

# The Networker



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Free to SA Child Care & Out of School Hours Care services

## Comparing budget against performance

Have you found yourself in a position where you are unable to quickly identify what caused a variance between the budgeted figure and the actual performance in your financial statements? This has been a dilemma for several directors calling Network SA recently.

Before you start checking invoices and bank statements, let's eliminate the 4 most common causes. You could be surprised to know it may not be because of spending.

These are the most common non financial reasons why you may not be achieving budgeted outcomes.

### 1. BUDGET – Is your budget realistic?

Quite often the budget has been based on prior year budgets and adjusted for this year. If you constantly use prior year budgets as your starting point then you are using last year's estimates which were based on the previous year's estimates as your starting point!!! Your actual income and expenses will always be different in some way from what you budgeted in previous years.

**A SOLUTION:** Don't use last year's budget as your starting point for this year's budget. There are benefits in using your latest year to date figures (remember it may not be for a full year) or your previous audited financial statements as a starting point for this year's budget.

Look at what has changed in income and expense *items* as well as *amounts* and base your budget on your latest actual performances. Take into consideration known future changes (legislation, utilisation rate changes, pay increases etc.). Remember, wages and food are likely to be your two most costly expense items.

### 2. MONTHLY COMPARISONS – Is your budget figure the same \$ amount each month?

Has your annual figure from the budget been allocated equally between each month (yearly figure divided by 12 and the same amount allocated to each month)? It might seem a quick and easy way to fill out all those monthly expenditure columns when you are preparing a budget.

Think about this. Is this how you earn your income and pay expenses? Do you operate for the same number of weeks every month? Do you pay your expenses monthly, quarterly or once a year although your budget states you pay the same amount each month? This method of allocating budgeted income and expense items is not how you actually operate on a month by month basis.

You will have utilisation rate changes (e.g. children leaving to start school or high school, lower attendances during certain periods of the year), you will operate more weeks in some months than others, and the number of pay periods in a month will vary. If your budget has been equally portioned you will always be questioning why your actual performance does not meet budgeted predictions.

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## **A Middle Years Framework for OSHC - Discussion Paper**

*Prepared by Kylie Brannelly (QCAN- Queensland Children's Activities Network)  
& Robyn Monro Miller (Network Of Community Activities NSW)*

There is increasing acceptance and promotion within the Out of School Hours Care sector for a framework to be developed which supports the experiences of school age children who attend OSHC services in Australia.

Such a framework would endeavour to provide a means of articulating the value of play and the importance of collaboration with children as a fundamental principle for school age care. This framework would provide a structure from which services can develop programs for children that promote and build resilience.

This discussion paper serves to commence discussion and debate around current practice in OSHC services throughout Australia and gauge support for the development of a Middle Years Framework for OSHC. You can download a copy from [www.netoosh.org.au/news](http://www.netoosh.org.au/news).



*Gail Gullickson*

### **SKYPE with us**

Children's services using Skype can now make appointments with Gail Gullickson (Network SA Financial Management Consultant) and Debbie Bond (ARMSU Coordinator) for face to face (video call) consultations via their computers.

This will be particularly useful for country services, where opportunities to meet face to face with our staff are harder to organise quickly.

Skype is a free program which can be downloaded from [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com). To set up for video calls which can be made free from your computer, you will need to purchase a webcam. You may also choose to buy a separate microphone (or headset with mike) for improved sound quality. All up, this could cost about \$80.00.

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**A SOLUTION:** When setting your budget, allocate income and expense items in accordance with the information you have to hand e.g. income – how many weeks you charge fees for each month, which months interest is earned etc.; expenses – which months you pay those expenses (number of pay periods in a month, quarterly utility expenses, annual insurance payment etc.).

There will be some items you will continue to allocate evenly because there is no other method but most income and expense items you will be able to identify as occurring in different months.

### **3. DATA INPUT – Have you indicated to your administration/finance officer where to allocate costings when inputting the data on your accounting software?**

Sometimes this is a communication issue rather than a financial problem. Although the budget was set by allocating certain income and expense items to specific categories, the data may have been posted into your accounting software (e.g. MYOB, QuickBooks etc.) differently.

**A SOLUTION:** If an expense item varies greatly, ask your admin/finance officer to show you which items have been posted to those accounts and compare those to where you allocated them in the budget. You may find you simply need to re-allocate the expense (e.g. consumables may be posted to petty cash, staff expenses, cleaning etc. but budgeted to just one item called consumables). Make sure your admin/finance officer knows where to allocate them to according to the budget.

