About Early Childhood Australia

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) is the national advocacy voice for young children and early childhood professionals in Australia. Incorporated in 1938 as the Australian Preschool Association, we have been of service to Australian children for more than 80 years. We are a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation with active State and Territory Committees in each Australian jurisdiction and a National Board of Directors.

ECA’s vision is to ensure that ‘every young child is thriving and learning’. To achieve this vision, we champion the rights of all children from birth to the age of eight to thrive, learn and play at home, in the community, within early learning settings and through the early years of school. Our work builds the capacity of our society, including families and early childhood professionals, so that every child—regardless of location, household income or individual needs—can be nurtured to achieve their potential.

Our Strategic Plan (2021–2024) has five priorities:

**Priority 1:** Speak up for young children  
**Priority 2:** Collaborate for impact  
**Priority 3:** Champion ‘beyond quality’ in early education  
**Priority 4:** Lead and inspire professional learning  
**Priority 5:** Be sustainable and effective

For more information about ECA, including our Annual Report, Strategic Plan and Reconciliation Action Plan, please visit [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au). You can also download the ECA app for use on your mobile device—available for both Apple and Android platforms.

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ECA Professional Learning

ECA is the leading provider of professional learning to the Australian early childhood sector across publications, events and online learning. We produce high-quality content to support the professional development of early childhood educators, teachers and service leaders. All resources are quality-assured, up to date and written by highly experienced subject matter experts.

Our resources support educators at all stages of their career—from students just starting out to leaders with responsibility for driving practice and quality improvement.

We recognise that professional learning is inherently linked to quality outcomes for children and important for everyone in the early childhood sector. We also know that adult learners have a diversity of learning styles, preferences and needs. Our goal is to provide a suite of quality-assured resources to meet the needs of every educator at any career stage.

This is the 6th edition of the ECA Professional Learning Guide, which provides an overview of our resources, including online learning, events and publications (digital and printed).

We have divided the guide into sections reflecting the four major components of our professional learning offerings:
Plan for professional learning

1. Develop a professional learning plan with clear goals and priorities:
   • If you’re doing this as an individual, make sure you commit to this plan.
   • If you’re leading a team, consult with your colleagues to ensure that they agree with the plan.
2. Budget for professional learning, including the cost of learning and how much time is needed to achieve your goals.
3. Reflect on and evaluate your learning to build a process of continuous improvement.

Did you know?
ECA has a collection of professional learning plan templates and tips to help you identify and plan for professional learning for yourself and your team.

Professional learning myths

We know that early childhood professionals, inundated with competing demands, are looking for the most effective ways to engage in ongoing professional development. Recent analysis of research on professional learning has identified a number of myths and truths about professional learning. We examined five of these myths, adapting them for the early childhood context. Here we share these myths and truths about professional learning and explore some of the ways that ECA is working to combat these.

Myth 1: Professional learning is a waste of time and money.

Some educators question the value of spending precious time and money on professional learning and believe that it is unlikely to be beneficial. Educators may also find it hard to source and fully engage with contemporary, research-based and relevant professional development that suits their learning style.

Truth: Effective engagement in comprehensive professional learning, which is high quality and linked to evidence and research, can lead to positive shifts in intentional teaching practice. This significantly improves children’s learning, development and academic outcomes.

ECA ensures that their professional learning offerings undergo an ongoing cycle of quality review, engaging sector professionals as external reviewers, regularly updating content, and engaging subject matter experts to contribute to content.

**Myth 2: Professional learning is more effective for early career educators and teachers and less effective for veteran teachers.**

It can be easy to fall into thinking we know all there is to know once we have been in a profession for a while. This is particularly true for educators working daily with children, who keep them on their toes! Seeing the value in trying alternative approaches can be hard when you know what works, but there is a risk that our practice can become outdated if we don’t keep up with new thinking.

**Truth:** Educators and teachers within the early years of their career do tend to learn and improve more rapidly than those with greater longevity in the profession. This is usually because there are more opportunities afforded to those beginning their careers. However, professional learning opportunities have been shown to support educators and teacher development at all levels.

ECA has responded to the needs of the early childhood sector and designed programs for educators and teachers at all career stages, promoting cross-sector and national networking. They enable collaboration in an online environment and allow more experienced educators and teachers, who benefit from teamwork and mentoring, to share their knowledge with those in the early stages of their career.

**Myth 3: Professional learning opportunities must be time-intensive to be effective.**

Although there are both short, one-off professional learning opportunities as well as long-term programs, educators may sometimes find themselves leaning more towards longer formats, thus missing out on a range of potential learning.

**Truth:** Professional learning opportunities of varying lengths and formats can have a wide range of positive impacts and results. These are likely to be seen by educators and teachers upon bringing the learning back into their early childhood setting.

ECA provides a range of professional learning opportunities to help meet the needs of educators and teachers with diverse skill sets working in a variety of different settings. ECA courses take anywhere from hours to weeks and months to complete and can be undertaken individually or alongside peers to allow for learning to be contextualised and embedded.

**Myth 4: Improving educator and teacher content knowledge is key to improving their intentional teaching practice.**

Many of the professional learning opportunities provided over the past few decades have focused on content knowledge and aim to impart the ‘what’ of a specific topic, such as numeracy, art or the planning cycle.

**Truth:** Professional learning programs that focus on intentional teaching practices are more likely to shift children’s outcomes. While learning content is important, it is equally valuable for educators and teachers to focus on the ‘how’ of teaching to create sustained practice change. This includes exploring play-based ways of teaching and learning with children as a tool for intentional teaching.

