April 2016

NQF Newsletter

Centre Support

centresupport.com.au

What is Reflective Practice all about?

Are your Early Childhood Teachers preparing for their Accreditation? - due by18 July 2016

Meet Matthew Stapleton.... CEO of Centre Support and Presenter at TEC16

Events and Training

THE EDUCATORS CONFERENCE:

TEC16 Bendigo VIC
TEC 16 Cairns QLD
TEC16 Coffs Harbour NSW
TEC16 Brisbane QLD

Don't miss out. Book online now at
http://www.centresupport.com.au/training-opportunities/

How can objects like clocks influence the quality and value of learning?

Professional Recognition for Early Childhood Teachers

Early Childhood Teachers in NSW will need to provide the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) with evidence of their ACECQA approved or recognised qualification and a current Working with Children Check clearance before 18 July 2016 to meet new compulsory accreditation requirements.

Accreditation recognises the professional standing of Early Childhood Teachers in the community and will see Early Childhood Teachers recognised as teaching professionals alongside NSW school teachers.

Once you have been accredited at Proficient Teacher level, you are required to maintain your accreditation by:

- ✓ completing 100 hours of Professional Development over five years (seven years for casual teachers) demonstrating your teaching practice meets the Austfalian Professional Standards for Teachers, and
- ✓ payment of your annual accreditation fee.

Visit the BOSTES website for more information

Stay updated on the latest news and join the conversation

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Centre Support Blog

NQF Training Videos

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own grown organics

The Fear of Risk

by Lukas Ritson

Fear of failure, fear of safety, fear of success, fear of liability, fear of uncertainty, fear of our capabilities, fear of judgment and fear of the unknown. With all the fear that is prevalent in society, I don't feel it necessary to start fearing one of the very things that empowers us to be fearless - risk. I am not referring to fearlessness in the way of jumping out of a plane or off a bridge. I am referring to fearlessness of heart. The fearlessness that empowers us to be confident and self-aware, to follow our dreams, to have original thoughts and come from a place of unconditional love that the whole world can see.

This is the fearlessness that is our responsibility as educators, teachers, parents and grandparents to nurture and grow in the children we love. This is why I not only support children when exploring risky play, but I support educators and parents in understanding risk and how to engage in risky play.

As everyone is aware, fear is very real and even though it may not feel it at the time - it is a very positive emotion. Positive in the sense that it keeps us safe and gives us an awareness that reaches every part of our bodies that we can tend to forget about in day-to-day living. For example, when we feel fear we not only feel the emotion of fear but it changes the physical state of the body when we go into the primal fight or flight mode. When we enter this mode, our body does amazing things in order to preserve our wellbeing. The body will turn off digestion, turn off immunity and turn off growth to name a few. We can take this into account when observing children that have not had the opportunity to celebrate what is an appropriate level of fear and are faced with a new environment or new relationships (seemingly low level of fear). This child could find themselves in a state of fight or flight that in turn creates anxiety that leads to their body shutting off these essential operating systems. This for me draws a very obvious link between a child's emotional state and the many childhood illnesses that are so rampant today. We can be proactive rather than reactive in this situation by simply empowering children to create their own measure of appropriate fear through exploring risk.

http://delightfulchildrensbooks.com/2011/12/15/trees/

Risky play creates a setting where children can become aware of their physical capabilities and in turn receive positive emotional rewards in the form of feeling good that builds confidence. This makes the child more likely to achieve the goals that they have set. For the people that feel young children are not capable of analysing their own risk, I invite you to observe a child on a swing when pushed too high. The child will have an instant emotional reaction when they feel like they have exceeded the level of risk they are comfortable with - "Stop! Too High" or "Arrrrrr!"

So where did this fear of children being exposed to risk come from? The Department?

Fear of Liability? Regulations? Uncertainty? Fear of judgment? We could examine the Departments and Regulations to see the disconnect and inconsistencies surrounding this topic, however we would still need to delve deeper. Over time, there have been trends towards surplus safety or no risk, and educators lost the initiative to make informed safety decisions for children during play. The intention behind this trend may have been to have consistency and zero risk of litigation. Whatever the reason, no risk environments were born. The Departments and Regulators took on board this approach and it become a standard across the industry.

