

Inclusion Matters

Issue 6

Adapting Practice



NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency

Supporting educators in early childhood education and care services to include all children



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From the State Manager of NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency

This issue of Inclusion Matters focuses on adapting practice.

As an educator, you can make inclusion happen by:

- ▶ Reflecting on what you see, hear and know;
- ▶ Identifying practical ways of changing the space around you; and
- ▶ Focusing on your interactions – what you say and what you do.

This issue includes two articles to inspire your reflections, planning and action.

Dr Cherie Lamb, Adjunct Research Fellow at the University of New England, encourages us to consider the use of sensorimotor experiences to promote resilience and inclusion for children from refugee backgrounds.

Marina Bailey, Psychologist, provides some thought provoking insights into the power of engagement when supporting behaviour in outside school hours care services.

Throughout this newsletter, we have also included some inclusion stories celebrating the amazing work of educators in early childhood education and care services. These stories showcase how adapting practice can make inclusion happen.

Finally, we would like to share our new Big Situations online resource with you. This resource is designed to support you to include all children while responding to, and supporting recovery from big situations.

Please talk with your [Inclusion Professional](#) or contact us on **1800 703 382** to talk about and plan for inclusion.

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Acronyms used in Inclusion Matters

ACECQA	Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority
EYLF	Early Years Learning Framework
IP	Inclusion Professional
IDF	Inclusion Development Fund
NQS	National Quality Standard
QIP	Quality Improvement Plan
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
SIP	Strategic Inclusion Plan
SEL	Specialist Equipment Library

The NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the many lands on which we work. We pay respect to Elders past and present and acknowledge the nurturing and teaching they provide to children across these lands. We extend this respect to emerging generations and see them as the custodians of their traditions and culture. As educators, we commit to walking together on a journey of inclusion and reconciliation.



Practical strategies to increase resilience in young children from refugee backgrounds

Dr Cherie Lamb

Adjunct Research Fellow at the University of New England

A recent study conducted in Queensland found that refugee families experienced limited participation in early childhood services, with reasons for exclusion being poverty, limited language rights, systemic racism, cultural divergence between home and early childhood settings, and trauma (Lamb, 2020). This article focuses on understanding trauma and its impacts on young children and increasing utilisation of sensorimotor experiences to promote resilience and inclusion for children from refugee backgrounds in early childhood settings.

Traumatic experiences are events that threaten the physical integrity of a child, or people close to them, through harm, injury, or death (Tobin, 2016). Complex or chronic trauma occurs in children who have been exposed to one or multiple events such as war, refugee experience, physical or sexual abuse, chronic and severe neglect, exposure to domestic violence, intensive and painful medical conditions, or a single catastrophic event such as a car accident, fire, or flood.

Young children who have suffered trauma almost universally show signs of dissociation or agitated and disorganised behaviour. They are likely to present with a range of signs and symptoms such as:

- ▶ Extreme ongoing distress when separated from a loved one;
- ▶ Frequent sickness, headaches or stomach aches;
- ▶ Nightmares;
- ▶ Inability to play;
- ▶ Concentration and memory problems;
- ▶ Difficulty handling sensory input;
- ▶ Aggressiveness;
- ▶ Passive withdrawal;
- ▶ Social and emotional immaturity;
- ▶ Short attention span for developmental age; and
- ▶ Developmental regression (Lamb, 2020, 2017).

While educators cannot fully eliminate the impact of trauma, they can play a vital role in fostering a child's happiness, successful adaptation to adversity, and pave a pathway to resilience.

Resilience is an individual's capacity to withstand and recover from significant challenges that threaten their stability, viability, and development (Masten & Narayan, 2012).

Sensorimotor activities including music, singing, movement, interactive play, and guided visualisation can be effective strategies to relax and regulate a child who has been traumatised, whilst reducing antisocial behavioural presentations.

