

# PRESCHOOL FIELD OFFICER SERVICE – TERM ONE NEWSLETTER

Dear Educators in Wyndham

Welcome back to Term One in 2022.

You will have received an email from us at the start of the year with updates about changes and our new Support Request forms, but please find this information below for those who may have missed it or have recently been added to our mailing list.

Due to funding changes, 2022 will see changes to the Preschool Field Officer Service in Wyndham.

- In 2022, PSFOs will provide service to educators requesting inclusion support for individual children within a 3 year old or 4 year old state funded kindergarten program.
- NEW - If a child is an NDIS participant and you have referred to the provider in the first instance, you may also refer to the PSFO service.

You will have become familiar with the Group Support Request option in the past few years. In 2022 our service will only be supporting Educators referring individual children.

The PSFO will be able to offer you:

- ❖ **Inclusive teaching support**
- ❖ **Other inclusive practice topics**
- ❖ **Coaching and mentoring**
- ❖ **Strategies**
- ❖ **Referral pathways for the child and family**
- ❖ **Onsite visits and virtual consultations**
- ❖ **Supporting parent meetings**

Our new Support Request (referral) Form, along with an updated flyer to provide to your families when referring, can be found here: [PSFO Service](#)

## IN OTHER NEWS .....

### **Community Health Speech Pathology Books Re-Open**

Please be advised that the books are re—open to Paediatric Speech Pathology referrals at IPC Health Hoppers Crossing following closing of the books last August due to staff shortages  
Referrals can be made by contacting intake on 8734 1400.  
Child development checklists and eligibility criteria remains unchanged.

### **Family & Sector Partnerships – Professional Development Calendar**

The Professional Development Calendar is an open invitation to all Early and Middle Year Professionals who aspire to expand their knowledge and learnings within their area of expertise. The calendar aims to be diverse and present quality speakers and workshops to Professionals wishing to develop. It is an evolving engine of work that is open to suggestions. If you have a topic of interest please feel free to send your suggestions to :

[Shannon.Mustafa@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:Shannon.Mustafa@wyndham.vic.gov.au)

### **June 24<sup>th</sup> – Save the date!**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Years Conference is a yearly fixture and ensures Quality presenters and workshops throughout the day. This year's theme: Transformational Practice Growing in partnership with community. We have an AMAZING line up From the Magnetic Dr Ruby Red, to the Charismatic and motivated Futurist Steve Sammantino and everyone in between, this year's event is one to watch out for. More information and ticket sales link will be available and advertised shortly. Your ticket buys you Two key note speakers and access to 8 workshops and a full day of Fun, Learning and Networking.

## **The Vulnerable Childrens Strategic Working Group**

The Vulnerable Childrens Strategic Working Group is about to start up again for 2022, this group offers an open forum for external organisations or services to share information, new initiatives, emerging needs and opportunities to collaborate. It also hosts guest speakers and provides Professional Development opportunities to said services. The working group is undergoing some changes in 2022 and is focusing on its ability to provide a valuable networking opportunity to the externals and internals that participate. The group focuses predominantly on services that support families with young children. We meet every 8 weeks with the next meeting being held on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2022. Please contact [Shannon.mustafa@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:Shannon.mustafa@wyndham.vic.gov.au) for more information.

## **Best Start**

*Have you ever heard of Best Start?* Best Start is a funded program through the Department of Education and Training, and has been around for almost 20 years! There are 30 sites across Victoria who support the access and participation of children experiencing adversity into key services such as Maternal Child Health and Early Learning programs. Best Start Facilitators work with local staff from these key services (Maternal Child Health, Supported Playgroups and Kindergarten services) to identify and implement small changes which will increase the access and participation of families in their community to attend their service.

In Wyndham, there have been some great outcomes, despite the current challenges of the last 2 years. Focusing on specific areas in Wyndham, services are able to come together to understand their local community, then start implementing change ideas with the aim to increase families accessing services. During 2021 and now 2022, Wyndham Park Community Centre on Kookaburra Ave in Werribee has been the key focus for Best Start work. A dynamic and dedicated group of services who work in or close by to the Community Centre have formed a Improvement Team, with members from Kindergarten, MCH, Playgroups, IPC Health, MacKillop Family Services, the Community Centre manager and the Salvation Army CaPSS team member.

