



Gowrie
NSW

ANNUAL REPORT **2014**



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OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to contribute to an enduring and sustainable society through the focus on early and middle childhood education and care.

OUR VISION

Gowrie NSW aspires to be at the forefront of early and middle childhood education and to empower and support children, families and professional educators.

OUR VALUES

- We are diverse and inclusive in how we work
- Our practice is grounded in evidence and research
- We aim to be leaders in everything we do.

OUR FOCUS

Over the next 2-3 years our five key areas of focus will be:

- Support for parents and families
- Knowledge leadership
- Professional learning
- Expert consultants
- Centre growth and development.

EXECUTIVE REPORT



Frances Drummond
Chairperson, Gowrie NSW

Our financial year has seen the finalisation of our Strategic Plan 2011 – 2014. We have achieved many important goals over the past twelve months, which lead us into a strong position for establishment of our next three year strategic plan.

The three key strategies of our plan 2011 – 2014 were:

- Driving improvements to lift the quality of our programs and services
- Achieving growth, opportunities and sustainability for Gowrie NSW and
- Building a viable, robust and well regarded professional development business.

Once again, our organisation has maintained a strong financial position over the last year with different programs financially supporting our early childhood centres.

We have focussed very strongly on the quality of education programs that we provide for children and families. Our focus on becoming a 'leader in the Infancy sector' has driven a change in how we respond to infants and toddlers in our programs and how we speak to families about our practices.

These changes have prompted educator discussions across our services, and our educators have written articles in Infant and Toddler publications in New Zealand and in Gowrie Australia's Reflections magazine.

Our links with Gowrie Australia have strengthened, and our educators have had the opportunity to discuss pedagogy with Gowrie colleagues from around Australia, through the Educator Link Up program.

We have improved the environments, in all facilities across Gowrie NSW, with building improvements to each of the centres and extensive work being completed at the front section of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre.

The initial redevelopment of the front part of the Lady Gowrie Child Centre now brings the building up to the current building standards. Refurbishment of the ground floor is the first stage of the larger Lady Gowrie Child Centre redevelopment. Plans are currently being developed with three main considerations:

- the expansion of the existing services to meet the growing demand for education and care places within the inner city Sydney suburbs;
- to develop observation rooms for the playrooms enabling observation of children without interruption of the program;
- to update and renew furnishing and fittings.

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre was originally developed as a demonstration early education centre and 'centre of excellence'. 'The Lady Gowrie Child Centres are therefore demonstration and research Centres on the one hand, schools carrying out a Pre-School Child Educational Program, on the other hand, health Centres in which the physical growth of the preschool child are studied and promoted'. (P7 Preschool Centres In Australia, 1944)

Our history has always involved strong links with professional learning institutions within the early childhood sector through Universities, TAFEs and private colleges, both in Australia and overseas. Our aim in re-developing the Lady Gowrie Child Centre Erskineville is to strengthen these links and provide an opportunity to prove that our practice is grounded in research.

The upper level development of the Erskineville building has been completed and now houses the 'Jo Pender' meeting room. We celebrated the official opening of the Jo Pender Room on 13th May 2014. The event was attended by seventy guests including Gowrie NSW board members, Gowrie NSW staff members, and representatives from the wider early childhood sector.

Jo Pender made a significant contribution to indigenous early childhood education throughout NSW. Jo Pender passed away suddenly in 2000 and the meeting room located within the Lady Gowrie building was named after her in recognition of the contribution Jo made in encouraging the early childhood community to understand the issues of Aboriginal people. We were fortunate to have Jo's mother, Maria Pender and her sister, Frances Grant make presentations on the evening. The Jo Pender Room has been fitted with an integrated, one touch audio visual system, including Wi-Fi video conferencing capability and incorporating one large screen, two touchscreens, four mobile devices and surround sound. The meeting room is a very flexible space and can host up to 50 guests in seminar style and 32 guests in cabaret style seating.

We are funded by the NSW State Government to support rural and remote services with professional learning opportunities. Travelling vast distances to remote communities with a small number of participants has not been a cost effective means of supporting these services with high quality training. The installation of the new facilities assists us to communicate with these centres on a more regular basis and to make these professional learning opportunities more accessible.

We have purchased a property in Dubbo for the purpose of developing a child care centre. Dubbo continues to be an area of growth and this would strengthen our existing ties with the rural community with the Inclusion Support Agency located in Dubbo and our funding for the Rural and Remote sector for Professional Learning.

Refurbishment works have been completed at Nanbaree Child Centre during the financial year and we are working with Corrective Services NSW for work to be completed at John Mewburn Child Care Centre in the near future.

We were involved in extensive negotiations with the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet regarding the management of Nanbaree Child Centre during the financial year, and from October 12, 2014 Nanbaree Child Centre will be fully owned and managed by Gowrie NSW. This is an exciting opportunity for Gowrie NSW in terms of developing inner city child care in the future.

With the change of Federal Government policy for professional learning of educators, we have reviewed how we provide professional learning to the sector to ensure that we meet our State Government contractual arrangements and also provide a wider variety of learning opportunities through more regional conferences and workshops. The change has proven to be very popular with increased attendance in our sessions.



Natalie Grenfell
CEO, Gowrie NSW

Our Gowrie NSW Board has provided expertise and resources for the development of our Risk Management Plan, Business Continuity Plans and review of our IT plan.

Our Investment Strategy has now been completed and implemented. Board induction has been strengthened and Board Information packages have been updated to reflect changes in the board responsibilities. This financial year saw the end of our Strategic Plan and the development of our new plan to move Gowrie NSW forward.

The past twelve months have been a time of reflection to ensure the proud history of Gowrie NSW is recognised and the values and principles of providing quality education and care and supporting families is still forefront to what we believe is important.

Frances Drummond
Chairperson, Gowrie NSW

Natalie Grenfell
CEO, Gowrie NSW

GOWRIE NSW HISTORY

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.