Sensorimotor experiences to promote resilience in young children

Activity	How does it promote resilience?
Music	Produces relaxing effect or increases arousal, depending on slow or fast music
Singing	Loud-soft; fast-slow; steady rhythms. Achieves balance through regulated breathing; Message = 'everything is okay'
Communal drumming	Fast to increase arousal and slow to produce a relaxed response
Lullabies	Facilitate emotional communication, self-regulation, and attachment
Play-songs	Help to self-regulate emotional responses
Melodic or chordal patterns	Containing or holding pattern to calm an agitated child
Stop-start songs	Self-regulation and co-regulation. Increase child co-operation
Musical call and response	Builds social skills, encourages listening, turn-taking, interactive behaviour, and communication
Movement	Helps to regain balance
Swaying & rocking	Calming effect
Running & jumping	Sensory stimulation providing a 'sense of the body's position'
Dancing	Releases excess energy in hyper-aroused children. Provides containment in circle formations, organised steps, and steady beat
Sensory movement-based activities	Monitoring how the body feels when faced with threat. Act out 'Going on a Bear Hunt' which provides a rhythmic way to explore sensation, overcoming obstacles, e.g., climbing over boulders
Interactive Play	Enhances social system, cooperation & sense of belonging
Ball games	Balance, coordination and cooperation
Games	Shared problem-solving activities
Obstacle courses	Develop problem solving and regulatory skills
Re-enacting dramas	Children may use figurines, props, and toys to re-enact dramas in safe, supportive settings
Peekaboo games	Searching, hide and seek games, beginning and end activities, packing away toys and falling and getting up games help build resilience and address separation issues
Shared imaginative play	Builds social skills, encourages listening, turn-taking, interactive behaviour and communication
Building & knocking down walls	Resilience building activity - children construct and knock down a wall with a collection of recycled boxes
Safe spaces activity	Setting personal boundaries, feelings of safety. Building safe personal spaces with chairs, tables, pillows, blankets, blocks, etc.
Relaxation	Provides containment and grounding. Manages high arousal
Visualisation activities	Support attention and focus. Guided visualisations, breathing exercises, weighted teddy bears, supported body awareness during relaxation

Lamb, 2017 (adapted from Signorelli & Coello, 2011; Wolan et al., 2015).

Flexibility in programming is important. Refugees are not a homogenous group of people, and no two refugee journeys are the same. It is important to gain knowledge about a child, their history and culture and the world view of their family and community, including child-rearing practices relating to play and praise. This knowledge enables the design and tailoring of appropriate individual and group experiences. A child who reacts with fight and flight responses in non-urgent situations, for example, may require calming activities, and a child who withdraws may require more arousal.

Strategies will need revision if undesirable reactions are activated in a child. Certain types of play or activity can trigger post-traumatic responses in children or remind them of past situations in which they were powerless. For example, Signorelli and Coello (2011) caution against singing the song 'Five Little Ducks' with a child who has lost family members. Likewise, 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' may be inadvisable for a child who has taken a perilous boat journey, or experienced floods. 'Hide and seek' may be frightening for a child who has been compelled to hide in confined spaces to survive; and red finger paint might represent blood to a child who has witnessed violence or execution. Auditory triggers such as loud or sudden noises, high-pitched noises, tapping, or fast drumming, and sensory triggers such as enforced eye contact may disturb some children who have been verbally, physically or sexually abused (Lamb, 2017).

If you are concerned about a child's trauma history or presenting behaviour, find out more about the child from their parent or guardian and work with them to contact the torture and trauma survivors' service in your state for information, guidance, and referral protocols - www.fasstt.org.au.

Within the context of safe and protective early childhood environments, by gaining the trust of a child's family by building supportive relationships, and through reflective practice and further research, educators are well-placed to scaffold, protect, and build resilience in young children from refugee backgrounds who have suffered trauma.

References and additional reading

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Contact your Inclusion Professional to plan for inclusion today!

T: 1800 703 382

E: inclusionagency@includeme.com.au

From Ukraine to the Northern Beaches



Australia has welcomed refugees from war-torn Ukraine. One family from the Ukraine is staying with extended family on the Northern Beaches. After enrolling in a school on the Northern Beaches, the family were supported by the school to enrol their child in the onsite after school care program.

All the educators were excited about this child joining them, but they knew they would need assistance to include him as they had limited knowledge about his experiences and the language he spoke. The service contacted their Inclusion Professional who told them about the Innovative Solutions Support funding stream. The Inclusion Professional helped the educators to create a project proposal for a Ukrainian bilingual worker to increase their understanding of Ukrainian culture and teach keywords in Russian. The funding application was approved.

