



## EDUCATION AND CARE

### ECU NEWSLETTER

ECU Newsletter #4 2024 – issued 24  
September 2024

#### National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care

The voluntary National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care (National Model Code) was developed by ACECQA in partnership with all governments and realised on 1 July 2024.

Available online at [National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care](#)<sup>1</sup>, the [National Model Code](#)<sup>2</sup> and [Guidelines for the National Model Code](#)<sup>3</sup> forms part of a range of actions in response to the 16 recommendations of the [Child Safety Review](#)<sup>4</sup>.

The National Model Code is designed to:

- promote a child safe culture when it comes to taking, sharing and storing images or videos of children
- support ECEC educators, as champions of child safety
- complement child safety activities and strategies already in place across the sector.

The National Model Code represents best practice. It recommends that:

- only service-issued devices can be used when photographing and filming children
- personal devices can only be carried or used in limited circumstances
- strict controls must be in place for taking, sharing and storing images or videos.

Approved providers and their services are encouraged to adopt the voluntary National Model Code.

Information and resources are available on [National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care](#)<sup>5</sup>.

#### Early childhood wages – worker retention payment

The Australian Government is supporting a wage increase for the early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce. Funding will be provided through a new worker retention payment. Grant applications for the worker retention payment are expected to open in October 2024, with the wage increase taking effect from December 2024.

Please visit [Early childhood wages - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)<sup>6</sup> for information and to find answers to FAQs about the [ECEC wage increase](#)<sup>7</sup>.

The Australian Government will provide more details, including grant guidelines, over the coming weeks. To get information and updates:

- [subscribe to the Australian Government Department of Education weekly newsletter](#)<sup>8</sup>
- [join the Child Care Subsidy approved providers and services Facebook group](#)<sup>9</sup>

## National Decision Tree – New guidance on when to lodge a notification to the Regulatory Authority

The [National Decision Tree](#)<sup>10</sup> supports approved providers and their staff to decide if and when a notification is required under the *Education and Care Services National Law 2010* (National Law).

Find out more about the National Decision Tree on:

- [National Decision Tree](#)<sup>11</sup> which includes introductory information and a link to the interactive tool
- [National Decision Tree - New guidance on when to lodge a notification](#)<sup>12</sup> or
- view the [National Decision Tree - User Guide video](#)<sup>13</sup>

## AERO publication - Video animations to support Early childhood learning trajectories

The Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) has released a series of [animated explainer videos](#)<sup>14</sup> to support its [early childhood learning trajectories resource suite](#)<sup>15</sup>.



These videos have been designed for early childhood education professionals, and cover

the domains of executive functions, social and emotional learning, mathematical thinking, language and communication, and physical development. Aligned with the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 and the National Quality Standard, this resource suite aims to strengthen educator and teacher confidence in using the evidence-based practice of assessment for learning in their services. View the videos on [AERO's website](#)<sup>16</sup>

## Independent Education Review

An Independent Review into the Tasmanian Education System was announced by the Minister for Education, Hon Jo Palmer on Monday 24 June 2024.

The review is led by Ms Vicki Baylis, an independent, experienced and well-respected Australian educator, who will lead this Review and report directly to the Minister for Education.

The [Independent Review into the Tasmanian Education System](#)<sup>17</sup> is being undertaken to provide advice to the Tasmanian Government on how to improve our education system over the next 10 years. The review will include the government and non-government school sectors with a focus on Kindergarten to Year 12. The [Independent Review of Tasmanian Education System Terms of Reference](#)<sup>18</sup> outline the scope of the review.

Early childhood education and care is outside the scope of this review, but all Tasmanians are encouraged to have their say on the future of Tasmania's Education System, so we wanted to share so you're aware this review is underway and had the opportunity to get involved.



There are three ways you can get involved in the Independent Review into the Tasmanian Education System and have your say. These are:

1. **Respond to the Consultation Paper**  
Submissions must be lodged by Sunday 13 October 2024
2. **Engage in consultation opportunities for Tasmanian children and young people**  
Submissions close October 27 October 2024
3. **Complete the survey for educators, families and community members**  
Submissions close October 27 October 2024

You can submit a response to one or all of the consultation options relevant to you, the choice is up to you.

