

Inclusion Ready News

Issue 3 – 12 October 2020



IN THIS ISSUE

2020 has been a huge year of uncertainty and change for everyone. Congratulations on making it through to term 4!

In our final newsletter for 2020, we share ideas for orientation to preschool within the context of COVID-19 as well as news from the Department of Education, information about our webinars and on training scholarships from Reimagine Australia.

We continue to be able to support you online, via the phone and through our online training. We'd also love to hear from you should you wish to discuss any information shared in this newsletter.

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Preschool Inclusion Team update

This term we say goodbye to two of our team members from the Inner West and Eastern Suburbs team, Mika Barakat and Linda Margan. We wish them all the very best in their new roles and thank them for their contribution to the Sector Capacity Building Program.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new team members.



Deb Grivas is joining the Penrith team. Deb has had over 30 years' experience as an early childhood educator and has worked in a variety of services and settings across Australia and internationally, including community preschools, early childhood intervention services, parenting support programmes and primary schools. Deb has a Masters degree in Inclusive Education and is eager to work with other educators to create quality, equitable and inclusive programmes for all children.



Vanna Lockwood is joining the Inner West/Eastern Suburbs team. Vanna is coming to us from her role as Educational Leader at St Peters Community Preschool where she worked for 15 years. Vanna has worked in the early childhood field for 30 years and also currently teaches part time at TAFE and has previously taught at Macquarie University. Vanna has a particular interest in learning from and supporting families, and in exploring ways of creating inclusive early childhood environments where empathy, kindness, respect and the emotional wellbeing of every child is nurtured.

NSW Department of Education update

► Preschool Profiles

We are currently in the process of completing Preschool Profiles with our preschools. We would like to extend our thanks to those of you who have engaged so far and remind you that we will need to complete this important requirement with you by **Friday 23 October** if we have not done so yet. We are finding that the Preschool Profile process this year is leading to a range of useful reflective conversations around inclusion readiness possibilities.

► High Learning Support Needs funding application due date: 5pm Thursday 15 October 2020

This deadline relates to any final adjustments which includes new applications and variations for 2020. The Disability and Inclusion Guidelines for 2021 will be launched in the near future with the closing dates for all quarterly rounds for High Learning Support Needs.

Upcoming KU Sector Capacity Building Program professional learning opportunities in term 4

Transition to School for Children with Disabilities Webinar

Presented by Heather Morse and Emma Pierce, Preschool Inclusion Team

Date: Wednesday 14 October

Time: 4:00pm - 4:45pm

Cost: Free

How educators in community-based preschools can support families of young children with disabilities around the transition to school process.

[Register here](#)

Wellbeing and Resilience for Children and Educators

Presented by Emma Woods and Karin Humphrey, Be You consultants, in conjunction with the KU Preschool Inclusion Team



Session 1

Date: Wednesday 4 November

Time: 4:30pm - 5:30pm

Cost: Free

How wellbeing and resilience can be supported in all children.

Session 2

Dates: Monday 9 November – Illawarra Region

Tuesday 10 November – Penrith Region

Wednesday 11 November – Sydney Inner West/Eastern Suburbs Region

Time: 4:30pm - 5:30pm

Cost: Free

- ▶ How educators can take care of their own wellbeing.
- ▶ Interactive Q&A with Be You consultant. Networking opportunity regarding wellbeing and resilience for educators.

[Register here](#)

Please note these webinars are available to preschools supported by the KU Sector Capacity Building Program.

Webinar recordings available

Two new webinar recordings are now available that were delivered in term 3. Please contact your Preschool Inclusion Consultant if you would like to receive a link for any of the webinar recordings.

▶ Critical Reflection on Inclusive Practice: A 2-part Webinar for Preschool Educators

Presented by Marg McLeish and Jan Faulkner

This 2-part webinar series focused on the importance of critical reflection and building educators' confidence to think more deeply about their work and to question the impact of their practices on the lives of all children and families. The presenters also outlined the main difference between reflection on practice and critical reflection and how they both fit under the NQS.

▶ Key Word Sign

Presented by Rachel Knights, Speech Pathologist

This webinar examined 'what', 'why', and 'how' of Key Word Sign, with a focus on the use of Key Word Sign in the preschool setting. Accessing the webinar recording may assist you in learning some signs and giving you useful information and resources to continue developing signing skills.

Preschool orientation for 2020-2021

Orientation for children starting preschool in 2021 may look a little different this year. Orientation visits in term 4 are usually a time where children and families get to know more about preschool and you have an opportunity to start building a relationship with new children and families. Orientation also offers an early opportunity to see children within your environment. Providing opportunities for children to become familiar with the preschool environment is still an important component of a smooth transition into preschool.

Here are some creative COVID-safe options you might like to try:

- ▶ Create a video or welcome message from the preschool. This can be recorded and uploaded to YouTube, Dropbox or OneDrive and the link then shared with families.
- ▶ Create a social story to introduce the preschool to new children. We've created a template that you can download and adapt for your preschool: www.ku.com.au/uploads/Social-Story-Im-Going-to-Preschool.pptx
- ▶ Provide a virtual tour of the preschool environment. This could be live streamed to your preschool's Facebook page or broadcast through Skype, Zoom or Facetime.
- ▶ Create a live or recorded story time with educators.
- ▶ Schedule a live online event for a question and answer session for new families and children.
- ▶ Create packages that can be sent home. These could include social stories, photographs of educators, the preschool environment and some preschool experiences and any other relevant information.
- ▶ For families who identify any specific concerns, you may like to consider arranging a time that they could visit in a COVID-safe way.

Transition to school social stories

If you have any children who you feel would benefit from using any of the following social story templates designed to support children to become familiar with different aspects of school, please contact your Preschool Inclusion Consultant. These specific stories may provide additional support to children who benefit from feeling prepared for new situations.

- ▶ My new school
- ▶ Assembly at school
- ▶ Canteen at school
- ▶ Library at school
- ▶ Recess and lunch at school
- ▶ Sport at school

Delving Deeper podcast – coming soon

This podcast will involve conversations with presenters of our 'Hot Topics In Inclusion' webinar series where we delve deeper into the key messages and answer questions raised on these important subjects.

NDIS reforms



On Friday 28 August there was a [media release](#) regarding the upcoming National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) reforms. These reforms aim to make the NDIS more accessible for people with permanent and significant disability as well as to have a greater flexibility in choices around support packages.

Another significant change is the introduction of independent assessment.

More information about the implications of this for the Early Childhood Early Intervention approach will follow when available.

Training scholarships from Reimagine Australia

(Reimagine Australia was previously Early Childhood Intervention Australia)

Reimagine Australia are offering a number of scholarships for their upcoming Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention Training and 'The Reimagining' Virtual Summit.

To find out more about this training and to apply for a Best Practice in Early Childhood Intervention training scholarship valued at \$250 [click here](#). This training is NESA endorsed for 6 hours.

To find out more about the 'The Reimagining' Virtual Summit [click here](#). To apply for a full scholarship valued at \$595 [click here](#). Each day of the summit is NESA endorsed for 6.5 hours. To apply for a 'The Reimagining' Virtual Summit half scholarship valued at \$297.50 [click here](#).

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.

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NSW Government Department of Education.*

Cover photo: St Peters Community Preschool