ECA provides a variety of professional learning opportunities that cover both the ‘how’ and ‘what’ of vital topics, skills and practices necessary for educators and teachers to design effective play-based curriculums for children.

**Myth 5: Professional learning programs are unlikely to work within a wide range of contexts.**

It can sometimes be tricky to find high-quality, research-based professional learning that can be easily interpreted in multiple contexts. At times, educators and teachers can find themselves confused about how to translate new information into their particular early childhood setting.

**Truth:** Professional learning programs can have positive effects across a variety of contexts when supported by strong leadership and effective implementation plans.

One of the best ways of ensuring that any professional learning remains contextually relevant is to maintain strong leadership that connects what is being learnt to how it can be translated into practice. Planning for how professional learning will be engaged with, translated and utilised may help to sustain long-term educator and teacher learning.

ECA has worked with many early childhood sector experts to ensure that all professional learning opportunities include a focus on leadership. Courses can be undertaken individually or in teams and can be completed in a self-paced or guided way.
ECA Learning Hub

The ECA Learning Hub is a highly interactive professional learning platform built on a Learning Management System (LMS) that allows you to track your own or your team’s learning. The platform is functional and supports sustained professional learning that leads to changed practice.

Designed specifically for early childhood education and care (ECEC) professionals, the professional learning courses featured on the Learning Hub are based on latest research and follow adult-learning methodologies. The courses are ideal for educators, teachers and other professionals working with young children.

There are online modules (short courses) for individual, self-paced learning and webcasts that work well for group training, as well as programs that contain both. The hub has a diversity of content across topics relevant to early childhood education and school-aged care, including:

- planning, documentation and research
- leadership and management
- rights, advocacy and inclusion
- pedagogy and curriculum
- health and wellbeing
- reconciliation and cultural responsiveness.

Our content is developed by subject matter experts, researchers and sector leaders and reviewed for quality by at least two other professionals with relevant expertise. It speaks the language of educators and teachers and can be used across the wide range of settings—school, preschool/kindergarten, family day care, in-home care and outside school hours care.

ECA Learning Hub modules, interactive webcasts and webinars can be purchased individually or through a subscription that provides access to a library of resources, including exclusive subscriber-only content. A subscription can vary in size, from one individual to thousands of learners, and its pricing is based on the number of users per subscription.

In addition to the subscription library, packages that are part of our partnered projects are also available for purchase. These include:

- a series developed by the Reggio Emilia Australia Information Exchange (REAIE) to help educators to interpret the educational approach of Reggio Emilia
- a suite of modules developed by Dr Claire Warden, specifically for the Australian context, focusing on ‘Learning with Nature’ and ‘Participatory Planning Using the Floorbooks® Approach’.

Please visit the ECA Learning Hub to explore our subscriptions, new content and some of ECA’s open-access courses.
Quality online learning

The mix of quality online learning available on the ECA Learning Hub is intended to provide flexibility for individuals and teams who may be at different starting points of knowledge and expertise. The resources available come in several different formats:

- **Self-paced online courses**
  Interactive courses designed to give you the latest information at a time that suits you. Text, videos and interactive activities offer a practical understanding of quality practice in early childhood and school-age settings.

- **On-demand webinars**
  Video presentations (30–60 minutes) exploring different topics in great depth. Webinars are pre-recorded, studio-quality online seminars.

- **Interactive webcasts**
  Subject matter experts present information on different topics through videos and interactive elements. Webcasts include stop points for reflection and in-service tasks.

- **Communities of Practice**
  Online communities where participants learn with and from each other, with curated professional learning resources to expand knowledge on a specific topic. Communities of practice use a blended-learning approach, including self-paced online courses, live events, printed publications, online forums and an action research project.

- **Live webinars**
  Live-streamed events that explore timely topics in great depth, providing learners with the opportunity to connect with early childhood experts in real-time on an online forum.

- **ECA Leadership Program**
  A unique program designed specifically for pedagogical leaders, including but not limited to education leaders. It comprises a Leadership Capability Framework, Self-Assessment Guide, modules and webinars, and an online learning community.

Accreditation and mapping

All ECA online learning courses are mapped to the National Quality Standard (NQS) Quality Areas and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). ECA offers many courses that are currently accredited by the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) ACT and NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Accredited courses

Please refer to the Learning Hub website for more specific accreditation information for each state and territory, as well as an up-to-date list of accredited courses.
Teacher accredited courses

ECA offers a multitude of courses that are currently accredited in two jurisdictions: Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) ACT and NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) NSW. The approved courses outline what professional standard each course is linked to and what learning outcomes can be achieved to help teachers select the most suitable courses for them. Below is a selection of approved courses, and the list is added to regularly. For an up-to-date list of all accredited courses, visit the ECA Learning Hub website.

Philosophy leading strategy
(3-part series)
Quality Area: 4, 7
APST: 7
TQI accredited

Putting art in place
(2-part series)
Quality Area: 1, 3, 6
APST: 2, 6
TQI accredited

Understand the role: Nominated supervisor and person in day-to-day charge in education and care
Quality Area: 7
APST: 6, 7
TQI accredited

Encountering and interpreting the principles of Reggio Emilia Encounters
(4-part series)
Quality Area: 1, 3, 5, 6
APST: 3, 6
TQI accredited

An insight into Autism Spectrum Disorder in the early years
(2-part series)
Quality Area: 1, 5
APST: 1, 3, 5
TQI accredited

A good place to be a child: Creating effective early learning environments
Quality Area: 1, 2, 3
APST: 3, 4, 7
NESA accredited

Music in early childhood
(2-part series)
Quality Area: 1, 5, 6
APST: 6
TQI accredited

Engaging with digital documentation and technology
(3-part series)
Quality Area: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7
APST: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
NESA+TQI accredited

Partnerships with families for inclusive practice
(2-part series)
Quality Area: 1, 5, 6
APST: 6, 7
TQI accredited

A strengths-based, self-directed and short-term program for current and aspiring early childhood leaders

Find out more: Scan the QR code, or contact the ECA Customer Service Team on 1800 356 900
**Flexible options**

The ECA Learning Hub offers flexible ways to access online professional learning.

