



Celebrate the EYLF!

The release of the Early Years Learning Framework (the EYLF) is a first for Australia—a national framework for early learning designed to guide educators in their curriculum decisions. The EYLF gives the early childhood sector opportunities to raise the status of both early childhood education and educators. The document provides services with many options for working with children and embraces the breadth and diversity of our services.

Children's Services Central believes the EYLF should be celebrated. Our role, as the Professional Support Co-ordinator in NSW is to help services maximise the value of the EYLF at service level. So we have devised some initial ways of supporting services to implement the Early Years Learning Framework:

■ EYLF Breakfasts

These breakfast sessions are an opportunity to hear a member of the EYLF Consortium speak, listen to the words of practitioners and network with colleagues. EYLF Breakfasts will be presented in late October, throughout November and in February 2010 in all 18 regions. For those unable to attend a breakfast, video documentation will be available for viewing online.

To book go to www.cscentral.org.au/training

■ Staff Meeting Package

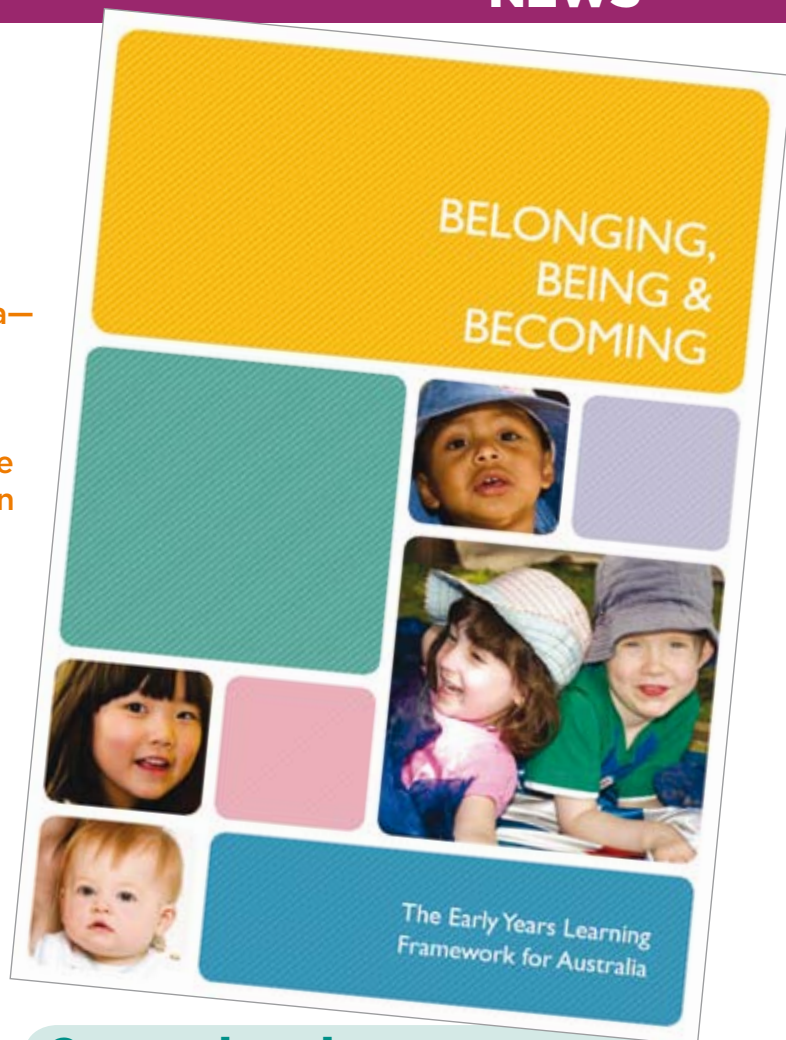
This package contains PowerPoint presentations, guided experiences and reflective questions designed to assist services in reflecting on the EYLF at their service.

The staff meeting package will be online from early November. See www.cscentral.org.au

■ EYLF E-Tips

Children's Services Central will host an EYLF E-tips email where individuals can sign up for a weekly email with tips, guidance, resources and support to assist with the implementation of the EYLF.

To register for the E-Tips please go to: www.cscentral.org.au/news/eylf.html



Comprehensive EYLF training

From the beginning of 2010 comprehensive training on the EYLF will be rolled out by our professional support providers across all regions of NSW. See www.cscentral.org.au for updates.

