

## FEBRUARY 2026

We hope that February has been kind to you as it is a month that always seems to find its rhythm quickly! The year is well underway, routines are settling, and the real work of nurturing, guiding and growing alongside children is in full swing. This is a good time to check in with yourself and your practice. What's flowing well? Where might you refine a system, strengthen a conversation, or lean into something new? Small, intentional adjustments now can make the months ahead feel smoother and more sustainable. Family Day Care is built on professionalism, independence and heart. You each run your own business, shape your own environment, and create deeply meaningful learning experiences every day. This month's newsletter brings important updates, reflective prompts, practical reminders, and inspiring stories from across our service — all designed to support you in running strong, confident, high-quality programs.

### FAREWELL & WELCOME

This month we say goodbye to Talissa Meehan in Albany and Jess O'Connor in Kalgoorlie! After one year at Nature Alliance Talissa will be putting her day care toys away and bringing out newborn baby gear for a while! Talissa, we wish you all the best for the birth of your baby and hope that we can welcome you back to Family Day Care when your new little family unit is settled. Jess has been an Educator with Nature Alliance for 10 years and has made the big move from Kalgoorlie to Perth. We are excited to have you closer to us, but sad that you will no longer be an Educator. You made a significant contribution to the Sector, and it has been wonderful watching so many children grow up in your service. Thank you both for all the hard work and dedication that you put into your businesses and for making our visits warm and welcoming!

We would also like to welcome Eva Lewis from [Gidge's Little Learners FDC](#) in Gidgegannup and Laura Smith from [Niddups Early Education](#) in Capel. We look forward to visiting your services and being a part of the adventures that you and the children will be undertaking!

### ADMIN TEAM UPDATE

We are so excited to welcome Caitlin to the Admin team!! She has been with us for two weeks and already feels like part of the furniture! Caitlin has experience in early childhood and is keen to learn more about Family Day Care! Introducing yourselves to Caitlin when you chat on the phone will be awesome, it might take a while to piece the whole structure together, but we have no doubt that with the supportive guidance from Sandra and the information you share, she will be an Admin superstar before we know it! Welcome to the Nature Alliance Family Caitlin, we are very excited to have you on board and can assure you that you will feel like a member of our family in no time!! Caitlin will be working from Monday to Wednesday between 09:00 AM and 16:30 PM.



### HAVE YOU REGISTERED ON THE GECKO PLATFORM YET?

From the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2026, mandatory National Child Safety training will be available on Geckko. The training is free and online. All Educators MUST complete this training as part of the new National Child Safety reforms that have come in. As yet, we are not sure how long you will have to complete the training, but it has been confirmed that it will be available from 27<sup>th</sup> Feb. To access and complete the training, you must have an individual Geckko account, if you haven't yet, please register for [Geckko](#).

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## CHANGES TO REGISTRATION OF A VOLUNTEER IN YOUR SERVICE

As of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026, we will be implementing a non-refundable \$55-00 registration fee for the setting up of Volunteers for your service. Registering Volunteers takes up a significant amount of time in the office and it does impact on the service when time is invested and then the Volunteer doesn't start. Please ensure that both you and your Volunteer are committed to the process before applying.

## POLICIES BEING UPDATED

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

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

## AEDC 2024 FOCUS: EMOTIONAL MATURITY

The fourth [AEDC domain](#), *Language and Cognitive Skills*, focuses on the foundational skills children use for thinking and learning. It includes early literacy and numeracy, memory, concentration, problem-solving, and an interest in books and learning experiences. This domain looks at a child's ability to recognise letters and numbers, understand basic concepts, follow instructions, and engage in purposeful learning activities.

AEDC data shows that some children are vulnerable in this area, often when they have had fewer opportunities to experience rich language, early mathematical concepts, and thinking-based play in meaningful ways. In Family Day Care, educators naturally support this development through conversations, storytelling, singing, counting, sorting, cooking, exploring nature, and encouraging children to ask questions and share their ideas. When children are provided with hands-on experiences, gentle guidance, and encouragement to think and explore, they develop confidence in their ability to learn. These everyday moments build strong foundations for a successful and positive transition to school.

**Reflect on:** *How do you intentionally create opportunities for children to explore early literacy and numeracy concepts during everyday routines and play? In what ways do you encourage children to think, question, and problem solve rather than providing answers? How do you support children to concentrate, follow instructions and stay engaged in experiences that extend their learning? How do you recognise and respond when a child may need additional support to build confidence in their learning abilities?*

You can explore AEDC data for your local community at the [AEDC Community Data Explorer](#). By viewing results for your area, you can gain valuable insight into children's developmental strengths and challenges and reflect on how your own program contributes to children's readiness and wellbeing in this domain.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Following on from last month's update about professional development and the new requirement for a minimum of 8 hours of PD per year, we wanted to share an upcoming opportunity that may support you in getting started. The [Family Partnership Practice Model](#) for Early Learning Service Educators from [Emerging Minds Learning](#) (totally free and has assessment at the end of modules) and it is Australian based. They have lots of other courses available online as well, especially around mental health and well-being.

