

Inclusion Ready News

Issue 8 – 22 February 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

We're back!

We are pleased to let you know that the Department of Education has extended the contract for KU to continue delivering the Sector Capacity Building Program in the Sydney Inner West, Penrith and Wollongong regions. This means that we are back to business as usual, and KU will continue to provide inclusion support to preschools until Thursday 30 June 2022 when longer term arrangements will be announced.

We hope you all managed a break over the holidays – even though for many of us it wasn't as relaxing as we may have hoped. We are thrilled that we are

available to provide you with any inclusion support you may need as you get to know new children and welcome back returning children for another year. We recognise that COVID-19 continues to have a huge impact on how you operate and that the usual challenges of settling in may be even more challenging this year.

In this newsletter we have included lots of resources, along with information about upcoming professional development that we hope will support your inclusive practice in Term 1.



Connecting with your Preschool Inclusion Consultants in Term 1

As this newsletter goes to print, we are able to visit preschools when there is an urgent need to support inclusion of children with a disability or additional needs. Your consultant can take a rapid antigen test before their visit if this is needed by your preschool, and will follow all usual COVID-19 policies and procedures. Visits are of course also dependent on individual preschool policies and restrictions on visitors.

We will keep you updated as conditions and policies change and will be in touch with you to decide the best way to keep connected and provide support.

We hope you have received your 2022 Inclusion Planner in the mail and are using this tool to reflect and plan for inclusion with your team. We'd encourage you to pop this up on your wall for easy access.

Please don't hesitate to contact us at any time to discuss your inclusion needs, particularly if you have any pressing concerns.

Your Preschool Inclusion Consultant is here for you!

While COVID-19 continues to impact on some of the ways we work, your preschool inclusion consultants are still here to support you. These are some of the different ways we can help:

- ▶ Providing free, individualised inclusion consultancy for your preschool (either over the phone, online or, if urgent, making a physical visit)
- ▶ Online team training
- ▶ Virtual coaching and mentoring sessions
- ▶ Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan (PIRP) development and regular review
- ▶ Supporting a team approach to guiding children's behaviour
- ▶ Sourcing answers and providing resources around your individual inclusive practice needs
- ▶ Providing free inclusion webinar training, professional development, and networking opportunities (both live and via sharing recordings)
- ▶ Sending specific emails about key information to support your practice (such as funding deadline reminders, upcoming relevant events in your region)
- ▶ Providing tailored resources such as visual supports, social stories and tip sheets
- ▶ Dropping off or posting hard copies of resources
- ▶ Discussing and supporting educators with individual learning plan (ILP) development
- ▶ Discussing concerns and questions about individual children's access and participation in your program (with parent consent)

What's new on the Inclusion Gateway website

The KU Inclusion Gateway website is your 'one-stop-shop' for all things inclusion. It contains up-to-date articles, news and information, recorded webinars and upcoming professional development opportunities and an abundance of resources for you to download for free! Make sure you bookmark this website and visit it regularly as it is continually updated: www.kudisabilityinclusion.com.au

(Remember you will find your preschool's name in the dropdown box to log in and your password is exactly the same as your preschool name.)

Here are some new additions to the website you might find helpful:

‘Creating Cultures Of Inclusion’ article

In this provocative article, Dr Kathy Cologon, Macquarie University, School of Inclusive Education, gets to the core of what inclusion is and why it’s so important. We feel this is a must read for all team members and encourage you to print it out and put it on your staffroom table. Here’s an excerpt:

“Over time we have come to understand more and more that inclusion is about everyone. It really is about all of us. There is no ‘type’ of person who needs to be included – we all do. Inclusion is a right for everyone, not an act of kindness or charity. Inclusion is not conditional, and it is never optional. Inclusion is about all of us being genuinely welcome and supported to flourish together.”

Read the whole article at <https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/professional-learning/news-and-articles/creating-cultures-of-inclusion-2>.

Dr Kathy Cologon also presented an excellent webinar on this topic last year which can be found at <https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/creating-cultures-of-inclusion-within-preschool-settings>

If this information has inspired you, as it did us, your Preschool Inclusion Consultants are available to support team reflections on the inclusive culture at your preschool. This may be by completing a Preschool Inclusion Readiness Plan, coaching and mentoring for specific team members, or accessing professional development.

