

All About OSHC

Worker Retention Payment Grant
Update for OSHC

Effect of Summer Holiday Programs on
Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing

Developing A Deeper
Understanding of Play
Robyn Monro-Miller | Play Australia

Navigating a Financial Audit of Family
Assistance Law (Child Care Subsidy):
Insights from OSHC



Edition 9, December 2024



www.noshsa.org.au 2024 SNAPSHOT



566.600

**children
using OSHC**



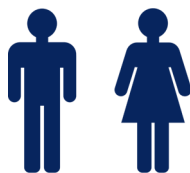
12.4

**average weekly
hours spent by
children in OSHC**



5,077

**services in
Australia**



27,491

OSHC educators

About NOSHSA

NOSHSA is a federated alliance with representation across Australia. NOSHSA's State and Territory Associations are the recognised peak body's for OSHC in each of their jurisdictions. Peak bodies are recognised by governments as being able to provide pertinent advice and recommendations on behalf of their members. NOSHSA is recognised as the Australian Peak for OSHC by the Education Council. The membership bases in each of NOSHSA's jurisdictions includes both small and large providers.

With you as a member, the lobbying power of NOSHSA increases dramatically. Together, our membership and voice can change policy. This is our combined strength.

How can you make the difference?

Be a part of this Australia wide organization by joining your State/Territory OSHC Association now.

- Attend meetings and network with colleagues.
- Pass on your views to your Association so your concerns can be heard and acted upon.

NOSHSA State and Territory Branches

Queensland/ Northern Territory/ Australian Capital Territory & Tasmania	New South Wales	South Australia	Victoria	Western Australia
Queensland Children's Activities Network (QCAN) (NOSHSA Secretariat)	Network of Community Activities	OSHCsa	Community Child Care Association	Outside School Hours Care WA (Inc.)
Yuggera Country 66 Woodend Rd, Woodend, QLD 4305	Suite 6, 88 Mountain St Ultimo NSW 2007	PO Box 55, Klemzig SA 5087	Wurundjeri Country Suite 8 West, Bell City 215 Bell Street Preston VIC 3072	OSHCwa@gmail.com
admin@qcan.org.au 1300 781 749 www.qcan.org.au	network@networkofcommunityactivities.org.au (02) 9212 3244 www.networkofcommunityactivities.org.au	oshcsa@gmail.com www.oshcsa.org.au	reception@cccinc.org.au (03) 9486 3455 www.cccinc.org.au	www.oshcwa.com

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Welcome

Welcome to our first and only edition of All About OSHC for 2024. Thank you for your patience while we have put together this edition which serves as a remarkable reflection on the significant events and activities of 2024.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Chairperson of this Alliance in 2024 and to have made contributions to the professionalism and advancement of the OSHC sector. This year we have celebrated some significant milestones and events, including:

50 year celebration of the Network of Community Activities. Network was Australia's first OSHC/OOSH focused peak body to be established to service the community across New South Wales. In this edition you can read about how their Members, CEO and Board celebrated this milestone.

OSHC Educator Day 2024 boasted significant engagement across the Country. The celebration of our sector, marked by it's own day of recognition is another significant milestone as OSHC stands out and identifies itself as a profession in its own right.

International OSHC Conference hosted in Brisbane, Australia. This is the first time an international conference bringing together researchers and practitioners from across the Globe has been hosted in the Southern Hemisphere. Together with Griffith University, NOSHSA were very proud to host this event. You can read more about the WERA IRN Task Force Global event inside.

Worker Retention Payment Grant to help elevate wages across the ECEC sector. This is a significant investment for OSHC and NOSHSA look forward to supporting the sector throughout 2025 to engage with this important initiative. Updates will be posted on our website and social media channels.

Thank you for taking the time to read our magazine. We look forward to sharing more updates with you in 2025 and encourage you to share this free publication widely across your networks.

Warm Regards
Kylie Brannelly
Chairperson
NOSHSA

The contributions in All About OSHC come from a variety of sources and authors. The views expressed in these articles may not represent the express views of NOSHSA delegates.

National Quality Framework Snapshot

ACECQA Update

In August, ACECQA released its latest National Quality Framework (NQF) [Snapshot](#). Chris Mason, Senior Manager of Workforce, Engagement and Research at ACECQA provides an overview of the performance of the outside school hours care (OSHC) sector. The figures below are taken from the [NQF Online Snapshot](#).

As at 1 July 2024, approaching 4,500 OSHC services had a published quality rating, with 88% rated as Meeting National Quality Standard (NQS) or above – the highest proportion since the quality assessment and rating system was introduced as part of the NQF.

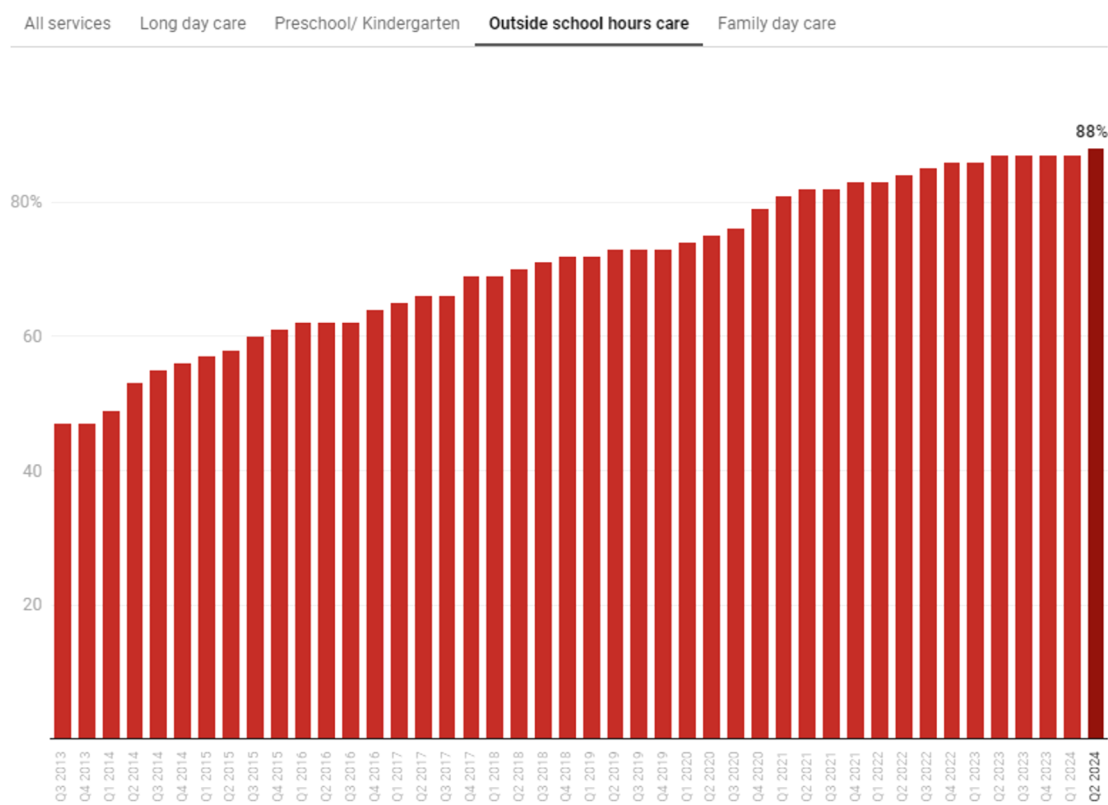
Looking across the 40 elements of quality that comprise the NQS, there are four that more than 200 OSHC services do not meet:

- Assessment and planning cycle (1.3.1)
- Critical reflection (1.3.2)
- Educational leadership (7.2.2)
- Management systems (7.1.2).

Our website includes a range of resources relevant to [Quality Area 1](#) and [Quality Area 7](#), as well as resources to assist in [Meeting the National Quality Standard](#) in general, and specific guidance and support relating to [educational leadership](#).

Finally, if you haven't already, please do subscribe to our [newsletter](#) to stay up-to-date with key developments, such as the launch of the [national decision tree](#) to support approved providers notify regulatory authorities of incidents, complaints and updated information, and the update to the [national workforce strategy online dashboard](#).

OR10: Overall and service type quality ratings by quarter (Meeting NQS or above)



Tasmania Community of Practice



On June 20, the National Outside School Hours Services Alliance (NOSHSA) marked a significant milestone by holding its first Community of Practice meeting in Tasmania. The event took place at The Friends School in Hobart and was attended by a diverse group of professionals dedicated to enhancing the quality of Outside School Hours Care across Tasmania.

The gathering brought together a variety of stakeholders, including educators, directors, educational leaders, and managers from various service providers across the region. This diverse mix of attendees highlighted the collaborative spirit that underpins NOSHSA's mission.

The primary aim of the meeting was to foster collaboration on shared goals and challenges within the sector. Participants engaged in lively discussions, sharing insights and best practices that could benefit the broader community. The energy in the room was palpable as attendees explored innovative strategies to improve service delivery and outcomes for children and families.

A key highlight of the event was the introduction of a new microcredential pilot program. This initiative aims to provide tailored professional development opportunities for those working in

Outside School Hours Care. Attendees expressed enthusiasm for this program, recognising its potential to enhance skills and knowledge in the field.

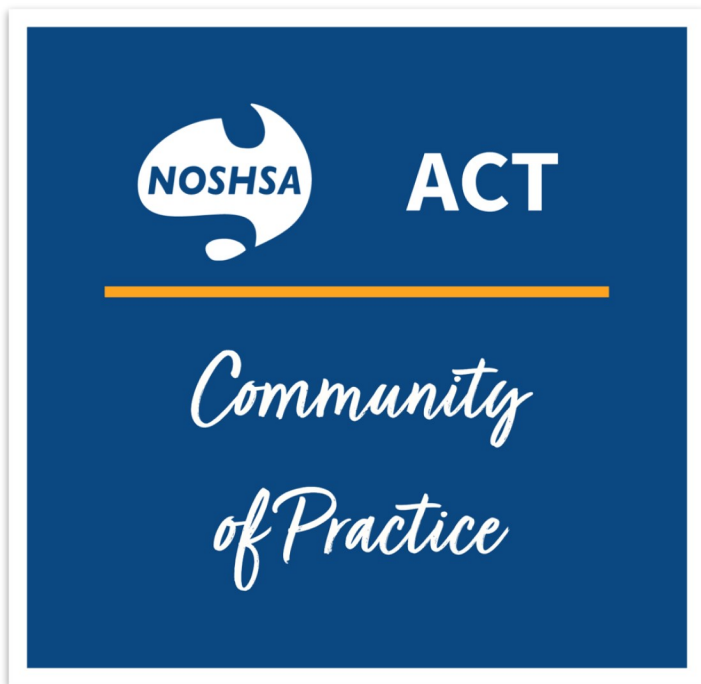
In addition to the microcredential pilot, the meeting also focused on exploring further training and development opportunities in Tasmania and discussed the proposed wage increases. NOSHSA is committed to supporting continuous improvement and professional growth within the sector, ensuring that educators and leaders have access to the resources they need to excel in their roles.

The success of this inaugural Community of Practice meeting has set a positive precedent for future gatherings. By bringing together passionate professionals dedicated to the advancement of Outside School Hours services, NOSHSA continues to build a strong foundation for collaborative learning and innovation in Tasmania and beyond.

In conclusion, the first Community of Practice meeting in Tasmania was a resounding success, showcasing the power of collaboration and the shared commitment to enhancing the quality of Outside School Hours Care. With exciting initiatives like the micro-credential pilot on the horizon, the future looks bright for the Tasmanian OSHC community.



ACT Community of Practice and Update



The ACT Community of Practice have been meeting regularly throughout 2024. The group have engaged in important advocacy efforts for the ACT OSHC sector and have been working with CECA, the Regulatory Authority on regulations and quality matters. Of particular interest has been the addition of the Certificate III in Outside School Hours Care to the recognised qualifications list for the ACT.

NOSHSA Membership

The ACT now have access to a membership subscription for NOSHSA which entitles providers to the following membership benefits:

- Quarterly Community of Practice meetings
- ACT advocacy and support
- Delegate attendance and participation in NOSHSA meetings
- Dedicated email professional advice and support
- NOSHSA's 'All About OSHC' publication
- Training and event discounts
- Members only website access to resources (to be launched in 2025)

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday 7th June 2025

Membership and other enquiries can be directed to act@noshsa.org.au.