Support from DEEWR

DEEWR is hosting an online forum to allow "people in the early childhood sector to share their views with each other and with the Australian Government about the draft Early Years Learning Framework Educators' Guide." The Educators' Guide will be developed as a series of modules to explain, interpret and expand the Framework for early childhood educators.

To get access to the Educator's Guide you need to register for the online forum at www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Pages/EarlyYearsLearningFramework.aspx



★ ROUNDUP

Consultants and presenters needed

Are you an effective communicator? Do you have a range of professional experiences and interests? Are you interested in becoming a consultant or presenter for support and training in NSW?

Children's Services Central is interested in hearing from people who are keen to extend their professional lives to include training and support for childcare staff and services in NSW.

Holding a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment is an advantage but is not required.

If you are interested, please email us at info@cscentral.org.au and request an Expression of Interest to become a Consultant or Presenter.

Receipts

Services approved for CCB purposes would have recently received a letter from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) about the requirement to issue four-weekly statements to all families. The letter states that issuing such statements has been a requirement since January. The requirement to produce four-weekly statements replaces the old requirement to issue receipts to a family whenever fees were paid.

To clarify:

- Services do have to issue statements every four weeks. Your CCMS software should be able to do this already or should be being updated to enable this to happen.
- There are penalties if you don't do this.
- Sample statements and more information can be found on the DEEWR website at <http://tiny.cc/ccms>

New rates for ISS and FSS

DEEWR released new guidelines for the Inclusion and Professional Support Program at the end of July. The Guidelines include new rates for Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS) and Flexible Support Funding (FSF). Both of these payments support the inclusion of children with ongoing high support needs in Australian Government Approved Child Care Services.

The new ISS rate for long day care services is \$15.95 per hour up to a maximum of 25 hours per week. For Family Day

Care Services the new ISS Capacity Payment rate is either \$4.24 (Tier 1) or \$8.48 (Tier 2) per hour up to a maximum of 50 hours per week.

Flexible Support Funding (FSF) is a funding subsidy administered by ISAs and paid to childcare services to enable them to be more responsive to families and children with additional needs. The new FSF subsidy for long day care services is \$15.95 per hour for LDCs and FDCs.

The new subsidy rates came into effect from 1/07/2009.

For more info see www.ku.com.au/resources/other/FAQs.pdf or contact your region's Inclusion Support Agency—refer to our website to locate: www.cscentral.org.au/support

Funding for early childhood education teachers

Under the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education Bilateral Agreement children's services will receive a subsidy for employing teachers from the 2011/12 financial year.

Every licensed centre-based or mobile service in NSW offering a preschool program and employing an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) who has a primary contact teaching role in the design, development and implementation of the developmental educational child program will be eligible for the subsidies.

Services employing a teacher will receive a subsidy of \$6,000 per year for each three year trained teacher or \$8,000 for each four year trained teacher, with an extra \$1,000 for remote areas. The maximum number of teachers that will be funded per service is consistent with the numbers required under the Regulation (i.e. up to a maximum of four per service). Services not required to have a teacher under the Regulation (i.e. those under 29 places) are eligible for the funding if they choose to employ a teacher.

The funding for this initiative comes from the \$82.3 million the NSW Government will receive from the Commonwealth in 2011/12 under their Bilateral Agreement on Achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education.

This is a huge and important step for children's services in NSW. Research has shown that the employment of university-educated teachers in children's services makes an improvement to the quality of the education and care for children.

Looking to update your policies?

At Children's Services Central we receive many enquiries asking how to develop and implement policies. Information on policy development as well as sample policies can be found on our website at www.cscentral.org.au/publications/policy-development.html

NEW children's health fact sheets available

Looking for quality information on a range of children's health problems? The Children's Hospital at Westmead has produced a range of handy fact sheets on children's health issues. Many are available in languages other than English: www.chw.edu.au/parents/factsheets



Children's Services Central is the Professional Support Co-ordinator in New South Wales and is an initiative funded by the Australian Government under the Inclusion and Professional Support Program. Children's Services Central is managed by a consortium of key organisations that resource and support the sectors of children's services in New South Wales.

