

ANNUAL REPORT

A year of sustainable growth

2013



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Our Purpose

Our purpose is to create happy, safe and nurturing experiences for children through quality education and care.

Our Values

- We are diverse and inclusive in how we work
- Our practice is grounded in evidence and research
- We are open to new ideas and approaches
- We lead by example.

Our Focus

Over the next 2-3 years our focus is on the quality of our services growth and sustainability for Gowrie NSW.

Strategy 1

Drive improvements to lift the quality of our programs & services.

Strategy 2

Achieve growth, opportunities and sustainability for Gowrie NSW.

Strategy 3

Build a viable, robust and well regarded professional development business.

Executive Report



Over the past twelve months we have been working through the second year of our Strategic Plan. Our purpose statement to, ‘Create happy safe and nurturing experiences for children through quality education and care’, remains the basis for our decisions on the direction of Gowrie NSW.

Our purpose statement is a reflection of a child’s time within Gowrie NSW services, believing the same qualities of safety, and nurturing experience are all reflected in each of the programs we support across the sector.

Gowrie NSW is committed to the National Quality Framework. Our children’s services are all working towards meeting the highest program standards achievable with the revision of policies and procedures and evaluation of our programs.

We have made a consistent commitment to improving the ‘look and feel’ of our children’s services and offices with the refurbishment of the centre environments and replacement of commercial kitchens at Gowrie Child Care Centre and Nanbaree Child Centre. Further works are planned including repainting internal environments, replacement of floor coverings and installation of new cabinetry in our other programs.

To improve the work environment for our Inclusion Support Agency (Bathurst) team, we have relocated the office to a new location which better meets the needs of our team.

Over the past twelve months we have revised some of our internal systems with the aim of improving the service experience for children and families. Some of these initiatives include the introduction of a new web based fee administration system, allowing families to have an

up-to-the-minute view of their fee accounts. We have also introduced an idebit facility for families and approximately 30% of families have chosen this method of payment.

The refurbishment and renovation of Gowrie Child Care, Erskineville has been an ongoing project with a range of options being considered and explored. The next twelve months will see a decision made for the future direction of the Erskineville property.

Planning for the development of the early childhood program at Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Child and Family Centre is still progressing with the completion of the building anticipated for May 2014. We have been working with our partners, Link Up and Burnside on the successful transition of Yenu Allowah to full Aboriginal management before June 2014.

One of our strategies in the Strategic plan continues to be ‘to build a viable, robust and well regarded professional development business’. With this in mind we have streamlined our online booking process and continue to focus on developing quality professional learning opportunities for educators around NSW. We are exploring new markets for professional learning and we have been successful with the growth of our customised training over the past twelve months.

This is an exciting time for the early and middle childhood sector. We look forward to the next challenging year.

Frances Drummond
Chairperson, Gowrie NSW

Natalie Grenfell
CEO, Gowrie NSW

History of Gowrie NSW

The first kindergarten in Australia was opened in New South Wales in 1895.

The concept of children attending preschool was a new idea for the general public and was met with considerable opposition. However, despite popular opinion, the Kindergarten Union of NSW was formed and several kindergartens were opened by the Free Kindergarten Union (FKU).

The kindergartens operated under the auspices of the FKU and various church bodies. The severe depression of the late 1920s and 1930s caused great hardship and distress for many families. During this period, many kindergarten teachers took up the philanthropic tasks of distributing shoes and food, helping mothers make clothes from donated fabrics and providing hot lunches for children.

At the same time, however, the educational needs of children were also being considered. The idea of creating a centre to demonstrate what was then known about the best ways of educating and caring for young children had emerged as early as 1930. On 10th November 1930, the FKU called a meeting to consider ways of furthering a new nursery school experiment. Nursery schools had developed in England based upon the pioneering work of sisters Margaret and Rachel McMillan. They demonstrated that the education of the 'whole child' occurred best in a stimulating environment that was clean, and that provided children with nourishment, fresh air and play materials aimed at promoting sensory and creative development. The McMillans also stressed the need for well qualified teachers who would concentrate on the child not the lessons.

To support and develop their work, the Nursery School Committee was formed and a number of grants and bequests were provided for the Committee to begin their work. The Committee established several nursery schools and changed its name to the 'Demonstration Nursery School Committee' (DNSC). Although kindergartens continued to be established, the DNSC persisted in planning and working to establish demonstration model centres.

The key step in the establishment of the Lady Gowrie Child Centres was the formation of a national preschool body with representatives from the Kindergarten Unions from each state and the maternal Child Welfare representatives in Adelaide in 1936. The meeting was opened by Lady Gowrie and it resolved that 'a full interested meeting be held as soon as possible to further explore avenues of cooperation'.

There was ongoing national interest in the welfare of preschool children. The Federal Government at that time announced that an amount of £100,000 would be budgeted for public health projects, especially in relation to the health of women and children.

'The outcome of this was that Demonstration Centres should be established in each capital city at which not only will the method for care and instruction of young children be tested and demonstrated, but also the problems of physical growth, nutrition and development be studied'.

The DNSC drew up tentative concept plans for demonstration centres catering for up to 100 children each day.

Because of the inspiration provided by Her Excellency Lady Gowrie, it was decided that she be asked to honour Australia by allowing the six centres – one in each state capital – to bear her name: 'The Lady Gowrie Child Centre'.

Each state's Kindergarten Union appointed a Lady Gowrie Child Centre Committee. As well as being responsible for the local management of their Centre, the members of each Committee were given the responsibility of generating the interest of the general public in the work and help to build up a body of public opinion to promote the movement.

During the years from 1939 to 1940 Her Excellency opened each of the centres at a public gathering.

The first Gowrie centre in NSW opened as Lady Gowrie Child Centre on October 16th 1940.

The continuing theme of standing by children, families and communities is the legacy that Gowrie NSW carries into its operational philosophy today. Since 1940, Gowrie NSW has demonstrated the flexibility and strength to endure the major social, economic and political changes that have taken place over the years in our society. We have developed with the time, and have been at the forefront of exploring and implementing new ideas and practices, particularly with regard to advocating for social equity and children's rights.

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre was changed to Gowrie NSW in 2010 in recognition of the diversity of programs that we currently manage supporting children and families around NSW.



The theme of standing by children, families and communities is the legacy that Gowrie NSW carries into its operational philosophy today.

Board of Directors



Gowrie NSW Board & Executive

The Gowrie NSW board meets on a bi monthly basis, with the Audit and Risk Committee meeting when required.

All board members are non executive directors and receive no remuneration for their services. They may be reimbursed for reasonable costs and expenses incurred in connection with Board Activities.

The role of the board is to ensure good governance of Gowrie NSW.

Seated L-R: Natalie Grenfell – Chief Executive Officer (Invitee), Jim Chaplin – Chief Financial Officer (Invitee), Melly Sah Bandar (Director)

Standing L-R: Bill Tobin (Director), Lisa Palmer – Human Resource Manager (Invitee), Carol Burgess (Director), Frances Drummond (Chairperson)

Absent: James Falk (Director), Dana Chardon (Director)



Frances Drummond
Chairperson

Frances joined the Gowrie NSW Board in 2009. Frances is an intellectual property lawyer with over 20 years experience in in-house and private practice in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Australia, advising clients on intellectual property strategies and practices across all aspects of trade mark law, including portfolio management, enforcement and exploitation. Frances is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Director	Date Joined	Meetings held	Meetings attended
Frances Drummond	01/06/2009	6	6
Rebecca Macken	05/02/2011	6	1
Dana Chardon	15/11/2012	4	4
James Falk	17/11/2011	6	5
Carol Burgess	15/11/2012	4	3
Melissa Roughley*	07/02/2008	3	2
Tracey Young*	20/11/2006	3	3

* Melissa Roughley and Tracey Young resigned from the Board 15th November 2012
* Carol Burgess and Dana Chardon were appointed to the Board 15th November 2012

Invitees	Meetings held	Meetings attended
Natalie Grenfell	6	6
Jim Chaplin	6	6



Dana Chardon
Treasurer

Dana joined the Gowrie NSW Board in November 2012. Dana is currently the Director of Risk with software company Atlassian, and has extensive experience working internationally within both the pharmaceutical and telecommunications industries. Her areas of expertise include: corporate compliance, operations and strategy, business continuity management, operational risk and change management.



