



## PSC STATE PLAN

JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012

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# 1.0 CONTEXT

## 1.1 Introduction

The State Plan details the range of professional development and support that will be delivered to eligible child care services in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) from July 2011 to June 2012. Communities@Work has been contracted as the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) in the ACT by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and is funded by the Australian Government under the Inclusion and Professional Support Program.

This document is called the 'PSC State Plan' and incorporates the following:

- Information on the review of the previous years professional development and learnings;
- Annual budget;
- Information on how the ACT PSC will ensure effective partnerships are built and maintained with all relevant stakeholders: including the Indigenous Professional Support Unit (IPSU) and Inclusion Support Agency (ISA);
- Information on how the ACT PSC will ensure all eligible child care services and relevant stakeholders are aware of the services available through the ACT PSC;
- A risk management strategy; and
- A continuous improvement strategy that identifies and addresses opportunities to build on and improve the services being delivered.

The State Plan has been developed by the ACT PSC and has been agreed with DEEWR as one of our key deliverables. The most important aspect of the State Plan is that it shows what, how and when our professional support activities will be delivered. In particular, it shows our approach in responding to objectives of the Professional Support Program.

These are to:

- Lead professional practice and drive quality improvement.
- Support services to implement the Early Years Learning Framework and the Framework for School Age Care
- Prepare and support educators for their changing roles under the National Quality Framework and enhance educators' knowledge and skills on existing and new areas of practice.
- Support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds, including Indigenous children, children with a disability and children from CaLD backgrounds.

The State Plan also demonstrates how we are responding to the findings of our research efforts and how we have collaborated with our key stakeholders to develop this Plan. The Plan is to be reviewed annually and updated to respond to emerging needs and priorities identified by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

## 1.2 About Us

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## 1.3 Who does the State Plan cover?

The State Plan is designed for the professional support needs of eligible children's services in the ACT. These include:

- Australian Government approved child care services, including both private and community centre-based long day care; outside school hours care including vacation care; family day care; occasional care; and in-home care.
- Inclusion Support Agencies (ISA), Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISF) and Bicultural Support Workers.
- Individuals including staff, carers, directors, coordinators, owners and management committee members of the above services.
- Registered care services, Indigenous playgroups, JET crèches and local government funded children's services can access the services of the PSC on a fee for service basis.

## 1.4 How will the PSC State Plan work?

The State Plan shows what, how and when our professional support activities will be delivered. It is our core guide to service delivery.

The State Plan forms part of the agreement between each PSC and DEEWR. We will be reporting against this State Plan to DEEWR as part of our contract to deliver effective professional support services in the ACT.

The State Plan is an important part of the arrangements between PSCs and Professional Support Service Providers (PSSPs). It will help the ACT PSC build strong relationships with PSSPs and help us be sure that the PSSPs are working where needs are greatest.

The State Plan is a tool for the ACT PSC to plan, review and monitor our activities. We will be reviewing the State Plan regularly to ensure our service provision is meeting the needs of children's services across the ACT. Through an ongoing continued data collection process the ACT PSC will be able to monitor changes needed and amend our State Plan accordingly.

## 2.0 DEVELOPING THE PSC STATE PLAN

The ACT PSC considered the professional development and support needs of all eligible child care services and then developed the activities in our State Plan.

### 2.1 How was this State Plan developed?

The ACT PSC has developed the State Plan based on the following approaches:

#### **Comprehensive Professional Development and Support Needs Analysis**

A comprehensive Professional Development and Support Needs Analysis was undertaken in March 2011. Results from the survey of eligible children's services in the ACT underpin all aspects of the development of the State Plan.

Methods for gathering data included:

- Dissemination of surveys to all eligible ACT children's services (100%).
- Dissemination of survey to all ISF's (100%).
- Implementation of 2 focus groups.

A written survey went to all eligible services/schemes across the ACT. Key findings of the report indicated:

- Those participating in the survey have a well-developed appreciation of the importance of professional development and the value it adds to service outcomes.
- The awareness for the need for further professional development on key policy areas of the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Agenda increased from the results of the 2010 Survey.
- The respondents are largely well informed of the programs and activities provided by the ACT PSC.
- Respondents are satisfied with the quality of the services provided by ACT PSC and believe that the professional development provided makes a difference to the delivery of care and education through their services.
- The training calendar continues to be the most widely recognised and useful resource from the ACT PSC as was also demonstrated by the results of the 2010 Survey.

Positive appreciation of the support provided by ACT PSC continues to be experienced across all service types participating in the survey.

