

Sector Capacity Building Program



Inclusion Ready News

Issue 6 – 21 July 2021



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IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to Term 3, 2021.

In this newsletter we reflect on the launch of our 'Nurturing Communication' Toolkit and 'Share and Show' Inclusion Board Game for Educators and we share information about the exciting professional development we have planned for you this term. We highlight resources available on our Inclusion Gateway website and share stories about the benefits of the Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan process. We also share some resources to support your work with children and families as they prepare for transition to school.

Once again, unfortunately we are experiencing the impacts of COVID-19 restrictions. We are moving to online inclusion PD, so please continue to register for events and we will keep you posted if changes occur. Let us know if you require any extra support during these challenging times – if we aren't able to see you face to face, we are always available to visit virtually.

Sector Capacity Building Program Extended Until End December 2021

The NSW Department of Education has notified us that our program will continue in the same way until the end of 2021. After this time, a procurement process is planned to support future SCB program arrangements. Further information will be provided as arrangements progress.

Nurturing Communication Toolkit and Share and Show Board Game

By now, many of you would have received your complimentary 'Nurturing Communication Toolkit' and 'Share and Show' Inclusion Board Game for Educators. At our recent 'Nurturing Communication' workshops we enjoyed playing the game and hearing from Jo Waring and Rebecca Manning, KU Speech Pathologists, on how educators can support children's language and communication development at preschool.

Included in the kit are a 'Communicating with Friends' resource filled with communication ideas that can be used in any inclusive preschool; a 'Nurturing Communication' guidebook; the Nurturing Communication card set that describes specific language and communication strategies; and a 'Share and Show' Inclusion Board Game for Educators to facilitate team learning in a fun manner.

If you are yet to receive your toolkit, your Preschool Inclusion Consultant will be contacting you soon to arrange a visit once COVID restrictions are eased again.



Spotlight on our Inclusion Gateway website

We've had excellent feedback from preschools regarding our new Inclusion Gateway website. Thank you! If you haven't checked it out already, we encourage you to log in and explore the fantastic free inclusion resources, webinars, articles, information and podcasts available.

Go to www.kudisabilityinclusion.com.au to start exploring.

We are updating the website regularly and we would love to hear what you think about it. Please let us know what you have found useful and what you would like to see added.

A reminder, you can log in by selecting your preschool name from the drop down menu and your password is exactly the same as the way your preschool's name appears in the dropdown menu.

‘Delving Deeper’ podcast series

While you’re on the website, take some time to listen to a podcast or two in our ‘Delving Deeper’ podcast series where we explore more deeply some of the content presented as part of our ‘Hot Topics in Inclusion’ webinar series. You may like to stream a podcast to listen on your phone.

- ▶ Marina Bailey – Positive behaviour support
- ▶ Dr Tim Moore – Early childhood intervention and inclusion
- ▶ Melanie Heyworth – Reframing Autism
- ▶ Dr Robyn Dolby – Playspaces® for inclusion

Transition to school: Term 3 focus for preschools in supporting transition to school for children with additional needs

Preschool educators are uniquely placed to support families in their child’s transition to school due to the strong trusting relationships they develop with parents and carers.

At this time of year, it is a good idea to check in with families of children with disabilities or additional needs to see whether they have approached their local school and any other schools they are interested in applying for. This will allow sufficient time to complete any forms and share information and recent reports for school entry in 2022. If families have not yet contacted schools, preschools may need to support them with this process.

To support you in assisting families with this process, we have a number of resources and professional learning available to you on our ‘Inclusion Gateway’ website.

Resources include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Our 45 minute webinar: [Transition to school for children with disabilities](#)
- ▶ The [Ready, Set, School](#) guide for early childhood practitioners
- ▶ [Ready, Set, School](#) guide for parents
- ▶ Articles on transition to school in our ‘Inclusion Ready News’ newsletters

To access this information, please go to <https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources> and log in. You can then search in keywords with the term “transition to school” and all available resources will populate for you.

A useful video from the NSW Department of Education you may like to share with parents:

www.education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/inclusive-learning-support/starting-school-with-additional-needs

Should you require any support around transition to school for children with disabilities, please do not hesitate to contact your Preschool Inclusion Consultant.

Preschool Profiles

Your Preschool Inclusion Consultant will be in contact soon to arrange a time to complete your 2021 Preschool Profile. This process provides important information to the Department of Education about preschool inclusion needs. This needs to be completed by **Friday 27 August 2021**.