Carol Burgess
Director

Carol joined the Gowrie NSW Board in 2012. Carol is known for her early childhood expertise both nationally and internationally. Carol is the Course Director for the Bachelor of Education (Birth to Five), the Bachelor of Teaching (Birth to Five) and the Associate Degree Early Childhood (Birth to Five) at Charles Sturt University. Carol works closely with TAFE NSW to develop academic partnerships and she is also the NSW President of Early Childhood Australia (ECA).



Bill Tobin
Director
(Since 22 August 2013)

Bill has recently joined the Gowrie NSW Board, bringing extensive experience in Workplace Health & Safety and Workers' Compensation risk management. Having worked in both the corporate and not for profit sector, both in Australia and in the United Kingdom, Bill's experience in training and systems development brings a unique balance to our board.

Rebecca Macken
Secretary

Rebecca joined the Gowrie NSW Board in 2010. Rebecca currently works as a Senior Policy Advisor for the Department of Premier and Cabinet (NSW).



Melly Sah Bandar
Director
(Since 22 August 2013)

Melly comes to Gowrie NSW with a broad business background and a strong foundation in strategic financial, commercial and operational planning and analysis, process improvements, change management, transformation and system implementation. Melly has worked in Australia, USA and Indonesia.



James Falk
Director
(Resigned July 2013)

James was on the Gowrie NSW Board from 2011 to July 2013 as Audit & Risk Committee Member. James has more than 15 years experience in delivering process and productivity improvement projects, and has consulted extensively in this area. James has a background in policy research and development in Health, Transport and Treasury and this has driven his commitment to public sector policy reform and political advocacy

Who We Are

Our People

Gowrie NSW prides itself on having a higher than required number of quality educators in our programs. As such, we continue to focus our attention on supporting our employees to further their qualifications within their profession, whether this is a teacher completing their fourth year of their Bachelor Degree, or an educator obtaining their Certificate III in Children's Services. The emphasis we have on helping employees to develop their skills and knowledge sets us apart and helps us to attract and retain people of great calibre.

Gowrie NSW comprises an incredibly diverse group of individuals, from a range of different backgrounds, who all share the same purpose and values at work. We are proud to say of our 122 employees who worked with us during 2012 to 2013, we had people from 33 different nationalities and 24 different languages were spoken. We celebrate the differences that our employees bring to Gowrie NSW in our everyday work.

Our Annual Staff Conference in September 2013 provided another great opportunity for our employees to come together, reconnect, celebrate achievements, share work practices, learn from key note speakers, and feel energised to continue to excel in the workplace.

Recognising the service of our Staff

5 ^{YRS}	Siuying Belinda Fok Loreto Rhonda Vang Fadia Atwani Shahla Abanejad-Hejrandoost Mitra Akbari-Sepehr Timothy Davidson Alexandra Konstantinidis
10 ^{YRS}	Min Starr Hinh Le Jamila Cheema
15 ^{YRS}	Hayley Lui Amra Adamovic Shikha Dey
25 ^{YRS}	Teresa Fernandes

Qualification achievements

- Jamila Cheema** – Bachelor of Teaching (June 2013)
- Marian Abdi-Hashi** – Diploma of Children Services (2012)
- Shahla Abanejad-Hejrandoost** – Certificate III in Children Services (2012)
- Nafisa Dadyar** – Certificate III in Children Services (2012)
- Trish Johnson** – Certificate IV in Training & Assessment (August 2013)
- Elena Lebedeva** – Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting) (December 2012)

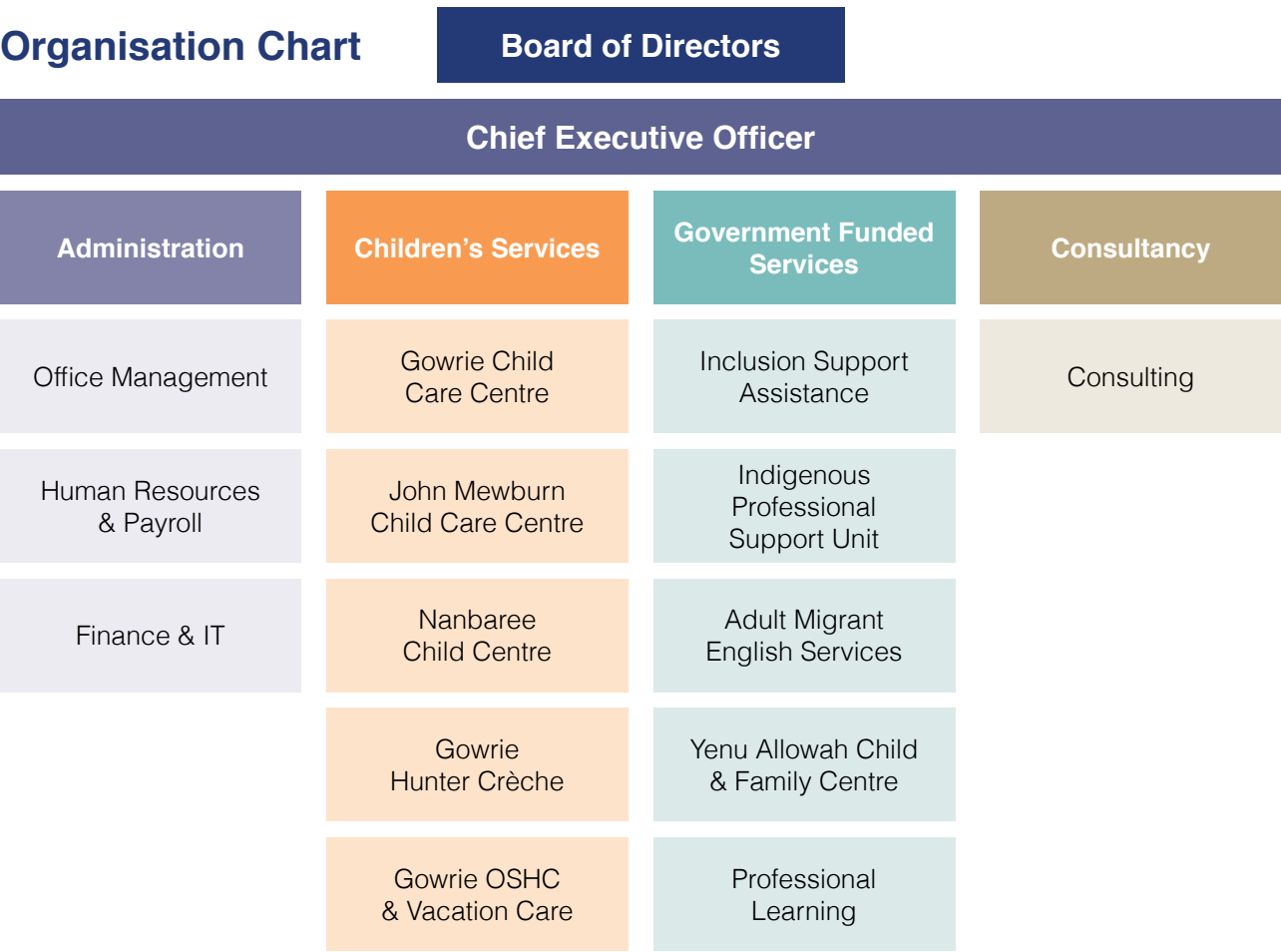
Languages spoken

Arabic	Hindi
Bengali	Indonesian
Bislama	Italian
Bosnian	Mandarin
Cantonese	Persian
Chinese	Portuguese
Danish	Russian
Farsi	Singhalese
French	Somali
German	Spanish
Greek	Tamal