In terms of identifying potential areas for improvement or new content for professional development the feedback is limited. In addition to the calls for support in relation to the Early Learning Years Framework and the National Quality Agenda; planning and curriculum development continue to be sought.

Other areas of need included:

- Holistic approaches to teaching and learning
- Support in the area of children's behaviour with respect to relationships and partnerships

## **Review of the provision of the Professional Development and Support delivered by the ACT PSC in 2010/2011.**

A component of the March 2011 Professional Development and Support Needs Analysis reviewed the provision of professional development presented by the ACT PSC for the previous year. The purpose of the review was two fold:

- to further identify future professional development needs of children's services in the ACT; and
- to evaluate and review the effectiveness of the range of learning opportunities provided under the Professional Support Coordinator program.

As a result of this review and evaluation, the ACT PSC was able to determine the level to which children's services viewed products and services offered by the ACT PSC as creating change in practice within their services.

*A copy of the Professional Development and Support Needs Analysis report is included at attachment A.*

### **Formal discussions with Key Stakeholders**

During 2010/2011 the ACT PSC undertook and participated in discussions to ascertain the views and needs of the children's services sector. The following summary demonstrates ACT PSCs ongoing engagement with stakeholders.

- Issues discussed at the ACT Children's Forum on which the ACT PSC has representation.
- Issues raised at the children's services meetings held by the Office for Children, Youth and Family Support.
- Regular contact with the ACT Government's Office for Children, Youth and Family Support, Children's Policy and Regulation Unit
- Regular contact with the ACT Government Department of Education and Training Early Childhood Team.
- Regular feedback sought from Professional Support Service Providers.
- Meetings and consultations with children's services peak bodies and agencies.
- Ongoing consultations with the sector through both formal and informal mechanisms.
- Weekly meetings with the ACT Inclusion Support Agency.
- Participation in the PSC National Alliance.
- Participation in the NSW/ACT Inclusion and Professional Support Program Forum; and
- Advice, information and feedback from the ACT PSC Advisory Group at meetings held quarterly. ACT PSC Advisory Group Members include:
  - ACT/NSW Indigenous Professional Support Unit
  - ACT Inclusion Support Agency
  - Canberra Institute of Technology
  - ACT Community Based Directors Association
  - Therapy ACT
  - Out of School Hours Association of the ACT
  - Early Childhood Australia ACT Branch
  - Australian Community Children's Services (ACT representative)
  - National In-Home Care Child Care Association (ACT representative)
  - Child Care Associations Australia (ACT representative)
  - Occasional Care Association of Australia (ACT representative)
  - Family Day Care Australia (ACT representative)
  - Universities

## Further Research

Further investigations:

- Analysis of data collected from evaluations of professional development sessions conducted during 2010/2011.
- Early and middle childhood research papers presented in 2010/2011.
- The Canberra Social Plan.
- The ACT Children's Plan 2004/14.
- The National Childcare Accreditation Council Quality Trends report.
- Practice Potentials: Impact of Participation for Professional Development and Support on Quality Outcomes for Children in Child Care Centres.
- Previous needs analysis results and trends identified in terms of professional support needs.
- Action Research Report – Role and professional support needs of Inclusion Support Facilitators 2009.
- 2011/2012 ACT ISA Region Plan
- The Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being, Becoming
- The Framework for School Age Care

## 3.0 THE STATE PLAN FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

A result of this research and consultation, the ACT PSC has identified a number of key issues and focus for professional support service delivery. The tables below lists a summary of each of the program priority areas for the Inclusion and Professional Support Program, the needs in the ACT in relation to this, and our broad approach to meeting these needs. A detailed explanation of the ACT PSC response is provided under Products and Delivery.

### 3.1 Needs and Broad Approach to meeting Priority Areas

Priority Area 1: Leadership and Management	
IDENTIFIED PD & S NEEDS	BROAD APPROACH/PRODUCTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting children service's directors in their role as leaders (particularly those who are new to their position)</li> <li>Support the development of organisational systems that enable service governance, commitment to continuous improvement, planning &amp; evaluation, and business management (finance, human resources and organisational arrangements)</li> <li>Promote respectful and professional teamwork</li> <li>Understand the importance of engaging in professional development and support</li> <li>Support the development of leadership skills</li> <li>Training and resource development for small business management</li> <li>Support services to transition to the National Quality Framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional Luncheon Series</li> <li>Customised Training</li> <li>Mentoring Program</li> <li>Learning Circles</li> <li>Professional Development and Support Calendar</li> <li>Conference Sponsorship</li> <li>ACT PSC Website</li> <li>Family Day Care EXPO</li> <li>EYLF &amp; NQF – Professional Support &amp; Learning</li> <li>ACT PSC Newsletters and E- News</li> <li>Practitioner Inquiry Project Grants</li> <li>Resource Development</li> <li>Professional Development Special Events</li> <li>Info HUB (General Resource Library)</li> <li>Sector wide Director meeting - guest speaker</li> <li>ACT Children's Services Conference</li> </ul>

