

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Dear Families

After a challenging year and with the festive season upon us, it is important to focus on those aspects of our lives that are a priority – family, friends, health and happiness.

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted on all of us in some way – thankfully in our state the management and response has been overall very successful with the restrictions not to the high level of some other jurisdictions. Whilst it is essential to remain vigilant in terms of health and hygiene practices and follow the direction of recognised authorities, families will be able to celebrate this special time together – something that was uncertain for a period.

For children, the anticipation of Christmas and all that goes with it is central to their thinking as they see the many gift

idea catalogues and advertising of those much sought after toys and equipment. When thinking about a gift for your child/ren consider the following:

- **Age appropriateness** – choose toys that promote learning and growth and are open ended (can be used in a variety of ways)
- **Safety** – avoid ribbons, cords, and small parts/pieces for young children
- **Wheel toys** – safety equipment is essential (helmets, protective knee/arm pads)
- **Fabric toys** – flame retardant and can be laundered
- **Digital toys** – adhere to recommended limitations for usage particularly screen times.



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'Children First'

Also, during the summer holiday period when water activities increase it is important for families to be water safety conscious. Children are naturally attracted to water and therefore must always be supervised whether at home, at the beach or at an aquatic facility. If water play is an activity at home, ensure buckets and inflatable pools are emptied immediately after use. Families are encouraged not to rely on flotation devices as a safety measure – the key to water safety is active supervision. Further information and resources about water safety for children is contained in this newsletter.

Sun safety is also important as outdoor play increases with summer weather. Parents can be a positive role model for their children by promoting and following the recommendations of recognised authorities that reduces the risk of UV damage in children and helps them develop good sun protection habits. Further SunSmart information and resources about sun safety is also contained in this newsletter.

Finally, to those families who cease connection with Lady Gowrie Tasmania as their children move onto school, thank you for the faith shown in us to support the education and care of your children. To support families with this transition, the focus article in this newsletter provides practical tips on preparing children for starting school.

To those families and children returning in 2021, we look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you to support your children's learning and development.

On behalf of Lady Gowrie Tasmania, I extend very best wishes for a safe, peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year.

Take good care,

Ros Cornish
Chief Executive Officer

SunSmart Reminders

1. **SLIP** on some sun-protective clothing that covers as much skin as possible.
2. **SLOP** on broad spectrum, water resistant SPF30+ (or higher) sunscreen. Put it on 20 minutes before you go outdoors and every two hours afterwards. Sunscreen should never be used to extend the time you spend in the sun.
3. **SLAP** on a hat – broad brim or legionnaire style to protect your face, head, neck and ears.
4. **SEEK** shade.
5. **SLIDE** on some sunglasses – make sure they meet Australian Standards.



B4 Early Years Coalition



Lady Gowrie Tasmania is a proud member of the B4 Early Years Coalition - a movement for change to ensure every child in Tasmania is cared for and nurtured through the early years, no matter what. The name 'B4' represents the early years of a child's life – pregnancy to age four – before a child begins full-time school and the period before birth.

To learn more about the important work of the B4 Early Years Coalition, please follow the link below:

<https://b4.education.tas.gov.au/projects/>

Message from the Board of Directors

Dear Families and Friends

Suddenly we find ourselves at the end of 2020 – a year that has at times felt long, as we faced the coronavirus pandemic, but at other times has seemingly flown past, as we have returned to some of our normal routines.

The year has been filled with challenges and change, and as we get ready for the end of the year, rather than focusing on the challenges, instead I would like to encourage our families, friends and team to reflect on what we have achieved.

Thank you to our families that have trusted our team to be diligent and dedicated as they have delivered safe services. Thank you also for trusting in their kindness and resilience, knowing their work is focused on helping children to feel safe, be happy and to thrive.

Thank you to our team who worked through the uncertainty and constant change and have taken on whatever has been asked of them, as we adapted to the changing requirements and actions, we needed to take to keep our doors open to support those that needed us most. Coming to work each day and striving to continue to do the best we can, is no easy task in uncertain times.

Since our last newsletter we held our AGM which was a great success and was delivered in keeping with our COVID Safety Plan. Deputy Chair Barbara Mawson and I had the privilege of recognising some of the achievements of our team including awarding the Helen Stephen Scholarship, recognising long service and thanking some long serving retirees.

