

All About OSHC



Striving for Excellence in OSHC

2023 IPA World Conference

Educators as Researchers - Action Research in OSHC
Rarni Rothwell

**A Chat with OSHC Research Pioneer
Dr. Bruce Hurst**
Lucy Harberts



Edition 7, June 2023



www.noshsa.org.au

2023 SNAPSHOT



536,660
children using
OSHC



12.7
average weekly
hours spent by
children in OSHC



4,889
services in
Australia



55,764
OSHC educators

About NOSHSA

NOSHSA is a federated alliance with representation across Australia. NOSHSA's State and Territory Associations are the recognised peak body's for OSHC in each of their jurisdictions. Peak bodies are recognised by governments as being able to provide pertinent advice and recommendations on behalf of their members. NOSHSA is recognised as the Australian Peak for OSHC by Education Council. The membership bases in each of NOSHSA's jurisdictions includes both small and large providers.

With you as a member, the lobbying power of NOSHSA increases dramatically. Together, our membership and voice can change policy. This is our combined strength.

How can you make the difference?

Be a part of this Australia wide organization by joining your State/ Territory OSHC Association now.

- Attend meetings and network with colleagues.
- Pass on your views to your Association so your concerns can be heard and acted upon.

NOSHSA State and Territory Branches

Queensland	New South Wales	South Australia	Victoria	Western Australia
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Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of All About OSHC for 2023. NOSHSA have been very busy with sector advocacy and promotion. We are proud to have received funding to deliver the 'Embedding Inclusive Practices in OSHC' project over the past two terms. This project is a significant milestone for our sector as it presents the first fully funded professional development program delivered nationwide for a decade. Sector engagement has been tremendous and we look forward to sharing aspects of our project evaluation in due course.

Readers will notice a few advocacy related inclusions in this edition as we share some of the important work that NOSHSA does 'behind the scenes'. It is not always easy to make visible the work that NOSHSA does to ensure that the voice of OSHC is influential, however, we can assure the sector that when important opportunities arise, NOSHSA is included. Over this year, NOSHSA have provided submissions to the ACCC; the Productivity Commission review; the Inclusion Support Program review and more recently the National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy.

Our branches and networks are expanding and we are now proud to have an active community of practice network in the ACT and an emerging network in Tasmania. Updates about these networks will be promoted on the NOSHSA website and through emails.

Finally, we pay our respects to the late Judy Finlayson who was a pioneer in advancing the OSHC sector. Judy was a former Chairperson of NOSHSA and CEO of NSW organisation, Network of Community Activities. You can read about Judy's significant contributions and legacy in an article tribute to her.

Kylie Brannelly
Chairperson
NOSHSA

The contributions in All About OSHC come from a variety of sources and authors. The views expressed in these articles may not represent the express views of NOSHSA delegates.

30 Years of Advocacy - The National Outside School Hours Services Alliance (NOSHSA)

Kylie Brannelly and Robyn Monro Miller

National Outside School Hours Services Alliance (NOSHSA) has been advocating for Australian Outside School Hours Care Services for 30 years. NOSHSA is recognised by Education Council as the national OSHC peak, and was originally declared the OSHC peak body by the Australian Government in the 1990's.

During the 1990's, NOSHSA boasted many achievements for the sector including start-up funding, operational subsidies and the development of National Standards for OSHC in 1995. These standards became the foundation upon which the laws and regulations as they apply to OSHC today were built under the leadership of Robyn Monro Miller.

NOSHSA played a key role in the development of the National Childcare Accreditation Council's Quality Assurance for the sector and led the sector through its implementation with a nationwide training and support project. Over the last 30 years, NOSHSA has influenced every major decision impacting the Australian OSHC sector and were pivotal in the development of the National Quality Framework and the inclusion of OSHC

which prior to this remained unregulated in some jurisdictions across Australia.

The development of a Framework for School Age Care

On the 27th May 2010, the Minister for Youth and Children's Services, Kate Ellis announced the decision to support the creation of a National School Age Care Framework. This was the culmination of successful and sustained advocacy by the only peak body for school age care services in Australia, NOSHSA.

This landmark time was a turning point in the status and standing of the school age care sector in Australia. It was the coming of age for a sector that had long been considered the 'Cinderella' of care services. OSHC had become a key player with its own learning framework transcending OSHC from the poor cousin to a recognised space and place of quality learning for school age children.

It was this moment in time that NOSHSA, the key influencer of government policy and strategic direction for the OSHC sector, was again able to lead sector development into the new era of



Advocacy

The development timeline



policy, regulation and quality. What set this advocacy apart from so many others was the engagement of the OSHC sector across the country. The school age care framework was not a directive of government, it was the result of legitimate and intentional consultation and advocacy on behalf of and within the sector itself.

By the time the national steering group was formed the process of developing the framework had already begun within the sector. The sequence of steps that led to and followed this transcendence of the sector is worthy of public record and effective sector consultation and engagement. A leading example of a sector led initiative and successful sector engagement and ownership.

The first hurdle – OSHC in or out?

Leading into the 2007 election, the Labour government, if elected, made a commitment to 'reform' the Education and Care sector. The proposed reforms included:

- The integration of the regulatory and quality systems (which were seen as duplicative at the time due to states and territories maintaining the regulatory role while the NCAC oversaw the quality system.
- The implementation of a new, 5 point,

rating system which would improve information available to parents about service quality.

The national consultation which shortly followed Kevin Rudd's successful leading of the labour party into government resulted in a majority consensus to proceed with the system reforms and reduce the burden and duplication of the existing regulatory and quality systems.

The OSHC sector has always been unique and diverse and not well understood by its early childhood counterparts. While OSHC and early childhood share similarities there are equally as many contextual differences which require that OSHC sits outside the definition of 'early childhood services' and is recognised as a service type in its own right. This point, however, has been an ongoing challenge for NOSHSA to have recognised within the broader education and care services sector.

When the opportunity arose to discuss where OSHC would be positioned in the new system, now known as the National Quality Framework, it was with fierce advocacy that NOSHSA lobbied to stay outside of the birth to 5 system in order to protect the OSHC sector's identity. This was a strategic decision with goal to ensure OSHC remained independent of early childhood and



received recognition and validation through having its own framework.

The advocacy was complex and required significant lobbying to governments with clearly articulated, evidence-based positions describing

why OSHC required its own framework. It was agreed that OSHC would not initially be included in the birth to 5 framework and when the Early Years Learning Framework was published in 2009, NOSHSA immediately began consultation with the sector to consider how a framework for middle childhood would build on this work in a relevant and meaningful way appropriate to the context of school age care.

In the spring of 2009, NOSHSA commenced consultative processes with the dissemination of a discussion paper written to the sector to garner interest and support with a proposal for a middle years framework for OSHC. NOSHSA delegates consulted with members of their state and territory peak OSHC associations, gathering feedback. This resulted in overwhelming support for a school age care framework.

The momentum gathered quickly, resulting in the preparation of briefing papers for a meeting with the then Assistant Minister for Education, Kate Ellis. The briefing included NOSHSA's requests to develop a complementary document to the EYLF which:

- Maintained Belonging, Being and Becoming as key themes; and
- Applied the outcomes of the learning framework to school age children

In addition to this, NOSHSA requested government make a strong commitment to research in the OSHC sector and that all future

policy and planning acknowledge the continuity of learning in school age care settings.

The process that resulted in the [launch of the Framework for School Age Care in Australia "My Time, Our Place"](#) by Minister Peter Garrett, on August 19, 2011 was the largest national engagement of the sector in school age care history.

