NATURE ALLIANCE FAMILY DAY CARE NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026

The shortest day of the year now behind us and July brings a sense of renewed energy as we continue through Makuru. The crisp winter air, foggy mornings and fresh, rainy days create wonderful opportunities for children to experience the season in all its richness. Pulling on coats and gumboots to splash through puddles, collecting fallen leaves and natural treasures, spotting rainbows after a shower, or enjoying the warmth of a shared story and hot meal afterwards are all part of the magic of winter. This season reminds us that some of the most memorable moments are found in simple adventures, whatever the weather.

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS ARE OVER…YOU MADE IT!

Another school holiday period is done, and if you're anything like most Family Day Care educators, you've probably breathed a little sigh of relief. The routines return, the pace settles, and suddenly there's a moment to pause before the next busy season arrives.

Rather than rushing straight into business as usual, take a few minutes to reflect. The holidays often bring different children, changing routines, unexpected challenges and different successes. Taking a few moments to reflect can strengthen your practice, build your confidence as an Educator and, yes... it will even tick a few boxes during Assessment & Rating. 😉

Here are a few questions to get you started:

- What brought the children the most joy these holidays? Why do you think that was?
- Did any child's interests surprise you or develop in an unexpected way?
- Was there a moment that challenged you? Looking back, would you respond differently now?
- How did the holiday routine support (or disrupt) children's wellbeing?
- What conversations or interactions with children made you stop and think?
- Did you discover a new activity, resource or approach that you would like to continue using?
- How were children's voices reflected in your program over the holidays?

The final question to wrap it all up, *"How has this holiday period changed the way you think about your practice?"* This is about recognising how your experiences have influenced your thinking and how they might shape what you do next. This is where everyday experiences become opportunities to grow, improve and become an even more intentional Educator.

MANDATORY REPORTING – KNOWING YOUR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Protecting children is at the heart of everything we do, and while we encourage Educators to report any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, it's important to understand what Mandatory Reporting means in Western Australia. If you form a reasonable belief that a child has been, is being, or is likely to be sexually abused, you have a **legal obligation to make a report**. You do not need proof or evidence—your role is not to investigate, but to report your concerns so the appropriate authorities can respond.

If you're ever unsure about your responsibilities, please take the time to read the information on the Mandatory Reporting website, and remember that the Nature Alliance team is always here to support you if you need guidance. You may also consider reviewing the FAQ on the Nature Alliance website.

If you're ever unsure, please reach out. The Nature Alliance team is here to support you, and the Mandatory Reporting website is also an excellent source of guidance.

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TALKING MONEY WITH FAMILES

Conversations about fees aren't always easy, but clear communication from the beginning helps avoid misunderstandings later.

Consider providing families with a standalone fee schedule document during their initial enquiry and at least 2 weeks prior to any changes. Keeping fees separate from your Parent Handbook also makes updates much easier and allows families to acknowledge they've received the information without replacing the entire handbook each time something changes.

BOOKED HOURS AND EARLY PICK UPS

If you close early for any reason, remember to let the Admin Team know so that the timesheets for that day can be adjusted. Educators cannot charge their standard day fees if they close their service early. It is essential to remember that you can only charge for care that you can provide. Chat to the Admin team if you need guidance or clarification.

MEET YOUR FIRST EDUCATIONAL LEADER - LEA

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?

To me, being an Educational Leader is about inspiring, supporting and empowering educators to be the very best they can be. It is about building trusting relationships where educators feel safe to ask questions, reflect on their practice and celebrate their successes, knowing they will be supported rather than judged.

Every educator brings unique strengths, experiences and talents, and my role is to recognise those strengths while helping them continue to develop.

My goal is to make documentation, programming and quality improvement achievable, giving educators more time to spend with the children in their care.

Above all, I believe an Educational Leader leads through relationships. By encouraging reflective practice, celebrating achievements, providing constructive guidance and being available when educators need support, I hope to inspire confidence and a genuine passion for continuous improvement.