Our AGM was the last formal service of two of the members of our Board with Angie Somann-Crawford and Kane Ingham finishing their terms, each having shared their expertise, time and commitment to supporting the organisation's continued growth over the last three years. On behalf of the Board, thank you both for all your work, dedication and counsel.

In closing out the year, on behalf of the Board, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our CEO, Ros Cornish, for her resilience and leadership throughout the year, and acknowledge the excellent support our Senior Management Team, Sam Wesson, Annette Barwick and Kathy Cripps, provided throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

I hope everyone gets a well-deserved break over the Christmas period and we look forward to seeing everyone again in 2021.

Anne Beach
Chair Board of Directors



LADY GOWRIE TASMANIA CHILD AND FAMILY WELLBEING PROGRAM



Lady Gowrie Tasmania is a community-based not for profit organisation, providing a range of services for children, families and early childhood professionals within Tasmania.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania offers their families access to the Child and Family Wellbeing Program.

The program provides free confidential, practical and emotional support to families who might be experiencing some of life's challenges or who may benefit from support in the day to day raising of their children.

CHILD AND FAMILY WELLBEING PROGRAM

229 Campbell Street, North Hobart, TAS 7000

PO Box 422, South Hobart, TAS 7004

P: (03) 6230 6860 E: familysupport@gowrie-tas.com.au

Christmas Closure Dates

All Lady Gowrie Tasmania services and programs will close for the Christmas break at their usual time on Wednesday 23rd December, 2020 and will re-open on Monday 4th January, 2021. Wishing all our children and families a happy and safe holiday season.

2021 Fee Increase

The Board of Directors approved a fee increase, effective at the beginning of 2021, as part of the budget development and approval process. In approving the increase, the Board was cognisant of the impact on families and compared Lady Gowrie Tasmania fees with other providers. This investigation indicated that the fee charged by Lady Gowrie Tasmania remains below that of many competitors. The fee schedule for 2021 is available at each individual site and upon request.

Kids Alive – Do the Five!

With summer holidays fast approaching it is important to re-visit conversations with children around water safety. Tragically, drowning is a leading cause of accidental death in children under 5 in Australia. Many children will also experience non-fatal drownings, which can lead to debilitating life-long disabilities. 'Kids Alive – Do the Five!' website <https://kidsalive.com.au/> offers fantastic resources for families including access to the mobile app, music videos and water safety animations for children. In the meantime – remember to do 'the five' below!

1. Fence the pool
2. Shut the gate
3. Teach your kids to swim – its great!
4. Supervise – watch your mate
5. Learn how to resuscitate

*'Maybe Christmas, he thought,
doesn't come from a store.
Maybe Christmas, perhaps,
means a little bit more.'*

DR SEUSS



Starting School: Preparing Your Child

Becoming familiar with your child's new school

In the months and weeks before starting school it is good for your child to become familiar with the school environment. This includes routines and rules as well as the classroom, playground, toilets, drinking fountains and so on. Here are some ideas:

- If your child is at a preschool or early childhood centre with a school transition program, try to make sure your child is at preschool on the days the children visit 'big school'.
- If your child isn't at preschool, visit the school yourselves, or see whether the school runs its own transition program.
- Visit the school and if possible meet your child's teacher. Let your child know that teachers are there to help, and she/he can ask for help any time.
- Make sure your child knows where you'll be picking her/him up.

Practical preparations for starting school

It's a good idea to have uniforms, lunch boxes, bags and stationery ready ahead of time:

- Get your child to try on the uniform and shoes before the first day to make sure everything fits. It's a good idea to have your child wear new school shoes for a few days before school starts and practise doing up laces or buckles.
- Choose a school bag that's comfortable for your child to carry. A backpack with adjustable straps is best.
- Choose a lunch box that has an easy lid for your child to open
- Find out if your child needs any other items for school - hat, art smock, library bag, pencils, markers, crayons.
- Make sure your child's name is clearly marked on all clothing, as well as his/her lunch box and school bag.

Managing feelings about starting school

Starting school can be a big change for your child, and she/he might feel a bit anxious as well as excited. Ideas for managing mixed feelings are below:

- Try to organise play dates with other children before the first day of school. It can help if your child knows another child going to the same school before school starts.
- Give your child lots of love and support and be enthusiastic about your child starting school. This sends your child the positive message that school is exciting and that she/he will cope well and have fun.
- Read a children's book about starting school with your child. Reading books about school together can help you talk with your child about his feelings. You could try *Starting School* by Janet and Allen Ahlberg, or *Starting School* by Jane Godwin and Anna Walker.

