



fkaCS eNews

Term 3 | September 2019

Welcome to the *fka* Children's Services (*fkaCS*) eNewsletter for Term 3, 2019!

It has been a busy term for us, working alongside services in receipt of School Readiness Funding, and creating over 150 kits in multiple languages for the Victorian Department of Education and Training Early Childhood Languages Program!

We've held multiple professional learning events across Victoria, and settled on a lovely new location in Abbotsford where we will call home from early October.

More information on the following pages - we hope you enjoy.

Feature Article

School Readiness Funding Update

In 2019 Victorian kindergartens in Tranche 1 - Brimbank/Melton, Inner Gippsland, Mallee, Outer Gippsland Southern Melbourne and Wimmera South West - received School Readiness Funding. Throughout these regions fkaCS has supported services in their cultural inclusion practices and developing a library of multilingual books and resources. To engage in Cultural Inclusion Support, fkaCS consultants and the teaching team identified the best method of delivery for their context, including:

- Coaching and Mentoring
- Facilitated Reflective Practice Sessions
- Facilitated Group Learning
- In-Program Observations, Mentoring and Coaching

Supporting the Sector: Facilitated Reflective Practice Sessions

A service in Southern Melbourne utilised their School Readiness Funding to engage in regular facilitated reflective practice sessions with fkaCS to achieve their identified goal of building stronger connections with their community through making the individual identities of children and families visible within their environment.

The first strategy the service implemented was to develop a 'welcome wall'. To do this they emailed families inviting their contributions. The service received a great response which not only allowed the service to begin engaging with children and families about their individual identities, but this practice also supported achieving a goal on their Quality Improvement Plan. Teachers, children and their families now regularly engage in greeting one another in language.

This service was also supported in unpacking and extending strategies they were using to support children engaging in the program. The teaching team recognised that through their practice changes they were observing strengthened relationships between peers, resulting in a stronger sense of agency and autonomy within the kindergarten program.

The benefit of engaging in facilitated reflective practice sessions is that it allows teaching teams to reflect-for-action within the context of their learning environments. The role of the objective facilitator is to support the teaching team in peeling back the layers of the identified practice, goal and/or outcome to develop achievable short and long term goals to move through the change process.



School Readiness Funding 2020

In 2020 we will see Tranche 2 services join Tranche 1 in receiving their School Readiness Funding. The Tranche 2 area includes Victorian kindergartens in the Hume/Moreland and Goulburn Region.

When developing your annual plan there are some important things to consider:

- That you - the Kindergarten Teacher - are engaged in the planning process. As you will be responsible for scheduling the delivery of support detailed on your plan, it is important that you are aware of what is required.
- Consider the amount of backfill you will require at every point of implementing your plan. This includes:
 - Scheduling and planning for the delivery of your support
 - The face to face delivery of support
 - Implementing aspects of the support delivered, i.e. if you are purchasing training or coaching, is time required to read materials, plan for implementation and evaluate the outcomes?
- Contact the organisations on your plan as soon as your plan is approved to schedule your support, even if you are not planning to utilise the support until later in the year.
- Consider connecting with other kindergarten services in your area; there may be an opportunity to connect for group professional learning opportunities.

If you are currently in, or about to begin your School Readiness Funding plan and are considering purchasing *fka* Children's Services Cultural Inclusion Support or the Bilingual Lending Library items, we would love to hear from you to discuss which package will best suit your identified needs.

03 9428 4471 | culturalinclusion@fka.org.au



Sector Updates



Inquiry into early childhood engagement of culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Have your say – Parliamentary Inquiry

Early childhood development is being examined by the Victorian Government Legislative Assembly's Legal and Social Issues Committee, with a focus on the experiences of and programs available for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The Committee is inviting public submissions from community members and organisations about young children's involvement in health services, early childhood education and care, early years of schooling, local community programs, and child and family support services. An important focus for the inquiry will be how involvement in these services and programs can help children and their families feel connected with their local communities.

As part of the inquiry, the Committee will be considering best practice models that have been successfully implemented interstate and internationally. The Committee is interested in hearing from community members who wish to share their stories and experiences. Details on how to make a submission, and an outline of the key issues covered by the inquiry's terms of reference, are available from the Committee's website www.parliament.vic.gov.au/CALDchildinquiry. **Written submissions to the inquiry are welcome until 11 October 2019.**

fka Children's Services will be submitting a paper to the inquiry, focusing on Early Childhood Services and young multilingual children's active participation in their education and care.

We encourage you to also submit a paper focusing your experiences teaching young multilingual children and how you approach developing partnerships with multilingual families. However, with Term 4 looming, we welcome the opportunity to include your stories in our submission should you not have time to prepare a paper. We want to know:

1. What works well in my kindergarten?
2. What have I learnt about active participation for multilingual children and families?
3. The additional resources or support I need to reduce the barriers to active participation of multilingual children and families in my kindergarten.

 **Visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/Q7C8FJJ to participate!**

Sector Updates

AAPEC Possum Skin Pedagogy

On 31 May the *Possum Skin Pedagogy: A Guide for Early Childhood Practitioners and Reflecting on the Possum Skin Learning Project: Journeys and Outcomes* was launched. The document was produced by Action on Aboriginal Perspectives in Early Childhood (AAPEC), funded by the Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies (AGECS) and authored by Dr Sue Lopez-Atkinson with support from Victorian Elders, senior members of the Aboriginal community, and the AAPEC Possum Skin sub-committee.

The publication is now available for download: www.fka.org.au/partnerships-and-collaboration/aapec

fkaCS Members can purchase a hard copy of the publication for \$10! Price to cover the cost of handling. Phone 03 9428 4471 or email fkacommunications@fka.org.au to order.

