

# Physical health and wellbeing: innovative approaches in an inner city community

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The *Innovative approaches in an inner-city community* research project was designed to:

- build **educator capability** in relation to using AEDC data sets to inform professional decisions;
- enact **pedagogical practices** that afford children opportunities to engage in challenging physical play; and
- **measure and communicate about the effects of intentional, sustained and contextual practices** to parents and families, the local community and other early years services.





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**Physical health  
and wellbeing**

Children's physical readiness for the school day, physical independence and gross and fine motor skills.



**Social  
competence**

Children's overall social competence, responsibility and respect, approach to learning and readiness to explore new things.



**Emotional  
maturity**

Children's prosocial and helping behaviours, and absence of anxious and fearful behaviour, aggressive behaviour and hyperactivity and inattention.



**Language and  
cognitive skills  
(school based)**

Children's basic literacy, interest in literacy, numeracy and memory, advanced literacy and basic numeracy.



**Communication  
skills and  
general  
knowledge**

Children's communication skills and general knowledge base on broad developmental competencies and skills measured in the school context.



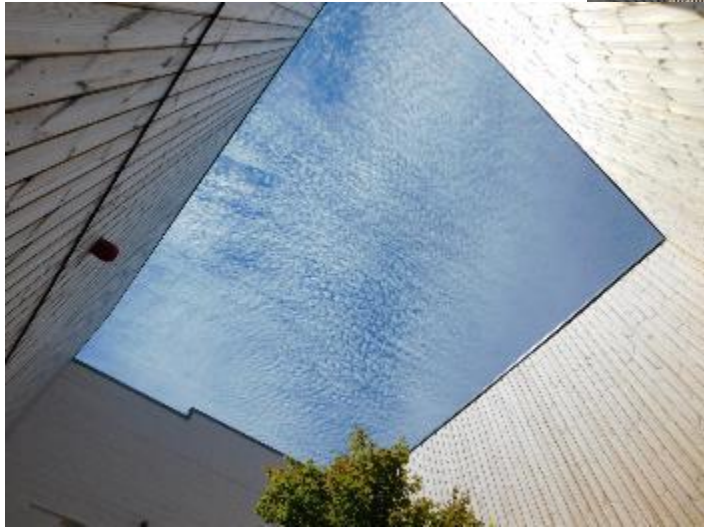
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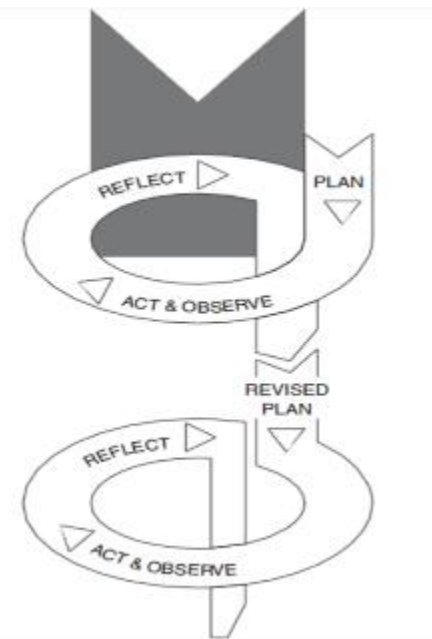


Figure 1: Kemmis and McTaggart (2001) Action research spiral.