We know it is a challenging time with COVID restrictions and we are able to complete this in flexible ways that don’t require a great deal of your time. Please note, actions identified in this Preschool Profile will relate to July to December 2021.

Upcoming professional development

Free Live Webinar: Exploring the Pyramid Model to increase social emotional competencies in young children to prevent challenging behaviour

Presented by Sara Stockman

Thursday 5 August 2021, 4:30pm-5:30pm

Register here

This webinar provides an overview of the evidence-based Pyramid Model, providing an opportunity to explore the tiers of this framework designed to enhance social and emotional skills for all children, engage with colleagues in break-out rooms, discover current evidence based resources, as well as providing ideas for further training, coaching and implementation that you may like to explore with the Preschool Inclusion Team.

The **Pyramid Model** promotes high quality evidence-based early educator practice. Educators' use of Pyramid Model practices aims to increase the social-emotional competencies of all children, enhancing inclusive practices of the service as a whole, as well as supporting children with behavioural challenges. Practices from this model support families with parenting and enhance individual educator practices and teamwork.

Australian evidence supports Pyramid Model practices as having positive impacts on outcomes for children, educators, teams and families that are in line with the National Quality Standard and Early Years Learning Framework.



About the presenter

Sara has a passion for ensuring social emotional development is a priority for all children. Drawing upon 20 years of personal and early childhood professional experiences, Sara provides the most contextualised, relevant and supportive social emotional learning and teaching for team leaders, educators and children alike. As a result, inclusivity and positive behaviour are the most enjoyed outcomes, along with strong team, family and child connections.

Free Live Webinar: Anxiety in Preschool Aged Children

Presented by Roxanne Goff, Clinical Psychologist, Centre of Emotional Health Clinic, Macquarie University

Tuesday 24 August 2021, 4:30pm-5:45pm

Register here

This presentation will explore:

- ▶ The different presentations of anxiety in preschool aged children
- ▶ Strategies to assist children with the management of anxiety
- ▶ The relationship between and impact of ASD on anxiety including adaptation of strategies
- ▶ Communicating concerns to parents and determining when specialised intervention is needed
- ▶ Recommendations for resources and training
- ▶ Opportunity to raise specific questions

Please send us any questions you have about this topic to us before the webinar.



About the presenter

Roxanne is an endorsed Clinical Psychologist who has been providing individual treatment for young people and their families presenting with emotional and behaviour disorders. She specialises in treating young people with a diagnosis of ASD and emotional disorders including coordinating the Cool Kids Anxiety Management Treatment program adapted for children with autism at the Centre of Emotional Health Clinic. She has also been involved in several research projects focusing on the understanding and treatment of childhood developmental disorders.

Save the Date: Trauma - Impacts and Educator Strategies

Presented by Bronwen Elliot

Sydney Inner West: Monday 30 August, 4:45pm-7:00pm

Penrith: Monday 20 September, 3:30pm-6:30pm

Illawarra: Tuesday 21 September 9:30am-12:30pm

Look out for a flyer coming soon with event and registration details for this face to face workshop.

In this workshop Bronwen will focus on:

- ▶ What is trauma?
- ▶ How do traumatic experiences affect children's development?
- ▶ How can educators support children affected by trauma?
- ▶ How to find relevant resources for educators and support services for families.



About the presenter

Bronwen is a social worker with many years of experience working with children and families and assisting agencies, including early education providers to better meet their needs. She is a clinician with the NSW Children's Court Clinic and has extensive experience in child protection and foster care.

Coming Soon: Giftedness and Twice Exceptionality

Presented by Paula O'Hara, Co-founder/Gifted Education Consultant, Navigate Gifted Solutions

Look out for a flyer coming soon with event and registration details for this workshop.

In this workshop, Paula will provide information about giftedness in young children along with practical strategies to support gifted children in preschools. She will explore what it means to be twice-exceptional and discuss the particular additional needs that these children may have, and share strategies to support their inclusion in a preschool setting.



About the presenter

Paula is an experienced educator who has worked in positions ranging from preschool to adult education across various education sectors. Paula has completed a Certificate of Gifted Education (COGE), a Master of Education specialising in Gifted Education and has post-graduate qualifications in Special Education. Paula is passionate about working alongside the families and carers of gifted and high potential students to enable opportunities that enhance and personalise their education.

