



RUCSN

Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc.



ANNUAL REPORT 2006

INDEX

Page No.

RUCSN VISION, MISSION AND VALUES	2
SERVICES.....	3
REPORT FROM CHAIRPERSON AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.....	4
RUCSN ORGANISATIONAL CHART	6
RUCSN STAFF	7
EVOLVING SUPPORT FOR CHILDCARE	9
PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR WA.....	11
PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR NT	13
RUCSN RESOURCES AND TRAINING SERVICES	14
REGIONAL SERVICES.....	17
GREAT SOUTHERN INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY.....	17
CENTRAL INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY.....	19
NORTH METROPOLITAN & ISLANDS INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY.....	21
PILBARA INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY	23
SOUTH WEST INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY.....	25
SOUTH EAST INCLUSION TEAM (SEIT) JULY 2005 – MARCH 2006	27
THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2005 – 2006.....	29
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	36

RUCSN VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION

A community which values and supports high quality and inclusive services for all children.

MISSION

To support the inclusion of all children and their families in Children's Services and community activities; and to provide professional support that enables Children's Services to build capacity and deliver high quality services for all children.

VALUES

People: the intrinsic worth of children, childhood and all people, and their right to achieve to their full potential;

Community: diversity and its contribution to our community;

Participation: the rights of children and families to equitable access and participation in the community;

Relationships: mutual respect, recognition of strengths and support in all relationships;

Achievement: collaborative and co-operative approach to achieve goals;

Ethics: high level of relevant expertise and ethical practice; and

Accountability: an open and accountable organisational culture that is committed to flexibility and responsiveness through appraisal and reflection.

PHILOSOPHY

“All people have intrinsic worth and potential for development, and that for children the best place for them to achieve that potential is in a nurturing and supportive child focused environment with other children.”

SERVICES

RUCSN is the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) in both Western Australia and Northern Territory. In these roles, RUCSN facilitates support and training to all eight Inclusion Support Agencies (ISAs) in WA and two ISAs in NT, as well as to all child care services in WA and NT. RUCSN also manages a state wide Resource Centre and Library in WA.

RUCSN currently sponsors 5 of the 8 Inclusion Support Agencies and has offices and staff in the:

- North Metropolitan region – based in Malaga
- Great Southern region – based in Albany
- Central region– based in Geraldton and Kalgoorlie
- Pilbara region– based in South Hedland and Karratha
- South West region– based in Mandurah and Busselton.

RUCSN also has experience in providing a range of other services, including:

- a mobile children’s service in the West Pilbara;
- a mobile family support program across the Murchison and Midwest region;
- a mobile intensive support playgroup program in the East Pilbara;
- the Rural Playgroup Support Service in Midwest, Murchison and Pilbara regions;
- PALS (Play and Learn to Socialise) Programs as part of the Early Years Program (DCD) in Kalgoorlie, Carnarvon, Gosnells, Maylands/Bayswater, Merriwa/Clarkson, Mullewa and Byford;
- Inclusion Support in Three Year Old Kindy and Occasional Care programs; and
- a “Transition from Child Care to School” program.

REPORT FROM CHAIRPERSON AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Zelinda Bafile - Chairperson



Tony Morley – Executive Director

A YEAR OF SUCCESS

The 2005/06 year has been a period when the foresight of the Board and past commitment of Management to diversification and preparation for the new challenges ahead, has come to fruition.

RUCSN is delighted to have been recognised by the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) as the organisation appointed to take on the following important and significant roles:

- Professional Support Coordinator –Western Australia (PSCWA)
- Professional Support Coordinator – Northern Territory (PSCNT)
- Inclusion Support Agency – North Metro (NMISA)
- Inclusion Support Agency – South West Country (SWISA)
- Inclusion Support Agency – Pilbara (PISA)
- Inclusion Support Agency – Central WA (CISA)
- Inclusion Support Agency – Great Southern (GSISA)
- Supported Mobile Playgroups – Newman and outlying areas.

RUCSN retains its original focus on supporting children with disabilities and other additional needs. The new programs have allowed the organisation to broaden into a more mainstream role supporting all children in children's services.

The PSCWA and PSCNT roles mean RUCSN facilitates training and support and provides resources and advice, either directly or through sub-contractors, to all Australian Government Approved Child Care Services in Western Australia and Northern Territory.

The evolution of RUCSN from “support for children in specific target groups” to the capacity building model of supporting all children's services has required RUCSN staff to re-evaluate their roles, and then to act as change agents across the child care sector. This new model really values the input and work of carers working with children, and then adds support and resources to their specific and individual needs. The outcome is a more positive and supportive experience for each child in the service, and this is being recognised out in the field.

We take this opportunity to also thank fellow Board members and staff and the many supporters of RUCSN from the child care sector. The year 2006/2007 will be a year of consolidation for RUCSN. The new programs will be implemented, and a further needs analysis survey will be conducted to ensure that child care services are getting the support, advice, resources and training that they require in order to be able to offer high quality and inclusive child care.

OFFICE MOVE

The expansion of RUCSN to meet the new roles saw our Head Office move from West Leederville to Malaga at the end of March 2006.

The new building is larger and brighter, and has the potential to meet the growth of RUCSN in the future. During this coming year we will convert the warehouse into more office space; and ultimately have access to 26 parking bays, a useful amenity for clients and visitors.

THE 8TH ANNUAL RUCSN SCHOLARSHIP

The RUCSN Scholarship helps to cover the extra costs that can occur when a person with a disability enters tertiary education. We take great pleasure in congratulating this year's recipients:

- David M Dooley 17 years old studying for a Bachelor of Education
- Bess Williams 17 years old studying for a Bachelor of Arts
- Kim Robins 18 years old studying for a Bachelor of Science
- Marie Rye 17 years old studying for a Bachelor of Science

Each of the recipients submitted an essay as part of their application process, which highlighted their ability to achieve personally and shine as a role model for all young people.

GOVERNANCE

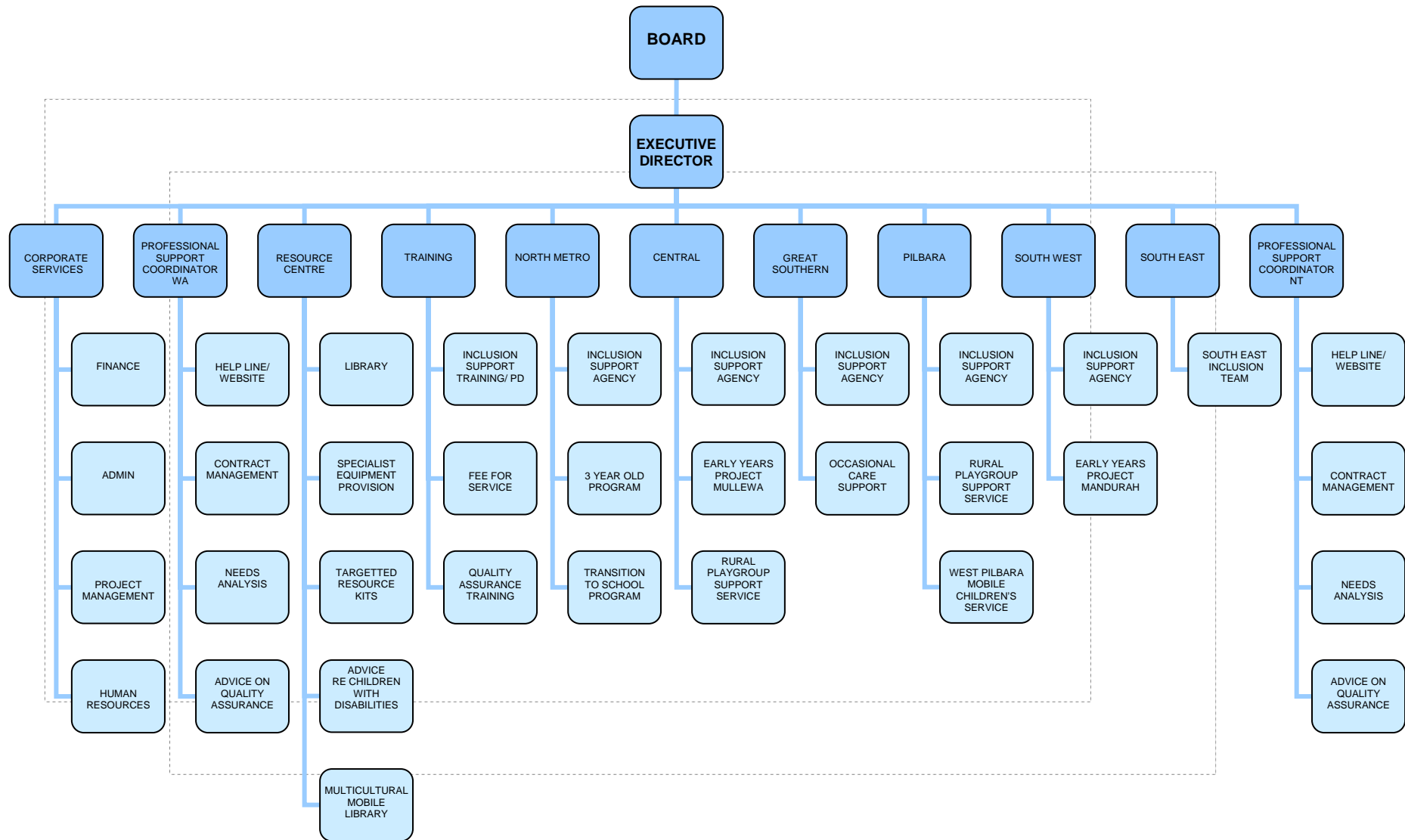
The success of RUCSN is a reflection of its culture and the value it places in its people who are dedicated and committed to the organisation's goals.