If you have any questions please contact [contact@ier.tas.gov.au](mailto:contact@ier.tas.gov.au).

## ECU Grants program initiatives

The Department for Education, Children and Young People, through the ECU Grants Program, supports continuous improvement in the quality of education and care and child care in Tasmania. The objectives of the [ECU Grants Program](#)<sup>19</sup> are:

- To support the provision of safe, inclusive, high quality education and care to Tasmanian children, particularly those disadvantaged by geographic or socio-economic circumstances
- To encourage initiatives that support the Tasmanian education and care

workforce, including projects targeted towards enhancing skills and leadership

- To promote initiatives that aim to increase community understanding regarding the importance of high quality education and care for children

The ECU has offered a range of scholarships as part of its grants program initiatives in recent years. We're proud that we've been able to offer a range of supports for Tasmanian ECEC educators to achieve qualifications and build their knowledge and skills and to support services to comply with qualification requirements.

In 2024 one of the scholarships the ECU have offered was a travel scholarship to support a Tasmanian educator to attend the ECA Reconciliation Symposium. Below ECA Reconciliation Symposium travel scholarship recipient Melanie McHugh shares her experience and learnings from participating in the symposium.

In 2019 and 2020 we offered two rounds of scholarships for educators who already held an approved Diploma and had relevant workplace experience to support them to gain an ACECQA-approved early childhood teaching qualification, namely, the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Teaching) from the University of New England.

The qualification is delivered online and included practicum placements within Tasmanian education and care services, ensuring that the theoretical knowledge gained was reinforced with hands-on experience. Completing this qualification, particularly while working in a professional role, is a huge achievement.

In this newsletter we're excited to celebrate the achievements of two committed educators and new graduates who have achieved their Bachelor of Education (Early



Childhood Teaching). Cassie Winwood and Rebecca Weicks share their experiences and advice below.

### Melanie McHugh – ECA Reconciliation Symposium travel scholarship recipient

It was with great appreciation that I was the lucky recipient of a travel scholarship to attend the ECA Reconciliation Symposium, in Canberra, Ngannawal Country, in May 2024 with the support of the Tasmanian Department for Education, Children and Young People. This was the first Reconciliation Symposium I had attended, therefore I attended with the eyes and ears of a novice! It was wonderful to gather with so many professionals in the early childhood education and care sector to discuss and learn together across 2 jam-packed days.

There were a diverse range of speakers and presenters, each offering a glimpse into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, perspectives, history, current affairs, and storytelling. We talked about how to select resources for culturally responsive teaching and had discussions around truth-telling, racism, cultural celebration, actions for the future and current practice in motion at specific early childhood education and care centres across Australia.

We had many opportunities to talk and give feedback in the groups we sat with, and groups included a facilitator to help guide the discussions. There was also a breakout room, with several expo-style displays with team members ready to assist. It was useful to have the resources and books available for sale and extra special to have the book signing and reading by Adam Duncan author of 'The Bunyip and the Stars', a fantastic book I have been reading to the children at Stewart Child Care Services (my workplace),

with interesting, creative responses from the children.

A key focus was on 'empowering the individual'. Aunty Denise reminded us to 'learn from each other and respect each other'. Trevor Brown, the National President of ECA, inspired me to keep in mind that storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to share reconciliation. I'm moving forward in action with greater knowledge and connections to empower me as an educator.

