

AUGUST 2026

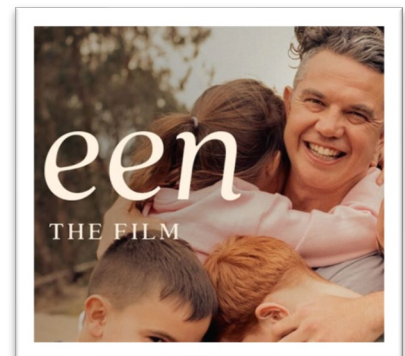
The early childhood education and care sector is firmly in the spotlight at the moment, and with that comes increased scrutiny of the work we do. While compliance may not be the most exciting part of Family Day Care (and can sometimes feel like a never-ending pile of paperwork!), accurate and current documentation is essential. But being a great Educator is about so much more than ticking compliance boxes. It is also about remaining curious, reflecting on your practice and continuing to grow. In this edition, we have balanced the important compliance reminders with opportunities to think more deeply about your pedagogy—including the film *SEEN*, the development of our Children's Philosophy and recognizing the AEDC domains within everyday observations. At a time when the sector can feel particularly heavy, it is more important than ever that we continue to share ideas, inspire and celebrate one another, and look after ourselves and each other. Compliance keeps our foundations strong, but it is your relationships, passion and willingness to keep learning that bring Family Day Care to life.

GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The Guide to the NQF has been updated to include information about guidance for school age care services and information about related provider determinations. While these may not be significant changes for you to research, this is a good opportunity to revisit the document and maybe reflect on an area in relation to your service. The most recent version can be found on the Nature Alliance website under [Resources for Educators](#), or you can download them directly from the ACECQA [Website](#).

MUST WATCH – 'SEEN' THE FILM

"SEEN" is a documentary that delves into the long-term impact of childhood trauma and the journey of healing to create stronger, healthier families. The film examines how parents confronting their own childhood coping mechanisms can positively influence their parenting and child development. The documentary features real parents and experts in the field, offering unfiltered and authentic narratives. Experts include Maggie Dent, Dr Billy Garvey, Dr Vanessa LaPointe, Lael Stone and more. [Register online](#) to request your on-demand viewing link. For 'Event' add "Seen" – location, date and time details can be left blank. Watch it in the comfort of your home with friends and family or alone if you prefer. You have 48 hours to start once your individual link has been issued.



CHILDREN'S PHILOSOPHY

At Nature Alliance we believe children are active participants in their learning and that their ideas, thoughts and perspectives deserve to be heard and valued. So, we will be inviting all educators and children to help us create Nature Alliance's Children's Philosophy – a philosophy written *with* children, rather than *for* them.

Shortly we will be sending out a selection of questions for you to ask your children, we will collate their answers and develop a philosophy. We are very excited to have the children's voices embedded in such a meaningful way. Watch this space! 😊

PARENT HANDBOOK

Please be aware that when you are due to review your Parent Handbook for your service, there is an updated template on the [website](#). It is important you use the updated version as there are important additions – a child safe practices reference, a commitment to child safe & a disclaimer.

WHERE CHILDREN CAN BE CHILDREN



MEET YOUR NEXT EDUCATIONAL LEADER - JOY



An Educational Leader supports Educators to reflect on their practice, build confidence and continually improve the quality of education and care they provide. In Family Day Care, this doesn't mean telling Educators what to do. Instead, it means working alongside them—asking thoughtful questions, sharing ideas and resources, celebrating successes, and encouraging meaningful reflection that leads to positive outcomes for children. An Educational Leader helps create a culture of continuous improvement, where every Educator is supported to grow professionally while developing programs that are responsive to the interests, strengths and needs of the children in their care. Can you guess who your Educational Leaders are?

I believe that strong, trusting relationships with educators are the foundation of meaningful support and professional growth. I have found that educators are more willing to reflect on their practice, ask questions and embrace new ideas when they feel respected, listened to and valued. Rather than seeing my role as providing answers, I see it as working alongside educators to build their confidence and capability over time.

