

Working for a Stronger Future







Produced by the National Members' Forum under the auspice of Family Day Care Australia.

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The members of the National Members' Forum (until November 2009, known as the State Associations National Meeting (SAM)), comprised of carer and coordination unit representatives from every state and territory of Australia as the principal architects and authors. The National Members' Forum is the auspice of Family Day Care Australia.

The National Members' Forum representatives have contributed to the development of the Plan at formal meetings, working parties and teleconferences. They have all willingly given their time and are fully committed to the future of family day care.

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The Minister for Early Childhood Education, Child Care and Youth, The Hon. Kate Ellis MP, for her enthusiasm and support of the project.

Finally, to The Hon Maxine McKew MP, then Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Child Care who started the project off when she said, 'Where is family day care going to be in five years time...show us what you are going to look like in five years.'

We hope that this five year plan, *Working for a Stronger Future*, shows the Australian community where family day care wants to be in the future.

Foreword

Every child deserves to have engaging early learning experiences in a safe and caring environment.

Child care reform is a high priority for the Australian Government, and we recognise how important this is for parents and carers and the child care industry.

The Australian Government has worked with the Council of Australian Governments, in consultation with stakeholders and industry experts, to develop the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care. This framework sets out a vision for the future of child care, as well as standards for consistency and quality of child care across Australia.



The resulting reforms, to be delivered in partnership with family day care, will improve children's education, health and wellbeing, giving them the right start to contribute to Australia's future prosperity.

I am delighted that the family day care sector has embraced the reforms under the National Quality Framework. Through Family Day Care Australia, the sector has taken the initiative to develop *Working for a Stronger Future — Family Day Care Five Year Plan*, which is based on the principles and objectives of the National Quality Framework.

The genuine commitment of the family day care sector to provide quality care, learning and development outcomes for children through a qualified and well-resourced workforce is commendable. I congratulate you for your initiative in developing this inspirational plan.

I look forward to working with the family day care sector to achieve our shared goal of supporting children to reach their full potential.

The Hon Kate Ellis MP

Minister for Early Childhood Education, Child Care and Youth

March 2010

About family day care

Family day care provides families with the unique opportunity to have their children participate in an early childhood education and care program, in small groups, in a home-based setting.

Children are nurtured and cared for in the homes of approved family day care carers who are resourced, supported and monitored from a central coordination unit. This network of carers, coordination unit and families is collectively referred to as a family day care 'scheme'. Family day care schemes can operate privately, though predominantly operate within a framework of local government or community-based services.

The vast majority of family day care carers are self-employed, and a small number are employed by local government and community-based services.

In early 2010 there were over 12,000 registered carers, 307 schemes across all states and territories and 102,900 children enrolled in family day care services Australia-wide.

Family day care caters for young babies through to pre-teens and beyond. Care is offered during standard hours, before/after school, during school holidays and in some circumstances overnight and weekends.