The Board of Management, Executive Director and Staff of RUCSN share a common and clear understanding of the organisation's Vision, Mission and Values, and this commitment was clearly demonstrated in an independently facilitated review during the year.

Two Board Members retired this year: Yvonne Hateley who served for one year and Margaret Sims who served for four years. Board members give their time voluntarily and we are grateful to Yvonne and Margaret and thank them for their contributions to the success RUCSN has enjoyed during their time with us.

Zelinda Bafle and Tony Morley

RUCSN ORGANISATIONAL CHART



RUCSN STAFF

RUCSN warmly acknowledges the following staff who have contributed to RUCSN's achievements during the past year.

STAFF NAME	JOB TITLE	START DATE
INCLUSION SUPPORT		
Central Inclusion Support Agency - Goldfields		
Kellie Goes	Inclusion Support Manager	2002 (to 2005)
Belinda Pool	Inclusion Support Manager	2005
Alinka Spencer	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2004
Central Inclusion Support Agency - Midwest Gascoyne		
Nicola Riley	Inclusion Support Manager	2001 (to 2005)
Sharyn May	Inclusion Support Manager	2002
Joanna Gill	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2005
Alvina Flanagan	Project Support Worker	2006
Great Southern Inclusion Support Agency		
Fiona Garland	Inclusion Support Manager	2002
Lisa Hassell	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2003 (to 2006)
North Metropolitan Inclusion Support Agency		
Cathy Hewick	Inclusion Support Manager	1996
Kerrie Phillips	Inclusion Support Facilitator	1995
Jo Robins	Inclusion Support Facilitator	1996 (to 2006)
Maria Turoy	Inclusion Support Facilitator	1997
Pauline Spicer	Inclusion Support Facilitator	1997
Sharon Gamble	Inclusion Support Facilitator	1998
Margie Edwards	Inclusion Support Facilitator	1999
Jackie Goodsman	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2003
Grace Smith	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2004
Maggie Heynemann	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2004
Gillian Lonsdale	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2004
Julie Bloor	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2004
Pilbara Inclusion Support Agency		
Carol Warren	Inclusion Support Manager	2001
Narelle Coyle	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2004
Peta Watson	Play Leader/Bicultural Worker	2005
Lyn Treasure	Playgroup and Inclusion Support Worker	2005
Ursula Wilson	Playgroup Assistant/Bicultural Worker	2005 (to 2005)
Carol Roe	Playgroup Assistant	2006

South East Inclusion Support Team (to March 2006)

Jané Hansen	Inclusion Support Manager	2004 (to 2006)
Moya McHenry	Inclusion Support Worker	1999 (to 2006)
Corinne Chiverton	Inclusion Support Worker	2003 (to 2006)

South West Inclusion Support Agency

Judy Walker	Inclusion Support Manager	2006
Hazel McLean	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2006
Alison Price	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2006
Ann Horner	Inclusion Support Facilitator	2006

TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Lee Jeffery	Manager, Training & Support Services	1996 (to 2005)
-------------	--------------------------------------	----------------

TRAINING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) SUPPORT

Ralph Southall	Training and Quality Assurance Manager	2005
Kellie Goes	Country Coordinator and Project Manager	2006

RESOURCE CENTRE

Shirley McInnes	Manager, Resource Centre	1992
Elly Hayes	Librarian	1998
Helen Illich	Library Assistant	2004
Monty Kelly	Librarian	2006
Biserka Mustajbegovic	Library Assistant (Mobile)	2006

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR

Sara Hinchley	PSC Coordinator WA	2006
Tania Sellers	PSC Manager NT	2006

MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Tony Morley	Executive Director	2001
Alisa Guillory	Administrator	1999 (to 2006)
Hayley Brandreth	Administration Officer	2004 (to 2006)
Sue O'Byrne	Bookkeeper	2002
Ngairé Bell	Administration Officer	2005 (to 2006)
Marion Bom	Manager Corporate Services and Projects	2005
Julie Janecic	Admin Team Leader	2006
Ros Gardner	Admin Officer	2006
Rahayu Jahaya	Admin Officer	2006

EVOLVING SUPPORT FOR CHILDCARE

The movement towards inclusion of all children, regardless of their level of ability or cultural background, into Australian Government funded children's services began in the 1980's. It was a natural response to the growing community belief that all Australians should enjoy equal access to community services and facilities.

Thus, the Commonwealth's Inclusion Support Program supports all children with *additional needs* – those with a disability, those from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and those from Aboriginal families – to participate in child care services.

In Western Australia, the initial support was for children with disabilities and this was provided by dedicated workers in a number of community based childcare services. In 1987, with the setting up of Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs (RUCSN), the program was extended to provide support for children with disabilities in community based centres where there was no dedicated worker. The support at this time was provided in a "hands on" way, with the one worker responsible for meeting all the child's needs. The term "integration worker" described the support role. The child was "in the door" of the service but not necessarily "participating fully".

In 1994, the Wallis Report recommended a change from the "integration" model, which had focussed on 1:1 support. It proposed a model of regional Inclusion Teams, whose workers could provide consultancy style support to all Commonwealth funded children's services in their locality. The role of the Inclusion Support Worker (previously known as SUPS workers) was to empower caregivers by providing them with the skills to successfully include children with additional needs in their programme. It was hoped that this new model would move the focus from "integration" to "inclusion", emphasising the responsibility of caregivers to provide activities and experiences that met the needs of all children. Thus services were expected to provide programmes that reflected cultural aspects of a child's life and background, as well as their interests and abilities.

In 1997, the Wallis model of Regional Inclusion (SUPS) Teams was introduced in Western Australia. It led to the creation of 11 Inclusion Teams whose boundaries were based on Family Day Care regions. Many of the previously "dedicated" support workers moved to a regional team and, with all the former "Integration Workers", were introduced to their new role as "Inclusion Workers". This was a significant change and Inclusion Support Workers had to adapt to a "trainer/facilitator" role. The Inclusion Teams were complemented by Resource and Advisory Agencies who were contracted to provide In-Service Training, Quality Assurance Support, Resources, Training for Inclusion Support Workers and Bicultural Support. Child Care Services needed to know who to contact for the different types of support needed.

The introduction of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program in 2006 sees the emphasis shifted to an integrated approach to meeting the inclusion and professional support needs of child care services. The aim is now to promote and maintain high quality care and inclusion for all children in eligible child care services, by increasing the skills of carers and service staff, in line with nationally consistent priorities.

The Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) is the central point of contact for services seeking support and provides advice, information and referral as needed. The focus of both the PSC and the Inclusion Support Facilitators is on capacity building of child care services through a strengths based approach...this means identifying the current capacity and skill level in the service; assisting the service to identify what they can do themselves and then providing advice, resource materials and information to further support the service.

The new focus on “developing strengths,” is in line with the direction being taken by many governments and agencies. It can be viewed as a critical component of community development through its emphasis on making linkages with local supports and services. Underlying this approach is the belief that groups of people – such as staff in child care services – have a variety of skills and strengths which are often neither recognised or utilised.

The new Inclusion Program assists services to identify their needs and explore how these may be met from within their own set of skills, or by accessing local support. Services will no longer be able to depend solely on their Inclusion Support Agency to meet all their needs. Instead, they will be encouraged to recognise their own capacity to address child care issues, especially around the inclusion of children with additional needs. It is envisaged as services recognise their strengths and capacities, they will become increasingly independent in meeting future challenges.