Children's Services Central

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L-R back: Bernadette Pulis-Rolt, Treena Cutmore, Carolyn McGuiness, (front) Leanne Gibbs, Indra Alagar Raja, Kelera Mar

Meet the team

The Children's Services Central team is here to assist you in providing quality services for children across NSW.

Between them they have more than 50 years experience in children's services-including long day care, integrated services, family day care, Aboriginal children's services and in key management and advisory roles.

Project Officers Treena, Carolyn and Kelera respond to enquiries on centre-based 0-5 children's services through the 1800 number and also through email. Their experience allows them to respond to a diverse range of questions-from Regulation to policy, Early Years Learning Framework to health and hygiene practices and even how to remove a possum from a centre roof!

Their work with Inclusion Support Agencies, resource development and allocation, website maintenance and professional support needs analysis contributes to providing the best professional development and support to child care services of NSW.

Corporate Services Officers Indra and Bernadette aim to make your contact with Children's Services Central as smooth and pleasant as possible. Indra handles all professional development bookings and with over 3,500 course registrations in the last 6 months, she keeps very busy. Bernadette looks after all other administrative details ensuring services receive all our valuable information and resources such as *Central News* and the Professional Development Calendar.

Manager, Leanne, aims to ensure eligible services are provided with support and professional development that enhances the ability of teams to provide a quality service to children and families. Attention to feedback, sector accountability and coordination of providers and products all play a part in achieving this goal.

We appreciate your feedback and suggestions, so please call us on **1800 157 818** or email us at info@cscentral.org.au

Needs analysis thank you

Thank you to all in childcare services and Inclusion Support Agency teams who contributed to our Professional Support Needs Analysis.

The Needs Analysis helps us to map out the professional development and support we offer children's services in 2010 and beyond. It was conducted through:

- An online survey;
- An analysis of professional development and support evaluation and attendance patterns;
- Analysis of service distribution in regions by service type and size;
- Website traffic analysis;

- Analysis of large organisation needs;
- Telephone interviews with services from each region;
- Analysis of needs/requests from individual services;
- Assessment of Quality Framework needs;
- Analysis of sector trends and issues,
- Inclusion & Professional Support Program Forum feedback,
- ISA focus questions; and
- Discussions with Children's Services Central team members.

Look for a full report in next issue of *Central*.

The online survey prize goes to Rebecca Wilson from We R Kids Learning Centre in Tamworth who has won ten free Children's Services Central training places.



FDC Forum a success

'Prepare to Succeed' was the theme of The NSW Family Day Care Association (NSWFDCA) Annual Professional Development and Networking Forum held in September at Darling Harbour, Sydney.

The two-day event called for continued success in the sector and commenced with a welcome networking reception attended by delegates from around the state. The opening ceremony the following day included a 'Welcome to Country' and a series of traditional Aboriginal dances by the Dance Theatre Group Redfern.

Anita Jovanovski, CEO of NSWFDCA, presented her welcoming address, followed by the keynote speaker Carol Lymbery, CEO of Community Child Care Co-operative and Children's Services Central. Ms Lymbery inspired the delegates and called upon their abilities to promote and achieve success. This fitted in well with the forum's theme of 'Prepare to Succeed'.

Delegates were then able to participate in a series of workshops, including Quality Assurance, Regulations, Music, Transition to School, Child Safety, as well as attending the NSWFDCA Annual General Meeting.

The AGM was completed by the end of the day of the Forum and, by this time, many delegates were getting excited about the formal occasion of the annual networking dinner, held at The Star Room. The unique backdrop of the venue created a special environment for delegates and allowed further opportunities for networking. Long Service Awards were presented to Life Members who have given 10, 15 or 20 years of service to the Family Day Care sector. A Life Membership Award was also presented to long-time NSWFDCA member, Ariane Dixon, for her outstanding support and commitment to the sector.

