

Sector Capacity Building Program



Inclusion Ready News

Issue 1 – 20 May 2020



IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to the first KU Sector Capacity Building Program newsletter.

In the current context of COVID-19, we will share the exciting opportunities we are offering this term to help you to be inclusion ready while you may be exploring different ways of working and engaging in online professional learning.

We share some of the latest information relating to the disability sector and service provision, to help you keep abreast of some of the factors which may impact your families, and hence your inclusive practice, in the coming months. We have also brought together some inspiring examples of how preschools are keeping connected with children and families.

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Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan (PIRP)

Some preschools have already engaged with us to complete a plan. If you have reduced attendance this term, now may be the perfect opportunity to develop a plan with us.

Why develop a Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan?

- ▶ The plan is devised by and owned by you – a working document that helps to keep your team cohesive and focussed.
- ▶ It provides strong evidence, which can be shared during your assessment and ratings visit and demonstrates that your team are actively prioritising inclusive practice and working collaboratively with your Preschool Inclusion Consultant.
- ▶ The planning process, and ongoing support provided throughout the year, contributes to the minimum 8 hours (12 hours for priority preschools) of support you are entitled to each term, as set out by the Department of Education. The planning will occur via phone and/or online meetings.
- ▶ When you develop a plan together with us, we will provide you with a certificate to display so that families and visitors such as Compliance Officers will know that you are actively focusing on inclusion.



Webinar Series – ‘Hot Topics for Inclusion’

During term 2, we will be providing regular FREE live webinars around the topics you have indicated matter most to you. We have some incredible speakers waiting to bring you information to take your inclusive practice to the next level.

For more information and to register go to:

<https://www.ku.com.au/childcare/about/inclusion/scbp-hot-topics-in-inclusion>

Disability and Inclusion Program – Updates from the Department of Education

High Learning Support Needs funding for quarters 1 and 2

Scheduled April 2020 quarterly payments for Early Childhood Education funded programs will be progressed. This includes High Learning Support Needs (HLSN) funding and Minor Capital Works funding available through the Disability and Inclusion program.

HLSN funding will be maintained through to 30 June 2020. No negative adjustment will be applied to HLSN funding for this period (Quarter 2).

Further consideration will be undertaken regarding HLSN funding from July 2020 onwards.

Whilst adjustments will not be made for the period from April through to 30 June, services should continue to advise the Department of changes in the circumstances of children receiving funding through HLSN as outlined in the Program Guidelines.

The full FAQs can be found here: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/coronavirus>

Reminder re closing date for funding applications for quarter 3

Applications for high learning support needs (HLSN) and minor capital works funding for quarter 3 (July-September 2020) close: **Thursday 28 May at 5pm**

(For further funds to be considered, Quarter 2 HLSN funding based on preschool observations need to have reviews submitted by Thursday 28 May).

For more information about HLSN funding applications go to: https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/grants-and-funded-programs/disability-and-inclusion-program/disability-and-inclusion-program-guidelines-2020#High_4

Your Preschool Inclusion Consultant is also able to support you with the application process. Please contact us with any questions.

Important note:

ECCMS can no longer be accessed with an AUSkey – you now require a MyGovID.

For more information about accessing ECCMS via MyGovID go to: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/grants-and-funded-programs/early-childhood-contract-management-system>

Disability sector news

Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) update

Lifestart provide ECEI services for children in your area and they continue to accept referrals. ECEI supports children 0-6 years who have developmental delays, concerns around development, or disability. They assist with determining children's support needs (including NDIS funding access where eligible), providing referrals for support and providing short-term intervention. Supports will be provided using remote modalities (e.g. phone, online meetings).

Referrals can be made by contacting the Client Engagement Team on **1800 953 390**.

Disability sector news (continued)

NEW Disability Information Helpline

A new hotline for families and services has been set up to answer questions and provide information and referrals relating to disability and the impact of COVID-19 – **1800 643 787**.

<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/information-and-referrals-for-people-with-disability-and-their-supporters-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

Therapy engagement during COVID-19

Children accessing therapy may now be offered these services remotely via telepractice also known as telehealth. This mode of therapy provision has been used in rural and remote areas for many years and research has shown efficacy in terms of engagement and therapy outcomes. It is important to be aware that many children will currently be participating in their therapy in this way and, alternatively, that families may be choosing to disengage for a period due to not feeling this modality will suit their needs. It is a good idea to keep in touch with families to find out what therapy their children are engaging in (or withdrawing from) and speak with your Preschool Inclusion Consultant around ways you can continue to work collaboratively during this time or support children who are currently not engaging in therapy.

Diagnostic services

Many diagnostic and assessment services are currently being provided via telehealth. As several diagnostic tools require face-to-face assessment, children who are awaiting assessment may now face a prolonged wait and parents may only receive partial information around their child's potential diagnosis at this time, if they are able to access any diagnostic information. ECEI can assist children in the absence of a diagnosis, however it is important to recognise the additional wait families will likely face for diagnostic outcomes, and the uncertainty and potential stress families may experience, as well as the impact this may have on access to a variety of funded supports.

Preschool voices:

Keeping connected to include all children during COVID-19

Bellambi Point Community Preschool (Big Fat Smile)

Director Cassie Edwards has kindly shared some of the ways their team have kept connections with children and families strong, with many children at home in response to COVID-19:

- ▶ Providing home activity packs for children (e.g. playdough, craft materials, home-made puppets)
- ▶ Using Kinderloop to share resources (e.g. links to Storyline, Kinderling)
- ▶ Sharing the variety of Zoo webcams and video sharing with the families through Kinderloop as well
- ▶ Taking a group photo of educators and sharing a Hello message to children and families who are absent
- ▶ Reaching out to all families to check in and ask what can be done to support them on an ongoing basis
- ▶ Regularly sharing relevant information with families

Christ Church Gladesville Preschool

Kathryn Trimble, Director of Christ Church Gladesville Preschool, shared some highlights on how they transformed over the past weeks due to COVID-19.

“Over the last three weeks our attendance has dropped from 58 children per day to between 8 -14 per day. With 3 teams we have been using the time to prepare for children being at home during Term 2. Educators have been making craft packs and including Easter items and Mother’s Day craft for the children to do at home. We have made Blogs for each class and have been videoing stories, Munch and Move exercises, science experiments and art ideas. We have been using curriculum content that we planned for Term 2, such as the Kimochi’s program, Reconciliation week, Sustainability, Munch and Move and Worrywoos program. Each class has access to their own Seesaw app to help their child to connect in with their teacher and friends. This app is very easy to use and the children can upload their own comments, photos and videos to share with their teacher and friends. Educators will be able to add to their program from this feedback as well.

The aim is to keep all our children connected with preschool, curriculum, their teachers and friends.”

Thank you to Cassie, Kathryn and their teams, for sharing their preschools’ voices with us.

A final favourite quote



Strength lies in differences,
not in similarities.

Stephen R. Covey

Your Preschool Inclusion Consultant is available to support you online and over the phone at this time. Please let us know of any specific support you may be needing.

*The Sector Capacity Building Program is funded by the
NSW Government Department of Education.*