The bilingual worker has been attending the service one afternoon a week and is a valuable resource for everyone. Some of the practices being embedded by educators through this project include:

- ▶ Weekly language sessions led by the child with support from the bilingual worker where the child teaches his friends and educators key words in Russian;

- ▶ Afternoon teas with Ukrainian treats, such as Ukrainian dumplings which all the children enjoy;
- ▶ Educators downloading and using the Google Translate App to support conversations; and
- ▶ Children creating visuals to wear on a lanyard to support communication between peers.

The educators and the child's peers played a significant role in making inclusion a success from the start. Planning for inclusion focused on educators asking children what emotions someone might be feeling about moving to a new country and what they could do to create a welcoming space. The children made welcome cards, with photos of themselves and descriptions of what they like to do.

When the children heard about the circumstances in Ukraine, they decided it would not be appropriate to continue playing their war games. Instead, they invented a new version of the game, changing the name to 'City versus Jungle' using different props.

This experience has highlighted for educators the ability of children to be perceptive of their peers and adapt their interactions and play to be inclusive. With the support of the bilingual worker, educators and all children have learnt about the Ukrainian culture and developed ways to effectively communicate and play together.



Supporting Behaviour through Engagement in Outside School Hours Care Services

Marina Bailey, Psychologist

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high national benchmark for OSHC services in Australia. The ability of services to meet these outcomes, particularly in relation to supporting behaviour, regulation and positive relationships, often relies on high levels of educator engagement. Achieving this however is not always easy.

The role of an OSHC educator is a complex one for many reasons, including how to provide a service to children in middle childhood of varying ages, development, and relationships. This period is a time of significant change for children, with marked differences in the rate of development, the emergence and importance of identity, acceptance and for many, the realisation that social power has many benefits.

These factors however do not exist in a bubble. They interact with children's individual personalities & development – and play out in an OSHC environment where social relationships may not be as well established and defined as in the school environment. This interaction between internal and external factors can all impact significantly on social behaviour and regulation.

Supporting Behaviour

Educators use a variety of supports to promote positive behaviour. Routine & predictability, choice & control, visual supports, and passive sensory areas or “Chill Zones”, are all effective strategies to support ALL children's behaviour and regulation.

However, we cannot assume that simply providing these supports alone will reduce behaviours of concern, particularly in children who struggle to regulate or engage positively with peers.

All strategies to support behaviour are dependent upon high levels of educator engagement, an understanding of individual children's profiles and a strong focus on building those relationships.

The benefits of high educator engagement

High educator engagement often has an unintended benefit of “levelling the playing field” for children socially. For some children, the very presence of an educator within the activity allows them to initiate, negotiate and stay calm more easily. This is achieved not only through the natural scaffolds, modelling and guidance an educator provides, but also through the influence their presence alone has on the behaviour of OTHER children and THEIR ability to be fair, negotiable and inclusive. It allows for a more proactive response, an opportunity to ‘guide’ behaviour in the moment and model how to problem solve socially. In other words, it helps everyone “keep in check”.

The benefits however are not only for children. The more regulated children remain, the more engaged they are and the more positive and meaningful interactions between educators and children – the greater level of job satisfaction is possible. So how can this be achieved?

Engagement vs Supervision

Firstly, it is important to think about how we view the role of educator in OSHC. Do we view engagement as something that comes at the expense of supervision or duty of care – especially when behaviours of risk are present?

How can we use high engagement to reduce risk through purposeful, targeted interactions and situational awareness?

There are several possible ways:

- ▶ Considering which children will be in attendance and pre-empting potential challenges;
- ▶ Pre-planning and ensuring preferred activities are on offer;
- ▶ Staff collaboration to identify where pro-active, purposeful engagement by educators will have the greatest impact (e.g. targeted to cohorts or activities associated with higher risk); and
- ▶ Creating opportunities to build relationships that may need nurturing between particular children and educators.

Reflective Practice

- ▶ Is my view that behaviour and regulation are a “skill” or do ALL children have the ability to “behave appropriately”?
- ▶ What feelings and attitudes in me are triggered when children engage in behaviours of concern?
- ▶ What positive qualities can I focus on when trying to nurture a relationship that has been difficult to establish?

