



ACT Council of Parents & Citizens Associations

The parent voice on public education

Early Learning Committee 2021

EARLY CHILDHOOD STRATEGY

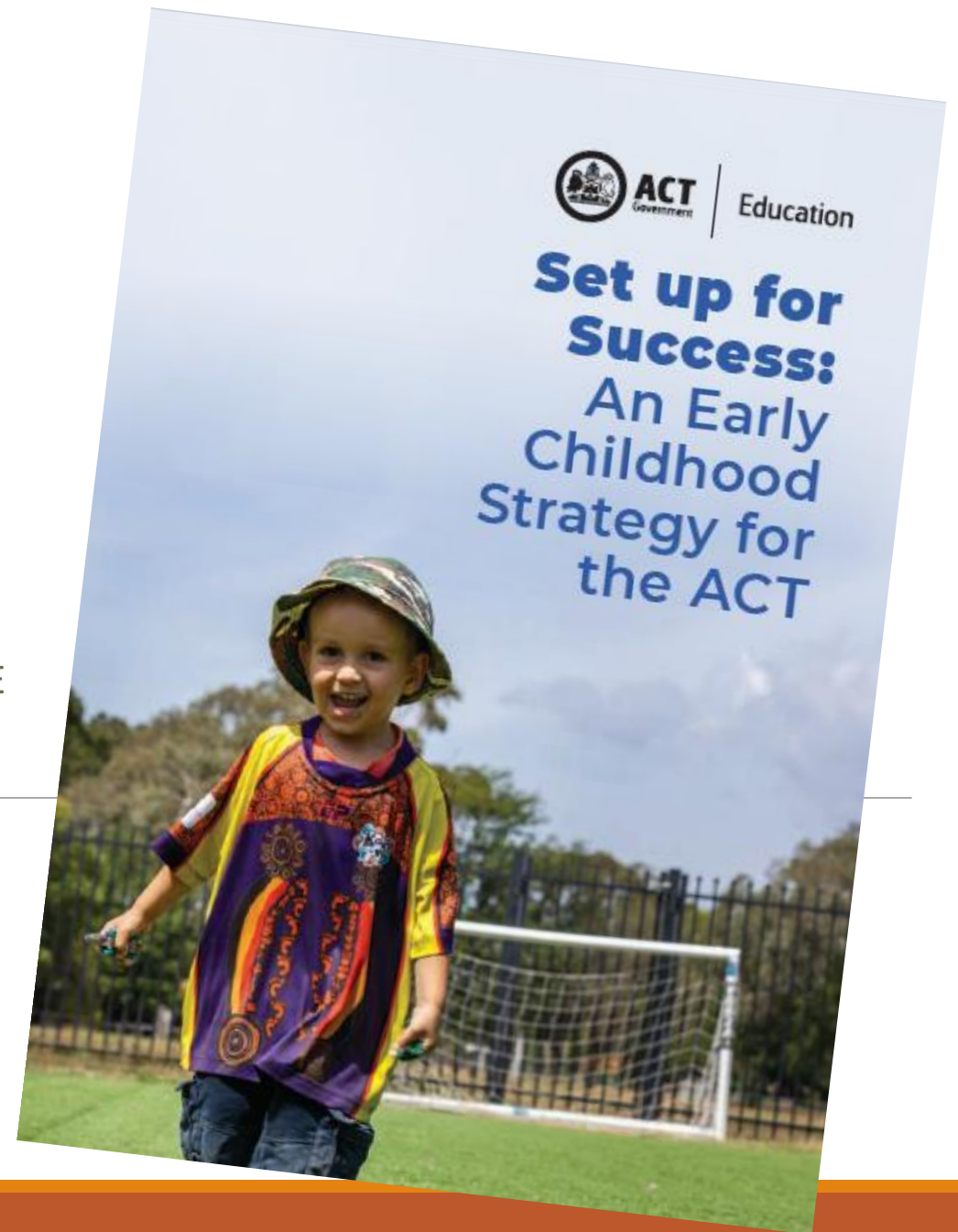
RESOURCES: ESAFETY – LUNCHBOXES – RELATIONSHIPS ED

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

ACT TEN-YEAR PLAN

[REPORT](#) - SET UP FOR SUCCESS

RELEASED 31 AUG 2020



children, educators, partnerships

Initiatives to:

- ensure every child is included
- develop and value early childhood teachers
- build collaborative partnerships
with parents, schools, community and health services



Where are we now

The ECEC sector - services are approved under the National Quality Framework or licensed under the Children and Young People Act 2008:

- preschool for four-year-old children delivered by the **ACT Government**;
- preschool and other early childhood services delivered by **non-government schools**; and
- preschool and other early childhood services delivered by **long day care, playschools** and **other services**.

playschools and **education and care services** provide a full day of care and learning which supports the needs of children and families.

