

APRIL 2026

Another month is well underway, and as always, there is so much happening across our Nature Alliance community. From important updates and policy changes to practical ideas, professional development opportunities and beautiful moments of learning being shared, this edition is packed with information to support your practice. It's always a pleasure to see the dedication, care and connection that each of you brings to your Family Day Care environments every day. We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter and find something here to inspire, reflect on or try in your service.

INCREASE OF EDUCATOR LEVY – 6TH JULY 2026

From 6 July 2026, our levy will increase slightly from \$1.75 to \$1.90. We understand that any increase can be felt, so we want to be transparent about why this change is necessary. As a service, we are committed to maintaining strong, regular support for our educators, which includes extensive travel across regions—both by road and air. Like many, we are experiencing rising operational costs, alongside increased administrative and compliance requirements that require additional staff time to ensure we continue delivering a high-quality, responsive service.

In addition, Redpay will now be passing on bank fees to services, rather than these being paid by families, and this has also been factored into the adjustment. While we have worked hard to keep the increase as low as possible, these combined pressures have made a small rise necessary. This adjustment will help us sustain the level of support, connection, and oversight that underpins the strength of our Family Day Care community.

We encourage Educators to take this adjustment into account when reviewing and setting their fees for the new financial year.

WELCOME BRENDA & TAYLA

Some of you may have already had the opportunity to meet our newest ESO in the Perth metropolitan area, Brenda Beets. Brenda brings extensive experience in the Family Day Care sector, having worked as both an Educator and a Coordinator. We are very pleased to have her on board, supporting Educators across the region from Mandurah to Mindarie. At the moment, Brenda is familiarising herself with our processes and procedures—once she's conquered risk assessments and parent authorisations, she'll officially be one of us 😊. Brenda works Monday to Wednesday and is happy to chat to anyone needing support, guidance or some advice.

We also want to take this opportunity to welcome Tayla Wells in Greenbushes. We are excited to welcome you to the Nature Alliance Family and can't wait to follow you and your children along on all of your day care adventures!

UPDATED TEMPLATES

The following templates have been updated and are on the website for you to download when needed:

- [Transport Risk Assessment](#) – we noticed that the version number had not been updated on the footer. This has now been updated. When reviewing your Transport Risk Assessments, please ensure you use Version 4.
- [Daily Environment Checklist](#) – updated to include additional information for those Educators with fishponds.

WHERE CHILDREN CAN BE CHILDREN



POLICY UPDATE

The following policies have been updated. A big thank you to the Educators who provided input, your suggestions really do make a difference. To access updated copies on the website, click the links below. Hard copies will be delivered to you during your support visits:

- [Policy 1.4](#) – Sleep & Rest (Yes, AGAIN 😞)
- [Policy 15](#) – Absences from Care
- [Policy 16](#) – Physical Activity
- [Policy 22](#) – Fit & Proper Persons
- [Policy 25](#) – Keeping a Register of Service, Staff, Assistants, Students & Volunteers
- [Policy 27](#) – Provision of Information

The following policies are being updated. This is your opportunity to provide feedback, obtain clarification and offer suggestions:

- [Policy 2](#) – Interactions with Children
- [Policy 5.1](#) – Delivery & Collection of Children
- [Policy 30](#) – Engagement of FDC Educators

USING FLOORBOOKS WITH BABIES: CAPTURING THE EARLIEST VOICES IN LEARNING

Floorbooks are often associated with preschool or older children, but they can be just as powerful with babies. While babies may not yet use spoken language, they communicate richly through gestures, facial expressions, sounds and actions. Floorbooks provide a way for educators to honour these early voices, making learning visible and collaborative from the very beginning.

For more information click on the [this](#) article for some great reading!

ADMIN CHATS- LATE TIMESHEETS

It is essential that timesheets have been checked AND submitted ready for processing by **10am every Monday**. These are your contracts for payment, so they are your responsibility. To avoid that last minute Monday rush and support families with compliance here are a few quick tips:

- Set clear expectations at Enrolment
- Check and amend timesheets BEFORE parents authorise (once they sign, they are locked)
- Set the same weekly deadline for final authorisations EG. Friday 5pm
- Send a simple automated group reminder at the same time each week
- Remind families that their CCS relies on that final authorisation
- Create your very own routine that becomes habit for families.