FOOD SAFETY TIP

Safe food handling is an essential part of providing a healthy and safe environment for children. Effective food safety practices include thorough handwashing before food preparation and serving, cleaning and sanitizing food preparation surfaces and utensils, storing food at appropriate temperatures, checking use-by dates, and preventing cross-contamination between raw and ready-to-eat foods. Educators also need to be aware of children's individual dietary requirements and allergies, ensuring meals and snacks are prepared and served safely. By consistently following safe food handling procedures, educators minimize the risk of foodborne illness while modelling positive hygiene practices that help children develop lifelong healthy habits.

CHILD BODY SAFETY

The Daniel Morcombe Foundation provides personal child safety education to children and young people at no cost to prevent abuse and promote lifelong health and wellbeing.

Explore their website to find lots of amazing resources to teach children body safety.

Jelly Surprise is a simple introduction to understand body cues. Understanding these can help a child trust themselves and know if they are feeling safe or unsafe.

Jelly's surprise visit to the local playground creates a flurry of excitement and worry. Watch and listen as Hugo, Lola and Angus discover how their body cues help them recognise when they are in a safe or unsafe place.

Specifically designed for parents, caregivers and educators of children aged 0 to 6, the content of Jelly Surprise is evidence-informed, trauma-informed and age-appropriate. It teaches children to recognise and understand their body cues, feelings and emotions and helps them to **R**ecognise, **R**eact and **R**eport unsafe situations.

Jelly Surprise aligns to the Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0

You will also find a companion guide to assist with curriculum planning or sharing with families

HI FROM JURIEN BAY

When you visit Jazmine's Family Day Care in Jurien Bay, you can't help but feel at home. Set amongst the beautiful olive trees on her family's property, her environment reflects the calm, welcoming nature that she brings to her role every day. Jazmine is passionate about creating a space where children feel safe, nurtured and valued as individuals, believing that children learn best through play, positive relationships and the everyday experiences that surround them. Living in a small coastal community, she provides an important service for local families, offering quality early childhood education close to home. Every visit is filled with genuine conversation, warm smiles and children who clearly feel a strong sense of belonging - a lovely reflection of the caring environment she has created.

AEDC DATA –INTENTIONAL TEACHING – THE SMALL MOMENTS MATTER

Intentional teaching is often misunderstood as carefully planned activities or structured learning experiences. While these certainly have their place, intentional teaching is just as much about the everyday moments that naturally occur throughout the day. It is about being purposeful in our interactions with children—recognising opportunities to extend learning, encourage curiosity, introduce new language, and support children's thinking as experiences unfold. Often, the most meaningful learning happens during routines, conversations, play, and the unexpected moments that cannot be planned.

In Family Day Care, intentional teaching might look like asking one more question before offering an answer, encouraging a child to solve a problem independently, introducing new vocabulary during a nature walk, or helping children reflect on how they worked through a disagreement. These seemingly small interactions have a significant impact on children's development across all five AEDC domains. By being present, responsive, and intentional in the everyday moments, educators help children develop confidence, resilience, communication skills, and a genuine love of learning. It is often the smallest moments that leave the biggest impression.

Reflect on:

- How do you use everyday routines and spontaneous moments to extend children's learning and thinking?
- When was the last time you paused before providing an answer, giving a child the opportunity to think, problem-solve, or discover something for themselves?
- How do your conversations, questions, and interactions intentionally support children's development across the five AEDC domains?

You can explore AEDC data for your local community at the AEDC Community Data Explorer.

LOOSE PARTS – have you considered them?

We hear the terminology and we think about lots of random stuff taking up space and making it look messy BUT loose parts are actually wonderful, eclectic treasures that offer a world of imagination, experimentation and exploration to children. Einstein said Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world. How true is that!! When you give a child the tools to explore the possibilities are endless and loose parts are tools. Loose parts are not prefabricated items that in many ways are single use, they are the recycled boxes that become a dolls bed or a space helmet, a length of fabric that becomes a blanket for a teddy or a superhero cape or some lengths of wood and rope that becomes a raft. Loose parts play involves materials that can be moved, manipulated, constructed, rearranged, taken apart, put together, carried, combined, lined up, used alone and given a destiny that is determined by a child rather than an adult or a manufacturer. So, all the bits and pieces you have in your house and shed could open a world of wonder, flex those little minds and give them a real sense of ownership, direction and achievement.

