2204

## HOTLINE

**Are you an Australian Government approved childcare service? If so, have you reported vacancies to the Hotline?**

Children's services should have received information about different methods of reporting vacancies to the Child Care Access Hotline. It is a telephone service 'that provides families with information to help them choose a childcare service that meets their needs'.

In its last Budget, the Australian Government announced that parents will have access to a central register of childcare availability across Australia from this Hotline. To enable this register, children's services need to report weekly on vacancy and usage data for each day of the week.

Usage data needs to be reported for the previous week and vacancy data for the week ahead.

Services can submit data via some existing software systems, via the internet or by telephone.

Further information about the reporting requirements has been issued directly to services by FaCSIA. The Hotline number is **1800 386 900**. ●