In the rare case that a timesheet is too late to be processed on Monday, it **MUST** be submitted with 10 days along with an email to ADMIN detailing why it is late. Timesheets exceeding 10 days from the weekending are unable to be processed to avoid service breaches, forfeiting payment for care given.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Thank you to Maddie Szann for sharing this valuable professional development opportunity that can contribute towards your required 8 hours of annual PD. Maggie Dent—a well-known and respected voice in early childhood—will be delivering a free, three-part online webinar series in conversation with Himanshu Gupta, CEO of Mana. Together, they will explore how children develop their sense of self in the early years, the beliefs about gender that shape our responses, and practical strategies to support bravery, resilience and optimism in every child. Maggie's style is warm, humorous and grounded in real-life practice, making these sessions both engaging and highly relevant.

The sessions will be held at 9:00am WA time (11:00am AEST) on 28 May, 29 June and 15 July. As they are free and online, they offer an accessible way to build your knowledge and reflect on your practice. If you're unable to attend live, a recording will be emailed to you after the session, provided you have [registered](#).



USING AEDC DATA IN EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Now that we have explored the five domains of the Australian Early Development Census, the next step is considering how this data can inform our everyday practice. The AEDC provides valuable insights into how children are developing across key areas and highlights where some children may be experiencing vulnerability. While the data reflects communities rather than individual children, it offers a useful guide for Educators to reflect on trends and consider how their environment and practice can support children's development.

In Family Day Care, this does not mean making big changes or introducing new programs. Instead, it is about being intentional with what you are already doing. By reflecting on the AEDC domains, Educators can identify opportunities to strengthen their practice — for example, supporting emotional regulation through consistent routines, encouraging social competence through guided play, or embedding language and problem-solving into everyday experiences. Small, thoughtful adjustments can have a significant impact over time. Using AEDC data in this way supports responsive, reflective practice and helps ensure that all children are given the best possible foundation for a confident and successful transition to school.

Reflect on:

- How can the AEDC domains guide your planning and interactions with children in your care?
- Are there areas where you could strengthen your practice based on common vulnerabilities identified in the data?
- What small, intentional changes could you make to further support children's development across the five domains?

You can explore AEDC data for your local community at the [AEDC Community Data Explorer](#).

A BEAUTIFUL CULTURAL LEARNING MOMENT

On a recent visit Cassie and the children were engaging with the [Bibbulmun Bonar: Six Noongar Seasons Song](#) as part of their daily routine. It was a lovely moment to see the children so engaged and connected through music and learning. Thank you, Cassie, for sharing this beautiful resource and for the thoughtful way you incorporate this. It is a meaningful example of how culture, music, and routine can come together to support children's sense of belonging and understanding of Country. We appreciate you sharing this learning experience with us.

FOOD SAFETY FACTS FROM YOUR FRIENDLY FOOD SAFETY OFFICERS – FEEDING INFANTS & YOUNG CHILDREN

Infants and young children under five years old are especially vulnerable to foodborne illness because their immune systems are not fully developed. Their stomachs also produce less acid making it easier for harmful germs to cause harm in their bodies.

There is detailed advice on infant and young children feeding on the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) [website](#).

All general rules for safe food handling are especially vital when cooking for a young child so keep hot food steaming hot, keep cold food refrigerated, cook food properly, separate raw and ready to eat food, keep kitchen and utensils clean and wash hands with soap, rinse and dry thoroughly. Make sure you follow these Food safety tips to clean, cook, chill and separate.

If preparing food in bulk, cool it quickly by refrigerating. Don't keep it in the fridge for more than about three days. When you make pureed vegetables or soup for babies, you can make enough for several meals. Use a covered ice-cube tray to freeze small quantities which you can defrost one cube at a time for a single serving.

As with commercially produced baby food, keep home prepared food chilled by using an ice pack when transporting for feeding outside the home. Ensure any container, spoon etc is washed thoroughly with hot soapy water, rinsed well and thoroughly dried between one use and the next.



Fill food container with just enough food for one serving. Harmful germs from a baby's mouth can be introduced into food or bottle where it can grow and multiply even after refrigerating and reheating. Throw away any leftovers. Do not feed any later meals from the same container or spoon.

Food can safely be made ahead of time (the previous night) provided it is then kept in the fridge. Ensure food preparation surfaces, hands and utensils are clean when preparing and packing the food. Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly. Food should be kept cool.