- **Individual courses:** Choose from more than 90 online learning courses to suit your learning needs or enrol in a short-term program for an extended learning experience.

- **Professional learning packages:** Carefully selected resources on key topics, packaged to support sustained learning at discounted prices.

- **Annual subscriptions:** On-demand access to a comprehensive library of 90+ online learning courses.

> The ECA Learning Hub is an invaluable resource to support quality in early childhood. It gives busy early childhood educators the chance to take part in professional development programs that are practical as well as inspiring. The ECA Learning Hub allows educators to work through the modules over time and at their own pace, which research has shown to be the most effective form of professional development.

> – Dr Amanda Niland

**Exclusive subscription-only courses**

A subscription to the ECA Learning Hub gives you exclusive access to new content produced by ECA every year. Receive bonus online content not available without subscription.

- A conversation with Dr Stuart Shanker
- Child safe organisations—National principles (11-part series)
- Supporting families who experience vulnerabilities: Funding with impact
- Taking notice and taking care
- The art of leading in challenging times

Subscription to ECA’s Learning Hub includes access to exclusive subscription-only content
Professional learning topics
Planning, documentation and research

Documenting and assessing children’s learning with Dr Anne Kennedy
**Presenter:** Dr Anne Kennedy
**Quality Area:** 1, 5, 6
**APST:** 3, 5

**Subscription**
Discover how documenting and assessing children's learning helps educators gain a deeper understanding of children’s interests, strengths and abilities and how to support and extend children's learning and development.

Delving deeper into documenting and assessing children’s learning
**Presenter:** Victoria McDowell
**Quality Area:** 1, 6, 7
**APST:** 3, 6

**Subscription**
Expanding on the ideas and concepts outlined in the introductory course, 'Documenting and assessing children's learning with Dr Anne Kennedy,' this course explores a variety of strategies to document and assess children’s learning and the importance of documentation in high-quality educational programs.

Using critical reflection
**Presenter:** Dr Jennifer Cartmel
**Quality Area:** 1, 4, 7
**APST:** 3, 5, 6

**Subscription**
This course explains how critical reflection forms a crucial part of professional practice in early childhood education and care, and provides suggestions for how to make critical reflection a positive part of everyday practice.

The planning cycle: Rediscovered
**Presenter:** Rod Soper
**Quality Area:** 1
**APST:** 3, 5

**Subscription**
Rod Soper presents this inspiring rediscovery of the planning cycle that challenges us to consider how we can use the planning cycle to reinvigorate not only our thinking but also our approach to children's learning and development.
Engaging with digital documentation and technology
(3-part series)
Presenter: Karen Turner
Quality Area: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7
APST: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Subscription
This three-part series will take you on a journey through multiple perspectives—that of the child and family, the educator and the leadership team—to consider how best to implement documentation through a digital medium.

Play-based learning: Using the Pedagogical Play-framework
Presenter: Professor Susan Edwards
Quality Area: 1, 3, 5
APST: 3
Subscription
This course discusses a new approach to balancing open-ended play with intentional teaching using the Pedagogical Play-framework.

Strengthening quality through critical reflection and action research
By Linda Newman, Nicole Leggett, Melissa Duffy-Fagan and Kate Higginbottom
This Research in Practice Series title focuses on critical reflection and showcases how educators can think about issues in deep and divergent ways to support practitioner research. The book includes a practical explanation of action research to support educators in their professional learning journey towards becoming critically reflective practitioner–researchers. It also elaborates on two real-life case studies on action research projects to assist educators in imagining and planning their own practitioner action research aimed at improving quality in their centres.

Quality Area: 1, 3, 4, 7

Subscribe to ECA’s Research in Practice Series:
Tools for pedagogical leaders
ECA Communities of Practice

ECA’s Community of Practice (CoP) is a vibrant online community designed for early childhood professionals at all stages of their careers to come together and connect around a particular topic. The CoP is an opportunity for early childhood professionals to learn with and from each other.

Each CoP contains carefully curated professional learning resources to expand your knowledge base on the chosen topic area. You will also engage with specially selected professional learning materials chosen to facilitate conversation about pedagogy and practice.

As part of the ECA CoP, you will:

- expand your knowledge on the chosen topic area
- engage in a number of online forums and live Zoom events
- be constructively challenged by your peers and facilitator
- have the opportunity to cultivate ongoing professional relationships with other learners
- be actively involved in critically reflective dialogue
- design and implement an action research project
- shift your pedagogical practices as they relate to play-based learning in early childhood
- participate in and engage with ECA Learning Hub resources that will extend your thinking.

Elements of Communities of Practice

- Professional learning materials
- Online learning modules
- ECA publications
- Live events
- An action research project
- Online forums through the ECA Learning Hub online portal
Participatory planning: The Floorbooks® Approach and nature pedagogy

Presenter: Dr Claire Warden

These professional learning packages have been developed by Dr Claire Warden in partnership with ECA.

What is the Floorbooks Approach?

