

MARCH 2026

As March comes to an end, the year is finding its pace and many of you are settling into the rhythms of your days — balancing routines, relationships, and the ever-changing needs of the children in your care. This is often the point where we begin to notice what's working well and where we might need to adjust, reset or try something new. Take a moment to reflect on your environment, your systems, and your visibility within your community — especially if you're navigating vacancies or quieter days.

Family Day Care continues to be a unique and valuable offering within the early childhood sector, even as the landscape around us feels like it's crumbling! This month's newsletter brings practical reminders, reflective prompts, and shared ideas to support you — from marketing your service and strengthening professional practices, to inclusion, wellbeing, and everyday curriculum moments.

We hope this edition leaves you feeling supported, capable and inspired to keep showing up, adapting, and doing what you do best!

MARKETING YOUR FAMILY DAY CARE

2026 has been a bit of a struggle for a number of Educators. The childcare sector is taking a beating in the media, long day care centres are popping up left, right and centre and the rising costs of everything is just making it difficult for families to make ends meet! Educators who have never had vacancies are suddenly faced with a few empty spots. Marketing your business can be daunting, especially if you haven't had to do it for a while, so let's look at what your options are. Firstly, reflect on who your target market is and then find out where they 'hang out', both online and physically. Make your FDC visible in those circles, if you're online then post and share activity ideas, promote the benefits of FDC and comment on posts that are on pages you follow. Make yourself visible. You are an authority on your business and what you do, let potential families see that. If you are out in the local community, consider wearing a shirt or hat that identifies you as a FDC Educator, ask your children to wear branded hats or bibs or even think about branding for your car. Hang out at Story Time at the local library, chat to new mums share your knowledge.

Speak to your existing families, let them know that you have a rare vacancy and ask them to let their friends know if they are looking for care. By word of mouth is often a very effective way of filling up those empty spots. Displaying notices at the local library, Child Health Clinic, local coffee shop (or even leaving your business cards there) can also be just the prompt that a family may need.

Finally, there is always the option of paying for a bit of advertising online. Family Day Care Australia offers [marketing packages](#) that can be tailored for unique levels of promotional support. In the meantime, enjoy a slightly quieter day, take advantage of the lower numbers and make yourself visible in your community!

UPDATED POLICIES & TEMPLATES

The following policies have been updated. It has been updated on the website, emailed to you and will be distributed to you in the next month or two.

- [Policy 1.4](#) – Sleep & Rest

WHERE CHILDREN CAN BE CHILDREN



RESOURCE SHARE

Cassie in Bunbury has kindly shared a couple of links that she likes to access and watch with the children when they are [preparing to complete their evacuation drills](#). Once they have watched & listened Cassie continues conversations with the children and they then put their learning into practice. Cassie reminds the children that we use 000 rather than 911 by listening to the [emergency services song](#).

Cassie has found the children are more engaged in the drills and are able to tell their parents what they have learnt. Thank you, Cassie, for sharing these links with us 😊.

ADMIN CHATS- INCIDENT REPORTS

This Month I'd love to chat Incident Reports. You now have the option of completing these within Harmony, so they come direct to us. Incident reports, like most of our paperwork, are legal documents and are essential to support child safe practices. When you are completing these consider that in a worst-case scenario this document will be heavily scrutinised along with any relevant risk assessments. Fill in every section, tick every box and use professional terminology. Really reflect on the steps you would take going forward to minimise risk in future and record it. We register every incident report and store them for the required timeframes. ALL incident reports must be received by the service within 24 hours of the incident. In the case of a serious incident such as any incident that requires medical treatment or emergency services, we need to lodge these on ECRU's portal. So even outside of office hours you need to call or text our out of hours number so that we can get it through on time. The Educator and the family will then be contacted by an ESO and ECRU to ascertain if the incident was managed sufficiently. If you want to refresh your knowledge within the [REGS](#) scroll to page 77 where you'll find Regulation 85 Incidents, injury, illness and Trauma.