### **4. SETTING FEES FIRST – Do you set your fee then try to budget within those fee limits?**

Your budget should be set based on the actual income and expense costs required to provide quality care rather than trying to maintain a utilisation rate to keep a set fee level.

**A SOLUTION:** You should check your current utilisation rate and consider it in conjunction with what you know about likely changes in the future. From that, you should be able to estimate what your utilisation is likely to be in future months. You should then charge fees according to your estimated utilisation rate and operational costs.

There may be a number of other reasons for variations between what your financial statements show and your budget comparison. However, you can save yourself a lot of anxiety if you check for these 4 possibilities first. Check them first before looking for unexplained variances in your budget figures.

Remember - There is nothing wrong with revisiting your budget throughout the year. With proper comparisons you will be able to avoid overspending and make any necessary changes throughout the year.

**Gail Gullickson**  
**Network SA**  
gail.gullickson@networksa.org.au



## BUDGET WORKSHOP

10.00AM - 1.00PM MONDAY 26TH OCTOBER

AT NETWORK SA

Cost: \$66.00 (full rate)    \$55.00 (Network SA Extra members' rate)

Presenter Gail Gullickson

Email [sue.pens@networksa.org.au](mailto:sue.pens@networksa.org.au) for booking form.

# Planning for Your AGM

*The following article is an excerpt from a new Network SA Resource Sheet, Planning for Your Annual General Meeting. A full copy, which incorporates checklists to facilitate planning, can be downloaded free from our website, [www.networksa.org.au](http://www.networksa.org.au).*

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of a community organisation is an occasion for reporting back to all the 'owners' or members, for complying with government regulations and for spreading the word about your great service. In a nutshell it is about accountability, compliance and communication. The work of putting on an AGM is made easier if you plan ahead.

## Check Your Constitution

Your constitution is an essential resource when planning the AGM because this is where you should be able to find rules about the calling of and procedure at general meetings, including

- the business to be conducted at the meeting,
- how much notice you are required to give the members and how this should be conveyed or displayed,
- proceedings at meetings (quorum and chairperson),
- voting at meetings,
- how to conduct a poll if this is demanded at the meeting,
- special and ordinary resolutions,
- whether members are entitled to vote by proxy,
- the appointment of an auditor of a 'prescribed association', and
- the manner in which the rules of the association may be altered.

If your constitution is several years old it may not include rules about all of these matters, and should be reviewed. If your centre is incorporated as an association under the Associations Incorporation Act 1985, as most community based child care services in South Australia are, you can obtain a model constitution and checklist for what should be included in your rules from the Office of Consumer & Business Affairs website, [www.ocba.sa.gov.au](http://www.ocba.sa.gov.au).

## Who Should be Invited

The AGM is essentially a public meeting of all members of the association, called by the management committee or board of the centre. Your members may include two or three groups (identified in your constitution) - parents or guardians of children cared for at the centre, employees and /or persons who have applied in writing and been accepted. You may also choose to invite local dignitaries, people who have supported the centre and other guests.

Your constitution will include a clause about the quorum or minimum number of members required to attend. This may not be a very high number. You are more likely to have more members attending if you have a special attraction or if members are very unhappy with the way the centre is running. If everything is going along reasonably smoothly, parents may not see the need to attend and you should not necessarily be discouraged by low numbers. What is essential is that everyone who comes is welcomed and included.

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## Business of the AGM

The business (agenda) of the meeting should include

- confirmation of the minutes of the last AGM and any special general meeting held during the year since the last AGM,
- presentation of accounts and reports of the committee,
- presentation of the auditor's report (required if a Prescribed Association),
- election of committee members,
- appointment of the auditor if required, and
- any other business as required.

It is usual in child care services for the Director to present a report as well, but not essential unless you have specifically included a Director's report as a requirement in your constitution or in the policies of your centre. You may decide to add an information or social aspect to the meeting as well, by having a guest speaker or a presentation at the AGM, or putting on a display. How you structure your AGM is up to you as long as you include the essential elements (dot points above) on your agenda.

## Election of Committee Members

One of your goals will be to attract new management committee members. Ideally, you will have some new people volunteering to join the management committee as well as a few experienced committee members staying on.

It is helpful to have a hand-out ready for parents or others who may be interested in nominating for a position on the committee. This can be made available before the AGM as well as at the meeting. It could include some background information about how the committee is structured (e.g. how many parents, who else is on the committee), how often it meets, what it does and its general responsibilities as the governing body of the service. If it is available before the AGM you could also include the contact numbers for one or two of your current committee members who may be prepared to answer any questions about the committee role.

