

FAR NORTH QLD
in the **LOOP**

MAY 2010



REGIONAL ROUNDUP

The Far North Queensland PSN met in Cairns recently to review the planning for the region for 2010.

The PSN are excited to have the sessions on the **Early Years Learning Framework** and those planned around **Turning Theory into Practice for Working with Children** planned to be offered in a range of locations over the next few months. Workshop one of the regions series on **dance, music and movement** has been held in Cairns and the second in this series offering **Bollywood fun, fitness, music and movement** both for the 0-5 age range and the 5-12 age range. The PSN is exploring other topics including **Emergent Curriculum for beginners** and **documenting the emergent curriculum** for later in the year depending on the regional budget.

Please remember that all PSCQ workshops will have a close date for registrations indicated on the flyer with **No** late registrations able to be processed. It's also important to be aware that workshop sizes are often restricted by the venue size or presenters' needs so please look for restrictions on the flyer—we do try our utmost to offer places to as many services as possible across the many services in the region, although this can be challenging so your understanding and patience are appreciated.

Don't forget this year we have gone green so if you are not receiving flyers etc. please update your information with us by calling Bernadine on 07 4799 7982.

For more information on professional development arranged by PSCQ as well as non PSCQ events or to view the Northern Regions Professional Development Calendar please head to www.pscq.org.au

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NEED TO CONTACT PSCQ?

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Your *Far Nth Qld*
Project Officer is:
Peter Demopoulos





DEAR DIARY...

Our EYLF journey at Rosie's Early Learning

Let me take you back a little... it's September 2009 and the centre has just received an excellent score for accreditation. All staff are on a high, everyone has realised that we have achieved what we had been working towards for over 18 months and it FEELS GOOD! I have the EYLF booklets in my office ready to share... but how long do we bask in the glory of our result? I ended up giving the staff a couple of weeks to really soak up the feeling. We headed out for dinner to celebrate, patted each other on the back and then agreed we were ready to start a new journey. This journey was the Early Years Learning Framework.

I knew it was time for us to get back on track and continue to reflect on practice – I mean really our constant reflection had been the reason so much change had happened in the first place so why would we stop there? I also knew that it would be very easy for the staff to read the EYLF after our Accreditation result and say, "Well, we already do that."

In October 2009 I introduced the EYLF to my staff. The intention wasn't to start the process but more just to familiarise them with the book. Each staff meeting for October, November and December I asked them to read sections (just small chunks) so that they could absorb the information. We would then look at reflective questions designed to discuss our practice in relation to the EYLF. It was a process that I believe has served them all well, in particular the less experienced staff as we had enough time to talk things through for understanding.

I imagine many services put the book aside and thought, "We have until July next year, no need to rush," but I thought, "AGHHHH we only have until July next year and there is so much great stuff to discuss!" There was no time to waste.

Once we had broken down the book and related it to our actual practice we discovered many places where we could really create innovative and dynamic strategies. We were able to critically analyse each component of the 'Practice Section' in the EYLF and this we felt was the best place to start. The temptation was there to head straight to the learning outcomes but we resisted this as to start at that point would only lead any practitioner to a very structured approach to the framework in trying to achieve the outcomes.

We felt the EYLF was so much more than the outcomes; it was an opportunity. In December each year we have a 'Vision Builder' which is a time for staff to dream without any budget restrictions. This is a day when as a team we think of new ideas, new building structures and how we can make the program be really different from everywhere else. Our Vision Builder in 2009 was full of great ideas and the staff were really able to think about how these incorporated into the EYLF. At this session we decided that we would begin to trial some of our ideas in documentation from January 2010. These changes in documentation were directly related to months of reflection and a passion for innovation. Change can be a hard process to go through but I credit my staff in their constant ability to look for better, desire the best and challenge themselves and each other to continue to move forward.





DEAR DIARY...

Our EYLF journey at Rosie's Early Learning

Now it was time to look at the learning outcomes...
WE LOVED THEM!

We didn't want to see each learning outcome in isolation; rather build connections between them so this is what we did. We have created 'Key Elements' of learning where we have been able to embed and link many of the learning outcomes together.

Currently we are trialling 3 'Learning Investigations':

- * How we construct and care for ours and others' identities
- * Understanding the World around us – Natural and Community
- * Understanding of investigation strategies to enhance learning

These are not themes or even the drivers of our program but instead give our documentation and planning guidance when children show us skill and interests. Let me share an example.

