



Perspectives on Quality in Family Day Care

Never Stand Still

Arts & Social Sciences

Social Policy Research Centre

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Quality



Methodology



Participating Services

Blue Mountains Family Day Care

Camden Family Day Care

Gin Gin Family Day Care

Greater Hume Children Services

Kids in Family Day Care

Wynnum Family Day Care and Education Service

Professional Practice

So we want to really conduct ourselves as professionals in everything we do and we hope that that will really shine through with our educators ... It's about just celebrating our own achievements and the professionalism and the quality of the service, and other services.

(Coordination unit staff member)

Relationships

“that whole sort of family – children, educators, support coordinators, me”

(Service director)

Children, Families and Educators

I feel this is an extension of my home, that's honestly how I feel about home day care.

(Family)

...as a family day care educator, I can build closer bonds with the children and the families and they actually do become part of your life [...what we] provide to these children is a home away from home really.

(Educator)

Educator peer relationships



The things that can happen when educators are working together in teams, it makes my job so easy. [...] if someone is going on holiday, they've organised themselves with their parents and they just know what other educators are doing and they support each other. If someone is having a bad day, it's just that simple, that they'll support each other.

(Manager)

Educators and the coordination unit



It kind of works in partnership with each other. They respect us as educators and the business that we're running, and we also know that they're there if we need any advice or support for the parents.

(Educator)

If the coordination unit don't have that respect and relationship and bond with their educators, I think that's when you're going to have issues and when you're going to find things start falling apart. But once you've got that respect and that relationship with them it's the foundation that you create that it just makes your life so much easier.

(Coordinator)

Flexibility



By Andrew Shiva / Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=28608413>

Flexible Hours

I have the doctor's children, the police officer's son, I have a high school teacher's children.

(Educator)

We have husband and wife teams that run the services together. We have a mother and daughter team, the mum is going to be working Monday to Wednesday and the daughter Thursday, Friday. So they're providing full coverage for their families.

Coordination unit staff member

Flexible programming

[Today] all four of them were really engaged. I thought I'm not going to go, 'Okay, it's rest time. Let's go to our beds.' That's what I like, is I can do that and honour that. I feel like it's honouring them as individuals, and their space, time. That's valuable.

(Educator)



Flexible use of Space

I'll do the washing [...] and I'll potter around in the garden which they all [join in]. They like to do those sorts of things with you.

(Educator)



Flexible use of Space

I believe being in Family Day Care you can offer things to children that they can't get in other learning environments we can go to the shops and learn about money, and buying healthy food. [We] write a shopping list of health food and then go to the shop
(*Educator*)



Alimentos Saudáveis à Mesa, flickr.com



Autonomy

They've got to do it their own way. They've got to find their own strengths [to find] their own way of doing it because it's in their own home.

(Coordinator)

The support is there when I need it, but they leave me alone to run my own business the way I want to. That's one of the greatest things about family day care, you can put your own personality on it [...] You're given the freedom to be who you are. You're not trying to be squashed into a role.

(Educator)



Diversity and Social Support

My son was actually born with cleft palette, so she had to special-feed him. I don't think a centre would have the time or the means to sit with that baby to feed the way that he needed to be fed. There's a special art to it [my educator] was willing to try that and she did. And it worked.

(Family)







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Report available from:
[http://handle.unsw.edu.au/
1959.4/unsworks_38896](http://handle.unsw.edu.au/1959.4/unsworks_38896)

Videos available from:
FDCA website members
section



Discussion

Introduce yourself to your group

Share an example of how you or your service support strong and positive relationships.

Discussion

Share some of the flexible practices that happen in your service. These could be about hours, programing, uses of space or something else.

What are the limits on FDC flexibility? What would you like to see change?

Discussion

Discuss different approaches to educator autonomy you have encountered.

Think of an issue where you are not sure if it should be for an educator to decide or the coordination unit. Discuss this with your group.

Discussion

Share practices from your services that help support a wide range of families and children.

What are the challenges?

What are the benefits?

What would help?