Today, I am so happy to see more centres of all shapes and sizes embracing and acknowledging the importance of risky play, with the department and the regulations following suit. More and more educators are pushing forward by educating themselves and others on the benefits of risky play and sustainable development of children and it's amazing to be a part of this revolution.

To be a part of the revolution, I invite you to do two things; understand the difference between risk and hazard and always prioritise the children's development. *Risk*: Something that is possible to negotiate and may be appropriate for particular situations and children. *Hazard*: Something that is inherently

dangerous and needs to be remedied, such as a climbing structure with sharp edges or loose boards that could seriously injure children if they play on it. (Curtis, 2010) Curtis, D. (2010, March-April). A simple way to embed the practice is to start assessing risk with a benefit opposed to just looking at eliminating all risk. A risk benefit assessment will allow you to have a tangible measure of appropriate levels of risk because you will be able to see what the risk is, what a hazard is and what the benefit of a particular element of your outdoor environment is. An example of a Risk Benefit assessment is available and downloadable on the Own Grown Organics Resources page at http://www.owngrownorganics.com/resources/

Always putting the childrens' development first is the number one way to be the most positive impact in a child's life. When we put the child's development first we are respecting the child, we are acknowledging our own limiting beliefs, we are building our confidence in understanding and we are being the best educators we can be. By being the best educator you can be, you are being a part of something much bigger than yourself, your centre or industry. You are contributing to the development of the world - to the fearlessness of heart.

Lukas Ritson

Inservice Training

What is Reflective Practice all about?

Discover the 'real truth' about documentation and reflection.

Over the past seven years Centre Support has been working with thousands of services and educators around the country to understand and document the EYLF and MTOP.

This has led us to develop a course and a guide that can easily identify where your educators are in understanding and documenting children's learning and assessment and how to move them to the next step.

Centre Support's Documentation and Reflection training unlocks the real truth about documentation and reflective practice for early childhood professionals.

Moving from a developmentally appropriate program to a learning framework has involved a change in how and what we document to show how children are travelling toward the learning outcomes. This involves changing from what we have learnt in the past, including in our training, and taking on a new approach to documenting for assessment rather than documenting to identify a specific need or skill which promotes a developmental domain.

Some educators are reluctant to change and to let go of what they learnt in the past. They rely on what they have always done rather than being open to the new theoretical understandings of 21st Century education. They cannot see how reflective practice leads to improvement in their teaching by, for example, helping them recognise how children learn.

Sometimes educators listen to many sources of confusing unreliable information about the importance of reflective practice and how to document. Sometimes listening to those with outdated historical beliefs of past practice can cause doubt, confusion and lack of improvement. For example, there is no need to use 100 types of documentation to meet or exceed the standard.

Documentation is about capturing learning that provides evidence of assessment, the distance travelled and how the child is progressing toward or achieving the outcomes.

Centre Support

T I 1800 440 102 F I 1800 308 029 W I centresupport.com.au

M I PO Box 3378 BANGOR NSW 2234

Centre Support Pty Ltd (ABN 29 132 937 538)

What, not who, influences your professional practices?

Did you know it's not just people that can influence educator practices? Objects like clocks can influence practices as well. How often do you look at a clock to see whether it's time to change activities, routines or environments?

Your interactions with the clock will be influenced by your beliefs and responsibilities. For example you may believe:

- a strict schedule is necessary for good professional practice and productivity
- strict schedules ensure children participate in necessary developmental activities
- it's better to spend time with all children rather than a group who want to continue an activity

Your emotional response to the clock will also affect practices. For example, you may experience significant stress because time dominates daily practice. This in turn may influence interactions and relationships between children and educators.

Other ways the clock could influence practice include its location and appearance. What could happen if the clock was in a different location or not there at all?

