We are six months into our project and very excited and encouraged by the feedback that we have received from you, an early childhood exemplary educator. It has been fantastic to gain an insight into your typical work days. New data is coming through each day from the Random Time Sampling Time-Use Diary you are completing that shows the complex, challenging and multi-faceted work that you do. We have included an early summary of the data received so far to share with you in this newsletter.

Who has participated so far?

By the end of November, 105 educators from more than 48 preschools and long day care centres in metropolitan and regional areas of NSW and QLD had entered Time Use Diary data. As a group, our participants represent a wide range of positions, qualifications, and experience. Most of you are working with children aged 3 to 5 years, and over a third of you are working with children with additional needs.

The participation we have had so far is a terrific start, particularly as educators get ready for the holiday period and enrolments in 2018. But in order to make this database more robust, we need more exemplary educators on board. Our goal is to reach 500 educators, so we still have a way to go!

The benefits of joining the project.

The project will provide an evidence base to inform:

- pay equity determinations
- professional standards for early childhood educators
- the recruitment of suitable candidates into educator courses who have realistic expectations of the profession and the skills required
- the content of vocational and university courses, to better prepare pre-service educators for their future roles
- the content of continuing professional development to more effectively support educators to move towards exemplary practice
- management strategies to strengthen professional supports and organisational conditions that foster high quality ECE

Remember, this database will be the first of its kind in Australia. This is your opportunity to share and showcase the challenging work that you do.

Would you like to learn more?

If you would like to read more, there are some interesting articles authored by our researchers that you may find interesting on our blog. Check it out here. (https://exemplaryeducators.wordpress.com)

We still have a while to go!

End of year closures

Many centres may close over the holiday break or operate with a lower enrolment capacity. If this is the case, you may choose to wait until the new year so that your data shows a ‘typical work day’. The project will continue into the new year so there is flexibility in finding a time that suits your centre.

Some initial data and trends we are seeing

We thought that you would be interested to know about some preliminary findings from the data you have provided so far. Please remember that this data is based on 1,200 hours of work and 105 educators. Our goal is to have information on 10,000 hours from 500 educators. What we are
seeing so far is just a taste of what we can expect in 2018. So far:

- We can estimate that almost two-thirds of an early childhood educator’s working day is spent in direct engagement with children. This includes being with children during play, engaging in intentional teaching, being with a child or children during routine care or transition experiences, and providing emotional support.
- The rest of the day is typically used for planning, organising the indoor and outdoor play environment, doing professional development or administration, communicating through emails/newsletters with families, and taking breaks for lunch, etc.
- We are also beginning to get a picture of how busy early childhood educators are, from the number of different activities you enter for each hour of the Time Use Diary. The number of primary activities educators have entered ranges from one activity for the whole hour to the maximum of 10 different activities. On average, educators are completing 3 different activities during a typical hour.
- We can also see that for a large proportion of educators’ work day you are also engaged in a secondary activity. This shows us that multi-tasking, which is when educators report doing two different activities at the same time, is typical of early childhood educators’ work.

What some of the participating educators are saying about this project

“I found it useful to be reminded just how many things we do all at once – and how stressful this is but also how satisfying.”

“The app is really easy to use and everyone was really excited to start!”

“I am looking forward to reading the research findings, this really is important for our profession”

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.

(Left to Right)
Professor Frances Press | 02 6338 4287 | fpress@csu.edu.au
Professor Linda Harrison | 02 6338 4872 | lharrison@csu.edu.au
A/Prof Sandie Wong | 02 6338 4437 | swong@csu.edu.au
Dr Megan Gibson | 07 31880921 | mgibson@qut.edu.au

A farewell from Sylvia (Research Assistant)

“I was offered a secondment to work with the Exemplary Early Childhood Educators Study for six months through my work at Inner West Council. This was an amazing opportunity to work with leading people in the early childhood sector and develop skills and knowledge into the process of research. During these six months, I have met exemplary educators and had open critical discussions about the study and pedagogy. I have learnt so much and I carry that with me daily. I have really enjoyed my time on the Exemplary Early Childhood Educator Study and look forward to future projects together.”

Please don’t forget that Kim will be assisting any services that Sylvia is working with. Kim’s details are below.

Would you like more information?

We are more than happy to speak individually to services and talk about how you might integrate your participation into your: learning curriculum, reflective pedagogy, Quality Improvement Plan and possible application for an excellent rating.

We know that email inboxes get full over the silly season, so if you would like us to resend your invitation or If you would like to have chat please contact our Research Assistant, Kim Crisp (0468 358 364 (kim.crisp@qut.edu.au).

Seasons greeting from

The Exemplary Early Childhood Educators at Work Research Team

We look forward to working with you in 2018.