



2022–2025
FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA
STRATEGIC PLAN

ABOUT FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA

Family Day
Care Australia
is the national
peak body for
family day care.

Through collaborative national advocacy, a strong research evidence base, and high public visibility Family Day Care Australia supports, represents and promotes the sector in delivering quality outcomes for children.

We are an apolitical, independent, not for profit national peak body that represents a national membership of more than 10,000 family day care educators and 420 approved services.

Together with sector stakeholders we are working towards a stronger future for family day care.

FDCA is governed by a volunteer Board comprising Member Elected and Board Appointed Directors and is managed by a professional, executive leadership team.

FDCA has, for 30 years, represented the interests of the sector and its members and has provided support and leadership throughout the ongoing evolution of both family day care and the broader early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector.

From its humble beginnings in 1971 family day care has evolved from a 'cottage industry' to become a vital component of the ECEC landscape.

Today, the dedicated professionals in family day care deliver over 7% of all approved childcare in Australia, supporting 96,000 children and 66,000 families through quality, flexible, accessible ECEC.

FOUNDATIONS FOR PLANNING

OUR MEMBERS VOICE

As a member association, the needs, challenges and opinions of our members provides a fundamental foundation in establishing our strategic priorities.

In late 2021 FDCA commissioned an independent member survey to provide comparative data to assess progress on several strategic objectives during the period 2018-2021; to better understand the value of membership and member satisfaction; to determine any additional services FDCA could provide to enhance the member experience; to examine the key issues and challenges facing the sector and how FDCA can help address these; and ultimately to inform our strategic planning process to ensure that the national peak is aligned with the needs of its members.

While the 100-page report provided comprehensive analysis of each of these issues, there were a number of very encouraging findings for FDCA, particularly off the back of the unprecedented challenges of COVID. These included:

- Sustained high member satisfaction and net promoter scores with a notable increase in net promoter scores among service members
- Strong sentiment regarding FDCA effectively representing the sector with 75% of services and educators agreeing or strongly agreeing

- Strong acknowledgment that FDCA understands sector challenges, again with a notable positive increase among service members

Additionally the report provided insights into a number of consistent themes around key issues and challenges for members. These included:

- Administrative burden remains a key challenge for educator and service members and has not eased since our last survey
- The impacts of COVID have been significant, particularly for educators
- Awareness and understanding, being 'valued' by governments and the broader reputation of the sector was of concern to members
- Inequitable/inadequate funding frameworks remain a challenge
- For services, the overwhelming challenge was consistently skills shortages and the increasing challenge of recruiting new educators

The importance and prevalence of these key themes throughout the survey findings provided significant guidance in reviewing our strategic priorities and shone a spotlight on a number of key areas of focus for the period 2022-2025.

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR ENVIRONMENT

As we look ahead we consider the past, present and future internal and external environment in shaping the organisation's strategic priorities.

There is no denying that it has been a dynamic and often challenging decade for our sector through the transition to the National Quality Framework, the Productivity Commission Review, the challenges of fraudulent operators entering our sector, the transition to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and the fee cap, and of course, more recently COVID.

The reputational challenges of non-compliance have lingered well beyond their merit, and despite unwavering strategic advocacy from FDCA, the regulatory and policy environment remain unfavourable, with policy formulation in many areas continuing to inadequately acknowledge and accommodate the family day care model. The funding envelope has tightened, and administrative burden continues to grow, while educator caps, coordinator ratios, compliance focussed ratings and assessment, and excessive delays in CCS approvals have all placed significant viability pressures on our sector and contributed to a sustained decline in the family day care footprint.

Across the broader sector we are in the midst of a workforce crisis prompting the engagement of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) in the development and delivery of the 10-year National Workforce Strategy. Although an emerging issue pre-COVID, post COVID, workforce challenges are undeniably the primary challenge facing the broader ECEC sector, and although our sector is not immune, with requisite supports the unique sole trader model may hold some advantages for family day care.

Of course, the impacts of COVID have dominated the landscape for the majority of the previous strategic period and, while the path ahead remains uncertain, the significant impact of COVID on family day care operations, viability and life more broadly, have placed immense pressure on educators and services, and has created a static educator recruitment environment, the impacts of which may be felt for some years to come.

And yet, despite the many challenges of our environment our sector remains resilient, and more so, remains a critical part of Australia's ECEC landscape. Ironically, COVID shone a light to governments on some of the sector's very unique strengths; the small group, natural home environment, relationships with families, and support for frontline and emergency services workers, saw family day care maintain attendances throughout COVID that were unparalleled by the broader sector.