**Maureen McGuire**

maureen.mcguire@networksa.org.au

## New Early Learning Facility for Children with Autism

An Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centre has been opened in Prospect, Adelaide. It will operate from Anglicare's Daphne Street Childcare and Specialist Learning Centre.

Anglicare, in partnership with the Autism Association of South Australia and Flinders University, has refurbished and equipped the existing child care centre in Daphne Street Prospect to accommodate the centre.

Six specialist staff, including a childhood education teacher, psychologist, speech pathologist and occupational therapist, will work alongside five childcare staff to provide the learning environment for children aged up to six years old with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

It is anticipated that the centre's research component would assist in the development of a deeper understanding of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

The Australian Government will provide \$3.2 million to operate the specialist centre.

This centre is the first of six autism specific centres to open as part of the Australian Government's commitment to deliver up to 260 Early Learning and Care Centres nationally.

Autism specific centres will also be opening in Sydney, Brisbane, North West Tasmania, Melbourne and Perth.

# SA OSHC sector news and events

## OSHC Celebration Day

Join the OSHC SA Association to celebrate OSHC on Friday 23rd October at St Paul Lutheran OSHC, 44 Audrey Ave Blair Athol. We ask you to be seated by 10 and we plan to be finished by 12.30.

There will be 2 guest speakers to celebrate OSHC. The first is David Wilksch and the second is Julie Ann Moat. David is the principal of St Paul and has a commitment to OSHC and will share his personal OSHC celebration story with us. Julie Ann may be remembered as the director of OSHC at North Haven PS for many years. Although she has now moved into other work, her heart and her roots are still firmly linked to OSHC and she will share her journey with us.

There will be an interactive display on show from some of the agencies who support and assist OSHC services.

Finally the OSHC Awards for 2009 will be presented. This is an opportunity to recognise the talent, initiative and expertise that can be found within our OSHC services in SA.

Morning tea will be served and there will be a charge to cover the cost of catering. Please go to our website – [www.oshcsa.org.au](http://www.oshcsa.org.au) - for the full information as well as the nomination forms for the awards. We ask that you consider making a nomination or at least join us to CELEBRATE OSHC. RSVPs are required.

## OSHC Awards 2009 – a brief summary

*(please go to the web site for the full explanation)*

The 2009 OSHC SA Awards will seek nominations in three categories and we hope that these nominations will come from services, communities, school principals and OSHC support personnel. In instances where a local service or an individual has made a contribution to neighbouring services, we will welcome nominations from staff of other services too.

Nominations will close on 25th September and no late entries will be considered. Full information and nomination forms can be obtained from the Association's web site [www.oshcsa.org.au](http://www.oshcsa.org.au) and you may contact 0411 558 050 for additional information if required.

Awards in Category 1 will be made to individuals and Categories 2 & 3 are service awards. Please include the following information for each nomination:

- Identify the Award category
- Name of Nominee
- Name of Service
- Director's length of service
- Name of the Nominator and their link to the OSHC service
- Contact phone number of nominator
- List others who support this nomination (e.g. service staff, school staff, governing council or individuals)
- Written statements that include examples of practice to address each of the award selection criteria

**Kay Thomas**  
**Out of School Hours Care SA Association Inc.**

## The Council for the Care of Children

The SA Council for the Care of Children launched its framework *Look out for Young South Australians* at the South Australian Museum on 12th June 2009. This framework sets a baseline for the five domains of children's lives against which the circumstances of South Australian children can be measured in the future. The five domains are:

- health and development,
- safety and protection,
- enjoyment of life and achievements,
- contribution to family and community life, and
- preparation for adulthood.

The framework is available for downloading from the Council for the Care of Children's website, a user friendly resource for children and young people's rights which will also include some of the latest research and policy directions about children and young people.

The site is a key component of the Council's strategy to promote child and youth friendly environments. There are specific pages for children and young people, and the ***what's new?*** page focuses on local news and children and young people's achievements.

The Council for the Care of Children is a statutory body established under the *Children's Protection Act 1993*. Up to 10 members are appointed from the community and the Minister for Families and Communities designates Chief Executives from departments as those closely involved in the care and protection of children as members. The Executive Director of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Ms Kaye Colmer, and the Chief Executive of the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS), Mr Chris Robinson are members of the Council.

For further information about the Council's activities check the website [www.childrensa.sa.gov.au](http://www.childrensa.sa.gov.au)

## Settlers Farm Vacation Care are hosting the 'Big Vac Out' again

*For Vacation Care Services*



It's on again! The 'Big Vac Out' is fast becoming a tradition. This year the event will be held on December 18th over 2 sessions (see the flyer insert in this *Networker* for additional details).

The Big Vac Out is a great opportunity for services to combine with others for a fantastic show day. With so many rides and amusements children could be excused for thinking they are at the Royal Show!