Leadership & Management Team

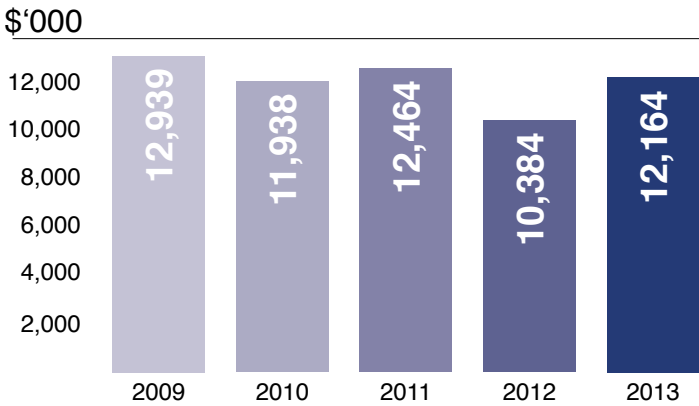
Natalie Grenfell	Chief Executive Officer
Ruth Callaghan	Chief Executive Officer (Resigned August 2012)
James Chaplin	Chief Financial Officer
Lisa Palmer	Human Resource Manager
Rose Todd	Manager Education and Care
Merise Bickley	Manager Professional Learning
Susan Hutchinson	AMES Contract Manager
Judy McKay-Tempest	Manager Indigenous Professional Support Unit
Rhonda Vang	Manager Inclusion Support Agency – West & Central West

Organisation Chart



Financial Report

Revenue Performance over 5 years

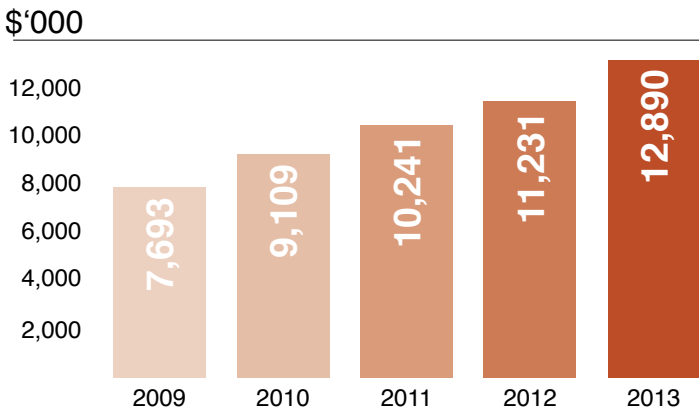


Gowrie NSW achieved another strong result reporting a net surplus of \$1,658,735 for the year ended 30 June 2013 (\$989,997 in 2012). The surplus is due to improved utilisation in our child care centres, higher funding received from government under certain programs, and savings in administration and support areas of the business.

The contribution from each business unit for the year after allocation of corporate administration and support costs was:

	Jun 13 \$000's	Jun 12 \$000's
Government funded business	1,557	1,031
Child care	(31)	(10)
Professional learning and consulting	13	11
Corporate (after allocations and including interest)	120	(42)
Net surplus for the year	1,659	990

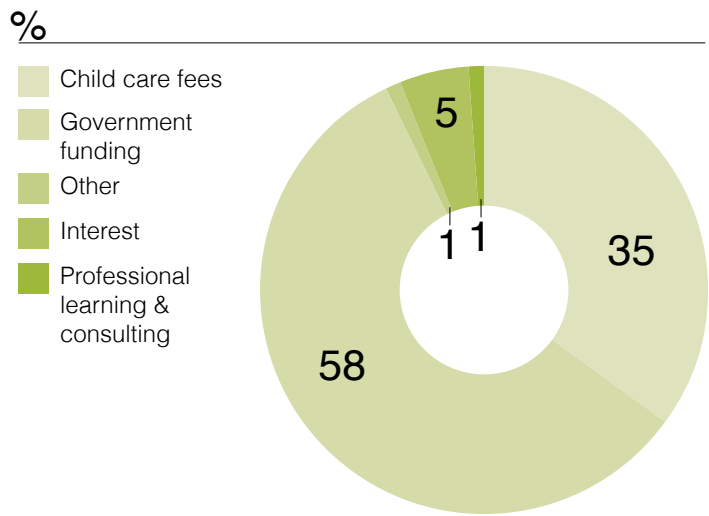
Net Assets over 5 years



Net assets continue to grow. Historically, Gowrie NSW has maintained a conservative investment strategy which, through the financial crisis of the last 5 years, has resulted in steady returns on its investments. A large percentage of the assets are held in short term cash deposits. Gowrie NSW is currently reviewing its investment strategy to determine the best use of these resources in the future. The short term nature of the investments allows Gowrie NSW to take advantage of opportunities, should they arise, to expanding its services. During the second half of the 2012/13 financial year, a number of opportunities were identified which will require an investment of cash through 2013/14.

Where our funds come from

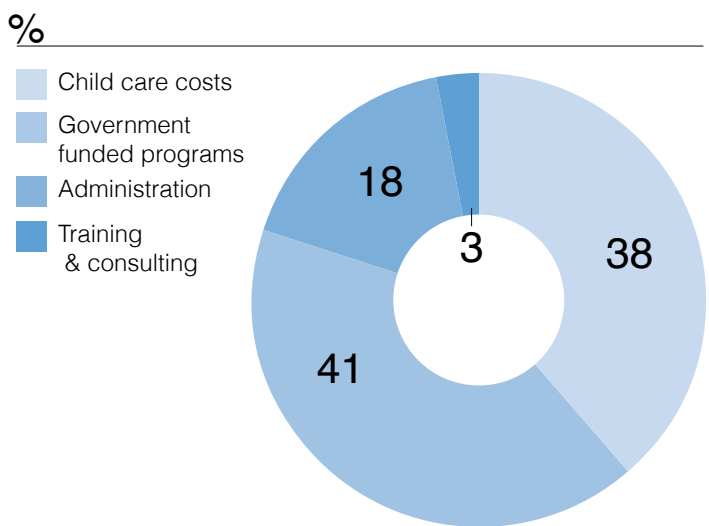
Total revenue \$12,163,770



Gowrie NSW relies on government funding for a number of projects run on behalf of the NSW state and the federal government. Over 58% (2012 – 52%) of Gowrie NSW's revenue is from government funding. This has contributed to the surplus of Gowrie NSW this year and prior years. Investment funds are being used to identify and develop opportunities in non-government supported areas to replace any future loss of government funding.

Where our funds are spent

Total expenditure \$10,505,035



Gowrie NSW's total expenses for the year were \$10,505,035, an increase of 12% on last year compared to the revenue increase of 17%. Of this amount, \$5,627,134 (54%) represented employee and employment agency costs – a 3.9% increase on last financial year. Administration and support costs decreased 10% this financial year based on improved systems and processes and managing costs.

Gowrie NSW's financial records for the year ended 30 June 2013 were audited by Grant Thornton Australia in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Corporations Act 2001. A full copy of Gowrie NSW's Annual Financial report is available from our website at www.gowriensw.com.au

Gowrie Child Care Centre

1 Elliott Avenue
Erskineville 2043
Phone: 02 8594 4212
Fax: 02 9519 7349
Director: Karen Dresser
Hours: Monday - Friday, 7am - 6pm

Our work with children and families

During the past year Gowrie Child Care Centre has continued to work closely with community agencies to support children and families using the program. These have included the Brighter Futures early intervention program, the NSW Department of Community Services, Barnardos, the Benevolent Society and the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital at Camperdown. The educators and director at Gowrie Child Care Centre have also worked closely with speech, occupational and physio therapists to support the inclusion of children in all aspects of our programs.

As part of our enrolment process, all families are offered the opportunity to have a 'home' visit.

This is where one or two educators can visit a family in their home or in a place that they and their child may feel relaxed and secure (for example, their local park). This allows the educators to get to know the child and their family in a setting that is comfortable for them, and educators can work collaboratively with families to learn about the child and their routine and plan an individualised orientation to the program.

This year, through the 'Seeds of Empathy – Babies as Teachers for Developing Empathy' project, families with new babies were invited to spend time in the program's play spaces with their baby and their child to talk with the children about their babies.

