

# Health and Wellbeing of Family Day Care Educators in Australia

Presented by  
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# The Workshop

## Today's workshop

Overview of the research project

Workshop activity 1

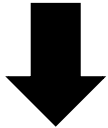
Workshop activity 2



Mixed  
Methods  
Project

# Arms of this project

Quantitative 



Qualitative 



## What did we find?

Amazing educators supporting families

'at the end of the day I feel like I've gotten what I've needed from the day and all the kids have gotten what they needed'

'that drives me ....fulfilling parents' expectation'

Mental Wellbeing is lower than population norms

Educators felt supported and resilient

**Factors affecting Educator Mental Wellbeing**


Quantitative  
Results

Mental Wellbeing is lower than population norms

Educators felt supported and resilient

# Quantitative Results

## Factors affecting Educator Mental Wellbeing

Resilience (also had impact on Sense of Community)


Mental Wellbeing is lower than population norms

Educators felt supported and resilient

**Factors affecting Educator Mental Wellbeing**

Resilience (also had impact on Sense of Community)

Job Stress


Quantitative  
Results

Mental Wellbeing is lower than population norms

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## Quantitative Results

### Factors affecting Educator Mental Wellbeing

Resilience (also had impact on Sense of Community)

Job Stress

Effort and Reward Imbalance



Mental Wellbeing is lower than population norms

Educators felt supported and resilient

## Quantitative Results

### Factors affecting Educator Mental Wellbeing

Resilience (also had impact on Sense of Community)

Job Stress

Effort and Reward Imbalance

Body Image

Food insecurity

# Qualitative Arm

Interviews  
15 educators  
8 coordinators  
From around Australia



## Support from Coordinator

### Quotes from Educators

'Yeah, really good'

'(signed up because) of her support and encouragement'

'really good relationship'

'Brilliant'

'she's amazing'

'supportive'



## Support for Educators



### Quotes from Coordinators

'every time ... we come up with a new form that we need them to do, we're a bit hesitant to send it out because .... this might push them over the edge'

'I feel like now they're in such a state that if I ask one more thing of them .... they're gonna crash'

## Resilience - Isolation

### Quotes from Educators

'Yep, it's important to get out and about ... because when I was doing longer days and more days .... it did become a bit isolating'

'So do you find the role isolating?  
Extremely, extremely'



# Organisation



## Quotes from Educators

'try and be organised .... usually on a Sunday .... I'll sit down at the desk for a few hours and just kind of think, OK ..... What kids have I got in care this week'

'very rarely get stressed, don't get anxiety about anything ... because I have that organisation'

## Quotes from Educators

## Sense of Community

'the community is always really positive about what I'm doing'

'the library does a particular story time for Family Day Care Educators'

'it's good for the children to see ... that we've all got .... a community'



## Covid-19



### Quotes from Educators

'people can stop to work, say I'm not gonna work .... but I can't. I don't have this this choice. So, it's better to think positively'

'So, I kind of just got my act together and worked out how I could survive'

'that is the sh\*\*\*\*est I think this job can be, where you're left in the dark, you've got a disease that's swirling the community, everyone is terrified, like absolutely terrified, and we're not being paid, so how can it get any worse than that'



# Covid-19



## Quotes from Coordinators

'Like I can cry about it. I can get angry, but it's not gonna help'

'(they) were inviting people into their family home .... week after week ..... and no one acknowledged it'

# Paperwork

## Quotes from Educators

'keeping the family in family day care'

'it's overregulated'

'we come under the same regulations as big day care, but I don't think you can compare, this is a home environment'

'they've just added another six risk assessments'



# Paperwork

## Quotes from Coordinators

'And then also talking to them about prioritising that paperwork. What is .... essential paperwork that needs to be done and what paperwork can you .... put aside for when you've got a little bit of extra time'

'Simplify it so it's sustainable'



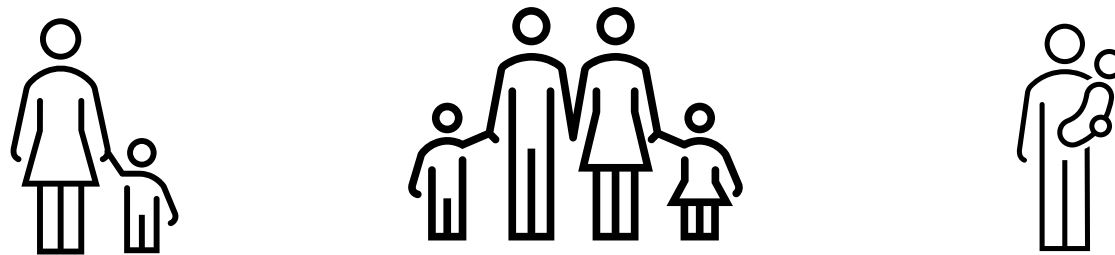
# Parents

## Quotes from Educators

'I think the biggest challenge in..... day care is the parents'

'sometimes parent's expectation was too high'

'it's easier with a tricky child then a tricky parent'