## Priority Area 2: Relationships and Partnerships

IDENTIFIED PD & S NEEDS	BROAD APPROACH/PRODUCTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop positive and meaningful interactions between staff and children and the engagement of children in the program</li> <li>• Implement approaches for promoting the engagement of families in the development and delivery of programs, and the development and maintenance of links with the community more generally</li> <li>• Implement strategies for working with families, especially Indigenous families, families for CaLD backgrounds and families with children with disabilities</li> <li>• Implement strategies that encourage social justice and participation in child care services</li> <li>• Respond to expectations and demands of parents as consumers</li> <li>• Guiding children's behaviour</li> <li>• Engage children and families in planning</li> <li>• Reflective practice</li> </ul>	<p>Professional Luncheon Series            Learning Circles            Professional Development and Support Calendar            Customised Training            Community Connection Hubs            Specialist Equipment Pool            Info HUB (General Resource Library)            Bicultural Support            Conference Sponsorship            ACT PSC Website            Specialist Behaviour Support Calendar            Family Day Care EXPO            ACT PSC Newsletters and E-News            EYLF &amp; NQF – Professional Support &amp; Learning            Practitioner Inquiry Project Grants            Special Events            ACT Children's Services Conference</p>

## Priority Area 3: Curriculum Development

IDENTIFIED PD & S NEEDS	BROAD APPROACH/PRODUCTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the implementation and ongoing planning and evaluation of learning programs and the Early Years Learning Framework/ Framework for School Age Care</li> <li>• Develop programs and curricula, including how to interpret and work effectively with current and emerging theories on how young children learn and develop</li> <li>• Provide quality environments that supports learning and development, guiding children's behavior, including supervision of children, managing challenging behaviours; and working with diverse family expectations</li> <li>• Organise the physical environment to engage children in learning experiences</li> <li>• Updates of new development, innovation and change in the child care sector</li> <li>• Implement environments and opportunities for children to enable them to participate in learning and development that is culturally and linguistically inclusive</li> <li>• Develop environments where play can be creative and recreational when appropriate</li> <li>• Promoting children's learning and development</li> <li>• Providing safe environments for children – Wellbeing of children</li> <li>• Programming – all aspects</li> <li>• Encouraging family participation</li> <li>• Demonstrating and documenting children's learning</li> <li>• Outdoor environments</li> </ul>	<p>Professional Development and Support Calendar            Info HUB (General Resource Library)            Professional Luncheon Series            Mentoring Program            Conference Sponsorship            Learning Circles            Customised Training            ACT PSC Website            Community Connections Hubs            Family Day Care EXPO            ACT PSC Newsletters &amp; E -News            EYLF &amp; NQF – Professional Support &amp; Learning            Practitioner Inquiry Project Grants            Special Events            ACT Children's Services Conference</p>

## Priority Area 4: National Quality Framework and other Mandatory requirements

IDENTIFIED PD & S NEEDS	BROAD APPROACH/PRODUCTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of mandatory requirements, including the National Quality Framework and the Child Care Management System</li> <li>• Support Indigenous child care services funded under the Budget Based Funding program to understand their requirements under their Funding Agreement</li> <li>• Compliance with NQF</li> <li>• Policy implementation and development</li> <li>• Gaining an understanding of the National Quality Agenda.</li> <li>• Assist children's services transition to and implement the National Quality Standards</li> <li>• Assist children's services to implement the Early Years Learning Framework/ Framework for School Age Care</li> <li>• Compliance with Licensing standards</li> </ul>	<p>NQF Support            Professional Luncheon Series            Learning Circles            Mentoring Program            NQF Sector meetings            Family Day Care EXPO            ACT PSC Newsletter &amp; E-News            Childcare Kitchen &amp; Networking Series            Online Learning Packages            EYLF &amp; NQF – Professional Support &amp; Learning            Practitioner Inquiry Project Grants            Resources            ACT PSC Website            Info HUB (General Resource Library)            ACT Children's Services Conference</p>

## 3.2. Products and Delivery

The following information provides a description of our products developed in response to the national priorities and the sector needs.

