OCTOBER 2026

November is around the corner and somehow the end of the year is already starting to appera on the horizon!! This month's newsletter really reflects what makes our Family Day Care community so special – Educators sharing ideas, useful resources, favourite recipes and things they have discovered along the way. Hopefully you will find something that makes your work a little easier, sparks a new idea or simply reminds you that you are part of a much bigger network of people learning from and supporting one another!

SPOT CHECKS

As part of the Education and Care Regulatory Unit's due diligence they occasionally pop by Family Day Care premises to undertake spot checks. While a lot of what they will be checking will be visible in the environment sometimes, they may request documentation that is stored in a way that could compromise your supervision practices. You may want to reflect on how you can provide documents while still maintaining sound supervision. Documents such as enrolments, risk assessments and parent authorisations are stored in our secure servers so feel free to collate a list of their requests and advise that you will have your service email the documents within 24 hrs.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH – DELICIOUS BANANA BREAD



Casey Coomer came up with a fantastic idea for the newsletter! She thought it would be fun to share Educator's favourite recipes every month! While we did try put a recipe book together, we unfortunately only received enough recipes to put together a pamphlet! So, rather than let them go to waste in the dusty archives, Casey's suggestion has brought them back to life!!! To start us off on our culinary journey, we asked Casey to share her favourite! Casey says this is, "An oldy (October 2003 😲) but a goody! If I had a dollar for each person I have sent this to over the years!!! You can cut down the sugar and the kids still love it"! Rather than make the newsletter another page longer, we decided that it would be a great idea to upload the recipes every month onto our website, all you have to do is log onto the platform, go to Educator Resources and before you know it you will have an online 'recipe book' to draw inspiration from! This wonderful recipe must be credited to Margaret Johnson! Thank you for sharing Casey!

THRIVING KIDS – A LITTLE SUPPORT CAN GO A LONG WAY

A big thank you to Sam for sharing some information she recently came across about the new *Thriving Kids* program. With her previous experience working in inclusive practices and following many conversations over the years with families, Sam thought this may be a useful resource for Educators to be aware of.

Thriving Kids is being introduced to provide children and families with easier access to information, advice and support when they have questions or concerns about their child's development. As Sam pointed out, families can sometimes already be feeling quite overwhelmed by the time they start looking for help. Knowing that there are free, accessible places they can turn to may be the little bit of encouragement they need to take that first step and reach out.

The program is still in its very early stages, so it may not yet have all the answers or supports available. However, it is certainly something worth keeping on our radar, particularly for Educators supporting children and families who may benefit from some additional guidance or support.



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This is exactly the kind of sharing that can be so valuable in Family Day Care — one Educator comes across something useful, shares it with the wider network, and suddenly we all have another resource tucked away for when a family might need it. You can read more about the first phase of *Thriving Kids* here.

NEW CANCELLATION OF CARE ONLINE FORM

You may have recently gone looking on the website for a Cancellation of Care Form. This form no longer exists. We are now sending families a quick and easy mobile friendly form that they can complete and return to us immediately. It also includes a very short optional survey.

- Email or text us the Child's full name and we can take care of the rest
- If the family contacts us, we send the from to them and let the Educator know.

On that note if you have any children on your dashboard that are no longer in care let us know and we can help you get your dashboard tidied up for the new year 🎉

LEVY INCREASE

Please be advised that the Educator Levy will increase by 5 cents from 3 January 2027. This is in line with increased operating costs. We appreciate your understanding and continued support as we work to maintain the quality of support and services provided to Educators.

UPDATED TERMS OF TRADE

We have recently updated our Terms of Trade to reflect changes in language, privacy and redPAY fees. Make yourself familiar with the updates so that you can support families with their obligations.

CHILD PROTECTION / ONLINE SAFETY

Learning About Boundaries Together

Helping children understand personal boundaries starts with everyday conversations.

The Boundaries Song by Hopscotch Songs is a fun way to help children learn that their body belongs to them, that it's okay to say no when something feels uncomfortable, and that we should respect other people's feelings and personal space.

You can support this learning at home by asking your child before giving hugs or kisses, encouraging them to use their voice, and reminding them that it's important to listen when someone says no. Small, everyday moments can help children develop confidence, kindness and respect for themselves and others.

Why not listen to the song together and start a conversation about what boundaries mean?

PLAY. MOVE. EXPLORE! PHYSICAL LITERACY WEEK 2026

2nd–8th November 2026

If you are keen to get involved in Physical Literacy Week! KIDDO at The University of Western Australia, have a free initiative. There are fun, simple activities for babies, toddlers and children aged 2–5 years to build movement skills, confidence and social connections. Free resources, daily challenges and activities to share with families are available, with minimal equipment needed.

Register your service for free and join in the fun! You don't need to be a KIDDO member to participate.

END OF YEAR GET TOGETHERS!