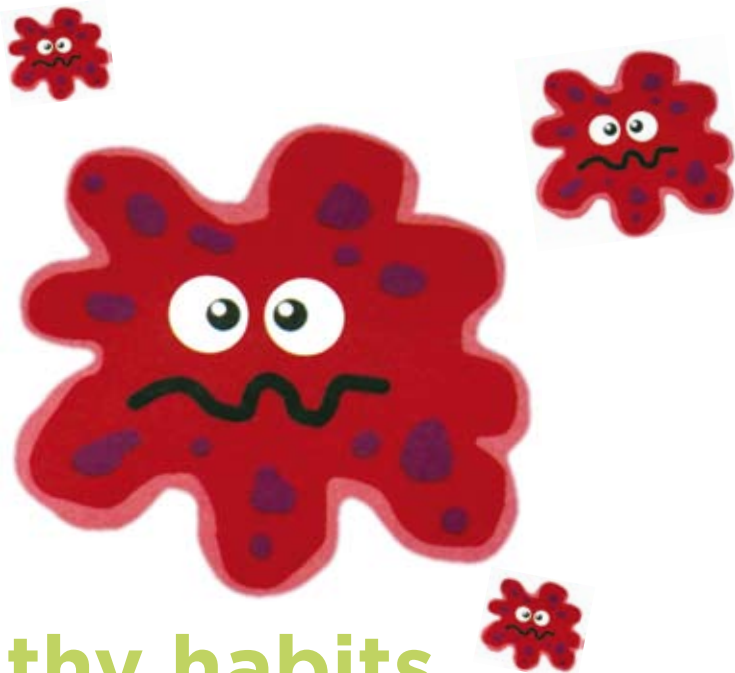
The second day of the Forum started with a performance by children from LA Talent School, followed by a keynote address by Catherine DeVyre, an outstanding motivational speaker. Ms DeVyre created an atmosphere of fun and excitement, inspiring delegates through her statements such as: "It's not how good you are but whether you are good enough to get better", "Change is inevitable, learning from change is optional" and "we cannot discover new oceans until you can move from the shore".

Sophie Mirabella, the Shadow Minister for Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education, Childcare, Status of Women and Youth addressed delegates with her views on the role and importance of Family Day Care to the Early Childhood Agenda.

Delegates then moved into the concurrent workshops that included the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Staff Management and Appraisals, Environments for Under 3s, Multicultural Perspectives, Critical Incidents, Child Care Management System (CCMS), CALD (Culturally and linguistically diverse) Care Providers, Policy Development and Inclusion.

NSWFDCA extends their appreciation to all delegates, and particularly those who travelled great distances to attend. We look forward to the next Forum in 2010.

NSWFDCA gratefully acknowledges the partial financial support of Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Guild Insurance and Financial Services.



Highlighting healthy habits

Children's Services Central has released a new free series of posters designed to assist services in maintaining healthy habits in their services.

Designed by Network of Community Activities, the posters were created in response to enquiries from services about accessing suitable and attractive resources that reinforce positive health practices. The posters focus on three of the areas in the accreditation process: hand-washing, nappy changing and infection control.

The infection control poster includes handy reminder stickers to place in any location in the service as requiring special consideration for infection control. The posters and stickers will assist staff and families with visual reminders of procedures and are being distributed free to services in NSW in this issue of *Central*.

Keeping them safe

The *Keep Them Safe: A shared Approach to Child Wellbeing* report is the NSW Government's response to Justice Wood's Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services in NSW.

Designed to improve the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in NSW, some elements of *Keep them Safe* will affect children's services.

According to the NSW State Government: "*Keep Them Safe* is a five-year Action Plan that aims to re-shape the way family and community services are delivered in NSW so that children, young people and their families receive the services they need, sooner.

"*Keep Them Safe* includes actions to enhance the universal service system and early intervention services, better protect children at risk, support Aboriginal children and families and strengthen partnership with non-government organisations (NGOs) in delivering community services."

The key element of the Governments' reform package that will affect children's services is the increased threshold for making mandatory reports of children to the Community Services Helpline from "risk of harm" to "risk of significant harm".

The Child Protection Inquiry found that NSW had one of the lowest thresholds for mandatory reporting in Australia and that the DoCS Helpline was being swamped by reports about children who,

while not receiving ideal care and whose families need support, did not require intervention by the State. The change of the threshold for reporting is intended to address this issue.