Inspired by our investigations on 'The world around us' we have integrated environmental components to the program. Currently the children are researching about recycling and the importance to the environment. We wanted to start with our own environment as this was the most relevant to the children. The teachers had been discussing what rubbish was, where it went and what would happen if we didn't put it in the bin. Many 'who, what, where and why' questions took place in their planning meetings.

The teachers engaged the children into an 'Emu Parade' of the outdoor environment over three days to see what rubbish they could collect. They documented and created specimens (all the rubbish collaged onto large sheets of card each day) and displayed these to compare. The children took great pride in the fact that after collecting the rubbish regularly they reduced it significantly.

The teacher's documentation noted some of the learnings:

Through participation in this experience the children are developing an awareness of the impact human activity has on the environment. They discovered that most of the rubbish came from our outdoor design studio and developed strategies to ensure that this does not continue to happen. They have taken real pride in caring for the centre's environment. As we continue to explore the impacts rubbish and waste has around the world we hope to enhance the children's understanding of the importance of caring for our environment.

We were able to access a free program through our local council on recycling and engaged them for two days to discuss the issues arising when we as humans do not care for our environment. The children gained a rejuvenated pride as they showed the presenter the work they had been doing. It was decided that we would have recycling boxes in our design studio and other areas of the centre to ensure the great work would continue. As I write this entry we are still engaged 3 weeks later in these discussions and hearing the children talk about the importance of putting rubbish in the bin.





DEAR DIARY...

Our EYLF journey at Rosie's Early Learning

When we look at the links to the EYLF, the practice section (page 16) identifies: 'They foster an appreciation of the natural environment, develop environmental awareness and provide a platform for ongoing environmental education.' This learning is directly connected to Outcome 2: Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment. Although this is just a small snippet of the work that is happening, the teaching staff are consistently seeing how the EYLF allows us as teachers to look at the children in far more depth and with wider lenses when writing and documenting the learning.

We have always strived to see the children as competent learners and our program for almost two years now has used a strengths-based approach to facilitate the children's learning. Now we have a framework to justify all the learning we have always felt was important to highlight!

As we approach July 2010 we are excited about our next planning day. This will focus on how we believe the trial is going and whether we want to make any changes. I will look forward to my next entry and all the growth that has and will continue to occur.

By: Carrie Rose, Centre Owner and Director



**Outcome 2:
Children become
socially responsible
and show respect for
the environment.**





NEW WEBSITE FOR PSCQ!

www.pscq.org.au

A brand new website for PSCQ is live and awaiting your visit! The PSCQ website has undergone a thorough redevelopment lately. We wanted to ensure we continued to bring you the most up-to-date and useful information relevant to your work in early childhood education and care and school age care – so a more functional, informative and interactive website was in order!

The new site is part of the comprehensive redevelopment of the website for the Health and Community Services Workforce Council (“Workforce Council”). Workforce Council is the organisation behind PSCQ, along with some other great initiatives for workforce development and innovation in the Health and Community Services Industries.

The new site will seem quite different at first! It gives a comprehensive look at all the initiatives in the Workforce Council, whilst still containing all the old PSCQ features you enjoyed – plus a lot more!

Some of the new goodies include:

- a new activity search, customisable to your professional development needs;
- resources and research;
- all our innovative support opportunities now accessible in one place;
- a list of approved Professional Support Service Providers to help you get professional development up and running in your service;

- easy access to information about the other great work done at Workforce Council.

How do I find my favourite features of the old website?

Activities, workshops and online learning

These are now all accessible through the ‘Activity Search’, which is linked from the PSCQ home page and also from each region page. Using this search you can select from a number of fields to narrow down specifically what you are looking for (but make sure you fill in **all** fields).

Staff Exchange Program, In Service Contribution Program, Action Research

These are all accessible through the ‘Actions’ section (in the main menu on the left hand side of the main page).

Regional information

These are now under a section called ‘Networks and Regions’ in the main menu, which also provides information on our Professional Support Networks and how to join.

We’d love for our colleagues, networks and stakeholders to get as much use out of the website as possible. Contact us on pscq@workforce.org.au if you have any thoughts you would like to share about the site. We look forward to your feedback.



TWO BY TWO INTO THE ARK

Resource Library and Advisory Service for PSCQ

New Exciting Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander resources are now available in the library. These resources will introduce new concepts and assist with embedding Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Inclusion throughout your service.

Traditional Resources

Dreamtime stories are a rich example of Aboriginal people's strong connection to land and sea. These stories are passed down from generation to generation in the form of a song, dance and art. It is important to offer stories in the right context so we recommend that services check and explain the origins of the stories they use and give examples of the regions or areas where they have come from.