News at fkaCS

We're moving!
New location from early October

**18 HARPER ST
ABBOTSFORD**



Visit www.fka.org.au for more information

fka Children's Services will be moving to a wonderful new location at 18 Harper Street, Abbotsford in early October.

Please note the Multicultural Resource Centre will be closed from 20 September – 14 October, reopening for our Members on Tuesday 15 October 2019.

We look forward to welcoming you to our new space, filled with plenty of light, natural surrounds and a brand new look for the Multicultural Resource Centre! Keep an eye on our Facebook page for further updates.

Early Childhood Languages Program: Teacher Resource Packs

fkaCS is currently engaged in developing the Teacher Resource Packs to support the delivery of the Victorian Government's Early Childhood Languages Program. fkaCS has developed language packs in Arabic, Chinese-Mandarin, Chin Hakha, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Karen, Punjabi, Spanish, and Vietnamese. These will be sent to services shortly and will support Language Teachers in engaging in language learning with children in kindergarten. The fkaCS team has carefully selected resources that encourage children to engage in the target language through play.

Resources included in the pack comprise of well-known titles such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*, *If You're Happy and You Know It*, and *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*. In addition, a range of bespoke books in the target language have also been included. fkaCS have also selected resources children can engage in with peers and teachers such as; felt sets representing story characters, bingo games, story tiles, finger puppets, songs and CDs, and number memory games with an aim to encourage play-based learning.

fkaCS has long-standing experience in the preparation of intentional teaching notes based on sound early childhood practice. In recognition of this strength fkaCS was also contracted to include 'practice notes' and 'reflective questions' in the pack to guide teachers in how they might choose to engage in the resources with children. The practice notes are underpinned by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and focus on the principles of integrated teaching and learning approaches. The reflective questions extend educators thinking about children's language learning experiences. The overall purpose of the pack is to provide a starting point of resources for language teachers to use in delivering the Early Childhood Language Program.

The next phase of the program will see fkaCS consult with the appropriate stakeholders to develop Teacher Resource Packs for services delivering Aboriginal languages and Auslan in their Kindergarten service.



Supporting resources for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, included in all kits



Just some of the resources included in our Arabic kit!



Events & Professional Learning Opportunities



Culturally Inclusive Transitions in Early Childhood: Geelong Workshop

How do we ensure all children and families experience equity for successful transitions into services and schools?

The VEYLDF (2016, p. 3) emphasises the importance of supporting children's and families' transitions as they move within and across services throughout the early childhood period.

This professional learning session is designed to assist early childhood services in:

- Facilitating smooth transitions for children and families into early childhood services.
- Actively supporting children and families in their transition from the Early Years Environment to the Primary School Environment.
- Identifying what inclusive communication looks like; ensuring families and children experience active participation and making communication shared.
- Accessing and engaging with the wider community.

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST): 7.3 Engage with parents/carers: Establish and maintain respectful collaborative relationships with parents/carers regarding their children's learning and wellbeing.

National Quality Standards: 6.1.1 Engagement with the service: Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions. 6.2.2 Access and Participation: effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

Event Details

Thursday 7 November, 2019

9:30am - 12:30pm

Venue TBC

GEELONG VIC 3220

Ticket Pricing

Vic State Funded Kindergartens:

\$90.00 *fkaCS* Member

\$100.00 Non-Member

Other Early Years Services:*

\$135.00 *fkaCS* Member

\$150.00 Non-Member

Register via Eventbrite:

<https://fkacs.eventbrite.com.au>



From the Multicultural Resource Centre

The Importance of Multilingual Resources

Multilingual resources are powerful tools in enabling children to understand their own identity and make meaning of others. Including multilingual resources within the environment that reflect the local community affords children and families a stronger sense of belonging, wellbeing and connectedness.

When educators use multilingual resources in their program they provide opportunities for children to become familiar with a variety of languages, scripts and storylines. Children are also introduced to perspectives from different cultures, learn to empathise with others, and to value languages other than their own. The use of multilingual resources opens doors to understandings about the cultural diversity within their own community and provides early childhood professionals a tool to facilitate cultural competency with children. Through the introduction of multilingual resources, early childhood professionals can begin to engage in respectful and trusting conversations with children about different ways of being and doing, thus supporting children's understanding of diversity.

Creating a multilingual library can be a starting point for your service to respond to VEYLDF's guidelines regarding diversity. It can help you actively engage families and children in ongoing learning and development in the program, at home and in the local community. A multilingual library can feature as an important tool in recognising 'multilingualism as an asset, and support children to maintain their first language, learn English as an additional language, and learn languages other than English' (VEYLDF 2016 p.12). Inclusion of multilingual resources in your service can help support the ongoing development and maintenance of children's home languages as well as demonstrate that the service values and upholds languages other than English.

It is important to reflect on how you are engaging in these resources to avoid feelings of tokenism. You may have colleagues, or engage other professionals to support you in embedding culturally respectful and responsive practices. To create a multilingual library, you might consider including:

- Books in different languages; including children's home languages
- Songs, rhymes, music and musical instruments representing the communities who participate in your learning environment
- Props, puppets, dolls and artefacts that are culturally inclusive and represent diversity
- Multicultural dramatic play material
- Pictures and signs in different languages

The inclusion of multilingual resources can thus be instrumental in engaging families in meaningful partnerships.

Member? Browse our multicultural resource collection online: www.library.fka.com.au

Not a member? Visit www.fka.org.au and join now!

Enjoy a range of benefits and play a vital role in supporting *fkaCS* to achieve our vision and purpose, enabling us to advocate for children's cultural and linguistic rights, maintain the Multicultural Resource (MRC) collection – ensuring hard-to-find multicultural/bilingual resources are accessible to Victorian education and care services, and design and implement new programs and resources to support all children's active participation, learning and belonging in their service.