Your Inclusion Professional can support you to reflect on your role as an educator and plan for engagement. Contact your Inclusion Professional to find out more.

Understanding behaviour
What can educators do?

We need to critically reflect on our practice individually and with our team

Knowledge and beliefs

- ▶ What do I know about each child?
- ▶ What do I know from my relationship with each family?
- ▶ How do my values impact on the way I view a child's behaviour? (e.g. do I see behaviour as being curious, communicating a need or 'naughty'?)
- ▶ How can my knowledge of typical child development help me to understand challenging behaviours?

Interactions

- ▶ What is my connection with each child?
- ▶ How am I being available to children's emotional needs?
- ▶ Do I respond in a supportive way rather than react? (i.e. my body language, voice, what and how I say it)
- ▶ What are the barriers or stressors and how can we limit or remove these?

Environments

- ▶ How does the physical environment promote positive behaviour?
- ▶ Does the environment support all children's needs? (e.g. access, sensory, resources)
- ▶ What opportunities do we provide for independence and agency, in both the outdoor and indoor spaces?
- ▶ How am I communicating positive behaviour expectations with each child?

Routines and transitions

- ▶ How do our routines provide predictability, but also allow flexibility?
- ▶ Do my group times allow choice and support every child's needs?
- ▶ Are transitions child focused not educator (time) focused?

Where can I access support?
Talk with your Inclusion Professional.
Phone 1800 703 382 Visit www.inclusionagency.nswact.org.au

The Australian Government funded NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency is managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Include Me and Gowrie NSW.

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In partnership with
Include Me
Since 1959

You can download the Understanding Behaviour posters for OSHC educators and CBDC and FDC educators from the resource section of the NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency website

<https://inclusionagency.nswact.org.au/resources?keyword=behaviour>

Rethinking, Reconnecting, and Rediscovering the Joy

An Innovative Solutions Support success story

The team of educators at The After School Klub (TASK) Merewether were struggling with a range of challenging behaviours including children absconding, children being aggressive with each other and towards educators, and children shutting down and not participating.

The team were aware that many children enrolled had experienced or were experiencing trauma. They had attended trauma informed practice training and had many strategies to put in place. They also had accessed funding for an additional educator however as the team continued to struggle with challenging behaviours, they realised that the strategies and the additional educator were not enough. After engaging in critical reflection, educators recognised that they needed to:

- ▶ shift their practice from being trauma aware to being trauma responsive;
- ▶ increase their understanding of why the behaviours were happening;
- ▶ better understand what children were trying to communicate to them through their behaviour; and
- ▶ build their confidence and skills in building stronger relationships with all children.

With the help of their Inclusion Professional, the service applied for an Innovative Solutions Support project.

The focus of this project was to engage a psychologist to build educators' skills and knowledge around trauma responsive practice. This support was delivered via a mix of content delivery and 'on the floor' support linking new knowledge with practical skills.

The project was approved with a psychologist engaged as the provider. As it draws to completion, we asked the team what some of the biggest shifts in their thinking and practice have been.

Shifts in educator thinking and practice include:

- ▶ Viewing children's behavior as children communicating an unmet need and educators seeking to meet that need first rather than coming straight in with a strategy to stop or manage the behavior;
- ▶ Recognising that whilst different strategies will work with different children it is meeting children's core needs of connection and being heard and valued by educators that makes the biggest difference; and
- ▶ Reframing 'attention seeking behaviour' to 'connection seeking behaviour' and seeing the primary role of the educator as being with children in play, in their world as opposed to supervising from afar and directing the play as they are not needing to 'seek'.



Educators commented:

"...instead of thinking a child needs a sensory toy as they are starting to get agitated and need something in their hands to help soothe them, it is thinking, this child is agitated because right now they think they do not have any friends and they need a connection and help making that connection."

"It is the educator shift and how we are viewing the children that has made the difference."

Finding the joy through changing practice... This Innovative Solutions Support project has changed the quality of daily experiences and interactions for both children and educators.

"Not only are they including more people into their play, but they are inviting us (educators) into their play...into their world...you have to be willing to be in someone's world before they will truly let you in."