The RUCSN Annual Report reflects the progress that has been made in introducing the new Inclusion and Professional Support Program to Australian Government Approved child Care Services (AGACCS) in W.A. The process has not been without challenges, as Inclusion Support Facilitators, childcare services and industry stakeholders seek to collaboratively meet the guidelines and expectations of the new program. However, RUCSN moves forward confident that its range of services are based firmly on the strengths approach.

In Western Australia, RUCSN is the sponsor of the PSC and five of the eight Inclusion support Agencies. RUCSN also sponsors the PSC in Northern Territory.

It should also be noted that significant support for children and children’s services is provided through funding from the State and Territory Governments across Australia. The Western Australian Government funds the Department for Community Development (DCD) which has a major focus on regulations and legislation; licensing issues; and child protection. All other States and Territories provide a higher profile focus and more significant suite of programs that recognise the importance of children and children’s services in the community. The imminent review of DCD will provide an opportunity to lobby the WA Government to provide a commitment to children in this State.

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR WA

RUCSN (Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs) and Ngala Inc were appointed as the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) in Western Australia in November 2005. RUCSN is the Lead Agency and Manager of this program. Funding has been provided by the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) to implement the PSC as part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP).

Editor's Note: In September 2006 RUCSN and Ngala have amicably agreed that Ngala will withdraw from this consortium following an organisational review and a re-focusing on its core business.

For the first time, Australian Government Approved Child Care Services (AGACCS) in WA have the opportunity to access a single point of co-ordination for Australian Government funded professional support and workforce development. Child care services are able to access information and request support from an extensive range of sources that will enhance their capacity to provide optimal services to children and their families. This support will include the provision of professional development opportunities, bicultural and specialist support; and resources to support the full participation of children in their activities. It is expected that through the implementation and development of the PSC, the child care sector in WA will be better placed and more effectively supported to meet the growing and changing demands of children and their families.

PSCWA perceives professional support for child care as a diverse range of interventions which underpin child care services' professional role with children and their families. Such support can include including leadership development, workforce capacity building, inclusion support, resource libraries, phone/email support, training, mentoring, learning circles, forums and seminars, information sharing (newsletters, fact sheets, web sites), bicultural pools and flexible funding.

Under the new program, RUCSN is bringing together all resources from ECCRU, RUCSN, CSSU, Gowrie and Meerilinga into one centrally managed Resource Library. Resources (including specialist equipment) can be accessed through the PSCWA Helpline.

For the initial 6 months the PSC was committed to meeting the contractual requirements of the funding agreement. Activities included setting up the 1800 help line and the web site, undertaking the needs analysis across the whole sector, meeting with key stakeholders, conducting the tender process for the Professional Support Service Providers and signing sub-contracts with new providers. During this time we continued to provide funding to CSSU and ECCRU to maintain their traditional services. The PSC now has the basic framework in place and will be looking to evaluate and refine all processes. One of our contractual obligations is to undertake an on-going needs analysis so we can respond to the changing needs of the sector. While information will be gained analysing the requests received by the helpline, it is still necessary to seek input from the whole sector.

There is no doubt that the new program is bringing change. Much of this is driven by the National Priorities from the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The sector Needs Analysis revealed a definite preference to move away from 'chalk and talk' sessions and towards a much more customised support approach. We have been successful in sub-contracting several service providers who are prepared to work in this way.

The challenge in this program is the funding available for sub-contracts - \$770,000/year. This may sound a lot, but is in fact \$1,000,000/year less than the funding available under the previous Broadband program. It is in fact the major reason why none of the previous support providers have elected to take (or continue with) a subcontract with the PSC.

PSCWA is going to have to be very innovative with this funding to meet the needs of the child care sector in WA. It is encouraged by the continuing independent role of other support providers. Meerilinga for example continue to provide "Calendar Training" and Gowrie continues to provide customised training. The PSC sees its own role as "filling the gaps" rather than competing with other providers. The PSC paid for the printing of the brochures "Now I'm a Qualified Childcare Professional" and "Employing a New Graduate", both developed by the Supporting New Graduates working group and CSSU. The PSC also provided funds towards bringing Louise Porter to WA for the KAPCS conference to be held in August.

We now have in place, contracts with One World for Training Pty Ltd, Sandy Morton and Chris Cross Consultancy Services and South Metro Youth Link Community Services. Customised support will be provided around the priority areas identified through the Needs Analysis. These include:

- guiding children's behaviour in a positive way
- encouraging family participation
- documenting and using each child's learning
- promoting respect and professional teamwork
- promoting language and literacy abilities
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Endorsed CCQA and OSHCQA training
- Human Resources Management
- legislative impact on service delivery
- evaluation of programs – OSHC
- communicating effectively with staff – OSHC

The PSC will be funding :

- the development of DVD resources and training packages on:
 - ◊ Behaviour management
 - ◊ Management Committee Roles & Responsibilities
 - ◊ Roles & Responsibilities of OSHC staff
- updates of the "Policies to Go By" "Staff Recruitment" and "Evaluation Guides"
- development of OSHC Resource sheets addressing current and emerging issues or trends
- development of 4 professional Development Packages which address common issues in non-accredited OSHC services

The PSC is continuing negotiations with other potential service support providers and is waiting on a proposal from Family Day Care Schemes of Western Australia to fund a DVD around Best Practice for Family Day Care. We have been asked to consider support for inaugural conferences/seminars in Albany and the Wheatbelt and are waiting for further details. We will also be offering the tender for the management of bicultural support by the end of 2006. As part of an initiative to build leadership in the child care sector, the PSC is establishing ten scholarships per year to encourage staff in child care services to study the Diploma in Child Care.

Sara Hinchley
Coordinator
PSCWA

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT COORDINATOR NT

On 8 May 2006, RUCSN (Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc) was appointed as the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) for Northern Territory (NT). Funding is provided by the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) to implement the PSC as part of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program.

For the first time the Australian Government Approved Child Care Services sector in NT have the opportunity to access a single point of co-ordination for the Australian Government funded provision of professional support and workforce development. Child care services are able to access information and request support from an extensive range of supports that will enhance their capacity to provide optimal services to children and their families. This support will include the provision of professional development opportunities, bicultural and specialist support and resources to support the full participation of children in their activities. It is expected that through the implementation and development of the PSC, the child care sector in NT will be better placed and effectively supported to meet the growing and changing demands of children and their families.

PSCNT perceives professional support for child care as a diverse range of interventions which support child care service's professional role with children and their families, including leadership development, workforce capacity building, inclusion support, resource libraries, phone/email support, training, mentoring, learning circles, forums and seminars, information sharing (newsletters, fact sheets, websites), bicultural and flexible support pools. As RUCSN is also providing the PSC program for Western Australia, the synergies of managing two PSCs will result in complimentary benefits for both regions.

PSCNT has already built collaborative relationships with many of the support agencies in the Territory. The PSC will be co-located with Early Childhood Australia Northern Territory (ECA NT), who have been funded by FaCSIA as the Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) for Darwin and the Top End. RUCSN has a strong relationship with ECA NT and Children's Services Support Program (CSSP), who have been funded by FaCSIA as the ISA for Alice Springs and the Central Australia region.

Under the new program, PSCNT will subcontract to Gowrie NT, Rowe Training and Consulting, ECA (NT Branch), CSSP, and others to provide training, professional support and resources to children's services across the Territory.

Tania Sellers has been appointed as the Manager PSCNT, and she will recruit one more part time staff to manage this program. Tania has qualifications in child care as well as many years experience in long day care and family day care. As the mother of 4 year old twin boys, she also has some personal experience in early childhood.

PSCNT is busy meeting the contractual requirements of the funding agreement. Initial activities include setting up the 1800 help line, the web site (www.pscnt.org.au), undertaking the needs analysis across the whole sector, meeting with key stakeholders, conducting the tender process for the professional support service providers and signing sub-contracts with new providers. The funding to many of the previous support providers has been extended until the end of December 2006, by which time there will be a clearer picture of the needs of the sector. It is very early days, but PSCNT is already excited by the welcome that it has received from the sector and all the players in Northern Territory.

RUCSN RESOURCES AND TRAINING SERVICES

RUCSN RESOURCE CENTRE

The past year has seen many significant changes in the scope of resources and services offered by the RUCSN Resource Centre.