Our interactions with inanimate objects like clocks cause us to interact with children and colleagues in particular ways. We continually experiment with practices that emerge as a result of our interactions with each other and time. There are countless different potential outcomes.

We need to remember that it's not just what objects represent but what they can do and what influence they can have that's important. They might influence us, for example, to focus on routines and schedules rather than the quality or value of a learning activity. How do objects like clocks influence your professional practices?

The EYLF says: Assessment for learning

Assessment for children's learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. It is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning. It is important because it enables educators in partnership with families, children and other professionals to:

- ✓ plan effectively for children's current and future learning
- ✓ communicate about children's learning and progress
- ✓ determine the extent to which all children are progressing toward realising learning outcomes and if not, what might be impeding their progress
- ✓ identify children who may need additional support in order to achieve particular learning outcomes, providing that support or assisting families to access specialist help
- ✓ evaluate the effectiveness of learning opportunities, environments and experiences offered and the approaches taken to enable children's learning
- ✓ reflect on pedagogy that will suit this context and these children.

Educators use a variety of strategies to collect, document, organise, synthesise and interpret the information that they gather to assess children's learning. They search for appropriate ways to collect rich and meaningful information that depicts children's learning in context, describes their progress and identifies their strengths, skills and understandings.

More recent approaches to assessment also examine the learning strategies that children use and reflect ways in which learning is co-constructed through interactions between the educator and each child. Used effectively, these approaches to assessment become powerful ways to make the process of learning visible to children and their families, educators and other professionals.

If you would like to find the 'real truth' about documentation and reflective practice, ring Centre Support to book a training session today. Phone 1800 440 102.

All Centre Support's training is an eligible professional development activity and can be claimed under the Long Day Care Professional Development Programme

Centre Support Pty Ltd

Training Days

TEC16 is an eligible professional development activity under the Long Day Care Professional Development Programme.

TEC16 THE EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

TEC16 Bendigo

Saturday 16th April 2016 - 8.30am to 4.30pm

A full day of professional development workshops! Registrations NOW OPEN. Don't miss out. Book online at http://www.centresupport.com.au/training-opportunities/

View the Program here:
TEC16 Bendigo - Full Day Program

TEC16 Cairns

Saturday 30th April 2016 - 8.30am to 4.30pm

A full day of professional development workshops! Registrations NOW OPEN. Don't miss out. Book online at http://www.centresupport.com.au/training-opportunities/

View the Program here:
TEC16 Cairns - Full Day Program

TEC16 Coffs Harbour

Saturday 7th May 2016 - 8.30am to 4.30pm
A full day of professional development workshops! Registrations NOW OPEN. Don't miss out! Book online today.
http://www.centresupport.com.au/training-opportunities/
View the full program here:
TEC16 Coffs Harbour - Program

TEC16 Brisbane

Saturday 14th May 2016 - 8.30am to 4.30pm
A full day of Professional Development workshops! Registrations NOW OPEN.

Don't miss out! Book online today
http://www.centresupport.com.au/training-opportunities/

View the full program here:
TEC16 Brisbane - Program

"Research is always discovering new things, and trends are always changing. Any good professional will be on top of - and responding to - these changes". Mary Dixon Lebeau

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M I PO Box 3378 BANGOR NSW 2234
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Professional Development TEC16

Matthew Stapleton

Matthew Stapleton is the CEO of Centre Support and presents The Educators Conferences TEC16. Over the last two years he has shown thousands of conference delegates real, practical examples of how to enhance learning and overcome problems at their service.

Matthew has delivered more than 250 seminars and trained more than 23,000 educators across Australia in the delivery of education and care which is rated 'exceeding' under the NQS.

Matthew has also designed professional development tools for early childhood education and care services across key areas such as WHS, EYLF, NQF, Behaviour Guidance and Food Safety and Hygiene. These resources, professional development and training options are what Centre Support is all about.

Matthew and his team of dedicated professionals provide full phone and email support to our members along with a proven system to build your Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) on a weekly basis ensuring that all elements are addressed over a twelve monthly cycle.