Our programs for children

The children at Gowrie Child Care Centre have continued to relish daily opportunities to explore the expansive and leafy outdoor environments. Children are encouraged to explore freely and to make their own discoveries.

Over the past 12 months children have engaged in learning projects that have evolved through spontaneous happenings, and the observed and expressed interests of the children. These projects have included:

Gardening experiences – children have planted, nurtured and harvested various crops including carrots, potatoes, strawberries and tomatoes, and grown 'grassheads' and other seedlings.

Cooking – with produce from the program's gardening projects, as well as cooking experiences using foods from children's and educators' cultural backgrounds (for example, spring rolls, sushi, roti).

Recycling – establishing a 'useful box' of donated materials for creating things and the 'up-cycling' of an old TV cabinet that is now a home corner kitchenette.

Water conservation – understanding the water cycle, collecting and measuring water, and designing further ways for recycling water.

The natural environment – getting to know the insects and creatures in the environment, and looking after tadpoles and learning about their life cycle from tadpole to frog.

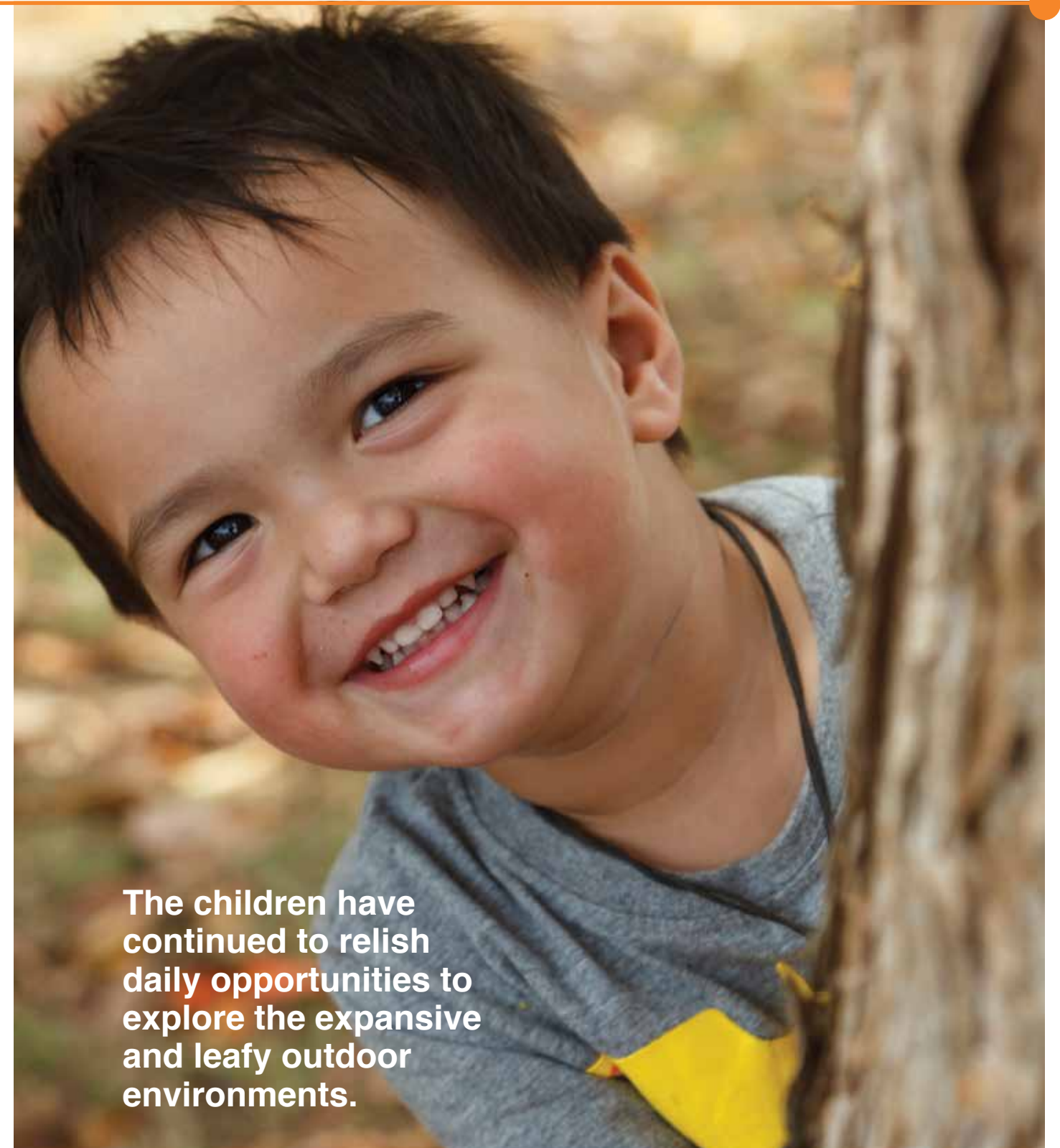
Mudpit play area – created by the Bugarri children (3-5 year olds), the new 'mudpit' play area has lent itself to a range of dramatic and creative play opportunities.

'We are part of a community' – where children explored maps and created a 3D map of the Erskineville area and engaged in local walks in the community.

Alexandria Park Public School visit – children from Alexandria Park Public School visited Gowrie Child Care Centre over 5 weeks to share information about 'big' school, and to read stories and play instruments with the younger children.

Our 2012 – 2013 highlights

- Educators attended training on the 'Munch and Move' program, a NSW health initiative for children from birth to five years
- The Centre participated in the transition to school project: 'Conversations: Children, families and teachers talk about starting school'. The Centre had the opportunity to share knowledge and build relationships with families and local schools to improve understanding of how to promote positive transitions to school.
- The installation of a commercial-style kitchen in the centre.



The children have continued to relish daily opportunities to explore the expansive and leafy outdoor environments.

John Mewburn Child Care Centre

2-4 Austral Street
Malabar 2036
Phone: 02 9311 4895
Fax: 02 9311 4896
Director: Nicole White
Hours: Monday - Friday, 6.30am - 6pm

Our work with children and families

John Mewburn Child Care Centre has been participating in the Partnerships in Early Childhood (PIEC) program for the last 5 years. The aim of the program is to promote strong, healthy relationships between children, educators, families and the community. The program has continued to support educators and families by developing an understanding of new concepts and language around attachment, relationships and social and emotional development. During 2012–2013 the program has assisted educators in further understanding and meeting the needs of each child through one on one consultation with a Child and Family practitioner. The Child and Family practitioner has supported educators to develop a further understanding of children's social and emotional needs through participating in regular reflective practice sessions. This year the program has also supported the networking of directors within the local community to share their experiences and ideas on how to facilitate genuine relationships that support emotionally connected and secure children.

Our programs for children

The Centre participated in the first Early Years Bush Connections course held by Randwick TAFE. Early Years Bush Connections is about engaging and connecting young children with the natural environment, whilst developing and educating children about sustainable practices. This course is adapted for Australia from the Scandinavian model of Forest Kindergartens and Schools. Information gained from the course has provoked educators to reflect and think deeply about:

- Who did this land belong to before us?
- What can we learn from our ancestors?
- What connections with nature might be possible for current and future generations?

John Mewburn Child Care Centre has continued to strengthen its connections with the local community. Over the past year, the children have regularly visited elderly residents of the Aged care facility located close to the Centre. The children enjoy talking, reading, singing, listening and spending time with the residents and engaging in shared activities.

There is always a buzz of excitement when the children enter the aged care facility and there is a real sense of community among the children, the elderly, educators and carers. From this program the children have developed a deeper understanding of some of the physical limitations that can affect elderly people.

They have also developed and enhanced their social skills by connecting with someone outside their family and have begun to develop an understanding that illness and death are a natural part of living. Overall the program improves the quality of life for both the children and the elderly, and plays an important role in connecting them to the world around them.

John Mewburn Child Care Centre's program has also provided opportunities for children across all age groups to participate in ongoing excursions to the local library, grocery store, post office, local parks and other local businesses.