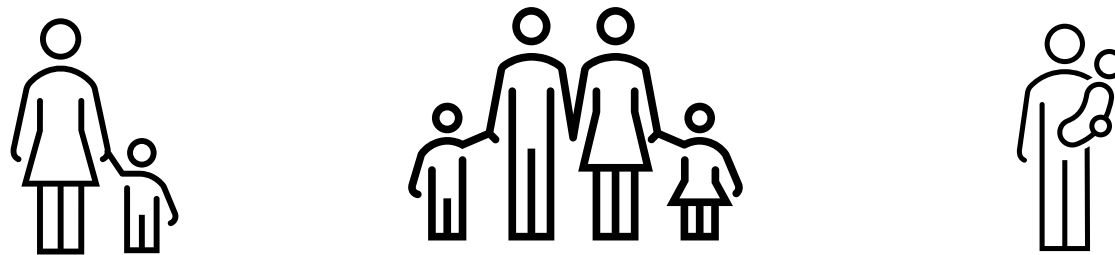


# Parents

## Quotes from Coordinators

'the biggest challenge right now, and I've noticed it over ... the last few years, is parents are expecting the educators to parent their children'

'the most challenging part of the role is dealing with the parents' expectations'



# Professional Boundaries



## Quotes from Educators

'It definitely helps to have a professional Paula\* and a social Paula\*'

'This is my first grandchild .... my daughter walks in, she gets asked the same questions and all the parents can see that'

'I'm very mindful of there not being a cross over of boundaries .... but for the best part we're just like a huge family'

\*name changed

# Professional Boundaries



## Quotes from Educators

'You need to learn your own boundaries and how to actually do it .... what do you want .... what you don't want? It's hard'

'I try not to overlap. I think I've had ..... a few experiences of overlapping and trying to be everyone's friend'

## Perception of Family Day Care

### Quotes from Educators

'what frustrates me is that people will say 'Are you still doing the babysitting?''

'I guess in the media and stuff .... paint family day care in not such a good light'

'I was worried that it was going to be like a professional like suicide for want of a better word'





## Perception of Family Day Care



### Quotes from Educators and Coordinators

'there were still many, many people who didn't know what family day care was'

I don't think the wider community .... even know any (family) day care exists still

they don't even know ... when I tell them what it is they think, oh wow, that sounds amazing

## Covid-19

### Quotes from Coordinators

'because every time these new rules would come out .... we would have to interpret them ourselves for family day care .... how are we gonna make this work?

'this information coming out from the department ... having family day care included in it, but it doesn't relate to family day care ... that was very challenging trying to work out how to relate it to family day care



## Covid-19



### Quotes from Educators

'and so basically, the government said, look, we're gonna take 50% of your pay and advertise it as free childcare for everybody. And we're not gonna tell anyone that we're docking 50% of your pay because we want everyone to think we're giving them free childcare'

'because we were opening our homes up in really uncertain times .... we didn't know what we were bringing into our own families. It wasn't like another workplace'

## Covid-19



### Quotes from Educators

'the really weird thing here was the government made an announcement of free childcare, and in the same press conference they said your childcare provider cannot turn your children away and you can have as much care as you want'

## Diminishing numbers



### Quotes from Educators and Coordinators

'isolation'; 'vulnerable'; lack of respect for the role';  
'financial stability'; 'scared to get started'

'fewer younger educators'; 'can't afford a house to  
work out of'

'leaving the childcare industry'

'Covid-19 – fear it will happen again and vaccination  
requirement'

## Conclusion



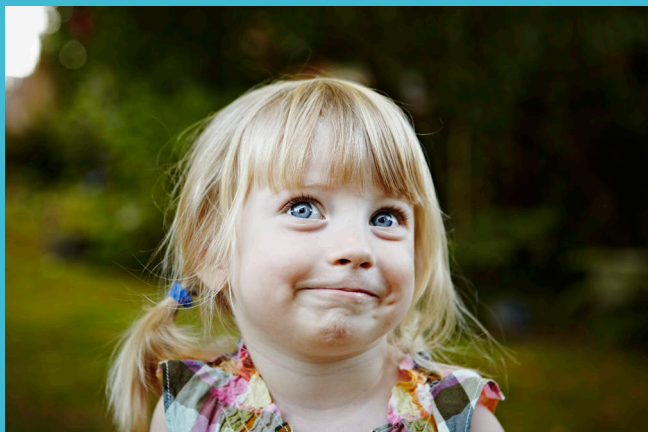
Mental wellbeing is lower than population norms

Affected negatively by  
Job stress, and  
Effort outweighing the rewards

Of concern for job stress and effort  
Parents  
Paperwork  
Perception and knowledge of FDC

'so important because it's such a niche market ...  
niche component of early childhood education that, it  
gets so overlooked'

## Conclusion



Mental wellbeing is lower than population norms

Affected positively by  
Resilience

What may be helping are resilience strategies

Organisation

Building relationships with parents

Professional boundaries

Getting out and about to negate isolation

Building a community

'it's long day care on a on a smaller scale, it's your  
boutique childcare'

# QUESTIONS



## Contact

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What can be done to support health and wellbeing of the educators?

## Activity 1



# Activity 1

Resilience  
Parents  
Professional boundaries  
Perception and knowledge of FDC



## Activity 2

# Translating the research to resources



## Activity 2

Resilience  
Parents  
Professional boundaries  
Perception and knowledge of FDC



# QUESTIONS

“keep the family in family day care’

Thankyou and to everyone who has participated and helped with this research

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