51% of services who were rated Exceeding are Centre Support customers! (68% in NSW).

As an Adjunct Member of Charles Sturt University's Research Institute for Professional Practices and Learning, Matthew is constantly involved with the latest research and thinking about young children's education and development. Previously a Head teacher with TAFE NSW, he has written and illustrated several children's books on issues including inclusion and diversity.

Perhaps most importantly, Matthew is the Owner and Approved Provider of an early learning centre in Dubbo that was recently rated exceeding in many quality areas, including educational program and practice. As an owner and Educational Leader, he is very much aware of what educators need and want.

As you can see, Matthew brings a diverse view of early childhood education and care to his conferences. There are twelve workshops in the TEC16 schedule. In one Matthew asks, "Are you a teacher?" This is an interactive experience where educators take a look at the way they see themselves and how this influences their interactions with children. Matthew explores how educators' perceptions can influence the way they manage time or interact with colleagues and children. Educators will be amazed at how much easier and more enjoyable their days could be.

The comment we always hear after each conference is "*I wish all my educators came. They would have got so much out of today.*" They need it and you need it to create great teams that strive to be the best for your children.
Come and see Matthew at a TEC16 near you. Visit the link for our TEC16 schedule. http://www.centresupport.com.au/training-opportunities/

Seminars

Embedding Sustainability

Lukas Ritson has had huge success working as an outdoor educator in an ECEC setting. This experience, together with his experience in outdoor recreation and as the owner of a horticultural company, has contributed to his hugely popular Embedding Sustainability workshops. He provides a program that embraces the natural environment in a way that is consistent with the principles and outcomes of the NQS and the EYLF.

Lukas is passionate about sharing his program and philosophy and hopes it will become standard practice across all ECEC services in Australia.

He will teach you how to integrate sustainable practices into your service, and how to engage with children to embed sustainable practices in a fun and innovative way. Get ready to be motivated and to see how easy this can be.

In the **Embedding Sustainability** workshop you will:

- ✓ discover the roles and benefits of a dedicated Outdoor Educator
- ✓ learn about new and innovative ways to engage children when looking after and caring for the environment
- ✓ see new opportunities to EXCEED the NQS in outdoor sustainability practices
- ✓ critically reflect on the concept of sustainability
- ✓ learn how to create incredible documentation for assessment.

Keep up to date with our Seminars.
http://www.centresupport.com.au/training-opportunities/

Lukas is also available to visit your centre and present his **Embedding Sustainability** workshop to your team of Educators. Call Centre Support on 1800 440 102 for a quote.

Centre Support Pty Ltd

All new for 2016

TEC16

THE EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

NQF Seminar

Series available online

Centre Support's Free NQF Seminar series is available online.

Free professional development videos

Since 2008 Centre Support has presented hundreds of seminars across the country to well over 25,000 educators. We've put our NQF Seminar series online so it is accessible to you regardless of where you live and work! You can access these videos at any time, and we encourage you to share these with your colleagues.

Use at staff meetings with your whole team

The series is made up of a 11 videos in total. Each video is ten minutes or less so it's easy for you to load and watch as you work through the series.

Part 1	Introduction to the NQF Seminar Series with Matthew Stapleton
Part 2	How do you keep up with all the changes?
Part 3	What is the assessor looking for?
Part 4	Providing a safe environment for your children
Part 5	How did a centre receive a $52,300 fine?
Part 6	Working with educators who say they are 'overworked and disgruntled'
Part 7	How Roxburgh Park ELC achieved EXCEEDING
Part 8	What do you need to write to get your report changed from 'working towards' to 'exceeding'
Part 9	How did an unhygienic centre go with their assessment?
Part 10	Starting the NQF process with a great QIP
Part 11	How do you get all educators involved?

Access the free NQF Seminar Series

1. Click here.
2. Click 'Free Trial'.
3. Register an account with the email address you used to receive this NQF Newsletter
4. Create your own password.
5. Once registered, click 'NQF Seminar Series ONLINE' on the left-hand side menu.
6. Use the videos at your staff meetings and share with your whole team of educators. No additional training cost, no need to leave the service. Watch in the comfort of your service!