When going out with the children and taking food with you, ensure that all food is packed safely. Include a cold source such as a frozen drink or an ice pack to help maintain a safe temperature. Perishable items, such as cold meats, chicken, or egg sandwiches, should be placed between the frozen items to keep them chilled for as long as possible.

LUNA ROO – THE KANGAROO BALLER!

There are so many easy, meaningful ways you can bring this year's National Simultaneous Storytime book, Luna Roo: The Kangaroo Footballer, to life in your Family Day Care next month. The story naturally lends itself to movement, teamwork, confidence and a strong sense of belonging.

Here are some simple ideas you can try:

- Movement & Gross Motor Play
Set up a mini "football field" using cones, cushions or natural markers. Children can practise kicking, passing or aiming for a goal. For younger children, even rolling or throwing a ball works well. This links beautifully to coordination, turn-taking and teamwork.
- "Jump Like Luna" Games
Bring in some kangaroo-inspired movement—jumping races, hopping between markers, or obstacle courses. It's a fun way to build strength and balance while connecting back to the character.
- Create Your Own Team
Children can design team colours, simple jerseys (paper or fabric), or flags. You could even name your Family Day Care "team" together. This helps build identity, belonging and group connection.
- Conversations About Confidence
Use the story as a starting point to talk about trying new things.
 - What was Luna learning to do?
 - What do you do when something feels hard?
 - Children could draw or talk about something they're proud of or something they're still learning.
- Outback Play & Small World Setups
Create a small world scene using natural materials—sand, rocks, sticks—and add toy animals or figures. Children can retell the story or create their own versions, building imagination and language.
- Story Retelling
Encourage children to act out parts of the story—kicking a goal, cheering for each other, or pretending to be Luna and her friends. This supports comprehension, sequencing and confidence in communication.
- NSS Event Moment
On the day, make it feel special—perhaps a picnic-style group story time, wearing team colours, or even a little "cheer squad" moment after reading. It doesn't need to be big to feel meaningful.

It's a lovely opportunity to combine literacy with movement, connection and joy—and to help children feel part of something much bigger happening right across the country. For some resources click [here](#).



WORD OF THE DAY

Co-construction – within Early Childhood Education, co-construction refers to the shared process of learning between children and Educators, where knowledge, ideas, and understanding are built together rather than delivered by the adult. It recognises children as capable contributors, whose thoughts, questions, and interests shape the direction of learning. In Family Day Care, co-construction can be seen in everyday moments — when Educators follow children’s ideas, extend conversations, problem-solve together, and remain open to where learning might lead. It requires Educators to listen deeply, be flexible, and value the process of learning as much as the outcome. When learning is co-constructed, it becomes more meaningful, engaging, and responsive, supporting children to develop confidence, agency, and a genuine sense of belonging within their environment.

WELLBEING SPOTLIGHT

Ever notice how a simple song can completely shift the energy in your day?

Some days feel chaotic, busy, or just a little bit much. In those moments, dance can be one of the simplest and most powerful tools we have — a way to let go, reset, and reconnect.

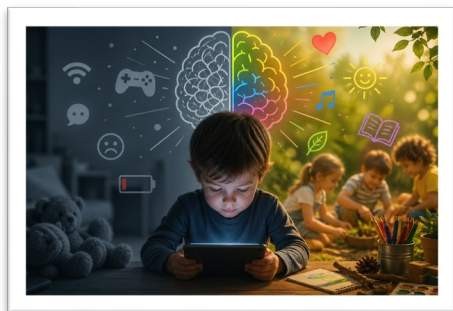
Dancing supports both educator and children’s wellbeing in so many wonderful ways:

- *Releases stress and lifts mood through natural endorphins*
- *Helps regulate emotions and reset the nervous system*
- *Encourages connection, joy, and shared experiences*
- *Builds confidence and self-expression in children*
- *Supports physical development, coordination and rhythm*
- *Creates a sense of belonging and “we are in this together” energy*

Sometimes it doesn’t need a plan or a program... just a song, a smile, and permission to move.

When was the last time you truly let go and danced? When did the children in your care last experience that kind of joy? Today, give yourself permission. Turn up your favourite song, shake off the day, and dance — because those moments of movement and laughter matter.