*Words by Melanie McHugh*



*Melanie McHugh with Sam Page, ECA CEO*

## Cassie Winwood – Graduate, Education and Care Scholarship Program



As a young child, I always imagined myself becoming a teacher, just like my Lola (grandmother) and Lolo (grandfather) who lived in the Philippines (dec.). In 2013, I embarked on my journey in the Early Childhood Education sector by enrolling in a Certificate III Children Services program through distance studies on the picturesque East Coast of Tasmania. As I delved into my studies, I also seized opportunities for volunteering and casual work within the ECEC sector. These experiences ignited a profound passion for educating and nurturing young minds. I applied to start my diploma with TasTAFE Launceston in June 2014 and was soon accepted. This was an exciting moment for me because I knew that this was

the pathway, I wanted to pursue full-time to further my knowledge. During my Diploma studies, I had to complete practical hours at a Long Day Care Centre. After a couple of shifts, the Director asked if I would like paid casual work. I was thrilled with the opportunity and couldn't say "yes" fast enough. While completing my Diploma in 2015, I continued to work more at the LDC, and they soon offered me a full-time position as a Diploma Educator once I completed my studies.

After making the move to Devonport, I was pleased to transition into a Senior Educator role at a local LDC. Over a few years in this role, I found myself fully immersed in educating both children and many trainees. Amidst this, I was pleasantly surprised when my director placed the 'Education and Care Scholarship Program application form' in our staff room. Upon seeing this opportunity, I recognised that this was my chance to invest in my professional growth and pursue further knowledge in the sector that had become so close to my heart.

Some may ask, "What inspired you to pursue a degree in Early Childhood Education and Care?" My simple answer is that I consider knowledge to be the most important aspect of teaching. I believe that teaching and learning reflect what is currently known and "what can be known" (Hand, 2014, p. 49). I see myself as both a teacher and a learner, constantly using and acquiring knowledge to educate and inspire those around me.

Throughout my journey in pursuing my Bachelor's degree, I encountered numerous trials that not only tested my resilience but also showcased my ability to overcome challenges. Many may wonder, "How did I manage to juggle my studies alongside work and family responsibilities?" To this, I would say that meticulous planning was key:

allocating specific hours each week to work, family, study, and leisure activities. It was undoubtedly demanding, but achievable. In addition to managing a full-time job, my husband and I welcomed our first child in April 2021, and remarkably, I was also pregnant with our second child during my final year of studies in 2023, with his arrival in February 2024. The completion of my studies wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering support of my family, alongside other incredible ECE team members and friends who played a pivotal role in my journey. They generously offered to look after my daughter, allowing me to dedicate substantial, uninterrupted time to my studies. Moreover, they took the time to proofread my work, engage in reflective conversations, and generously share their textbooks and experiences with me. Their support was invaluable and crucial in helping me navigate this demanding but rewarding chapter of my life.

In the year 2021, I was ecstatic when I was offered the role of 'Early Childhood Teacher' at my workplace. After years of dedicated study, I am now fully committed to continuing in this impactful position. My ultimate goal is to utilise my in-depth knowledge and skills to create and implement comprehensive, inclusive, and thriving pedagogical practices and environments. This entails not only fostering the growth and development of the children I have the privilege of working with but also offering guidance and support to the dedicated ECEs who are an indispensable part of our team. I aspire to establish a nurturing and dynamic educational setting where every child's potential can flourish, and where ECEs are empowered to deliver high-quality educational programs that truly make a difference.

If you find yourself contemplating the idea of advancing your education within the ECEC

sector while working, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. You will find that the knowledge you acquire will not only serve to enhance your professional growth but also play a pivotal role in fostering your personal development and self-discovery.

*Words by Cassie Winwood*

### Rebecca Weicks— Graduate, Education and Care Scholarship Program

I decided to pursue a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Teaching) because after 16 years as an early childhood educator, I was seeking more knowledge and professional development. I'd found that some of the training on offer wasn't really what I was after, and knowing there is a shortage of ECT's in our profession, considered that as an option. I thought I would enjoy studying at Uni and that I'd gain a lot more knowledge which I could bring to the ECEC profession.

Balancing studies with work and family commitments was difficult and at times very stressful. However, the work load is manageable, although some units require more work than others. When I became a foster carer with young children at home while working 4 days a week and studying 2 units at a time, it was a challenging experience.

Working in an organisation that was able to support me was invaluable and I was very fortunate to have the support of Lady Gowrie Tasmania as a whole, and the manager and educators of the service I was working with.