The NSW Government is running 550 three-hour information sessions around the state about *Keep Them Safe*. To book into a session go to <http://nsi.det.nsw.edu.au/nswprojects/KTS/default.aspx>

For more about *Keep Them Safe* and to download fact sheets see: www.KeepthemSafe.nsw.gov.au

Children's Services Central will support services through this change with policy guidelines, suggestions for meeting Quality Assurance requirements and information and support through updated child protection learning programs. Services may ring our support line **1800 157 818** with any queries and refer to our website for updated resources.



OOSH Regulations

Draft Regulations for Out of School Hours services (OSHC) are currently being developed by the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) and will impact on more than 900 OSHC services across NSW.

In a move welcomed by Network of Community Activities, as the peak body for OSHC services in NSW, the new OSHC regulations will not form part of the current regulation that governs early childhood services (*Children's Services Regulation 2004*) but will stand alone as an OSHC specific regulation.

The process of regulation of the OSHC sector is currently being progressed in two stages. In February 2007 the first stage commenced with the introduction of the requirement for all OSHC services to register with DoCS. The second stage is currently underway and involves the development of operating requirements that will form the foundation of the regulation.

The DoCS approach to the development of the new regulation is to maintain a minimum standard of care suitable for school age children. The National Standards for OSHC, regulations in other states and territories, as well as recognised best practice will help shape the development of the NSW regulation.

A reference group of stakeholder organisations has been formed by DoCS to assist with the development of the draft regulation. Members of the reference group include Network of Community Activities, Community Child Care, Child Care NSW, NSW Family Day Care Association, DEEWR, Commission for Children and Young People and representatives of the public, Catholic and independent education sectors.

To date the group has participated in two meetings and a final draft is nearing completion. Following approval of the document by the Minister for Community Services a public

consultation process will commence involving the sector, families and other interested stakeholders. Accompanying the public consultation will be the preparation of a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS).

This current stage in regulation development is part of the standard internal mechanisms of the NSW Government for the development of regulations. This stage assists the department to shape a draft document suitable for wide distribution to the public for consultation. No detailed public communication by DoCS has been made available in recent months due to the process still being managed internally.

It is anticipated by Network of Community Activities, as the OSHC sector peak, that consultation on the document will commence in early 2010. The State Government has confirmed no timeline as yet.

For further information on regulations for OSHC go to www.netoosh.org.au/oosh_news.htm

About Network

Network is the sector peak for Out of School Hours Services in NSW and represents 700 services, both community-based and private in NSW. Network also delivers the resource line and training for OSHC services on behalf of Children's Services Central.

For email alerts and more information and resources on OSHC go to www.netoosh.org.au

Robyn Monro Miller, chairwoman of Network of Community Activities.

Deadlier with a Degree

'Deadlier with a Degree is a tribute to persistence and resilience.'

Deadlier with a Degree is a collection of the personal stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait early childhood teachers. The aim of publishing the stories is to encourage other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to undertake early childhood education degrees.

The new publication, produced by Alma Fleet and Rosalind Kitson of Macquarie University with the support of Children's Services Central and Community Child Care Co-operative (NSW) brings together a wide range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait early childhood teachers from across Australia to share their stories of hope and survival in pursuing a dream of a degree.

The stories in the book are written by a group of indigenous graduates in early childhood education from Macquarie University, and tell of the decisions made and barriers overcome in starting and continuing their education.

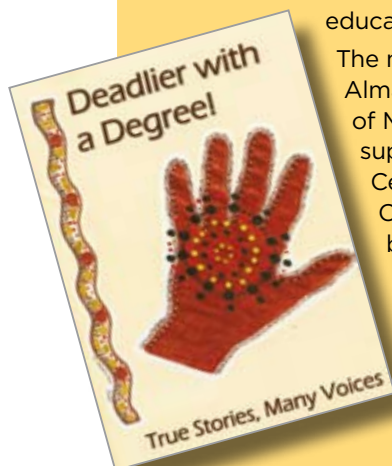
They talk about wanting to make a difference for themselves and the children they teach.

As they say at the start of the book:

"We're telling how come we went to uni, what it was like to get there, what it was like being there and how we feel about getting our degrees. Some of us already worked with kids but we're all qualified early childhood teachers now".

Deadlier with a Degree! True Stories, Many Voices (2009) Alma Fleet and Rosalind Kitson. Published by the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University

For more information about this publication, or would like a copy sent to you, email Toby Honig at Toby.Honig@aces.mq.edu.au



The role of Moderators

A message from the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC)

In November 2008, a new Community Services Training Package was endorsed and includes the qualifications relevant for the children's services sector:

Who are Moderators?