Standing by children,
families and communities
is the legacy that
Gowrie NSW carries
into it's operational
philosophy today.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gowrie NSW Board & Executive

As a not for profit organisation, the role of the Gowrie NSW board is to provide strategic leadership, demonstrate good governance and ensure ongoing performance of the organisation.

The board delegates the day-to-day management of Gowrie NSW to the CEO.

The Gowrie NSW meets on a bi-monthly basis and holds special meetings from time to time to discuss particular projects.

Board of Directors

Director		Date Joined	Meetings held	Meetings attended
Frances Drummond	Chairperson	01/06/2009	8	7
Dana Chardon	Treasurer	15/11/2012	8	7
Carol Burgess	Director	15/11/2012	8	6
Bill Tobin	Director	14/11/2013	8	8
Melly Sah Bandar	Director	14/11/2013	8	8

Invitees		Meetings held	Meetings attended
Natalie Grenfell	CEO	8	8
James Chaplin	CFO	8	8

Gowrie NSW is an organisation limited by guarantee. All board members are non executive directors and receive no remuneration for their services. Board members may be reimbursed for reasonable costs and expenses incurred with Board Activities. The board have delegated their responsibilities based on the Register of Delegation.

Audit Risk and Investment Committee

The Gowrie NSW Audit Risk and Investment Committee is a sub-committee of the Gowrie NSW board. The committee meets on a quarterly basis. The committee members are Dana Chardon, Bill Tobin and Melly Sah Bandar.



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.



Dana Chardon

Treasurer

Dana joined the Gowrie NSW Board in November 2012. Dana is currently the General Manager of Risk & Audit with Vodafone. Her areas of expertise include: corporate compliance, operations and strategy, business continuity management, operational risk, change management and audit. Dana has recently graduated from the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD).



Melly Sah Bandar

Director

Melly joined the Gowrie NSW Board in August 2013 as Audit, Risk and Investment Committee member. Melly has a broad background and a strong foundation in strategic commercial and financial planning, reporting, financial modelling, project management, business and financial transformation, process improvement and change management. Melly has more than 20 years experience in delivering business and financial transformation projects and has consulted extensively in this area for ASX 50 companies. Melly has worked in Australia, USA and Indonesia.



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 at CSU for the Bachelor of Teaching (Birth–Five), the Bachelor of Education (Birth–Five) and the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary). Carol is also the NSW President of Early Childhood Australia (ECA).



Bill Tobin

Director

Bill joined the Gowrie NSW Board in 2013, 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 both training and coaching WHS systems development bring a unique balance to our board.

WHO WE ARE

Our People

Gowrie NSW has invested time and resources into continuing to ensure our staff, educators and teachers can be the best at what they do. We have encouraged and supported our staff to continue their professional development through attending conferences (both overseas and within Australia), studying formal qualifications and attending professional learning session.

From the larger Gowrie organisation, we have focused on 'getting back to basics' with core training for all staff within Gowrie NSW. The initial focus has been on Work Place Health and Safety and has included specialists providing their expert advice and knowledge on topics such as manual handling and workplace ergonomics. It is our strong belief that a healthy and safe work environment is an enabler to our employees maximising their potential.

We have continued to develop our Management People Performance process participating in meaningful conversations with our Gowrie NSW team members about improving practice and ensuring that our staff are supported through their professional journey.

We have launched a new company induction program to ensure that when we welcome new employees to Gowrie NSW they are well equipped with information on the organisation to set them up for success.

Recognising the service of our Staff

5	Marian Hassan Abdi-Hashi Irene Skiadopoulos
10	Fahmida Akhter
15	Pauline Lee Anuradha Taxali

Qualification achievements

We value life long learning and congratulate the following educators for achieving their study goals.

Certificate III in Children's Services

- Anna Cvigr-Schlee
- Rasaluxmy Alagendran
- Pauline Lee
- Anjali Sengupta

Diploma in Children's Services

- Fahmida Akhter
- Arunima Saha
- Jennie May

Languages spoken

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| • Arabic | • Indonesian |
| • Bengali | • Italian |
| • Bislama | • Mandarin |
| • Bosnian | • Persian |
| • Cantonese | • Portuguese |
| • Danish | • Russian |
| • Farsi | • Singhalese |
| • French | • Somali |
| • German | • Spanish |
| • Greek | • Tamil |
| • Hindi | |

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT TEAM

Natalie Grenfell	Chief Executive Officer
Rose Todd	Manager Education, Care & Consultancy
Lisa Palmer Sophia Mackie	Human Resource Manager
James Chaplin	Chief Financial Officer
Melodie Glass	Manager Professional Learning
Susan Hutchinson	AMES Contract Manager
Judy McKay-Tempest Narelle Semmens	Coordinator Indigenous Professional Support Unit
Rhonda Vang	Coordinator Inclusion Support Agency – West & Central West



Senior Executive Team

Seated L-R:

Sophia Mackie – Human Resources Manager
Natalie Grenfell – Chief Executive Officer

Standing L-R:

Lisa Palmer – Human Resource Manager
Melodie Glass – Manager, Professional Learning
James Chaplin – Chief Financial Officer
Rose Todd – Manager, Education Care & Consultancy

Organisation Chart

Board of Directors

Chief Executive Officer

Administration	Children's Services	Government Funded Services	Consultancy
Office Management	Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre	Inclusion Support Assistance	Consulting
Human Resources & Payroll	John Mewburn Child Care Centre	Indigenous Professional Support Unit	
Finance & IT	Nanbaree Child Centre	Adult Migrant English Services	
	Gowrie Hunter Crèche	Professional Learning	
	Gowrie OSHC & Vacation Care		

FINANCIAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS


Government Funding

\$7.65m  **2013**
\$7.09m

The company still receives a large portion of its revenue (58%) from government funded programs. There was an increase in revenue from some funded programs this year and the end of our involvement in the Yenu Allowah project. The majority of the programs are contracted until June 2016 and June 2017.