NOSHSA ACT BRANCH Presents: THE OSHC EDUCATOR CONFERENCE!

The ACT Community of Practice have planned their first OSHC Educator Conference. The event will be held at the Canberra Grammar School and an excellent line up of speakers is currently being planned. Tickets are \$550 (inc GST). Registrations will open soon.

In addition, the ACT COP are also hosting a two day Leadership Masterclass and Colloquia with Robyn Monro Miller, Director, Transformative Impact Collective and Kylie Brannelly, Chairperson, NOSHSA. This two day event will be held on 6th and 7th June. Registrations are limited for this event and will open soon.

[ACT Branch Conference | NOSHSA](#)



Celebrating 50 Years of Network

Pauline O'Kane | CEO, Network of Community Activities



Network Chair Kate Gray and CEO Pauline O'Kane - 50th Gold Gala Dinner

This year marks a momentous occasion as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of Network, a pivotal milestone in our history and the Out of School Hours sector. We organised 50 events to reflect on our accomplishments and the promising journey ahead. Throughout our five decades of service, Network has collaborated with numerous organisations, stakeholders, and educators to enhance and develop the Out of School Hours sector in NSW. From the very beginning, we have been instrumental in its growth into the essential community service it is today. Our commitment to the Out of School Hours (OOSH) community is unwavering. We are the only recognised organisation in NSW with a profound understanding of the significance of OOSH services and the vital role they play in children's development and family support. These

services extend far beyond mere convenience; they have evolved into essential community play hubs for children during their time outside of school.

Raising the Profile

Network has consistently directed our efforts toward elevating the profile of the Out of School Hours community and its positive impact on children. Our advocacy is rooted in a rights-based approach, placing children in middle childhood at the forefront of our vision. We strive for inclusive, purpose-built environments that are crucial for supporting children during their out-of-school hours. Over the past 50 years, we have witnessed remarkable changes and the rapid evolution of the OOSH sector, which has become one of the fastest-growing areas within the Education and Care landscape. We advocate for localised services that cater to the unique needs of children and their communities. Our goal has been to alleviate the pressures on educators by providing them with clear, accessible content, newsletters, and resources.

Educating the Educators

We are committed to enhancing community education and fostering the ongoing development of educators' skills, and we take immense pride in this vision. As a Registered Training Organisation





Polly Howard - Facilitating their Play Journey - Eastwood Heights

(RTO), we provide both accredited qualifications and non-accredited courses. Our professional learning initiatives are driven by the sector, incorporating direct input from industry professionals.

Growing potential

We cultivate leaders into facilitators, enabling them to share their best practices and support the growth of new and emerging leaders.

In the early 1970s, Network began as a collective of passionate individuals who were deeply invested in enriching children's experiences during their free time, and it has flourished from those humble beginnings. Network has consistently remained committed to its original vision of connecting and bringing together those who share a passion to enhancing children's out-of-school experiences. We recall the days before regulations, when educators could prioritise the needs of children rather than being bogged down by administrative tasks. The heavy administrative

load that educators face is a significant factor in the loss of talented professionals in the field. This remains a key point in our advocacy efforts

Overcoming challenges.

We have also felt the repercussions of insufficient government funding, which has affected our initiatives. In response, we have embraced innovation and maintained our passion for our cause. Network has been instrumental in fostering connections within our sector, emphasising the importance of collaboration among our members. Our advocacy efforts are unwavering, and we stand as the sole voice for our sector in New South Wales. This advocacy is essential at this level, and our collaboration with NOSHSA amplifies our voice significantly. While this work can be challenging, it guarantees that our sector is fairly represented in policy discussions. We have witnessed numerous changes, including the establishment of dedicated spaces for OOSH programs in NSW and increased acknowledgment of their importance. However, there is still much work ahead, and we are committed to making further progress.

Networking is central to our vision.

One of the key events to commemorate this significant milestone was our Gold conference, accompanied by the Gold Gala dinner, where we proudly reintroduced our OOSHCA's. This occasion allowed us to honor the remarkable contributions of individuals who have greatly



Network Board Member Jess with regional and remote educators - Lunch to celebrate 50 years of OOSH



OOSH Educators collaborating with the NSW Government

impacted our sector. The true strength of Network lies in its people, and numerous individuals have been essential in shaping our organisation. It is important to recognise our founders, Judy Finlason and June Jeremy, who were pivotal in establishing the foundation of Network. We were also delighted to present the special Judy Finlason recognition award during our 50th anniversary conference. Both Judy and June played crucial roles in building the grassroots foundation of Network. Thanks to the vision and dedication of these extraordinary women, Network continues to flourish today!



Commitment to excellence and innovation

Celebrating another 50 years of progress rooted in our history is not just a milestone; it is a testament to our enduring commitment to excellence and innovation in our Out of School Hours sector. As we reflect on the achievements of the past half-century, we recognise the foundational values and lessons learned that have shaped our journey. These principles guide us as we navigate the complexities of the present and future.

Looking into the future

Looking ahead, we understand that the landscape of our sector is constantly changing. To thrive in this dynamic environment, we will continue to adapt and remain agile, embracing new technologies, methodologies, and ideas. Our ability to pivot in response to emerging trends and challenges will be crucial in meeting the evolving needs of our members.

We are dedicated to fostering a culture of collaboration, ensuring that we not only respond to change, but also anticipate it. By actively engaging with our community and listening to their feedback, we will refine our strategies and enhance our offerings, positioning ourselves for sustained success.

As we embark on this next chapter, we are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we will build on our rich legacy, leveraging our history as a foundation for future growth and innovation. Our commitment to excellence will remain unwavering, and we look forward to celebrating many more years of progress in OOSH and achievement in the years to come.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Network Board for their unwavering commitment, as well as to all our stakeholders and members, and most importantly, to the children who benefit from OOSH.

Active Kids Through OSHC: The Activated OSHC Program



Activated OSHC: Evidence-Based Support for Physical Activity in OSHC Services

With over half a million Australian children attending OSHC each week, OSHC has an incredible opportunity to support children's health and wellbeing through physical activity. While current data shows less than half of children meet recommended physical activity guidelines and two-thirds exceed recreational screen time recommendations, OSHC services are perfectly positioned to help change these statistics for the better.