In January 2006 the RUCSN library was given the contract to manage resource delivery for the Professional Services Coordinator (PSC). The RUCSN Resource staff recognise this as both a privilege and a responsibility. We look forward to the challenge of providing professional support, through resources, to all Australian Government Approved Child Care Services (AGACCS) in Western Australia. However, we realise this is a significant undertaking and we will be looking to the child care industry for input on how we can best meet their needs.

LIBRARY

As a result of FACSIA's new Inclusion and Support Program, the RUCSN library had the task of combining the Gowrie, ECCRU and RUCSN resources into one collection. While this proved a time-consuming task, requiring new cataloguing for many items, the RUCSN library has more than quadrupled in size and can now offer a wide variety of resources.

The original RUCSN library had a focus on disability and child development. The expanded collection includes an extensive range of resources reflecting cultural diversity, together with books and videos on programming, management, quality and accreditation.

RUCSN also took on the responsibility for the Mobile and Postal Multicultural Services which had been developed by ECCRU. This was a well established service and we value the groundwork done by ECCRU over the past years in collecting and distributing these resources.

The decrease in funding available for resources in the new Inclusion and Support Programme has led to the introduction of membership fees for the RUCSN Professional Library. There has also been a small increase in the cost of the Mobile and Postal fees, although this has been offset by the inclusion of full Professional membership in the fee. Membership of the RUCSN Resource Centre offers AGACCS excellent professional development opportunities, including access to the library collection, to the PSC website and to all the Child Care Policy documents developed by the Children's Services Support Unit.

Another big change for the library staff has been a relocation of the library from West Leederville to Malaga. The new RUCSN premises provide a much larger area for resources and the opportunity to store and display items more effectively.

EQUIPMENT

Provision of specialist equipment for children with disabilities continues to be the responsibility of the RUCSN Resource Centre. This equipment is linked to the Special Needs Subsidy Scheme and is funded by FACSIA. Although the funding has been limited to \$1,000 per child, costs have been contained within this limit through the cooperation of children's services, therapy agencies and RUCSN. We thank the Cerebral Palsy Association, Disability Services Commission and Therapy focus for their support in this area.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The RUCSN Resource Centre staff warmly acknowledge the interest and enthusiasm shown by the caregivers and Inclusion Support Facilitators who use our services. Thank you for your support. Personally, my thanks go to the wonderful Library staff: Elly Hayes, Helen Illich, Monty Kelly and Biserka Mustajbeg. Monty and Biserka joined us early in 2006 and show all the dedication and commitment that we have come to expect from the library staff.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the excellent help and support given by the RUCSN administrative staff to the library. Thanks to you all.

Shirley McInnes, Resources Manager

TRAINING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE SUPPORT

January 2006 saw an enormous change to the training and support RUCSN had traditionally provided to the children's services industry and its early childhood professionals. The Resource and Advisory Agency funding previously received ceased and a new program, the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP), was introduced. Under the new guidelines, the support RUCSN provided to the childcare industry changed. Our role became one of providing professional development to all eligible children's services and Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISFs). This training was to be inclusive of all aspects of child development and industry needs and not restricted to disability. The focus is now to build capacity through a "strengths approach".

A number of projects have been undertaken over the past 11 months and they are briefly described below.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

In March 2006 the annual RUCSN scholarship was awarded to four worthy young adults embarking on their first year of post secondary studies. More recently we announced the Diploma scholarship program, aimed at existing children's services staff. The focus is to support rural and remote students but does not exclude applicants from within the metropolitan area. This second scholarship is being funded by the PSCWA.

TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS

In early 2006 the PSCWA undertook a TNA survey of the childcare professional development needs. The training team was instrumental in the development, implementation and analysis of the surveys received from FDC, LDC and OSHC services. The data obtained assisted the PSC to identify training priorities for the year and appoint appropriate Professional Service Support Providers (PSSP). A series of 17 Focus Forums were implemented around WA to assist Child Care Services with both their understanding of the change to the IPSP and the TNA survey.

PSCWA WEBSITE

At the request of the PSCWA a web design company was engaged to develop the PSCWA web site. The aim of the site is to share information and provide Professional Development opportunities to childcare professionals and ISFs. It includes links to child support websites, a discussion forum and documents which services can download and use when developing their service documentation.

ISF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Training team is responsible for providing Professional Development to ISFs. To date we have delivered two separate training sessions for the ISFs on the new Inclusion Program. This has assisted them to develop their reporting formats and to understand the use of the Service Support Plan (SSP) and Assisted Inclusion Readiness (AIR) Plan as capacity building tools. ISFs have identified the need for 'Strengths based' training and we have contracted St Lukes, Bendigo to provide this training in September 2006.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Training team has undertaken the role of supporting family day care and long day care services with implementing their quality assurance programs. In particular we assist services that have not met Accreditation Standards. Our role includes a customised “one on one” support program to assist services develop a continuous improvement plan and move forward to submit their self study and prepare for validation. We have to date assisted several services to successfully progress to achieving accreditation.

LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

Looking into the future we intend to work towards obtaining a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) status for RUCSN. This process will be lengthy, requiring us to review all procedures and policies and create new ones as appropriate. RTOs must complete a quality assurance process before they can deliver nationally recognised training, which is our ultimate goal.

Another task is the review of all current training packages and the development of new ones. In the past, RUCSN training has primarily focused on skilling childcare professionals to support the inclusion of children with additional needs. We now plan to broaden our scope to include all facets of child development and service delivery. We are also keen to pursue an online training program and will review software programs that could provide us with an appropriate framework.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In closing, I would like to thank all RUCSN staff for their help and guidance over the past twelve months. The training team, with only 1.5 FTEs, could not have achieved all that it has without a collaborative effort. In particular I would like to thank Kellie Goes, Julie Janecic, Ros Gardner, Jané Hansen and Carol Warren.

Ralph Southall
Training and Quality Assurance Manager

REGIONAL SERVICES

GREAT SOUTHERN INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY

The Great Southern Inclusion Support Agency (GSISA) has two Inclusion Support Facilitators (ISFs), Fiona Garland and Lisa Hassell, both of whom are based in Albany and work part time. We are now seeking for an additional staff member to be based in Narrogin.

The last six months in particular have seen significant changes in the Inclusion Program due to the introduction of a “strengths based” approach to support. The team is developing its understanding of this approach and its application when working with children’s services.

Distance from Perth has made it difficult to meet with other Inclusion Support Agencies on a regular basis and this at times makes it challenging to ensure that the team has the same interpretation of the ISA Guidelines and other new developments. Fortnightly teleconferences with the Department for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) and support from the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) and RUCSN has been invaluable in providing support and guidance.

During the year, the team has contacted all the Australian Government Approved Child Care Services (AGACCS) in the region and is now developing relationships with new services. In the last twelve months, two Long Day Care services have opened in Albany and within the new ISA guidelines, the ISA can now also support the Gnowangarup Occasional Child Care Centre and the Gnowangarup and Narrogin Mobile Occasional Care Services. These provide childcare to nine towns. The GSISA has promoted the role of the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) and has encouraged services to access the PSC via the helpline.

Supporting child care services through the changes in the Inclusion Program has taken considerable time and to date the GSISA has concentrated on developing Service Support Plans (SSP) with services. The feedback from many services has been positive, and proactive services are encouraged when their strengths are recognised. Lack of qualified staff has made implementing the new program difficult at times, as have the constant staff changes within services. Limited experience and skills have resulted in some staff having difficulty grasping the new concepts. Similarly, some staff lack the confidence needed to make links with other people or agencies within the community. Regular staff changes also make it difficult for ISFs to establish relationships and to build capacity within children’s services.

The team has maintained links with a wide range of agencies and provided them with information regarding the changes to our role. We frequently attend networking and community activities that assist us to further foster links between childcare, government and other community groups. Ongoing contact has been maintained with resource agencies, particularly RUCSN and ECCRU, in order to support the needs of our service and childcare services. Resources and support from these organisations have been invaluable and requests have been responded to promptly.

The number of children with high support needs who are supported with Special Needs Subsidy Scheme (SNSS)/Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS) funding has increased in the last twelve months. Albany desperately needs another Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and Vacation Care (VC) service as there are a number of school age children with high support needs requiring care, and not able to access it. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) children’s numbers remain about the same in services, but the utilisation of child care by families from culturally and

linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds is low, considering the influx of CALD families into our region.

OTHER PROGRAMS

The GSISA continues to support two children with high support needs in State funded Occasional Care services with surplus funding from a previous project funded through the Non-Government Centres Support Non-School Organisations (NGCS). The *Inclusion Support for Occasional Care services in the Lower Great Southern Region* project was run in 2005 and with the funding for additional hours and extra resources, children with high support needs were successfully included. Inclusion support had not previously been available to these services.