Net surplus

Child Care Operations

\$0.074m  **2013**
loss of \$31,000

Child Care revenue (Education and Care Centres) totalled \$4.6m (2013: \$4.2m). This delivered an improved net surplus primarily due to increased utilisation all centres.

Investment Income

\$0.60m  **2013**
\$0.55m

Despite lower interest rates, investment income increased during the year.

The Board, through the Audit, Risk and Investment Committee oversee the investment portfolio. In May, JBWere were appointed as our Investment Manager after a tender process. The key principles of our investment policy are:

- Pools of capital available for short, medium and long term investment.
- Performance of each pool to earn returns of CPI plus a margin.
- Performance benchmarked against measurable indexes.
- Socially responsible investment strategy – not investing directly in for profit Child Care organisations and restrictions on investments in unethical industries.

Net assets

\$14.8m  **2013**
\$12.9m

\$14.2m is invested in short term deposits or with JBWere (investment manager). During the last year a property in Dubbo was purchased which will be developed in the coming year. There are also other projects identified to grow education and care centres.

Corporate costs

\$2.0m  **2013**
\$1.9m

Corporate costs represent 15% of total revenue (2013: 15%). The company is focused to ensure this percentage doesn't increase.

Surplus

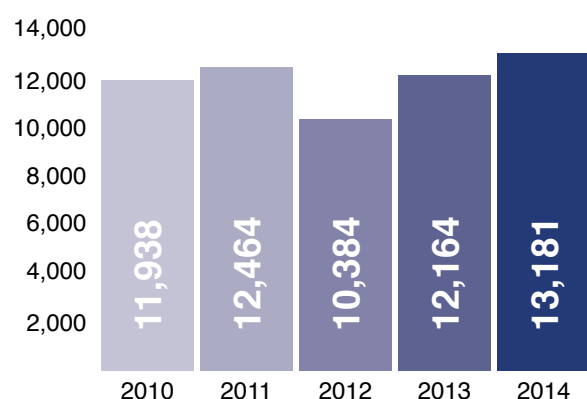
\$1.95m  **2013**
\$1.66m

Net surplus for the year increased by \$0.3m. There was improved contributions from all areas of the business and costs were kept within budgets.

FINANCIAL REPORT PERFORMANCE

Revenue Performance over 5 years

\$'000

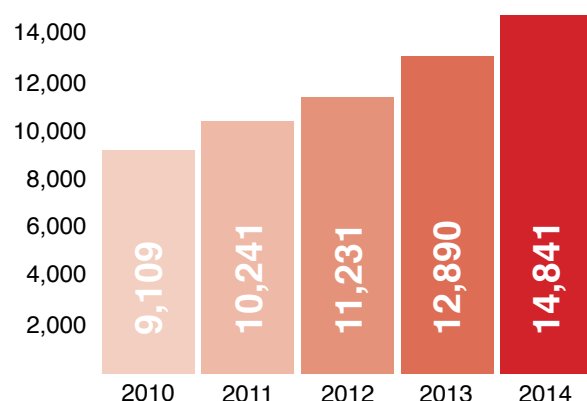


The contribution from each business unit for the year after allocation of corporate administration and support costs was:

	Jun 14 \$000's	Jun 13 \$000's
Government funded business	1,818	1,557
Education and care	74	(31)
Professional learning and consulting	(59)	13
Corporate (after allocations and including investment income)	118	120
Net surplus for the year	1,951	1,659

Net Assets over 5 years

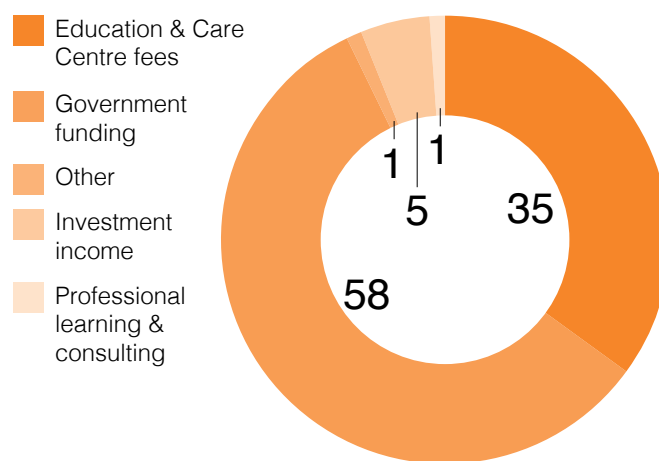
\$'000



Where our funds come from

Total revenue \$13,180,943

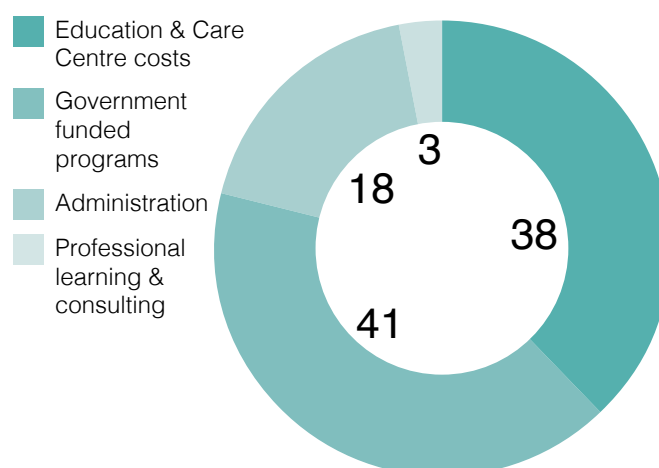
%



Where our funds are spent

Total expenditure \$11,230,064

%



Gowrie NSW's financial records for the year ended 30 June 2014 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

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE CENTRES

Our education and care centres; Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Nanbaree Child Centre and John Mewburn Child Centre, provided quality education and care to three hundred and twenty seven (327) children, from two hundred and ninety four (294) families during the financial year 2013/14.

Our enrolments in each education and care centres proved to be consistently high, with extensive waiting lists in each age group and particular demand for birth to two year old places. With the redevelopment of many inner city industrial sites for residential developments, we anticipate that demand for quality child care centres will remain for some time.