Having been a Family Day Care educator allows me to understand the challenges that can occur, the isolation and how hard our Educator's work.

This has required me to be intentional about being available, approachable and responsive. Every educator brings different strengths, experiences and challenges, so I recognise that a one-size-fits-all approach to leadership is not effective. Instead, I adapt my support to meet individual needs, whether that involves talking through programs and how to extend the learning, engaging in reflective conversations, celebrating successes or gently challenging thinking to encourage deeper reflection. These moments reinforce that educational leadership is not about directing practice but about creating the conditions in which educators feel safe to learn, take risks and grow professionally.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE BOOKINGS

We are in the process of compiling a list of schools and their operating hours so that we can ensure that a child's booked hours do not overlap with school hours. If you have not already let the Admin team know which schools you collect children from and their operating hours, please do so as soon as possible. Booked sessions cannot start or end during school hours and CCS for the entire session will be cancelled if there is an overlap, even if that overlap is just 5 minutes.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

A number of timesheets are being submitted with missing or incorrect times, signatures or notes explaining any anomalies. Following up and correcting these errors takes considerable time and places additional pressure on the team to process timesheets by the deadline. Please carefully check every timesheet before submitting it. If information is missing, the timesheet will be returned to you and may not be processed until the following week. We recommend setting aside time at the end of each week to check that everything is complete and accurate. While you may only have a small number of timesheets to review, the team processes between 500 and 700 each week. The pressure to ensure everything is compliant is immense, and something slipping through the cracks could place the Service at risk. Please help us do our part by taking the time to do yours carefully.

FOOD SAFETY TIP

Cooking with children can encourage an interest in food, healthy eating habits and skills for life. While cooking with the children, you can educate them about food safety. Start by teaching the children why food safety is so important. Let them know about the risks of food poisoning and explain to them that nasty things like bacteria grow on food and these can make us sick. Also, explain that we can avoid food poisoning with some easy steps.



Role model food safety and help them do things like washing chopping boards and putting food away into the fridge. Educate the children about nutrition, this can be instigated by the junk mail that we often get from the local grocery stores! When you are cooking with children, it is a good time to teach them about good nutrition ***Cooking with kids is not just about ingredients, recipes, and cooking. It's about harnessing imagination, empowerment, and creativity. Guy Fieri***

CHILD PROTECTION AND ONLINE SAFETY

Now more than ever, these two topics are just as important as the other, for Parents & Caregivers, Early Childhood Education and Care Services, Family Day Care, Schools, Sporting Clubs and Child-Serving Organisations.

Images of children painting, reading, performing, playing sport, celebrating or graduating are routinely shared in newsletters, on websites and across social media. Twenty years ago, a school newsletter was printed on paper and tucked into a school bag. Today, a single photograph can be uploaded to social media, copied, downloaded, screenshot, altered using artificial intelligence or shared with thousands of people within seconds.

Once an image is online services, schools, clubs, organisations, families and children lose control over where it travels and how it may be used. This isn't about assuming the worst, it's about ***recognising that technology has changed dramatically, while many of our policies and practices haven't.***

Even when a photograph seems harmless, it may unintentionally disclose information about a child. While each piece of information may appear insignificant on its own, together they can build a surprisingly detailed picture. In an age where information is easily collected, copied and connected these details deserve greater consideration.

As our understanding of online safety and child protection evolves, it's time to ask an important question, ***Do our current image sharing practices still reflect what we know about keeping children safe?*** When it comes to children's safety, reviewing long-standing practices and policies in light of new evidence isn't overreacting, it's responsible child safeguarding.

[Kayelene Kerr Child Safety Expert]

To read more about what Kaylene Kerr, founder of eSafeKids has to say on the topic of sharing images of children follow this [link](#) OR to become a community member of eSafeKids and access a variety of resources and information click [here](#).