The Floorbooks Approach is designed to create a balance between adult intentionality and child autonomy. Floorbooks allow educators to consult deeply with children during the planning and documentation process. The approach encourages higher order thinking skills and helps children influence their learning.

What are Talking Tubs?

A Talking Tub is a container that a practitioner fills with a wide variety of objects based on a particular theme. Objects can be taken out one by one, encouraging children to touch, feel and explore a theme. Observation, documentation, assessment and planning are most effective when they are matched to the needs of the child. In order to achieve this, we need to understand children’s thinking by considering all the ways in which they communicate.

The Talking Tub is a vital part of the Talking and Thinking Floorbooks Approach. The tub will allow you to provoke child-led conversations, which in turn will create possible lines of development.

What is nature pedagogy?

Nature pedagogy is an educational way of working with children that embraces nature. ‘Nature pedagogy is an understanding of our sense of belonging to land, our sense of working with nature. There is a pedagogical shift when you move outside into nature … it’s learning with nature, not just teaching about it.’ —Dr Claire Warden.
Professional learning topics

Pedagogy and curriculum

**Respect: A guide to calm and nurturing infant care and education**

*Presenter:* Toni Christie

*Quality Area:* 1, 2, 5, 6

*APST:* 1, 3

**Subscription**

Respect—defined as treating someone or something with consideration—should underpin the values and actions of educators. This course will unpack the practicality of respect in infant and toddler programs, with particular emphasis on primary caregiving, care rituals, settling processes, free movement as well as partnerships with families.

**A good place to be a child: Creating effective early learning environments**

*Presenter:* Dr Luke Touhill

*Quality Area:* 1, 2, 3

*APST:* 3, 4, 7

**Subscription**

In this course, Dr Luke Touhill talks about creating effective early learning environments that capture the image of the child and shape the behaviour of both children and adults. He also examines what makes a successful learning environment.

**Take me outside: An introduction to outdoor learning**

*Presenter:* Victoria McDowell

*Quality Area:* 1, 3

*APST:* 3, 4

**Subscription**

Explore the importance of outdoor environments for children’s learning and development and gain strategies on using a variety of outdoor spaces with children, while also examining how educators and children can manage risk without removing challenges and fun.

**Supporting language development in the early years**

*Presenter:* Christine Andell

*Quality Area:* 1, 5, 6

*APST:* 1

**Subscription**

Understanding how language learning occurs—and how educators and carers can support young children in this learning—is integral to the role of early childhood education and care professionals. This module explores current theories of language learning and provides practical ways to facilitate language development in the early years.
Engineering creativity: Celebrating loose-parts play for all ages

Presenter: Robin Christie

Quality Area: 1, 3, 5
APST: 3, 6

Subscription

This webcast examines many practical instances of loose-parts play using materials that are recovered, upcycled and drawn from nature in infancy to school-age care spaces and their importance in symbolic and imaginative play.

Indoor environments: Spaces for children

Presenter: Dr Luke Touhill

Quality Area: 1, 3
APST: 3, 4

Subscription

This course looks at the role of the physical environment in children’s learning and will help you create creative and effective indoor learning spaces for young children.

Exploring literacy in the early years

By Jenni Connor and Christine Topfer

To function effectively in the modern world, children need to be competent and confident with literacy. Literacy underpins children’s learning in early years settings and enables them to participate fully in everyday life. This Research in Practice Series title offers practical strategies for promoting children’s literacy development.

This book is for early childhood educators working with children aged three to six years, in preschool and the first years of school. It highlights:

• how oral language is the foundation for literacy
• the place of phonics in literacy teaching and learning
• an active view of learning to read
• writing to express ideas.

The book is based on high-quality contemporary research about literacy learning. It explains what this means for best practice in early learning settings and provides a rich range of ideas and activities that educators can draw on to suit their own context.

Quality Area: 1, 5

Subscribe to ECA’s Research in Practice Series:
Tools for pedagogical leaders
Encountering and interpreting the principles of Reggio Emilia Encounters (4-part series)

Discover and explore the principles of Reggio Emilia in this one-of-a-kind online professional learning package, developed by Early Childhood Australia and the Reggio Emilia Australia Information Exchange in collaboration with Reggio Children, Italy.

This series contains four encounters:

**Encounter 1—Not just any place**
The first Encounter or part provides an overview of the educational project of Reggio Emilia and the context, culture and complexity of this educational approach. The next two Encounters will build on this initial information with an in-depth exploration of several of the important concepts of the project.

**Encounter 2—Seeing things differently**
In the second Encounter, ‘Seeing things differently’, you will be offered information about some of the pedagogical choices made by educators who work in the municipal early childhood centres in Reggio Emilia and Australian interpretations of this approach. You will also be given the opportunity to consider pedagogical research and invited to consider ways that these choices link to daily practice.

**Encounter 3—Teachers and children as researchers**
In the third Encounter, ‘Teachers and children as researchers’, we delve deeper into some of the strategies for understanding the learning and teaching that the Reggio Emilia educators engage in as part of their day-to-day work with children. You will also be given the opportunity to complete the online learning journal and reflect back on your learning experience throughout the Encounters.

**Encounter 4—Pedagogy, a context for research**
In this Encounter, ‘Pedagogy, a context for research’, some of the theoretical underpinnings, values, practices and language of the educational project of Reggio Emilia will be examined in greater depth, although it should be kept in mind that the educational project of Reggio Emilia is always evolving.