A champion for the sector

NOSHSA were pleased to have the opportunity to meet with the Assistant Minister for Education at the time, Kate Ellis on October, 30 2009 in Adelaide. Kate Ellis was a true advocate and champion for the sector, and listened to what the NOSHSA delegates had to say about the OSHC sector including its unique identity. Kate took the time to learn, appreciate and understand. Soon after this and following the completion of the Early Years Learning Framework, a meeting was convened to progress the independent development of a Framework for School Age Care.

This initial meeting was held in Canberra in February 2010 with senior representatives from the department and in March 2010 the project plan to 'Develop a Quality Activities Framework for Outside School Hours Care' was presented and negotiated. NOSHSA, represented by Robyn Monro Miller (NSW) and Kylie Brannelly (Qld) met with these senior departmental representatives to establish a project reference group which would become a steering committee for the project.

The inaugural steering committee met in April 2010 with its first task being to establish the performance criteria and credentials required of potential candidates to be engaged to develop the framework. It was a competitive process and suitable applicants were assessed resulting in consultant, Dr Jennifer Cartmel from Griffith University, being selected to develop the framework under the direction of a steering committee in mid-May 2010.

The steering committee was expanded to comprise representatives from the Australian Government (funding the project), a COAG representative from each State and Territory, the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC), the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA) and Kylie and Robyn as the two delegates from NOSHSA.

A key aspect of the development of the framework was the ongoing, widespread and critical consultation with the school age care sector. This was a time of genuine and authentic consultation when the voices of the OSHC sector were captured and recorded to influence the direction of the framework.

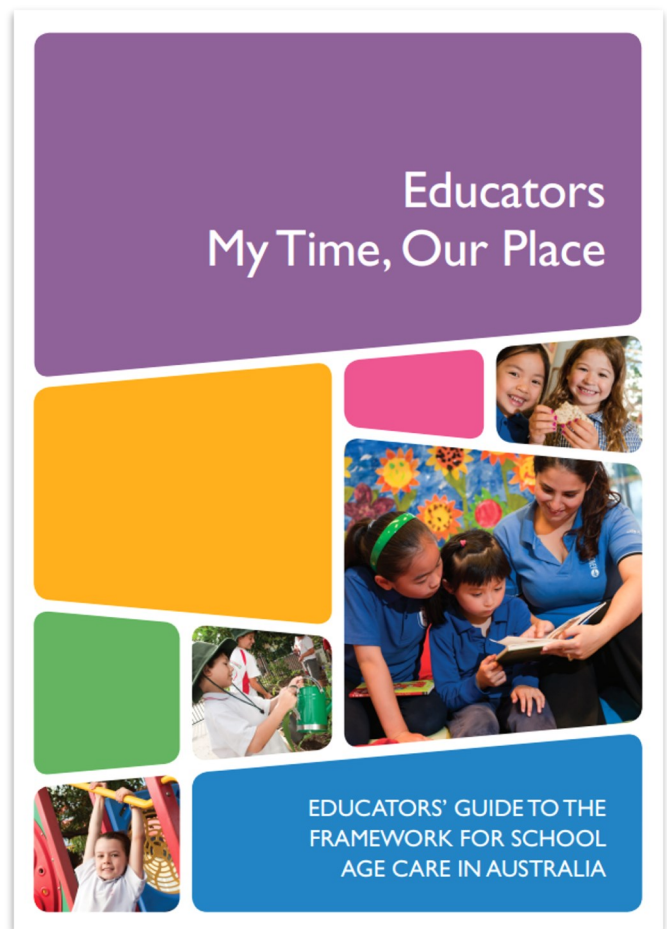
NOSHSA, in partnership with the Australian Government hosted consultations in every state and territory including major regional areas. Facilitated by NOSHSA Representatives Robyn Monro Miller and Kylie Brannelly the consultations drew over 3,500 members of the sector.

Brainstorming on butcher’s paper, responding to reflective questions and identifying key aspects of school age care practice that must be included in any document, these grass roots practitioners contributed their ideas between shifts or after a long day. Each one of the participants committed to the mission to have the voice of the sector heard and their own voice incorporated into the framework. It was a coming of age for our sector. It was an opportunity to stand proudly for our profession.

The content gathered from these consultations forms the basis of the school age framework today. Dr Jennifer Cartmel painstakingly reviewed the information and feedback incorporating it into a document that was then reviewed and discussed by the steering group before approval.

In addition to the Framework for School Age Care, the Department agreed to fund to development of a complementary resource *‘Promoting collaborative partnerships between school age care services and schools’*. This resource was a natural extension of the framework and resultant

of the significant feedback received by the sector during consultation identifying the necessity for schools and OSHC to work together to achieve positive outcomes for children. This resource acknowledged that children’s learning across the day is supported by effective transitions and continuity of learning and that children’s learning is holistic and inter-connected. In promoting holistic child-centred learning and positive wellbeing for children, school and OSHC cannot operate in isolation from each other.



These steps were not easy and until very recent times, NOSHSA has been the ONLY dedicated national voice for OSHC in contrast to the early childhood sector that has more than 10 recognised national sector peaks. While some of these other peak bodies alleged to have OSHC services within their membership, they were not fully across the OSHC sector and 100% dedicated to its advocacy. Now, more than ever, it is critical that NOSHSA continues to advocate for the OSHC through its mechanisms of genuine and authentic consultation with the sector.

Educators as Researchers - Action Research in OSHC

Rarni Rothwell – Learning, Education and Development Manager, QCAN

A recent article published by Nolan & Paatsch in the *International Journal of Early Years Education* titled [Name it and claim it: supporting early childhood teachers to recognise themselves as researchers](#) shared with me by the esteemed Associate Professor Jennifer Cartmel, prompted me to reconsider how Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) intersects with research. The article that focused more broadly on qualified teachers in early childhood education and care (ECEC) posed that whilst the expectations to “engage with research and become inquirers into their own practice” has been strengthened by the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL)*, “current early childhood documents that guide practice use non-descript terms without ascribing them to research or researching.” They “argue that greater opportunities are needed for early childhood teachers to be recognised as consumers and producers of research and validated as researchers of their own practice.” (Nolan & Paatsch, 2023:1) But what does this say for us in OSHC? Do the Professional Standards for OSHC Educators have similar expectations in regard to research? As for this non-descript language in key documents, have I interpreted this differently due to my own lived experiences of action research? Are we NOT recognised as consumers and producers of research in OSHC? Is action research NOT already an established approach in OSHC and are practitioners NOT already using this to shape and inform their own practice at a grassroots level? Are OSHC educators NOT researchers of their own practice? We need to revisit the history of action research in OSHC to make better sense of this.

Action research was introduced to me by the Health and Community Services Workforce Councils (Workforce Council) Professional Support Coordinator Queensland (PSCQ) as a project funded by the Australian Government under the Inclusion and Professional Support Program for the broader early childhood sector.

“As part of their goal to support the professional development of children’s services educators across Queensland, the PSCQ developed and implemented an Action Research Project designed to build the capacity of early childhood educators to understand their own learning processes and set the foundations for practice improvement through continual learning and progressive problem solving” (Workforce Council, 2009:22).

