



Latest COAG news

Welcome to the first edition of the Department for Communities regular email updates focusing on early childhood development. These updates are intended to keep you and other key stakeholders informed and will initially focus on Council of Australian Government (COAG) initiatives. It will provide a forum for relevant queries and progress reports and respond to requests from the sector for information. Please feel free to circulate to your networks.

The Department for Communities has responsibility for leading the Early Childhood Agenda, including the COAG reforms in WA. Funding and implementation of these reforms will primarily be through National Partnership (NP) agreements between States and Territories and the Commonwealth Government. These NP agreements specify the funding to be provided, the outcomes to be achieved and the roles and responsibilities for each jurisdiction.

In 2008 two COAG NP's were signed; one on Indigenous Early Childhood Development and the other on Early Childhood Education. These NP's are outlined in this update.

Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership.

[COAG](#) has committed to Closing the Gap on Indigenous disadvantage with joint national funding of \$564 million over 6 years.

The [National Partnership \(NP\) for Indigenous Early Childhood Development](#) comprises three inter-related elements -

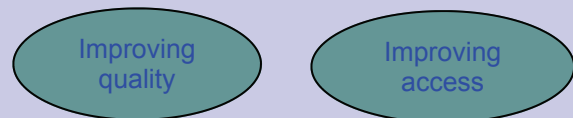
1. The establishment of 5 children and family centres in WA, to be located in areas with high Indigenous populations. The centres are designed to offer integrated education and care, health, and child and family support services.
2. Increased access to antenatal care, pre-pregnancy and teenage sexual and reproductive health.
3. Increased access to, and use of, maternal and child health services.

The Department for Communities is the lead agency for coordination of this NP.

Consultations will commence early in 2009 with communities to ensure that all three elements are responsive to community's needs.

You can click on the highlighted and underlined words in this update to find out more information.

Areas that will be addressed through the COAG reforms for early childhood education and care



- Development of a National Early Childhood Development Strategy
- National Quality standards
- Universal access to preschool (Kindergarten in WA)
- Workforce development
- An Early Years Learning Framework
- Child and Family Centres
- National roll-out of the Australia Early Development Index (AEDI)

Early Childhood Education National Partnership

The National Partnership for Early Childhood Education is committed to providing [universal access](#) to all children in the year before they start full time schooling. Universal Access refers to Kindergarten in WA.

The NP supports the provision of quality early childhood programs delivered by 4-year university qualified early childhood teachers, for 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year. Programs will be in a form that meet the needs of all parents, including working parents and will be implemented across a range of settings, including child care.

Implementation will commence in 2009/10 and funding will increase progressively over the life of the NP to achieve full universal access by 2013.

This NP is closely linked to other elements of the COAG reform agenda, including the development of a National Early Years Learning Framework, workforce reforms and the development of a national early childhood education and care quality framework.

Other news

Progress on the Early Years Learning Framework.

Many of you participated in the recent consultations held in Perth on 20 November to give valuable input into the draft [Early Years Learning Framework](#). This framework, when implemented, will guide early learning in care and education settings. A large turnout of around 350 interested participants provided the Charles Sturt University writing team with feedback to assist in developing the draft framework. Supporting documentation will be developed that sits under the framework and will assist in implementation.

This framework is linked to the development of **National Quality Standards**, to ensure quality and consistency across early education and care settings. The next stage will be the trialing of the framework in 29 early learning and care settings throughout Australia, including 4 in WA. The framework is to be implemented by July 2009.

For more information go to www.deewr.gov.au/eylf

This is the first in a series of Early Childhood Updates. The focus on COAG is in response to requests from the early childhood sector for readily accessible and concise information on this complex reform agenda.

*Have we got it right? Send feedback or questions to judith.kenny@communities.wa.gov.au
Copies of this update are also available on the Departments' website www.communities.wa.gov.au.*

You are also welcome to email or make copies and distribute to your networks.