The GSIST was also involved in the *Transition from Childcare to School Program*, a pilot project offered by RUCSN. It provided assistance and support to families and teaching staff to manage the transition of children with a disability from childcare to formal schooling. The program commenced in October 2005 and continued through the first 6 weeks of Term 1, 2006. Feedback from the family and school was tremendously encouraging.

We were also successful in accessing Early Years funding to facilitate workshops on *Early Communication and Sensory Processing* for children's services staff in the Lower Great Southern. These workshops were facilitated by a local Occupational Therapist and Speech Pathologist and feedback about the workshop was overwhelmingly positive. We are still receiving requests from services to repeat this session. The Lower Great Southern Childcare Network is working towards a Conference in 2007 with the support of the PSC and this is one of the planned workshops.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although the past twelve months have been challenging, it has also been a rewarding time for the Great Southern Inclusion Support Agency. We would like to acknowledge the support given to us by RUCSN and organisations in the Great Southern region, in particular Wanslea Family Services, Disability Services Commission and the Department for Community Development. We look forward to continuing to work cooperatively with child care services and agencies in the coming year.

Fiona Garland
Inclusion Support Manager
Great Southern Inclusion Support Team



***Children at a Three
Year Old Kindy
“inclusion in practice”***

CENTRAL INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY

The Central Inclusion Support Agency has continued throughout the past year, to promote its role to agencies, families and children's services in the region. As well as providing advice and support to all children's services through the Inclusion Support Program, we have continued to promote inclusion to playgroups through the Rural Playgroup Support Service in the Midwest region. We also started a 12-month Early Years Project in Mullewa in February 2006.

Over the past six months some significant changes have occurred within the Central Inclusion program. The first was the merging of the Midwest Gascoyne and Murchison region with the Goldfields region to form the new Central region. The joining of the two teams, the new ISF role and the introduction of the PSC has brought some interesting challenges for staff and services within the central region. The agency continues to have offices in both Geraldton and Kalgoorlie, with a consequent increase in communication between the two areas.

The manager of the Geraldton team, Nicola Riley, left RUCSN to pursue a career in teaching in September 2005 and Sharyn May took on this role in the Geraldton office. In February 2006 Joanna Gill was appointed as a part time ISF in the Geraldton office. In Kalgoorlie, Belinda Pool took over the manager's role September 2005, prior to Kellie Goes relocating to Perth. Kellie had been the manager of the Goldfields Children's Inclusion Unit for 6 years and is sadly missed by many in the Goldfields community. Fortunately she has stayed with RUCSN and is now working at the Perth office. Alinka Spencer continues to be a valued member of the Kalgoorlie team, working as a part time ISF.

There have been far reaching changes to the delivery of inclusion support in the past twelve months. We have spent much time learning and implementing the new Inclusion and Professional Support program. We have communicated the changes to children's services through meetings with all services in the region and updates on changes as they are introduced. Despite these challenges we have maintained a good reputation and positive relationships with services in the region.

We have a number of new services now eligible to receive our support. These services include Kambalda Child Care Centre, Bega Crèche, Jameson Youth Centre, Hannan St Play and Learn, Leinster OSHC, Meekatharra OSHC and Geraldton Play and Learn. This is a result of FaCSIA's broadening of the range of child care services able to access assistance for child with additional needs.

The region saw a slow start to the year with low utilisation at most children's services. Numbers improved gradually but even now few services have waiting lists. Over the past 12 months there has been an increase in service utilisation by families from ATSI and CALD backgrounds. There continues to be concern around the lack of qualified and experienced staff available and services' ability to retain staff once employed. This naturally impacts on the efficacy of inclusion support provided in regard to programming for children with extra needs.

OTHER PROGRAMS

The *Rural Playgroup Support Service* is funded by the Department for Community Development to support community playgroups within the Midwest Gascoyne and Murchison region. It is managed by staff based in the Geraldton office. Over the past 12 months this project has received requests for support ranging from assistance with funding applications, to activity sessions in existing playgroups, to conducting family play sessions with the mobile playgroup. Regional visits were made to communities including Cue, Meekatharra and Wiluna to offer support to existing family support projects, to playgroups and to schools which are trying to establish

playgroups within their community. Playgroups facilitated by schools, particularly in remote areas, have been an emerging trend.

Support was given to local Indigenous families to strengthen an existing playgroup, as was support to families from a CALD backgrounds to be included in an existing playgroup. We have continued to work with these families as they begin their journey to establish a group that is based on their own cultural values and beliefs. Over the past six months, strong links have been made with Playgroup WA as we work in collaboration to support local families. Playgroup support has also been enhanced through funding accessed from the Early Years Regional Funds to assist us to provide 'play days' in remote regions.

In January 2005 the team in Geraldton received funding from Early Years to facilitate a Family Bonding Project in Mullewa. The project commenced in February 2006 and will continue until December 2006. This project aims to build on existing parenting skills through a variety of programs and activities. By the end of June, families had experienced opportunities to participate in play days; learn to make resources from materials found within homes; and access advice and support on parenting issues. Local DCD staff and other agencies which assist families with young children are also supporting this project.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We continue to work closely with many agencies throughout the region, particularly Allied Health Services, the Department for Community Development, Goldfields Individual and Family Support Association, Early Years Groups and the Disability Services Commission. Over the past 12 months the support provided to our team from RUCSN's Perth office and other country teams has been invaluable and it is gratefully acknowledged.

Sharyn May
Manager
Central Inclusion Support Agency

Belinda Pool
Manager

NORTH METROPOLITAN & ISLANDS INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY

The North Metropolitan Regional Inclusion Support Agency (NMISA) has had a busy year with the winding up of some programs and the continuation of several small projects. It was also successful with the FaCSIA tender to continue to provide inclusion support to the north metropolitan region. The primary focus continues to be inclusion support, whilst maintaining well established links with community services within the region.

The team has seen many staff changes this year. In April we sadly farewelled Jo Robins, who took up a position as Manager of Family Support Services with the Red Cross. Jo had been with RUCSN since 1996 and was a strong support to whole team. Other Inclusion Support Facilitators Jackie Goodsman, Maggie Heyneman and Grace Smith are currently on extended leave from RUCSN.

NORTH METRO AND ISLANDS INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY

The most significant event this year was our success in being awarded the tender to provide inclusion support to children's services in the north metropolitan area as part of the Commonwealth's new inclusion program. There was a moment for celebrations but that was quickly forgotten with the enormity of the task in front of us!

From the beginning of January 2006 we commenced as the North Metropolitan and Islands Inclusion Support Agency (the Islands being Christmas and Cocos Islands). The role of the Inclusion Support Agency changed on every front. The new program required everything to be done differently from the first contact with children's service. Processes, interactions with childcare staff, and planning for inclusion all followed a new format and style. The Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) role changed to follow the strengths based approach and focused on building service capacity, helping with inclusion readiness, and developing Service Support Plans.

In the first six months of this new program the team concentrated on providing high quality service delivery. Together we focused our energy and skills on supporting each other. We planned together, practised together, were challenged together, reflected together and shared knowledge and skills with each other. Each ISF contributed to the change process and brought different skills to the group. We also worked closely with the RUCSN regional ISAs and with Kellie Goes (Project coordinator and country support). There is still a long way to go but we are lucky to have a skilled, experienced and passionate team of people who have embraced the new inclusion program and have the skills and positive attitude to overcome the challenges it presents.

OTHER PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING, NGCS GRANTS, 2005.

- ♦ Transition from Childcare to School project

This project was coordinated by Jo Robins and operated from October 2005 to March 2006. The overall aim was to provide assistance and support to families and teaching staff when managing the transition of children with a disability from childcare to formal schooling. 15 children and families participated in the project. The program focused on preparing all parties for the transition by thorough planning and the development of support networks and resources. The project feedback and final report indicated an overwhelmingly positive outcome for those involved.

Three Year Old Kindy Inclusion Program

This project was coordinated by Julie Bloor and operated from July to Dec 2005. In WA, no funding is provided for inclusion support to Three Year Old Kindy programs. Some children are thus unable to attend due to this lack of support. The project's primary goal was to increase successful outcomes for children with disabilities attending Three Year Old Kindy programs. RUCSN was funded \$13,000 to provide inclusion support to 4 such programs, supporting 5 children with high and ongoing additional needs.

Three Year Old Kindy program directors, staff, volunteers, and families all responded in the affirmative that the pilot project made a difference for the five participant children. Improvements in many areas was noted, especially communication, confidence, increased independence, participation in routines and interaction skills with peers and adults. Considering the small amount of funding for this project the outcomes for the children, families, staff and peers far exceeded expectations and certainly provided value for money. It is our intention to seek further funding to implement similar programs to support Three Year Old Kindy programs on a much wider scale.

