

"TIME Out" Newsletter

Occasional Child Care Association

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President's Message

The last 3 months have been a very busy for the Occasional Child Care Association but in saying that it has also been a very rewarding. Just knowing that we are now able to communicate with our members by email is truly a great achievement for the Association. There are a few services that are still not on email but Jenny ensures me all our members receive information by either email, fax or postage. The committee at the moment is busy with the preparations for our 2008 conference "**Looking to the Future for Occasional Care**" which will be in Sydney CBD at the Citigate Sebel. The theme for our conference I feel is true in the sense that our sector is always continually adapting and responding to all families in the community are continually thinking ahead. You are now all aware of the outcome of our meetings with FaCSIA with the new revised definition of occasional care being approved and also the approval for the retention of the current funding model for the formula funded services. More details are in this issue of "TIME OUT". Looking forward to seeing you all at our conference in Sydney. Should be a great one

Mary A Cottee

OCCA NSW Annual General Meeting 2008

The NSW Occasional Child Care Association Inc held its AGM on Tuesday 8th April 2008 at the Concord Bowling Club, Concord. Mary acknowledged the outgoing committee role and thanked them for their support and commitment over the last 12 months and wished them well. All positions were declared vacant and nominations were put forward and positions were accepted for the Management Committee for 2008. The following nominations were accepted:

President: Mary A Cottee

Secretary: Kathy Murphy, Djanaba Occasional Care, Jannali

Treasurer: Lee Best, Concord Occasional Care

We are also very fortunate to have 10 committee members from various Occasional Care Centre's in the Metropolitan area of Sydney. Jann Griffins, Djanaba OCCA; Elizabeth Laws, Hurstville OC; Jennine Blackburn, Wombat OCCA; Oriana Woomack, North Rocks OCC; Kathryn Barker, Illawarra Area CC; Emma Healey, Djanaba OCCA; Kristina Lisica, Short Street OCCA Wollongong,

It is really very pleasing to have so many on our Management Committee, and it is extra special to see some new faces added to the committee this year. Being on the committee is a good character building experience for an individual as well as a learning experience and can be very rewarding with the information that you are able to have access too. The Occasional Child Care Association Inc NSW/National is there for you, **its members**. and at any time State/National members can provide information to the Association. It would be great if services could form network groups within their areas and then feed back that information through our "TIME OUT" or by **placing it on our website on Up to Date News page.**

Child Care Management Systems: Are you ready

Do you need any help with funding, knowing when you are going to transition or any general information regarding CCMS. You can contact the CCMS Helpline on 1300 667 276 or email the helpdesk ccmshelpdesk@facisa.gov.au.

Help with your software and understanding how to enroll children you need to make contact with your software provider.. For general understanding of the CCMS you can get a DVD of one of the training events held last year. See www.cscentral.org.au or call 1800 157 818

Consult the training material that the CCMS Task Force sends you at transition time. You can also look at the CCMS Child Care Services Handbook 2007/2008 on line at www.facsia.gov.au/handbook2007-08_ccms. This is the definitive CCMS guide

If you need any support with getting your service ready to transition contact Children's Services Central on 1800 157 818.

They are currently working out the best way of providing additional support to services but you must call them with any specific help you may require. At this point of time we have not have a time set down for another meeting with the CCMS Task Force but may make an appointment when we are down in Canberra at the end of August for the National Children's Services Forum (NCSF). When we last meet with the CCMS Task Force it was our understanding that all other services types were going to be online before they even started to think about occasional care. We will be able to give you all an update of where it is all for our sector at our conference in August. Mean while if you have any queries please make contact with all the details above.

Definition of Occasional Care & Formula Funding Model

By now all Occasional Child Care Services would have an official letter of approval from DEEWR to notify them of the revised definition and the retention of the current funding model for Formula Funded OCC services and not to move to utilization model. **All these changes will take effect as of 1st July 2009**

Occasional Care (OCC) is a centre-based form of child care. OCC services are responsive to the needs of the general community and provide flexible care which allows parents to meet their work-related and non-work related commitments. Families can access OCC regularly on a sessional basis, or irregular. OCC services do not offer full-time, all day care except in extenuating circumstances. OCC provides families with the flexibility to leave children in a early childhood learning environment on days and hours that best meets their needs. OCC can provide care at short notice and immediate emergency care. OCC services charge fees that reflect the amount of time a child spends in care. OCC is available to all children, however most of the children in care will not have started school.

DEEWR have developed the Questions & Answers document <http://www.oceccc.gov.au> for services which will clarify what the revised definition will mean to them. **OCCA National has been having meetings with the Department for over two and a half years re the new funding model and will continue to have further meetings and consulate with them in regard to issues that are relevant to our sector.** DEEWR have appreciated and acknowledged our contribution to the development of the revised definition. In all the years I have been working in occasional care and been on the Association Management Committee, I have always been an advocate for our sector type and have been very passionate about the unique service we provide to our vast communities and now with the above revised definition I must say it is very rewarding to finally have the acknowledgment of a definition which really does reflect what are sector is all about. Also the National Occasional Child Care Association must also acknowledge the time that FaCSIA put aside for meetings and consulting with us of the concerns and issues we had for our sector and duly listened. It is very much appreciated by the National Occasional Child Care Association.

Occasional Child Care services have just over 12 months before any changes will be implemented. Some services may need to look at how their service is operating or maybe there will not be any change what so ever.

