

Sector Capacity Building Program



Inclusion Ready News

Issue 4 – 3 February 2021



IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to 2021!

We hope you have all returned to preschool renewed and refreshed and are looking forward to starting a brand new year. 2020 was a year like no other, and we hope that in 2021 we will have more opportunities to work together towards enhancing your inclusive practice.

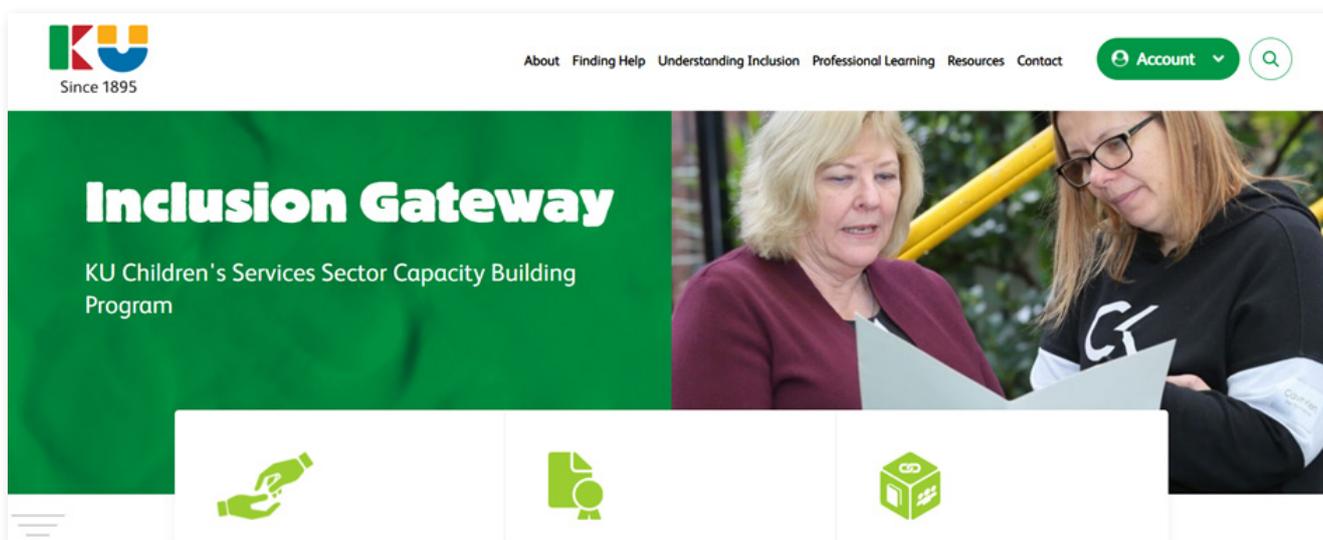
Regardless of what the year holds, your Sector Capacity Building team will find ways to connect with you and build on the wonderful work that you do with all children.

In this issue we are pleased to invite you to our first professional learning events of the year: 'The Why and How of ILPs' and 'Inclusive Routines and Transitions'. We are also excited to announce the launch of 'Inclusion Gateway', our new website developed for preschools, packed with useful resources. We discuss a new resource that will support your team in establishing routines and transitions at preschool in an inclusive manner, we remember to focus on our own self-care and wellbeing, and finally we share some more ideas on how your Preschool Inclusion Consultant can help support you in your preschool.

Our new 'Inclusion Gateway' website coming soon

We are very excited to announce that 'Inclusion Gateway', the new KU Sector Capacity Building Program's website, is almost ready to be launched. We've been working hard behind the scenes to put together a website that will be full of useful and practical information and ideas to support you in your inclusive practices. The launch of Inclusion Gateway website and a first peek at our website will be presented as part of our second professional learning event this term. (see below for details).

This website is an inclusion learning space designed specifically for educators in preschools supported by the KU Sector Capacity Building Program. Each preschool will have their own log in and you will be able to dip in and out of the site at any time. The 'Inclusion Gateway' will enable you to access professional learning, find a range of practical resources, and view current and regularly updated information to support you with your inclusive practice.



Reflecting on your routines and transitions

Inclusive routines and transitions are responsive and flexible and enable all children to meaningfully participate. At the beginning of the year, establishing new routines and transitions can often have challenges, particularly for children with additional needs.

Routines and transitions can become more inclusive when we are purposeful, aware and intentional in both our planning and our practice. Through critical reflection we can create routines and transitions that consider the needs of the individual within the routine, as well as the potential for learning and nurturing through relationships.

The Sector Capacity Building team has developed the '**Responsive Routines and Transitions Tool**' to support you in this process of critical reflection and working towards implementing effective inclusive routines and transitions at preschool.

To learn more about this tool please contact your Preschool Inclusion Consultant.