Finally, thank you to all the NMISA staff who continue to share their enthusiasm, passion and willingness to adapt to the ever changing world of inclusion support.

Cathy Hewick
Inclusion Support Manager
North Metro & Islands Inclusion Agency

THE THREE YEAR OLD PROGRAM

The picture on the right was taken in a Three Year Old Kindy program. Kindy children provided honest and positive feedback on the inclusion project, with the following comments:

“I liked to play with him because he is fun and maybe when kindy has finished I will go to his house and play”;



“I like helping him because he was my first friend at kindy”.

Comments from a staff member at the end of the program;

“If someone was observing....I don't think anyone would've been able to pick him as a child with special needs. He seemed like every other child- like any other kindy child”.

PILBARA INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY



The past twelve months have been very exciting and fulfilling for the Pilbara team. We were fortunate to add two new programs to our core business of Inclusion Support: the Bi-Cultural Worker program and the West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service.

This enabled us to expand our team to include Lynne Treasure (back left), Peta Watson (back right), and Carol Roe (front right). Narelle Coyle (front left) and myself (back centre) feel very lucky to have such talented and hard working colleagues join our team.

The *Pilbara Inclusion Support Agency* is currently going through a period of change. The focus is now on building the capacity of Australian Government Approved Child Care Services to create an inclusive environment for all children and families that supports their wellbeing and development, rather than supporting an individual child. I would like to thank all the Pilbara centres for the wonderful support they have given the Inclusion team as it explores and develops its new role.

OTHER PROGRAMS

The *Aboriginal Bi-Cultural program* enabled Peta to visit childcare centres and assist staff increase their knowledge of Aboriginal cultural and related creative experiences. It proved to be such a popular resource for childcare staff that it was decided to continue it as part of our regular Inclusion Program. We see this as a demonstration of our commitment to assist childcare services through developing their capacity and skills to include children with additional needs.



Peta and child from Wickham Early Learning Centre creating Aboriginal Flag Handprints

The *West Pilbara Mobile Children's Service*, funded by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, provides regular playgroups to Aboriginal communities at Strelley, Jinparinya, Yandeyarra, and Marta Marta. It also offers a successful and well attended "Play in the Park" group at a local venue in South Hedland.

Through the playgroups the parents and children in the communities have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of play activities. They also have access to a range of toys that support children's overall development and increase their awareness of "school readiness" skills.

Funding from the Department for Community Development (DCD) for the *Rural Playgroup Support Service* has continued and this year we introduced playgroups to isolated children in outback areas. In this capacity we are currently visiting Sherlock and Pyramid Stations. All our outlying services were affected by the wet weather at the beginning of the year. Welcome as it was, it delayed the start of both playgroups and mobile community visits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Pilbara team continues its strong partnership with the Department for Community Development (DCD) and acknowledges the support provided by DCD's local staff in Tom Price, Newman, Karratha, and Hedland. Cate Eastcott, the Children's Services Officer in Karratha and Cecilia Fernandez, the Community Capacity Builder in Tom Price, have been particularly supportive over the past year.

Continued collaboration with Child Care Links, Nikki Keefe and Julie Coffin; Irene Kelly, the Aboriginal Parenting Office at DCD; and DCD's Best Start Coordinator, Sharon Todd, have resulted in exciting new play experiences for some local families and children. Mega Playgroups have been held every couple of months in the Hedland area and play programs have been offered periodically in Marble Bar.

Special thanks to BHP Billiton Iron Ore and Boodarie Iron who donated \$4,000 to purchase gross motor toys and shelving. The Water Corporation donated much needed bottles of water for our Mega Playgroup fun days. Such support demonstrates the value of the community development ethos which exists in this region.

The Pilbara Team remains committed to supporting Pilbara families with young children through its funded programmes and extending its collaborative partnerships with like minded services.

Carol Warren
Manager

SOUTH WEST INCLUSION SUPPORT AGENCY

The South West Inclusion Support Agency (SWISA) joined RUCSN in April 2006. Since then it has been a very busy time for the service, with the transition from previous sponsors and the establishment of two new offices, one located in Mandurah and another in Busselton. This has been a time consuming process and often meant that staff were obliged to undertake duties outside the typical ISF role. This significantly challenged their work skills at times!

SWISA employs 4 part time staff, 2 located in each regional hub. Alison Price was enticed back to RUCSN after a short retirement, when she joined the SWISA team in Busselton. Alison had previously worked for 10 years as an ISF with NMRIT, thus becoming an immediate asset to our team with all her previous expertise. Annie Horner joined the team in May with a wealth of experience, having been employed in the children's services industry for 38 years. Annie's most recent employment was as TAFE lecturer in Children's Services at the SW Regional Campus. This experience has been of enormous benefit to SWISA as Annie had already established exceptional links with the child care industry in the South West. Hazel McLean joined the Peel office in May. Hazel has been a dedicated child care professional in the Peel region for many years and brings a diverse range of experience in children's services. Judy Walker is the Agency Manager and transferred her skills from the previous inclusion program in Peel, having worked for 7 years as its Program Coordinator. The evolution of SWISA has at times been a turbulent journey, but after four months we have emerged a highly skilled and dedicated team who are committed to supporting children's services and advocating for the successful inclusion of all children and their families into the community.

The changes to the Inclusion and Professional Support Program have brought challenges for all concerned. SWISA's main priority has been to support children's services through the transition in a positive and effective manner. ISF's have worked diligently with services to maintain and establish new links in their regions. This has been particularly crucial for the South West team, with both areas promoting RUCSN and the changing roles. During this time SWISA has received an increase in the number of referrals and requests for inclusion support. There has been a positive response from child care staff to the new model and an increased awareness of the Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) and RUCSN, with all services having been visited by team members.

Both regional hubs work in partnership with a number of government and community agencies to ensure an inclusive perspective is reflected throughout the community. Mandurah is the fastest growing regional area in Australia and has attracted interest in funded research and programs for children and their families. SWISA is actively involved with the Peel Early Years Group (PEYG) taskforce which has adopted the theme 'Wired for Health', promoting nutrition and physical activity in young children. RUCSN (Peel) is involved in the planning of various community events for children and child care staff in partnership with community agencies.

SWISA manager (Judy Walker) is the assistant vice president for the Peel Filipino and Multicultural Association and is active in supporting new migrant families in the Peel region. This has been a valuable association which ensures CALD and refugee families are provided with current information and inclusion support within the community and child care.

The Peel Regional Partnerships for Community Child Development is a joint initiative between the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research and Murdoch University. Professor Fiona Stanley and Professor Ann McMurray are the key stakeholders in the longitudinal study of young children in the Peel region. SWISA and the PEYG have been asked to participate in the research program.



SWISA Peel has been involved with Playing and Learning to Socialise (PALS) program for the past three years. This initiative has been a collaboration of services including Community Health and DCD. Judy Walker and Faye Lucas (Senior Clinical Psychologist) have been engaged to conduct a statistical evaluation of the program. Peel Development Commission is funding the project. SWISA Peel continues to work in close partnership with Mandurah Community Health paediatric team through us use of office space in Mandurah health centres.

In determining high usage services, we can only compare the proportional amount of time we spend in the services in the Peel region. Using this as a benchmark, there are some services that we visit more frequently than the others. Reasons for this may be:

- staffing: services with a high turnover of staff, and/or proportionately more young, unqualified staff,
- change in ownership,
- services situated in lower socio-economic areas,
- services who are willing to take children with additional needs without any additional funding. These services have a strong belief in inclusive care but require proportionately more support from SWISA to enable them to do this.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

South West Inclusion Support Agency would like to sincerely thank the RUCSN management, and in particular Kellie Goes and Ralph Southall, for all their assistance over the past few months. They have always responded to our requests willingly and with profound patience, having dedicated many hours of their time to ensure that the South West team is well supported and the service delivered is of the highest quality.



Judy Walker

Manager

South West Inclusion Support Agency

SOUTH EAST INCLUSION TEAM (SEIT) JULY 2005 – MARCH 2006

Editor's note: This report covers the period July 2005 to March 2006. As a result of the introduction of the new Inclusion Program, the South East Inclusion was merged with the Communicare and South West Metropolitan regions in March 2006. Communicare now manages this area as the South Metropolitan Inclusion Support Agency.