### Continuing Products:

The ACT PSC will be undertaking seventeen main activities which have called 'Products'. The following gives an overview of each product.

Product	Description
<p>TRAINING DELIVERY</p>	<p>The training schedule will include training, workshops, forums and conferences covering each of the priority areas with a focus on a variety of learning approaches and methodologies. The ACT PSC will facilitate the following forms of professional development:</p> <p><b>Learning Circles</b> (Action Research Projects including but not limited to)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Years Learning Framework in Practice – The Next Step</li> <li>• My Time, Our Place: A Learning Circle for Educators in School Age Care</li> <li>• Documenting Children’s Learning</li> <li>• Holistic Approaches to Teaching and Learning</li> </ul> <p><b>Professional Development and Support Programme and Curriculum Calendar</b> providing workshops on a variety of topics (including but not limited to)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making teams work</li> <li>• Writing Skills and using technology to Plan and Document Learning</li> <li>• Supporting Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder</li> <li>• Routines and Transitions</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Building Positive Relationships</li> <li>• Quality Improvement and a team approach</li> <li>• Reflective Practice</li> <li>• The Early Years Learning Framework focus sessions</li> <li>• The Framework for School Age Care focus sessions</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Connection Hubs</b> focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Research Expo</li> <li>• Quality Improvement and Engaging with Community</li> </ul> <p><b>Customised Support and Training</b></p> <p>Customised professional development sessions as requested by eligible child care services, either on an individual centre basis or as a collective.</p>

Product	Description
<p>TRAINING DELIVERY (continued)</p>	<p><b>Inspired, Informed, Inducted</b></p> <p>A two part induction series for new recruits to the children’s services workforce in the ACT. This session aims to increase the skill level and knowledge of people just entering the children’s services workforce. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of their roles and responsibilities as children’s services employees. Content of the induction program includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure and overview of the ACT children’s services sector</li> <li>• Duty of Care</li> <li>• Mandatory Reporting</li> <li>• Ethical frameworks and professionalism</li> <li>• An overview of The Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Framework</li> <li>• Health, safety, hygiene and infection control</li> <li>• Respectful communication with children and families</li> <li>• Experiences that support children’s learning and play</li> </ul> <p><b>Childcare Kitchen &amp; Networking Series</b></p> <p>This series will focus on the unique skills and requirements needed by staff who are responsible for the management of kitchens.</p> <p>These sessions will have two components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accredited Training</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> </ul> <p><b>Online Packages</b></p> <p>Online packages will be developed in accordance to regulations and licencing requirements in the ACT. Online packages include (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory Reporting Refresher</li> <li>• Nutrition &amp; Food Safety</li> <li>• Induction processes</li> <li>• Early Year Learning Framework Familiarisation</li> <li>• Framework for School Age Care Familiarisation</li> <li>• National Quality Framework Familiarisation</li> </ul> <p><b>Practitioner Inquiry Grants</b></p> <p>In 2011/2012 Practitioner Inquiry Grants will be available for services wishing to engage in a Practitioner Inquiry Project as a whole service. Services will be offered the opportunity to apply for grants to undertake their own line of inquiry with their whole team.</p>
<p>PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT AND ADVICE ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>This is our range of support and advice activities that are not classified as ‘training’. Assistance will be provided via telephone, email, face-to-face visits and through direct mentoring.</p>