"Children are including other peers into their games because they feel more supported in the environment."

Contact your Inclusion Professional to discuss how Innovative Solutions Support can help your service.



A change in thinking, a change in practice



Innovative Solutions Support projects creating change.

This story demonstrates how Innovative Solutions Support projects shifted educator practice and thinking from integration, which saw educators focused on using strategies to fix and change a child, to inclusion, which saw educators making changes to their programs and practice to support children to engage and participate. This shift has occurred over four years and through two Innovative Solutions Support projects.

At the beginning of the journey, in 2018, the Playmates Cottage Childcare Centre team was prompted to reflect on how they could better support the inclusion of children with diverse needs who were accessing the service. Their focus was on the children's behaviour and finding strategies to change or fix their behaviour. Continued critical reflection with their Inclusion Professional led to the team recognising that there was a gap in their practice between the needs of the children and connections with the program. This meant that the educators were taking an individualised approach and concentrating on the behaviours of

the children, rather than reviewing the program or environment and possible modifications within the environment to meet the sensory needs of all children. Because of this, the behaviours of some children escalated across the day.

To address this gap in practice the service was supported by their Inclusion Professional to develop an Innovative Solutions Support project that focused on:

- ▶ Building educator understanding of what sensory activities look like from a child's perspective;
- ▶ Embedding sensory perspectives into the program; and
- ▶ Rearranging the environment to reinforce or enhance the impact of the sensory issues sometimes experienced by children.

The project was approved and implemented across 5 weeks during 2019.

An Occupational Therapist supported the educators to build their knowledge about children's sensory needs, how children could present with differing sensory requirements, and



strategies to support the children in the environment. The educators became more responsive within the program and implemented activities to support heavy joint and muscle input into every day and introduced deep breathing activities in all rooms as a regular part of the program.

After the success of this sensory focused project, the service recognised the need to build educator capacity in supporting children with diverse communication skills and needs.

The service requested support from their Inclusion Professional to apply for an Innovative Solutions Support project focused on embedding the use of visuals across the service to support children's communication and interactions.

In 2022, the Innovative Solutions Support project commenced and at the conclusion of the project the director described the project as 'brilliant' and commented there were changes 'from the first session with the speech therapist'. The service has embedded visual supports into care environments, and these are being used by all children to support them to express themselves, develop agency and have a better understanding of what is happening

throughout the day. Educators have noticed that since using the visuals across the service and with all children, that children are gaining independence with self-help skills and there has been an increase in interactions with each other and with the adults in the room. *One educator commented "I was born to work this way with the children"*.

As a result of the two projects the focus of educators has shifted from the challenging behaviours displayed by children to more reflective conversations about the program and the environment and how educators can make changes to both to create a calm environment for everyone.

A focus on Reconciliation

Being brave and making change!

Through a reflective conversation between Rose, the Director of Butterflies International Childcare Centre and Laura Field, the service's Inclusion Professional, it was identified that it was a challenge for the service to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within their daily program because the team of educators came from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, did not grow up in Australia, and had minimal knowledge of First Nations history.

To support the service to build their knowledge and understanding together, the Inclusion Professional shared some links to support learning about the Cammeraygal people, the traditional owners of the land, some reflective questions to support team discussion, and a link to the ABC Playschool episode Walking Together that focused on reconciliation.

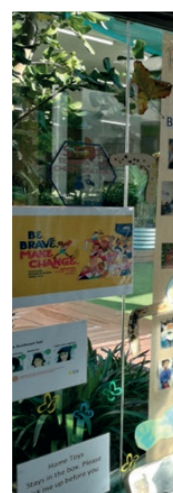
Some of the educators watched this ABC episode and participated in a reflective conversation in their team meeting. Rose reported that the reflective questions provided were key to igniting curiosity

and a developing understanding of the importance of reconciliation. Following the team meeting, the service began to change their environments to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and create a culturally safe space. They have received some positive feedback from an Aboriginal family attending the service.

Several educators have now started projects in their rooms, which have flowed into the foyer and shared spaces. The service has registered a Reconciliation Action Plan with Narragunnawali, and educators are involved in creating the actions.

The service has also connected with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through the local council and is preparing to have an Elder visit the service. Educators are actively 'doing the work', researching to increase their knowledge and identifying how their connection with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community can support reconciliation.