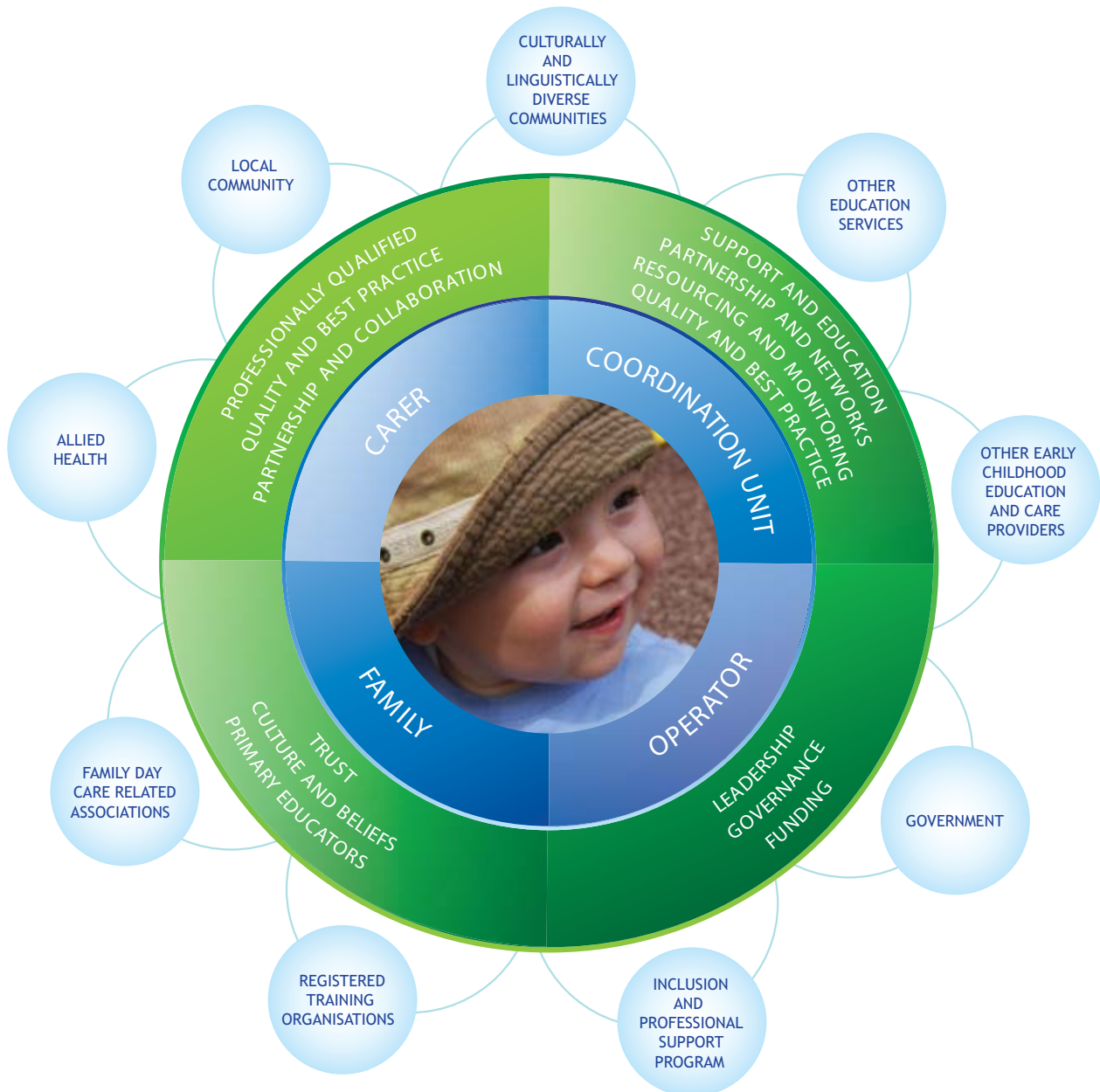
In the current environment, the service complies with Australian government guidelines, national standards, state and territory regulations, the Family Day Care Quality Assurance system through the National Childcare Accreditation Council and individual scheme policies.

In the natural learning environment of the home, children who attend family day care learn through play and exploration within a small group setting. Children receive individual care and attention and are acknowledged as strong and competent learners who can initiate their own learning experiences. This approach utilises the understanding of children's strengths, skills and knowledge as an important basis for program decision making¹.

Family day care's child-centred approach puts the child's wellbeing first. The service respects the key role of parents and works within a collaborative partnership model that helps children to thrive.

Over the next five years, the family day care sector aims to further strengthen the service model to better respond to the needs of the families and communities it serves, and to meet the challenges of a changing policy and regulatory environment.

¹ DEEWR 2009, *Belonging, Being & Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Commonwealth of Australia.



The Family Day Care Model

The family day care model is comprised of the core elements of children and families, carers, coordination units and operators/sponsors. One of the key strengths of family day care is the service, family and community partnerships. We know from research that this kind of integrated approach enhances children's achievement.



The Jelly Bean Tree

Written by Jill Eggleston
Illustrated by Raymond McGee

Family day care

Vision

Inspiring children to reach their full potential

Mission

Working together to make family day care a viable, visible and valued early childhood education and care choice now and in the future

Preamble

From a small 'cottage industry' in the mid-70s to a formal, Australian government approved early childhood education and child care service operating nationally with over 12,000 carers through 307 schemes, family day care has come a long way.

Over the past 35 years, changes in demographics, economics, and family structure have increased the demand for early childhood education and care. So too has our **enhanced understanding** of the development of children. Early childhood academics regularly highlight the significance of experiences, attachment and environment offered to young children and the impact this will have on the child's potential outcomes later in life. There is now more emphasis on the **importance of quality early education and care**, and its **effects on brain development** from birth to three years.