Starting school: the early weeks

Your child might need some support when school starts. There are some simple things you can do to help these first few weeks go smoothly:

- Try to drop off your child at school before the bell goes in the morning. Also pick your child up on time. If you're late it could make your child feel very anxious.
- Be patient if your child wants to blurt out every little detail about school or clams up completely. You could try saying something like, 'Tell me one good thing about your day', rather than asking lots of questions.
- Don't expect too much academic progress too soon. If your child is happy and seems to be enjoying school, that's a real achievement. The rest will come later.
- Remember that it's normal for children to play with lots of different children, and even to play on their own sometimes. It takes a while before they settle into a group of friends.
- If your child doesn't seem to be settling well, or tells you about teasing or bullying, speak to your child's classroom teacher.

School is a big transition for your child. Your child might need extra support and plenty of rest at home in the first few weeks.

Taken from Raising Children's Network Article 'Starting School: Preparing Your Child'



Reflection: Building Community Connections

Midway Point Education and Care Service are proud to share our reflection below:

"The sun is out, the birds are singing...let's go for a walk in our local community!"

Today as a group we set off on a little adventure. As we walked through the streets, educators explained that the children's rooms are named after the street names in our local community. Ivy and Madeline noticed many butterflies, Riley B noticed a butterfly sculpture on someone's house! The children walked in a calm and confident manner while engaging in conversation about their surroundings and learning about road safety.

We walked until we reached the basketball courts (or as some children like to call them the 'football courts') where the children moved their bodies and oh my, what a great job they did! We played ball games, fruit salad, Pac-Man, chasing insects... as a group we laughed, made jokes, worked together as a team and talked about the importance of keeping active. The children were so excited they could not wipe the smiles from their faces!

On our way back to the service, we visited the community garden and spoke to Jo who runs the local community house. We explained to Jo that we are starting a garden at our service and how we would love for her to share some tips with us. So, the next time we head out for a walk, we will visit the community house for a session with Jo on how to make our very own garden beds! As we said goodbye to Jo, she kindly gave us each a delicious, scrumptious apple to eat. The children shared their thoughts below:

'I saw apples!' - Ivy

'We need to be careful of cars and not get hurt'. - Evelyn K

'It was so good and so cool, I saw a butterfly on someone's house'. - Riley B

'We played basketball, I want to go again'. - Noah

'My house is just down there, next time, if it stays Beau's house, we can go there!' - Beau

'We had apples on our walk... yummy!' - Mason

'We got some flowers and had apples from Jo. We can go to the playground next time'. - Jasmine

'I liked the game where you chased us.' (Pac-Man) - Madeleine

Connecting with our local community is an important part of our program as it enhances our children's sense of belonging and social connectedness."

Miffy Wedd – Service Manager

Midway Point Education and Care Service





Yoga and Mindfulness at Norwood

The children in the Warragul Room have been participating in Cosmic Kids Yoga online with their favourite sessions being Betsy the Banana and the Butterfly of Wishes. Yoga improves children's concentration and memory, builds flexibility and strength and also helps children to regulate their emotions. It also boosts children's self-esteem and helps them to manage anxiety.

The children have also been participating in daily mindfulness sessions with one of their favourite stories being the Cosmic Kids 'Sleeping Dragon'. The benefits of mindfulness for children include lowering anxiety and stress, increasing positive moods, improving social skills and concentration and strengthening self-control. Mindfulness also increases self-esteem and encourages better decision-making skills.

These yoga and mindfulness experiences in our programs, held both indoors and outdoors, are helping our children to slow down and reset in this busy world.

Heather Mains – Service Manager
Norwood Education and Care Service

NAIDOC Week 2020 Celebrations & Reflections

NAIDOC Week is an annual celebration of the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The NAIDOC Week theme for 2020 was 'Always Was, Always Will Be' and recognised that First Nations peoples have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Kingston Education and Care Service share their NAIDOC Week 2020 celebration and reflection below:



**Always Was,
Always Will Be.**
8-15 NOV 2020



'Here at the Kingston Early Education and Care Service we are greeted every morning by the inspiring vista of kunanyi through our windows. As we celebrated NAIDOC Week in our service, we continued our journey of cultural competence as we explored the culture and ways of the Nation's First People.'