Developed in partnership by: In collaboration with:
The ECA Leadership Program
ECA’s Leadership Program is founded on expert research and sector consultation. It has been designed by some of Australia’s foremost early childhood experts, including Sandra Cheeseman, Leanne Gibbs and Manjula Waniganyake, and further quality-assured by early childhood leaders. Our Leadership Program was specifically created as a strengths-based, self-directed, short-term program for both current and aspiring early childhood leaders in diverse settings.

The Leadership Program was redeveloped in 2021 to incorporate contemporary sector research, and it was reviewed again by educators, leaders and aspiring leaders from across the sector. New materials have been added, both to the program folder and to the online content, and using self-assessment tools, participants can focus on the specific areas that will best support their needs and goals.

Who is this self-directed Leadership Program suitable for?
• Educational leaders
• Team or room leaders
• Experienced childhood educators and teachers
• Experienced and new service directors and managers
• Early childhood consultants
• Aspiring leaders

Why choose this program?
ECA’s Leadership Program enables sector leaders and managers to benchmark, develop and map their own professional learning. It is self-paced and can be completed in your own time or undertaken along with the other participants as a cohort.

It has been mapped to the National Quality Framework and the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and also contributes to the Early Years Quality Improvement Plan. Participants can create their own individual Personalised Professional Learning Plan (specific to their current working environment).

Program participants receive access to:
• twelve online professional learning courses
• access to online forums, to connect with other leaders
• program folder containing the hard copy Leadership Capability Framework and a ‘how-to’ guide with suggestions on how to make the most of the Framework (for each individual participant)
• ECA Leadership Program completion certificate.

Box of Leadership Provocations
The Box of Leadership Provocations is a valuable optional addition to the Leadership Program. Written by six of Australia’s leading early childhood experts—Anne Stonehouse, Anthony Semann, Susan Irvine, Catharine Hydon, Michelle Gujer and Leanne Gibbs—the new ECA Box of Leadership Provocations is for leaders at all levels of early childhood education and care. Each of the 48 provocation cards, which are organised under the six capabilities outlined in the ECA Leadership Capability Framework, includes questions to provoke discussion and debate.

Invest in yourself or your future leaders with the ECA Leadership Program
Professional learning topics

Leadership and management

Understand the role: Nominated supervisor and person in day-to-day charge in education and care

Presenter: Vanessa Gale

Quality Area: 4, 7
APST: 6, 7

Subscription

Unpack what it means to be a nominated supervisor or a person in day-to-day charge of an education and care service. Participants will be assisted in understanding the role’s key responsibilities, how the legislation gives effect to these, and the legislative requirements, including what they should expect of approved providers.

Philosophy leading strategy (3-part series)

Presenter: Dr Leanne Gibbs

Quality Area: 1, 4, 7
APST: 7

Subscription

A shared vision and philosophy is integral to the achievement of an Exceeding rating, yet these components are not always understood by educators and managers. This series aims to study the meaning of vision and philosophy and explore how a vision and philosophy is used within early and middle-childhood settings.

Duty of care: Work health and safety in education and care

Presenters: Early Childhood Australia

Quality Area: 2, 3, 4, 7
APST: 4, 6, 7

Subscription

Work health and safety is everyone’s responsibility. Explore workplace and individual responsibilities and how to fulfil these responsibilities.

Developing and maintaining a Quality Improvement Plan

Presenter: Dr Luke Touhill

Quality Area: 1, 4, 7
APST: 7

Subscription

The course encourages a team-based approach to developing and using a QIP, seeking the involvement of all educators, children and families.
Managing challenging exchanges: Responding professionally
Presenter: Jennifer Ribarovski
Quality Area: 4, 7
APST: 6, 7
Subscription
This course introduces the importance of professional communication and explores communication strategies to address conflict and challenging exchanges in your role as an educator or staff member within an education and care service.

Making quality visible
Presenter: Sarah Louise Gandolfo
Quality Area: 1, 5, 6, 7
APST: 3, 7
Subscription
This course looks at quality and explains how educators can develop, lead and maintain it in their early childhood education and care setting. Explore how a service embeds a rich and unique approach to quality within its philosophy, drawing on both cultural and community strengths.

Mentoring in early childhood education: A dynamic professional relationship
By Lennie Barblett and Catharine Hydon
As the working lives of early childhood educators become more complex and the demands on professional practice increase, it is essential to create spaces where professionals can seek support. Mentoring is an apt way to provide this support, and is a dynamic professional relationship that offers one of the most important mechanisms for improving early childhood educators’ practice.

This Research in Practice Series title focuses on the mentoring relationship, describing what it is and how it can be effectively built and sustained. The book provides practical suggestions on how to document meetings and agreed goals, and has links to the national frameworks, ensuring that establishing and improving mentoring skills can be documented in a Quality Improvement Plan.

Quality Area: 4, 7

Subscribe to ECA’s Research in Practice Series:
Tools for pedagogical leaders
Professional learning topics

Health and wellbeing

Emotion coaching: A transformational tool
Presenter: Beth Macgregor
Quality Area: 1, 3, 5
APST: 1, 6

This webcast discusses effective ways of guiding children with big feelings and behaviours. It explores the five steps of emotion coaching—emotional awareness, connecting, listening, naming emotions and finding good solutions—and explains how these can be used by early childhood professionals to build trusting and respectful relationships with children.

Supporting children’s self-regulation: Birth to three years
Presenters: Professor Andrea Nolan and Karen Bonson
Quality Area: 1, 3, 5
APST: 3, 6

This course focuses on how educators can help very young children learn how to understand, name and manage their emotions and begin self-regulating their own behaviour.