Early childhood education and care has become a priority for both families and government. The government's message at the Family Day Care Australia National Conference in May 2009 was that *'The child care profession has a critically important role in the development of the next generation of Australians.'*

To support families in accessing child care, government expenditure now exceeds \$2 billion per year. With that expenditure, comes an expectation from families and government that the industry **demonstrate accountability for the quality of its services** and the **achievement of outcomes** for children.

The Council of Australian Government's (COAG) National Quality Framework emphasises three influencing factors in the 'iron triangle' of quality child care: **qualifications, ratios of adults to children and group size**. COAG promotes an agenda to improve overall quality that includes new national standards and a consistent regulatory system, along with an Early Years Learning Framework. **Family day care** has committed to ensuring it is **well placed to succeed** in this new environment.

In early 2008 representatives of the family day care sector, through the State Association National Meeting (SAM) group hosted by Family Day Care Australia, began to consider the future of family day care in the context of this changing environment.

Over the ensuing 18 months this representative group **defined the elements and values** that have made family day care unique, and then considered a **future model** that could **retain those elements and values** while ensuring **ongoing best practice**.

This Five Year Plan is the result of those discussions. The process has been challenging and members of the SAM representative group have had vigorous debate, fuelled by passion and commitment, when considering how best to move forward.

Above all, there was **common understanding** that the sector needs to **work together to respond to a changing environment** and to **create a stronger and more sustainable family day care sector for the future**. This is the **purpose** of developing the *Five Year Plan*.

The **goal** of the *Five Year Plan* is to provide the **highest quality care, learning and developmental outcomes for children** in the family day care environment, supported by a **qualified and well resourced workforce**.

The family day care representative group, known as the National Members' Forum (NMF), commits to review the plan on an annual basis to ensure it continues to respond to the fast pace of change and the needs of the community and the family day care sector.

This Plan has been developed to allow family day care to:

- align with best practices now and on a continuing basis in order to assist every child to reach their full potential
- meet the challenges of the changing policy and regulatory environment
- be recognised for the skill and qualifications of our carers and staff
- provide care and education in a unique and natural environment
- attract quality carers and staff with our sustainable business models
- work in partnership with all those who have an interest in the child's development
- build and maintain a strong profile in the community.

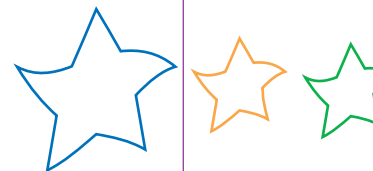
We believe this is our chance to **turn challenges into opportunities**.

We believe this is the time to **ensure family day care** – the early childhood education and child care model that we all believe in – **continues to support the development of children** in Australian communities and provide options for families.

We believe that we need to **work together as a sector** to achieve the goals in this Five Year Plan.

Join us in working for a **stronger future** for family day care.





Operating Framework

Family day care operates within a robust regulatory framework, underpinned by evidenced-based best practice. Family day care retains the richness and texture that is engendered by cultural, geographic, economic and social diversity. It operates with sound governance principles, management structures and operational strategies and takes a multi dimensional view of quality, with a focus on continuous improvement.

Key Result Area 1

Goal

Family day care will be a consistently delivered, sustainable, high quality care and education program that reflects the centrality of children and respects the key role of the parents in their child's wellbeing.

Key Result Area 1 : Operating Framework

Outcome 1 - Evidence-Based Best Practice

The family day care model is underpinned by an evidence-based best practice framework

Key Performance Indicator

Family day care demonstrates that the Early Years Learning Framework is embedded in everyday practice

Key Strategy

Implement the Early Years Learning Framework in family day care

Actions

1. Map the Early Years Learning Framework to the family day care context through focused consultation
2. Develop a national tool to implement practices across family day care based on the Early Years Learning Framework
3. Facilitate the implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework family day care tool

Outcome 2 - ECEC National Quality Framework

The family day care model reflects the early childhood education and care National Quality Framework

Key Performance Indicator

Consistency of application of the early childhood education and care National Quality Framework across the family day care sector

Key Strategy

Integrate the National Quality Framework into the family day care setting

Actions

1. Identify the components of the national quality agenda and their application to family day care, eg universal access, workforce participation, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific issues
2. Develop an information kit about the components of the national quality agenda that fit with the National Quality Framework and develop strategies for implementation
3. Develop a communication plan to support the dissemination and implementation of the information kit to family day care nationally

Key Result Area 1 : Operating Framework

Outcome 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

All stakeholders within schemes have clear roles and responsibilities in operating a family day care service under the National Quality Framework