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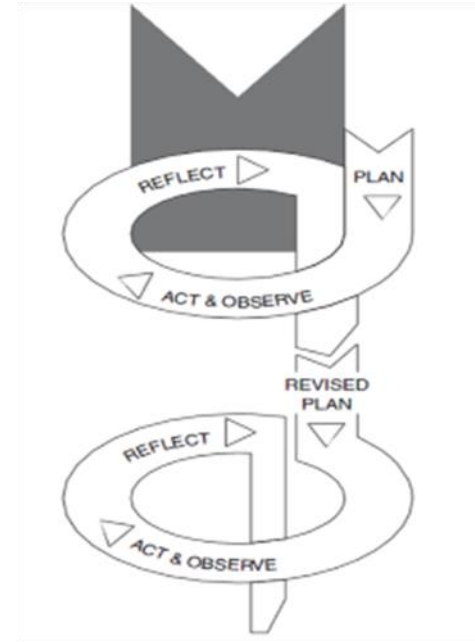
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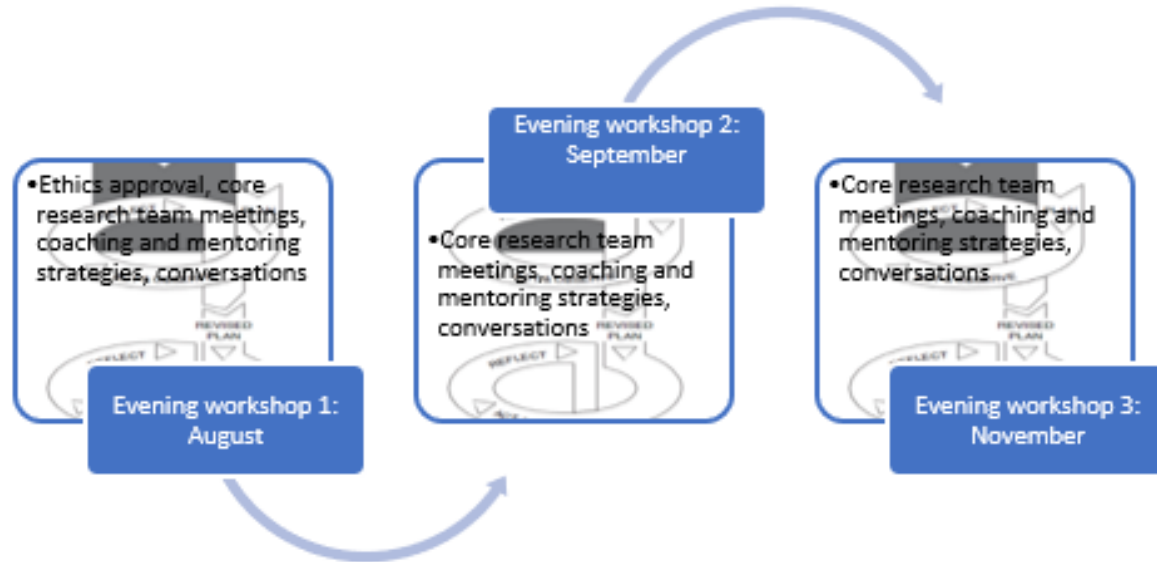
# Research question...

*How can early childhood educators enable children to flourish in the area of physical health and well being?*

Icon	Children developmentally on track	Children developmentally at risk	Children developmentally vulnerable
 Physical health and wellbeing domain icon	Almost never have problems that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. These children are generally independent, have excellent motor skills, and have energy levels that can get them through the school day.	Experience some challenges that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. This may include being dressed inappropriately, frequently late, hungry or tired. Children may also show poor coordination skills, have poor fine and gross motor skills, or show poor to average levels of energy levels during the school day.	Experience a number of challenges that interfere with their ability to physically cope with the school day. This may include being dressed inappropriately, frequently late, hungry or tired. Children are usually clumsy and may have fading energy levels.



# Shape of the project



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# Critical conversations

Active play  
should be  
encouraged  
whenever  
possible.



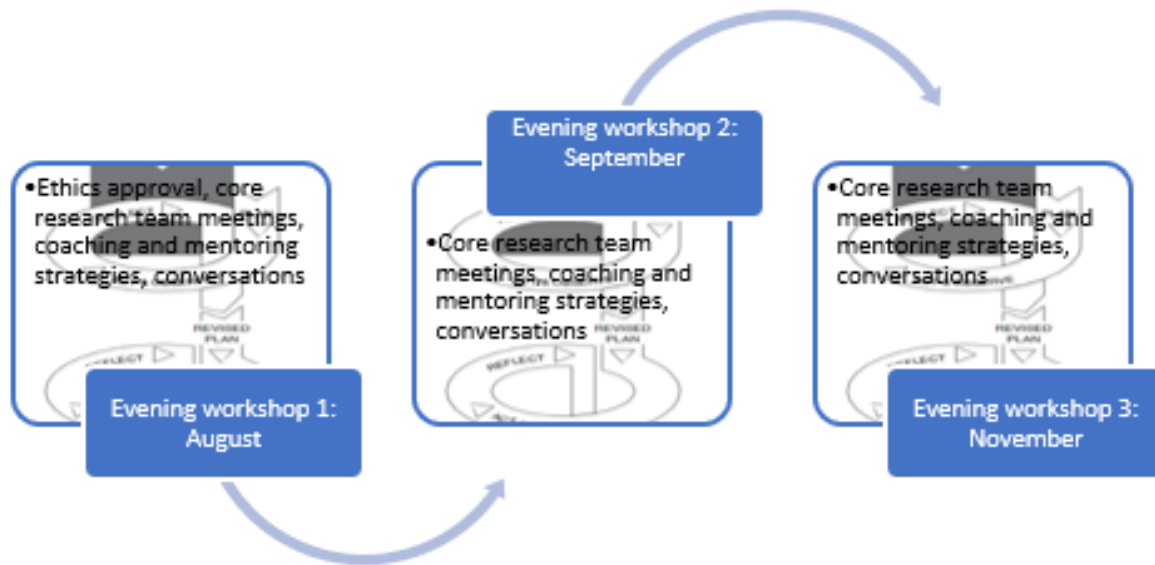
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# Shape of the project



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# Findings

Theme 1: Knowledge and skills.