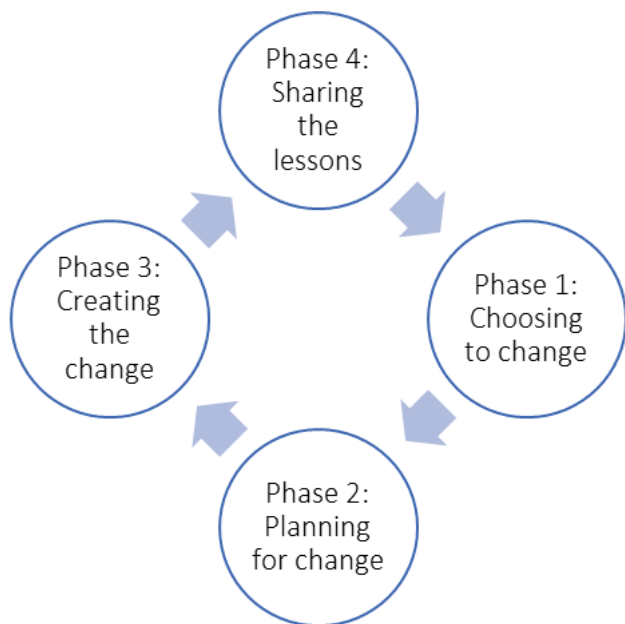
This program provided six facilitated whole day learning days, two core learning days, a sharing day and mentoring support between sessions, which allowed me and two of my OSHC colleagues to be among a cohort of more than 50 early childhood professional across Queensland who participated in the project in 2010. This initial engagement over twelve months was transformational, introducing me to ‘critical’ reflection, emphasising the value of collaboration (which was always so embedded in the Qld OSHC context) and reigniting a professional curiosity that has yet to be quenched.

This project was heavily influenced by the work of Glenda Mac Naughton and Patrick Hughes, described in [Doing Action Research in Early Childhood Studies – A Step by Step Guide](#) (2009). It is informed by the several hundred early childhood action researchers that they worked with in the decade leading up to publication and

they note in the preface that:

“when you offer practical strategies to challenge their thinking and their practice, they grasp them readily as a way to create changes. Further, we have seen that when they grasp the disparate and sometimes difficult ideas that underpin action research, their work grows in rigour, depth and quality and the professional and social changes they create grow in significance.”

It describes action research as a cyclic process of “think-do-think to research and create change” (Mac Naughton & Hughes, 2009:1-2) and takes you step-by-step through the process. The following diagram depicts their action research approach as illustrated in their guide:



Whilst this book is targeted at university students, early education professionals (including OSHC), curriculum advisors, managers and policy makers as an introductory text, it uses rich language to describe the action research process, and gives links to ‘going deeper’ should you wish to pursue research more formally. The PSCQ Project working in these ways, with skilful facilitators who operate out of academic research institutions, positioned participants – myself included – to understand how our work as educators could and should be guided by the action research cycle. This early action research work (and the hundreds



referred to by Mac Naughton & Hughes) brought forth many examples of educators as researchers, consuming and producing research that shaped and transformed practice. These action research projects (and many since) have been

shared extensively throughout the early education and care sector, through assorted conferences (see [All About OSHC, Edition 1, March 2020](#)), [publications](#), [magazines](#), [poster presentations](#), [PHD Thesis](#), [Journals](#), [Submissions](#)) and professional grassroots networking through the NOSHA state and territory branches. Whilst there is some looming evidence of this (as linked above), the withdrawal of funding for the ECEC Professional Support Project, meant that most of the shared documentation of these action research projects is no longer accessible. What are the implications of this for the current OSHC sector? Do we have a collective sense of our action research history and how it has impacted our understandings and evolution of best practice? Perhaps our key framework documents can offer further insight.

As action research was gaining a firm foothold in ECEC, the sector was undergoing extensive change with the development and implementation of the National Quality Framework (NQF). The NQF brought about landmark reforms in which all Australian governments worked together to strive for better educational and developmental outcomes for children “based on clear evidence that the early years of children’s lives are very important for their present and future health, development and wellbeing.” (ACECQA, 2013:7) The NQF is underpinned by six guiding principles, including that best practice is expected in the provision of

education and care services. Whilst the role of research in best practice was not fully articulated until the NQS was amended in 2018, the original standards specifically draw on the importance of research relating to four particular elements:

- Element 1.2.2 - Each child’s learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation. *“Intentionality utilises professional knowledge and strategies that reflect contemporary theories and research concerning children’s play, leisure and learning.”* (ACECQA, 2013:40)
- Element 2.1.3 - Effective hygiene practices are promoted and implemented. *“Assessors may **observe** hygiene practices that reflect current research, best practice and advice from relevant health authorities.”* (ACECQA, 2013:56)
- Element 5.2.1 – Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities. *“Assessors may observe children engaged in ongoing collaborative projects they have initiated that involve research, planning, problem-solving and shared decision-making.”* (ACECQA, 2013:131)
- Element 7.1.4 – Provision is made to ensure a suitably qualified and experienced educator or co-ordinator leads the development of the curriculum and ensures the establishment of clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning. *“Assessors may sight evidence of professional discussion and interrogation of research and new ideas.”* (ACECQA, 2013:172)

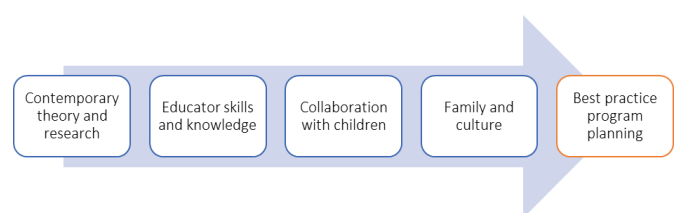
All of these elements position educators as consumers of research, who draw on this knowledge to inform and progress their practice; one even going further to position children (and their intentional educators) as creators of research and knowledge.

This focus on research is further established in *My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care in Australia* (MTOF) published in 2011, highlighting its importance in the principles, practices (in both intentionality and evaluation for wellbeing and learning) and outcomes. It is probably however the *Educators Guide to MTOF* (2012) that offered the most insight into the role of research in OSHC;

“When educators reflect on their role in children’s lives they reflect on their own views and understandings of theory, research and practice. This Guide provides educators with underpinning knowledge about the theories, research and practices that are most relevant to children in the middle childhood phase.” (Australian Government, 2012:3)

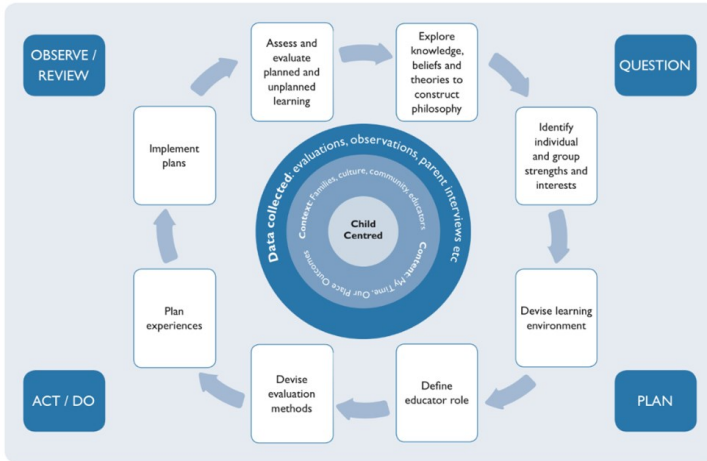
“Educators must develop their own beliefs and values in relation to their pedagogy in the light of their understanding of theory and research to provide quality programs. Reflective practice is considered to be an essential technique for promoting such critical inquiry.” (Australian Government, 2012:6)

Chapter 3 of this guide, titled Decision Making: Implementing the Framework, offered important insight into how educators could and should draw on research to shape and inform the curriculum.