About Activated OSHC

In early 2025, we're excited to launch Activated OSHC, an innovative, evidence-based program developed through extensive research and sector consultation. This free accreditation program empowers OSHC services to confidently implement the Australian OSHC Physical Activity and Screen Time Guidelines while enhancing alignment with National Quality Standards, particularly Quality Area 2. The program provides comprehensive support for developing effective approaches to physical activity and screen time, helping services create environments where children can thrive.

Program Features

Activated OSHC features evidence-based professional development delivered through a one-hour interactive online training module. Services receive step-by-step guidance for implementing the Australian OSHC Physical Activity and Screen Time Guidelines into their policies, supported by practical tools developed

specifically with and for OSHC educators. This comprehensive approach has been designed in partnership with university researchers and key sector organisations including NOSHSA, ACECQA, and OSHC industry leaders to ensure its relevance and applicability across the sector.

Research Validation

Activated OSHC has been rigorously evaluated through a 2.5-year trial involving 200 OSHC services across South Australia, New South Wales, and Western Australia. Early results have demonstrated its feasibility in diverse OSHC settings, ensuring it meets the practical needs of services while achieving meaningful outcomes for children. Data collection is still underway, with full results expected in 2025.

Going Live in March 2025

We're thrilled to announce that Activated OSHC will be available nationwide from March 2025. Services can register their interest now to receive early access when the program launches, access implementation support resources, and join an enthusiastic community of OSHC services committed to supporting children's physical activity.

Ready to join the movement towards more active, healthier OSHC environments? Visit www.activatedoshc.org.au to learn more about how Activated OSHC can support your service and register your interest today!



Enhancing the Retention and Engagement of Educators

Kate Gray | Centre Director, Elleebana OOSH

Kate Gray, who holds the position of Centre Director at Elleebana OOSH in New South Wales, shares valuable insights into the strategies they employ to retain educators. This information is particularly significant and timely in light of the persistent workforce shortages affecting our sector. Kate's expertise sheds light on effective approaches that can help address this pressing issue within the Out of School Hour sector. These strategies, while straightforward in nature, have been thoroughly tested and proven to be effective.

10 Ways We Keep Educators Engaged in Our Service

These practices help us keep our staff engaged and motivated. These tips may work for your service too!

1. Empower Your Team:

Once our staff members are confident in their roles, we avoid micromanagement and give them the freedom to implement their duties as they see fit. This level of trust enhances their confidence and maintains high levels of engagement.

2. Encourage Professional Growth:

We provide equal opportunities for all staff (regardless of career journey) to engage in training and professional development. We also promote reflective practice, encouraging staff to review and reflect on their experiences and methods. This combination of continuous learning and self-reflection enhances skills and shows our investment in their growth.

3. Ensure Constant Support:

We roster one member of our leadership team over ratio each session, so there's always someone available to support and mentor Educators. This real-time assistance helps everyone feel supported and valued.

4. Promote Work-Life Balance:

We offer flexible work arrangements to accommodate study and family commitments. This balance contributes to overall well-being.

5. Maintain Consistent Schedules:

Permanent educators work in the same areas on the same days throughout the term. This consistency helps build strong connections with children. Relationships make a significant difference to job satisfaction.



6. Celebrate Achievements:

We love to celebrate! Whether it's birthdays, weddings, or a job well done, we make sure to recognise and appreciate each other's efforts. This boosts morale and fosters a sense of community.

7. Foster Open Communication:

We use tools like messenger chat and newsfeed function in our rostering program to keep everyone informed about important updates. We have regular meetings to keep everyone in the loop.

8. Support Mental Health and Well-Being:

Our Employee Assistance Program, "Uprise," supports staff well-being and mental health. This demonstrates our commitment to their overall health and happiness.

9. Implement Fair Employment Practices:

We prioritise fair hiring and promotion practices. Permanent positions are offered to our casual staff first, promoting loyalty and career progression.

10. Create a Positive Work Culture:

We believe in having fun at work. We encourage a positive atmosphere where laughter, fun, and mutual respect are integral parts of our work environment. This helps maintain a supportive and joyful workplace.

Worker Retention Payment Grant Update for OSHC

Worker Retention Payment



Employers, educators and teachers signed the first national supported bargaining agreement with the federal government on Thursday 5th December 2024.

Made by the sector for the sector, this agreement was the catalyst for the Federal Government's \$3.6 billion commitment to fund a 15% increase in early childhood wages.

NOSHSA congratulate our Victorian delegate, Community Child Care Association who were instrumental in negotiating this historic deal on behalf of community and small providers.

This is a win for the entire ECEC sector, including OSHC that has been struggling with workforce shortages for decades.

Community Child Care Association, Executive Director, Julie Price announced:

Over the past three years, we've been raising the voices of small and community services in federal parliament. We worked intensively to ensure the federal government prioritised this investment now.

Our biggest advocacy campaign yet has delivered the right outcomes for our members. It's clear that the federal government values community and small early education and care services.

Professional pay for educators and teachers is the foundation for unlocking the full potential of quality education and care for children, families and our communities. Small and community services will open new places where they are needed most because they can attract and keep qualified staff.

NOSHSA have advocated alongside the Outside School Hours Care Council of Australia to ensure this opportunity was extended to our workforce. We continue to work closely with Government on the implementation of this important initiative for our sector.

NOSHSA have held information sessions to keep the sector informed about compliant workplace instruments as well as the subsidy guidelines and have developed a template with our legal advisors which is available for organisation's to order. [Workplace Instrument | NOSHSA](#)

Developing A Deeper Understanding of Play

Robyn Monro-Miller | Play Australia



Building a healthy Australia through play

2024 has been an incredible year for play in Australia with lot of great new initiatives happening, including the first International Day of Play on June 11.

Playwork is an important aspect of OSHC service provision, but in fact is not new to OSHC!! It has been present for much of the OSHC history in Australia, just not formally recognised by the title “playwork”. However, playwork practice was common practice in many services when OSHC was first formalised, and as early as the 1970’s and 1980’s was practised across Australia with a strong focus in NSW services.

Australian Industry Certified Playwork Qualifications

This year, Play Australia has worked with Play Wales to bring the Internationally renowned Playwork Practitioners course to Australia.