One of our educators in the Wattle Room, Michelle, identifies as a Tasmanian Aboriginal. She is proud of her heritage and is on an ongoing learning journey of the ways and cultures of her ancestors, as well as being invested in building awareness of cultural perspectives in the community in which she lives and works. She looks forward to sharing her knowledge and understandings with the educators, children and families at our service to support the embedding of positive cultural competence.

During NAIDOC Week, Michelle wore her Aboriginal flag t-shirt which prompted discussions with the children around the meaning behind the colours of the flag. Red representing the earth, yellow the sun and black the Aboriginal people of Australia. We also connected with land through an excursion to the bush behind our service, collecting fallen fauna to use in a planned collaborative weaving project on our deck under the watchful eye of kunanyi.'

Karin Eikhoff – Service Manager
Kingston Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania Alanvale Education and Care Service share their NAIDOC Week 2020 experiences below:



In the Tamar Room at Alanvale Education and Care Service the children participated eagerly in a variety of rich and meaningful experiences to celebrate NAIDOC Week 2020. Although we encourage these experiences during key weeks of celebration of our Nation's First peoples and culture, we are proud in the knowledge that our children are exposed to ongoing indigenous respectful practices that are embedded in our pedagogy and programs.

Lynette Mason – Service Manager
Alanvale Education and Care Service

Lady Gowrie Tasmania acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Australia and pays our respect to the longest living cultures and Elders both past and present. We acknowledge and celebrate the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures today and acknowledge and respect their deep connection and relationship with Country and Community and commit to working together for a united Australia that values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for all.

To learn more about Lady Gowrie Tasmania's genuine commitment to reconciliation and to build our people's cultural competence please visit our website:

<https://gowrie-tas.com.au/about-us/#commitment-to-reconciliation>



Christmas Chocolate Balls

Children will enjoy helping to cook this quick and easy treat for Christmas – to give away as gifts or for your family to enjoy!

Ingredients

- 1 X 250g packet of plain biscuits
- 1 X 395g tin of condensed milk (condensed coconut milk for a dairy free alternative)
- 1 cup of desiccated coconut
- ¼ cup of cocoa
- Extra desiccated coconut for rolling

Method

1. Place the biscuits into a bowl and crush until they resemble fine crumbs
2. Add the cocoa powder, desiccated coconut and condensed milk and mix until well combined
3. Roll heaped teaspoons of mixture into balls and roll in remaining coconut to coat

You can shake up the recipe and make it your own by using your favourite biscuits, for example Ginger Snaps, or by rolling the chocolate balls in Christmas sprinkles!

Makes approximately 30 balls. Store in an airtight container for up to a week.

Transition to QK Enrol - Update for Families

QK Enrol is now available to Lady Gowrie Tasmania families for waitlist, enrolment and bookings management. All Vacation Care is now booked using the QK Enrol via the My Family Lounge portal. Currently enrolled Long Day Care families will have QK Enrol made available to them early in the new year but may request earlier access from service managers if they wish to request changes to bookings or enrol siblings. After following the registration instructions in your welcome email, please use the link on the Lady Gowrie Tasmania website to sign into My Family Lounge. For more information, please see the My Family Lounge website at www.qikkids.com.au/My-Family-Lounge/home or contact Kathy Ortmann, Children's Services Program Leader – Operations, via email csoperations@gowrie-tas.com.au or phone (03) 6230 6818.



2020 Children's Week Teddy Bears' Picnic

'If you go down in the woods today, you're sure of a big surprise'...

It was a wonderful sight to see children and educators across all Lady Gowrie Tasmania Education and Care Services come together in October to celebrate the 2020 Children's Week Teddy Bears' Picnic. Teddy bears of all shapes and sizes were proudly cuddled, played with and 'fed' at the picnic by the children and their friends.

Children's Week is a national celebration that recognises the talents, skills, achievements and rights of children. This year's theme focused on the right of all children to choose their own friends and safely connect with others and is based on Article 15 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Integrated Centre for Children and Families, Gordon Square and Fahan Education and Care Services are pleased to share their Teddy Bear's Picnic photos on this page.