Each of our Gowrie NSW early education and care centres have experienced their environment 'beyond the gate'. The 'beyond the gate' is based on research that children will develop a respect for the environment and rhythms of the day the more they interact with their environment. Each of the Gowrie NSW centres has a unique and different environment particular to their community. Sharing the wider environment with children has provided the children with a broader range of opportunities and experiences which can be discussed and explored within the early childhood setting.

At Nanbaree Child Centre, the children engaged in regular excursions within the Sydney Central Business District community participating in events held at the Opera House, walks to inner city parks and weekly shopping excursions. Children from Lady Gowrie Child Centre have begun visiting the local library, small businesses in the community and Sydney Park. John Mewburn Child Care Centre children have continued their strong connection with the elderly at the Chesalon Malabar Nursing home and aged care facility. The children visit the facility every three weeks to engage and share in activities of singing, reading and art.

One goal of the Strategic Plan 2011 - 14 has been to upgrade and improve the environment and facilities at each Gowrie NSW location.

The removal of large trees from the Lady Gowrie Child Centre playground and the installation of an approved soft surface has provided open space for children to participate in large gross motor activities and allowed more light into the play rooms.

At John Mewburn Child Centre, the installation of an irrigation system, inclusion of wooden pallets as garden beds, replacement of fencing and outdoor equipment, the arrival of 'Jessica' the chicken and the development of a large vegetable and herb garden continue to enhance the environment and provide children with opportunities to engage in sustainable practices.

As part of our environmentally sustainability initiatives, a small water tank has been installed in the larger Lady Gowrie Child Centre playground for children to use for watering the garden and mud play activities. The children also harvested potatoes and seeds from their garden over the year.

Nanbaree Child Centre have made significant improvements to their environment through the inclusion of areas of natural environment across the centre, refurbishment of cabinets, painting and the replacement of equipment and furniture with natural recyclable and open ended resources.

Nanbaree Child Centre was successful in receiving a Landcare and Coles Junior Grant to install a vertical garden and 'grow lights' for the centre. As an indoor centre, the Nanbaree team have worked with the children to bring as much of the outdoor environment inside as possible. The garden produced large quantities of cherry tomatoes and various herbs which the children enjoyed using in cooking and during meal times. Situated in a 'green building' the principles of environmental sustainability are entrenched in the daily operation of the centre.

The implementation of the KidsMatter framework has been a focus for children, families and educators of John Mewburn Child Care Centre. KidsMatter is part of the Australian Early Childhood Mental Health initiative and provides a holistic approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing in children, families and educators. The program has been very well received by parents and educators.

John Mewburn was selected to participate in a transition to school trial through the Department of Education and Communities. The aim of the trial was to develop a transition to school tool and a set of guides for educators and families to complete for children attending school in the following year.

The importance of a positive transition to school has been emphasised in research around the world. It is well established that a successful start to school is linked to later positive educational and social outcomes.

Transition to Schools Educators, teachers and families completed the draft transition statements for children attending school in 2014 and provided these to schools the children were to be attending. The trial was supported by a team of Researchers from Victoria University.



Each of the Gowrie centres has a unique and different environment particular to their community



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE CENTRES



The Infant and Toddler
Network Group enables
educators and teachers
to share knowledge
and discuss infant
and toddler practice



Early Childhood teachers from Lady Gowrie Child Centre participated again in the 'Conversations Transition to School' project. The project involved teachers and Principals from local schools including Erskineville Public School and St Mary's Primary Catholic School, Erskineville. The project aimed to create an understanding of children's experiences and engagement in early childhood settings before school, and their experiences and engagement in their first year of school. Teachers from both the early childhood setting and the school setting found the process valuable in developing links and understanding of different educational settings, and assisting children with the transition between informal and formal education.

During this financial year, John Mewburn Child Care was recognised as a quality provider of early childhood program and was nominated as a finalist in the Randwick City Business excellence awards.

Infant and Toddler Project

As part of our Strategic Plan, 2011 – 2014 our focus has been on 'becoming leaders in the Infant and Toddler sector'.

In achieving this goal, we have developed an 'Infant and Toddler' project across our centres to critically examine our practice and interactions with infants and toddlers, and deepen our understanding of the natural development of very young children. We have drawn our knowledge of respectful and responsive caregiving practices from the work of Dr Emmi Pikler and Madga Gerber and begun to use the principles of the Pikler Approach and Resourceful Infant Educaring (RIE)[®] as a lens on our practice with infants and toddlers.

In 2014 three (3) teachers from two of the education and care centres attended a ten (10) day intensive training of 'Foundations theory of Resourceful Infant Educaring (RIE)[®] in Auckland, New Zealand.'

Ten (10) educators attended 18 hours of professional development on infant and toddler practice including a visiting consultant specialising in respectful infant and toddler caregiving.

The Infant and Toddler Network Group was established in May 2014 for Gowrie NSW educators and teachers to come together to share knowledge and discuss infant and toddler practice. The group was attended by 16 educators and teachers on the first evening. The group will continue to meet quarterly into 2014/2015 extending to inclusion of educators and teachers working with infants and toddlers across Sydney.

Our links with our Gowrie Australia colleagues were also strengthened this year with the continuation of the Link Up Gowrie Educator forums. The national forums provide educators with the opportunity to show case their ideas and discuss pedagogy with other Gowrie educators around Australia.

Published Articles

Loren Wilson, early childhood teacher at Lady Gowrie Child Centre, wrote a reflection on her experiences attending the New Zealand RIE[®] training which was published in the New Zealand Infant and Toddler Network magazine.

Articles written by Centre Directors Nicole White and Osanna Giang were published in Gowrie Australia publication Reflections.

The Manager Education and Care attended the tenth World Forum on Early Care and Education held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Over 841 early childhood leaders and practitioners from 81 nations participated in the gathering, with a focus on discussions around the delivery of quality services to young children globally and to develop action plans for achieving quality in diverse settings. Presentations were made by more than 250 early childhood professionals from all over the world, including Afghanistan, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Myanmar, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, and Zimbabwe.