The first cohort of 56 passionate play people from across Australia attended workshops and webinars between July and September and are now in the final stages of assessment. Feedback from participants has been incredible and a new practitioner online network made up of the first cohort continues to thrive.

Play Australia will be offering more training through this new partnership in 2025, and registrations are now open from courses in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Rockhampton with some travel subsidies available in each course for participants from other state/territories.

Play Wales are the world leaders in Playwork, and Play Australia have partnered with them to ensure the training offered was world best practice. Over the next 3 years, Play Wales trainers will be coming to Australia to support the skilling up of the Australian Playwork sector and supporting Play Australia to build up a cohort of accredited trainers to deliver the program across Australia

Industry certified by Play Australia for Australia, the Playwork Practitioner courses are offered at foundation and senior levels and designed for those people currently working with children.

Playwork is not sector specific and as such the course is designed to appeal to a broad range of sectors working with children and young people, which in turn generates an exciting and innovative climate for learning in each group. In the 2024 cohort OSHC Educators, Early Childhood

Educators, Teachers, Occupational Therapists and Adventure Playground and Local Government representatives are all participating and sharing experience, perspectives and most importantly identifying how a playwork approach could be implemented in their service type.

Each 30-hour course kicks off with 3 webinars attended by all registered participants. This is then followed by 2 days of practice workshops with small groups of 15 across 4 states, led by a Play Wales specialist and Play Australia facilitators, followed by a self-paced assessment. The emphasis is on playful and participative learning that meets different learning needs and preferences. The course builds on learners' knowledge of working with children and provides a solid understanding of playwork theory and practice.

New Online Playwork Module Set for Release - January 2025

Play Australia is committed to ensuring all educators have access to training and information to support their work with play. It can be time consuming and costly to ensure all staff have access to information. Understanding this, to support the OSHC sector with orientation to Playwork, Play Australia has developed a new online self paced learning program titled "Introduction to Playwork Principles". Featuring Phillip Jaffe from the UNCRC, Dr Anthea Crawford, Kylie Brannelly, Robyn Monro Miller, Kylie Keene, David Kutcher, Judd Walsh and Warrawee Care Centre, the course covers all 8 of the Internationally recognised Playwork principles.

The course has been designed to introduce new OSHC educators to Playwork and is essential for all educators. Play Australia recommends that services consider this short one hour course, consisting of three modules and a quiz, which also produces a certificate for downloading upon successful completion. As part of the OSHC orientation process, sitting alongside first aid and child protection qualifications, this course is an essential for the basic package of training needed

at commencement in a service.

The module has been reviewed by a range of OSHC Educators over the last few weeks and is due for release in January 2025. Helen Pentecost from OSHC provider 3Bridges (who are also a loyal Play Australia member!), upon reviewing the module said: "This is such a fantastic starting point for all OSHC professionals! Playwork has always been a part of OSHC, but this training really clarifies those concepts and puts them into context".

As a special offer to NOSHSA readers, register for the online module by 14 February and enter the code noshsa (all lower case) to receive the Play Australia member fee of \$80 per participant (a saving of \$30 per person!)

About Play Australia.

Play Australia is believed to be the oldest play advocacy and membership organisation in the world with the mission to build a healthier Australia through the power of play. Formed in 1913, and known then as the Play Guild, it was formed to advocate for more playgrounds so children could experience the benefits of play. In 2024, now known as Play Australia since early 2000's, the National peak cross-sectoral body for play celebrated 111 years as an organisation supporting and advocating for play.

Led by CEO Robyn Monro Miller, a former OSHC educator and advocate, who herself practiced playwork in OSHC in the 1990's and early part of this century, the organisation works across a range of sectors in education, local government, planning, health, manufacturing and children services.

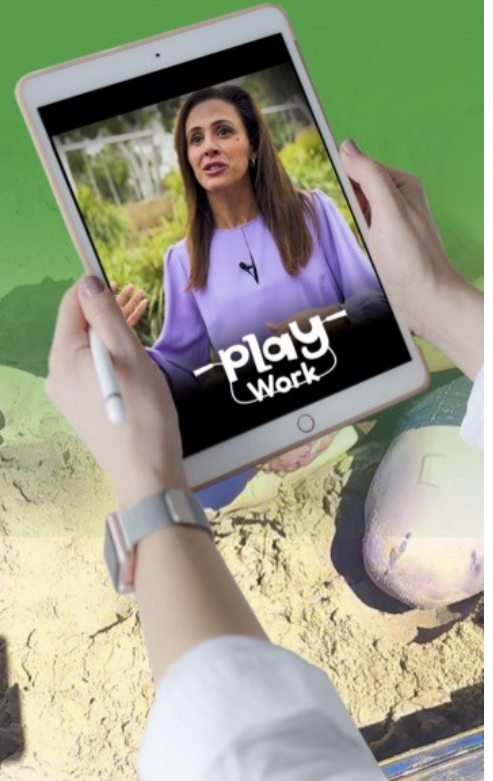
To learn more about their work, membership and to gain access to resources and online learning materials go to www.playaustralia.org.au

(note the website is being updated over January, so just in case you access it and there are connection issues you know to try again!)

play Work

An Introduction to the Playwork Principles

TRAINING COURSE



A short course designed to enhance Educators understanding of the internationally recognised Playwork Principles and their application in an OSHC environment.



Promoting
the value
of play



SELF PACED

Save your time and complete the entire course in the comfort of your office, at home or anywhere that has wifi. It is a self-paced course



STATEMENT OF ATTAINMENT

You will be awarded with a certificate which you can add to your other PD achievements.

* Just \$80 inc gst for Play Australia Organisational members



play-australia.thinkific.com



**Get
started
now!**

Navigating a Financial Audit of Family Assistance Law (Child Care Subsidy): Insights from OSHC



In Melbourne's vibrant northern suburbs, an Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) program is a vital support for over 650 enrolled primary students, offering essential services tailored to families accessing the OSHC service. Recently, the program underwent a rigorous audit process initiated by the Australian Government Department of Education, highlighting the critical importance of compliance and transparency of Child Care Subsidy administration.

David Gibson, a dedicated OSHC Coordinator, shared his firsthand experience of the audit, shedding light on the meticulous process and its outcomes. The audit, conducted under the Family Assistance Law, was announced in early April and aimed to ensure compliance with the Child Care

Subsidy System entitlements and Family Assistance Law operational regulations.