Some of the challenges I faced were balancing and managing responsibilities. I am a chronic procrastinator and find it challenging to not leave things to the last



minute, but at the same time I also tend to perform better when under that pressure. I think if you can keep on top of the study and just chip away at it a bit at a time it certainly makes the whole process easier.



I am so proud of completing the degree at 50 years old! It shows you are never too old to go back to studying. I have gained so much knowledge and understand things on a deeper level than I had previously. Being able to share this knowledge with my peers and support Lady Gowrie in bringing quality programs for children has been a huge achievement. Working alongside my colleagues and sharing my newfound knowledge has been very rewarding.

I've achieved a career aspiration since completing my degree - I have begun a new role working in Educational Leadership which

has been an aspiration of mine for a long time.

In terms of advice for others, if you are considering further education, I would say just go for it. With the right support from employers and the support of the University, you can do it.

The depth of knowledge and the growth in yourself as an educator is very rewarding and with all this new knowledge you are better able to support children, families and educators within the ECEC community.

*Words by Rebecca Weicks*

### View previous ECU Newsletters

You can access the [archive of previous ECU Newsletters](#)<sup>20</sup> on the ECU website.

#### Contact details:

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## Links

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- <sup>1</sup> National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care | <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-model-code-taking-images-early-childhood-education-and-care>
- <sup>2</sup> National Model Code Taking Images and Videos.pdf | [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-07/National Model Code Taking Images and Videos.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-07/National%20Model%20Code%20Taking%20Images%20and%20Videos.pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> Guidelines For The National Model Code | [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-07/Guidelines for the National Model Code Taking Images and Videos.pdf](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-07/Guidelines%20for%20the%20National%20Model%20Code%20Taking%20Images%20and%20Videos.pdf)
- <sup>4</sup> Child Safety Review | <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/child-safety-review>
- <sup>5</sup> National Model Code – Taking images in early childhood education and care | <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-model-code-taking-images-early-childhood-education-and-care>
- <sup>6</sup> Early childhood wages - Department of Education, Australian Government | <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/workforce/wages>
- <sup>7</sup> Questions and answers about the ECEC wage increase | <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/workforce/wages/questions-and-answers>
- <sup>8</sup> subscribe to the Australian Government Department of Education weekly newsletter | <https://www.education.gov.au/ecec-subscribe>
- <sup>9</sup> join the Child Care Subsidy approved providers and services Facebook group | <https://www.facebook.com/groups/359334192803179>
- <sup>10</sup> National Decision Tree | [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/notify - NDT](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/notify-NDT)
- <sup>11</sup> National Decision Tree | [https://www.acecqa.gov.au/notify - NDT](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/notify-NDT)
- <sup>12</sup> National Decision Tree - New guidance on when to lodge a notification | <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/latest-news/national-decision-tree-new-guidance-when-lodge-notification>
- <sup>13</sup> National Decision Tree Help Video | <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/notify/national-decision-tree-help-video>
- <sup>14</sup> Introduction to Early Childhood Learning Trajectories | Australian Education Research Organisation | <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/guides-resources/videos/introduction-early-childhood-learning-trajectories>
- <sup>15</sup> AERO Early childhood learning trajectories: User guide | <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/guides-resources/practice-guides/early-childhood-learning-trajectories-user-guide>
- <sup>16</sup> AERO Early childhood learning trajectories: User guide | <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/guides-resources/practice-guides/early-childhood-learning-trajectories-user-guide>
- <sup>17</sup> Independent Review into the Tasmanian Education System | <https://ier.tas.gov.au/>
- <sup>18</sup> Independent Review of Tasmanian Education System Terms of Reference | <https://ier.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/Independent-Review-of-Tasmanian-Education-System-Terms-of-Reference-.pdf>
- <sup>19</sup> ECU Grants Program | <https://educationandcare.tas.gov.au/grants/>
- <sup>20</sup> ECU Newsletters | <https://educationandcare.tas.gov.au/news/newsletters-archive/>