Key Performance Indicator

Roles, responsibilities and relationships are defined, documented and included in induction processes and performance management

Key Strategy

Enhance good governance and strong relationships through clarity of roles and responsibilities

Actions

1. Draw on research from *Outcome 4 - Continuous Improvement*, to identify governance arrangements, roles and responsibilities that contribute to high performing schemes
2. Define optimal roles, responsibilities and relationships
3. Develop an information/resource kit to include:
 - model governance policies and procedures as a framework to support scheme stakeholders to carry out their roles and responsibilities
 - clarification of the interrelationships between roles
 - implementation guidelines
 - linkages to performance management
 - guidelines on how to develop organisational philosophy and goals
4. Develop and implement a communication plan to support the dissemination of the information/resource kit
5. Research, identify and promote appropriate governance training for management committees (sponsors/licensees)

Outcome 4 - Continuous Improvement

Quality and best practice in family day care are facilitated by consistently focusing on continuous improvement

Key Performance Indicators

All schemes have a planned approach to continuous improvement that reflects collaboration

Practice demonstrates active reflection and response to areas identified for improvement

Key Strategies

Ensure research informs best practice for the family day care model

Create a culture that incorporates continuous improvement in daily practice

Actions

1. Identify contemporary international best practice in early childhood education and care
2. Research within other human services sectors' best practice models of continuous improvement and draw elements into the family day care environment
3. Gather information and assess current practices across family day care in Australia. Identify family day care schemes that consistently achieve high quality
4. Map and analyse best practice data specific to family day care in Australia
5. Undertake original research in the family day care context to add to the best practice in early childhood education and care literature
6. Implement a system and strategy to continue research agenda

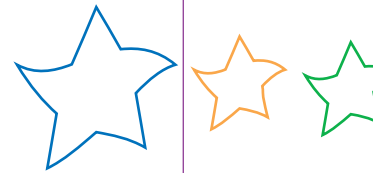
Outcome 4 - Continuous Improvement

Actions...

7. Develop an information/resource kit to include:
 - education - meaning of continuous improvement and how to embed in daily practice
 - shared examples of best practice across family day care
 - how to implement and document a *Plan, Do, Check and Act* process for continuous improvement
 - how to incorporate continuous improvement into performance management systems
 - links to other resources and support mechanisms
8. Develop and implement a communication plan to support dissemination of the information/resource kit and to ensure good practices are shared widely on an ongoing basis







All carers are qualified to deliver high quality, purposeful care and education, and are supported by skilled, qualified coordination unit staff. Family day care is a career of choice for early childhood education and care professionals and turnover is low to facilitate individual valuing relationships with families and children.

Goal

Family day care attracts and retains a professionally qualified and experienced workforce.

Key Result Area 2 : Workforce

Outcome 1 - Carers

Family day care has appropriately skilled and qualified carers

Key Performance Indicator

All carers will have a minimum qualification (or be actively working towards a minimum qualification) of Certificate III in Children's Services by 1 January 2014

Key Strategy

To develop and implement a five year workforce development plan that enables all existing and future carers to be professionally qualified and receive ongoing support and professional development

Actions

1. Research and utilise baseline data on existing carer qualifications
2. Analyse training needs for carers
3. Identify RTOs that can provide flexible training models
4. Work with RTOs to:
 - develop family day care specific training packages
 - map carer induction programs to Certificate III
5. Develop a carer induction package that links to units of competency in Certificate III
6. Identify barriers to training and work with RTOs to address barriers

Outcome 1 - Carers

Actions...

7. Research and share information regarding funding for training
8. Develop resources for carers to assist with gaining a qualification eg recognition of prior learning (RPL) models
9. Identify family day care specific professional development opportunities and trainers
10. Work with the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council to ensure that future training packages reflect the needs of family day care
11. Develop a change management strategy to transition existing carers to the new model

Key Result Area 2 : Workforce

Outcome 2 - Coordination Unit Staff

Coordination unit staff have the appropriate skills and qualifications to deliver high quality support services to carers and to run a financially viable service

Key Performance Indicators

Coordination units have an appropriate mix of qualified staff, including:

- i. Diploma of Children's Services for staff with direct contact with children by 1 January 2014
- ii. access to a four year degree qualified early childhood teacher by 2014

Coordination units have skills in:

- i. people management
- ii. business management
- iii. relevant legislative frameworks
- iv. application of the family day care business model

Key Strategy

Develop and implement a five year workforce development plan that enables all existing and future coordination unit staff to be qualified relevant to their role and to receive support and access to ongoing professional development

Actions

1. Research and utilise baseline data on existing coordination unit staff qualifications
2. Research and develop a range of evidence-based multidisciplinary teams that enhance service delivery outcomes
3. Analyse training needs for staff
4. Identify RTOs regarding flexible training models
5. Work with RTOs to develop family day care training at Diploma level or higher if identified
6. Identify barriers to training and work with RTOs to address barriers
7. Research and share information regarding funding for training

Outcome 2 - Coordination Unit Staff

Actions...