It's hard to believe we're already talking about the end of the year! Before everyone gets caught up in the craziness of the Christmas season, we'd love the opportunity to get together, have a laugh, catch up and celebrate another year with our wonderful Educators. This year, we're organising a few gatherings in different regions, including Perth, the South West, Geraldton and Albany. You're more than welcome to attend whichever gathering suits you, or even more than one! Keep an eye on your inbox, as we'll be sending out an invitation shortly with all the details and a link to RSVP. We really hope you'll be able to join us. It's always lovely to spend time together outside of our usual visits and meetings!



MEET YOUR NEXT EDUCATIONAL LEADER – JO GEORGIOU

Having started my own journey in Family Day Care as an Educator, I think I will always have a soft spot for the person on the other side of the conversation. I remember what it was like to have someone coming into *my* environment, looking at *my* program and asking questions about *my* practice. That experience has shaped the kind of Educational Leader I want to be.

For me, Educational Leadership isn't about having all the answers. In fact, sometimes the best thing I can do is not give you an answer at all! I'd much rather listen, ask questions and help you work through your own thinking. I want you to understand *why* you do what you do and feel confident in the decisions you make, rather than doing something simply because someone from the office told you to.



Relationships are incredibly important to me. I want our Educators to feel safe enough to say, *"I don't understand this," "This isn't working," "I need help,"* or even *"I don't agree with you."* Those are often the conversations where the best reflection happens. There should never be any shame in asking a question or admitting that you're unsure.

One of my favourite parts of this role is hearing about what is happening in your FDC. I love the little stories – the child who has developed a completely unexpected interest, an experience that took off in a direction you hadn't planned, something you've tried that worked brilliantly...or something that was an absolute disaster! All of it gives us something to talk about, reflect on and learn from.

I also don't believe there is one 'right' way to be a great Family Day Care Educator. That's one of the things I love most about FDC. Every Educator brings their own personality, culture, experiences, strengths and interests into their environment. My role isn't to make everyone look the same. It's to help you recognise the strengths you already have, keep questioning and growing, and find ways to make your practice meaningful for the children and families you care for.

After all these years in Family Day Care, I'm still learning too. I learn from our team, I learn from research and professional development, and very often, I learn from you. That's probably what continues to inspire me most about being an Educational Leader – none of us ever really finishes learning.

HI FROM JESSICA JOVANOVIC IN ALBANY

Jess has recently returned to our Family Day Care family after taking a break to travel and spend quality time with her family. She brings a bubbly, energetic and warm presence to her role, along with a genuine passion for children, their learning and their development. Jess is committed to building a strong, connected community that values and supports families. She recognises the important role parents play in their children's lives, acknowledges the dedication and effort they contribute, and strives to empower them with the confidence and support they need to thrive. Jess embraces each child as a unique individual, recognising their strengths, interests and learning needs. She is dedicated to providing a nurturing and supportive environment where children feel valued, are encouraged to explore their interests, and are guided and supported as they grow, learn and develop at their own pace.



WORD OF THE DAY

Planning – when we hear the word planning, it can be easy to picture a weekly program filled with activities decided in advance. In early childhood education, planning is much broader than deciding what children are going to do. Planning is the thinking and decision-making that happens when Educators use what they know about children to consider what might come next. It can be informed by observations, children's interests and ideas, conversations with families, developmental knowledge, reflection, community events, the environment, or something that happened unexpectedly during the day. In Family Day Care, planning might mean adding resources to extend an interest, changing the environment, revisiting an experience, introducing a new challenge, organising an outing, or simply deciding to step back and give children more time to explore an idea themselves. Good planning is not about filling every space on a program or knowing on Monday exactly what will happen on Friday. It should be flexible, responsive and able to change as children's interests, needs and learning change. The important question isn't "What activity can I plan?" but rather, "Based on what I know about these children, where could their learning go next?"

AEDC DATA – THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS

Throughout this AEDC series, we have explored the many ways educators can support children's development — through intentional teaching, observations, and the environments we create. Underpinning all of these, however, are relationships. Children are more likely to explore, communicate, take risks, manage challenges and engage in learning when they feel safe, known and valued. Strong, responsive relationships don't sit separately from the five AEDC domains; they help create the conditions in which development across all five can occur.

This is one of the real strengths of Family Day Care. Caring for a small group of children allows educators to know children deeply — their personalities, interests, family connections, little quirks, what makes them laugh and what they need when things aren't going quite right. A child who trusts that you will support them when they are frustrated can gradually develop Emotional Maturity. Children who feel secure within the group have opportunities to build Social Competence. Conversations, shared stories and genuine back-and-forth interactions strengthen Communication Skills and General Knowledge, while exploring ideas and solving problems together supports Language and Cognitive Skills. Even Physical Health and Wellbeing is supported when children feel safe and confident enough to explore, move and become increasingly independent.

Relationships aren't something extra we add to the program — they are woven through everything we do. When we use AEDC data to reflect on children's development, it is worth looking beyond experiences and resources and considering the relationships surrounding the child. Sometimes the most powerful thing we can offer isn't another activity at all. It is our time, attention, consistency and genuine connection.