AEDC 2024 FOCUS: COMMUNICATION SKILLS & GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

The fifth & final [AEDC domain](#), *Communication Skills & General Knowledge*, focuses on how children use language to communicate effectively and make sense of the world around them. It includes a child's ability to understand and use spoken language, express their needs and ideas clearly, take part in conversations, tell stories, and show an awareness of the people, places, and experiences in their everyday world. This domain also reflects a child's confidence in communicating within familiar and unfamiliar situations.

AEDC data shows that some children are vulnerable in this area, often when they have had fewer opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations, ask questions, share ideas, and build knowledge through real-life experiences. In Family Day Care, educators naturally support this development through rich conversations, storytelling, songs, imaginative play, excursions, shared meals, and everyday experiences that invite curiosity and communication. When children are encouraged to express themselves, listen to others, and explore the world around them, they develop confidence in their communication skills and a stronger understanding of how they belong and participate in the world. These everyday moments build strong foundations for a successful and positive transition to school.

Reflect on: How do you create opportunities for children to express their thoughts, ideas, and needs during everyday routines and play? In what ways do you support children to engage in meaningful conversations, storytelling, and shared experiences with others? How do you encourage curiosity and help children make connections between their experiences and the world around them? How do you recognise and respond when a child may need additional support to build confidence in their communication skills?

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

Lisa Seia shared a thought-provoking blog post titled, '[Does wearing a uniform equate to being a professional?](#)' Not only does this post make you consider what a 'professional' person looks like in Early Childhood and Education, but it also made us reflect on why we wear what we do. Lisa loves wearing bright clothes and the children especially love her pink flowy tulle type long skirt! Jo G used to wear a uniform because it signalled to her 3-year-old son that it was 'day care time' and that day care rules now apply and it was also a great way to market her FDC when she was out and about in the community! This article encourages you to reflect on your own practices and to see if you want to make any changes. Lisa also thought that Educators may find the website interesting as [Inspired EC](#) offer lots of great, affordable webinars that can boost your Professional Development hours!

INCLUSION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Have you thought about what *Inclusion* looks like in your Family Day Care? Inclusion is more than just having a child attend your service, simply having resources representing inclusion does not ensure inclusive practices. Inclusion is not about changing a child so that they fit into your environment. It's about changing what you do so that all children can participate. The Department of Education has shared some information and resources to help you build a culture of inclusion at your Service. Click [here](#) to access the Department's website. This might be the perfect opportunity for you to reflect on your practices, chat to your colleagues, brainstorm with your ESO and don't forget to record this Critical Reflection 😊.

FOOD SAFETY FACTS FROM YOUR FRIENDLY FOOD SAFETY OFFICERS

Handwashing is one of the easiest ways to keep children and educators healthy! As an educator, you play an important role in making sure your hands and the children's hands are clean before preparing or eating food. Before meals, remember to wash your hands and guide children to do the same. This helps reduce the spread of germs and models positive hygiene habits for children.

Key handwashing steps:

- ✓ Wash hands with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds
- ✓ Wash hands before preparing or serving food
- ✓ Support children to wash their hands before sitting down to eat
- ✓ Show children how to wash between fingers, backs of hands, and thumbs
- ✓ Dry hands thoroughly using a clean towel or paper towel

Make handwashing fun!

🎵 Sing a simple handwashing song while washing, for example:

"Wash, wash, wash your hands,
Bubbles big and small,
Front and back and in between,
Clean hands for us all!"

Do you have a favourite handwashing song or rhyme? We would love for you to share it! Songs and rhymes make handwashing enjoyable and help children remember to do it well.

LITERACY - THE READING CHALLENGE!

For the past 5 years, Jane and the children in her care have taken part in the local FREE school-age Reading Challenge at the library. 🌟 This year, one of the children in Jane's care earned the most points and the story shared in the local paper. What an amazing achievement! <https://www.busselton.wa.gov.au/news/young-readers-wrap-up-summer-with-monster-mayhem-at-city-of-busselton-libraries/1011?c=17> The library have some wonderful events and activities we encourage you to check them out.