Product	Description
<p>INFO HUB (General Resource Library)</p>	<p>Children's Services can access resources via the 1800 number, the ACT PSC website or via their Inclusion Support Facilitator. The catalogue and loan facility is available in both hard copy and online.</p> <p>This area covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-service training materials (manuals, electronic training materials, online modules, workbooks, visual aids, audio-visual equipment)</li> <li>• A range of printed resources such as fact sheets, pamphlets and newsletters</li> <li>• Journals, textbooks and professional literature</li> <li>• Resources that support quality programs, such as books that enable cultural inclusion and bilingual education for educators and children</li> </ul>
<p>SPECIALIST EQUIPMENT PROGRAM</p>	<p>The Specialist Equipment Program responds to the individual needs of child care services and operates in collaboration with the Inclusion Support Agency and local therapists.</p> <p>This area covers specialist equipment for the inclusion of children with additional needs into eligible children's services.</p>
<p>1800 TOLL-FREE PHONE LINE</p>	<p>The 1800 toll-free phone line is available for general questions and as a resource to access the range of support services and products available via the ACT PSC. The 1800 toll free number operates Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm.</p>
<p>ACT PSC WEBSITE</p>	<p>This product covers downloadable resources such as fact sheets, templates, website links, articles, newsletters, training calendars, information about the IPSP, PSC, ISA, IPSU and public notices.</p>
<p>NQF SUPPORT</p>	<p>The aim of NQF support is to promote high quality programs for children, with a focus on developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes underpinning quality care and education.</p>
<p>SECTOR WIDE DIRECTOR MEETINGS – GUEST SPEAKER SPONSORSHIP</p>	<p>In partnership with the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services the ACT PSC funds a keynote speaker to address the sector. This is a responsive product that responds to the emerging needs of the sector.</p>
<p>MENTORING PROGRAM</p>	<p>The aim of the Mentoring Program is to provide on the job collaborative support facilitated by an experienced mentor. The mentoring is incorporated into a formal program but is also applied on an informal basis. The mentoring program has a focus on networking and collaboration that supports reflection, the sharing of experience and focus on solutions.</p>

PROFESSIONAL LUNCHEONS	The Professional Luncheon Series is a lunch held quarterly, primarily targeted toward directors and service managers. The aim of the Professional Luncheon series is to bring together a variety of professionals working in children's services with a keynote speaker to discuss current topics of interest.
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	A range of products will be developed through the National PSC Alliance, specifically for National Quality Standards (NQS) and Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). This will include information sessions, forums, customised training, fact sheets and online packages.
CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP	The aim of Conference Sponsorship is to assist educators to attend interstate conferences and to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for early/middle childhood educators in the ACT to gain professional skills and knowledge to support the provision of high quality care and education for children and their families.</li> <li>• Create pathways for the sharing of skills, knowledge and information.</li> </ul>
BICULTURAL SUPPORT PROGRAM	The Bicultural Support Program responds to the individual needs of child care services and operates in collaboration with the Inclusion Support Agency and Indigenous Professional Support Unit.  Bicultural support includes a pool of specialised staff from various cultural backgrounds to assist in building the capacity of children's services to include children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.  The Bicultural Support Program utilises community networks and other available services where appropriate.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR INCLUSION SUPPORT FACILITATORS	The 2011 Action Learning project will focus on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedding critical reflection into everyday practice in a deliberate way;</li> <li>• Engaging with co-researchers &amp; critical friends; and,</li> <li>• Documenting and presenting learning.</li> </ul>
ACT PSC NEWSLETTER AND E-NEWSLETTER	A biannual newsletter sent to every eligible service in the ACT. An E-News emailed to subscribers monthly.
SPECIAL EVENTS	<b>The ACT PSC hosts special events including:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor Environments</li> <li>• Awards and Conferences</li> <li>• Leadership Capacity Building Series/Retreat</li> <li>• Family Day Care EXPO</li> </ul>

## New Products Proposed for 2011/2012

<p>ACT NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY</p>	<p>To prepare and support educators for their changing roles under the National Quality Agenda the ACT PSC has developed an implementation strategy to support educators to transition to the new system. The implementation strategy is based on the PSC Alliance National Quality Framework Implementation Strategy and is adapted to meet the needs of educators in the ACT.</p> <p>The ACT PSC will provide a nationally consistent two staged approach to NQF professional learning and support to Australian Government Approved Child Care Services (AGACCS). The first stage will begin in January 2011 and will assist services to fully understand the processes, tools and implementation of the NQF.</p> <p>The second stage will provide more in depth support and development of the skills and knowledge educators, administrators and managers will require to successfully embed the new quality standards and to prepare their services for commencement of the new system in January 2012. The PSC will work in concert with DEEWR and National, State and Territory stakeholders to determine the most appropriate elements and anticipate that over time these may be refined and further developed as new information becomes available and as additional needs are identified from our consultations across the sector.</p>
<p>CHILD SAFE, CHILD FRIENDLY RESOURCE</p>	<p>The ACT PSC in partnership with the ACT Children &amp; Young People Commissioner (CYPC) is modifying the NSW Commission for Children &amp; Young People's NSW Child Safe/Child Friendly Training Program to ensure that it is suitable for the ACT policy and legislative context. This resource will assist services to develop policies, procedures and structures which will ensure that their organisation is both 'child safe' and 'child friendly'. This resource will assist in guiding services so that they meet the requirements of the <i>Children's and Young Peoples ACT 2008</i>.</p>
<p>WORLD VIEWS, THEORIES AND PHILOSOPHIES IN CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROJECT</p>	<p>This audio-visual resource will be a collection of video interviews with prominent children's services professionals offering an insight into a range of worldviews, theories and philosophies to help inform, define and engage everyday practice in new ways. Interviews will include national and international academics, educators, policy makers and activists and also represent a range of different service types. A written resource will support the video interviews by outlining the key points of each worldview, theory and philosophy and include additional reading to support educators' ongoing engagement with the concepts introduced in the interviews.</p>
<p>MY TIME, OUR PLACE TEAM MEETING PACKAGE</p>	<p>The packages will be available to all school age care services. This package empowers services to unpack My Time, Our Place as a team. The package will support services in breaking down My Time, Our Place into sections and provide discussion points for teams to explore what the document means for their individual service.</p>