Theme 2: Use of spaces: Centre and beyond.

Theme 3: Resources and equipment.

Theme 4: Pedagogy, programming and practice.

Theme 5: Children's voices.

Theme 6: People and relationships.



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# Theme 1: Knowledge and skills

- Motor skills
- Active curriculum
- Effortful play
- Physical literacy

*"It's [AEDC and the Project] given me a new lens [to view children/programming/planning]."*  
(educator comment, Workshop 3)

*"The active play sessions were a major turning point in the project. Marcy was incredibly respectful of the children and educators and was able to role model to educators experiences/play sessions that they are able to implement for all children. Before implementing these play sessions, Marcy spent time both rooms getting to know the children and educators and I believe this supported these sessions to be based on the needs/interests of the children in the service."*  
(email correspondence, educator-participant)



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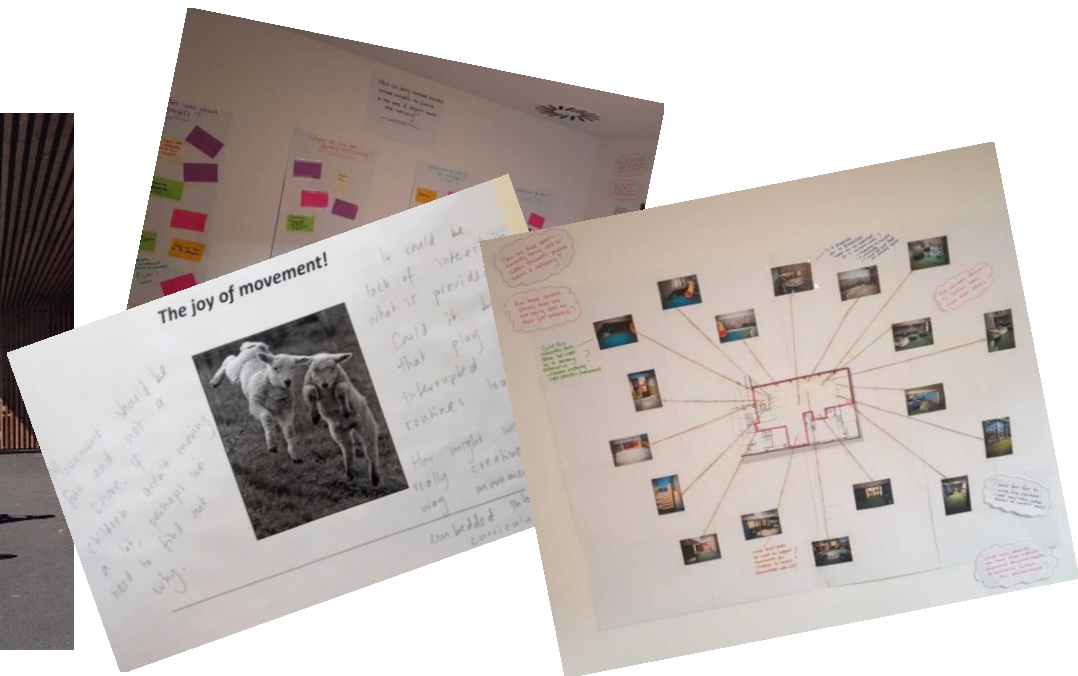
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# Theme 2: Use of spaces - centre and beyond

## Transitions Rivulet Walk Wheels Day

*"I feel like this has given [me] permission to try new things – to explore the environment."*  
(educator comment, Workshop 3)