Moderators are employed by NCAC to analyse the overall quality of a childcare service. Moderators hold a relevant degree with a focus on early or middle childhood studies. Moderators are selected from different states and territories across Australia. They are required to have had active involvement in children's services for at least eight years either as a service provider, adviser, academic or administrator.

What do Moderators do?

Moderators undertake an analysis of the service's practices by examining the information provided in the service's Self-study Report; the validation of indicators, and the Validator's and service's comments in the Validation Report; and the comments or evidence from the service in the Validation Evaluation Form. Moderators use the information available in these documents to rate the service's achievements in each Principle in the Child Care Quality Assurance system that the service is participating in.

This process is particularly important when there are differences in the rating of indicators between the Validator and the service. While Validators validate indicators based on the practices they observe and documents they read on the day of the Validation Visit, Moderators rate Principles from an overview of all the available information. They are able to piece together not only a snapshot of practice on the day of the Visit but also the long term achievements and goals recorded by the service in their Self-study Report and Continuing Improvement Plan.

Sometimes the Moderator will agree with the Validator; at other times they will agree with the service. Moderators reach this decision by examining all the available information and drawing upon their:

- Knowledge and skills of early and middle childhood development
- Experience working in child care services and implementing quality child care practices
- Understanding of recommendations from recognised authorities
- Knowledge of families and the value of building effective partnerships
- Respect for diversity and equity
- Familiarity with the CCQA process and standards.

Once Moderators have evaluated the information and provided a Moderation Rating for each Principle, the data is fed into the NCAC database program that calculates a combined rating for each Quality Area. This produces the service's composite Quality Profile, which determines whether the service has met the standard required for Accreditation.

Analysis of the service's Self-study Report, Validation Report and Validation Evaluation Form, provides Moderators with a clear understanding of the service's strengths and areas for development and improvement. Moderators use this to develop the service's Continuing Improvement Guide, which provides child care professionals with a clear picture of where they currently are and how they can continue to improve.

How long does Moderation take?

One of the frustrations for services has been the waiting time to receive an Accreditation Decision after the Validation Visit. In the data entry and Moderation processes which occur in this period it is important to have time to ensure accuracy and fairness. To shorten this period NCAC has commenced using scanners to scrape the data and store reports in our electronic document management system. This has resulted in shortening this period from 10–12 weeks, to 6–8 weeks.

Scanning documents like Self-study and Validation Reports means that we are unable to redact (black out) information which may identify the service. As such, protocols have been strengthened to ensure Moderators do not have a conflict of interest with the service. We have increased training of Moderators regarding the importance of unbiased moderation, confidentiality and NCAC's code of conduct. Finally the work of Moderators is peer and management reviewed to ensure objectivity and consistency.

The Validation Evaluation Form

This form provides services with the opportunity to comment on Step 3: Validation and the performance of the Validator. Service Representatives should consult with all the childcare professionals who participated in the Validation Visit when completing the form, because sometimes people have different perspectives of the Visit.

Services can attach additional information to the Validation Evaluation Form relating to the validation of indicators, which can further paint a picture for the Moderator about its standard of practice. For example if the service disagrees with a Not Occurring validation of an indicator in the Validation Report, the Service Representative can provide additional written evidence in the form. This evidence needs to relate directly to the requirements of the indicator and the practice that was occurring during the Visit.

What else can services do?

- Write about the service in the Service Summary Statement. Services can include information about their current circumstances, which may affect their practices that they would like the Moderator to know about. The Service Summary Statement should be completed by the service prior to its Validation Visit and attached to the completed Validation Report at the end of the Visit.
- Make sure that all comments are clear and describe what was occurring during the Validation Visit. The comments should relate to the indicator being disputed. When interpreting indicators, services are encouraged to refer to the relevant Principle and Preamble.
- Provide specific examples of practices that show how the service met the indicator such as excerpts from written policies and procedures or meeting minutes

For further information about Step 4: Moderation or the role of Moderators, contact a NCAC Child Care Adviser on **1300 136 554** or email qualitycare@ncac.gov.au

Searching for support, resources and professional development?
Call us on
1800 157 818

New Bicultural role

The Bicultural Support Pool provided by Ethnic Child Care Family and Community Services on behalf of Children's Services Central provides free bicultural support workers to children's services to help them successfully include children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and Indigenous children. In the last six months alone, 400 bicultural support workers have been provided to children's services in NSW. For more information on the current Bicultural Support Pool see www.cscentral.org.au/support/bicultural-support-pool.html

Under revised Inclusion and Professional Support Program guidelines, Bicultural Support can now be offered to services in an additional way.