Dreamtime Kullilla Dreaming Stories

This kit provides:

- 5 Aboriginal Dreaming Stories narrated by Michael Connolly.
- Cultural information for Educators
- Teaching Activities and suggestions
- 5 copies of original artwork
- CD of 5 Dreaming Stories



Dreamtime Memory Game

Using the traditional art work from the dreamtime these sets of cards create opportunities to learn about Dreamtime as well as improving memory and concentration and increase language development. Creates opportunities to extend interest that emerges from this activity.

Contemporary Resources

Kids on our Block - Enjoy the fun as the kids get together on their street and play "Indigenous way"... looking out for each other and doing the right thing... all through summer, autumn, winter and spring.



Raps for Big Fullas and Raps for Little Fullas - Two reading books by Monkey Mark that describe both traditional Dreamtime stories and contemporary life for Indigenous peoples.

Dean's footy Song - Dean loves playing footy and going to training every week. He reads all the footy magazines, watches all the games on TV and, when he goes to the "knock-out", he loves being with family and cheering for his favourite team.

Baby dolls

Boy and girl baby dolls, dressed in beautiful outfits depicting Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander designs.



Services can call the Resource Library on 1800 112 585 and talk to staff about how we can support your service through the Early Years Learning Framework.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where can I find a registration form?

Flyers for activities will be sent to your service at your designated email address unless otherwise stated. Flyers can also be found on the website at www.pscq.org.au or call PSCQ on 1800 112 585

How do I register for professional development?

Please fill in all fields of the application table, making sure all names are written clearly and spelt correctly, as these names will be used for attendance certificates.

If paying by credit card complete details and fax the application to 07 4799 7986 or scan and email to northern@workforce.org.au Do not post the original or a duplication of payment may occur.

If paying by cheque or money order, fax your completed application to 07 4799 7986 then post the application form with payment to **H & CS WORKFORCE COUNCIL , Ground Floor, 303 Adelaide St BRISBANE 4000**

Please book early to avoid session cancellation due to lack of numbers or missing out on a place for a session. Many presenters have strict limitations on numbers attending and or cancellation policies. **Late registrations** (Sent after the close date indicated on the flyer) may be accepted to fill sessions, please confirm availability with PSCQ prior to sending any late applications. *Note: If you unsure please check your eligibility for attendance to PSCQ activities prior to sending your registration form.*

Do I need to send payment with registration?

Yes. Payments are required for all activities no later than the close date. **Certificates will not be issued without payment and your registration may be cancelled if payment has not been received. No payments can be accepted at the event.**

My service requires an invoice before we can pay. What do I do?

The registration form is also a Tax Invoice.

My service requires an receipt. What do I do?

The registration form is also a Tax Invoice. A receipt will only be sent to you if requested in writing at the time of registration. The receipt can only be issued in the name of the person/service making the payment.

Will I receive confirmation?

PSCQ Townsville office will endeavor to send a confirmation of attendance to all activities arranged from the Townsville office. If the above registration process is followed confirmation will be emailed to you or your service just prior to the event.

What are the fees?

All professional development is GST inclusive. Fees vary according to the length of the presentation and will be clearly identified on the event flyer.

Will sessions be cancelled?

PSCQ reserves the right to cancel or alter arrangements, where necessary. Every effort is made to ensure that activities proceed as scheduled and if required you will be advised of any cancellation or alteration.

I have not received my certificate?

PSCQ will not issue certificates until payment has been made and signed attendance sheets have been sighted from presenters. **Always remember to sign in when attending an activity.**

Can I get a refund?

If you are sick or unable to be released from your service, you can nominate another person to attend however PSCQ **must** be advised. If you wish to cancel completely, you must formally advise PSCQ no later than seven (7) working days prior to the activity. **If you cancel with less than 7 working days notice or simply do not attend, refunds will not be given and outstanding payments will be pursued.**

Is food provided at the activity?

In general the following will apply but please refer to the activity flyer for specific information: Full day workshops will have lunch and morning tea available.; half day courses receive morning or afternoon tea and evening workshops will have a light supper on arrival. Please notify PSCQ on your registration form if you have any special dietary-related needs and we will do our best to cater for these.

How do I find the venue?

The name and address of the venue will be indicated on the flyer. Those registered to attend will be notified of any changes that may occur.

Is parking available?

Venue parking capacity is subject to each venue, day and time. If you are concerned you may like to contact the venue prior or always leave plenty of time before start time to ensure you can arrive on time.