Reflect on:

- *How do the relationships you have built with children help them feel safe enough to explore, communicate, take risks and try new things?*
- *How do you adapt your interactions based on what you know about each individual child?*
- *What opportunities do children have to develop strong relationships with one another?*
- *When a child is experiencing difficulty in one of the AEDC domains, how might strengthening connection and relationships support them?*

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

WELLBEING

Burnout rarely arrives suddenly. More often, it creeps in through ongoing stress, emotional exhaustion and the feeling that there's never quite enough time or energy. The good news is that research into stress management for early childhood educators consistently shows that small, consistent actions can act as powerful buffers.
Regular movement, a few moments of mindful breathing, gratitude reflections, celebrating small wins at the end of the day. Reflect on whether you're approaching challenges with a fixed or growth mindset. Gently challenge worst-case thinking, and ask, "Is this thought accurate, fair and helpful?" Catching yourself in this headspace can reduce rumination and support your emotional wellbeing at work.



Supportive relationships, a sense of purpose working with children and intentional disconnection from work are all strongly linked to higher job satisfaction and reduced burnout. These small shifts can collectively strengthen early childhood educator wellbeing and help sustain you in the work you care so deeply about.

PLAYGROUP

We have revisited some of the children's ongoing interests, particularly their fascination with mixing and creating. Following the children's exploration of painting with mud and turmeric water the previous month, I decided to extend their interest in mixing and experimentation through a potion-making experience. What a wonderful response! The space was bustling with children as they enthusiastically decanted water, selected fresh flowers, herbs, leaves and lemon slices, and added these to their potions. They stirred, measured and experimented with layering sand, corn flour and water, observing and discussing the changes that occurred as the different elements interacted. The experience provided rich opportunities for sensory exploration, creativity, experimentation and collaborative learning. The children were able to follow their own ideas, make choices, test their theories and observe cause-and-effect relationships in a playful and engaging way. Their enthusiasm demonstrated how extending an existing interest can create meaningful opportunities for deeper exploration and learning.





EFT & BODY SCAN MEDITATION

Leanne Dowsett recently shared a couple of resources with me that I thought some of you might be interested in exploring.

The first looks at **EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique)**, often called 'tapping', adapted for use with young children. Tapping combines gentle tapping on particular points of the body with talking about or acknowledging feelings. For little ones, it can be approached very simply and playfully as another way of helping them slow down, notice how they are feeling and begin to develop strategies for managing big emotions.

The second resource is a **body scan meditation for children**. A body scan encourages children to bring their attention to different parts of their body and notice what they can feel. It can be a lovely way to introduce mindfulness, body awareness and quiet moments into the day.

Leanne has shared two YouTube clips which demonstrate each of these approaches:

EFT / Tapping:

Tap Along! Every little Cell is Healthy & Well

Body Scan Meditation:

5 Minute Kids Mindful Meditation

These aren't about expecting young children to sit perfectly still or suddenly become tiny meditation gurus! They are simply ideas you might like to explore and adapt to suit the children in your care.

If you do give either of them a try, think about what you notice. *How do the children respond? Do some engage more than others? Could either approach become another tool in your toolbox for supporting children's emotional wellbeing and self-regulation?*

Thanks for sharing, Leanne!

SPECIAL EVENTS COMING UP IN NOVEMBER

Welcome to November! This month is bursting with wonderful opportunities for everyone to enjoy. This time marks Kambarang, the beautiful "second spring" and season of birth. The landscape is bringing an explosion of colour to our days. With the warming sun returning for longer periods and the last of the winter rains subsiding, it is the perfect time to soak up the energy of the season. Whether you are stepping outside to enjoy the brilliant afternoon light, watching the active birdlife, or simply embracing the natural renewal of late spring, there is something for everyone to participate in.

❤️ 1st–30th – National Adoption & Permanency Awareness Month (Australia)
❤️ 1st – World Vegan Day
❤️ 1st – All Saints' Day (Christian)
(A Christian day remembering saints and people of faith. Observed by some families and communities.)
❤️ 3rd – Melbourne Cup Day
❤️ 5th – Outdoor Classroom Day
❤️ 7th–14th – Australian Food Safety Week
❤️ 7th–15th – Australian Pollinator Week – Celebrating bees, butterflies, birds and other pollinators in our environment.
❤️ 8th – Diwali
❤️ 9th–13th – World Nursery Rhyme Week
❤️ 9th–15th – National Recycling Week
❤️ 10th – World Science Day
❤️ 11th – Remembrance Day
❤️ 13th – World Kindness Day
❤️ 14th – World Diabetes Day
❤️ 20th – World Children's Day (UN)
(Celebrating children's rights, voices and wellbeing.)
❤️ 20th – National Agriculture Day
(Celebrating Australian farmers and the importance of agriculture in our everyday lives. Helping children explore where food comes from, how it is grown and the connections between farming, sustainability and healthy communities. Theme 2026: Our Farmers, Our Future.)
❤️ 24th – National Fairy Bread Day
❤️ 25th – White Ribbon 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

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

"Accept that some days you're the pigeon and some days you're the statue!" – Scott Adams