Overall, approximately 500 to 600 of the most vulnerable three-year-old children in the ACT miss out on the benefits of early childhood education and care services each year.

where we want to be

Valuing lifelong learning and the impact on wellbeing

Valuing every child - all children have the best possible start in life and have the fairest possible opportunities to learn.

Universal access to preschool for three-year-old children

ECEC considered a force for social good

Increased workforce participation can also be a driver of equity and social good

A future where all children have access to high quality early childhood education. Where services meet and exceed standards, put children's outcomes over profits, and are designed to include children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.

Implementation

3 phases

Phase 1: p12 of the report 2020/2021

First phase - years one to two	
A fair start for every child	
Targeted access to preschool for three-year-old children for 2020/2021	Ensure access to 15 hours per week of preschool for three-year-olds, prioritising children and families in public schools.
Provide 200 places in the Koori Preschool program for three-year-olds from 2020	Provide 15 hours per week of Koori Preschool program for three-year-old children.
Scope universal access to early childhood education for three-year-old children	Undertake preparatory work such as modelling, regulatory design and infrastructure enhancement to enable phased delivery of universal access to preschool for three-year-olds, within the constraints of the available budget and sector capacity. Plan for the inclusion of parenting programs as part of the partnership to deliver universal access to preschool for three-year-olds.
Provide long-term access to ECEC services for the Children's Services Program	Collaborate with the Community Services Directorate and the ECEC sector to provide children accessing the Children's Services Program long-term access to an education and care service until they start school.
Partner with Play Groups, Playschools and Nature Play Groups	Develop a framework for partnering with Play Groups, Playschools and Nature Play Groups to increase access to these services for families experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage. Consider initiatives such as the Village for Every Child project. Develop district-wide partnerships between government schools, Play Groups and Playschools, to improve connections with families across the community.
Expand the existing Koori Preschool program for four-year-olds to 15 hours per week from 2020	Expand the service from 12 hours to 15 hours per week.
Recognise early childhood education in ACT law	Amend the Education Act 2004 to recognise that early childhood education and care has a central role in the realisation of the rights of the child and therefore must be universally available on an equity basis.
Valuing educators, values children	
Develop educator professional standards	In consultation with unions and the ECEC sector, develop educator professional standards, initially for voluntary adoption. Work with Education Council to establish a new national workforce strategy to attract, develop, support and retain a high-quality workforce, initially for voluntary adoption by providers.
Provide training to educators to support children affected by trauma	Support education and care services to access training in trauma and early identification of families experiencing domestic violence.

First phase - years one to two	
Share expertise of early childhood teachers across schools and services	Provide opportunities for early childhood qualified teachers in both government and non-government settings to collaborate and develop joint educational programs for children aged 3-5 years, through communities of practice.
Reform the Early Childhood Degree Scholarships Program	Reform the Early Childhood Degree Scholarships Program to increase take-up and completion rates.
Develop a cross-sector workforce strategy	Develop a cross-sector workforce strategy in close collaboration with the ECEC sector and industrial partners that will increase consistency, increase knowledge and skills of the workforce, and improve recruitment and retention for the ECEC workforce across all types of settings. Support providers to understand and uphold the National Quality Standard.
Develop and implement an ACT-wide approach to effective transitions between services for children, including schools	Develop a cross-sector approach to effective transitions for children based on strong collaborative relationships, best practice and a formal process for sharing information about children's learning and development across ECEC settings and schools.
Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) trial for preschool children in 2020	Meeting the ACT Government's election commitment to conduct a trial of OSHC for four-year-old preschool children at four ACT public schools, delivered in the preschool environment.
Expansion of Prep for Pre program	Expand the Prep for Pre program to engage families to be active partners in their children's learning prior to them starting preschool.
Enhance delivery of the Early Years Learning Framework focused on respectful relationships and gender diversity	Establish a training program to assist educators to use the Early Years Learning Framework as a tool to focus on respectful relationships and gender diversity.
Increase support for parents as first teachers	Increase the provision of CC Cares @ Canberra College to support new parents who are completing secondary education. Develop an early childhood educational component of the midwifery program with Canberra Health Services for expecting parents that can be included within the ACT's Personal Health Record 'Blue Book'.
Working together for children	
Recognise and leverage the value of OSHC licence agreements and government lease arrangements with ECEC providers.	Work in partnership with the sector to leverage the value of OSHC and government lease arrangements to deliver on strategic elements of the strategy.
Co-design a process with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for the evolution of Koori Preschool	Consistent with the commitment to self-determination in the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2009-2024, engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Canberra and Wreck Bay to co-design the evolution of Koori Preschool that meets the community's needs now and into the future, particularly about cultural safety and integrity.



