Welcome Message from our new Executive Director, Tracy Mackey

I’m really pleased to be taking up the Executive Director, Early Childhood Education role – joining a team that is working to ensure children across NSW get the best possible experience of early learning environments. With the work of the Directorate spanning the policy, program and regulatory spaces it’s important that we have really strong and positive relationships with our stakeholders, especially all of you as providers.

While I’ve already been on my first visit to a service I’m looking forward to having the opportunity to visit many services over the coming months. I’m keen to hear about the approaches and practices you’re delivering and talk with you about the opportunities and challenges that are on your mind. I’d encourage you to share feedback and suggestions with our team by emailing ecec@det.nsw.edu.au.

ACCREDITATION 2016 – PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION FOR NSW EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS

In 2016 NSW early childhood teachers working in long day care and preschools will need to be accredited by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES).

Accreditation will be a requirement for early childhood teachers who hold a teaching qualification approved or recognised by ACECQA and who are responsible for the delivery of the Early Years Learning Framework.

Further details are available on the BOSTES website.

2016 BI-ANNUAL PRESCHOOL CENSUS

From 2016 the census of community preschools will take place twice a year in March and August.

These two collections are known as the Bi-annual Preschool Census.

Data collection for this bi-annual preschool census will be managed by the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation and the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate.

The Early Childhood Contract Management System (ECCMS) has been enhanced to collect data for every enrolled child at community preschools.

For 2016, there is no change to the yearly funding adjustment process. The adjustment will occur as usual in December 2016 based on August 2016 preschool census data.

Data to be collected in the March 2016 census will include child level data, including the number of days each child is enrolled and service operating hours.

Please be aware of some key dates:

- The representative fortnight for the March 2016 census is: Monday 22 February to Sunday 06 March 2016
- The ECCMS functions for census data entry opened on: Monday 15 February 2016
- The ECCMS functions for census data entry will close on: Sunday 13 March 2016

A Bi-annual Preschool Census Quick Reference Guide and eLearning are available on the Early Childhood Education and Care Bi-annual Preschool Census webpage here.

HAVE YOU TOLD US ABOUT YOUR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS?

Over coming months many services will be holding their Annual General Meetings and electing new committee members. Don’t forget to notify us any changes to your executive committee membership after these elections.
Committee members such as president, vice president, secretary and treasurer are considered to be responsible for the “management or control” of a service under the National Law. The National Law requires that you keep us up to date on the appointment and/or removal of any people from these positions.

Notifications can be made through the National Quality Agenda IT System by selecting the option ‘Notification of change to information about approved provider’. You will then be guided by prompts to help you enter the required information.

You will need to ensure that you attach the following for each new committee member who is appointed to a position of management or control:

- PA-02 Declaration of Fitness and Proprietary.
- A Working with Children Check (committee members who are volunteers are exempt from this requirement until April 2017). The application form is available here.
- A criminal history record check issued not more than 6 months before the date of the notification (please select ‘name and date of birth check’). You can obtain a Criminal History Check from the NSW Police Force.

KIDSAFE NSW

Kidsafe NSW aims to prevent child deaths from injury and reduce the severity of injury to children aged 0 – 14 years.

Kidsafe NSW provides support information and resources across four key safety areas: Home and Community, Playground, Road and Water Safety. Resources available include workshops and presentations, information sheets, posters, notifications of product recalls, e-newsletters and guidelines. You can find out more about Kidsafe NSW here.

EARLY LINKS NSW

Early Links NSW works with families of children aged 0 – 8 years with developmental delays and disabilities. Early Links is able to assist children and their families to develop existing support networks and create new networks to meet the goals of the family and child.

Early Linkers are available to work alongside organisations and service in assisting families access early intervention within the community and also ensuring that young children can participate in a wide range of community activities.

Early Links can assist with:

- Information
- Learning about a child's needs
- Setting goals and making plans
- Creating stronger links with your community
- Referrals to specialist and community support

For more information about Early Links NSW visit their website.

SUPPORT FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Small Biz Connect is a NSW Government-funded advisory service for small business. It offers programs through which small business operators, including early childhood education and care providers, can access expert advice on managing their business.

Small Biz Connect advisors work with small business operators to help achieve their goals through face-to-face, tailored support. Small Biz Connect advisors are mobile and can travel to meet clients at convenient locations. They work one-to-one with clients about their circumstances and can help with discovering ways to improve.

If you are looking for ways to improve, adapt or expand your early childhood business, Small Biz Connect can provide valuable guidance. For more information about what Small Biz Connect can offer visit the Small Biz Connect website, or call 1300 134 359.

ENERGY CUT

Energy Cut has produced an easy-to-read guide that assists childcare centres with reducing their energy use with simple solutions which can be implemented at little or no cost.

You can obtain a copy of the 20 Step Guide to Cutting Energy Bills in Your Childcare Centre here.

VACCINATION AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS

The Commonwealth ‘No Jab, No Pay’ measure commenced on 1 January 2016. This means that children who are unimmunised because their parents have a conscientious objection to vaccination are no longer eligible for the Child Care Rebate, Child Care Benefit, or Family Tax Benefit (Part A – Supplementary). Children with medical contraindications or natural immunity for certain diseases and those on a recognised catch-up schedule remain eligible for these family assistance benefits. More information about the Commonwealth changes is available from the Australian Department of Social Services website.

These measures do not affect the ability of children in NSW to enrol in an early childhood service. Conscientious objection continues to be a valid exemption for enrolment purposes in NSW under the NSW Public Health Act. A NSW specific vaccination objection form for enrolment in NSW services in 2016 is available from the NSW Health website. Please note that this form is only required to be completed for children enrolling in a NSW service after 1 January 2016. Children who were enrolled in 2015 to commence in 2016 do not need to complete the new form.

Keeping in touch

Update your contact details by logging onto the NQAITS portal and/or for funded services by logging onto ECCMS.

You can also get in touch with us by:

- phoning us on 1800 619 113 (general) or 1300 755 426 (funding)
- emailing us on ececd@det.nsw.edu.au (general), ecec.funding@det.nsw.edu.au (funding) or eceextra@det.nsw.edu.au (EC Extra editor)
- to access previous issues of EC Extra or to add new subscribers click here