Supporting children’s self-regulation: 3–5 years
Presenter: Dr Kate Williams
Quality Area: 1, 3, 5
APST: 3

Self-regulation is a critical skill that develops in early childhood and underpins all future learning and wellbeing. This course focuses on how to help children learn to manage their own attention, emotions, thinking and behaviour.

Settling multiple children in early childhood education and care settings
Presenter: Cindy Davenport
Quality Area: 1, 2, 3
APST: 7

The need for sleep and rest varies as children develop and grow, and, in many cases, an early childhood setting is very different to the home sleep environment. This webcast examines practical safe-sleeping strategies for settling multiple children in early childhood education and care settings.
Wellbeing matters package
Presenter: Rod Soper
Quality Area: 6
APST: 7
Subscription
Rod Soper examines the concept of personal wellbeing and how service leaders can establish a culture of wellbeing in their early learning services.

Early Childhood Education for Sustainability: Now or never, a time for urgent change
Presenter: Dr Sue Elliott
Quality Area: 1, 3
APST: 7
Subscription
In this webinar, Dr Sue Elliott examines what sustainability looks like within early childhood and what educators can do to facilitate change within their early childhood services.

Developing a happy, healthy and sustainable early childhood workplace
By Tamara Cumming, Laura McFarland and Sandie Wong
Early childhood workplaces are unique and designed with children and families in mind but may not focus on those who actually work there. A conscious effort needs to be made to create workplaces that support educators, staff, leaders and their practice.

This Everyday Learning Series title explores why it is important to make early childhood workplaces happy, healthy and sustainable, and what the features of a positive work environment are.

It also contains case studies, prompts for reflection and ideas for supporting and maintaining improvements to early childhood work environments.

Quality Area: 2, 3, 4, 7
Professional learning topics
Rights, advocacy and inclusion

Professionalism and identity in early childhood: Who we are and what we do
Presenter: Catharine Hydon
Quality Area: 4, 7
APST: 7
Subscription
This course explores the idea of professional identity in two ways—who you are and what you do. You will ponder notions of professionalism and your identity in early childhood education and care in relation to children, families, colleagues and the community. You will consider links between professional identity and the implications of professional ethics for your practice.

Anti-bias approaches in early childhood
Presenter: Dr Red Ruby Scarlet
Quality Area: 1, 6
APST: 3, 4
Subscription
In this course, Dr Red Ruby Scarlet addresses key critical questions about embedding anti-bias approaches in everyday practice: what it is, what it means, how the anti-bias approach is interrelated with other pedagogical approaches, and the practical ways in which educators can become a part of the ‘anti-bias’ movement.

Working with the ECA Code of Ethics
Presenter: Catharine Hydon
Quality Area: 4, 7
APST: 7
Subscription
This course extends upon the revised ECA Code of Ethics and examines what it means to be ethical and how early childhood educators can use the Code of Ethics to strengthen relationships with children, families, colleagues, communities and the profession.

Partnerships with families for inclusive practice
(2-part series)
Presenter: Early Childhood Australia
Quality Area: 1, 5, 6
APST: 6, 7
Subscription
Partnerships with families and caregivers underpin young children’s inclusion, learning and development. This series examines the role of effective partnerships to enable inclusion within early childhood education and care services, the benefits of partnerships and strategies to support inclusive practice.
Supporting bilingualism during early childhood
Presenter: Dr Ruth Nicholls
Quality Area: 1, 6
APST: 1, 6
Subscription
This course explores the theories behind bilingualism and how educators, who are in a unique position to support children in developing their language and communication skills, can share language and culture with young children and families.

The value of play
Presenter: Dr Luke Touhill
Quality Area: 1, 5
APST: 1, 2, 3, 4
Subscription
This course looks at the value of play for children’s learning in the early years, why play matters and the educator’s role in supporting and extending play and learning.

Working in partnership with families facing adversity
By Nick Hopwood
When families with young children are affected by adversity, early childhood professionals can be in a unique position to help them reduce the effects this may have on children.

This book explains how:
• educators and parents can recognise and work with differences, especially those related to knowledge and expertise
• partnership can be understood and implemented as a mind-expanding process through which educators and parents can co-create new meanings, understanding and possibilities for action.

The book presents practical strategies—drawn from a study conducted in Australian settings—that can help educators work respectfully, jointly and effectively with parents affected by adversity. Through case studies and real-life examples, it also brings to life the key concepts of ‘making noticing count’ and working with ‘what matters’.

Quality Area: 6
Professional learning topics

Reconciliation

Reconciliation in children’s education and care: Taking the first steps

Presenters: Jo Goodwin and Catharine Hydon

Quality Area: 1, 6
APST: 2, 4

Subscription

Take the first steps towards embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and reconciliation into your practice. By referencing the truth about Australia’s history, this course explains how knowledge and personal beliefs may impact your experience of reconciliation and how they form the foundation for building reconciliation in education and care practice.

Understanding and making art: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art in early childhood settings

Presenters: Jo Krabman

Quality Area: 1, 5
APST: 2

Subscription

Explore in this course how educators and young children can approach art appreciation and think critically about art-making, inspired by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art.

NAIDOC Week: Stories of practice

Presenter: Jessica Staines

Quality Area: 1, 6, 7
APST: 1, 4, 6

Subscription

NAIDOC Week is a nationally significant annual event that celebrates the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This course will provide early learning professionals an opportunity to consider how they engage with and celebrate NAIDOC Week in their local community context.