If you would like any additional information please contact Jan Hutchison on 8280 8108 or [jan.hutchison@settlersr7.sa.edu.au](mailto:jan.hutchison@settlersr7.sa.edu.au)

**Jamie Hutchison**

## **Siblings Australia Conference**

The 2nd Siblings Australia conference, 'Creating Connections' is being held 19-20 November in Adelaide. The registration brochure is now online - including a draft program outline - at [www.sapmea.asn.au/siblings09](http://www.sapmea.asn.au/siblings09).

This conference is an important event for anyone interested in families of people with special needs (disability or chronic illness).

It will have relevance to practitioners, policy makers or academics from a number of fields, including children's health, child protection, disability, education, early intervention, family services, mental health and aging carers, as well as family members themselves, some of whom will contribute significantly to the program.

The conference will showcase current programs, provide an opportunity to learn about research developments and explore future directions in sibling support.

## **Transfer of industrial powers**

### **Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2009**

In the June edition of The Networker, we reported that the South Australian Government had announced that it planned to hand over a significant proportion of its industrial powers to the Commonwealth.

This process moved a step further when legislation to allow South Australia to formally join the new national industrial relations system from 1st January next year was tabled recently in State Parliament. Minister Paul Caica tabled the Fair Work (Commonwealth Powers) Bill 2009, which is part of a legislative package of two Bills that will refer certain industrial relations powers to the Commonwealth.

An agreement is also being finalised between the (Federal) Fair Work Ombudsman and SafeWork SA to provide for local delivery of South Australian compliance, education and advisory services associated with the national system. As part of these service delivery arrangements SafeWork SA officers will undertake a large number of education visits over the next three years to those workplaces transferring from the state system to the federal jurisdiction.

The Bill excludes employers and employees in the State public sector and local government from any of the references to the Commonwealth, as these will remain subject to State industrial relations laws.

The logo for Network SA, featuring the text 'network sa' in a purple, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter 'o' in 'network' has a stylized dot above it.

### **Change to Network SA Direct Deposit Details**

We have recently opened new accounts with Westpac.

Our new account number for direct deposits is Westpac Wingfield BSB: 035-225 Account: 159768

If you are paying an account by direct deposit please quote a reference number or name and send payment advice to:

[sue.pens@networksa.org.au](mailto:sue.pens@networksa.org.au) or

fax 8268 8065 (attention Sue Pens).

# Wages and Awards Round-up

## South Australian Industrial Commission

In its 2009 decision the South Australian Commission decided to increase the adult award rate of pay by \$14.00 per week with effect from the first pay period on or after 1 October 2009. Proportionate adjustments will apply to juniors and trainees. The new State Minimum Award Wage will be \$560.65 per week.

The South Australian Industrial Commission decision applies to those services which are still operating under the State system (e.g. centres where the employer is a sole trader or partnership and many OSHC services in DECS schools). Services paying wages in accordance with a workplace agreement should check the terms of that agreement.

## Australian Fair Pay Commission

In its 2009 general Wage-Setting Decision the Australian Fair Pay Commission (federal) decided to maintain the standard Federal Minimum Wage at \$14.31 per hour (\$543.78 per week) and maintain the adult rates of pay in Australian Pay and Classification Scales at their current levels. This decision also applies to junior employees, employees to whom training arrangements apply, employees with disability (with the exception of the SWS), casual employees and employees receiving basic piece rates of pay.

This decision means that there was no wage rise for employees of those children's services where the employer is trading as a constitutional corporation (e.g. a company or an incorporated association). Services paying wages in accordance with a workplace agreement should check the terms of that agreement.

The Australian Fair Pay Commission ceased to exist on 31 July 2009 after completing this final wage review.

## Future decisions

Fair Work Australia has taken the place of the Australian Fair Pay Commission in the federal system. From 1st January 2010, it is likely that all non-government employers in South Australia will move into the federal system. Each financial year from 2010, a Minimum Wage Panel of Fair Work Australia will conduct an annual review of modern award minimum wages and make a national minimum wage order. National Minimum Wage Orders together with the National Employment Standards and Modern Awards will make up the guaranteed safety net of enforceable minimum terms and conditions. The next wage decision is due in mid 2010, to apply from 1st July 2010.

## National Employment Standards

New National Employment Standards will cover maximum weekly hours of work, flexible working arrangements, parental leave and related entitlements, annual leave, personal/carer's leave and compassionate leave, community service leave, long service leave, public holidays, notice of termination and redundancy pay and the Fair Work Information Statement. They will apply from 1st January 2010.