SEIT went through a minor restructuring process in the previous reporting period which led to a smaller yet very efficient team. SEIT continued to focus on time management and capacity building of child care staff, promoting increased self sufficiency amongst child care staff when dealing with inclusion issues.

The SEIT team consisted of Moya McHenry (long serving and highly treasured Aboriginal Bicultural Inclusion Support Facilitator), Corinne Chiverton (dedicated and skilled Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) and Jané Hansen (Manager/ISF).

As the Manager, I would like to thank the team for their enormous effort in making SEIT's services successful in the region. I would also like to thank all the child care services and relevant children's and community services that we have been involved with during the reporting period. We worked with 52 child care services (including Vacation Care, Out of School Hours Care, 2 Family Day Care Schemes and one Multifunctional Aboriginal Community Services) and supported the inclusion of 106 children.

SEIT offered 3 types of information sessions/workshops on the following topics SNSS; Promoting Social Skills; and Cultural Awareness. The Team also offered ideas on facilitating cultural inclusion; Aboriginal cultural information; and Speech and Language Packs. All these resources were aimed at supporting quality care and inclusive practices through a strength based and positive approach. This information was widely used and contributed to the development of culturally and developmentally appropriate programming.

SEIT's main office was located in West Leederville. However our 'local' regional office, located in Maddington (shared accommodation at Mission Australia), was well utilised and saved precious time for the ISFs.

OTHER PROGRAMS

ABORIGINAL SUPPORT

The Team included an Aboriginal ISF (Moya) whose role was to support child care staff with the inclusion of individual children from an Aboriginal background and provide culturally relevant information, e.g. SEIT's Aboriginal Resource Kits. Moya was particular active in the Armadale community and visited Best Start, Gwynne Park Aboriginal services, Aboriginal Family Support Services and Mission Australia's Coolabaroo girls group.

EARLY YEARS ACTIVITIES

SEIT was involved in gaining support for a speech and language group "Let's Talk" in Gosnells. This was funded by the Early Years Project Funding through DCD, via the Gosnells Early Years Action Group. The project started in Term 2, 2006.

CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) ACTIVITIES

A need for more CaLD information was identified by SEIT, resulting in the team offering CaLD awareness sessions and resources. Many thanks to the City of Gosnells (especially the Children's Program Officer, Nadine Popelier) who kindly hosted three sessions at no cost. SEIT developed a handout to encourage "welcoming" CaLD practices and distributed, where appropriate, a range of CaLD information from the Ethnic Child Care Resource Unit (ECCRU).

ECCRU, Kenwick Child Care Centre and SEIT worked in partnership to offer an Open Day for CaLD families. It provided children's games and activities, together with child care information, to families from refugee background who typically do not access child care. The project was funded by Save the Children, Early Years, ECCRU and RUCSN.

TRENDS

SEIT's main concern in the region has been the long waiting lists for speech pathology. It is becoming more evident that a large number of children do not access early intervention for speech and language therapy in the SEIT region. Initial appointments for assessment take up to 12 months in the public system, and in this region, many families cannot afford to access private services. Child care staff become increasingly frustrated with the lack of continuous support offered to families by other agencies. The benefits of Early Intervention would obviously have a flow-on effect into child care. Although SEIT was not funded to give prolonged support to child care services for children with general speech delays, SEIT acknowledged the problems and provided programme ideas to support speech and language development. Furthermore, SEIT provided RUCSN's "Speech and Language" packages and made referrals to the appropriate agencies. The team also initiated the 'Lets Talk' project mentioned previously.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SEIT would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of its sponsor RUCSN and to thank the previous SUPS Resource and Advisory Agencies, ECCRU and RUCSN, for their contribution to the team's professional development and resource acquisition. Thanks also to all the relevant disability and health services. A special thanks to Jane Roberts (Children's Services Officer, Department for Community Development) for her great support. These mutual relationships/partnerships are essential to provide better outcomes for children in Child Care.

Jané Hansen
South East Inclusion Team Manager

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2005 – 2006

Zelinda Bafle LLB, FAICD, FCIS SF Fin– Chairperson

Company Secretary, General Counsel and Group Manager Risk & Compliance, Home Building Society Ltd

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Chair, Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc (since 1999)
Appointed Chair 2001 and re-appointed 2004.

Qualifications Skills

- Bachelor of Jurisprudence (University of Western Australia) (1977)
- Bachelor of Laws (University of Western Australia) (1978)
- Licensed Real Estate Settlement Agent and Triennial Certificate Holder (1984)
- Diploma in Real Estate Management (1997)
- Securities Institute Diploma Course (1996 – 1997)
- Australian Institute of Company Directors Company Directors Course (1999)

Experience

- Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Company Secretaries in Australia Ltd
- Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australia
- Member of the Law Society of WA
- Company Secretary and General Counsel, Home Building Society Ltd (1996 –2003)
- Assistant Company Secretary and Corporate Lawyer, Home Building Society Ltd (1989 – 1996)
- Senior Manager and Corporate Lawyer, Home Building Society Ltd (1984 – 1989)
- Lawyer, Frank Unmack & Cullen Solicitors (1979 – 1983)

Other Positions/ Interests

- Member, Corporations and Markets Advisory Committee (since 2005)
- Member, Council of Curtin University of Technology (since 2004)
- Member of the Finance Committee of the International Federation of University Women, Switzerland (since 2001)
- Chair, Management Committee, Perth Area Consultative Committee (since 2001)
- Past President, Corporate Lawyers Association (Western Australian Chapter) (1988 – 1989)
- Council Member, Friends of the Perth International Arts Festival (Inc) (1986 –2004)

Barbara Macnish – Vice Chairperson

Executive Director Portfolio Coordination Department of Culture and the Arts

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Deputy Chair Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc (since 2001)

Appointed Deputy Chair 2003 and re-appointed 2004.

Qualifications Skills

- Master of Business Administration (Curtin University) (2004)
- Graduate Diploma (Business) (Curtin University) (2004)

Experience

- Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Executive Director Department of Culture and the Arts (since 2005)
- Assistant Prices Commissioner, Department of Consumer and Employment Protection (2001–2005)
- Director Corporate Services Ministry of Fair Trading (1999-2001)
- Director Corporate Services Government Employees Superannuation Board (1990-1999)
- Director Department of Social Security and other various positions (1975-1990)

Other Positions/ Interests

- Member Healthway Board (since 2005)
- Member Management Committee, Perth Area Consultative Committee (since 2004)
- Council Member, Friends of the Perth International Arts Festival (Inc) (1995-1999)

John Annand - Treasurer

Company Secretary, Accounting and Contracts Manager, North West Shelf Gas Pty Ltd

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Treasurer, Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc (since 2003).

Qualifications Skills

- Bachelor of Business Degree – Double major in Accounting and Finance (Edith Cowan University) (1984 - 1987)
- Completed Institute of Chartered Accountants Professional Year program with KPMG (1992)
- Completed Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance and Investment (1997)
- Completed Graduate Diploma in Company Secretarial Practice (2004)

Experience

- Various accounting and finance roles within Woodside Energy Limited (since 1997)
- Manager – National Australia Bank (1995 -1996)
- Various accounting and finance roles whilst working and living in London UK (1993 -1994)
- Senior Accountant, KPMG (1989 – 1993)
- Member of Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia
- Member of Securities Institute of Australia
- Member of Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators

Other Positions/ Interests

- Member Old Haleans Association
- Member Lake Karrinyup Country Club
- Member KPMG Alumni

Tony Morley

Executive Director, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc.

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Appointed to Board as Executive Director in 2005.