Putting art in place
(2-part series)

Presenter: Dr Red Ruby Scarlet

Quality Area: 1, 3, 5, 6
APST: 2, 6

Subscription

This two-part series focuses on art and how it facilitates the development of relationships with Country, children and adults, as well as with materials and technology. The series also answers questions surrounding who the teacher is and what counts as valid knowledge, and explores learning in human – non-human relations and how Indigenous cosmologies are infused throughout these relationships.
Acceptance, justice and equality: Exploring reconciliation in early childhood education and care

By Catharine Hydon and Adam Duncan

Reconciliation is one of the most important matters facing the Australian community. This edition of the Research in Practice Series aims to support early years practitioners in exploring reconciliation with young children. Starting with insights into the history of reconciliation in Australia, the book provides ideas for reflection and action towards a reconciled Australia. The context and history are brought to life through the voices of a range of early childhood professionals working in the sector, and their stories offer concrete, accessible and meaningful examples of action, which other educators may find useful in developing their own framework for reconciliation work.

This book forms part of Early Childhood Australia’s ongoing commitment to reconciliation. It is hoped that the ideas and stories provided in this book will drive a revised determination in those who see this work as decisively in the domain of early childhood education and care.

Quality Area: 1, 4, 6, 7

A guide to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures: The important first step to reconciliation

By Jo Goodwin

In Australia, we have two distinct peoples who are Indigenous to our nation: Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Whether or not you are beginning or continuing your learning on how to best include and explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures with young children, it is your commitment, time, values and attitudes that will progress these ideas. An ongoing commitment to progressing reconciliation with young children can be achieved through building positive relationships, demonstrating respect and creating opportunities with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader community in which you live and work. Progressing reconciliation can at times be challenging, difficult and slow. It can also be inspiring and energising and open a world of possibilities.

Quality Area: 1, 5, 6
Access, participation and positive outcomes: Inclusion in early childhood

Access, participation and positive outcomes: Inclusion in early childhood is a free resource for educators at any stage in their career. The resource is a curated collection of innovative online professional learning resources to support inclusive practices in early childhood education and care settings. This collection of free resources aims to support increased knowledge, skills and confidence in the inclusion of children with a diagnosed disability, but also children with other factors that may affect their general wellbeing and engagement in early learning.

Short online self-paced professional learning courses:

- Introducing inclusion: Looking at diversity and adversity through an inclusive framework
- Creating a community of support for children and families experiencing vulnerability
- Being the champion for children who are impacted by trauma and adversity
- Making connections with neurodiverse children through play (2-part series)
- Understanding young children’s behaviour and empowering their future (2-part series)
- Big life events: Impacts on children, families and communities
- Fostering trusting relationships to support children with anxiety
- Every child has a right to be included

Downloadable e-books

These downloadable e-books include practical approaches to supporting children’s development.

Animations in accessible language

A series of short animations presents essential concepts about children and early childhood education and care to support the development of foundational knowledge of early childhood pedagogy and inclusive practices:

- Being present and in tune with children
- Respectful nappy change and toileting routines
- Transitions and relationships
- Active supervision
- Creating an environment to foster play

A podcast series

Series two of the ECA Podcast has been tailored to strengthen the way early childhood educators understand different aspects of inclusion. Australia is rich with diverse families and children that make up our society. Educators play a critical role in supporting those who have historically been seen as less than able or not as capable due to their differences. Using a variety of expert voices, we bring you this podcast to assist you in reflecting on what inclusion means to you and how to develop strategies appropriate for your context.
ECA Publications

ECA has been producing innovative and essential early childhood publications and resources for more than 50 years. ECA is a leading and reputable early childhood publisher with a dedicated team of editors and designers who are passionate about their work and can guarantee the excellence and usefulness of our publications. All publications are quality-assured, up to date and written by experienced early childhood professionals.

Everyday Learning Series

Aimed at early childhood educators, students of early education and beginning practitioners, this popular publication draws upon the endless possibilities offered by everyday experiences and provides simple ideas on how to create positive learning environments for young children and enhance their interactions with the world around them. The Everyday Learning Series is available for purchase individually or as part of a subscription.

Research in Practice Series

The Research in Practice Series (RIPS) is a practical, evidence-based resource offering effective new approaches for those challenging issues which arise in the care and education of young children. The books are idea-rich and focus on the practical ‘hands-on’ aspects of early childhood, making them ideally suited to experienced early childhood professionals. The Research in Practice Series is available for purchase individually or as part of a subscription.

Every Child magazine

Every Child magazine puts the spotlight on the early years of childhood. Published quarterly and beautifully designed in full colour, it contains informative articles on issues such as health, education and social trends as well as book reviews, profiles and guest statements from well-known identities. Articles not only focus on aspects of early childhood from a local level but also investigate political and national developments.

Aimed at anyone involved in the care and education of young children, Every Child is topical, diverse and always entertaining. Members of Early Childhood Australia receive a complimentary copy of Every Child magazine as part of their membership.

What are the benefits of subscribing to these series?

Subscribing to the Research in Practice Series and Everyday Learning Series is a great way to keep up with the new content produced by ECA every year. Subscribers receive hard-copy issues over a 12-month period and bonus online content not available with individual issues purchased without subscription.

Bonuses content

Each Everyday Learning Series title is accompanied by a downloadable fact sheet outlining the topic for parents and families. The fact sheets are full of bite-sized information that is easy to understand and perfect to display or distribute to families.

I cannot tell you how helpful the fact sheets are. I share them with parents and use sections of them in my documentation tools. They are really practical and great for parents.