“The Framework enables us to incorporate contemporary theory and research; educator skills and knowledge; collaboration with children; and partnerships with families and culture to develop best practice for program planning” (Australian Government, 2012:11)

This section also described the planning cycle *“as a continuous ‘cycle of inquiry’ which includes stopping to think about how and why we’re doing things the way we are, examining our answers to these questions from different perspectives, and*



using the deeper understandings we develop as a reference point for deciding what actions or changes we want to make.” (Australian Government, 2012:12) This was captured in the following diagram of the School Age Care Planning Cycle depicted on page 16 of the guide.

The four primary phases of question, plan, act, and observe, align with those typically used in an action research inquiry; a point that has been established and discussed amongst the OSHC sector since the Educators Guide was

introduced; along with the prompting of educators to consider documentation as data collection (Rothwell & Vollbrecht, 2015). The guide also offers many examples of educators ‘experimenting’ with the cycle, often including children as co-creators of knowledge.

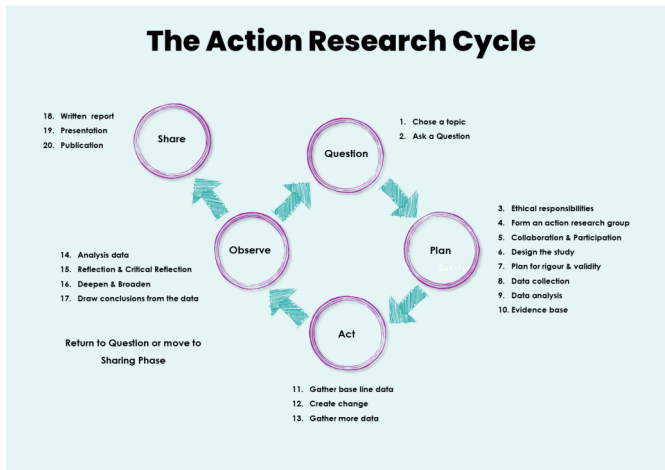
In 2013-14 NOSHSA was funded to roll out a similar action research project with a specific focus on OSHC. Here in Queensland and the Northern Territory it allowed 10 services to explore a wide range of topics over several months, culminating with the sharing of these projects at the QCAN Annual Conference in 2014. The action research segment titled “Ignite! Research based ideas and strategies to stimulate your thinking and inform future practice!” showcased the following projects:

- **Documentation in OSHC– what is meaningful and relevant?** - Macgregor OSHC
- **Embedding social-emotional learning in OSHC** - Our Lady of Lourdes OSHC
- **Building relationships with children** - Good Shepherd OSHC
- **The role of the coordinator and the NQF – what is required now?** - Manunda Terrace, NT
- **The NQF and My Time, Our Place – what do educators need to know and be able to do?** - St Catherine’s OSHC
- **Specialised service delivery for school age children with disabilities** - YMCA Aspley Specialist Service
- **Supervision, School and OSHC** - Nakara OSHC, Northern Territory
- **Community and family relationships - the impact on service delivery** - Loosends OSHC
- **Providing school age care for older children** - Kuluin OSHC
- **Providing school age care for older children** - VicKids OSHC
- **Supporting rural and remote communities within venue family day care for school age children** - QCAN

The success of these projects and those that came before them, coupled with the innovative exemplars of transformative practice they showcased across the OSHC sector, prompted the QCAN Board to invest in the ongoing funding of this type of research.

Since 2014 the QCAN Action Research Project has aimed to enhance excellence in OSHC through enabling our members to take on the role of action researchers, engaging in this cyclic form of critical reflection. The research group met regularly across several months, working with the generous support of OSHC

champions and critical friends, Associate Professor Jennifer Cartmel and Dr Bruce Hurst, exploring ideas of interest in their unique context with their key OSHC stakeholders. This approach is depicted below:



The sectors appetite and passion for research has continued to grow with several previous action research participants going on to higher degrees with research focussed on OSHC. I look forward to sharing the work of our current QCAN action research projects in the future as we prepare for the Conference of the WERA Task Force ***Bricolage: Research Methodologies and Perspectives in Extended Education*** at Griffith University, Queensland 19-21 September 2024.

Over time the updated framework documents have further strengthened the focus on research too. In the 2018 update of the NQS this included:

- adding drawing on a range of current research, theory and understandings into the guidance around best practice expectations (ACECQA, 2018:11)
- exceeding theme 2 – practice is informed by critical reflection drawing on various sources of knowledge and research evidence, and evaluating these sources for their credibility and relevance as well as their ‘fit’ to the context of the service (ACECQA, 2018:95)

Whilst in the 2022 update to MTOP the link between research and practice continued to be highlighted. It reads:

“Current practices are discussed, debated and evaluated, and new ideas generated.”

“As professionals, educators are committed to lifelong learning and seek out opportunities to strengthen their professional knowledge and skills to support continuous quality improvement in practice. Working in collaboration with colleagues, they identify and negotiate learning priorities, reflect on how they learn best, and look for evidence-informed learning experiences that support deep learning, critical reflection and practice change. Educators recognise that ongoing learning can take many forms. This may include professional learning experiences within settings, for example, professional conversations within teams, coaching and mentoring, professional reading, practitioner inquiry and participating in collaborative research projects.” (AGDE, 2022:19)

“When educators reflect on their practices with children and young people, they reflect on their own views and understandings of theory, research, values and perspectives” (AGDE, 2022:28)

But where does that leave us as consumers and producers of research in OSHC? Do we use this to shape and inform our own practice at a grassroots level? Is action research an established approach in OSHC? Are OSHC educators’ researchers of their own practice?

These are questions that can only be answered in the communities in which each of us work based on our contextual experiences and knowledges. It is absolutely impacted by how the action research stories of best practice have been conveyed; how it positions research and the role of educator as consumer and/or producer. Whilst research is positioned as import to the work of OSHC educators in the documents that guide our practice, the emphasis is on consuming research

to validate and guide practice rather than producing, which is often isolated to the co-construction of the children's knowledges. Whilst this is important, it is not the only production of research in OSHC.

Perhaps we would benefit from more descriptive language with a stronger focus on research and researching; language that helps us to reimagine our work as educators as also social scientists co-creating knowledge and understanding with all our stakeholders – collectively generating new understandings of OSHC. Action research positioned this way, seems particularly important, given the limited OSHC specific formal research that exists here in Australia.

Many of us in OSHC know the power of action research to offer new understandings and better ways of practicing. As a result we have embedded this research approach into our everyday work as educators. Whilst we have been showcasing this for over a decade, it seems to have been overlooked by the broader education community. Perhaps OSHC educators just need to be better recognised along with their early education colleagues, as Nolan & Paatsch (2023) suggest. Whilst we would certainly also benefit from greater opportunities to “be recognised as consumers and producers of research and validated as researchers of their own practice”, we are not going to just sit around and wait for it to happen. We will continue the important work of action research in OSHC regardless, not for the recognition or the transformational professional development it affords, but because of the amazing outcomes for our children and families that shape our ever evolving understanding of best practice. As we do, we will also work to better evidence the OSHC research journey to ensure our collective experiences and the important learnings they deliver, outlast us all.

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My Time, Our Place V2.0 Visiting Scotland and Iceland

In undertaking the update of My Time Our Place 2.0 the Australian researchers looked to what was happening around the rest of the world. Both Scotland and Iceland have resources to guide the delivery of services and contributed to background information. The guiding vision for their services includes the UNCRC, particularly Articles 12 children have a say on matters that affect them, and Article 31 about play, leisure, rest and education. Some Icelandic services have Children’s Councils that provide input into the way in which services are executed.