DIGITAL HEROIN: SCREENS ARE DAMAGING OUR CHILDREN’S BRAINS



You might be interested in this thought-provoking clip from the [Now That We’re A Family Podcast](#) featuring Nicholas Kardaras, titled [Digital Heroin: Screens Are Damaging Our Children’s Brains](#). In this discussion, Kardaras explains how excessive screen use can impact children’s developing brains in ways similar to addictive substances, affecting attention, emotional regulation and social development. He highlights concerns around early and prolonged exposure to digital devices, linking it to increased behavioural challenges, reduced resilience and difficulties with focus. The conversation also explores the importance of real-world play, human connection and setting

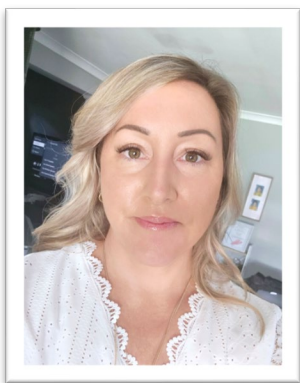
clear boundaries around screen use. While it offers a strong perspective, it provides a useful opportunity for reflection on how we support healthy development and balanced technology use within our Family Day Care environments and also gives you valuable information to share with your families.

SCAVENGER HUNT

Have you every considered going on a scavenger hunt? This can be done right in your backyard, or you can go on a hunt around your neighbourhood or to your local park. Prepare a list before you go, include things like find a feather, find a certain colour of a flower, a texture of bark, a type of leaf – the list is endless. If you have children that can’t read, make it a list of pictures. If you don’t have time to go and take photos, be creative and just hand draw & colour what you want them to look for. Then copy the list so everyone gets one. If you laminate them, the children can mark make with whiteboard markers and tick off things as they find them and you can reuse the lists again.



HI FROM KALGOORLIE



Our Educator in the spotlight this month is Emma in Kalgoorlie. She has been with Nature Alliance for approximately 7 years and is an important member of our Kalgoorlie Educator network. Emma is deeply committed to creating meaningful connections, regularly taking children out into the community and organizing catch-ups with fellow Educators and their groups. Her Service has a warm, welcoming feel and visits to Emma's home always leave you feeling like a part of her extended Family Day Care family. She runs an organized and thoughtfully planned service, balancing structure with plenty of opportunities for fun and play. She understands the importance of working hard, while also making time to enjoy the moments that matter most with her own family. Her dedication is reflected in the strong relationships she has built with her families, some of whom even treat her as a part of their own family! If you ever find yourself in Kalgoorlie, let Emma know you are

there. I'm sure she would love to say hi!

WHEN LAST DID YOU DO A BATTERY CHECK?

Just a quick reminder to keep an eye on battery safety in your toys and resources. It's really worth taking a few minutes every now and then to double check that battery compartments are secure, screwed shut properly and not easily opened by little hands. Even toys that have been around for a while can become a risk over time, with covers loosening or breaking without you noticing.

It's also a good idea to check any new or donated toys before adding them into your environment, as not all products are created equal when it comes to safety. Loose batteries, especially [button batteries](#), can be extremely dangerous if swallowed, so anything that isn't secure should be removed straight away.



A quick check here and there can make a big difference—and helps keep your environment safe for everyone.

SPECIAL EVENTS IN MAY

Next month you and your children may wish to participate in the following events and celebrations that take place in Australia and around the world. National Family Day Care Week (4-10th May), Mother's Day (10th), Pirate Day, World Bee Day, International Mother Earth Day, National Simultaneous Story Time (27th), Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, World Turtle Day, Food Allergy week and National Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week. So grab your computer and start Googling for ideas, exact dates and activities. You can also click [here](#) for links to relevant websites.

OFFICE HOURS

Our office hours are 8.30am to 4.30pm. If you have a query outside of these hours, please email or phone and leave a message. If you need to speak with someone in an emergency, please ring Jo Georgiou and if your call is not answered immediately, leave a message and your call will be returned.

PHONE NUMBERS

Sandra & Caitlin: 0431 449 567 (Mon – Fri); **Joy:** 0429 030 362 (Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri); **Jo C:** 0477 029 531 (Mon - Fri); **Jo G:** 0477 029 132 (Mon – Fri); **Lea:** 0477 029 228 (Mon, Tue, Thurs & Fri); **Brenda:** 0494 656 801 (Mon - Wed). To ensure that we respond to your emails promptly please send your queries to: info@naturealliancefdc.com.au

"Great things never come from comfort zones." – Neil Strauss

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