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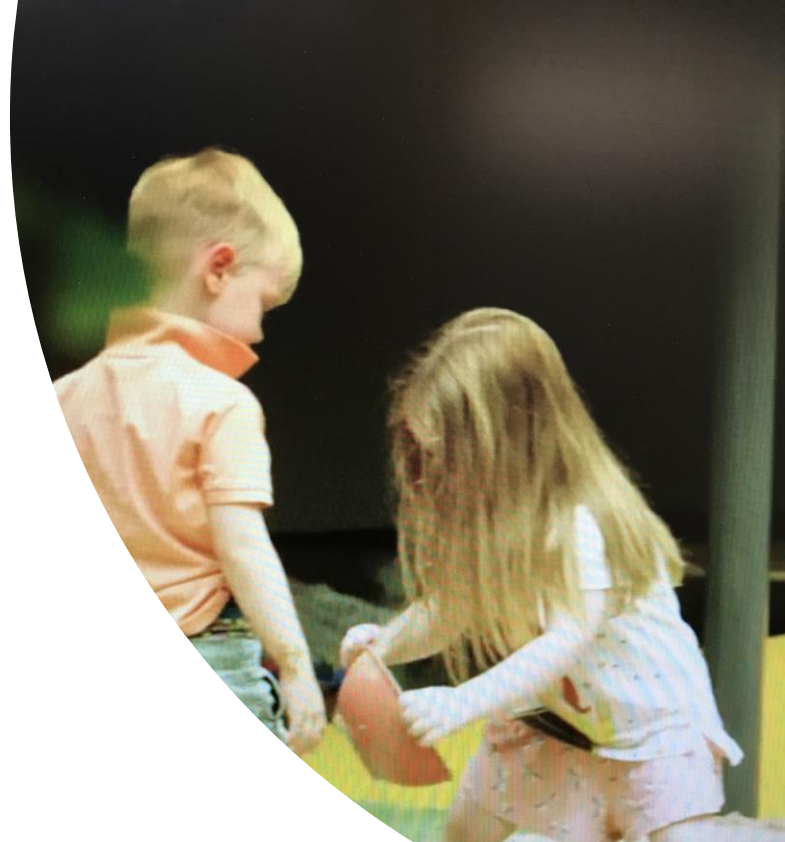
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# PHYSICAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN AN INNER CITY COMMUNITY

Lady Gowrie Tasmania

Integrated Centre for Children & Families  
South Hobart



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AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT CENSUS  
ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT (AEDC)

# Recommendations and ways forward

- Further engagement and building capacity with the AEDC (alignment with QIP)
- Ongoing program of professional growth and learning
- Continue transdisciplinary approaches to research
- Optimise play spaces and develop understandings about the design principles in the unique building (meeting or forum with the design team and the educators)
- Funded research as a foundation for future projects
- The *Flourishing Tasmanian Child* project

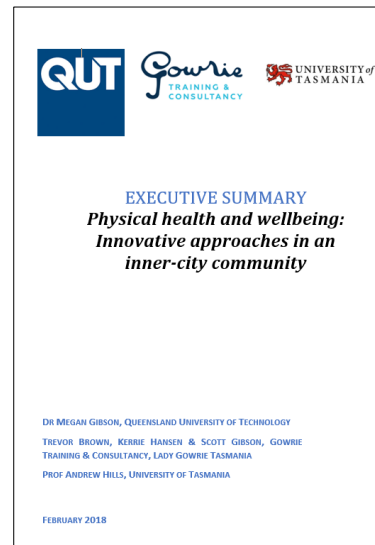
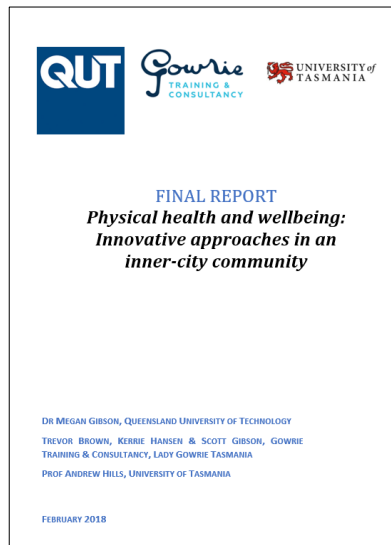


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## THE FLOURISHING TASMANIAN CHILD PROGRAM

### Phase 1 – COMPLETE

1 inner-city site – Child and Family Centre

1 AEDC domain – Physical health and wellbeing

Project title: Physical health and wellbeing: innovative approaches in an inner-city community  
Approach: Action Research  
Context: B-4 (child and family centre)  
Outputs: A final report; shifts in practice and experiences for children

### Phase 2

1 regional site

Up to 5 AEDC domains

Project title: The Flourishing Tasmanian Child: Establishing a place-based professional community to support children's optimal development.  
Approach: Communities of Practice + Action Research + Coaching and Mentoring  
Contexts: Pregnancy - 8 y contexts (Playgroup, LIL, Child & Family Centres, LDC, FDC, OSHC, K-2) + families  
Outputs: A community strategy for children; a scalable model that will be translatable to other communities; a final report

### Phase 3

Multiple sites – State-wide

Up to 5 AEDC domains

Project title: The Flourishing Tasmanian Child: Establishing place-based professional communities to support children's optimal development.  
Approach: Survey + Communities of Practice + Action Research + Coaching and Mentoring  
Contexts: Pregnancy- 8y contexts (Playgroup, LIL, Child & Family Centres, LDC, FDC, OSHC, K-2) + families  
Outputs: Unique community strategies for children; a final report

Aug 17 – Feb 18



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“Thriving children really need thriving educators.”

Dr Megan Gibson



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# Thank you

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