Our 2012 – 2013 highlights

Over the last year there has continued to be a significant focus on developing natural and sustainable play spaces for children. Educators, children, families and the community have worked together to develop the outdoor environment and to use and recycle old materials to make new resources for the Centre following on from the children's interests.



There has been
significant focus on
developing natural
and sustainable play
spaces for children.

Nanbaree Child Centre

Level 1, 28 Margaret Street
Sydney 2000

Phone: 02 9262 2322
Fax: 02 9262 2618

Director: Osanna Giang

Hours: Monday - Friday, 7am - 6.30pm

Our work with children and families

Nanbaree Child Centre continues to work on creating a sense of connectedness and belonging for all children by cultivating positive, collaborative relationships between educators, children and their families through daily interactions and the sharing of information about children's experiences and interests.

Our programs for children

The City of Sydney library delivers books to the program every fortnight for the children to peruse and borrow. The children really enjoy the new range of stories that the library sends through each fortnight, and they are always excited when the new books arrive. Children have learnt about the concept of borrowing books from a library (and returning them) and they are now able to recognise and identify library books when they see a barcode. This regular experience has also helped children to learn about taking responsibility for caring for the books that they have borrowed, and will later be borrowed by other people.

Nanbaree Child Centre's 3 to 5 year old children go out into the local community every week. They walk to the shops at the Metcentre located next to Wynyard train station and purchase fruit and vegetables from the fruit shop and bread from the bakery. The children are involved in the entire process, from choosing their own fruit, paying for the fruit and then carrying it back to the Centre. Excursions into the community broaden the children's understanding of the world in which they live and help build connections between Nanbaree and the local community.

The simulated outdoor space at Nanbaree Child Centre continues to feel more and more like a genuine outdoor space with the increase of plants and natural resources for children to engage with. With the introduction this year of an edible herb garden, the children are regularly grazing on tasty fresh herbs throughout the day. The children have also used the herbs in their cooking experiences and have been enjoying fresh mint tea during meals. The children are responsible for watering the plants on specific days and they use a moisture monitor to know how much water to give.

Our 2012 – 2013 highlights

In August 2012 the fourth child to ever enrol at Nanbaree Child Centre when it first opened, returned to the centre for a visit. Thea is now a 15 year old high school student, but she still has very vivid and fond memories of her time at Nanbaree. She was able to recall stories being read to her, the lunches that were served and the games that she played. Thea recognised her educators who are still at Nanbaree Child Centre – Hayley Liu, Shikha Dey and Anu Tuxali – and she was so pleased to see them again.

Early in 2013 TLC Indoor Gardens were engaged to set up an indoor edible garden consisting of seasonal vegetables and herbs. The Business Development Manager from TLC Indoor Gardens, Sheridan McCue, visits the Centre once every 3 weeks to monitor and maintain the plants. Sheridan engages with the children during each visit, and the children help her to water the plants and plant of new seedlings.

During 2013 the Centre underwent extensive refurbishment and upgrading of facilities, which has included a complete kitchen renovation, the replacement of floor vinyl in the corridors and the removal of lockers and storage in the outdoor room to create a new open space for children to explore and play.



Excursions into the
community broaden
the children's
understanding of the
world they live in.

Gowrie Hunter Crèche

Tighes Hill TAFE
Newcastle

Coordinator: Sue Legg

Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 9am - 2pm

Our work with children and families

Gowrie Hunter Crèche, located at Tighes Hill TAFE, Newcastle, provides early childhood education and care for children aged from birth to five years whose parents are enrolled in English Language lessons through the Government's Adult Migrant English Program. Many of the families using Gowrie Hunter Crèche are refugees, the majority of whom come from African countries, with Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of The Sudan and Republic of South Sudan being the most common countries of origin. Some families will only have been in Australia for two weeks when they come to the Crèche, and most children and families using this service require a high level of support. There is therefore a strong focus on building supportive, trusting relationships. Educators aim to learn and use some basic 'survival' words in children's and families' first languages. During 2013 the Crèche's enrolment form and parent handbook was translated into the most commonly used community languages.

Our programs for children

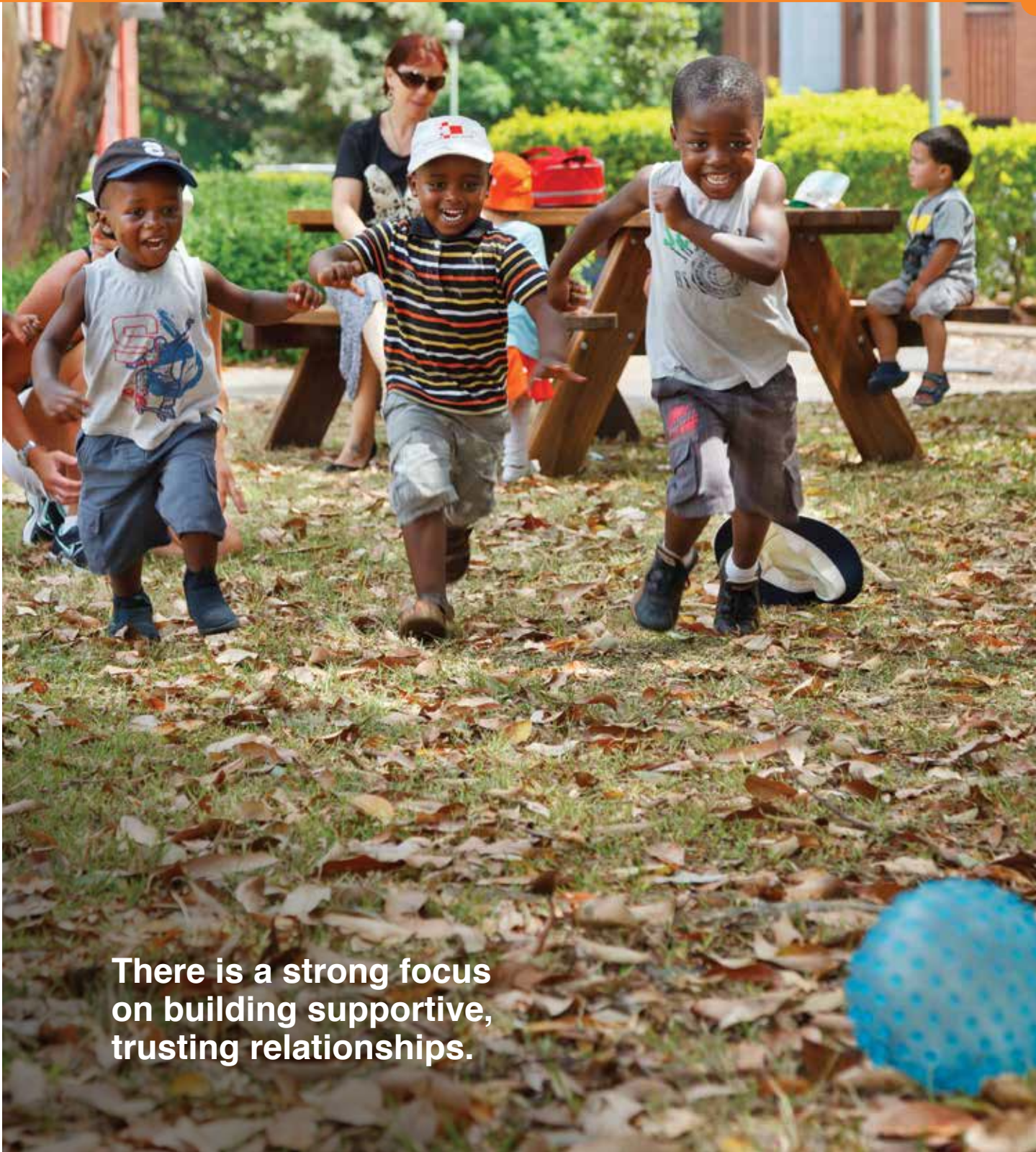
The program is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework with a strong focus on 'Belonging, Being and Becoming' (National Curriculum). The educators form caring, trusting and nurturing relationships with each child and patiently encourage language and social and emotional development through the many and varied educational resources and experiences provided. The children stay together as one group during the day in a 'family grouped' environment, where children of mixed ages have many opportunities to interact and learn together. This is particularly important for siblings who attend the Crèche program, as this gives them a strong sense of security. It is also beneficial to all areas of children's learning, including the development of language, social, emotional and cognitive skills.