It is both timely and increasingly evident that family day care is uniquely placed to support a number of key priorities of governments throughout our next strategic period. In framing the years ahead, as we work to represent, support, and promote our sector, it is crucial that we advocate for the uniqueness and irreplaceable value of our sector:

- For the children and families who rely on overnight and weekend care that they cannot get anywhere else
- For those in regional and rural communities where family day care isn't just their option of choice, but at times, their only choice



- For children in many of Australia's most disadvantaged communities, and for those with additional needs for whom the small group, home-like environment is uniquely supportive
- For those seeking greater session flexibility to support casual and part time work as they re-enter the workforce

And of course, for the tens of thousands of women across four decades of family day care for whom our sector has provided a richly rewarding career, and the financial independence and autonomy, of being a small business owner-operator as a family day care educator. Family day care is one of Australia's largest professional networks of women in small business, and is arguably our country's most valuable, not only playing a vital role in shaping the future of Australia's children, but by way of the sector's injection of capacity into workforce participation. In fact, FDCA's modelling with Deloitte Australia demonstrates that each new family day care educator can create 159 hours of parent workforce capacity every week and, over the course of a year, this equates to an injection of over \$300,000 of GDP into our nation's economy.

FDCA wants to see more educators, supporting more children and families, in more communities across Australia.

As the national peak, FDCA is extremely well placed to lead the sector; we have strong organisational capacity and exceptionally robust governance structures, by way of a highly skilled and inspired Board and staff. We are lean, agile and efficient in our work and we enjoy productive stakeholder relationships, a sound financial position and excellent member engagement.

Our Strategic Priorities remain highly relevant and the direct linkages from the Vision, through the Mission, Goals, KPIs and Key Initiatives continues to effectively align strategy with operations that ultimately provides a clear and executable roadmap for a stronger future for family day care.

VISION, MISSION, VALUES

VISION

Family day care is the natural choice.

MISSION

To represent, support and promote the family day care sector in delivering high quality early childhood education and care to more Australian children.

ACHIEVING OUR VISION

- 1** Our Vision requires a political, policy and regulatory environment that embraces the uniqueness, importance and capabilities of family day care and that enables a strong, viable and widely accessible sector.
- 2** Our Vision demands consistently high quality outcomes for children in family day care.
- 3** Our Vision requires strong awareness and understanding of the many and unique benefits of family day care for children, families and educators.

Underpinned by our Values and guided by our Mission we will achieve our goals and together we will realise our Vision.

VALUES

EQUITY

Equitable access and the removal of barriers to high quality early childhood education for all children. Equity is a core underpinning of FDCA's organisational culture

PROFESSIONALISM

Ongoing improvement in, and recognition of, the sector as professional early childhood educators and administrators. A professional sector needs a highly professional national peak

EXCELLENCE

Excellent outcomes for children in family day care underpins a strong and viable future for family day care. Excellent outcomes from FDCA will support the sector in this objective

COLLABORATION

Collaborative partnerships between services, educators, families and children are key underpinnings of quality in family day care. FDCA, the sector and stakeholders are partners in achieving our vision



2022–2025 STRATEGIC SNAPSHOT

PRIORITY	GOALS	KPI MEASURE
REPRESENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide strong leadership, a united national voice and future directions for family day care through effective, broadly representative, consultative and evidence-based advocacy on key policy issues • Champion a political, policy and regulatory environment that embraces the uniqueness, importance and capabilities of family day care and enables an agile, viable, accessible and growing sector 	<p>Achieve 50% positive advocacy outcomes for family day care</p> <p>Representation on all key stakeholder reference groups</p>
SUPPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support ongoing improvement in pedagogical and operational practice, and outcomes for children in family day care, through research, resources, professional learning opportunities and networks • Support the sector in the effective and efficient management of, and compliance with, the administrative, business and regulatory requirements of family day care 	<p>Increase % of services 'meeting' or 'exceeding' the NQS from 57% to 66%</p> <p>Maintain Net Promoter Score:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educators between 40-50 - Services between 50-60
PROMOTE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and position family day care on its unique strengths in delivering high quality early childhood education and care to support long term sector viability and growth through marketing, public relations and strategic media management • Raise awareness and position family day care as a career of choice for educators and service providers, and support services in the recruitment of professional early childhood educators in areas of need and opportunity 	<p>Increase FDCA website annual monthly average 'unique visitors' by 5% to 16,900 per month</p> <p>Increase FDCA locator annual monthly average leads by 15% to 1,015 per month</p> <p>Establish new baseline measure of awareness and perception of users and non-users of family day care and increase by 5%</p>
ORGANISATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure sustainable, ongoing and valued services to members through technology, innovation, diversification, organisational capacity, operational efficiency, good governance and strong financial management 	<p>Maintain % of operating services as members at 90%+</p> <p>Maintain % of 'satisfied/very satisfied' members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educators 65%+ • services 65%+ <p>Maintain break-even bottom-line position (reviewed annually)</p> <p>Maintain expenses/reserves ratio 10 months</p> <p>Maintain a staff engagement score of 4+</p>

FAMILY DAY CARE AUSTRALIA

PO Box 571 Gosford NSW 2250

Telephone: 1800 658 699

Website: www.fdca.com.au