The process commenced with an unexpected phone call on April 5th from a Program Officer of the Provider Audits team within the Australian Government Department of Education, notifying Gibson of the upcoming financial audit. This initial contact set the stage for a thorough examination of the OSHC's financial integrity and Child Care Subsidy administration practices.

Following the notification, an email arrived on April 10th outlining the audit requirements. Detailed attachments specified the types of information and documents required, including provider details, financial statements, policy

documents, and evidence of compliance with payment procedures.

Gibson immediately began collaborating with a Person with Management or Control (PMC) who also carries the title of School Principal, ensuring all required information was accurately compiled and securely transmitted within the deadline – by April 24th. Concurrently, he liaised with their third-party software provider to gather comprehensive reports and information necessary to satisfy the audit criteria.

Reflecting on the process, Gibson acknowledged a lesson learned – the importance of direct communication with the auditing team. "In hindsight, I should have contacted the audit team directly from the outset," he admitted. This adjustment would have clarified certain requirements earlier and potentially streamlined the process.

As the audit progressed, Gibson and his team diligently provided all requested documents and evidence, including statements of entitlement, bank statements demonstrating gap fee payments, and policy documents outlining fee structures and discounts. Despite their meticulous preparation, the audit did uncover a few areas for improvement.

"One of the key findings was related to the categorisation of children as permanent or casual attendees," Gibson shared. The audit recommended adjustments to ensure accurate categorisation, reflecting the actual attendance patterns of the children. Additionally, it highlighted a delayed update of fee information on external platforms, prompting Gibson to promptly rectify the oversight with [Starting Blocks](#), a government-managed childcare information service.

Ultimately, the audit concluded with positive outcomes, affirming the OSHC's commitment to compliance and transparency. The experience underscored the importance of thorough

documentation and proactive communication in navigating regulatory audits effectively.

Looking ahead, Gibson emphasised ongoing vigilance and adherence to regulatory requirements as essential for maintaining the program's integrity and ensuring continued support for their community's education and care needs. The OSHC remains steadfast in its mission to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children outside regular school hours, supported by robust frameworks of compliance and accountability.

As audits continue to play a vital role in ensuring accountability across education and care services, the experience of this OSHC service serves as a valuable case study in proactive compliance management within the education and care sector. By sharing their journey, David Gibson and his team exemplify a commitment to excellence in education and care provision, setting a standard for community-managed school councils and OSHC services alike.

Gibson's recommendations for Family Assistance Law-related financial compliance audit:

- Maintain and update details for Persons with Management or Control in the Provider Entry Point (PEP)
- Policies remain up to date especially concerning governance and management, bookings, fees and payments and financial integrity
- Regularly checking details on Starting Blocks are current (vacancies and fees are updated from PEP)
- If undergoing an audit, contact the Australian Government Department of Education Provider Audits Team, to get clarification of requirements if unsure

Contact your NOSHS branch [Branches | NOSHS](#) for further support.

Effect of Summer Holiday Programs on Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing

Effect of summer holiday programs on children's mental health and wellbeing: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Population and intervention

School-aged children attending a summer holiday program lasting 5+ days.

Subgroup analysis by participant and program characteristics.



Findings

- 26 studies (n=6,812 participants).
- 62% of studies from the USA.
- Studies were generally small with high risk of bias.

Programs: Majority were day camps (n=15) that ran for 2-3 weeks (n=10).

Results: Small to negligible effect sizes, consistently toward improvements.

Conclusion

Trends toward improvements:

Anxiety, depression, general mental health ✓

Social-emotional outcomes ✓

Cognition ✓

No change in self-worth ✗

Stronger patterns of improvement for disadvantaged children.

Emily Eglitis, Catherine Simpson, Ben Singh, Timothy Olds, Amanda Machell, Rosa Virgara, Mandy Richardson, Kylie Brannelly, Aniella Grant, Jessica Gray, Terri Wilkinson, Zoe Rix, Carol Maher.

doi: [10.3390/children11080887](https://doi.org/10.3390/children11080887)



University of
South Australia

Alliance for
Research in Exercise,
Nutrition and Activity

Despite growing research interest in the role of summer camps in preventing obesity and optimising children's health, to date, there have been no systematic reviews evaluating the effectiveness of summer holiday programs (i.e., interventions) on modifying children's health behaviours and important health outcomes like adiposity and cardiorespiratory fitness.

In this review, we sought to address this gap, and answer the following research questions:

1. What effect do summer holiday programs have on the health behaviours and physical health of children and adolescents?
2. Do these effects differ by participant characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic disadvantage and age)?
3. Do these effects differ by program characteristics (e.g., program format, content, and duration)?

The full systematic review and meta-analysis can be accessed from:



children

an Open Access Journal by MDPI

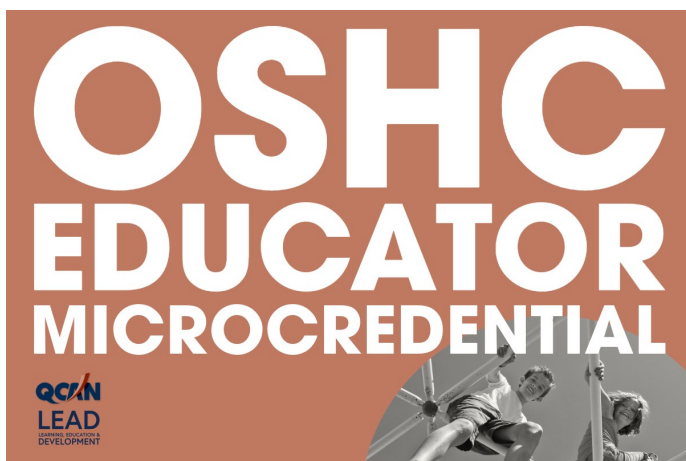
Effect of Summer Holiday Programs on Children's Mental Health and Well-Being: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

Emily Eglitis; Catherine Simpson; Ben Singh; Timothy Olds; Amanda Machell; Rosa Virgara; Mandy Richardson; Kylie Brannelly; Aniella Grant; Jessica Gray; Terri Wilkinson; Zoe Rix; Carol Maher

Children 2024, Volume 11, Issue 8, 887



OSHC Educator Microcredential Rollout



At the end of 2023, the Queensland Children’s Activities Network (QCAN), NOSHA Secretariat were funded to develop an Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Educator Microcredential, using the National Microcredential Framework.