Similarities

Unsurprisingly there are some similarities between school age childcare between Scotland, Iceland and Australia- not least, the relationship between services and schools. Many Scottish and Icelandic services are based within schools and there are often issues with access to premises, storage and use of spaces. There are also shared staff between school and the OSHC services. In Iceland the school principals are responsible for staff in OSHC and the school.

Outdoor play, is especially important in all services. There is a strong sense for appreciating nature no matter what the weather. There are some services with outdoor playgrounds filled with loose parts and others who take the children

to the bush and to the beach especially during the summer holiday period.

Differences

The Icelandic services are provided for children 6-9 years and then there are youth clubs and leisure centres for older children. The services are funded by the municipalities and national government. The Scottish services have staff ratios for working with three to eight year olds as 1 to 8 ratio and for children aged 9 years and older a ratio of 1 to 10 is recommended.

One after school centre in Iceland – Dalheimar Leisure Centre has certification from UNICEF as a rights afterschool care. As a UNICEF's Rights Schools, they use the term Whole School Approach to explain the philosophy of the project, that describes a holistic approach to the implementation of children's rights in after school activities.

In Scotland, Associate Professor Jennifer Cartmel, Kylie Keane (Keen About, Canberra) and Kylie Brannelly presented in person to members of the Scottish Out Of School Care Network and in Iceland, Jennifer Cartmel presented simultaneously in person and online at the Department of Education, University of Iceland. We look forward to being able to host some of the participants when we host the WERA Taskforce Global Research in Extended Education conference in Brisbane in September, 2024.



Australia's First Churchill Scholarship for Outside School Hours Care



A Churchill Fellowship offers Australian citizens a life-changing opportunity to travel overseas for four to eight weeks to learn more about a topic or issue that they are passionate about. Applicants are empowered to design their own projects to explore international best practice and innovation that can be applied in Australia.

In 2022, Jenni Hutchins, the former CEO of a NSW based OSHC provider applied to undertake a project with a focus on OSHC. This application was successful and became the first scholarship awarded in Australia for research into the OSHC sector. In June 2023, Jenni has begun her journey with the fellowship and has established a website and blog to document and share what she experiences and learns along the way.

'I started the Centre of Focus website to capture my learnings whilst I travel for my 2022 Churchill Fellowship on Out of School Hours Care. My goal is to offer readers a glimpse into my thoughts and experiences of best practice models of OSHC for children/students. This information, all vlogs and blogs will be free to access and share (with credit to me as author). I hope to do bi-weekly short videos and blogs to provide on-the-go information. My aim is to have a dynamic site packed with information about OSHC and other subjects near and dear to me. Take some time to explore the blogs and see for yourself.' Jenni Hutchins

You can follow Jenni's journey on her website: www.centreoffocus.com.au

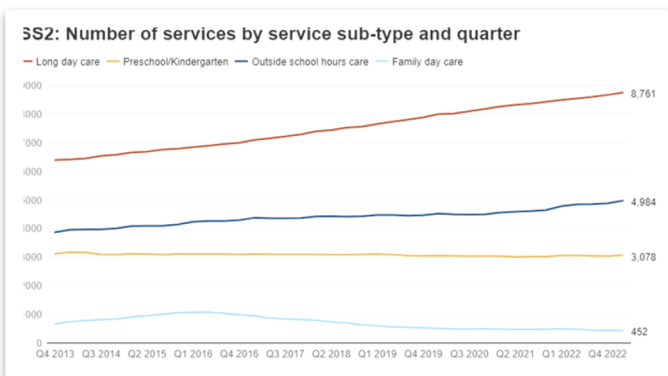
National Quality Framework Snapshot

ACECQA

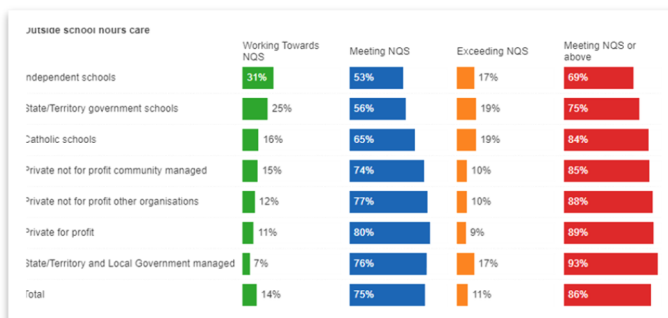
In May, ACECQA released its 41st National Quality Framework (NQF) [Snapshot](#). Chris Mason, Senior Manager of Workforce, Engagement and Research at ACECQA provides an overview of the outside school hours care (OSHC) sector. The figures below are taken from the [NQF Online Snapshot](#).

As at 1 April 2023, there are just under 5,000 OSHC services approved under the NQF, compared to just under 4,000 services at 1 April 2014. This means that the OSHC sector has grown by more than 25% over the last nine years. In the last 12 months alone, the OSHC sector has grown by 4%, making it the fastest growing service type under the NQF.

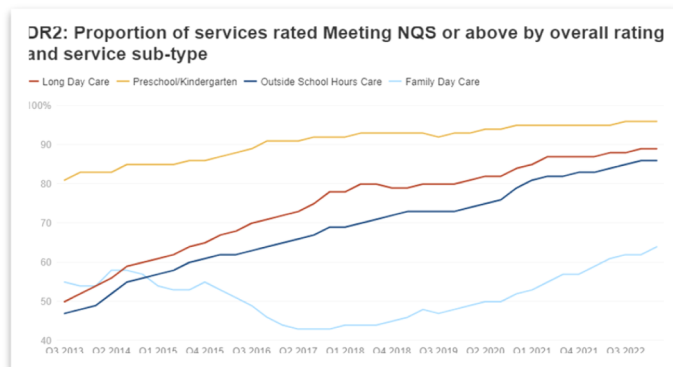
More than a quarter (29%) of all services approved under the NQF are OSHC services, and just under half (48%) of OSHC services are private-for-profit operated services.



Our latest NQF Snapshot shows that 86% of OSHC services are rated Meeting NQS or above, with 11% rated Exceeding NQS.



The proportion of OSHC services rated Meeting NQS or above has risen consistently over the last nine years, starting out at below 50% before hitting 60% in 2015, 70% in 2018 and 80% in 2021.



It will be interesting to see how close the proportion gets to 90% in 2024, with six elements of quality proving to consistently be the most challenging for OSHC services (more than 5% of OSHC services are currently assessed as not met for each of the below elements):

- Assessment and planning cycle (Element 1.3.1)
- Critical reflection (Element 1.3.2)
- Management systems (Element 7.1.2)
- Educational leadership (Element 7.2.2)
- Development of professionals (Element 7.2.3)
- Health practices and procedures (Element 2.1.2).

Our website includes guidance and support for all services to [meet the NQS](#), as well as a wide range of [supporting materials](#) and [research and reports](#).

Finally, with 2023 shaping up to be an incredibly important year for the children’s education and care sector, please do subscribe to our [newsletter](#) to stay up-to-date with developments, such as the revised [approved learning frameworks](#) and the [national workforce strategy](#), including the [review of staffing and qualification regulations](#).