<p>CANBERRA'S LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS – MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION</p>	<p>A set of 7 multimedia presentations consisting of a fusion of video and photography will be developed to show case Canberra's children's services. The presentations will share examples of inspiring learning environments that are inclusive, promote competence, independent exploration and learning through play.</p> <p>A written resource will accompany the multimedia presentation, which will further discuss the importance of the learning environment in supporting educators in their care and education of children.</p>
<p>CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH INSIGHTS (ISSUE 3) – EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK EDITION</p>	<p>The introduction of the Early Years Learning Framework and My Time, Our Place has introduced the use of outcomes to the sector. This edition of the Contemporary Research Insights will deliver research to eligible services so that they may consider outcomes as part of their daily practice. Research perspectives will focus on the value and importance of principles and practices and what research says about how children might best be supported to reach the outcomes.</p>
<p>EYLF PROFESSIONAL CONVERSATIONS NETWORK</p>	<p>The Professional Conversation Network is a facilitated network (situated in both North and South Canberra) that is open to all members of the early childhood education and care community to come together and engage in professional conversations surrounding the Early Years Learning Framework. Using the Educator's Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework as a platform, the network sessions will provide opportunities for in-depth discussion and thinking over a sustained period about the concepts that build the framework. The sessions will be designed to: provoke, inspire and challenge.</p> <p>Members of the Network will have to opportunity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Think about...</li> <li>Talk and reflect about...</li> <li>Try out...</li> <li>Hear about... and</li> <li>Find more about...</li> </ul>
<p>EXPLORING CULTURAL COMPETENCE</p>	<p>A "World Cafe Style" forum hosted by the ACT ISA and the ACT PSC Bicultural Support Program. This event will provide participants with an opportunity to engage in robust conversation and discussions surrounding Cultural Competence and Cultural Identities. The session will unpack the underlying principles of trust, respect for diversity, equity, fairness and social justice.</p>

<p>EXPLORING CULTURAL COMPETENCE (Cont.)</p>	<p>The forum will explore the following ideas:</p> <p>How do I understand culture?</p> <p>What does cultural competence mean for children, family, colleagues and community?</p> <p>How might my culture, or my way of seeing and understanding the world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affect the relationships with children and families</li> <li>• Advantage some children, while disadvantaging others</li> </ul> <p>What opportunities do I provide families to engage with me on ways that are genuine, respectful and value their culture?</p> <p>How do I support children to explore different cultures without stereotyping?</p> <p>How do I assist children to gather information, ask questions, seek clarification and consider possibilities about their own lives?</p>
<p>FAMILY DAY CARE – ENGAGEMENT WITH THE EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK</p>	<p>Facilitated EYLF/FSAC Planning Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully funded Individual facilitated planning sessions for Co-ordination Units to support schemes to formulate an action plan to engage educators with the EYLF and Framework for SAC and transition to the new National Quality Standards.</li> </ul> <p>Educator Newsletter Articles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly EYLF/FSAC articles to include with schemes newsletter with a focus on practical implementation of the EYLF/FSAC. The newsletter articles will be written with a FDC focus taking into account the specific requirements of the FDC sector.</li> </ul> <p>FDC Coordinators/ CDO'S Network Sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ACT PSC will organise co-ordinator networking sessions to facilitate professional conversations and critical reflection. One session per term (2 hours) with a guest speaker, facilitating the sessions with a focus on the learning frameworks.</li> </ul>