Microcredentials are a response to the changing educational landscape that sees a growing demand for shorter-form courses that enable workers to rapidly upskill and evidence this newly acquired knowledge, whilst also encouraging lifelong learning. This microcredential has been developed as an industry partnership, grounded in the everyday practice of OSHC educators, evolving across the year in response to the needs and feedback of the OSHC sector.

The OSHC educator role is diverse in nature and informed by many legal, ethical and professional responsibilities. The OSHC Educator Microcredential aims to equip educators with a solid understanding of their role and its varied responsibilities, to empower them to be confident in the important work that they do.

This microcredential includes six content focus areas:

1. Legal and Professional Responsibilities of Educators Working Within the NQF
2. Child Protection and Duty of Care Responsibilities for OSHC Educators
3. Work Health and Safety and Managing Risks in OSHC

4. Relationships with Children including Behaviour Guidance and Support
5. Effective Supervision and Safe OSHC Environments
6. Designing and Delivering Experiences in OSHC (in a manner that accords with the ALF)

The training was initially delivered as 2 x 3-hour sessions face-to-face, 4 weeks apart, across several Queensland regions including Brisbane North and South, Sunshine and Gold Coasts, Ipswich, Logan, Toowoomba, Townsville, Cairns and Wide Bay. The delivery went on to include online sessions at various times across the week to allow for maximum engagement with educators across the state. Over the course of 2024 we have had over 600 educators participate in the training.

The six hours of training is supplemented by key resources including a comprehensive Educator Workbook and a suite of assessment tools. The Educator Workbook complements the content covered in the OSHC Educator Microcredential training, addressing the skills and knowledge



required for effective practice as you commence work in the Australian school age care context. Throughout this workbook there are a number of helpful features highlighted in boxes. These include:

- Prompts to **access your organisation’s** specific documents or resources that you need to access to complete the microcredential.
- Links to **supplementary training resources** that we recommend you access to complete the microcredential.
- Links to **additional resources** that can help extend your learning journey if desired.
- **examples** from key documents.
- **notes** section for each of the six (6) focus areas.

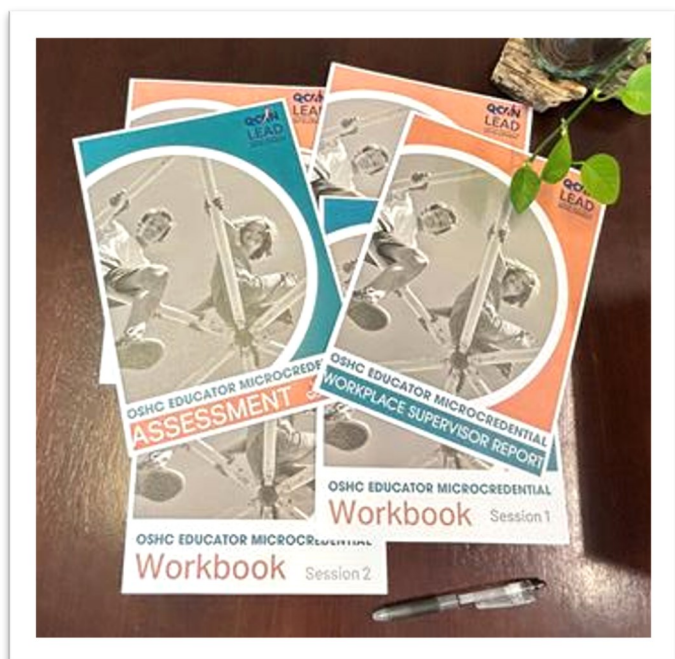
As an industry partnership, participants skills, knowledge and behaviours are required to be demonstrated on-the-job and evidenced in the workplace. This has been done through a Workplace Supervisors Report, which has recently been simplified and streamlined, with the use of a Microsoft Form. This is the only piece of assessment that **MUST** be submitted to be certified.

There are two additional assessment workbooks that will assist educators in evidencing the skills, knowledge and practice covered in the Microcredential. This includes written questions covering all 6 content areas, and a policy matrix focusing on the required policies of ECS National Regulation 168 and how educators are supported to understand and follow their organisations’ key Policies and Procedures. Many organisations are electing to continue to use these additional assessment tools, despite them now being optional.

Through undertaking the training and successful verification of the Workplace Supervisor Report, participants are awarded a certification which affirms their attainment of the essential knowledge and skills required of an effective OSHC educator.

The OSHC Educator Microcredential will be fully funded for Queensland educators until 30 June 2025.

Educators outside of Queensland will be able to access the training via the OSHC Educator Microcredential Recorded Training Package Subscription. Enquiries can be made via admin@qcan.org.au. Alternatively, you can register online for the fee-for-service training via the QCAN website www.qcan.org.au/microcredential



Certificate III in OSHC - Provider Update

10983NAT

Certificate III in Outside School Hours Care

Course details can be found at training.gov.au/Training/Details/10983NAT

The following RTOs are accepting enrolments for the Certificate III in Outside School Hours Care at the date of this publication.



NOSHSA is currently negotiating with a number of RTOs across Australia to expand the delivery and accessibility of this qualification. Queries regarding the qualification can be directed to kylie@qcan.org.au

Celebrating OSHC/OOSH Educators' Day 2024

On the 31st of July the OSHC/OOSH sector united across the country, both in-person and online, for a very important celebration- OSHC/OOSH Educators' Day! This year's theme: **Limitless Possibilities**, highlighted the valuable work and limitless potential of our sector's innovative Educators.

The celebrations (much like our sector!) were diverse and innovative, with a small snapshot of these events captured online through social media. Through hashtags such as #OSHCeducatorsDay and #OOSHEducatorsDay services, families and peak bodies shared their appreciation:

- Nationally, Helping Hands and The Y shared video messages from their OSHC children.
- In South Australia, MOSHC educators received plants from their MPS Governing Council, Clare OSHC received gift vouchers for local businesses from their Advisory Committee and Yankalilla OSHC were gifted certificates, engraved wine glasses and cookies from their Governing Council and Principal.
- In Queensland, QCAN hosted an OSHC Educator Day Trivia Night for OSHC professionals across the state and the team at Belgian Gardens OSHC went bowling.
- In New South Wales, Network presented their annual OOSHCA awards, Mount Kuring-Gai Before and After School Care were gifted cookies and Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services educators received certificates of recognition.
- In Victoria, a service collaborated with families and teachers to share messages of gratitude via email, which were then transformed into buntings to decorate their kitchen space for educators to read praise from their school community.