WORD OF THE DAY

We have all heard about the Principles and Practices of the Early Years Learning Framework, but have you ever stopped to think about what they really mean and how they influence your everyday practice?

Principles – the Principles of the Early Years Learning Framework are the beliefs, values and understandings that underpin high-quality early childhood education. They guide the way Educators think about children, families, relationships and learning, influencing every decision they make throughout the day. In FDC, the Principles are woven naturally into practice. They can be seen in the trusting relationships built with children and families, the respect shown for each child's unique background, the value placed on play, and the ongoing reflection that helps Educators continually strengthen their practice. While they may not always be visible as a planned experience or documented activity, the principles shape the culture of your service and create the conditions in which children feel safe, secure, confident and capable learners. Over the coming months, we'll explore each of the EYLF Principles in more detail and reflect on what they look like in everyday Family Day Care.

WINTER WELLBEING: WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKPACK?

Imagine carrying a backpack with you each day. Inside are the things that matter most — your passion, your care for children, your commitment, your creativity, and the joy you bring to your work.

But sometimes, without realising it, we add extra weight to our backpack. Stress, worries, expectations, busy schedules, and things that are outside of our control can slowly make the load feel heavier.

Winter is a beautiful time to pause and check in with ourselves:

- 🌿 What can I let go of?
- 🌿 What support do I need?
- 🌿 What helps me feel refreshed and re-energised?

Taking care of your own wellbeing is not selfish — it is an important part of creating a calm, positive, and nurturing environment for children.

This winter, take a moment to acknowledge the amazing work you do, give yourself permission to pause, and remember that you do not have to carry everything alone.

💙 A lighter backpack creates space for more moments of connection, joy, and wellbeing.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Curiosity, Growth and Stepping Outside Our Comfort Zone

Sometimes the greatest learning happens when we are willing to try something new, explore the unknown, and step outside what feels familiar. We invite you to take a few minutes to watch this inspiring short video …

How to Become a Better Learner about two tigers and discover what happens when they step outside their comfort zone. It is a simple reminder that curiosity, courage, and a willingness to embrace new experiences can lead to unexpected growth and opportunities.
As educators, you create environments where children are encouraged to explore, investigate, take risks, and discover new possibilities. This video is a lovely opportunity to reflect on your own learning journeys and the moments where we have stepped outside our comfort zones.

EDUCATOR RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT: J&D SUBLIMATION & CREATIONS

Jess Renee Alvisse, an inspiring Australian creator who started J&D Sublimation & Creations in 2019 to carve out her own path while navigating a disability.
Jess handcrafts a beautiful range of resources and gifts that are perfect for family day care environments that can make fantastic tactile visual aids to spark children's imaginations during storytelling or open-ended play.

- **Custom Sublimation Items:** Ideal for personalized gifts, keepsake mugs, or branded pieces for your educator service.
- **3D & Resin Prints:** Visually engaging, unique physical models that can capture children's imaginations.
- **Aromatics:** A sensory selection of handmade candles, wax melts, and incense.

J & D
SUBLIMATION & CREATIONS

Supporting independent creators like Jess is a wonderful way to enrich your program while fostering community connections. Explore her unique range and support her dream of going nationwide by visiting the J&D Sublimation & Creations Store.

SPECIAL EVENTS COMING UP IN AUGUST

- **3rd–10th August – Dental Health Week**: Promote healthy teeth and good oral hygiene habits.
- **4th August – National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day**: Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culture, identity and connection to Country.
- **9th August – International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples**: Recognise Indigenous cultures and celebrate diversity, respect and belonging.
- **14th August – World Lizard Day**: Discover reptiles through nature play, books and local wildlife.
- **15th–23rd August – National Science Week** (Theme: *Seeds of Science*): Inspire curiosity through experiments, gardening and exploration.
- **22nd–28th August – Children's Book Week** (Theme: *Symphony of Stories*): Foster a love of reading with stories, dramatic play and creative experiences.
- **27th August – Red Nose Day**: Raise awareness of safe sleep and children's health and wellbeing.

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

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

"You wouldn't plant a seed and then dig it up every few minutes to see if it has grown. So why do you keep questioning yourself, your hard work and your decisions?" – Bhikshuni Thubten Chodron