## NURSERY NOOK COACHING & CONSULTANCY

A big thank you to Madi for sharing a Facebook group she follows [Nursery Nook Coaching & Consultancy](#). Madi shared a photo of one of her spaces with Nursery Nook to receive feedback, and it was lovely to see the thoughtful and practical suggestions provided (you can see the feedback shared [here](#)). Nursery Nook is led by James and Mel who are specialists in Early Years coaching and consultancy based in the UK. Thanks again, Madi, for sharing this with us, feel free to explore Nursery Nook on Facebook for inspiration, reflection, and fresh ideas.



### **WONDERFOLD 4-SEATER ELITE WAGON**

Talissa in Albany is currently selling her [WonderFold 4 Seater Elite Wagon](#). These wagons are a fabulous resource making it so much easier to get out and explore the community. Perfect for excursions, walks, and everyday adventures. If you have been thinking about investing in one for your service, this could be a great opportunity to pick one up.



### **ADMIN CHATS**

The time has come to see some of your much-loved children transition out of your care. With this in mind it is time to clean up your Harmony dashboard by sending in your [Cancellations of Care](#). Now that most families have holding fees in place it's nice to see these returned so that they can finalise care and move on. In the case that families have already left feel free just to email them a copy of the form and they can send it back to us directly if you prefer. Holding fees are usually refunding around 4 weeks after the final week of care. This allows final processing and fees collection to be finalised. Once we have refunded it, we then remove the child from your dashboard.

### **ENROLMENTS & FEES**

Being self-employed means you are responsible for running all aspects of your business. While some processes — such as enrolments and fee collection — are managed by Nature Alliance, this doesn't remove your role in overseeing them. You may not be sitting with families as they complete their enrolment, or physically collecting fees at the end of the week, but you absolutely can manage these processes proactively.

This might look like explaining the enrolment process to families, outlining what information they will need, ensuring they understand what a CRN is, how to access immunization records, and discussing medical conditions and what should be included on enrolment documents. Conversations about CCS, factors that may change their percentage, and clarifying processes around absences, holidays and terminating care are all opportunities to communicate your business practices clearly and professionally.

When notifying Admin that a family is starting, consider copying the family into the email and following up to ensure they have received their enrolment link. If they haven't appeared on your dashboard, check in to see whether they need assistance. Once enrolment is finalized, review the details on Harmony and familiarize yourself with the information so you can ask questions and ensure accuracy.

Similarly, follow up when timesheets are submitted, remind families when payments will be deducted, and if you are aware of financial pressures, communicate early with Admin before amounts escalate. With over 700 families across the service, the Admin team work hard to monitor processes — however, the smoother your own systems are, the stronger your business will be.

You may not process the paperwork or physically handle the fees, but they are still part of your responsibility. Take ownership where you can, be proud that you operate your own business, and think about what small systems you can put in place to prevent issues before they arise.

### **FOOD SAFETY FACTS FROM YOUR FRIENDLY FOOD SAFETY OFFICERS**

Food poisoning bacteria grow rapidly in food with a temperature between 5c and 60c and can reach dangerous levels within 2 hours. Bacteria need several conditions to grow & multiply - the correct temperature, food, moisture, time, PH, and oxygen. When reheating food do so rapidly, allowing food to heat slowly keeps it in the danger zone for longer for and aim for an internal temperature of 75 degrees. Reheating rapidly also kills any bacteria that may have grown during the initial cooling after cooking the food.



## WORD OF THE DAY

*Intentionality* – within the National Quality Framework, intentionality refers to the deliberate, informed choices Educators make to support children’s learning, wellbeing, and development. It moves practice beyond routine or habit, requiring Educators to think critically about *why* experiences, environments, and interactions are offered. In Family Day Care, intentionality can be seen in how Educators adapt routines to meet individual needs, respond thoughtfully to children’s cues, and extend learning through meaningful conversations and experiences. Being intentional means drawing on professional knowledge, observation, and reflection to guide decisions rather than simply following a plan. Over time, intentional practice strengthens professional judgement, supports deeper learning, and demonstrates a clear connection between theory, reflection, and practice.

## INTRODUCING EVERGREEN CHILD!

We are excited to share that Katrina has launched a new online shop, [Evergreen Child](#) .It’s full of unique materials and resources to support children’s learning, creativity, and play. From hands-on activities to thoughtfully designed learning tools, there’s plenty to discover.