Exciting Progress on the Activated OSHC Study - A National Call to Action

We are pleased to share an update on the groundbreaking 'Activated OSHC' study, a collaborative effort between the National Outside School Hours Care Association (NOSHSA), and researchers from the University of South Australia, University of Western Australia, University of Newcastle, Flinders University, and the University of Wollongong, as well as government and industry partners.



This pioneering project focuses on the implementation of the new National OSHC Guidelines for Physical Activity and Screen Time, which are currently being assessed in a major research trial. The trial is active across South Australia, Perth and surrounds, and Newcastle and surrounds, with OSHC services being randomly selected for participation.

We are pleased to report that to date, an impressive total of 113 services have jumped on board this important initiative. If your service is invited to participate, we warmly encourage you to consider joining. It's a chance to contribute to the evolving landscape of Outside School Hours Care in Australia.

For services that don't receive an invitation, or are located in VIC, QLD, TAS, NT, and ACT, please note that the full program will be made available to you once it is officially released in late 2024.

This study demonstrates what can be achieved when we work together. By participating in projects like

these, we can continue to improve our industry, making sure it aligns with the needs and expectations of the children in our care.

Thanks to everyone in our community for your continued efforts in providing quality Outside School Hours Care across Australia. Your work is essential, and your dedication is greatly appreciated.



NOSHSA - Embedding Inclusive Practice in OSHC Project

In 2023, NOSHSA have received funding from the Australian Government to deliver the most significant national project to support the OSHC sector in the area of inclusive practice. This project focusses on building capacity across the educator team in the areas of:

- Complex behaviour support
- Neurodiverse affirming practice
- Trauma informed care and practice

There is a full suite of resources which includes:

- Educator Workbooks
- Guides and training materials to support educational and service leaders with implementation
- Recorded webinars



While the training and mentoring sessions are nearing completion of the 2023 roll out across terms 1 and 2, further online training opportunities will be available throughout term 3.

Griffith University have been engaged to undertake an evaluation of the project as NOSHSA seeks to understand how to support high quality inclusive practice in OSHC and how this project in particular has impacted the sector. Lead researcher, Dr Jennifer Cartmel has received 205 responses in the evaluation to date indicating that more than 3/4 of the participants have used the materials to plan their professional learning for the remainder of the year.

Early findings on the project include significant changes in practices in services. Some of the comments include:

- *Listened to the children more to find better connections with them.*
- *Continued to work with children who struggle through emotions/decisions. When children are not looking/behaving/interacting like themselves continuing to try and read those signs.*
- *Make sure I'm acknowledging positive behaviours more often. If a child is not ready to listen due to being upset, made sure I've given them space to calm down before trying to talk to them.*
- *Changed the vocab of staff and myself from what is the child doing wrong to what need is the child communicating.*
- *We have stopped daily group time, we are transitioning to a flow routine when children transition from school to OSHC*
- *A wellbeing hub for our team.*
- *The training however has taught myself (Educational Leader) more to be able to teach my team.*
- *Encouraging my team to lean into discomfort critically reflecting on their own practice.*
- *We have also added in a new critical reflection process which is getting more staff involved in the changes and improvements of the service.*

Developed a new induction checklist for staff, and a new easier way to identify programmed activities that related to an observation and follow up to be completed.

Further information about the project can be found here [Inclusion Project | NOSHSA](#)



Striving for Excellence in OSHC

The Australian Children's Education and Care Authority (ACECQA) recognises and celebrates excellence in the delivery of education and care. The Excellent rating recognises providers and educators using innovative practice to achieve significant improvements for:

- their children and families
- the local community and/or organisations
- the wider education and care sector.



Services rated Exceeding National Quality Standard in all seven quality areas are eligible to apply. The Excellent rating is the highest rating achievable under the National Quality Framework.

NOSHSA acknowledges the significant efforts and work that goes into achieving an exceeding rating in all seven quality areas. This means that the service has gone 'above and beyond' in their practice and has demonstrated high quality practice in all areas consistent with the exceeding themes of:

- Embedded practice
- Meaningful engagement; and
- Critical reflection

Three services that have recently been awarded the exceeding rating, making them eligible to

apply for the excellent rating are:

- **Kuluin OSHC**
- **Wilston Kids Care**
- **Warrawee Care Centre**

Each of these services operate in a context that is unique to their community. Following are comments made by each of the Service's leaders about their journey to exceeding:

Kuluin OSHC

Kuluin State School OSHC is a 160 place service located on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland operated by a P&C approved provider. In October 2020, the service received a rating of Exceeding NQS in every standard. Whilst the service had previously been rated as Exceeding in 2013, the 2020 assessment and rating outcome required that the service demonstrated practice consistent with the exceeding themes across each standard. Having been able to do this, they are now eligible to apply for the excellent rating which is awarded by ACECQA.

Whilst Kuluin OSHC are highly regarded in their local community, they are also renown for their many exemplary practices in the wider OSHC community. Kuluin have been very active members of their State Peak, QCAN for many years; collaborating and networking with other OSHC services locally and across the state. They were a part of the initial NOSHSA action research project in 2013, deeply embedding critical reflection, cyclic planning and ongoing improvement into their everyday practice. Over the years this innovative best practice has been showcased with a focus on:

- School and OSHC collaborations
- Redeveloping the Murri trail
- Child-led program design including loose parts

More recently, Kuluin OSHC were asked to provide case studies for a project being undertaken by the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO). The project sought to identify and share evidence based practices that support effective continuity and transitions for school age children between school and OSHC.

Then in 2022, Kuluin OSHC together with Associate Professor Jennifer Cartmel presented their 'Murri Trail' research at the international WERA conference. This event, which was held online in 2022, brought together researchers in the field of extended education from all over the world.



In 2023, Kuluin OSHC were presented in a service showcase to the Scottish Outside School Hours Care Network.

They look forward to having this sector leading practice formally acknowledged through an excellence rating.

Wilston Kids Care

Wilston Kids Care is a 260 place P&C operated Outside School Hours Care service in Queensland and is proud to announce it has achieved an Exceeding rating under the National Quality Standard. The Wilston State School, not for profit, OSHC service, is now acknowledged as one of the

leading providers of quality school-based care. Wilston Kids Care has a demonstrated commitment to delivering high quality outcomes for school aged children.

General Manager Raeleen Wren said, “the team was thrilled to have received recognition for the quality and inclusion outcomes at Wilston Kids Care. “Our focus has been on providing an environment that allows child directed learning whilst supporting a child’s individual strengths, building their confidence and teaching them lifelong skills.” “Our team is dedicated to providing the best possible education and care program for children during their schooling journey.” “This rating is a testament to their hard work and dedication,” she said.

“We achieved Exceeding in all seven Quality Areas, with no recommendations for improvement. “We are proud to have transformed the service over the last five years into one of the leading Outside School Hours Care services in the country.” We are known for being one of the very few large set up and pack down services in Queensland, co-sharing facilities on a State School site.” Our space is not purpose built or independent from the school, yet we successfully cohabitate in shared school spaces, to deliver an Exceeding Program.

The National Quality Standard is a measure of the quality of early education and care services both in childcare and outside school hours care across Australia, set by the regulator, Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). It is a comprehensive assessment that examines all aspects of a service, including its educational program and practice, health and safety standards, physical environment, relationships with families and communities, governance and leadership, and the qualifications and experience of its staff.

Wilston Kids Care received an overall rating of Exceeding the National Quality Standard, which is the highest rating a service can achieve under the on-site assessment and rating visit process

National Out of School Hours Care Educators Day - Wednesday 26 July 2023

National Out of School Hour Care Educators Day is the annual National day to celebrate and recognise the important role Educators play in the lives of children. It is an initiative introduced by Network of Community Activities and celebrated together with member organisations of NOSHSA (The National Association for Out of School Hours Care in Australia) and the OSHC sector. Each year it is celebrated on the last Wednesday of July.