The educators are excited to have an extensive range of new resources to share with the children for term 3, 2013. During this term many of the children will be preparing to transition either to another mainstream early childhood education and care setting or to formal school.

Our 2012 – 2013 highlights

In 2013 educators at the Crèche decided to celebrate Harmony Week, which celebrates the social, cultural and economic benefits that cultural diversity brings to Australia, in their own way. The Harmony Week website suggested that early childhood education and care services cook and eat food from different countries with the children. However, as the children at Gowrie Hunter Crèche bring their own food from home for mealtimes, the children are regularly exposed to foods from a wide variety of cultures. As an alternative, the educators used the popular children's book *Possum Magic* to guide a learning experience where the children cooked and ate Australian food. Educators divided the Crèche into the three cities mentioned in the book where the story's characters ate Vegemite sandwiches, pavlova and lamingtons. Educators then read some of the story, consulted a large teaching map borrowed from TAFE and moved to the city mentioned to eat each of the foods. The children's families also participated in the celebration by sharing some traditional dancing and singing from their own cultures with the children and educators.

For the end of term event in Term 2, 2013, the Crèche organised a 'pyjamas and popcorn' party, which was well received by the children who were fascinated with cooking the popcorn and watching and listening to it pop.



There is a strong focus
on building supportive,
trusting relationships.

Gowrie OSHC & VC

Outside School Hours Care & Vacation Care

Malcolm Street
(enter through Bridge Street)
Erskineville 2043

Phone: 02 9557 5061

Fax: 02 9557 5061

Supervisor: Gayle Dodd

Hours: Monday - Friday, 3pm - 6pm

Our work with children and families

Gowrie Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and Vacation Care have been operating on the grounds of Erskineville Public School for almost 20 years, and the program continues to be popular and well attended. Currently, the program meets the child care needs of 140 families and there are a total of 166 children involved in the programs.

Throughout the year, Gowrie OSHC and Vacation Care has continued to focus on building community partnerships to enhance children's learning and strengthen community relationships.

Gowrie OSHC and Vacation Care's relationship with the government funded SDN Inclusion Support Agency, and the provision of an additional educator to support the engagement of all children in the program, is integral to maintaining an inclusive and responsive service for all children.

Throughout the coming year, Gowrie OSHC and Vacation Care will continue to work to enhance children's learning, strengthen community relationships, and consider ways for the program to constantly evolve, inspire and stay relevant to families.

Our programs for children

The program is transitioning to become an approved service under the National Quality Framework and delivers a program guided by the My Time Our Place framework for school age care in Australia. There is a strong focus on building secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children and ongoing learning and reflective practice for educators. Children are regularly consulted to help plan for learning experiences that are relevant to their current interests.

The service has continued its involvement with the Australian Government's 'Active After School Communities' (AASC) program and strongly advocates children's health and wellbeing by supporting the program's outcomes of engaging school aged children in structured physical activity. By involving local sporting clubs and coaches Gowrie OSHC and Vacation Care aim to encourage ongoing participation.

In the area of creative arts, the Gowrie OSHC 'Kid's Club', which includes children aged nine and over, are currently working on a 'commissioned' artwork for Gowrie NSW's Alexandria Corporate Office. This collaborative project has been embraced enthusiastically by the participating children, with many creative options and ideas being presented by this group of involved learners.

The use of natural materials, elements of Gowrie NSW's history, with a contemporary twist, are forming the basis of the work. This project is closely aligned to My Time Our Place (National Curriculum Framework).

Our Collaboration with Erskineville Public School

During 2012–2013 Gowrie OSHC has continued to strengthen and build upon the collaborative relationship it has with Erskineville Public School.

In 2013 the program was invited to present at an Erskineville Public School information morning for families, and they have been invited to participate in future information sessions. There is strong focus on maintaining ongoing communication between the OSHC program and school to help ensure consistency for children across both settings in relation to policies, procedures and expectations, and to provide positive, quality environments for children. Erskineville Public School has also identified a possible need for an extension of the OSHC program, and Gowrie NSW will trial a Before School Care program in Term 4 2013.

Our 2012 – 2013 highlights

Throughout the year, Gowrie Vacation Care has been pleased to offer the children many opportunities to engage in a range of experiences within the community, from going to see dramatic productions at local entertainment venues to picnics in the park, to special visitors to the program.

A major program highlight occurred during the winter 2013 vacation care program when a NRL & Sport Clinic was presented by a high profile rugby league professional. This experience was well received by the participating children and supported the outcomes of the AASC program.



Continuing to enhance
children's learning,
inspire and stay
relevant to families.

Inclusion Support Agencies

Gowrie NSW manages the NSW West Inclusion Support Agency (ISA), based in Dubbo, and the NSW Central West ISA which is based in Bathurst. The ISAs operate under the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP), funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

The program assists eligible Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to include children with ongoing high support needs, and supports capacity building to enable services to provide quality environments that are inclusive of all children. To achieve this, ISAs assist services to link in with relevant community supports, work in partnership with families, identify professional development needs and opportunities, and engage in reflective practice and quality improvement.

The Central West ISA employs 2 part time Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISFs) to support 79 services throughout the region. West ISA also employs 2 ISFs, who support 68 services in the region, which covers approximately one third of the state extending to Broken Hill in the west, the Queensland border in the north and Mudgee in the east. The ISA Coordinator, who manages both the Central West and West ISA teams, is based in the Dubbo office.

Highlights 2012 – 2013

Gowrie NSW successfully tendered to continue to provide the West and Central West ISA services from January 2013 until the end of June 2016.

The ISFs in the Central West ISA region worked as part of the Bathurst Child and Family Network to organise professional development on Helping Children Succeed through Speech, Language and Literacy. Two world renowned speakers from Charles Sturt University presented to participants. Representatives from a cross section of service types in the region attended, including participants from the early childhood, education, welfare and health sectors.

The ISFs in Central West ISA region also focussed on strengthening partnerships and collaboration with the early intervention and ECEC services based in four towns within their region. This will create better outcomes for children with additional needs. Special educators from early intervention services attended educator team meetings to follow up on strategies that had been developed in previous meetings, such as training on the development and use of visual aids.

An ISF from the West ISA attended a community meeting run by Otitis Media. Through this meeting the ISF became aware of the free Care for Kids' Ears resource kit which was designed and produced by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing to increase awareness of ear disease and hearing loss in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. These resource kits were distributed to a number of ECEC services in the West ISA region during site visits.



Indigenous Professional Support Unit

New South Wales & ACT

The Indigenous Professional Support Unit (IPSU) continued to work in partnership with the NSW Professional Support Coordinator (PSC), Children's Services Central, and the Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs) throughout NSW and the ACT to provide professional support, advice and training to eligible Aboriginal Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Services.

IPSU also continued to work closely with the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP) to deliver projects and resources to assist non-Aboriginal early childhood education and care services to engage with their local Aboriginal community.

Highlights 2012 – 2013

National IPSP Working Group

As a member of the IPSP Engagement and Communication Working Group, IPSU worked in partnership with representatives from the National IPSP (PSC, ISA, IPSU) to develop 3 documents for effective collaboration across the IPSP that included DEEWR, Regulatory bodies and ACECQA, to support the successful delivery of the IPSP program at a national level.

The policy development professional learning sessions were delivered in 4 regions by Children's Services Central in partnership with IPSU.

Patterns and Early Algebra Preschool numeracy project

Between July and November 2012 an additional 8 education and care services participated in the 'Improving numeracy outcomes for young Indigenous children through the 'Patterns and Early Algebra Preschool (PEAP) Professional Development Program'. This research project, conducted in partnership with Macquarie University, aimed at closing the gap in terms of mathematical outcomes for Indigenous children. The project was undertaken with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal early childhood educators working within ECEC services. From March to June 2013 IPSU conducted school interviews to track the progress of the children involved in the project as they transitioned to formal schooling.