Other new resources

- ▶ **‘Having a COVID test’** and **‘Getting vaccinated’** social stories:
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/having-a-covid-test>
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/having-a-vaccination>



These can be edited and personalised to the child’s needs. Social stories help children make sense of situations that may be confusing or upsetting to them. We also have our **‘Sometimes people wear face masks’** social story available in English and ten other community languages:

<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources?showing=17&keywords=mask>

- ▶ **‘Short and Sweet’ video series** – The first two bite-sized videos are available from a series that offers professional development to introduce, consolidate and extend your understanding of inclusive best practice. Short enough to watch in your tea break and ideal for early career educators and experienced staff members alike.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/professional-learning/short-and-sweet>
- ▶ **‘Getting to know your child’ form** – We have developed a form you can use or adapt to support communication between families and preschools and open a dialogue about any individual child’s needs. This is particularly useful now when incidental conversations with parents and carers may have become less frequent in COVID times.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/getting-to-know-your-child>
- ▶ **Getting ready for appointments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families** – Fact sheet to share with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to prepare for appointments with external professionals for their child.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/getting-ready-for-appointments-for-aboriginal-families>

- ▶ **The Be You Disability Inclusion Guide** offers a suite of resources and information curated by Be You to promote inclusion and belonging for the wellbeing of all children.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/be-you-disability-inclusion-guide>

New podcast

- ▶ **Delving deeper into nurturing social/emotional competencies and the Pyramid Model with Sara Stockman** – This podcast delves further into applying the Pyramid Model in supporting the social and emotional competence for children in preschool settings.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/delving-deeper-into-social-emotional-skills-and-the-pyramid-model>

New webinar recordings

- ▶ **Giftedness and twice exceptional in preschoolers** – A webinar discussing what it means to be gifted and twice exceptional and how educators can support these children in preschool settings.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/giftedness-and-twice-exceptionality-in-preschoolers>
- ▶ **Understanding and auditing your sensory environment** – Understand how your preschool's sensory environment impacts on children's sensory processing and participation, and can be used to maximise participation and learning.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/understanding-and-auditing-your-sensory-environment>
- ▶ **Creating cultures of inclusion within preschool settings** – A webinar by Dr Kathy Cologon exploring important facilitators of and barriers to genuine inclusion.
<https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/resources/creating-cultures-of-inclusion-within-preschool-settings>

Upcoming Term 1 professional development

First Steps in Responding to Developmental Concerns During COVID Times



When: Monday 28 February and Monday 14 March, 4:30pm-5:15pm

Cost: Free

Register: <https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/professional-learning/events>

Do you have developmental concerns about a child at your preschool, but are not sure what to do next?

COVID-19 has impacted on preschools' opportunities to connect with families, along with waiting times for therapy and assessment services.

This two-part practical webinar, presented by your KU Preschool Inclusion Consultants, will help you to put a plan in place.

Part 1

We will consider the current context and how it may impact on your inclusive practices as you get to know the child. We will reflect on the inclusive preschool environment and discuss the importance of gathering data using observations as a first step in responding to concerns.

Part 2

In this session, we will begin to analyse the data and respond to what you've learnt about the child by making a plan – including how to communicate with families, developing short term goals and teaching strategies. We will also discuss the next steps such as accessing developmental assessments, funding applications and support options.

Emotional Regulation and Launch of Guidebook and Share and Show Cards – Free Live Webinar



Presenter: Marina Bailey, Consultant Psychologist

When: Tuesday 29 March, 4:30pm-5:45pm

Cost: Free

Register: <https://kudisabilityinclusion.com.au/professional-learning/events>

In this webinar, Marina Bailey will share her wide knowledge and experience as we explore practical strategies for supporting preschool children to understand and regulate their emotions.

We will also officially launch the new KU Emotional Regulation Guidebook and reflection card set and reflect on ways these resources can be used by your team. See below for more details about this new resource.