For 2022, the group aims to:

- Increase the number of children they are referring to MCH, Supported Playgroup and Kindergarten. This is through the group meeting together each month to have a solid understanding of each other's programs, along with ways they can work together to support families to access programs.
- Make connections with local community groups and places where community meet to share information about these key early years services.
- Reflect Aboriginal culture in their programs. Some services have started on this journey, while others will be beginning this year. The group will support each other and share some experiences with families.

Some of the improvement highlights from 2021 for this group have been:

- Learning more about Early Start Kindergarten. This information saw an increase of knowledge from services around Early Start Kindergarten.
- Supporting a family from feeling unsure about starting Supported Playgroup to then regularly attending Playgroup. The playgroup facilitator was then able to support the family to access 1st and 2nd year of Kindergarten for their 2 children, all at Wyndham Park Community Centre.
- Finding other ways to communicate with families who visit the Wyndham Park Community Centre, such as chatting to community members about supports/programs while they are waiting in the Foodbank line. Attending virtual parent information sessions organised by the neighbouring Wyndham Park Primary school, to learn more about Kindergarten programs including understanding what Early Start Kindergarten is.

As the Wyndham Park Improvement Team continues to work towards their key outcomes this year, a new group is being established in the Truganina area, based around the new Truganina South East Community Centre. The focus of this new group for 2022 will be learning about and identifying key improvements to support refugee and asylum seeker families to access key services. The learning will be facilitated by Foundation House, along with support to implement changes from the Best Start Facilitator.

2022 will bring more opportunities for services who are part of improvement teams in Wyndham to keep on working towards outcomes for children and families.

Have you thought about what small changes your service can implement to create a space where families are supported to engage, along with having help to find out more about local services? Contact Lyndall, the Wyndham Best Start Facilitator to see if some of the ideas already tested could work in your program. [WyndhamBestStart@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:WyndhamBestStart@wyndham.vic.gov.au)

**Wyndham Child and Family Directory - Click on the image below, to see the supports on offer for families in Wyndham**



**Read the latest Joining the Dots e-update - Upcoming events and community support for families in Wyndham - [Joining the Dots e-update](#)**

## **Wyndham City – Libraries**

Did you know that Libraries offer organisational library memberships for childcare centres wishing to borrow books and other items from the library? Contact your local library for more information. It's great to be able to save money and borrow books rather than educators purchasing themselves especially when content becomes outdated. Here is a link on their website that might be very useful: <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/libraries/kids/parent-and-teacher-resources>

If you're after a particular book and the library doesn't have it they also have a suggested purchase process <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/libraries/using-library/library-purchase-suggestion-guidelines>

The libraries also provide tours for small groups who are within walking distance to any of the five libraries.

There is a large range of pre-recorded early years programs that can be viewed at any time, you can find these by clicking on this link <https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/services/libraries/early-years/early-years-events-and-activities>

For the month of February they're also running a couple of sessions which are suited to children aged 1-5 years and families:



## **Live Online Story Times**

Join us for a live online Story Time every Thursday at 12 noon in February. Enjoy engaging stories, songs and chat with our librarians from the comfort of your own home.

**Online**

**Ages 1–5**

**Thursdays during February**

**12pm–12.30pm**

**Bookings required**

**[Book Now](#)**



## Q&A with a Speech Pathologist

Meet with Lisa Decker, local Speech Pathologist from Well Said Clinic to share concerns and questions about your child's language development. Join with other parents to hear Lisa's expert opinions about fostering children's speech, language and communication skills.

**Julia Gillard Library Tarneit**

**Monday 21 February**

**7pm–8pm**

**Bookings required**

[Book Now](#)

**Kind regards**

**PSFO Team**

To contact the PSFO Team:

Tel: 9742 8199

Email: [psfo.service@wyndham.vic.gov.au](mailto:psfo.service@wyndham.vic.gov.au)