Link ABS ACT statistics	AEDC data explorer	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Children <u>Enrolled</u> in a Preschool Program (4 & 5 year olds) - As at 1 July							
4 year olds enrolled in preschool or in a preschool program (no.)	--	--	4 978	5 314	5 381	5 393	
5 year olds enrolled in preschool or in a preschool program (no.)	--	--	1 436	1 492	1 568	1 637	
Total enrolled in preschool (no.)	--	--	3 064	3 124	3 071	2 845	
Enrolled in preschool program within a long day care centre (no.)	--	--	1 915	2 276	2 306	2 440	
Children enrolled across more than one provider type (no.)	--	--	1 440	1 411	1 571	1 752	
Total enrolled in a preschool program (no.)	--	--	6 417	6 807	6 944	7 030	
Children <u>Attending</u> a Preschool Program - As at 1 July							
Children attending preschool for less than 15 hours (no.)	--	--	1 292	1 556	1 179	1 182	
Children attending preschool for 15 hours or more (no.)	--	--	5 000	4 982	5 690	5 768	



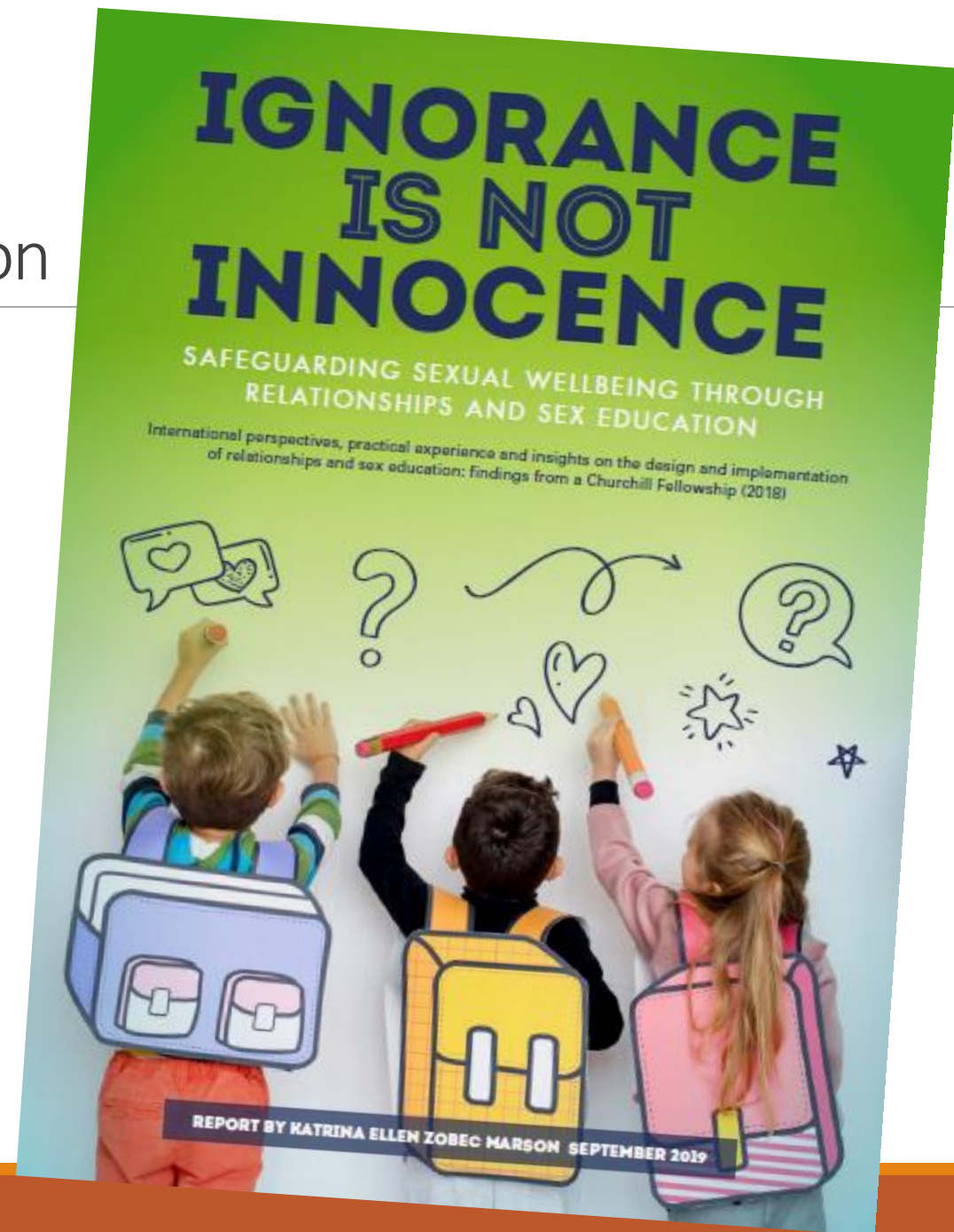
Relationships and sex education

Access to information that can be used to make autonomous decisions and keep children safe.

Report '[Ignorance is not innocence](#)'
and [YouTube introduction](#) by Katrina Marson

ACT Education Directorate [relationships education](#) and