## Modern Awards

Award modernisation involves the creation of a system of 'modern' awards to operate in conjunction with the new Australian workplace relations system from January 2010. The key objective of award modernisation is to reduce the number of awards in the system from about 2400 to 130, by creating awards with national coverage across industry and occupational lines which will replace federal awards and NAPSAs. Modern Awards will come into effect on 1 January 2010 from which time they will be administered by Fair Work Australia. Contents of Modern Awards are intended to build on the 10 National Employment Standards. The relevant Modern Awards for most child care and OSHC services in Australia will be the Children's Services Industry Award 2010 and the Clerks – Private Sector Award 2010.

**Maureen McGuire**

maureen.mcguire@networksa.org.au

# ARMSU Resource Centre

The ARMSU Resource Centre supports the inclusion and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in child care and education and promotes learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Resources for children include picture books, big books, stories, puppets, kits, videos, DVDs, CDs, multi sensory toys, persona dolls, games and puzzles.

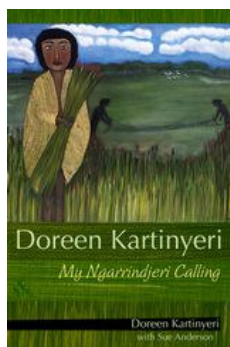
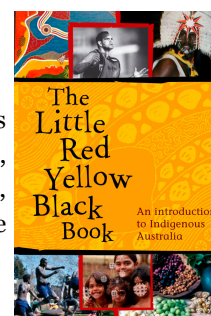
Resources for child care professionals and teachers include programming and curriculum resources, reference materials, biographies, music, and other publications to support cultural awareness and the growth of understanding of the principles of cultural security.

This article describes a range of reading materials suitable for adults and teenage readers. All of the books described are available for loan from the ARMSU Resource Centre. You must be a financial member to be able to borrow items.

The ARMSU Resource Centre is part funded by the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) Gowrie Training Centre under the Australian Government's Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP). Under this program, child care services attracting CCB eligibility have access to subsidised membership. Subsidised memberships include membership of Lady Gowrie Resource Centre SA as well as the ARMSU Resource Centre. Contact ARMSU of 8445 8128 or the Gowrie Resource Centre on 1800 129 606 for details.

## The Little Red Yellow Black Book An introduction to Indigenous Australia

This book is an invaluable guide written from an Indigenous perspective, with mini-essays providing a range of views. The topics covered include: history, culture, arts, sport, languages, population, health, participation in education, employment, governance, resistance, reconciliation. It's a great starting point for anyone wanting to learn about the Indigenous cultures of Australia. This edition published 2008.



## My Ngarrindjeri Calling

This is the autobiography of Doreen Kartinyeri, Ngarrindjeri historian and elder, who established the Aboriginal Family History Unit at the South Australian Museum, and was dedicated to upholding and protecting Ngarrindjeri law. Born at Raukkan (Point McLeay) Aboriginal reserve at the mouth of the Murray in 1935, she was sent to the Fullarton Girls Home in Adelaide at the age of 10 after her mother's death. Doreen later learnt cultural knowledge from her elders and became famous Australia wide as a passionate spokesperson for Ngarrindjeri women fighting against the construction of the Hindmarsh island bridge. Her story reveals a deep-set desire for social justice, wit, humour and integrity. Published 2008.

## First Australians

### The Untold Story of Australia

Seven documentaries on DVD, depicting the true stories of individuals, both black and white, caught in an epic drama of friendship, revenge, loss and victory beginning in 1788 in Sydney with the friendship between Governor Phillip and Bennelong and ending in 1992 with Koiki (Eddie) Mabo's legal challenge to the foundation of Australia. Highly recommended. First screened on SBS in 2008.

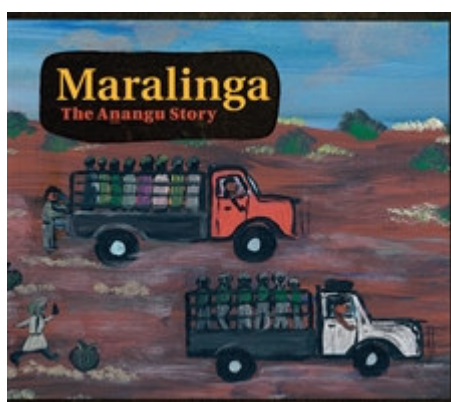
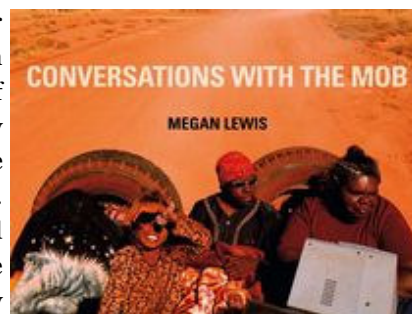
Also available for loan is the companion volume *First Australians An Illustrated History* published in 2008.