HI FROM COLLIE

Jenni is a passionate Family Day Care educator who creates a warm, nurturing environment where every child thrives. A strong advocate for community engagement, Jenni regularly extends children's learning beyond her Family Day Care environment by exploring local community spaces, including tad poling in the creek, exploring Lake Kepwari or participating in community-based projects such as the Collie show where they have won prizes for their group art projects. Through these experiences, children have developed a sense of belonging, citizenship and responsibility while learning that they can make valuable contributions to their community. Jenni's practice reflects her belief that children learn best through meaningful relationships, authentic experiences and opportunities to connect with the world around them. Her dedication, kindness and enthusiasm inspire curiosity, confidence and a lifelong love of learning in the children she cares for.



AEDC DATA –SEEING THE AEDC IN YOUR OBSERVATIONS

Now that we have explored how intentional teaching can support children across the five AEDC domains, the next step is learning to recognise these areas of development in the everyday moments we observe. An observation does not need to focus on just one area of learning. A simple moment of play can tell us so much about a child's physical development, social skills, emotional maturity, thinking, language and communication — sometimes all at once!

Imagine a child notices that another child is upset because they cannot find their favourite toy. They ask what is wrong, help them look for it and suggest somewhere they haven't checked yet. In this one small interaction we can see **Social Competence** through cooperation and helping, **Emotional Maturity** through empathy, **Language and Cognitive Skills** through problem-solving, and **Communication Skills** and **General Knowledge** through conversation and sharing ideas. Looking at observations through the AEDC domains can help us notice just how much learning is happening within ordinary moments and can also highlight areas where a child may benefit from further opportunities or support.

This doesn't mean adding an AEDC checklist to every observation! Instead, use the data as another lens when reflecting on what you see. What strengths are emerging? What skills are developing? Is there an area you haven't seen very often? Most importantly — what could you do next to support or extend the child's learning? Reflect on:

- When you look back at a recent observation, which of the five AEDC domains can you see within it?
- Are there particular domains that appear frequently in your observations, and others you notice less often?
- What does the observation tell you about the child's strengths, and where might there be an opportunity to provide further support or extension?

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

TECHNOLOGY THAT SUPPORTS CREATIVITY

Amongst all the talk and concern about children accessing devices and the internet, there is a range of products available that children can use to develop IT skills and be creative without going near the web and these are fabulous investments for school age children.

3D Print Pens are the same concept as a 3D printing machine except it looks like a hot glue gun. Filaments are used instead of a glue stick, and the children can create 3D artwork. A fabulous introduction to 3D printing without the price tag. [My Sensory Space Australia](#) is an Aussie site to check out that sells them and there is bound to be a few other sites.



What about a projector to enlarge pictures so they can be transferred onto paper or a canvas. Again, using technology with no need to google. You can even purchase paint pens from Crayola – this is a rechargeable device, you insert a texta into the allocated space and the ink becomes spray. By doing some research you can invest in reasonably priced tools that school age children will line up to use!! Sits nicely in Outcome 5 of the EYLF – Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media AND Children use technologies and media to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking.

EDUCATOR TIP



Colleen in Busselton wanted us to share with you a strategy used to keep her emergency contacts book up to date. Colleen finds the growth in children is huge in the first few years, so Colleen sets a reminder to check the children's photos every 3 months and update them where needed. If an accident occurred and Colleen wasn't conscious, emergency services could easily identify and support her children in care until parents arrived. We always think it will never happen, but you never know, doing everything to keep children safe is what we are all about. Thanks, Colleen, for sharing your processes 😊.



WELLBEING:

R U OK? – Let's Not Wait Until the Day

Thursday 10th September is R U OK? Day, but the important message is that checking in with the people around us shouldn't be limited to one day.

So much of your time caring for children, supporting families and creating safe, nurturing environments. It is just as important that we remember to check in with ourselves and each other.

R U OK? encourages us to Ask R U OK? Any Day. Life's ups and downs happen every day, and sometimes a simple conversation can help someone feel connected, supported and cared for. You might notice that a child seems quieter than usual, a friend doesn't seem themselves, or someone you know is finding things a little harder than normal. Trust your instinct and check in.

A simple "Are you OK?" can be the beginning of an important conversation.

The four steps:

ASK – Start with a genuine question and let them know you have noticed something.

LISTEN – Give them your time and listen without judgement.