In preparation for the Elder's visit to the service, the educators collated some questions they felt would



increase their knowledge and confidence to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into their program. To incorporate the children's voices, educators also asked them what they would like to know. All the questions were emailed to the local Elder before their visit. The service is already planning on how to increase family participation in their reconciliation journey.

Rose commented on the importance of educators 'being truly curious' and their acknowledgement that 'we need to do our part first'. Rose emailed, 'Thanks for your support and guidance in relation to our Reconciliation Action Plan. We have gained some confidence to start for sure!'

The service has since engaged in a conversation with a visiting sports provider who had expressed that he didn't have knowledge or understanding about reconciliation. They shared the link to the Playschool episode Walking Together and the sports

provider then used this information to include a focus on reconciliation in their program the following week.

Being curious, being brave and sharing your learning will support progress towards reconciliation!

Contact your Inclusion Professional to discuss how you could plan for reconciliation.



Questions to support reflection

- ▶ How could your service engage in conversations about reconciliation and make plans for action and change?
- ▶ What changes could you make to your environments and educational programs to include all cultural perspectives?
- ▶ How can you connect with and listen to First Nation Peoples in your community?

Specialist Equipment

Inclusion In Action

When planning for their program, Greenway Child Care Education team members identified that further support would be required to provide an inclusive environment for all the children in their care. They approached the Inclusion Agency for support, and with assistance from their Inclusion Professional they developed a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP). This plan identified strategies and resources that would address the inclusion barriers being experienced, enhance the physical and social participation opportunities for a child called Zoe, as well as create greater opportunities for friendship development between all children.

In the Strategic Inclusion Plan, specialist equipment was one of the resources identified to access. The service worked together with Zoe's family, Allied Health Services and Inclusion Professional to decide on the most suitable pieces of equipment and then applied for a Lecky Squiggle Standing System with base, and a Lecky PAL Chair. An application to the NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency Specialist Equipment Library was submitted, and in a short time the requested pieces of equipment were couriered to the service.

These pieces of equipment were used to support Zoe to be able to sit at tabletop activities, share meals with peers at the lunch table, sit with the group for stories and songs independently and participate in all daily activities within the care environment.

Educators report that the use of specialist equipment has increased Zoe's participation in planned experiences alongside her peers, supported her participation in daily routines and increased the interactions and friendships between all children.

Educators commented:

"It is fantastic to see Zoe getting enjoyment out of using her new chair and standing frame. It is also great seeing her peers including her in the everyday routine."

"When it is mealtimes (especially lunch), whoever is sitting next to Zoe will talk to her as they are eating. Zoe will stop eating and join in on the conversation that is happening next to her."

For more information on the Specialist Equipment Library talk to your Inclusion Professional and see <https://inclusionagency.nsw.act.gov.au/about/specialist-equipment-library>



New Resources

Big Situations Resources

NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency
Big Situations...
Supporting educators to prepare and respond

This resource is available for **free** and aims to support educators to include all children while responding to, and supporting recovery from, big situations.

It contains resources and supports educators can access when big situations happen.

- Child Safety and Wellbeing
- Critical Incidents
- Epidemics and Pandemics
- Family Violence
- Loss and Grief
- Natural Disasters

To access the Big Situations resource go to www.inclusionagencynswact.org.au or use the QR code below:



NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency
Big Situations...
Supporting educators to prepare and respond

Over the past few years, Australian communities have been impacted by a range of natural disasters coupled with a global pandemic. We refer to these events and other major challenges that educators may experience as 'big situations'.

Before you do anything... safety comes first. If you are experiencing a 'big situation' now...