Follow up support and training also continued to be provided to the 8 participating early childhood education and care services during 2013. The research team, which consisted of Dr Marina Papic and Dr Kate Highfield (Macquarie University), Deborah Garrett (previous IPSU TRO), IPSU Coordinator Judy McKay-Tempest and Gujaga MACS staff Priscilla Carmichael and Sophie Youngberry, presented an interactive workshop on the key research findings and hands on practical tasks from the PEAP project at the 2013 SNAICC Conference.

Community in Practice – Sister Service Project

In 2013 the 'Community in Practice – Sister Service Project', undertaken in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal early childhood education and care services in a number of metropolitan and rural communities throughout NSW, concluded. The project commenced in 2010 with funding and support through the NSW PSC. It partnered Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services to promote a local focus on 'closing the gap' in early childhood education and care services by facilitating the development of 'sister relationships' between the partner services. Using a 'community of practice' model for professional learning and development, participating services engaged in a range of activities including joint staff meetings, staff exchange opportunities and combined training sessions. The outcomes, challenges and successes of the project are documented in the Community in Practice – Sister Service Project (2013) report. This project is now being extended through the 'Yarnin' Circles' project, which provides an opportunity for educators to 'talk up' issues they may be experiencing in making connections with their local Aboriginal community or to share how they have made connections. This project is being facilitated by IPSU in collaboration with the ISAs in the relevant regions.

Conferences and Advocacy

IPSU has played an important role in a range of forums on both a state and national level. As well as convening the national ISPS forum in May 2013, IPSU will also host the IPSU Alliance Conference in October 2013. Gowrie NSW IPSU has also provided representation to:

- ACECQA, on behalf of the IPSU Alliance
- KidsMatter
- IPSP state forums
- ISA regional meetings
- The Budget Based Funded (BBF) Program review (at both a state and national level).



Yenu Allowah

Aboriginal Child & Family Centre

Belmore Street (Cnr North Parade)
Mt Druitt 2770
Phone: 1800 089 385

Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Child & Family Centre provides integrated services that include early childhood health, playgroups, family support and parent education programs for Aboriginal families in the Mt Druitt area. The Centre aims to support and promote the overall health, wellbeing and development of Aboriginal children and improve the support provided for their families. Yenu Allowah is a joint project of Gowrie NSW with Burnside Children, Young People and Families and Link Up.

Programs for Children and Families

Supported playgroup

The Yenu Allowah supported playgroup has seen some changes during 2012–2013. The playgroup has introduced interest-based programming for children, with a strong focus on learning through play and interactions with others including children, parents, family members and playgroup facilitators. The early learning team also introduced portfolios to document children's development and interests. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the playgroup curriculum and educators and parents share their understandings of each child's interests and learning. Each child is observed and an individual, interest-based, educational program modelled for each family is developed. The playgroup's indoor environment was also redesigned to include learning centres aimed to respond to children's individual interests and needs.

Bub n Me Time Program

The 'Bub n Me Time' program provides support for new and young mothers, offering them opportunities to come together to talk with healthcare professionals and educators about any issues they are experiencing or concerns they have including their baby's sleeping, settling, feeding and development and their own mental and physical health and wellbeing. This program also provides mothers with valuable opportunities to build their social networks with others in the community.

Outreach Program

During the past financial year the Yenu Allowah early learning team have worked in partnership with Mission Australia to provide a playgroup in the local park as well the ongoing playgroup at Noumea Public School which assists with home to school transition for Aboriginal children in the community.

2012 – 2013 Highlights

Soil Turning Event

In February 2013, Yenu Allowah's local reference group held an official event for the soil turning for a new permanent, one-stop centre, that will replace the current temporary premises located on the Mt Druitt Hospital grounds. Once completed, the new centre will also include a long day care early childhood education and care service. The soil turning event began with official introductions before moving on to a water blessing offered by women from Baa Baayne Aboriginal Corporation. Uncle Harold Hunt and Auntie Gloria Matthews undertook the official soil turning gesture with children and families from Yenu Allowah. Uncle Wes Marne provided a smoking ceremony to conclude the event.

NAIDOC Week

In July 2013, the Yenu Allowah early learning team provided several activity tables for children and families at the NAIDOC Week celebrations in the local Mt Druitt community, held at Blacktown City Council and the Emerton Leisure Centre.

Baby Welcome to Community

As part of NAIDOC Week celebrations, Yenu Allowah Aboriginal Child & Family Centre held its signature NAIDOC event, 'Baby Welcome to Community', for the second time. The event was held at The Hub, Mt Druitt, and was well attended by new parents from the community, as well as invited Elders. Parents introduced their children to the Elders and other community members and each child was presented with a beautiful certificate and a 'signature bear' for welcomes and best wishes to be recorded. The Baby Welcome to Community event aims to help Aboriginal elders connect with members of the next generation, and to make children and their families feel a part of their community.



Aiming to support and promote the overall health, wellbeing and development of Aboriginal children.

Adult Migrant English Program

Gowrie NSW continues to work with the NSW AMES consortium with TAFE NSW and The Smith Family to deliver the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) across three regions of NSW. These regions are Illawarra/Wollongong, Hunter/ Newcastle and Northern Sydney and Other Rural. Under the AMEP, Gowrie NSW places children aged from 6 weeks to 5 years in mainstream and crèche services while their parent studies English for a minimum of 510 hours. The AMEP program has continued to provide ongoing support and funding to newly arrived migrants throughout the year. Gowrie NSW received 2,757 child care referrals during the 2012 – 2013 financial year from various TAFE institutes and Community Colleges in the contracted regions, compared to 2,085 referrals in the previous year.

Mainstream Placements

Gowrie NSW assisted 670 students by placing 828 children in 384 child care centres throughout NSW in the 2012 – 2013 financial year. These services include long day care centres, family day care schemes, occasional child care centres and preschools. Gowrie NSW also paid for term break fees for all continuing mainstream students, to ensure consistency of child care for AMEP students throughout the academic year. In the 2012–2013 financial year an influx of new arrivals into the Illawarra area was identified and saw the number of students increase. This rise in students resulted in the number of referrals increasing by 35 per cent. Gowrie NSW has had ongoing challenges in previous years in placing children in the area due to the limited number of child care places available. To assist these students, Gowrie NSW negotiated and paid for additional staff and places at Wollongong TAFE Children’s Centre. As the demand for child care has increased over the past year, Gowrie NSW commenced negotiations with Wollongong TAFE with the possibility of providing crèche care to students studying under the AMEP.

Gowrie NSW has seen a change in migration trends in some regions of NSW during this financial year. The majority of referrals received from TAFE NSW institutes located in metropolitan Sydney are students who have migrated from China and Korea. In rural areas, the majority of referrals are students who have migrated from African countries, followed by migrants from China. Gowrie NSW continues to monitor migration trends to assist AMEP families with relevant information about child care and other services for families.

Gowrie NSW Crèche Placements

Gowrie NSW provides child care for students attending Newcastle TAFE at the Gowrie Hunter Crèche. During this year Gowrie NSW assisted 46 students by placing 57 children in the Crèche facility. The Crèche can accept enrolments up to 30 children per day, and is located onsite at the Newcastle TAFE institute. Gowrie NSW also provided enrolment forms and parent handbooks translated into a number of community languages to cater for the wide range of different cultural groups that used the Gowrie Hunter Crèche during the year.

Children & Family Information Services

Child & Family Information line

The Child Care and Family Information line is a referral service funded by NSW Community Services. During the 2012–2013 financial year Gowrie NSW received 680 calls. 75 per cent of the calls received this year were from families requesting assistance regarding support services and counselling services in NSW. Most of these were families with children aged between three and 12 years. This represents a change in the trend of the types of call typically received. In previous years, most calls have been enquiries about locating child care services. However, during the past year there has been a significant increase in the number of enquiries regarding family support services located in NSW.