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## Conversations with the Mob

In 2002, Megan Lewis quit her full time job with a national newspaper and went to live with the Martu people in the Great Sandy Desert region of Western Australia. Her goal was to create a photographic record of the lives of the Martu people. She thought that it 'would be a good way for me, and for others, to begin to understand the Martu people'. The result is a stunning collection of over 100 photographs with oral stories. *Conversations with the Mob* captures the beauty, humour, sadness and friendship of a traditional Aboriginal community grappling with the demands of Western culture. In her own words, 'It is my wish that my photographs and the mob's stories will allow hearts to open - that this book will serve as a bridge across the great cultural divide.' Published 2008.



## Maralinga The Anangu Story

This new publication is an illustrated history of the Maralinga Tjarutja lands of South Australia, told from the Indigenous perspective and created through a series of workshops, extensive research and community consultation.

In words and pictures, Yalata and Oak Valley community members, with author Christobel Mattingley, describe what happened in the lands before the bombs and after. Published 2009.

## Yuendumu Everyday

### Contemporary life in remote Aboriginal Australia

Yasmine Musharbash spent three years as a participant and an observer in the Warlpiri camps of Yuendumu in Central Australia. In writing *Yuendumu Everyday* she has interwoven narrative portraits of five Warlpiri women with anthropological analysis. The reader is taken deep into the contradictory realities of a not-so-distant hunter-gatherer past, and living in a first-world nation state. *Yuendumu Everyday* explores intimacy, immediacy and mobility as the core principles underpinning contemporary everyday life in a central Australian Aboriginal settlement. Published 2009.



Visitors are welcome to the ARMSU Resource Centre.

We are located in Building 2, The Parks Community Centre, 2 - 46 Cowan Street, Angle Park.

Our building is closest to the large car par in Trafford Street (entrance 7).

PO Box 2440 Regency Park SA 5942

Phone 8445 8128      [www.networksa.org.au](http://www.networksa.org.au)

# School age care in the USA

*Judy Nee is the CEO and President of the National Afterschool Association based in Washington DC (USA). Kay Thomas of the OSHC Association recently travelled to Sydney to hear Judy speak.*



*Judy Nee*

For me Judy's message was both very exciting and very challenging. It was very interesting to hear her overview of the current provision of care for school age children in the USA. The picture she painted has much in common with our own scenario. The key differences being (i) there appears to be more money available for research from both government and non government bodies, and (ii) there is more money spent on lobbying and advocacy. We know the population of the USA is substantially greater than our population but the NAA is planning a national conference in Washington DC in April next year for an expected 2500 delegates. WOW!

The basic elements of the American system do not seem too different, e.g. they struggle to attract and maintain staff, staff are not highly paid, venues are usually shared venues and staff may have an office! Quality control is different – not a national concept such as ours and there is no national qualification. Operational times are similar though the care in the summer vacation is much more complex than our system. Families may use a patchwork of several different care options in that period.

From Judy's address the most exciting challenges are centred on the growing collaboration between school and afterschool. Based on research into the incidence of juvenile crime there is now a national trend to strengthen the alignment between education and afterschool. There has been some in-depth work to identify the purpose of afterschool and the following is a summary:

- afterschool should be engaging and hands on,
- afterschool should offer projects and activities,
- afterschool has a blended content with school curricula,
- afterschool creates an environment where children can demonstrate learning, and
- afterschool supports children's positive growth and development.

These points were presented with some great examples of what might be presented, e.g. in class children are learning about the work of Michelangelo and in Afterschool care paper is taped under tables and children lie on their backs to create their own Sistine Chapel.

Today's children need to have opportunities to refine their skills in team work, problem solving and critical thinking and the afterschool care environments are well positioned to provide this level of support. Children also need to have time away from 'online' and the opportunity to commit time to social activities.

For me Judy's presentation was very timely – I am convinced that for OSHC to really blossom and reach its full potential we have to have a greatly enhanced relationship with our schools and the formal learning they offer.

As work is undertaken by our government to develop the Early Years Learning Framework and the subsequent work that will be undertaken to embrace school age care it is surely time for our people i.e. all OSHC stakeholders, to redefine what our nation wants from OSHC for our children.

**Kay Thomas**

# Changes to Discrimination Legislation

Recent amendments to the federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Age Discrimination Act 2004 will make it easier for employees to bring discrimination complaints.