8. Develop resources for coordination unit staff to assist with gaining a qualification eg recognition of prior learning (RPL) models
9. Identify family day care specific professional development opportunities and trainers
10. Work with the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council to ensure that future training packages reflect the needs of family day care
11. Develop a change management strategy to transition existing staff to the new model

Key Result Area 2 : Workforce

Outcome 3 - Career Choice

Family day care is a career of choice for early childhood education and care professionals

Key Performance Indicators

Length of time employed positions in schemes remain unfilled

Ratio of demand to availability of carers

Staff turnover within the first year of employment

Key Strategy

Understand and influence the conditions that attract and retain people in family day care

Actions

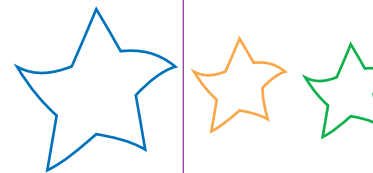
1. Research carer and coordination unit staff trends and establish baseline:
 - qualitative data - What originally attracted them? Why do they stay? What would make them go? What would bring them back?
 - quantitative data - exit surveys, statistics, demographics
2. Undertake a comparative analysis of remuneration and conditions of similar roles in related industries (self-employed and employed)
3. Actively lobby to influence wages and conditions
4. Utilise research to shape and target marketing strategies to attract people to family day care

Outcome 3 - Career Choice

Actions...

5. Develop an information kit that includes:
 - costs of set-up and operation
 - business infrastructure, eg tax, fee setting, contracts, policies
 - roles and responsibilities
 - safety requirements
 - start-up grants
 - benefits of being in family day
6. Map career pathways and provide ongoing professional development to assist workers to achieve their career goals:
 - link to accredited training
 - individual professional development plans





Environment

The natural learning environment of the home is family day care's unique offering. Where possible, siblings are placed together which supports maintenance of the family unit and the family values of the carer provides for an extension of the child's own family.

Goal

Family day care is recognised and respected for its unique education and care environment.

Key Result Area 3 : Environment

Outcome 1 - Natural Learning Environment

Education and care for children is provided in the natural learning environment of the carer's family home

Key Performance Indicator

Education and care environments meet the nationally consistent definition of a carer's family home

Key Strategy

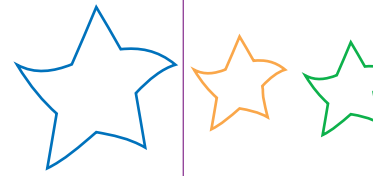
Gain national consistency in the education and care environment in which family day care is provided

Actions

1. Research the current environment in relation to family day care homes; regulations and policies
2. Utilising best practice research, implement an education and consultation strategy to inform the development of the definition of a family day care education and care environment
3. Develop a nationally consistent definition of a 'carer's family home'
4. Develop a transition strategy to assist carers to meet the nationally consistent definition of a carer's family home
5. Incorporate the intent of this goal into other communication strategies
6. Promote the education and care environment as a key differentiating factor of family day care







Sustainability

Self-employed carers set their own fees according to market conditions, and coordination units are well resourced, efficient and sustainable business units that deliver high quality support to families and workers. Schemes are effectively managed by skilled service operators who can access a diverse range of funding opportunities to suit their relevant business model. There are sufficient carers to enable parents to have choice in relation to their needs and values, and across the service, access to flexible care arrangements including overnight and weekend care is offered.

Key Result Area 4

Goal

Ensure the financial viability and sustainability of family day care.

