It's your last chance to contribute to the RTSTUD app data

Don’t miss the boat!

If you haven’t completed the smartphone app there is still time to contribute to Australia’s largest study of the work of exemplary early childhood educators.

Collection of RTSTUD data will cease on Friday 30 November

Thank you to everyone who is or has contributed to the Exemplary Educators Study. To date we have invited just over 550 early childhood education and care services across Australia to participate in data collection from the RTSTUD app. The data that you are sharing is invaluable and we really appreciate the time and energy you are giving this project.

By investigating your work we can inform strategies to better attract, prepare, recognise, support and retain a high-quality early childhood educator workforce into the future. Your participation will help to define and shape what it means to be an ‘exemplary educator’.

Even if your centre originally declined to participate but now you’d like to - you are very welcome to join the project! We would love to have you on board.

Educators working in participating centres, who did not use the app are also welcome to commence the study, using the original codes etc. that were sent to the centre.

How far along is this project?

We have been rolling out the project for just over a year. Phase one is coming to an end and phase two of the project is now in progress.

**PHASE ONE: RTSTUD app**

Data collection for phase one will stop on 30 November. The investigators will then analyse all the data that educators have shared with us from the RTSTUD app.

**PHASE TWO: Focus Groups**

Several face to face focus groups have already been completed. Thank you to all of the educators who gave us incredible insight into your practices and understandings about being an exemplary educator. More opportunities for focus groups will be available over the coming months so please join us.

Focus Group participants receive a $50 gift voucher if attending a session outside of work hours. The focus group discussions allow us to probe into the findings from the RTSTUD. We are very interested to hear how these findings resonate with your experiences.

**PHASE THREE: Case Studies**

Case studies will commence in 2019 and will involve field visits and the use of a specialised survey tool. Phase three allows us to study in detail the day-to-day work of exemplary educators.

These three phases of data collection ensure breadth and depth in our data, capturing the individual, professional and organisational dimensions of exemplary educators’ work. Each phase is extremely important and your participation is central to the project’s success.
Dissemination and data analysis

Our project was presented at the Early Childhood Australia (ECA) National Conference last week in Sydney. We are also presenting this week at the C&K Research into Practice Day in Brisbane.

The presentation slides from these events will be up on our blog over the coming weeks. They offer some insight into the preliminary analysis of data. As at July 2018, we had gathered over 3000 hours of valuable data from early childhood educators from Preschool Centres (43%) and Long Day Care Centres (57%).

Exemplary Educators Study blog
https://exemplaryeducators.wordpress.com/

Reasons to join the project

- This is your opportunity to have a voice in a project that will significantly impact future improvements to early childhood education and our workforce.

- Educators who have used the app have found that it is a great reflection tool, and have shared their thoughts at staff meetings. They have been able to incorporate some of their discussions into their teaching reflections and Quality Improvement Plan.

- Being a centre that is involved in large scale research shows that staff are committed to quality early childhood education and can assist centres in their application for an excellent rating.

- The invitation to this project went out to only 550 centres nationally. Being invited to participate in the project gives your exemplary educators tangible recognition for the incredible work that they do.

Need more information?

Please contact our Research Assistants for a chat or more information about the project. Sue and Kim are available on Mondays and Tuesdays.

The Research Team

Investigators

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Welcome Sue

Sue is our newly appointed research assistant in WA. Sue has worked across early childhood, primary and secondary education, in a variety of teaching, planning and assessment roles. A keen advocate for quality early childhood education, Sue currently teaches at Edith Cowan University and is involved in ongoing research. Sue will be working predominantly with our WA and SA centres.

Partner organisations

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)