ENCOURAGE ACTION – If they are struggling, encourage them to consider what support might help.

CHECK IN – Follow up with them later and show that you genuinely care.

Bring wellbeing into everyday practice, there are also wonderful ways to explore connection, emotions, kindness and relationships with children. R U OK? website has free Early Education resources including activities focused on kindness, friendship, recognising kind behaviours, emotions and emotional regulation.

These can be a great starting point for conversations and experiences that build children's emotional literacy and sense of belonging throughout the year.

WORD OF THE DAY

Last month we explored the Principles of the Early Years Learning framework, but how do we take those beliefs and actually put them into action?

Practices – This is where the Practices come in. The Practices describe the approaches Educators use to promote children's learning, development and wellbeing. In Family Day Care, they can be seen in the way you respond to children's ideas and interests, intentionally extend their learning, create environments that invite exploration, recognise culture and identity, support transitions and assess children's learning over time. They remind us that quality practice isn't simply about planning activities — it is about being responsive, thoughtful and purposeful in the decisions we make throughout the day. Many of these Practices happen so naturally in Family Day Care that we may not even recognise them for what they are. Understanding the Practices helps us put professional language around what we already do, while also encouraging us to question, reflect and continue to grow. Over the coming months, we'll unpack each of the EYLF Practices and explore what they really look like in everyday Family Day Care.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Bugs and Bare Feet www.bugsandbarefeet.com is a family-owned consulting business for the education and care sector in WA. They offer a wide range of online learning opportunities that are inexpensive and relevant to FDC. Bugs and bare feet offer back to basics PD that offers information in a practical and easy to understand way.

With the new requirement to complete 8hrs of professional development per year, Bugs and Bare Feet are offering you an opportunity to upskill easily. You can choose your course and get it done in your pj's, can't get any better than that!!

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PLAYGROUP

Many thanks to Deaney in Busselton for offering her large veranda for playgroup last week. The weather played nice but if it did change, we were ready for it!

Loose parts were a favourite again and across the morning a cubby was built, patterns made with loose parts and rainbow sticks created with sticks from the bush and coloured wool. The younger children were quite



mesmerised by the process of winding wool around a stick and then they moved to just exploring the wool. Who would have thought something so simple would keep children sitting on a mat in a contemplative state for so long. After my visit to REMIDA recently, we have a few more treasures to add to our loose parts including a car steering wheel, amazing dark blue glazed tiles, heaps of fabric, a myriad of smaller loose parts that will allow children to tinker and manipulate, wood, recycled CD's and much more. The steering wheel was my favourite find and I couldn't resist including a photo, can't wait to see what the children think and how they use it. If you are interested in joining REMIDA, jump onto their website and have a look www.remidawa.com once you join

you can visit as often as you like. They are located at 1 Prospect Place in West Perth.

SPECIAL EVENTS COMING UP IN SEPTEMBER

September is filled with opportunities to explore wellbeing, literacy, culture, safety, the environment and community with children.

-  1–30 September – Save the Koala Month
-  1–7 September – Asthma Week
-  2 September – Early Childhood Educators' Day
-  3 September – Indigenous Literacy Day
-  6 September – Father's Day
-  7–13 September – Child Protection Week
-  8 September – International Literacy Day
-  10 September – R U OK? Day
-  19 September – International Talk Like a Pirate Day
-  22 September – World Car Free Day
-  26 September – World Maritime Day

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

ADMIN TEAM - Sandra & Caitlin: 0431 449 567 (Mon – Fri); **ESO SOUTH - Joy:** 0429 030 362 (Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri); **ESO SOUTH - Jo C:** 0477 029 531 (Mon - Thurs); **ESO NORTH - Lea:** 0477 029 228 (Mon, Tue, Thurs & Fri); **ESO NORTH - Brenda:** 0494 656 801 (Mon -Wed) ; **MANAGER - Jo G:** 0477 029 132 (Mon – Fri)

To ensure that we respond to your emails promptly please send your queries to: info@naturealliancefdc.com.au

"The most wasted of days is one without laughter" – E.E. Cummings

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