



Early Childhood Education Weekly Update

23 January 2023

What you need to know this week:

- NSW Health is seeing an increase in gastro cases across the state. Services are encouraged to follow NSW Health's advice on preventing spread and controlling outbreaks.
- Register now for a free webinar on 1 March from 4-7pm on Unpacking Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement, delivered in partnership with Community Early Learning Australia.
- The Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund is open until 5pm 14 February.
- The department has released information for services to share with parents and carers.

Sector wide updates

Health update: rise in gastro cases

NSW Health is encouraging people to stay on alert due to an increase in cases of gastroenteritis in early childhood education services.

Viral gastro causes vomiting and diarrhoea, and can easily spread through direct contact with vomit, faeces, contaminated surfaces, and contaminated food or drink.

An outbreak should be suspected when two or more children or staff have sudden onset of vomiting or diarrhoea in a two-day period.

Promptly alert your local public health unit if an outbreak is suspected by calling 1300 066 055. Reporting is [required under the Public Health Act](#).

Services must also [notify the NSW Department of Education](#) in the event of an outbreak.

Actions to prevent spread

- Be alert for symptoms of fever, rash, diarrhoea or vomiting in children
- Reinforce basic hygiene measures, such as regular hand washing, cleaning all hard surfaces, and provide education to help prevent the spread of infections
- Exclude sick children and staff from attending the centre for at least 48 hours after their symptoms settle, and encourage them to visit their local GP
- Wear gloves and a mask when cleaning up bodily fluids, including vomit, when symptoms commence at the centre. Disinfect surfaces with a freshly made sodium hypochlorite solution.

What you should do next

Follow NSW Health's [advice for controlling viral gastro outbreaks in childcare centres](#).

More information

Read the NSW Health's [Gastroenteritis fact sheet](#).

Live webinar: Unpacking Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement

The NSW Department of Education is working with Community Early Learning Australia (CELA) to deliver free, online professional learning opportunities to support all service types.

An Unpacking Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement webinar will take place on **Wednesday 1 March from 4-7pm**.

The three-hour session offers:

- Key information to support educators and service leaders to feel confident in the self-assessment and continuous improvement process
- Tools and activities that enable self-assessment to be built into the culture of services
- Practical tips for each service type to enable all team members to understand and be more involved in self-assessment

What to do next

Register via CELA's [Unpacking Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement webpage](#).

Don't miss your opportunity to attend this high value, free online learning session!

Disaster Ready Fund Round 1 2023-24

Applications for the Australian Government's Disaster Ready Fund - Round 1 are now open.

The Disaster Ready Fund is designed to help communities protect themselves against the impacts of natural hazards across Australia.

Under the Australian Government guidelines, the NSW Reconstruction Authority is the Applicant and is coordinating project proposals on behalf of New South Wales.

Project proposals must be submitted to the NSW Reconstruction Authority on the proposal form via email to drfnsw@resilience.nsw.gov.au by **5pm 14 February**.

What to do next

Register now for information briefing sessions being held via Microsoft Teams:

- [Information briefing for local government and community](#) - Tuesday 24 January 2023, 3:30–5pm
- [Information briefing: general session](#) - Monday 30 January 2023, 2-3:30pm.

View the NSW Government's [Guidance on how to submit a project proposal \(PDF 457KB\)](#) (includes the project proposal form).

More information

FAQs and further details can be found on the NSW Government's [Disaster Ready Fund page](#).

For more information about the NSW Application to the Disaster Ready Fund – Round 1, please contact the NSW Reconstruction Authority at drfnsw@resilience.nsw.gov.au.

Welcoming families to your service in 2023

The Department of Education has prepared resources for you to share with families to support their child's transition into early childhood education this year.

Our [Back to Preschool](#) webpages are relevant for all families and provide helpful information to support a child's early learning journey, no matter their age or the service type they attend.

Families can also visit our [Attending your service in 2023 webpage](#) to find out what to expect throughout the year.

What to do next

Share our [Attending your service in 2023](#) and [Starting preschool](#) webpages with your families to help them prepare for the year.

Don't forget

- Register now for the free online professional learning program [Understanding and Supporting Children's Behaviour](#) delivered in partnership with Phoenix Support for Educators.
- For preschools: Complete the [Multicultural Inclusion Support survey](#) on what topics are most useful to support culturally inclusive practice at your service. [Applications are still open](#) to receive 20 hours of free inclusion support through the Bicultural Support for Preschools program.

- Register now: [Early Childhood Inclusive Education webinar series](#) - Inclusion in OSHC services (21 February at 7pm) and Inclusion in FDC services (28 March at 7pm)
- New rounds of the [2022/23 Start Strong Capital Works Grant Program](#) will be opening from February. Mark the dates in your calendar!

Families Corner

We're sharing resources made especially for families to increase their knowledge on the early childhood education and care sector. This is something you can take and pass on to families via your own communication channels.

- Our [Starting early education webpage](#) provides parents and carers with information about what to expect when enrolling and links to [translated resources](#) in 35 languages.
- [Little Yarns](#) is a podcast series from ABC kids that families can listen to with children to explore the diverse languages and unique cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Nations.

For more information

If you have any questions about your service operation you can contact the Information and Enquiries (I&E) team on [1800 619 113](tel:1800619113) or by emailing ececd@det.nsw.edu.au.

Our I&E team are currently experiencing a high volume of calls. We appreciate your patience and understanding as our staff work as quickly as possible to get to your calls. If your inquiry is in regard to Start Strong, please email the funding team at ecec.funding@det.nsw.edu.au.

For the latest COVID-19 advice please visit the [COVID-19 guidelines for ECEC services](#).



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Sent to all services and providers.

Our mailing address is:

Early Childhood Education

105 Phillip Street

Parramatta, NSW 2150

Australia

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