Qualifications Skills

- Tutor in Effective Communications (Edith Cowan University) 1995/96

- Quality Assurance Systems Auditor (ETRS Stebbings) 1995
- Bachelor of Business (Edith Cowan University) 1996
- Master of Business Administration (University of Western Australia) 2000

Experience

- 25 years commercial experience with Rio Tinto, Shell Oil, Mobil Oil, GKN, etc
- Experience with Kids' Camps, Activ Foundation, Catholic Care, CLAN, YMCA
- CEO of RUCSN since May 2001

Other Positions/ Interests

- Vice Convenor – National Alliance for Disability Resource Advice & Training Agencies
- Member – WACOSS PAC for Children (since 2004)
- President - Early Childhood Australia (WA) (2003 – 2005)
- Treasurer – National Investment for the Early Years (WA) (since 2005)

Ainslie van Onselen

Partner, Tottle Partner Lawyers

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Board Member, Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc (since 2005)

Qualifications Skills

- Bachelor of Laws (LLB) (University of Western Australia) (1995)
- Graduate Diploma in Applied Finance & Investment (FFin) (Financial Services Institute of Australasia) (2005)
- Company Directors Course Diploma (GAICD) (Australian Institute of Company Directors) (2004)

Experience

- Member of Law Program Consultative Committee, School of Law and Justice, The Faculty of Business and Law, Edith Cowan University (since 2006)
- Board Member of Barking Gecko Theatre Company and member of its Resources Committee (since 2006)
- Elected Member of the Legal Practice Board, WA and member of its Admissions & Registrations and Legal Committees (since 2005)
- Non-Executive Director of WebCentral Group Limited and Chair of its Audit & Risk Management Committee (since 2004)
- Senior Solicitor, Atanaskovic Hartnell, Lawyers, Sydney (2001 – 2004)

Other Positions/ Interests

- Winner of the 2006 40 under 40 Business News Awards and Winner of the University of Western Australia's 2006 Graduate School of Management Prize
- Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (since 2004)
- Councillor of the Law Society of Western Australia (1998 – 2000)
- Member of the Law Society of WA (since 1995), Australian Corporate Lawyers Association (since 2004) and Financial Services Institute of Australasia (since 2003)

Graham O'Neill

General Manager relationship & Commercial Banking, Home Building Society Ltd.

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Board Members, Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc (since 2004)

Qualifications Skills

- Bachelor of Business, Accounting and Finance (Edith Cowan University) (1990)
- Master Of Business Administration Degree (Deakin University, Victoria) (1997)

Experience

- 26 years banking and finance industry experience.
- Lending, business and financial skills across small business, commercial, corporate, rural and property related sectors.
- Management experience across large team environments (+150 staff) in process / operational environments.

Other Positions/ Interests

- Fellow - Financial Services Institute of Australasia
- Senior Associate – Australian Society of Certified Practising Accountants

Margaret Sims

Programme Director School of International, Cultural & Community Studies Joondalup Campus, Edith Cowan University.

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Board Members, Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc (since 2002)

Qualifications Skills

- Bachelor of Art (Anthropology, Psychology), (Auckland University) (1976)
- Masters of Art (Anthropology), (Auckland University) (1978)
- Doctor of Philosophy, (Auckland University) (1983)
- Diploma of Management (New Zealand Technical Correspondence School), (1988)
- Diploma of Education (Massey University) (1995)

Experience

- Tutor, Department of Anthropology, Auckland University (1983 – 1984)
- Researcher, NZ Society for the Intellectual Handicapped (1977 – 1984)
- Community Support worker, residential and vocational, NZ Society for the Intellectual Handicapped (1984)
- National co-ordinator, Community Living Programme, Royal NZ Foundation for the Blind (1985 – 1987)
- Clinical Psychologist, Auckland Early Intervention Programme (1987 – 1988)
- co-ordinator Junior services Tamaki Branch NZ Society for the Intellectual Handicapped (1989 – 1991)
- Co-ordinator Pacific Foundation Family Support programme (1991)
- Edith Cowan University (since 1992)

Other Positions/ Interests

- Past member Qualifications Committee Child Care Licensing. Currently on Qualifications Reference Committee for Department for Community Development
- Past member Communities for Children Mirrabooka
- Community Advisory Committee Child Care Links – Ngala Merriwa
- Community Advisory Committee Midvale parent Support programme
- Co-editor Australian Journal of Early Childhood
- Publications in the areas:
 - Sims, M (2002) *Designing family support programmes: building children, family and community resilience*. Altona, Vic: Common Ground Press.
 - Hutchins T & Sims, M (1999) *Program planning for infants and toddlers. An ecological approach*. Sydney: Prentice Hall.
 - Sims M (1997) *Including all children and families. A practical guide to using inclusion for meeting diverse and different care and development needs in Children's Service settings*. Perth, WA: Praxis Education.
 - Sims, M., Guilfoyle, A & Parry, T (2005) What cortisol levels tell us about quality in childcare centres. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, 30 (2), pp 29 – 39.

Russell Simpson

Regional Manager, Department of Indigenous Affairs, Murchison Gascoyne (since 2003)

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Board Members, Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc (since 2002)

Qualifications Skills

- Achievement Certificate (1979)
- Completion of Public Sector Management Course (1995)
- Public Sector Standards and Ethics Training (1999)
- Management Media Training (2003)
- Leadership and Management Training Program, Integral Leadership Program (2005)
- Professional Work Conduct Training (2006)

Experience

- Regional Manager, Department of Indigenous Affairs, Murchison Gascoyne (since 2003)
- Executive Officer to the Ministerial Council for Aboriginal Education and Training and Principal Policy Officer, Office of Education Policy and Co-ordination (2000 - 2001)
- Australian Medical Association of Western Australia, Co-ordinator (1995)
- Executive Officer, Private Sector Major Employment Strategies, Department of Employment, Education and Training (1992 - 1995)
- Manager Wheatbelt Region, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (1991 - 1992)
- Royal Commissions into Government activities and Rothwells (1991)
- 10 years banking and finance industry experience (1981 -1990)

Other Positions/ Interests

- Appointed to Board, Apprenticeship and Traineeship Company, Geraldton (since 2004)
- Chairperson, Mid West Gascoyne Human Services Regional Managers Group - Government (since 2005)
- Chairperson, Mid West Gascoyne Strong Families - Government (since 2005)
- Past Member, Australian Institute of Banking and Finance (1998 - 1990)
- World Vision Australia, Sponsor

Yvonne Hateley

Childcare worker (Nursery Nurses Examination Board - UK qualification)

RUCSN Board Of Management Position

Board Members, Board of Management, Resource Unit for Children with Special Needs Inc

Qualifications Skills

- Owns the Fremantle Early Learning and Child Care Centre (previously known as A.B.C.) and a new service in the UK
- President of the Childcare Association of Western Australia
- Vice Chairperson of the Management Committee of C.S.S.U
- Committed provider of quality care.

Experience

- Facilitated training for Gowrie and Meerilinga
- Validator for National Childcare Accreditation Council.

VACANCIES

We currently have two Board vacancies. People with an interest in our work are invited to contact Zelinda or Tony for more information.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS ON FINANCES 2005/2006

- RUCSN's financial basis has again been strengthened this year, setting the organisation up for any future expansion into projects that are compatible with our philosophy and culture; and allowing the organisation to take on the new Professional Support Coordinator (PSC) programs in both Western Australia and Northern Territory.
- The Operating Surplus of \$392,198 is higher than budget. RUCSN has developed an organisational focus on Quality and Efficiency. The focus on Quality results in an increasing number of funded programs and consequential turnover – income for 2006/2007 is reflected in a budget of almost \$5 million. The focus on Efficiency in our systems and processes creates synergies and a reduction in overall administration costs.
- Our major funding body (FaCSIA) has changed its payments schedules to incorporate significant payments at “date of signing” of contracts – this has enhanced cash flows and allowed interest to accumulate on those pre-payments. This change is in lieu of any “start up” or capital contribution from the Department.
- In April 2006, RUCSN was fortunate to secure new premises in Malaga at a reasonable rent, and with minimal removal costs. However, we have major refurbishment plans that will require a significant investment - our IT systems and communications systems need urgent replacement; general office equipment and furniture needs an upgrade; the rear warehouse requires refurbished as office and resource library space.
- The lease on the Malaga premises is for 5 years; RUCSN has also negotiated an option to purchase these premises after the 4th year - the RUCSN Board will be reviewing all options prior to this date.
- Provisions for employee entitlements (including redundancy entitlements) have been maintained in line with staff agreements and current legislation.

Tony Morley
Executive Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RUCSN is indebted to its many supporters, including:

- Commonwealth Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs for their ongoing funding, support and confidence;
- State Department for Community Development for funding of the Rural Playgroups Support Service and the various Early Years Strategy programs that RUCSN is delivering;
- Lotterywest for ongoing support;
- State Department of Education and Training for funding and supporting the various projects that RUCSN is delivering;
- Sherryn and the Skillsbank Team at Leadership WA; staff from Deloitte; Teri and James from Toolbox WA; David Martin from Synergy; and Greg Ellson for their advice around so many “corporate” issues;
- BHP for their support with the Pilbara projects;
- Individuals who support us through donations of time or money;
- Our partners and “sister agencies” who have joined with us in many collaborative ventures across Western Australia (especially Ngala and YMCA);
- Many other professional groups whose wisdom we draw upon in providing our services.

RESOURCE UNIT FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS INC.

RUCSN

5 Carson Road

MALAGA WA 6090

Telephone: (08) 9249 4333

Fax: (08) 9249 4366

Email: inclusion@rucsn.org.au

Website: www.rucsn.org.au