The **2023** theme is **OSHC/OOSH Educators: At the Heart of the Community**. This theme recognizes the significant contributions that OSHC Educators make to the lives of children and the way in which they bring communities together to support children's wellbeing, learning and development.



Network of Community Activities

have produced a bunch of free resources that services can access to help them promote and celebrate this day. These include:

- Posters
- Tiles
- Cards
- Bunting
- Certificates
- Posters
- Checklist; and
- Thank you

These resources can be accessed here:

[OOSH Educators Day – Network of Community Activities](#)

On Wednesday July 26th let's celebrate together sharing your stories and the outstanding contribution you make to the lives of children.

Government Funded Wage Increases for ECEC

On the 6th June, United Workers Union together with a number of Early Childhood Education and Care providers lodged the first application for a national multi-employer agreement in the Fair Work Commission. This application aims to negotiate better pay and conditions for the early childhood education and care sector with an initial application to Long Day Care.

New laws were introduced by the Australian Government last year under the Secure Jobs, Better Pay legislation with the intention to extend the benefits of enterprise bargaining to government-funded sectors like ECEC under a Supported Bargaining Stream. While the Government welcomed an application for multi-employer bargaining between unions and a discrete group of employers in the ECEC sector, the development has caused understandable anxiety in the broader industry including the Outside School Hours Care sector.

NOSHSA are naturally concerned that this application is focused on a discrete number of Long Day Care providers. It is understood however that there are many steps to the bargaining process and that following this initial application, negotiations will take some time, particularly when the better pay and conditions are reliant on Government funding.

NOSHSA continue to advocate for the OSHC to be included in any government funded wage increase negotiated for ECEC.

Chairperson of the National Outside School Hours Services Alliance, Kylie Brannelly states

'OSHC is an equal contributor to children's learning, wellbeing and development across the Australian ECEC sector. OSHC is regulated, assessed and rated as rigorously as other parts of the ECEC sector. The awarding of a pay increase to one part of the sector over another would be detrimental for the entire sector and would disadvantage children, families, educators and providers. We need equal recognition for the work and professionalism of OSHC educators throughout Australia and NOSHSA will continue to advocate on behalf of the workforce for this recognition.'

The Australian ECEC sector comprises 216,619 educators with 55,764 of those being OSHC educators across OSHC and Vacation Care. [2021 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census report - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)

For further information including media releases and Australian Government :

<https://elink.clickdimensions.com/m/1/43726113/02-b23157-ddae1dff2fd54fbf8cba8d2aa57556db/1/502/bde597c4-7b00-42fc-bf24-7417dcf345a0>

[Why we're supporting multi-employer bargaining for members - CELA](#)

[Draft National Strategy for the Care and Support Economy | PM&C \(pmc.gov.au\)](#)



A Chat with OSHC Research Pioneer, Dr. Bruce Hurst

Lucy Harberts - Community Child Care Association



Dr. Bruce Hurst is a bona fide Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) veteran and superstar, having worked across the field for more than three decades. Currently, he is trailblazing

as one of only two Australian researchers actively researching in OSHC, conducting innovative research that focuses on the perspectives of older children.

Recently, Community Child Care Association (CCC) sat down with the OSHC research extraordinaire to unpack his latest research: Programming for older children in School Age Care: Adult and child engagement with developmental pedagogies.

CCC: Pleasure to meet you, Bruce, can you please introduce yourself?

BH: My name is Bruce Hurst, and I work at the University of Melbourne in the Graduate School of Education as a research fellow. Prior to that, I worked in and with OSHC services – as a teacher of the diploma and certificate courses for OSHC, in local government with a few different councils coordinating, managing and supporting OSHC programs and at CCC. So that’s kind of my history, a long, long time working in OSHC, starting in the early 1990s.

*After a varied and impressive career like that, what made you return to study your PhD? One day, I was at my desk at CCC and a colleague handed me Jennifer Cartmel’s – who wrote *My Time, Our Place* – thesis. I remember at the time I was really captured by it. I was excited to see somebody had done a PhD about OSHC, so that was the inspiration for me. Plus, I didn’t think that there was enough existing research in OSHC. It was only when I discovered that I could do a*

master’s by research doing a thesis that I realised I could do a research degree in OSHC and sort of go down a similar path as Jennifer Cartmel.

Can you walk me through your latest research?

So for this research, I collected and looked at two sets of data: what strategies educators used to work with older children and what the older children had to say about those strategies. The two main strategies that the educators talked about were separate resources and spaces – and a strategy that I call the Apprentice Educator. I have learned over the years that Apprentice Educator is a very common strategy that educators will sometimes use when they invite older children to be like mini-adults or mini-educators to do educator-like tasks – to look after little children, to help little children with activities, to help in the kitchen, to help educators do their work and to lead activities, that sort of stuff.

What I learned from the research was that all the children that I worked with – and it’s only a small group of children (ten), so we can’t say that this is true for everyone of course – found great value in separate spaces and resources, their own games, their own equipment and that sort of thing. Let’s take Textas for example. They like to use, for want of a better phrase, a ‘grown up’ Texta or a fine tip



marker rather than the big Crayola's that were made for little hands. Those were too blunt and they couldn't do fine colouring in and drawing with them. It was about what they preferred to use, but also what they associate the markers with. It was the same with movies and stuff like that. They wanted to watch PG films like Harry Potter, not G rated films like Frozen. It was about how they see themselves as older children.

So that strategy of separate resources for older children was important to them in a range of ways. It was important because they had access to older children's resources outside OSHC, it was important to them because they didn't want to associate themselves with little kid stuff and it was also about the satisfaction of the play and leisure experiences too. If they had equipment that was suited to their age and development, then their play and leisure was more satisfying for them because they were using resources they thought of as developmentally suitable for them.

How receptive were the children to the role of Apprentice Educator?

One thing I learned from talking to the older children was they did not mention Apprentice Educator. Not one child mentioned that it was something that was good about OSHC. The stuff they thought was good about OSHC was play, friends and having stuff that was suitable for their own age – it wasn't being asked to do adult-style work and adult-style tasks.

For me, the critical question about the Apprentice Educator role which I thought was a little bit problematic is that it is highly gendered. Often when it was used there were homemaker style tasks for the girls and leadership and coaching tasks for the boys. Now I find that problematic to assume that girls are always going to want to do those homemaker roles and that boys are always going to want to be leaders – it can be vice-versa and it can be a combination of those things.

I started to wonder whether educators feel as if Apprentice Educator is attractive because it allows



all the children to take up an older identity, but to take it up in a way that feels safe. I think this could be because it doesn't involve risky play – it doesn't involve talking about adolescent bodies or pre-adolescent bodies that the children sometimes like to talk about. It is a way of them performing an older identity that isn't provocative and is seen as being a safe sort of thing they can do around younger children, like a sanitised version of being a pre-adolescent child.

Now this is not to say that I don't think that Apprentice Educator has a place in OSHC. It can have a place, but educators need to think about how they present and structure it. Educators need to move away from something being a boy's role or a girl's role and present it in a way that promotes diverse ways of performing gender. Also, if it is the only or the main strategy used for making OSHC a good place for all the children then I think it is really limiting.