In the federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992 the definition of 'indirect discrimination' has been changed so that there is now a need to prove that the condition or requirement imposed would disadvantage someone with the same disability. It also shifts the onus of proving the reasonableness of a requirement or condition to the person who imposed the requirement.

An employer has an explicit duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for people with disabilities. Failure to do so will amount to discrimination if it results in the disabled person being treated less favourably because of their disability than a non-disabled person in similar circumstances.

If an employee's disability precludes them from performing the inherent requirements of their position (after any reasonable adjustments) or it would be unjustifiably hard for their employer to accommodate their disability, the Act provides an exemption to unlawful discrimination. The extended ability for employees to bring disability complaints has been balanced by the wider application of these exceptions.

The new legislation amends the Age Discrimination Act 2004 to remove the 'dominant reason' test. This means that discrimination occurs if a person's age is just one of the reasons for taking discriminatory action that disadvantages them.

There have been changes to South Australian legislation too, which strengthen SA anti-discrimination laws, bring them into line with those of other states and nationally. and provide for better options to solve problems locally. The Equal Opportunity (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2008 includes:

- making it unlawful to discriminate against voluntary carers, including indirect discrimination such as setting unreasonable requirements that are too difficult for a carer to meet;
- extending State-level discrimination protection in the workplace to people engaged as contract workers;
- providing protections at a State level for people with disabilities, mental illness, learning difficulties or infections such as H.I.V. and Hepatitis C;
- making it unlawful to refuse to sell goods or services to a breastfeeding mother, or refuse nursing mothers access to educational services;
- making it unlawful for employers or educational institutions to force workers or students to stop wearing religious dress, unless the dress prevents a person from doing a job or creates a danger. This doesn't stop employers from setting reasonable dress standards; and
- making it unlawful to refuse a job to a person based on who their spouse or domestic partner is.

**Employers should consider** reviewing and updating relevant policies and procedures relating to recruitment, managing workplace issues and termination of employment and refresher discrimination training for staff. Employers will also have to go beyond consistent application of criteria and equal treatment to addressing issues such as what can reasonably be done to accommodate an employee's disability.

*Need to know more about equal opportunities, discrimination and harassment?  
Watch for the new Network SA training program out soon, for:  
**Nipping Problems in the Bud and Complaint Handling***

# Putting 'best practice' into your HR practices

The Fair Work Ombudsman has just released 11 *Best Practice Guides* to assist small to medium-sized businesses to implement best practice initiatives. They highlight key aspects of the federal workplace relations system and include:

- information on best practice concepts,
- strategies on how these concepts can be implemented,
- the benefits of doing so, and
- where to find more information.

A 'best practice' approach is about finding - and using - the best ways of working to achieve your objectives. In the case of personnel management, your objectives may be to develop a workplace that is productive, fair, builds strengths and competencies, and is a 'happy' place to be.

'Best practice' involves keeping up to date with the ways that successful businesses operate - in your sector and others - and measuring your ways of working against those used by the market leaders.

It recognises that it takes more than just following the rules ("Is that in the Award?") or finding out what your bottom line rights or responsibilities are as an employer or manager, to be able to develop a quality team.

Managing people successfully requires that you reflect on your own practices as an employer or manager. Guides such as these are a useful starting point in that process.

The *Best Practice Guides* are written in clear, understandable language and include checklists, tables and flow charts. They can be downloaded in Word or pdf formats from [www.fwo.gov.au/Best-Practice-Guides](http://www.fwo.gov.au/Best-Practice-Guides).

Topics include:

1. Work and family
2. Consultation & cooperation in the workplace
3. Use of individual flexibility arrangements
4. A guide for young workers
5. An employer's guide to employing young workers
6. Gender pay equity
7. Small business & the Fair Work Act
8. Workplace privacy
9. Managing underperformance
10. Effective dispute resolution
11. Improving workplace productivity in bargaining

The Fair Work Ombudsman has a range of fact sheets and other material to inform and educate employers and employees of their legal obligations under the Fair Work Act. They are available for download from the Fair Work Ombudsman website, [www.fwo.gov.au](http://www.fwo.gov.au).

**Maureen McGuire**

**Network SA**

[maureen.mcguire@networksa.org.au](mailto:maureen.mcguire@networksa.org.au)

# Belonging, being and becoming - the early years learning framework for Australia

The [National Early Years Learning Framework](#) 'Belonging, Being and Becoming' is a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Agenda for early childhood education and care. It will underpin universal access to early childhood education and be incorporated in the National Quality Standard.

The 5 learning outcomes for children from birth to 5 years are:

- Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity
- Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners
- Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators.