## WELLBEING SPOTLIGHT

🌱 5-Minute Energy Reset 🌱 On those extra busy days your body can hold extra stress and extra energy. This simple [5-minute reset](#) uses gentle movement and breathing to help you shake off tension, clear your head, and feel more grounded and energised perfect for a quick pause. There is no right or wrong way to do it. Just move, breathe, and let your body reset. Even a few minutes can help shift your mindset and bring a calmer, more focused energy back into your day.

Bonus: This is something you can easily do with the children too. Gentle shaking, stretching and deep breaths are great for helping regulation, release wiggles, and transition into the next part of the day.

## CHILD PROTECTION AND ONLINE SAFETY

Child protection and online safety are inseparable. With many children spending hours on screens, the risk of them encountering unsuitable content is real. Although it’s rare for children in care to be online during Family Day Care , a quick chat about safe internet habits can make a big difference.

Below is a trusted website packed with online-safety tips and body-safety resources—feel free to share it with families.

<https://www.childsafe.org.au/help-for-families/e-safety-online/>

## PLAYGROUP PAUSE



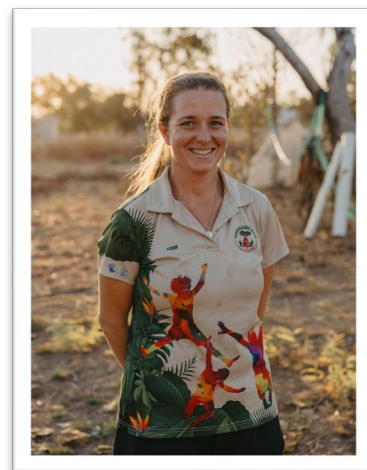
Children, at some stage, will develop an interest if not a passion for bugs. The bug hunts, the magnifying glasses and the books about bugs feed their curiosity. So why not go one step further a build a bug hotel so those fascinating critters will set up camp and stay a little bit longer. Each child could make one or you could make it a group project. You don’t need much, keep it simple and use some recycled cardboard boxes, I would use ones made from thick, strong cardboard. Collect pinecones, moss, pinecone needles, small sticks, cardboard tubes and whatever else the children feel the bugs would like to make a home in and pack it all into the box. Find a space out of the weather (otherwise the box will get soggy) and then wait. Hopefully in time, you will see bugs making their way in. If you want

to make a more permanent one build a wooden box made from light wood, now you are adding tool skills to the children’s learning and then the hotel will last longer.



## GREETINGS FROM BEAUTIFUL KUNUNURRA

Lizzie Stanger is our northernmost star located in the Kimberley Region. Kununurra Bush Kindergarten Family Day Care has been registered with Nature Alliance since 2018 and has been the perfect excuse for our ESO's to visit this beautiful part of the world! Lizzie, who is arguably one of our most adventurous Educators, has been leading a truly unique Family Day Care program that blends child-led learning, outdoor exploration and a strong sense of community. Her setting is rich with bush play, den building, veggie gardening, chicken care and regular local excursions (yes, Emma Gorge features!!). What stands out most about Lizzie's practice is her deep belief in resilience, consistent relationships and genuine child voice. Children are involved in decisions about their day – from menus to excursions – and are supported to take age-appropriate risks, connect with community, and build wellbeing through time in nature. If you ever want to swap ideas about outdoor programs, she's a wonderful colleague to connect with (and possibly a good excuse for you to visit Kununurra too 😊).



## NATIONAL SIMULTANEOUS STORYTIME – 27<sup>th</sup> MAY 2026 AT 12PM AEST



Get ready to join in on [National Simultaneous Storytime](#) on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May at 12 PM AEST! There's something pretty special about knowing children all across Australia are turning the same pages at the exact same time — and our little Family Day Care spaces are right there in the mix.

This year's featured book is *Luna Roo, the Kangaroo Baller* by Adam Jackson & Adrian Lloyd, and illustrated by Jake Minton. Because last year's book was loved so much, we have bought a copy for every Educator again! We will be handing them out during visits over the next few months, so keep an eye out! We can't wait to hear (and see!) how you bring Luna Roo to life in your service 🦘🏆.

## STAFF ON LEAVE

As most of you are aware, Joy will be going on much deserved long service leave! This means that Jo Chapman will be flying solo from March until June. Please ensure that any reminders, risk assessments, parent authorisations, etc are all send in ahead of time and before they expire. While we do have many processes put in place to remind you about reminders, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that they are kept up to date. If you are unable to get hold of Jo, please text or email her and if she is unable to respond you are welcome to reach out to the office or to Jo Georgiou. Joy, have the best time and make sure that you totally relax and that you come back to us with lots of stories about the adventures you went on.

## 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:** 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). To ensure that we respond to your emails promptly please send your queries to: [info@naturealliancefdc.com.au](mailto:info@naturealliancefdc.com.au)

"Most of your stress comes from the way you respond, not the way life is.  
Adjust your attitude and all that extra stress is gone!" – Anon

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