Upcoming professional learning and networking events

We are planning for our first event to be online due to uncertainty around COVID-19 restrictions, but we hope to be able to arrange face to face events soon. These opportunities are free and open to preschools supported by the KU Sector Capacity Building Program.

Webinar: The Why and How of Individual Learning Plans

Tuesday 9 March 2021, 4:30pm-5:30pm

Register here

An individual learning plan is a requirement for all children for whom you receive high learning support needs funding through the Disability and Inclusion Program. Do all educators at your preschool feel confident in developing and implementing these ILPs effectively?

Learn about:

- ▶ The 'why' of ILPs –
 - The research supporting individual learning plans (ILPs)
- ▶ The 'how' of ILPs –
 - Developing ILPs collaboratively with families and other professionals
 - Ensuring goals and objectives are specific, measurable, achievable and time-limited.

The Preschool Inclusion team will also share the new KU ILP template that links with the Early Years Learning Framework and discuss practical tips about how to use this tool. Participants will take away the ILP template to use at your preschool.



Guest Speaker: Dr Coral Kemp – Senior Lecturer, Macquarie School of Education, Institute of Special Educators (InSpEd)

Dr Coral Kemp was instrumental in establishing the Early Years programs at Macquarie University and the STaR Inclusive Early Childhood Association. Coral is currently an Honorary Senior Lecturer at Macquarie University where she is still involved in collaborative research. She is a committee member of the International Society on Early Intervention (ISEI) and was Chair of the Scientific Committee for the ISEI conference held in Sydney in 2019.

Inclusive Routines, Rituals and Transitions and Launch of the 'Inclusion Gateway' Website

Date to be confirmed very soon

Learn about:

- ▶ Routines, rituals and transitions from an inclusive pedagogy perspective
- ▶ The KU Responsive Routines and Transitions Tool
- ▶ Take a short, guided tour of our 'Inclusion Gateway' website

Keep an eye out for more information on this event and how to register.

Disability and Inclusion Program Funding dates

Quarter 2 assessment cut-off dates for High Learning Support Needs and Minor Capital Works funding must be submitted by **5:00pm, Friday 26 February 2021**.

The 2021 Disability and Inclusion Program Guidelines can be accessed here:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/grants-and-funded-programs/disability-and-inclusion-program/guidelines>

Please let us know if you need any support with the application process.

Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan (PIRP) development

Are you ready to delve more deeply into improving your inclusive practice? Your Preschool Inclusion Consultant can assist you and your team with reflecting on your strengths, developing goals and creating a working document that supports an inclusive approach at your preschool. The PIRP makes clear links with your Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and to the National Quality Standard (NQS). This document provides a great tool for self-assessment in preparation for assessment and rating, and assists in keeping your team cohesive and focused on prioritising inclusive practices in your preschool.

When you develop a plan with us, we will provide you with a certificate to display so that families and visitors such as authorised officers will know that you are actively focusing on inclusion.

For those who have already established their first PIRP, the beginning of a new year may be a good time to reflect on progress and update your plan with your Preschool Inclusion Consultant.



If you would like to know more, or you feel ready to begin the process of developing a PIRP, please contact your Preschool Inclusion Consultant.

Staff wellbeing and resilience

The ongoing impacts of the pandemic on the way we work in early childhood, mean that it is important to maintain a focus on caring for ourselves. Starting the year with a commitment to staff wellbeing and resilience will strengthen and support not only your team of educators, but also the children and families that you work with.

In order to successfully care for others, we need to care for ourselves first!



In 2020, 'Be You' presented a wellbeing and resilience webinar for us in which they shared many resources and strategies to improve educators' wellbeing and support our mental health.

The 'Be You' Wellbeing Plan for Educators is a tool to prompt us to think about our strengths and challenges, and to identify actions that we can take to support our self-care.

<https://beyou.edu.au/-/media/wellbeing-tools-for-you/practice/be-you-wellbeing-plan-for-educators.pdf>

If you missed the live 'Be You' webinar please ask your Preschool Inclusion Consultant to send you the webinar recording.

How your Preschool Inclusion Consultant can support you

Did you know that your preschool is entitled to at least 8 hours a term of support from the Sector Capacity Building Program?

Here are some of the ways your consultant can help:

- ▶ Link with you over the phone to discuss inclusion at your preschool
- ▶ Provide free inclusion consultancy visits to your preschool
- ▶ Provide free professional development and networking sessions both face to face or online
- ▶ Coach and mentor educators and support them to reflect on practice
- ▶ Support a team approach to guiding children's behaviour
- ▶ Support you to collaborate with visiting professionals, e.g. therapists
- ▶ Link you with support such as applying for Disability Inclusion Program funding for children with high learning support needs and other practical resources
- ▶ Provide current information about where to refer families for further support

Contact your Preschool Inclusion Consultant to discuss the many ways they can support you and your preschool in 2021.

Please let us know of any specific support you may be needing.

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Cover photo: St Peters Community Preschool