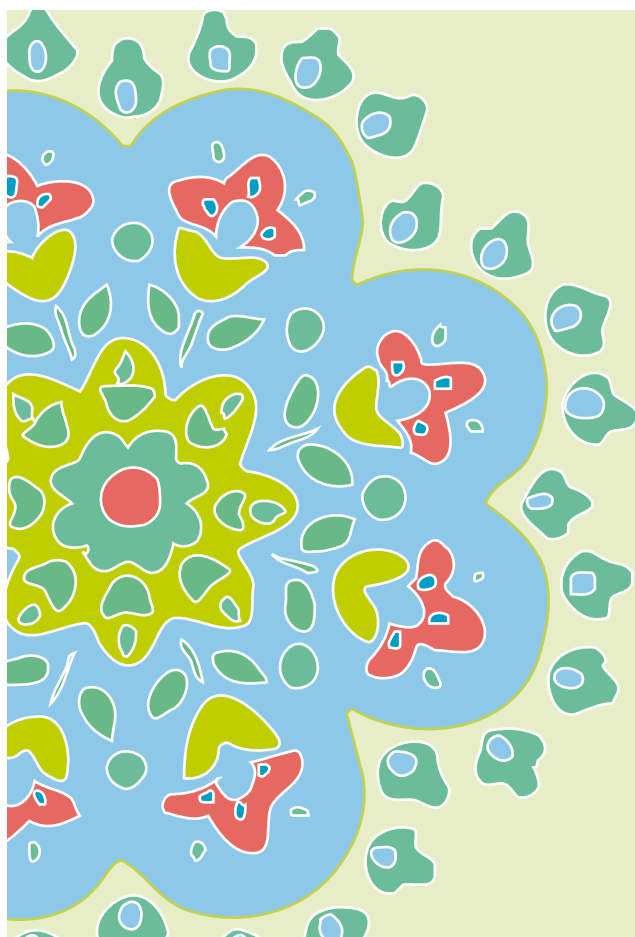
From the beginning of 2010 new 'offsite consultants' will be available to services to provide specialist support for implementing inclusive programs or curricula.

Meni Tsambouniaris, Co-ordinator of the Bicultural Support Pool commented that: "This change allows the opportunity for bicultural support and resources to be offered more comprehensively in regions where it is difficult to recruit and supply Bicultural Workers to provide a hands-on role. This will

support childcare services in enhancing their ability to meet the needs of children of CALD backgrounds".

Consultation with Inclusion Support Agency staff, Bicultural Support Workers and the community of children's services staff on the proposed role will assist Children's Services Central and Ethnic Child Care in developing a strong and integrated role for the offsite consultant. This will ensure the best outcome for children and childcare staff without duplication of roles.

More information about this additional bicultural support will be made available to services in early 2010.



Bicultural support in action

"Our Bicultural Support Worker (BSW) has been working in our three year olds room on Thursdays over the last 10 weeks, and all the teachers have found her to be of great support. This year, in this room, we have quite a few Indonesian-speaking children, and most of these children have very little English skills, so you can imagine the challenge that this presents us with each day. Our BSW has been of great assistance in this area, helping us to communicate better with these children. She has also helped settle, reassure and comfort a new child.

"However, it is not only the Indonesian-speaking children that have benefited from having the BSW in the room, but also all the other children who have enjoyed learning about various aspects of the Indonesian culture. It has been a great pleasure to have worked with our BSW over the last few weeks. I feel that it has not just been the children who have benefited from her support, but also very much the staff. We have all learnt a lot from her interesting multicultural experiences and hope to have her back again in our room later this year, so we can learn more."

Corrine Baldock, Teacher, House At Pooh Corner, University Of New South Wales.