- ▶ Keep everyone safe. Avoid injuries or harm by making your site physically safe and promoting a calm environment as much as possible.
- ▶ Follow the directions of emergency services
- ▶ Follow regulatory requirements and implement relevant policies, including informing management, and your Regulatory Authority where needed e.g. critical incident or service closure.
- ▶ Be ready to say no if people ask you to do things that are outside your scope or that could be harmful for children and calmly explain why
- ▶ Seek or ask for help as needed

<p>Child Safety and Wellbeing Concerns relating to child safety and wellbeing arise in response to things educators observe and hear when working with children and families.</p>	<p>Family Violence... Supporting children affected by family violence situations can be part of an educator's role.</p>
<p>Critical Incidents... A critical incident is an unexpected event that can impact on a service.</p>	<p>Loss and Grief... When there is a death within your service's community, educators will have a role in supporting children and their families who are experiencing loss and grief.</p>
<p>Epidemics and Pandemics When infectious disease affect communities, educators are responsible for following health requirements... as well as helping children understand the big changes around them.</p>	<p>Natural Disasters... When communities are affected by natural disasters, educators may have time to prepare children beforehand and will need to support them and their families afterwards.</p>

Role of the educator
 This is not about educators needing to know everything, or feeling pressured to resolve or fix big situations. It is about educators having confidence and access to the supports and resources they need to keep going in their important work with children and families when big situations happen.

Role of the Inclusion Professional
 An Inclusion Professional can support educators to proactively prepare to have the skills and confidence to respond to big situations that may occur. This preparation could include support to use this resource and may involve strategic planning. Inclusion Professionals can help educators connect with external organisations and agencies as needed.

To access the Big Situations resource go to www.inclusionagencynswact.org.au or scan the QR code.

The NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency is funded by the Australian Government

This **Big Situations poster** is included as an insert in this newsletter or can be downloaded from <https://inclusionagencynswact.org.au/resources/big-situations-poster>

Display this poster in your service's office or staff room to remind everyone of safety first strategies and the information and resources available to support them.

New Resources *Continued...*

What do services need to know about the Disability Discrimination ACT?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) supports children with disability to access and fully participate in early childhood education and care services in the same way as other children. All services must comply with the DDA.

ACECQA has released a collection of new resources to support you to understand your legal obligations under the DDA including how this links to the National Quality Standard. Resources include fact sheets, tip sheets, and posters that can be used with your teams to support you to reflect on and meet these obligations.

You can find the resources here: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/resources/disability-discrimination-act-1992-dda-resources>

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact your Inclusion Professional



ACECQA National Quality Framework eLearning modules for new educators

This eLearning program has been developed for new educators and includes four induction modules focusing on:

- ▶ Introduction to the children's education and care sector
- ▶ Overview of the National Quality Framework
- ▶ Law and Regulations
- ▶ National Quality Standard

Use this link to access these resource: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-quality-framework/national-quality-framework-nqf-elearning-modules>

Inclusion Support Program *Update*

Long Day Care services eligible for the Inclusion Support Program are also able to access a new state funded program called Start Strong for Long Day Care.



Start Strong for Long Day Care

Start Strong for long day care (LDC) is designed to improve affordability for families and support children's access and



2023 Start Strong for Long Day Care program

The 2023 Start Strong for Long Day Care program is the NSW Department of Education's State/Territory Funded Kindergarten/Preschool Program (KPP).

This funding has two components that eligible services may select to access, Program Payment and Fee Relief Payments. More information including Program Spending Rules are available in the 2023 Start Strong for Long Day Care program guidelines. You can access these guidelines on the NSW Department of Education website.

CCSA have developed some webinars you may find useful in further understanding the 2023 Start Strong program and you can access these webinars here:

<https://ccsa.org.au/implementation-support-for-start-strong-funding/>

Thank you for your feedback...

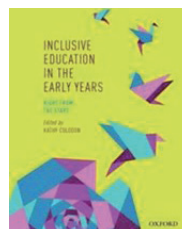
During 2022, services who received support from the NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency were invited to complete a quick 5-minute survey.

Thank you to all the educators who provided us with feedback. Each participating service was entered into a draw with the chance to win an inclusion resource.

Congratulations to our lucky winners: ***Integricare Early Learning Centre Rockdale; Explore and Develop Abbotsford; New Lambton District OOSH and Greystanes Uniting Church Childcare Centre.***

We hope you enjoy your copy of Dr Kathy Cologon's book – *Inclusive Education in the Early Years* and that you find it a useful resource as you continue your inclusion journey.

Photo: Sunanda – *Integricare Early Learning Centre Rockdale*



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The Australian Government funded NSW/ACT Inclusion Agency is managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Include Me and Gowrie NSW.



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