WORD OF THE DAY

Curriculum – within the National Quality Framework, curriculum refers to all the interactions, experiences, routines, events, planned and unplanned opportunities that occur in a child’s learning environment and are designed to foster children’s learning and development. It is much more than craft activities or planned experiences — it includes the everyday moments, relationships, conversations, routines, and environments that shape how children learn and make sense of the world. In Family Day Care, curriculum is often woven naturally through play, shared meals, outdoor exploration, problem-solving, rest times, transitions, and the spontaneous interests children bring into the day. A strong curriculum is responsive, intentional, and based on each child’s strengths, needs, culture, and stage of development. When Educators begin to view the whole day as curriculum, it strengthens reflective practice, deepens professional understanding, and highlights the rich learning that happens in everyday Family Day Care settings.

WELLBEING SPOTLIGHT

Taking care of yourself is just as important as taking care of the children in your care. Setting clear boundaries helps protect your time, energy, and wellbeing and allows you to make the greatest impact in your role.

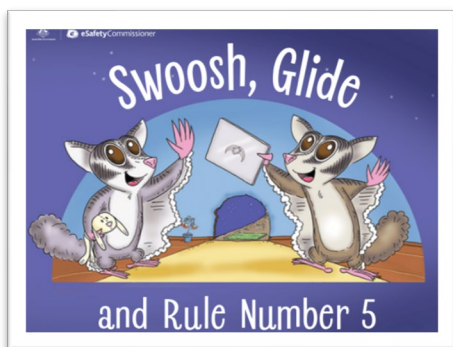
Take a moment to watch this [6-minute microlearning video with Dr Rebecca Ray](#).

Rebecca shares practical tips on how to:

- Protect your time and energy
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Preventing burnout and support long-term wellbeing

Investing in your own wellbeing benefits both you and the children you support, it’s a small step that makes a big difference.

CHILD PROTECTION AND ONLINE SAFETY – SWOOSH, GLIDE & RULE NUMBER 5



This delightful book was developed by the Australian eSafety Commissioner to help parents, carers and Educators start important conversations about online safety with young children. Meet Swoosh & Glide, two curious native sugar glider possums who are exploring the online world, just like our little ones do! Together with the catchy [My Family Rules song](#), this resource encourages children to be safe, be kind, ask for help and make smart choices when they are online. It’s a fun and gentle way to “start the chat” about digital safety at home or in care! [Read](#) the book, [Watch](#) the video, or [Listen](#) to the story together and see what conversations unfold!

PLAYGROUP PAUSE

We talk about mindfulness all the time and did you know the simple experience of painting rocks can give just that? Painting rocks allows the children to slow down, be thoughtful about what they are doing, it may encourage them to chat, or they may prefer to sit quietly and work. They manipulate paint and brush, they choose their colors and design, they focus and work in a small space. Imagine how their hearts and minds would slow down, imagine how much yours would too. Choose large smooth rocks that can’t be swallowed then younger children can also participate without you worrying and counting rocks every 2 minutes. I love the large black ones from bunnings you can buy in a bag. Give them a good wash and let them dry really well first. Once painted, allow the paint to dry well and then to keep the colors vibrant, seal with modge podge or PVA glue. Once dry the children could take them home, place them in their FDC garden or gift to neighbors in the



street. Imagine a basket from the op shop filled with these beautiful rocks for the children to access and use in their play. What else could be painted? Shells, bark, sticks, pinecones – who needs paper!! If you do make any with the children, we would love to see the end results 😊

HI FROM COWARAMUP



Emily-Rose has been with us for 6 months and is a creative and passionate educator who brings warmth, imagination and genuine care into every part of her program. Emily thoughtfully designs learning experiences that invite children to explore, create and express themselves in ways that feel meaningful and joyful. Emily's practice reflects a strong commitment to child-led learning, as she carefully listens to children's ideas and interests and uses these as the foundation for rich, engaging experiences. Emily's bright and bubbly nature is infectious, and her love of nature and sustainability is evident. We are excited to be on Emily's FDC journey with her, and we can't wait to see the adventures Emily and the children will have together.

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

"If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way." - Martin Luther King Jr

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