Topics discussed during the event included: Immigration, Children's Rights, Indigenous People, Universal Principles of Early Childhood Curriculum, Nature and Young Children, Cultural Diversity, Infants and Toddlers, Technology for Teacher Education and Professional Development, Trends and Models in Interior Environments, Children with Special Needs, Play, Peace Education, Men in Early Childhood Education, Advocacy, Public Policy, Observation, Care of Children Outside of Centres, Responding to Disaster/Emergency Situations, Empowering Parents as Advocates, Parent Partnerships, Nutrition, Brain Development, Leadership, Art Education, Ongoing Assessment, Multi-Lingual Education, Quality versus Sustainability, and much more. Many friendships and professional connections have resulted from attendance at the Forum with the benefits to be seen in future proposed conferences and professional development opportunities for Gowrie NSW.

GOWRIE OSHC

(OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE)

As a high quality child care provider, Gowrie OSHC continues to be a leader in the sector with innovative programs for school aged children. Across our three programs (Before School Care, After School Care and Vacation Care) we have maintained high utilisation patterns for 285 enrolled children and supported 218 individual families throughout the financial year. An ongoing relationship with SDN Inclusion Support Agency a government funded agency, ensures that support for all children and families is responsive and inclusive

Highlights

Throughout the year, we engaged in a number of projects with a focus on environmental practices and providing opportunities for our children to broaden their understanding of the global community including promoting our Before School Care Program, the importance of health & fitness and looking at ways to give children a stronger voice in our programs.

We participated in Target Kids Teaching Kids, a teaching module which encourages children to share their learnings and understandings of the environment with their peers, developing a more connected approach and genuine engagement. This was an extremely successful module for us with children discovering skills in re-cycling books into art works, gaining practical knowledge of how we use and conserve energy to simple things like being responsible and vocal about littering! Through this module, we have become more thoughtful and deliberate in our use of natural materials and biodegradable resources.

Through our involvement with the Active After School Communities initiative we were invited to take part in a Basketball Gala Afternoon with another local centre. This was such a positive experience for both centres having the opportunity to promote physically active play, broaden peer groups and connect with the community. Many children went on to join local Basketball clubs to continue their interest and skill development. Recent brain research has shown that the benefits of play and being physically active contribute to children's overall ability to grow, learn and develop.

Our educator's collaborative approach through co-programming, use of learning stories, videoing, interviews and other forms of information gathering supports children's interests and provides them with a voice. Children's findings and work are made visible through the Reggio Emilia inspired wall displays documenting experiences and sharing their journey or the process of learning with families.

Collaboration with Erskineville Public School

We welcomed author and chef, Anthony Sharpe from Educating Palates to host a special Gowrie Breakfast in November 2013 for the Erskineville school community, providing children with an inspired and nutritional menu. This popular event highlighted our Before School Care Program and encouraged families to consider this option as part of their child care needs.

Our program also joined with Erskineville Public School to participate in community events (Erko Bezerko) and presenting at Family Information Sessions.

In April 2014, the Department of Education approved the installation of a new kitchen, making this area a more functional space. It has made a significant impact on our menus, energy and water efficiency. Along with new furniture, considered for its natural qualities and colours which reflect calmness, the space has come together to create a relaxed, home-like place for children.



Research shows the benefits of play and being physically active contribute to children's overall ability to grow, learn and develop

YENU ALLOWAH 'WALKING TOGETHER'

ABORIGINAL CHILD & FAMILY CENTRE

Commencing in 2011, Yenu Allowah was a joint project of Gowrie NSW, Burnside Children, Young People and Families and Link Up, providing an integrated children's service that included playgroups, an early childhood health unit, family support and parent education to families in the Mt Druitt community.

The concept of the centre was from the Commonwealth Government's initiative providing the NSW State Government with \$74 million to set up nine Aboriginal Child and Family Units across NSW.

The aim of the program is to support and promote the overall health, wellbeing and development of Aboriginal children and their families.

In January 2014, the partners of the project agreed to handover to a single Aboriginal management model provided through 'Jaanimili,' the Aboriginal Services and Development Unit of UnitingCare Children, Young People and Families.

Although our contracted involvement was to end on 30th June 2014, all partners agreed the transition to Aboriginal management would assist in improved governance of the service, streamlining policy development, and employment of Aboriginal educators.

Gowrie NSW supported the program of children's activities for 2013 including the operation of five well attended supported playgroups reaching up to fifty six (56) children and families from the local area. The program also supported an afterschool care program, 'Bub and Me Time' program for new and young mothers, and an 'Early Start' program developing links with Wollongong University as part of the 'Early Start Engagement Centre'. Yenu Allowah staff were also provided with opportunities to work with educators and teachers across Gowrie NSW education and care centres to view best practice and to support them during their studies and practicum placement.

The Yenu Allowah programs operated from temporary premises in Mt Druitt while the new 'purpose built' building was being constructed on the grounds of Mt Druitt Hospital.

On 27 June 2014, the opening of the new building was celebrated and attended by over two hundred community guests, elders Aunty Edna Watson and Uncle Wes Marr, and State and Federal government representatives. The opening of the Child and Family unit and Early Learning Centre represented 'a forty year struggle by the Mount Druitt community to open a licensed integrated early education centre'.

The opening of the new centre will provide education and care for up to 39 children from 14 July 2014.

We are very proud of our involvement and commitment to this project over the past three years. We greatly valued our partnership working with Burnside Children, Young People and Families and Link Up in the design and establishment of this centre.



The aim of the program is to support and promote the overall health, wellbeing and development of Aboriginal children and their families



INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCIES

The Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs) are part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program funded by the Australian Government Department of Education. The service is provided by skilled Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISFs) who assist eligible Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to include children with ongoing high support needs. Support is also provided to enable capacity building within ECEC services to enable quality care environments inclusive of all children. ISFs assist services to link with relevant community supports, work in partnership with families, identify professional development needs and opportunities, and engage in reflective practice, collaboration and quality improvement. The services supported include Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Out of School Hours Care, In Home Care, Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Services and mobile ECEC services.