A Families' Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework has been developed and is available at the Early Childhood section of the DEEWR website, [www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au).

An Educators' Guide is planned for release in October 2009. More announcements about training materials will be made shortly.

The Early Years Learning Framework is due for implementation in January 2010.

## OSHC and the Reform Agenda

From the information gathered, it is clear that OSHC is firmly on the agenda for change and that there are opportunities for us to have some say in what will work for us and how the OSHC sector can continue to develop our image and further enhance the quality of our work, thus ensuring even greater benefits for the children and families we serve.

If you hear the following phrases, please tune in as it does include OSHC – Early Years Learning Framework, Regulatory Impact Statement, The Reform Agenda or anything that suggests changes to regulation and accreditation in childcare.

Please take time to make yourself familiar with information relating to the proposed changes and if you have an opportunity to attend a discussion group (hub group) seeking your input please grab the opportunity to be there. If you need to ask questions or seek more information contact the OSHC Association on 0411 558 050.

***Out of School Hours Care SA Association Inc.***

## Reminder – New Unfair Dismissal Laws now effective

From 1st July 2009 new unfair dismissal laws apply under the federal workplace relations system with the commencement of the Fair Work Act. Under the old WorkChoices system, employees in organisations with less than 100 employees could not sue for unfair dismissal. Under the new system, that barrier has been removed.

Employees who have completed a minimum employment period of at least six months (one year in the case of a small business employee), may now make an unfair dismissal application.

A dismissal in a small business (less than 15 FTE employees) will be deemed fair if the employer follows the Small Business Fair Dismissal Code. A copy of the code can be downloaded from [www.fwa.gov.au](http://www.fwa.gov.au).

***Maureen McGuire***

# network sa

Network SA Resource, Advisory & Management Services Inc. (Network SA) is a non-profit community organisation providing information, support, resources and training to the children's services sector in South Australia.



ARMSU is a specialist unit within Network SA. ARMSU operates SA's Indigenous Professional Support Unit ([www.ipsusa.org.au](http://www.ipsusa.org.au)), funded through the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Services provided to the children's services sector by Network SA & ARMSU include:

- Advice and support for Directors, managers, office staff, committee members, operators and other people responsible for effective management of child care and OSHC services
- Training and professional development services
- Specialist advice, support and training for Aboriginal services
- Aboriginal cultural awareness activities for children, and training for staff teams
- Indigenous inclusion support

From 2009 The Networker will be published quarterly in March, June, September and December. Closing dates for each edition are 15th February, 15th May, 15th August and 15th November. Contributions are welcome. Contact the editor Maureen McGuire.

This newsletter has been supported by funding from the Australian Government's Inclusion and Professional Support Program initiative.

Network SA & ARMSU are located in Building 2 at The Parks Community Centre, Angle Park. We acknowledge the Kaurna people as the traditional owners of this land. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region.

**Mailing address:** PO Box 2440 Regency Park SA 5942

**Phone** 08 8445 8128; **Fax** 08 8268 8065

**Email:** [info@networksa.org.au](mailto:info@networksa.org.au)

**Website:** [www.networksa.org.au](http://www.networksa.org.au)

ABN 55 025 418 476

**The material contained in this publication is of a general nature only and not intended to be advice on any particular matter.**

**Please share this newsletter with others in your service:**

- Director / Assistant Director
- Staff
- Administration
- Committee members
- Principal
- Line Manager



## Sector Association Meetings

Child Care in South Australia is supported by professional associations. Services are urged to support associations relevant to their service type by taking out memberships and encouraging staff attendance at meetings.

Meeting times are as follows:

### **ACCSSA (Australian Community Children's Services)** formerly NACBCS.

The committee of ACCSSA meets the 1st Tuesday of the month (beginning in February) at 9.30am at the Gowrie Training Centre.

### **The OSHC Association (SA) Inc.**

Meeting dates for 2009 are to be advised in the February Networker. For further information contact

0411 558 050.

### **Care-providers of South Australia (COSA)** (the peak group for Family Day Care Providers in SA).

All financial members are welcome to attend meetings, scheduled for 7.30pm on 9th & 23rd February, 23rd March, 27th April, 22nd June, 27th July, 10th August— AGM.

If you have any further questions please contact Priscilla Schwanz on 8252 0021 or 0423 303 093.

### **Childcare South Australia**

For information contact 0407 580 645

### **Community Children's Centres SA (CCCSA)**

No meetings in January or December. **2009 meeting dates** are 17th February, 17th March, 21st April, 19th May, 16th June, 21st July, 18th August, 15th September (A.G.M.), 20th October and 17th November (luncheon).