<p>SCHOOL AGE CARE STRATEGY – CHILDREN AS PARTNERS</p>	<p>In response to data gathered from the professional support needs analysis and consultation with the sector, ACT PSC has developed a School Age Care Strategy with the objective of engaging school age care practitioners in professional learning that will best meet the unique needs of this service type. Responding to an identified gap in professional learning the strategy will have a focus on responding to the needs of the 8-12 years age group.</p> <p>The strategy will encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitated community consultation event to determine mechanisms for professional learning, areas of need and possible resource development.</li> <li>• Sponsorship of four speakers to deliver professional learning sessions at directors meetings.</li> <li>• Online learning packages.</li> <li>• Staff meeting packages that incorporate a “train the trainer” component based around topics of management and leadership, partnerships with families, play based programming, child development and planning for positive environments.</li> </ul>
<p>RESEARCH</p>	<p>The ACT PSC will seek opportunities to be a part of and undertake research in collaboration with stakeholders, PSSPs and PSC Alliance members.</p>

### 3.3 Proactive Delivery of the Products

The following provides information regarding the proactive delivery of products to ACT children’s services. Through these processes the ACT PSC ensures that product delivery is relevant, appropriate and timely.

1. Marketing materials, brochures, email alerts, Newsletter, website, mailouts.
2. Stakeholder engagement through focus groups, pilot programs, Advisory Group and Needs Analysis.
3. ISF’s knowledge of PSC services and products.
4. The PSC actively promotes professional development within the sector and networks with relevant services and providers.

Information is shared with children’s services in a variety of formats including information on how professional development and support can be accessed through referral by ISFs and IPSU. The delivery of Products will be reviewed and adapted according to the needs of all eligible children’s services.

# 4.0 ENHANCING THE ACT PSC CAPACITY TO DELIVER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

## 4.1 Ensuring Effective Relationships

The ACT PSC is committed to ensuring effective and collaborative relationships with IPSP partners, key stakeholders and PSSPs both nationally and locally.

In particular the ACT PSC will continue to foster relationships and partnerships with the ACT ISA and ACT/NSW IPSU by implementing the following approaches and strategies:

- Work in partnership with the IPSU on various projects and professional development opportunities. The IPSU are a member of the ACT PSC Advisory Group, which informs the work undertaken by the ACT PSC.
- Collaborate and work in partnerships with the ACT ISA on various projects and professional development opportunities. As the ACT PSC and ACT ISA are co-located, ongoing communication and information sharing takes place on a daily basis. The ACT ISA take an active role in discussions regarding support needs of children’s services.

The ACT PSC is an active participant in meeting the strategic directions and goals of both the ACT/NSW IPSP Forum and the PSC Alliance. The following are the Strategic Plans. A focus of both Plans incorporates enhancing relationships across the sector and IPSP program.

### IPSP Strategic Plan for ACT/NSW

ACT/NSW IPSP providers are committed to working together to ensure ACT and NSW services are able to access support through the Program with a ‘no wrong door’ approach to all Programs of the IPSP. The ACT/NSW IPSP providers have developed a Strategic Plan that provides enriched inclusion and professional development support for children’s services.

The ACT/NSW IPSP providers are progressing work on the Strategic Plan between Forums, with working groups focusing on each of the three components of the Plan. The working groups have a representative from the PSC, ISA and IPSU.

Focus	Goal	Strategy / Action
<p>Inclusion and Interactions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authentic inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, children and families</li> <li>• Environments actively support the inclusion of all children</li> <li>• Relationships with educators and children paramount.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For 10% of services per region to explore the Aboriginal, or Torres Strait Islander history of the land where their services is located and surrounding areas.</li> <li>2. Percentage of services implementing change/plans to include all children increases.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify regionally specific strategies to include in the IPSP region/state plans</li> <li>• ISA team leader to share ideas and information to facilitate implementation of strategies</li> <li>• Services to then share with other services.</li> <li>• Define engagement/implementing change</li> <li>• Identify services that are not engaged.</li> <li>• Identify a resource/s that will assist engagement and who should be engaged/decision maker. (reinforce connections between IPSP providers /roles)</li> </ul>

<p>Professional Development and Reflective Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted, high level participation, time, reflective practice mentoring and research.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop and deliver the key message to children's services about the role and value of professional learning and reflective practice for the implementation of the NQF.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NQF resources are used to inform the staff of the IPSP.</li> <li>Develop the key message statement to ensure consistency across the IPSP message.</li> <li>Develop the strategy to deliver the key messages to services with reference to the IPSP communication protocol.</li> <li>Engage with services to promote foundation knowledge of NQF.</li> </ul>
<p>Connectedness and Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Between services and families, services and community, services and IPSP, IPSP and community, within IPSP</li> <li>Between Frameworks (NQF, EYLF, FSCAC, SSPs) and planning</li> <li>Networks within the sector</li> <li>Shared understanding of the goal</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of IPSP with the children's services community and wider community.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a marketing/communications plan to promote no wrong door approach (based on diagram)</li> <li>Resource development (Children's services) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>newsletter</li> <li>poster</li> <li>brochure</li> </ul> </li> <li>Resource development (families/community)</li> <li>Implementation strategy utilising networks</li> <li>Develop a common understanding and implementation of the communication protocols</li> <li>Define communication protocols relationships</li> </ul>