I think for older children, one thing I have learned is having challenge in their play and having an interest in play activities that challenge them is really important. It's harder when older children are bigger and stronger, but I don't think we should avoid providing older children with challenging play because it feels more difficult for us.

What do you most want people to take away from this research?

To think critically about the strategies they use for

older children and to think about age as a part of older children's identities – so identity isn't just their gender or the activities that they are interested in. For older children to see themselves as more capable or more able than younger children is a reasonable thing, and we need to use strategies that support them to feel that way. Now, Apprentice Educator can sometimes do that, but I think it also comes down to the play and leisure that we provide for older children – play and leisure should be the focus of the work educators do in supporting their older identities. OSHC is a play and leisure space, so we should be putting our efforts into play and leisure that allows all children to express their abilities.

It is truly complex providing OSHC for this age group – that's the reason we are still talking about it after 35 years. The things I have talked about today I don't want to be seen as universal answers that will work for every service and every

child. For me, it's about recognising that the best way to understand this and the best way to work with all of the children is to communicate with them, to get them to share with you what's important and to think critically about the things that you already do and be willing to revise them. To be open to new ways of working and things for children to suggest to you.

If you would like to read more of Bruce's research head to <https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/profile/537273-bruce-hurst>

Community Child Care Association is the peak for Outside School Hours Care services in Victoria. We are the Victorian branch of [National Outside Schools Hours Services Alliance \(NOSHSA\)](#), presenting a united voice on the advocacy issues that matter to OSHC at a national level.



Tributes Flow for Judy Finlason - A true advocate for our sector driven by children, community arts and the environment

Pauline O’Kane CEO, Network of Community Activities and proud friend of Judy’s



The world will never be quite the same now that Network (NSW Peak Body for Out of School Hours services) founder, Judy Finlason is no longer with us. . Judy will be greatly missed. Her contribution to the Out of School Hours sector was remarkable.

Judy has been the pivotal figure in Network of Community Activities history

a person who did make a difference and impacted all who were privileged to meet her. Judy was a Networker until the end. She is one of the classic, understated people who worked tirelessly for children and their time out of school, and did not take no for an answer. Judy had the capacity to inspire people and speak to their sense of justice. She was never afraid to speak her mind and participate in activism for the Out of School Hours sector and many others. She was a true trailblazer!

Reverse Garbage, Addison Road Community Centre and the Magic Yellow Bus are all institutions in Sydney’s inner west – much loved by Educators, teachers and parents for decades. Judy Finlason was there at the beginning of them

all. She was a driving force for children and community arts - sometimes literally: behind the wheel of the original Magic Yellow Bus that brought activities and colour to the lives of inner-city kids.

Network is fortunate to have had Judy involved in our organisation and she will never be replaced! Judy accomplished more than most people could in several lifetimes. She was instrumental in the birth of Network in 1974 and was the first Co-ordinator of Network and remained with the organisation until she retired in 2004. She did however, continue her involvement as a lifelong “friend” of Network.

Judy had a passion for children and their time out of school. She was experienced at negotiating with politicians and Government in a forthright yet polite manner. She was aware that bringing people together for a common purpose would result in action.

She led a life full of purpose and meaning..



Networking Across the World

In the early eighties Judy received a travelling fellowship and spent nearly a year travelling the world looking at programs for children in their time out of

school. In 1986 she received the Order of Australia medal for her service to the community. And only last year she received the Jack Mundy



award for her work in preserving Wolli Creek and stopping a major motorway from going through this bush land.

Judy's presence was inspiring and her work was rigorous and ambitious

Judy was a deep thinker who had a far-reaching influence on OOSH Educators all over NSW and beyond. Judy's presence was inspiring and her work was rigorous and ambitious and had a huge effect on the Out of School Hours movement. We are grateful for her work with Network and will continue to find joy in her memory. She was the author of many histories including Network's history of our first 25 years *The Network: when dreams become reality*. An essential read if you haven't already!

Judy had an infectious passion for people

Judy made a difference in a lot of lives, mine included. She knew how to bring people together and how to encourage you to do things you never thought possible. She was creative, energetic, and an amazing communicator. She was also humble, thoughtful, compassionate, wise, generous, loyal, bold and passionate! Judy was an inspiration to all who met her and her credentials were unparalleled and ranged from child health, community development, community arts, children & human rights, play, and the environment! She was born a natural networker.

Judy had an infectious passion for people, history, the environment and everything about the community. She would build and create communities (Networks) wherever she went!

Although 92 can be considered a good age, Judy remained a passionate advocate for children, the environment, and multiple other causes right until the end.

My life, like many, has been deeply enriched by knowing Judy and we can all be so thankful for everything she did for our Out of School Hours community and beyond.

We are grateful for her work with Network!

RIP dear Judy. We will all miss you! A truly great "Networker" has left us.



2023 IPA World Conference Glasgow

In June 2023, a strong contingent of Australian delegates travelled to Glasgow to attend and present at the International Play Association (IPA) conference. This is the first IPA conference in 6 years. Traditionally held every three years, the conference was unable to proceed in its typical format in 2020 due to COVID, however with an increased confidence in international travel across the world, a group of 50 Australians travelled across the globe to attend the conference.

The current President of IPA, Robyn Monro Miller shared a heartfelt welcome to the delegation.

The program boasted two significant presentations from the Australian OSHC sector.

Kylie Keane, Educational Leader from the 'excellent' rated Forrest Outside School Hours Care in Australia presented her approach to Playwork with the presentation: **Playwork Equals Quality in Australia**

'Whilst a Playwork approach may have been used across Australia for some time, it has only been in recent years that it has been viewed as a "quality" approach to working with children. This session will share various stories of how both individuals, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Services including Outside School Hours Care, Primary Schools and Educational Institutions have advocated for a child's right to play and adopted Playwork as their underpinning philosophy for delivering quality practice within the Australian Early Childhood Education and Care Sector. It is through the work of these Educators that the Australian Regulatory Bodies and the ECEC Sector are beginning to re-define their understanding of a child's right to play



and rethink how they understand, advocate for, observe, plan for and protect play within services across the country. Playwork is now recognised as quality educational practice drawing direct links to and within the Australian National Quality Framework.'

Dr Jennifer Cartmel, author of the first Framework for School Age Care in Australia and contributor to the update of My Time, Our Place V2.0 presented together with Griffith University student, Fiona McKay, on their research project: The Value Of The Play Cycle To OSHC Educators

'Australian OSHC educators are encouraged to strive for an inclusive environment for all children. For children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), lack of proper understanding by educators about their condition may make it difficult for them to engage within an OSHC service.'

Both of these presentations were well received by the international delegation of attendees and the Australian OSHC sector was proudly and professionally represented at this event.



Tasmania

Stay tuned to the NOSHSA website as details about a community of practice for Tasmania will be coming shortly.

ACT

The ACT branch have recently established as a community of practice. This group have met with an agenda for some important advocacy for the OSHC sector in the ACT including:

- Follow up on exclusion of ACT OSHC services from changes to regulatory requirements in relation to documentation for individual children and the ACT approach to individual documentation
- Innovative Solutions Project 2023 delivered:
- Qualifications and skills for OSHC in the ACT

Further information about this group will be posted on the NOSHSA website. Please contact admin@qcan.org.au if you are interested in joining this group. A separate NOSHSA contact will be available soon.

National





The National Outside School Hours Services Alliance (NOSHSA) is a network of all Australian State and Territory Out of School Hours Services (OSHC) Associations. These organisations promote provision of Out of School Hours Services and act as a united voice to advocate both to Government and the community for excellence in service provision.

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