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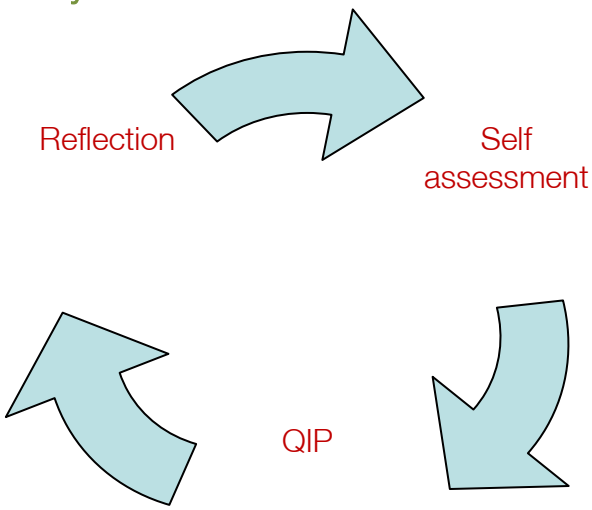
Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

How to ensure all of your Educators have the skills and motivation to help build your QIP.



It is very important for every team member who works at your service, regardless of their qualifications, to engage in a consistent process of reflection in order to recognise their strengths and identify areas that can be improved. This includes the cook, cleaners, management and the Nominated Supervisor.

This enables all stakeholders to gain an informed picture of:

- ✓ Current practice
- ✓ The quality of education and care experienced by children and families.

This "picture" of current practice highlights and confirms your strengths and is the starting point for planning to improve quality across the service. We have all been involved in reflective practices for EYLF, now we need to expand this to reflect on practice, policy and procedure against the seven NQS Quality Areas.

Good, solid critical reflection is the key to NQF. As the Nominated Supervisor, it is your role to teach your team how to record or contribute meaningful reflections and then transform this into practice. For the most part, team members will examine service practices verbally, as it occurs. Some team members, however, may not follow through to really think about how and why things are done that way.

The Nominated Supervisor needs to read the reflections of all educators, educators need to read each others, educators need to read the Nominated Supervisor's, and there needs to be opportunity to meet to discuss every week as a team - which is also reflected upon.

For more information or to enquire about how **Centre Support** can help you implement the NQS and build your QIP call **1800 440 102** or visit www.centresupport.com.au.

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M I PO Box 3378 BANGOR NSW 2234
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WHS Theme

Don't have a free WHS magnet from Centre Support to complement our monthly WHS Themes?

Contact us for your complimentary copy today.

Heights and Softfall

According to KidSafe NSW: "Playground injuries most frequently occur when a child falls from playground equipment onto a hard surface."

FALL ZONES -
Please circle '**yes**' (we achieved this) OR '**no**' (we will improve in this area)

This page and quotes are sourced from KidSafe NSW.

Y	N	Playground equipment 600mm or more above ground level has a falling space and impact area. (The falling space and impact area is a safety zone that surrounds the equipment and is free of obstacles) Falling Space and Impact Area info sheet
Y	N	Fall zones are free of obstacles
Y	N	Playground surfacing in fall zones meets AS/NZS 4422 (refer to KidSafe NSW info sheet on Playground Safety) Playground Surfacing info sheet
Y	N	Maximum fall height of playground platforms is 1800mm for education and care services. Measured from playing surface to the point of body support e.g. foot, hand or seated position.
Y	N	Fall zones meet AS 4685 - for static equipment with platforms 600mm to 1500mm above the ground, the falling space/ impact are is 1500mm. Playground Equipment and Surfacing info sheet
Y	N	Slides over 600mm above playing surface have fall zones with certified surfacing (1m rating) Slides Information Sheet from Kidsafe NSW
Y	N	Carousels are surrounded by a minimum of 2000mm fall zone
Y	N	Rocking equipment is surrounded by a minimum 1000mm fall zone. Falling Space and Impact Area info sheet
Y	N	Mobile equipment is surrounded by a minimum 1500mm fall zone for equipment that measure 600mm or more above ground level. Moveable Play Equipment info sheet
Y	N	Low equipment designed for climbing, rocking and jumping (below 500mm level) has a recommended circulation zone of 1000mm