## PSCA Strategic Plan

*Vision: "Australian children have the right to expert care and education by professionals".*

Objective	Strategy
<p>Support the implementation of early years and children's services reform.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a NQF Implementation Strategy</li> <li>Develop a National approach to leadership capacity within children's services.</li> <li>Implement the findings of the national research project into the provision of integrated service delivery</li> <li>Consolidate EYLF resources and information</li> </ol>
<p>To build partnerships with ISAs to support a nationally consistent approach to the inclusion of children.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a comprehensive national PD strategy for ISFs</li> </ol>
<p>Supporting childcare and education services provide suitable and inclusive support to Indigenous children and families.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities for collaborative work with IPSU Alliance to share knowledge and expertise for capacity building and supporting Indigenous inclusion for mainstream childcare services.</li> </ol>

## 4.2 Communication and Marketing

As part of the ACT PSC continual improvement strategy, the ACT PSC updated and reviewed the communication and marketing strategy. This strategy sets the foundation for the ACT PSC marketing and communication efforts. The 2011/2012 Communication and Marketing Plan combines existing communication arrangements with new approaches and is designed to increase ACT Children's services and stakeholders knowledge and understanding of the ACT PSC role, products and services.

The ACT PSC Communication and Marketing Framework is included at Attachment B.

## 4.3 Risk Management

The ACT PSC is committed to the management of risk in relation to:

- Program Management and Coordination
- Service Delivery
- Communication and Marketing
- Reporting

Risk management is a continuous process demanding an awareness and proactive action to reduce the possibility and impact of accidents and losses. Suitable risk management strategies are incorporated into our business planning, operations and management of PSSP's. The scope of these activities encompasses:

- Training in risk management for staff.
- Developing a risk management plan.
- Conducting surveys for identifying and eliminating risks.
- Prioritising risk control improvement areas.

The ACT PSC Risk Management Plan is included in Attachment C.

## 4.4 Continuing Improvement and Evaluation

The ACT PSC ensures continuous improvement in the quality of services described within Professional Support Coordinator Guidelines through the implementation of preventative and corrective actions.

The ACT PSC continuous improvement process is designed to achieve the maintenance of the quality system for the delivery of the Professional Support. The ACT PSC continuous improvement strategy also addresses the opportunities to build on and improve the services being delivered. Continuous improvement is an essential component of our work, which aims to improve the responsiveness and relevance of our service over time. The continuous improvement cycle on which our strategy is based has four interrelated phases 'Plan, Do, Reflect, Act cycle.'

The ACT PSC undertakes an ongoing approach to continuous improvement and evaluation by:

- Seeking participant feedback on professional development and support.
- Feedback from ACT PSC Advisory Group.
- Feedback from peak bodies and key stakeholders.
- Reviews of ACT PSC programs and products by independent consultants.
- Ongoing discussions and consultations with IPSU and ISA.
- Comprehensive annual Professional Support Needs Analysis.
- Establishment, implementation and monitoring of PSSP contracts.

- Revision of internal processes and procedures.
- Continual monitoring of the ACT PSC and Communities@Work strategic plan and business plan.
- Consistent reflection upon performance, and
- Commitment to research into best practice approaches and delivery of professional development and support

The ACT PSC Continuous Improvement Strategy is included at Attachment D.

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

This State Plan has been developed through an in depth Professional Support Needs Analysis, engagement with key stakeholders, extensive consultation with the sector, national priorities and our knowledge of the field. This State Plan is under continuous review and will be updated to respond to emerging needs and priorities identified by DEEWR and the sector.

During 2011/2012 the ACT PSC will work towards strengthening the relationships between Professional Support Service Providers to develop and maintain integrated approaches to service provision for education and care professionals in the ACT.



*It's about you. Always!*  
**Communities@Work**

The ACT PSC is managed by Communities@Work. The Australian Government, through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, funds the Professional Support Coordinator initiative as part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program.