Department of Education Disability and Inclusion Program (DIP) Funding dates

Quarter 4 (October - December 2021) assessment cut-off dates for High Learning Support Needs and Minor Capital Works funding must be submitted by **5:00pm Friday 20 August 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 your Preschool Inclusion Consultant know if you need any support with the application process.

Department of Education Community Grants

The Community Grants program supports eligible early childhood education services to increase participation and access for children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage, by delivering targeted initiatives and support for Aboriginal children and children from low income backgrounds.

Applications are open until **Friday 6 August 2021**.

See the NSW Department of Education website for more information:

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

Reflecting on Raising Concerns with Families

In Term 2 we presented a series of workshops where psychologist, Marina Bailey, explored the sensitive topic of raising concerns about children's development with families.

Marina discussed the complexities of these conversations and how to prepare and plan for them. She shared a range of practical strategies to support effective and positive communication during what can be very challenging interactions.



Educators have told us they found these workshops very informative and practical. Marina reminded us of the long-term implications for families of these conversations and the importance of recognising that we are doing so much more than raising concerns.

You can find a recording of the Raising Concerns webinar on our website:

<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/raising-concerns-with-families>

To support you to support families, we have developed a resource (now available in six community languages) to help parents prepare for appointments to talk about their children which you can also find on our website:

<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources?showing=1&keywords=prep>

Inclusion in practice – how these preschools have benefitted from the Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan process

Is your preschool ready to delve more deeply into its inclusive practices?

Your Preschool Inclusion Consultant is here to help!

What is a Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan?

A Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan is a plan devised by you, in consultation with your Inclusion Consultant. It is a working document that sets out steps and helps to keep your team cohesive and focused on your inclusion goals. The plan makes clear links to your Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and to the National Quality Standard (NQS) and provides strong evidence, which can be shared during your assessment and rating visit. It demonstrates that your team are actively prioritising inclusive practices and working collaboratively with your Inclusion Consultant.

Any preschool that participates receives a certificate to display so that families and visitors know you are actively focusing on and committed to inclusion.

How a Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan has helped these preschools:

Wollongong City Community Preschool

Wollongong City Community Preschool developed their plan in consultation with Belinda Monkman, their Preschool Inclusion Consultant. The preschool has an experienced team of educators who feel confident supporting children with a wide range of needs within the preschool, however, they wanted to be able to find ways to improve their support of parents and families and work towards developing a truly inclusive culture within their community.

By working through the plan with Belinda, the team were able to identify two main goals to focus on to improve their inclusive practices. They were to establish stronger connections with local schools and external support agencies for children with disabilities in the community and to boost the team's confidence in discussing developmental concerns or other difficult topics with families.

An action plan was developed and as a result the preschool has now developed relationships with their local transition to school programs and have attended KU's workshops on 'Raising Concerns with Families' and put this learning into practice. As a result, the entire team feels more equipped in supporting families in their service.



North St Marys Preschool

North St Marys Preschool have a number of children in their service with additional and complex needs, and feel they have a broad knowledge and understanding of how to support these children and their families. Committed to continual improvement, they engaged Deb Grivas, their Preschool Inclusion Consultant, to help develop a Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan.

Through discussions and after auditing their physical environment, they noticed that some areas of their outdoor area were being underutilised. They decided their plan should focus on building a more inclusive outdoor area and are now in the planning process of developing a sensory area with an edible garden; a quiet and calming space and equipment designed to support gross motor skill development.



Lapstone Preschool

Lapstone Preschool has a strong history of supporting children with additional needs. Many of their senior staff are extremely knowledgeable and experienced in this area. During a Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan consultation with their Preschool Inclusion Consultant, they recognised their strong knowledge base for more senior staff as one of their strengths.

However, they also realised that they have some newer staff members who haven't had the benefit of this experience. Therefore, one of their plan goals was to focus on ways to share knowledge between staff members and to improve their team approach to inclusion. They now make a point of sharing skills and knowledge during each fortnightly team meeting. They are developing mentoring opportunities between staff and are committed to continue growing their knowledge base through attending KU's professional development opportunities.



Please contact your KU Preschool Inclusion Consultant if you would like more information on how a Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan can help your preschool work towards a more inclusive service.

Fairness is not giving everyone
the same thing.

Fairness is giving each person
what they need to succeed.

Rick Lavoie

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

*The Sector Capacity Building Program is funded by the
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