Two part-time ISFs are employed in Bathurst to staff the Central West Inclusion Support Agency. The ISFs support 83 ECEC Services throughout the region which extends from Lithgow in the east to Tottenham, Condobolin, and Lake Cargelligo in the west, with West Wyalong, Cowra and Grenfell to the south. It covers an area of 63,000 square kilometres.

NSW West Inclusion Support Agency is the largest ISA region in NSW, measuring 1000kms from the easternmost point of the region, to the South Australian border in the west, and 500kms from the southern part of the region to the Queensland border. Some of the towns included in the region are Broken Hill, Bourke, Cobar, Brewarrina, Lightning Ridge, Coonabarabran and Mudgee. The 2 part-time ISFs based in Dubbo support 66 services across this region.

The ISA Coordinator, who manages both teams, is also based in the Dubbo office.

2013-2014

Due to distances between towns in these regions and low populations, many ECEC services are relatively isolated, as the closest other ECEC may be in the next town, hundreds of kilometres away. They may also be located in towns with few local support services available. Therefore, face to face contact with the Inclusion Support Facilitators provides advice as well as much needed information about the inclusion of children with additional needs, professional development opportunities, and information about outreach and online community supports. Each year, the ISA teams carefully plan trips to all parts of each region, in order to visit face to face with as many ECEC services as possible.

ISFs also regularly attend community meetings in order to stay abreast of the latest and best practice information, and to access available information and resources, which can then be shared with the ECEC services they support. Over the past year, the ISA team have been active attendees and participants in the following meetings:

- Dubbo Early Years Education Services
- Bathurst Child and Family Network
- Dubbo Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- Orana Central West Far West Multicultural Interagency
- Dubbo Communities for Children Committee
- Mudgee Child and Family Network
- Far West and Western Region Focus on Early Childhood Inclusion
- Lithgow Interagency
- Bathurst Transition to School
- Bathurst Multicultural Reference Group
- Orange Early Childhood Intervention Committee.

Through these meetings, ISFs have accessed and distributed information to the services that they support, including the following:

- NSW Family and Community Services (FACS) "On the Same Page" DVDs, produced by the University of Newcastle, were obtained and distributed. These DVDs contain social and communication strategies to support young children with challenging behaviours and is an extremely valuable tool for supporting educators to develop an understanding of inclusion and of working in partnership with families.
- Information about the 'Circle of Security' from Early Childhood Australia. This information has supported educators to understand issues and better include children from vulnerable families.
- Medicare Local provided Immunisation and Health Assessment Schedules which ECEC services were able to distribute to families.
- The Community Relations Commission for a multicultural NSW provided enough copies of a poster titled 'Principles of Multiculturalism' for each ECEC service in the ISA regions to receive one.
- The NSW Department of Education Hearing Support continued to supply information and brochures relating to the prevention of Otitis Media.
- Resourcing Families provided a brochure titled Planning a Positive Future for a Child with a Disability.

- CareWest provided brochures and information about the Early Start Diagnosis Program, which supports families of children recently diagnosed with an ongoing disability.
- FACS provided regular emails containing links to workshops, as well as information about the NDIS and grants.

The director of a new ECEC service in a small town west of Dubbo commented recently that the information package provided by the ISA is 'invaluable' as means of sourcing current information on issues of inclusion. Out of School Hours services have commented that they are grateful for the effort ISFs take to include information that is relevant to school age children in the Information Packages supplied to them. One ECEC service director commented that she always looks forward to the insight and experience that ISFs are able to share in regard to developing new strategies to engage families, especially where children have additional needs, or where families are considered vulnerable (e.g., enrolled under Brighter Futures). The director of a service in a western town reported that some parents attending the service are part of the local Police Force. They informed educators that the information about the Parent Help Line (Catholic Care and Families NSW) was extremely useful to them in their role in the community and that it would be used by them to help support vulnerable families in the town.

In NSW West ISA, the Dubbo Early Years Education Services (EYES) group consists of Early Childhood educators, local therapists, representatives of relevant government departments and non-government support services, and Early Intervention educators and therapists. The group meets once a month, and an ISF has taken on the role of distributing agendas and taking and distributing minutes of the meetings, ensuring that meetings are organised and productive.

Bathurst Child and Family Network includes a cross section of Non-Government Organisations and government services working with families and children. Central West ISFs are active members, thus raising the profile of the ISA. In 2013, the Network organised and held a conference titled 'Children in Focus' in conjunction with Charles Sturt University. The conference focused on the Rights of the Child and the effectiveness of ECEC services and agencies working in collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for children.

Participants from many sectors attended, including Early Childhood services, Early Intervention Services, government departments and community welfare services. This conference was the introduction to a conference held in 2014 titled "Engagement". The day included a presentation on Understanding and Embracing Integrated Practice Models and applying those skills. Participants attending the conference came from a wide range of services dealing with aspects of Early Childhood Education and Care. The Bathurst Family Fun Day held once a year, is organised by the Network and is a community event which showcases local child and family support services, as well as providing child-centred activities. NSW Central West ISFs are active participants and organisers on the day. All stalls include a child friendly focus which gives parents an opportunity to chat to the stall holders about the services they provide.

In 2014, an application to Arts Out West resulted in funding for two Aboriginal artists to paint the story of the Platypus on poles supporting shade sails over play equipment in the park. A local Aboriginal Elder told the story of the Platypus and its relevance to the river. Buses were supplied by the local Lands Council and Community Transport for free transport for families, and pick up points were in areas with a high proportion of Public Housing. Estimates indicated that over 1000 people attended. Businesses which supported the event are keen to participate again, due to the success of the day.



**Inclusion & Professional
Support Program**

AN AUSTRALIAN
GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

INDIGENOUS PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT UNIT

Gowrie NSW manages the Indigenous Professional Support Unit (IPSU) as part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program funded by the Australian Government Department of Education.