Resource Library & Specialist Equipment Pool

Gowrie NSW was proud to continue to support the early and middle education and care sectors through our management of the Specialist Equipment Pool and General Resource Library until December 2012. These programs were funded by the Australian Government Inclusion and Professional Support Program and were managed by Gowrie NSW on behalf of Children's Services Central, the Professional Support Coordinator in NSW.

Specialist Equipment Pool

The Specialist Equipment Pool provides specialised equipment and resources to support the inclusion of children with additional needs or ongoing high support needs in mainstream education and care services. The equipment provided through this service is not equipment usually expected to be purchased by an education and care service.

Equipment loaned to services upon the recommendation of specialised therapists working with individual children with additional needs included:

- Portable ramps to create access to environments
- Standing frames and full support swings to allow the child with high physical support needs to participate in the daily program
- Hoists, slings, harnesses, change tables, toilet seats and steps for nappy change tables
- Posture aids for educators to enable them to lift and transfer children safely
- Specialised 'basic' furniture such as chairs and tables
- Specialised inclusion aids, such as sensory mats.

Gowrie NSW transitioned this program to Children's Services Central in December 2012. The average rate of loans from the pool was maintained (71 July to September; 56 October to December) but a higher rate of returns was experienced in this same period to ensure unused equipment was returned in readiness for the transition. Equipment ceased to be loaned out after November in readiness for the transport to the new manager.

General Resource Library

Gowrie NSW has had a long history of providing library resource services to the early years learning community over many years. Regular users of the library have included preschools, outside school hours care, in-home care, long day care, occasional care, family day care, mobile services and Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services. Students and families also have utilised the range of literature and resources offered by the Library, which included:

- Books
- Articles
- Multimedia (videos, DVDs)
- Language other than English resources
- Pictures and posters
- Dramatic play resources
- Books and puzzles that reflect diverse cultures.

From July to December 2012, the Library services reached the following users:

- 158 members.
- 1870 loans: 1710 metropolitan; 160 rural and regional.
- 740 renewals.
- 40 visitors.

Sadly, after 12 years of operation with Gowrie NSW, due to a change in direction of Australian Government funding, the General Resource Library was relocated to Children's Services Central in December 2012 as part of a national library initiative.

Gowrie NSW supports this initiative as an important avenue where educators, students, families and professionals devoted to early years development are resourced to continue their learning and work with children.

Professional Learning Unit

Professional Learning

Gowrie NSW's Professional Learning program was transformed during 2012 and 2013. The title 'Professional Learning' replaced 'Training and Professional Development'. This name change reflects the National Quality Standard expectations in relation to education and care services 'building a positive organisational culture and professional learning community', and it demonstrates Gowrie NSW's commitment to embedding learning in everyday practice.

The revamped Professional Learning program was also supported by a newly designed calendar available both online and as a printed version. The establishment of email marketing, the introduction of a variety of learning models and an increase in the pool of Gowrie NSW's facilitators were significant changes for the Professional Learning program this year. The calendars over the past year have incorporated diverse learning tools such as learning communities, teleconferencing, video-conferencing, webinars and traditional face to face delivery.

Gowrie NSW has a long history of offering quality professional support to education and care service staff throughout NSW. In 2012-13 we maintained this strong reputation for supporting the sector in relation to current trends in early childhood. Feedback from participants has continued to demonstrate the quality of Gowrie's professional learning programs – specific and relevant content, facilitators with early childhood qualifications and extensive experience, smaller groups that are conducive to learning and venues selected for ergonomic environments and modern equipment.

A total of 1475 participants attended calendared learning sessions (1264) and customised learning sessions (211) in the past year. The topics offered across 99 sessions related to the four components of quality education and care: National Quality Framework (11), Children's Learning and Development (12), Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (3) and Leadership and Management (6). Popular topics were those related to the expectations of the National Quality Framework – First Aid Management of Anaphylaxis and Emergency Asthma Management, Preparing for an Assessment Visit and Maintaining the Momentum. Topics regarding Children's Learning and Development were increased by 50 % in the second half of the year aiming to meet the sector's request for more sessions related to practices with children.

A feature of the two Calendars was Educational Leaders: A Learning Community. This eight session course attracted participants with its collaborative, practice focussed opportunity where participant's learning was embedded in their own workplace over a period of time.

One participant from this session said 'I have found the course has given me a lot more confidence to believe in myself and my abilities. I have learnt possibly more than I realise. My management team comment on how inspired I am.'

The Professional Learning team again welcomed the opportunity to partner with like-minded organisations to:

- Deliver 36 sessions on behalf of Children's Services Central throughout NSW.
- Partner with TAFE Institutes throughout NSW to offer First Aid Management of Anaphylaxis and Emergency Asthma Management session. This well attended topic, offered in seven locations throughout metropolitan and rural NSW, enabled educators to meet compliance expectations of the National Quality Framework.
- Partner with Community Rehabilitation Service (CRS) for their expertise in sessions devoted to Workplace Health and Safety for Educators and Management.
- Working alongside the Australian Institute of Management (AIM) to offer Gowrie NSW's inaugural webinar Managing and Implementing Change
- Present to university and TAFE students to strengthen links with the early and middle childhood sector.

Improving the marketing of Gowrie NSW Professional Learning brand through regular email marketing campaigns, a new look calendar and a new and improved online registration process has created a consistent look and feel for the Professional Learning program. Marketing emails have reached up to 3,200 education and care services throughout NSW, including long day care, family day care, preschools and occasional care.

Consistent positive feedback and strong attendance rates demonstrate that Gowrie NSW's Professional Learning opportunities continue to be highly reputable in the education and care sector. As the sector continues to grow to meet the demands and expectations of the regulations and standards of the National Quality Framework, the direction and focus for Professional Learning for the upcoming year is to build our customised product – group and individual learning opportunities, to personalise learning programs for each service, and support their provision of quality education and care for children in their early years.

'A lovely relaxed session which was great for validating what we do and gave ideas to further enhance out practice'

'I thought I had a good grasp of this topic. It was good to have this reinforced and related to the EYLF...'

Consultancy

Over the past twelve months we have had an increase in the number of 'fee for service' consultancy opportunities. Having extensive experience and expertise within the sector, our experienced professional consultants are qualified to provide a wide range of services such as policy review and policy development, mock assessments based on the National Quality Framework, advising on building design, review of service operation and work based child care.

Our professional learning team have provided customised learning opportunities around NSW.

Our range of consultancy services are developed to meet our client's budget requirements.

Gowrie

Gowrie Australia

Gowrie Australia is a national consortium of state based Lady Gowrie Child Centres. There is a Lady Gowrie Child Centre in each capital city. Each centre provides a range of services which may include education and care programs, outside school hours care programs, professional development for early childhood practitioners, resource development, family support programs, resource centres and library services.



Although each Gowrie is a separate entity, we work collaboratively through a Memorandum of Understanding to develop and implement quality education and care programs for young children which are informed by current research and thinking.

The consortium meets on a regular basis to share best practice and to undertake the editorial role for the quarterly Gowrie Australia publication 'Reflections'. Reflections is distributed nationally to early education and care professionals, families and relevant government agencies.

Gowrie Publications

Gowrie NSW is proud to be a part of Gowrie Australia 'Reflections' Committee. 'Reflections' is a quarterly publication supported by the Australian Government Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations through the Child Care Conference and Publication and Support Services. The publication is distributed at no cost to children's services nationally and provides a valuable resource on current issues and research for families and practitioners in early and middle education. Gowrie NSW would like to thank the NSW contributors for their valuable support over the past twelve months.



Thank you

Most of the photographs in the Annual Report are from our children's services. We would gratefully acknowledge and thank the families from Gowrie Children's Services for allowing us to use these in Gowrie NSW publications.

We also wish to acknowledge and thank the non government organisations and Universities that we have collaborated with over the past 12 months allowing us to share expertise and goodwill, including Macquarie University and Childrens' Services Central.

Gowrie NSW benefits from the resources and financial assistance of many organisations.

We particularly wish to thank:

- Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- NSW Department of Community Services
- NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Corrective Services NSW
- Gilbert and Tobin for their pro bono assistance throughout the financial year.



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