Some of the frequent sentiments are also collated in the word cloud below.



And finally, NIOSHA Chairperson Kylie Brannelly shared the following message:

“OSHC educators help children become the best they can be and promote children and young people’s wellbeing, learning and development every day.

To all our educators in the OSHC sector, the work you do is really important and matters a lot. Never underestimate the value of your work and the impact that you have. You belong to a rising profession that continues to elevate with new and varied career opportunities across the sector. Being an OSHC educator is a valuable and essential role supporting children, families and communities.

Whether you are working in the sector as a springboard to other opportunities or are planning a long career in OSHC, the work you do makes a difference every day and WE THANK YOU!”

National Out of School Hours Educators' Day Wednesday 30 July 2025

Pauline O'Kane | CEO, Network of Community Activities

Save the Date and Mark Your Calendars:

How will you join in the celebration?

Recognition and appreciation

The theme for next year's Out of School Hours Educators' Day is **Recognition and Appreciation**, shining a light on the essential roles that educators play in the lives of children during their out-of-school time. This day is a wonderful chance to honour the commitment and enthusiasm that educators' bring to their work and communities every day.

This day is a unique opportunity to recognise educators' roles, as it highlights the profound influence Out of School Hours educators' have on children's lives. We know educators' who go above and beyond and play a significant role in numerous children's lives.

Let's celebrate together

This theme invites us to celebrate, whether through formal awards, personal notes, certificates of appreciation, special events or simple gestures of thanks.

Appreciation complements recognition, underscoring the need to express our thanks for the many hours educators' dedicate to planning creative and innovative programmes/activities, supporting children's well-being, connecting them with their communities and extending their play and learning opportunities.

The day calls for all stakeholders involved with Out of School Hours services—such as schools, parents, politicians, and communities—to express their thanks in significant ways, promoting a culture of respect for the Out of School Hours sector. How will you communicate the importance of this day to them?

Collaborating to embrace this theme allows us to collectively raise awareness and communicate the significant impact that Out of School Hours programs have on children's lives. This importance should not be overlooked. Creating an environment where educators' feel appreciated and valued fosters open discussions about their individual contributions which are not only essential but also highly respected.

We are the backbone of communities

Ultimately, 2025's year emphasis on Recognition and Appreciation serves as a strong reminder that Out of School Hours Educators' are the backbone of our communities, deserving of our highest respect and gratitude for their unwavering dedication in supporting children across Australia in their time out of school.

From humble beginnings

The origins of Out of School Hours Educators' Day trace back to a dedicated group of Out of School Care Educators' in Western Sydney, NSW, led by the exceptional Roz White, Centre Director at Wilberforce OOSH. Collaborating with Roz, Network worked with Roz to make this day a reality. National Out of School Hours Educators' Day has now emerged as an important event on our calendar, gaining traction and solidifying its status as a vital occasion within the profession. If you have not participated in this day before 2025 is your chance.

Network has lots of "FREE" resources on our website for services to download <https://networkofcommunityactivities.org.au/what-we-do/events/oosh-educators-day/>

30 July 2025

OSHC

EDUCATORS DAY

Recognition & Appreciation

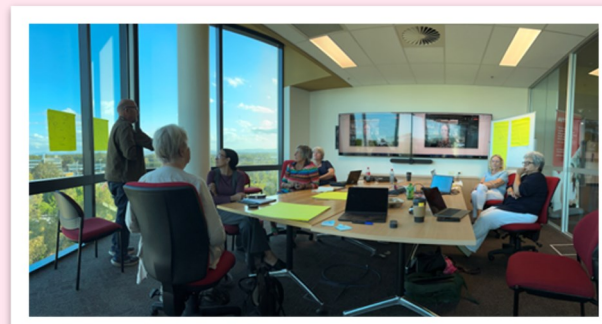


network
of Community Activities

WERA-IRN Task Force: Research in Extended Education Conference



The WERA-IRN Task Force: Research in Extended Education Conference was hosted in Brisbane by Griffith University and the National Outside School Hours Services Alliance (NOSHSA) Queensland Branch in September 2024. The event was an overwhelming success with 160 delegates representing 50 countries. The conference was attended by both researchers and practitioners. A post conference publication is currently being prepared which we will be able to share with you in 2025. We thank Brisbane Marketing for their funding contribution to this event.



QCAN ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE | SATURDAY 29TH MARCH 2025
 Visit qcan.org.au/conference for further information and to register.



QCAN STATE CONFERENCE

Thriving Educators, Thriving Children

REGISTER NOW!

SATURDAY 29TH MARCH 2025 AMORA HOTEL BRISBANE



GELYDA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2025 **ICELAND JUNE 11 - 13 2025**

Interested in shaping the evolving worldwide advancement of young peoples' development, learning and resilience?

On every continent there are innovative approaches to policy, research and practice to make the most of non-school hours. In 2023 we founded GELYDA to create the link between scholarship, new practices and programming as well as creating national and international systems. After a very successful virtual inaugural symposium in May 2024 we are now going to host a hybrid conference in Reykjavik Iceland, hosted by the School of Education – University of Iceland, in June 2025, gathering in person and for those who are not able to join, offering online components to promote participation for all.

Join the movement and please save the date for the Science and Practice of Extended Learning, Youth Development, and Wellbeing conference June 11 to 13, 2025!

The theme is “Extended Education, Youth Development, and Wellbeing.”

The Global Extended Learning and Youth Development Association (GELYDA) is a new international organization dedicated to understanding, supporting, and improving opportunities for learning, development, and thriving in schools, afterschool and summer programs, and communities.



The National Outside School Hours Services Alliance (NOSHSA) is a network of all Australian State and Territory Out of School Hours Services (OSHC) Associations. These organisations promote provision of Out of School Hours Services and act as a united voice to advocate both to Government and the community for excellence in service provision.

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