[Strategic Plan](#) 2018-21

Song: Teeny Tiny Stevies - [Boss of my own body](#)



Relationships and sex education RSE

Age appropriate RSE integrated throughout the school years is a protective factor for long-term wellbeing.

Educating children about creating and maintaining healthy relationships throughout their schooling empowers them to make informed decisions about their relationships throughout adult life.

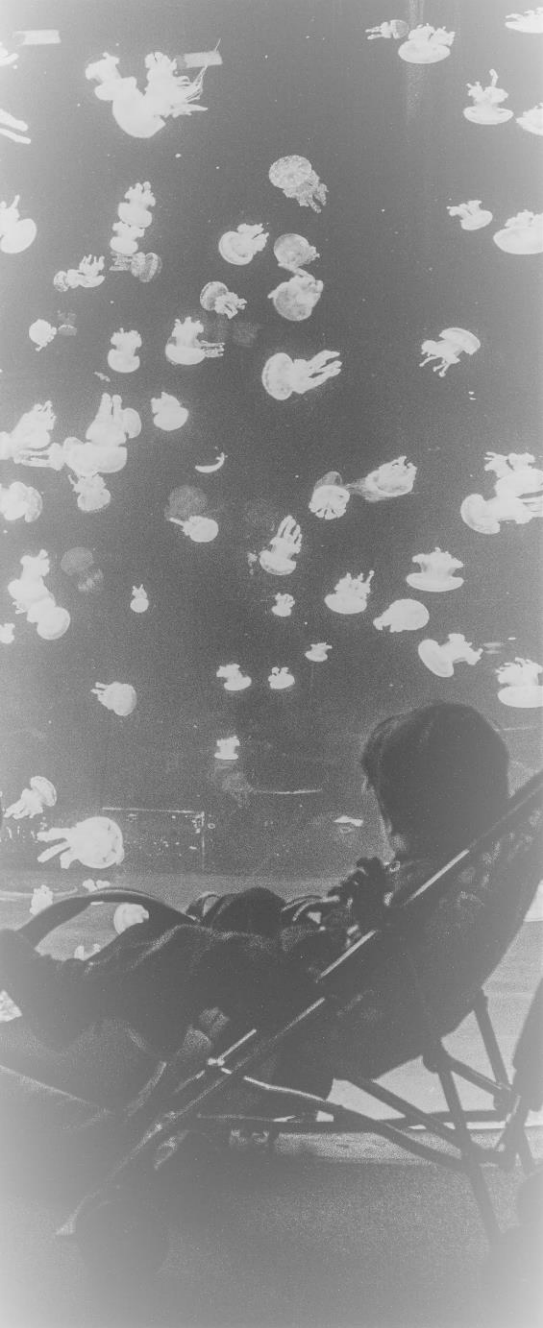
Early years policy and initiatives

The Education Directorate is developing a policy framework for fostering proactive collaborative relationships in early childhood education.

Council is also currently reviewing policy for relationships and sex education, and

ACT Minister Yvette Berry has outlined the government's commitment to a 'gender equality in schools' initiative:

Having an age-appropriate and whole-school approach to respectful relationships education will ensure that school communities promote gender equality, respect and embrace diversity... Creating a culture of gender equality in schools works to prevent family and domestic violence in our community.



Next meeting

Early Learning Committee

Thu 29 Apr, 7pm

Register your interest and agenda topics [here](#)