Key Result Area 4 : Sustainability

Outcome 1 - Business Model

The family day care business model is sustainable

Key Performance Indicators

Number of scheme closures
Adequacy of service delivery to families and carers
Financial status of individual schemes

Key Strategy

Build the capacity of schemes to become financially viable

Actions

1. Identify and analyse driving forces impacting on the development and implementation of a sustainable family day care model such as:
 - operating framework
 - Government policy
 - quality assurance system
 - funding sources
 - demographics
 - socio-economic context
2. Gather information and assess current practices across family day care in Australia
3. Identify family day care schemes that consistently maintain financial viability
4. Map the financial viability with identified driving forces and the different contexts, eg location, sponsor, community/private etc
5. Develop the business model/s to accommodate variables that underpin the family day care model
6. Develop and implement education, training and communication plans

Outcome 2 - Income Streams

Sufficient income streams sustain the identified business models

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of scheme closures
- Adequacy of service delivery to families and carers
- Financial status of individual schemes
- Diversity of funding streams accessed

Key Strategy

Develop an understanding of the various scenarios that might emerge in relation to funding and ensure that family day care has a solid funding base

Actions

1. Research funding models of:
 - family day care in Australia and internationally
 - other care services in Australia and internationally
 - other relevant community-based programs
2. Identify realistic funding options for family day care
3. Scenario plan the various funding models
4. Work with the government on any further review following the Senate Inquiry into the funding of child care in Australia
5. Work with government to achieve sufficient Network Support Funding
6. Develop a business case to government for start-up grants for coordination units to support new carers



Partnerships and Networks



Family day care builds and maintains effective relationships with stakeholders to support the delivery of quality outcomes for children. Recognising and responding to community needs and expectations are considered essential to the future of family day care. Family day care is well connected as a sector and considered an integral part of the broad range of family and community services. Family day care also has strong and positive relationships with government to ensure the needs of the sector are effectively represented in policy development. At the local level, children learn to become competent members of society through active participation and engagement with the community which is facilitated by carers through purposeful interactions.

Key Result Area 5

Goal

The family day care sector will build and maintain effective relationships with identified stakeholders to support the family day care model to deliver quality outcomes for children.

Key Result Area 5 : Partnerships and Networks

Outcome 1 - Working Relationships with Community

To have positive and strong working relationships with community, eg:

- family and children's services
- local community services
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups

Key Performance Indicators

Participation in joint projects

Referrals to family day care resulting from partnerships

Feedback

Invited participation in meetings and activities

Professional service providers utilise the family day care environment to support children and to provide their services

Sponsorship from local business

Key Strategy

Understand the needs and expectations of each stakeholder group in order to develop targeted strategies

Actions

1. Undertake stakeholder analysis to:
 - identify and segment stakeholder groups
 - identify needs and expectations of separate stakeholder groups
 - identify strategies to manage the relationships

Outcome 1 - Working Relationships with Community

Actions...

2. Develop a communication and engagement plan for targeted stakeholder groups taking account of protocols
3. Employ people in family day care from specific communities to enhance understanding of and engagement with a diverse range of communities
4. Seek sponsorship from identified local businesses

Key Result Area 5 : Partnerships and Networks

Outcome 2 – Working with Government

To have positive and strong working relationships with government:

- Local
- State
- Federal

Key Performance Indicators

Participation in joint projects

Feedback

Invited participation in meetings and activities

Government actively seeking advice from sector representatives at all levels

Government policy reflects the input of family day care representatives

Key Strategy

Understand the needs and expectations of each stakeholder group in order to develop targeted strategies

Actions

1. Undertake stakeholder analysis to:
 - identify and segment stakeholder groups
 - identify needs and expectations of separate stakeholder groups
 - identify strategies to manage the relationships
2. Develop a communication and engagement plan for targeted stakeholder groups taking account of protocols
3. Develop and influence policy positions for government at all levels





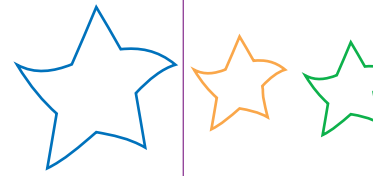


Image and Profile

Family day care works together to portray a positive image of the service as a high quality care and education program. Stakeholders and the general public have a clear understanding of the services family day care provides. Our communication delivers regular and effective key messages to all stakeholders.

Key Result Area 6

Goal

The family day care sector to have a positive image that is consistently delivered through sustainable, high quality care and education programs.