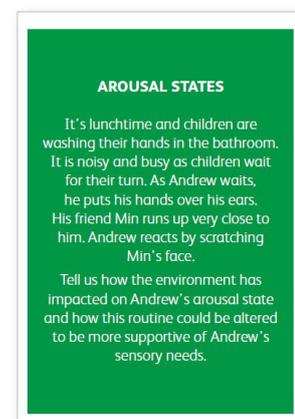
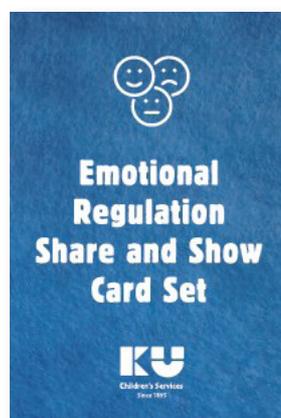
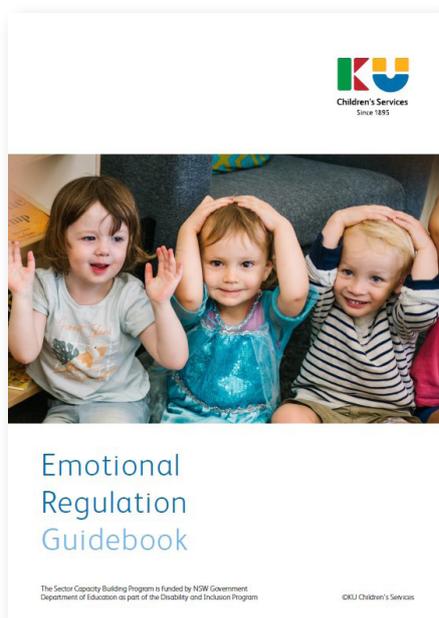
Emotional Regulation Guidebook and ‘Share and Show’ card set

We are excited to be launching our latest set of reflection cards and guidebook to complement your existing **‘Share and Show’ boardgame for educators** (see above for launch and webinar details).

Emotional regulation is the ability to understand our feelings and manage our reactions to those emotions. The **Emotional Regulation Guidebook** provides information about and strategies in relation to: Executive Functioning; Emotional Awareness and Understanding; Arousal States; Security and Attachment; and Perspective Taking and Empathy.

The set of reflective scenarios and questions in the **‘Share and Show’** playing cards support educator understanding and confidence around emotional regulation and inclusive practice, with questions and scenarios that prompt reflection and discussion.

By now you should have received these new resources to add to your ‘Share and Show’ boardgame. Please contact us if yours haven’t been delivered.



Disability and Inclusion Program Funding cut-off date reminders

High Learning Support Needs and Minor Capital Works funding applications for Quarter 2 must be submitted by **5:00pm Friday 4 March 2022**. You may contact your Preschool Inclusion Consultant for support with submitting funding applications.

The 2022 Disability and Inclusion Program High Learning Support Needs Funding Guidelines can be found on the NSW Department of Education website [here](#).

The 2022 Minor Capital Works Funding Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Provide your feedback on the Disability and Inclusion Program

The NSW Department of Education have engaged the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) and the University of New South Wales (UNSW) to undertake an independent evaluation of the Disability Inclusion Program (DIP).

Findings from this evaluation will help shape future funding decisions and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of DIP, to ensure children with disability and additional needs can participate in a quality early childhood education program on the same basis as their peers.

As part of this process, AIFS is conducting an online survey of NSW community and mobile preschools around the inclusion of children with a disability and additional needs at preschools.

The survey aims to understand how preschools are including children with additional needs, how they are using elements of the DIP to do this, and perceptions of the program's effectiveness.

It is focused on two program elements: High Level Support Needs and Sector Capacity Building.

All community and mobile preschools in NSW are invited to participate in this survey, even those who haven't engaged with the DIP.

Participation in this research is voluntary and all responses will remain confidential. The survey is best completed by someone who is familiar with day-to-day service operations and inclusion practices, such as a Director. If these roles are shared, you can do the survey together.

You can complete the survey [here](#).

“My purpose today and every day is to change perceptions so people with disability can live the lives they deserve to live.”

– Dylan Alcott, 2022 Australian of the Year



Photo: <https://twitter.com/dylanalcott/status/1485552671772020738>

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.*