During the financial year, IPSU continued to work in partnership with the NSW Professional Support Coordinators (PSC), Children's Services Central and the Inclusion Support Agencies to deliver projects, resources and support to Aboriginal and non Aboriginal children's services throughout NSW and ACT.

During the past twelve months, IPSU received an additional \$20,000 to support budget based Aboriginal services to undergo a voluntary Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The establishment of a QIP will assist in future planning for the ongoing operations of individual services.

In September 2013, our IPSU team were involved in a two day mobile services professional learning and development opportunity in Bourke NSW. Services participating in the forum were services from Bourke and the surrounding districts, Brewarrina/Lightning Ridge and Walgett. Session topics included were 'Unpacking the NQS/QIP', 'Mathematics in the Early Years' and 'Science for U5s'. These workshops provided an intense, 'very hands on' two days for educators and were very well received.

In October the NSW IPSU hosted a three day IPSU Alliance forum with the outcome being the finalisation of the Strategic Plan for IPSU. The forum also showcased the work undertaken in the partnership of Gowrie NSW and Macquarie University through the Patterns and Early Algebra Preschool (PEAP) program developed by Dr Marina Papic.

IPSU also developed 'Yarnin Circles' in June 2013. 'Yarnin Circles' are facilitated sessions to help guide and establish relationships between indigenous and non indigenous children's services within their own local community. Yarnin Circles were developed with the support of Children's Services Central from the NSW Professional Support Coordinator, Communities @Work ACT Professional Support Coordinator and the Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs) in the respective regions. 'Yarnin Circles' are an extension of the 'Community of Practice' in the regions of La Perouse, Bidwell, Bathurst, Tamworth, Gosford/Wyong, Dubbo and the ACT (Narrabundah).

Other achievements over the past twelve months have been the development of a new Client Management Database to better manage the various programs, data and information for the IPSU program and the redevelopment of the IPSU website.

We have had a number staff changes within the last twelve months. After nearly thirteen years employment with Gowrie NSW, Judy Mackay-Tempest resigned from her position as Coordinator of IPSU to pursue her career as Associate lecturer at Macquarie University. Judy is well respected in the early childhood sector and her vast experience in working with indigenous communities will be greatly missed by Gowrie NSW. Narelle Semmens was appointed as IPSU Coordinator in June 2014.

CHILD CARE & FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE

The Child and Family Information Line is a NSW State Government funded project providing a telephone referral system to support families, and agencies throughout NSW. As part of the project, Gowrie NSW maintains an extensive database of child care centre, government agencies and support services.

Gowrie NSW received four hundred and forty one (441) calls on the Child Care and Family Information Line in the 2013/2014 year compared to six hundred and eighty (680) in the previous year. The majority of calls were from individuals rather than agencies or professionals with the main enquiry being the request for family support. The majority of calls originated from rural and remote regions of NSW, followed closely by the metropolitan Sydney area.

Over the past two years, the nature of calls has changed. In previous years there has been a larger number of calls from families requesting information regarding the location of child care centres in particular areas. This is an important service for families moving to new areas within New South Wales seeking child care to meet their particular needs. Our database captures information to assist families in choosing child care centres especially those centres who have environments that support the inclusion of children with additional needs.

Although the number of calls directly related to the provision of child care has decreased, the Child and Family Information Line has received an increased number of enquiries related to family support services. These calls now represent thirty seven (37%) percent of all calls. Questions around legal issues, custody concerns, health queries and questions around child protection have increased. A particular trend has been an increase in the number of calls from grandparents requesting information about caring for grandchildren and legal issues around this. The majority of calls were families with children in the 3 to 12 year age group.

The length of time required to assist these families to identify their needs has also increased. As family issues become more complex, the amount of time required for our early childhood project officers to understand family requirements and provide the best means of support has also increased.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

Across 2013-14 Gowrie NSW Professional Learning has evolved and grown to support shifting sector needs and development. Increasingly, participants have asked for longer and extended learning professional learning opportunities. As well as our ongoing calendar events, we have increased our offer of Special Event Days and Professional Learning Series, offering an opportunity for educators to deepen ideas and thinking.

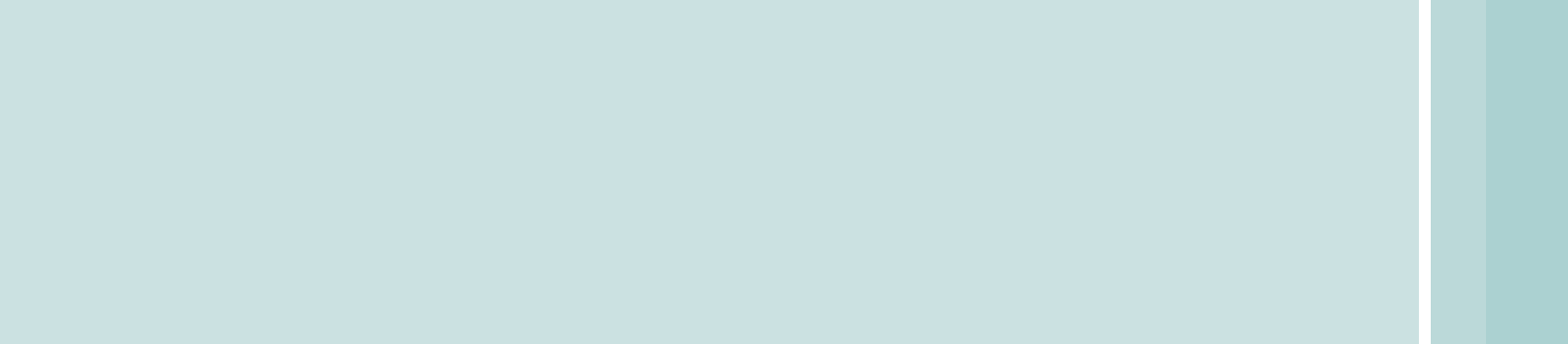
In 2014, we held 5 Conference Days with over 220 participants on the topics of Social and Emotional Wellbeing, Maths, Science and Technology, Children's Imagination and Leadership. We were delighted to partner with Maitland Regional Art Gallery and Dubbo Cultural Centre to host the Imagination Conference in these two regional areas. This conference brought participants from across the Central West, North West, North Coast and Hunter Regions of New South Wales. Many participants from Sydney were also drawn to these regional events. Two highly regarded speakers, Ursula Kolbe and Niki Buchan, presented and shared on imagination and creativity, and the day included an afternoon of art making and creative exploration for adults. In 2014, we also partnered with Reverse Garbage, delivering hands-on workshops across Sydney locations. In addition we partnered with Rosebury Community Support to offer three two-part series free of charge on Unique Communication Styles, Understanding Autism and Working with Families of Children with Additional Needs.