Key Result Area 6 : Image and Profile

Outcome 1 - Public Profile

Expand the positive public profile and image of family day care

Key Performance Indicator

Market research at the end of year five indicates a growth in brand equity and essence

Key Strategy

Develop an integrated marketing and communications campaign plan to inform, update and educate key stakeholders and the general public

Actions

1. Conduct market research on public recognition, identification, and recall of the family day care brand to establish baseline brand equity and essence
2. Clearly identify and develop family day care's key messages, clarify image and identify desired profile
3. Develop and implement a communications plan to deliver regular and effective key messages to the family day care and broader early childhood education and child care sectors
4. Develop and implement an integrated marketing and communications campaign to effectively promote family day care to government, media and the broader community (public)
5. Conduct market research at the end of three years and benchmark against year one baseline brand equity and essence



Glossary of Terms

Approved means that families using the service may be eligible for Child Care Benefit and the Child Care Rebate. Approved services must also show that they are meeting quality standards.

CALD stands for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (groups or communities).

Carer refers to those in the family day care sector that provide education and care to children within their own home.

Children is the term used to refer to babies, toddlers, three to five year olds and school aged children as individuals or members of groups in education and care settings.

Continuous improvement refers to the process by which each element of the scheme evaluates and seeks opportunities to improve its operations and daily practice. The primary goal behind continuous improvement is to enhance positive outcomes for children.

Coordination unit refers to the central administrative body for carers in localised settings. The role of the coordination unit is to assist in the training, resourcing and monitoring of carers in their area. Carers must be registered with their local coordination unit to be considered part of the family day care sector. Coordination units may comprise child development officers, field workers, managers, directors, placement officers, administrative staff and others.

Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, comprising the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) is the overarching federal government agency responsible for early childhood education and care in Australia.

ECEC stands for Early Childhood Education and Care. It is the broader sector from birth to school age including children in family day care, long day care, pre-school/kindergarten.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care. The framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school.

Family day care is a regulated home-based education and care service that blends child care, child development and early learning within a small group setting in the homes of approved family day care carers who are resourced, supported, monitored and trained from a central coordination unit.

Family day care quality assurance is the set of guiding principles for quality service provision administered and monitored by the National Childcare Accreditation Council.

Governance is the combination of processes, policies and structures, in compliance with the organisation's legal requirements, implemented by a board to inform, direct, oversee, and monitor the activities of an organisation.

Management Committee is the formal structure that provides authority, accountability, stewardship, leadership, direction and control exercised in an organisation, within a legally compliant framework.

National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) is the national body for monitoring compliance with quality standards and providing accreditation status for most formal child care arrangements in Australia.

National Members' Forum (NMF) is an advisory and consultative body to Family Day Care Australia, providing interaction, liaison and clear communication links between family day care stakeholders in each state and territory.

National Quality Framework is the framework, agreed to in a partnership between the Commonwealth and all state and territory governments in COAG, for early childhood education and care. The framework will be progressively implemented from 1 July 2010 and will apply to family day care, long day care, outside school hours care and preschools. Requirements under the framework relate to staff-to-child ratios, workforce qualifications, National Quality Standards and the Early Years Learning Framework.

Outcomes are the results, impacts or consequences of actions. This differs from the term 'outputs', which are quantifiable goods or services that contribute to outcomes.

RPL is a process that recognises prior learning.

RTOs are Registered Training Organisations that provide accredited training and qualifications.

Scheme refers to the collective network of family day care carers, coordination unit sponsor and families. Family day care schemes operate within a framework of local government, community-based or privately owned services.

Sponsor is the entity that has signed the contractual funding agreement with DEEWR, in order to deliver family day care services (also known as the operator).

Stakeholders are individuals or groups of people who are in some way connected to a process, project or business activity. Stakeholders can include, but not be limited to, the local community, other early education and care services, government at different levels, internal stakeholders and the media.

State Association National Meeting (SAM) was the national meeting of the representative group from each state and territory family day care associations (where they exist) and Family Day Care Australia. The SAM transitioned to the NMF in November 2009.

Sustainability is the result of finding ways to meet current needs that do not impact on the quality of the environment or service, or impact on the capacity of the environment or service in the future.

Universal Access is a program to be made available, through early childhood education and care settings, to all children by a four-year university-trained early childhood teacher, for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year, in the year before formal schooling. The commitment has been generated by the Australian Government in partnership with state and territory governments through bilateral agreements, and is proposed to be fully implemented by 2013.

Workforce means the network of carers and coordination unit staff who operate family day care services. The vast majority of carers are self-employed and are registered with coordination units. There are a small number of schemes where carers are direct employees of coordination units and receive a wage.







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