The Exemplary Early Childhood Educators At Work Study is well and truly underway. It has been encouraging to have had so much support from educators who value the importance of this Australian first research project. High quality early childhood education and care is pivotal to positive and successful outcomes for young children. It is the intention of this project to focus on the wonderful and largely undervalued workforce that is responsible for these programs. By investigating your work this project aims to inform strategies to better attract, prepare, recognise, support and retain a high-quality early childhood educator workforce into the future. In a way, your participation will help to define and shape the future definition of an ‘exemplary educator’.

We have had many wonderful services join the project, but we are still seeking more. The larger the group of contributors, the more valuable the research becomes. This is an opportunity for you to have a voice in what will be the single largest database in Australia that focuses on the complexities of the everyday work of exemplary educators in early childhood.

Why was your centre chosen?

Eligibility for the study is very limited. We have handpicked early childhood services that have exceeded all standards and substandards in the National Quality Standard Assessment and Rating process. This is an incredible result and something that we are sure you are very proud of. Your service and educators were assessed at the highest level.

Want to find out more about the research project?

This is a three year, multi-level investigation with three unique phases. This first phase focusses on collecting data to build a picture of what an exemplary educator’s day looks like, via the use of a smartphone app. The second and third phases will involve focus groups and case studies respectively. At this point in time, your participation is solely for phase one.

There is information on our blog, including some articles authored by our researchers that you may find interesting. Check it out [here](https://exemplaryeducators.wordpress.com)

Keep a close eye out for the Exemplary Educators Study in publications from various organisations …if people haven’t heard about this project by now, they will soon and you can proudly tell them that your service was one of the invited centres!

Our Partners

Nine wonderful organisations have invested in the project.

- Child Australia
- Community Early Learning Australia
- Inner West Council
- Crèche and Kindergarten Association
- KU Children’s Services
- Independent Education Union (QLD & NT)
- Independent Education Union (NSW/ACT)
- United Voice
- Rutgers University (USA)
Do all educators need to participate?
Participation is voluntary. While it would be great to have as many educators in the service completing the smart phone app, we understand that not all educators at your service may want to participate.

Does the whole team have to do it at the same time?
No, you can decide how your service completes the RTSTUD app. Most centres have been doing it together as a team (this helps to stay motivated) and others have been rolling it out room by room, or by qualification level. We are happy for you to work out the best arrangement for your service.

How long will this take?
The RTSTUD app will seek to gather 20 entries per user. For a full time educator, this is approximately 10 days (2 notifications per day). For part time staff, this will take longer. If the app ‘beeps’ on a non-work day, you simply indicate that you are not at work by pressing a button.

What if I miss a notification?
That’s ok. We understand that there will be times when you are away from work, or unable to access the app because you are with the children. The app will send you three reminders at 10 minutes intervals and if you haven’t been able to fill it out, it will simply reset and try again at another time.

Is there a cutoff date for participation?
We would love centres to start as soon as they feel ready and comfortable. However, as we head to the end of the year, this might mean that you want to wait until early 2018. Don’t worry, we will send out a cutoff date reminder well in advance so you will know how much time you have.

Who should be involved?
All educators with the appropriate mandated level of qualifications, who are working directly with the children on a regular basis. This includes educators across all qualifications.

I don’t know if I have the time to do this?
We understand that you already have a lot of responsibilities and that most educators are time poor. This is why the app was created. Entering data into the app (once you are confident) should take less than 5 minutes. Taking the time to enter data about what you have been doing for the past hour, will actually provide documented evidence on just how busy early childhood educators are!

What help is available if I have a question or get stuck?
Our Research Assistant is available to help you work through any issues or ‘hiccups’ before and during your participation period and can be contacted at any time.

Once your centre has consented to participation, you will receive a very detailed ‘User guide’ and a code for a demonstration / trial app before you commence the official data collection. This will allow you to become familiar with the app.

Meet the Researchers
Our research team bring with them extensive expertise, experience, and skills. They all have a strong interest in the early childhood workforce; and a strong track record of collaboration with the early childhood field. You are welcome to contact our researchers about the project at any time.

Would you like more information?
We are more than happy to speak individually to services and talk about your needs and how you might integrate your participation in this research into your service’s:

- Learning curriculum
- Reflective pedagogy
- Quality Improvement Plan
- Possible application for an excellent rating

Please contact our Research Assistant for a chat or more information. We would love to hear from you.

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