– Melanie, Educational Leader, Marrickville

Each Research in Practice Series title comes with the option to download an exclusive PowerPoint presentation, which is perfect to support engagement in professional learning as a team. The presentations are designed to prompt critical thinking and reflection and support conversations that improve practice in early childhood education and care settings. The presentations are particularly useful for managers and leaders.

As a director, helping my whole team focus on a topic is important. I use the PowerPoint presentations for our professional learning sessions. They are editable, so I can tailor them to the needs of my team. They are a hidden gem!

– Rhada, Director, South Melbourne

Australasian Journal of Early Childhood

The Australasian Journal of Early Childhood (AJEC) is Australasia’s foremost scholarly journal and the world’s longest-running major journal within the early childhood sector. AJEC offers research-based articles that are designed to impart new information and encourage the critical exchange of ideas among early childhood practitioners, academics and students. To enable this key work to reach a broader audience, ECA partners with SAGE on the publication and dissemination of AJEC.

AJEC is available for purchase individually or as part of a subscription.

Subscribe to ECA’s publications to access bonus online resources!
ECA signature publications and resources

Box of Provocations

ECA’s unique *Box of Provocations* series is designed to support critical reflection, discussion, debate and deeper thinking around a range of topics such as professional practice, leadership and sustainability.

- The *Box of Provocations for Early Childhood Educators* by Anne Stonehouse is a collection intended to support critical reflection, discussion, debate and deeper thinking about teaching, learning and what it means to be a professional educator.

- The *Box of Leadership Provocations* is for leaders at all levels of early childhood education and care. This resource has been written by six of Australia’s leading early childhood experts: Anne Stonehouse, Anthony Semann, Susan Irvine, Catharine Hydon, Michelle Gujer and Leanne Gibbs.

- The *Box of Provocations for our Earth* focuses on sustainability and nature pedagogy. The provocations across eight different themes, written by experts from the fields of sustainability and nature pedagogy, will prompt you to find different ways of doing things—perhaps even undergo mindshifts about what you value and how you see the world.

Beautifully presented and made to last, these will be a popular resource in your service for many years to come.

Ethics in Action – A practical guide to implementing the ECA Code of Ethics

This essential and practical 95-page guide to the ECA *Code of Ethics* clearly explains what ‘code of ethics’ means in everyday practice. Developed from the early learning and care sector’s desire to commit to and enact ethics in daily practice, this easy-to-use publication includes case studies, scenarios and provocations to support you in bringing ethics into action!

Start a conversation today with ECA’s Box of Provocations
ECA Events

ECA hosts a number of important events each year, with options to attend virtually and in-person.

The biggest event on the ECA events calendar is the ECA National Conference, with thousands of early childhood professionals from across Australia attending each year. Our other key events include the ECA Reconciliation Symposium and the AJEC Research Symposium. Alongside these, we collaborate with governments and other organisations throughout the year to present virtual events and workshops and also offer bespoke or custom events for our sector.

Calendar of events

- AJEC Research Symposium, 9–10 February 2023 (virtual event)
- Reconciliation Symposium, 9–10 June 2023, Hobart
- ECA National Conference, 4–7 October 2023, Adelaide

Australasian Journal of Early Childhood (AJEC) Research Symposium

We invite early childhood practitioners, researchers, leaders, academics and students to exchange ideas, innovative research methodologies and findings. The symposium will also discuss the latest research and pedagogical practice from the longest-running and most highly regarded academic journal within the early childhood sector, produced by ECA, the Australasian Journal of Early Childhood (AJEC).

ECA Reconciliation Symposium

The ECA Reconciliation Symposium brings the matter of reconciliation in early childhood into the spotlight and works towards a better future for all Australians.

Attendees at the ECA Reconciliation Symposium will learn about a culture dating back more than 40,000 years, and facilitated table discussions will lead to an atmosphere of dialogue, understanding and engagement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

The symposium will be held over two days and will be highly interactive. For those participants who attended the previous year’s event, there will be updates from various speakers plus new presenters and ideas to build on the journey. ECA is seeking table facilitators for the duration of the event and those who attended in a previous year may consider applying for this role during your registration.

The 2023 Reconciliation Symposium will be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart, Tasmania, from Friday 9 to Saturday 10 June 2023.
Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

Reconciliation Symposium 2023
Advancing reconciliation in early childhood education and care
Hobart, Tasmania • 9–10 June 2023

REGISTER NOW
Professional learning that supports practice across the
National Quality Standard

ECA’s publications and online learning resources are mapped to the quality areas of the National Quality Standard to support your quality improvement journey.

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30 Early Childhood Australia—Professional Learning Guide
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<td>Understand the role: Nominated supervisor and person in day-to-day charge in education and care</td>
<td>ECA Learning Hub Online Module</td>
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<td>Understanding and making art: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art in early childhood settings</td>
<td>ECA Learning Hub Online Module</td>
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<td>Understanding young children’s behaviour and empowering their future (2-part series)</td>
<td>ECA Learning Hub Online Module</td>
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<td>Using critical reflection</td>
<td>ECA Learning Hub Online Module</td>
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For more resources linked to specific quality areas, please contact ECA either by calling 1800 356 900 or emailing us at customerservice@earlychildhood.org.au.

ECA signature publication

First year at school:
Essential tips for parents and carers

ECA’s First Year at School is an essential guidebook for parents and carers that breaks down the challenges and expectations of starting school—from the preparation that is required a year before school starts, to picking the right school, developing relationships with teachers, dealing with technology and building children’s social and personal skills. Updated recently, this book is designed to help parents and carers support their child through one of the most important years of life.

![First Year at School book cover](image)

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