Community Connectedness in Family Day Care

Over the last few months, we have endeavoured to head back out on excursions and to continue making connections within our local community. We really believe that creating a sense of connectedness for the children in our care is so important for their learning and wellbeing. This has meant trips out to the parks and library, as well as re-engaging with the local schools and the Launching into Learning Programs that they offer. In the coming months, we hope to continue on this path and visit new places including the zoo, museum and local programs and events, which will give the children more opportunities to broaden their understanding of our community and to feel more connected.

We also recently held our Family Day Care Christmas party, which amazingly every family was able to attend - even Santa! It was so nice to all come together to celebrate and to have that sense of closeness and belonging that Family Day Care represents.

Stephen and Stacey - Enriched Explorers
Registered with Lady Gowrie Tasmania Family Day Care



Immunisation

Immunisation is a simple, safe and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases before they come into contact with them. Immunisation not only protects individuals, but also others in the community, by reducing the spread of preventable diseases. Your child can get the immunisations recommended on the Australian National Immunisation Program (NIP) schedule from several places including GP clinics, community health clinics and local government immunisation clinics. In January 2016, the Australian Government introduced a 'No jab, no pay' policy. This means that if a child isn't fully immunised parents are ineligible for the Family Tax Benefit Part A or the Child Care Subsidy. For more information about immunisations go to www.immunise.health.gov.au or talk to your family GP.



Lady Gowrie Tasmania - Website and Facebook

We encourage all families to follow the Lady Gowrie Tasmania Facebook page to receive current announcements and the reflections, stories and photos from our services and programs. For current information on all Lady Gowrie Tasmania services and programs, details of upcoming events, direct links to the latest Newsletters and Vacation Care Programs and most importantly for families - an easy to navigate 'Contact Us' page please visit our new website www.gowrie-tas.com.au





Contact Details

Head Office

346 Macquarie Street, Hobart	6230 6800	info@gowrie-tas.com.au
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Northern Services

Long Day Care Services

Alanvale	6348 1390	alanvale@gowrie-tas.com.au
Gordon Square	6382 2445	gordonsquare@gowrie-tas.com.au
Norwood	6336 6971	norwood@gowrie-tas.com.au
University	6324 3731	uninorth@gowrie-tas.com.au

Outside School Hours Care Programs

Frederick Street VAC	6331 5106 / 0438 109 367	oshclusternorth@gowrie-tas.com.au
Gordon Square ASC, VAC	6382 2445	gordonsquare@gowrie-tas.com.au
Launceston Preparatory School ASC	6331 5106 / 0438 109 367	oshclusternorth@gowrie-tas.com.au
Norwood ASC, BSC	6331 5106 / 0438 109 367	oshclusternorth@gowrie-tas.com.au
University ASC Mowbray, VAC Campus	6331 5106 / 0438 109 367	oshclusternorth@gowrie-tas.com.au

Occasional Care Program

Frederick Street Pre-School Program	6331 5106	oshclusternorth@gowrie-tas.com.au
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Southern Services

Long Day Care Services

Acton	6248 5644	acton@gowrie-tas.com.au
Battery Point	6214 0380	batterypoint@gowrie-tas.com.au
Bowen Road	6228 4568	bowenroad@gowrie-tas.com.au
Campbell Street	6230 6881	campbellstreet@gowrie-tas.com.au
Kingston	6229 1901	kingston@gowrie-tas.com.au
Integrated Centre for Children and Families	6230 6805	integratedcentre@gowrie-tas.com.au
Midway Point	6230 6872	midwaypoint@gowrie-tas.com.au
University	6226 2088	unisouth@gowrie-tas.com.au
Fahan Richmond South Hobart	Swansea Oatlands	6230 6805 clusteradmin@gowrie-tas.com.au

Outside School Hours Care Programs

Albuera Street ASC, VAC Bowen Road ASC Brighton BSC, ASC, VAC Glenorchy ASC, VAC Goulburn Street ASC Lansdowne Crescent BSC, ASC, VAC	Mount Nelson BSC, ASC Richmond ASC Rosetta BSC, ASC Sorell ASC, VAC South Hobart ASC, VAC Taroona BSC, ASC, VAC	6230 6806	clusteradmin@gowrie-tas.com.au
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Family Day Care

Family Day Care Scheme	6230 6809	familydaycare@gowrie-tas.com.au
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