Diversity Ideas

April

3rd	Daylight Savings Time ends	Turn your clocks back an hour
4th	Hanuman Jayanti	Hindu Tradition - This day celebrates Hanuman who was an embodiment of Lord Rama. Devotion and selfless work are encouraged.
13th	Songkran - Thai New Year	Songkran, the Than New Year and Water Festival, is one of Thailand's oldest and favourite festivals. Thai communities across Australia celebrate this festival with food, crafts and entertainment and splashing water to each other for celebration.
14th	Sinhala and Tamil New Year	The two main Sri Lankan ethnic groups, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, celebrate a common traditional New Year on this day.
15th	Ramanavami	This Hindu Festival celebrates the birth of Lord Rama, hero of the religious poem, 'The Ramayana'. The day involves the telling of stories and attending temples.
22nd	Pesach - Passover	Begins at sundown 22 April to 30 April. Passover is one of the most important Jewish Festivals. It commemorates the liberation of Moses of the Jewish people from slavery.
22nd	Hanuman Jayanti	This day is a Hindu celebration of Hanuman who was an embodiment of Lord Rama. Devotion and selfless work are encouraged.
22nd	Theravada New Year	New Year's Buddhist Festival
25th	Anzac Day	Marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during WW1 (1914-18) at Gallipoli. Dawn services at war memorials honour the sacrifice of those who dies in war.
29th	Holy Friday (Orthodox)	On Holy Friday the Orthodox Church commemorates the death of Christ on the Cross.
30th	Holy Saturday (Orthodox)	On Holy Saturday the Orthodox Church commemorates the burial of Christ and his descent into Hades.

May

1st	Palm Sunday (Orthodox)	On the Sunday before the Feast of Great and Holy Pascha and at the beginning of the Orthodox Holy Week, the Orthodox Church celebrates one of its most joyous feasts of the year.
1st	Easter/Pascha (Orthodox)	The Great and Holy Feast of Pascha celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This feast is the most significant day of the Orthodox Church.
2nd to 8th	International Composting Awareness Week	http://www.compostweek.com.au/core/
3rd	Lailat al-Miraj	Islamic observance of Mohammed's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and his ascension to heaven
5th	Ascension of Christ	This day observes the departure of Jesus from earth after his resurrection. It is perhaps the earliest observed celebration in Christianity.
8th	Mothers Day	Show your Mum how much you appreciate her
12th	Yom Ha'Atzmaut - Independence Day (begins at sundown on 11 May)	The National Day of Israel, commemorating the Israeli Declaration of Independence in 1948.
15th	Pentecost	Pentecost celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit and is regarded by some Christians as the birthday of the Christian church.
21st	Vesak Day or Buddha Day	Commemorates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha. The date varies by region and tradition. Some Countries celebrate Vesak Day 1 or 2 days either side of this date .
21st	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	http://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/index.shtml "In a diverse world, the destruction of cultures is a crime, and uniformity is a dead-end: our aim must be to enhance, in one movement, the diversity that enriches us and the human rights that bring us together." Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO
23rd	Declaration of the Báb (begins at sundown on 22 May)	This date marks the anniversary of the Báb's announcement of his mission in 1844. The Báb is a prophet and forerunner of the Baha'i faith. Work is suspended on this day.
26th	Australia's Biggest Morning Tea	Raising funds for cancer research - https://www.biggestmorningtea.com.au/
27th	National Reconciliation Week (to 3 June)	National Reconciliation Week celebrates the rich culture and history of the First Australians.
29th	Ascension of Baha'u'llah (begins at sundown on 28 May)	This day marks the death of the founder of the Baha'i faith, Baha'u'llah, in 1892. Work is suspended on this day.