Across the year, we developed Professional Learning on Request, which tailors our existing learning opportunities to suit the needs of a service and its team. In 2013/14 Gowrie NSW provided over 24 tailored sessions to over 550 participants. In addition across 2013/14 we delivered 19 sessions on behalf of Children's Services Central to over 300 participants.

In April 2014, the new Jo Pender Meeting Room was officially opened in Erskineville. This room is a space where up to 50 people can meet. In 2014 Professional Learning held many events in this space. With state-of-the-art audio visual and video conferencing system, one of the highlights of the year were two technology workshops run by Dr Kate Highfield. On both occasions participants were shown what integrating technology can look like as Dr Highfield seamlessly navigated and explained the technology in the room.

In 2014 a new series, specifically for parents, was developed called the Lady Gowrie Parenting Series. The first of the evening sessions, held in April 2014, was so popular many families appealed for more time and information. The series was developed specifically for families seeking expert, evidence-based advice in their role as a parent. The talks began with two sessions on Understanding Children's Behaviour. During the second half of 2014, the series continued with five talks over five months on the topics of Technology and Apps for Your Child, Setting Boundaries without Punishment, Nutritious Meals for Fussy Eaters, Positive Transition to School & Raising and Resilient Child.

Across 2014/15, Gowrie NSW Professional Learning looks forward to continuing to provide high quality events that reflect the sectors current desires and needs for learning. We also look forward to further developing the Lady Gowrie Parenting Series to provide high quality parenting education for the professional working family.



CONSULTANCY

With the increasing demand for consulting services in 2014, our fee for service consultancy was developed further in 2013/14 with the addition of new fee for service provisions.

The range of services now includes Initial Consulting Meeting, Business Development and Planning, Compliance Audit and Operational Health Check, Nominated Supervisor Mentoring, NQS & Compliance Review, Policy Review and Tailored consulting services.

In 2013/14 the Manager, Education & Care and Professional Learning & Development Manager provided fee for service consulting to 50% of enquiries including both private and community OSHC & Long Day Care services and a number of new start up businesses.



Gowrie NSW's fee for service consultancy was developed further in 2013/14 with the addition of new service provisions



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.



Thank you

We would like to thank and gratefully acknowledge the families from Gowrie NSW Children's Services for allowing us to use photographs and images in Gowrie NSW publications.

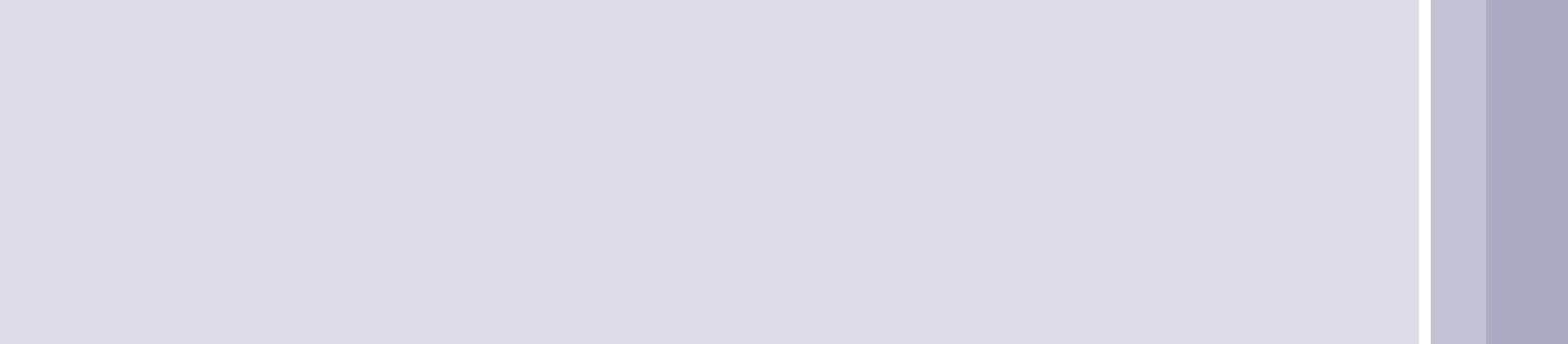
We also wish to thank the government and non government organisations and Universities that we have collaborated with over the past 12 months allowing us to share expertise and goodwill.

- UTS Child Care Inc.
- Campus Life, Macquarie University
- NSW Department of Community Services
- NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Department of Education (Federal Government)
- Corrective Services NSW
- Gilbert and Tobin (pro bono advice)
- Norton, Rose and Fulbright
- Atlassian
- Kids Matter
- Coles Junior Landcare Grant (Nanbaree Child Centre)
- Auditor – Grant Thornton Australia.

Gowrie Australia Publications

Gowrie NSW is proud to be a part of Gowrie Australia 'Reflections' Committee. This publication is distributed at no cost to children's services nationally on behalf of Gowrie Australia as a resource to the sector. 'Reflections' provides a valuable resource on current issues and research for families and practitioners in early and middle childhood. 'Reflections' is available to download for free from the Gowrie NSW website at www.gowriensw.com.au







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