Conference 2008: Keynote Speakers

Our 2008 conference this year “**Looking to the Future for Occasional Care**” on August 2nd & 3rd at the Citigate Sebel in Sydney is looking like it is going to be well supported by our members. Trying to organize workshop presentations for our Annual Conference is always a challenge but this year there is a very wide selection for delegates to choose from. Looking at the registrations at the moment there are a lot of services that are sending nearly all their staff. That is a big commitment for any service so hopefully the Conference Committee will be able to reimburse a small proportion of conference costs back to individual services.

A presentation of the “**Research on the Early Brain Development**” by **Professor Associate June Wangmann** will be very informative and beneficial for all occasional child care services as she will discuss what the implications will be to Early Childhood services. June has been involved with the Early Childhood Sector for many years and has worked with a broad range of Government and private organizations throughout Australia. At the moment she is working & lecturing in Chile. She is also a lecturer at the University of Western Sydney.

Our compulsory workshop will be: **Diversity, Difference and Exclusion: Why it matters in the Lives of Children** and will be presented by **Anthony Semann**. We all know Anthony very well as he has been a presenter at our conferences for many years. Anthony is an educator, innovator and advocate for all children and he is also recognized for his outstanding ability to transform, challenge and assist organizations and people to excel. He is a much sought after presenter, facilitator and public speaker. What began as a young teachers desire to help individuals transform the quality of their lives, relationships and values has grown into a successful consultancy and training company committed to transformative practices and philosophies.

To start our conference with these two presentations I feel will shape the foundation of our conference weekend and I am sure come Sunday delegates will be very much more empowered to return to their services with a renewed energy. Also the conference dinner on the Saturday night at the Spanish Restaurant should prove to be a very enjoyable evening. Remember all delegates will transported there but will need to make their own arrangements for returning to the Citigate Sebel . Come and enjoy a weekend in the City of Sydney. There will be a few little surprises along the way

Bicultural Support Pool/Specialist

The Bicultural Support Pool is a special group of Bicultural Support Workers that assist children’s services to work successfully with an Indigenous child or a child from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background. The service is free of charge for eligible children’s services, normally Formula Funded occasional child care services. You can call 1800 157 818 for further information. Workers are available:

- Assist in the initial setting-in period of children from (CALD) refugee or Indigenous backgrounds for a limited period
- Provide initial language assistance to children, parents and staff in order to help families and the service communication needs
- Introduce the child’s culture into the service by assisting children, staff and parents to develop and present multicultural games, songs, food and culturally appropriate activities
- Assist staff to understand diverse cultural practices and child-rearing practices in Australian society
- Promote children’s self esteem about their cultural heritage
- Encourage maintenance of and support the development of the child’s home language.

Specialist Equipment:

Do you need access to specialist equipment to include a child in your service. Specialist seating, positioning and toileting equipment, visual aids etc are available free of charge through the specialist equipment pool. Access to specialist equipment to enable a child to be included in a service is an issue that should be determined by a service in conjunction with **their Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF)** and any therapists that are working with the child.

There is a catalogue of existing specialist equipment that can be viewed on the Children’s Services Central website at www.cscentral.org.au/inclusion/sep.html

Once again this is only available to Formula Funded Services. State Funded services need to attract the SCAN funding for this service.

Service Profile: Water Street Occasional Care, Cairns

Water Street Occasional Child Care Centre is located in Cairns, Queensland and is sponsored by the Cairns & District Child Care development Association Inc and they are also the licensee of the centre. The centre is partially funded by the Federal Government and is community based non profit making.

The centre is licensed for 36 children and is opened Monday to Friday from 8am – 4pm. Fees are \$6.80 per hour with a minimum, booking of two hours.

“Our centre’s philosophy emphasizes the social, emotional and physical well being of each and every child. Realistic expectations are encouraged and we endeavour to keep a sense of humour. A happy and caring environment is our main goal – not only for the children but staff and parents as well.”

OCCA now online: Occasional Child Care Website

Consumed by Design have been working with the Occasional Child Care Association to design the new website. You can find it at www.occansw.com.au or www.occasional-child-care.com.au

If you are thinking about getting an online presence and opening a doorway to the multitudes of potential customers searching the web, why not take advantage of **WHAT OCCA can offer its members** along with **Consumed by Design** are offering. Here are some of the options:

- With your paid membership you will have your name, address and phone number added to the childcare service page
- Why not stand out a little from the rest. For an additional cost you can have a link added to your details & your own full page. This would give you your own web page without all the extra costs that go with it. Add anything you like, your own logo and some details about your Centre, email address or maybe a few pictures of your service
- If you are after more than just a single page, why not give **Graham a call on 0414 229 559** to discuss designing your own website. This would still be linked from the OCCA website but will have its own domain name as a stand-alone site.

Consumed by Design is an Australian graphic design company. They specialize in providing graphic design services for all forms of print, web design and all areas related to creative development. It’s not just about flashy designs. They will help you every step of the way from coming up with a logo/marketing concept through to the final product of either a business card, multiple page booklet, pull up banner or uniforms for your staff. They can offer excellent quality print management at extremely competitive prices.

At Consumed by Design they listen to what you are saying and recognize your requirements and understand the uniqueness of our industry to achieve a successful finished product. Their mission is always to provide tailored cost-effective, creative, quality solutions that target your goals. **Graham will have a Trade Display at our conference and will be available to answer any further questions you might have to ask.**

From the Secretary: This will be OCCA’s last “TIME OUT” in print form. The Association will send an email to each online service indicating when the “TIME OUT” or other relevant information is going to be on the website. Services not on line will still receive their “Time Out” via fax or post. As members of the Association we need to continue looking at our website to keep it active.

From the Treasurer: Membership fees have been increased by \$10.00. NSW \$140.00; National \$85.00. Prompt payment of these fees is vital as we have continuing expenses to cover. The increase is for the ongoing cost of the running of the website.