

ROYAL
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL



CENTRE FOR

Community
Child Health

2005 Survey Report about *Childcare and children's health* publication

Prepared for:

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Services***

Prepared by:

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1 Introduction

1.1 Publication background

Childcare and children's health is a bi-monthly, publication distributed free to all long day care services and family day care coordination units in Australia through the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC). Each edition of the publication includes an in-depth article, case study and Parent Fact Sheet on a given topic. It is provided as a reference for working through some of the quality areas in the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System and to complement advice from other books such as *Staying Healthy in Child Care* (2nd Edition) and other expertise in the field of children's health.

This initiative is supported by NCAC with funding from Johnson and Johnson and the Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services. The publication is developed by the Royal Children's Hospital, Centre for Community Child Health (CCCH) and is supported by a National Advisory Board and an Editorial Panel of early childhood experts.

To date the publication has made a significant contribution to improve and extend practice in children's services in the areas of health, development and well being of young children. Information provided in the Parent Fact Sheets is consistent with the expert opinion on these topics. When parents ask questions about issues such as teething, bedwetting, separation anxiety, and child care, to name a few of the topics; staff can easily photocopy the articles to give to parents as required.

Electronic versions of the publication are available for download via the internet. These and past publications back dated to 2000, are available on the CCCH website at http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/pub/index.cfm?doc_id=855. . Editions released in 2004 and 2005 are also available via the econnections website at www.econnections.com.au

1.2 Survey approach

In early 2005, the National Advisory Board approved a survey of the readership of the *Childcare and children's health* publication to gauge its effectiveness as a means of translating research into practice for child care and family day care staff.

In response to this, the Centre for Community Child Health developed a survey, to determine how the publication was being used and by whom, the level of satisfaction with the publication and the readers views on how the publication might be improved in the future.

The survey was distributed to approximately 5,000 services throughout Australia via a mail out to all services that currently receive the current *Childcare and children's health* publication.

Approximately 1,300 surveys were returned, with 1,178 returned in time for processing and analysis. Feedback provided by the survey responses indicates a strong use of the publication and supports its continuation. The feedback obtained also provides suggestions to be considered in the future development, production and dissemination of this valuable resource.

2 Description of the services which responded

2.1 Type of services

A total of 1,178 services returned the survey in time for analysis. While additional services completed and returned surveys several weeks after the completion date, these were not received in time for processing and analysis. As highlighted in Table 1, almost 60% of the surveys returned and analysed were from larger services with more than 41 licensed places. A further 33% were returned from services with a maximum of 40 licensed places.

Table 1: Size of the Child Care Service

Licensed places	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
40 and under	392	33%
41 and over	667	57%
No response	119	10%
Total	1,178	100%

Respondents were also asked to comment on the number of licensed places, broken down by age groups. Specifically, respondents were asked to identify how many licensed places are available for children under 24 months, compared to the number of places available for children aged between 24-36 months. Table 2 indicated that 70% of the services that responded currently offer places for children under 24 months, with 78% services offering places for children between 24 -36 months.

Table 2: Number of licensed places by child age

Licensed places	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Children under 24 months	821	70%
Children aged 24-36 months	918	78%

Of the 821 services which indicated offering places for children under 24 months, more than 80% (n=692) offer between 1-20 places at their services to children from this age group. In comparison, of the 918 services which indicated offering places to children aged between 24 and 36 months, just over 50% (n=474) offer between 1-20 places for children from this age group, with a further 31% (n= 286) services offering between 21-40 places.

Respondents were also invited to indicate how many family day carers operated in their relevant scheme, where family day care services were offered. Responses indicated that of the sample, there was a total of 156 family day carers. Just over 25% (n=40) of schemes reported the number of family day carers to be between 1-15, with a further 28% (n=44) of schemes between 16-30 carers and 22% (n=35) between 31-45.

2.2 Location of service

Respondents were asked to identify whether their service operates in a capital city, a regional centre, a rural area or remote environments, and also the state in which the service operates.

As illustrated by the table below, services within capital cities accounted for the largest group responding (47%). This was followed in descending order by services in regional centres (27%), rural areas (20%) and remote environments (3%).

Table 3: Number of services that responded by location

Location	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Capital City	548	47%
Regional Centre	319	27%
Rural	239	20%
Remote	35	3%
No response	36	3%
Total^a	1,177	100%

^a There was a single variable incorrectly coded in data entry. This response has not been included.

The following table presents the number of services that responded by the state or territory in which they are located.

Table 4: Number of services that responded by State or Territory location

Location	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
NSW	460	39%
VIC	224	19%
QLD	244	21%
WA	115	10%
SA	55	5%
TAS	24	2%
NT	14	1%
ACT	30	3%
No response	12	1%
Total	1,178	100%

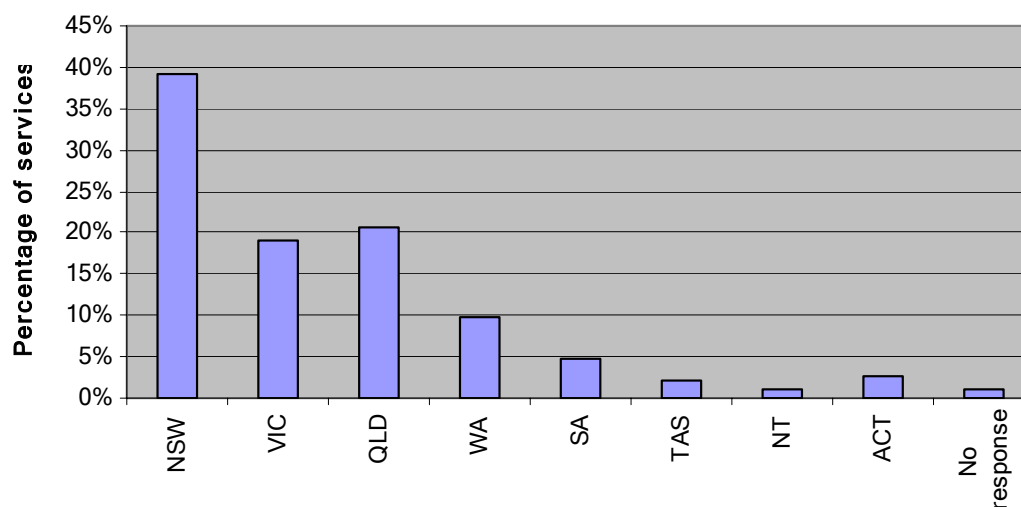


Figure 1: Percentage of services that responded by State and Territory location

3 Usage of the publication

3.1 Readership of the publication

The *Childcare and children's health* publication consists of three sections:

1. An in-depth article on one topic.
2. A parent fact sheet.
3. A case study.

The survey asked respondents to identify who usually reads each section of this publication. Multiple responses were permitted. The following table presents the number and proportion of respondents who reported readership of the various sections for each reader category. For example, 1,129 or 96% of respondents reported that Directors/Coordination Unit Staff read the in-depth articles contained within the publication.

Table 5: Readership of the publication components by reader category

Reader category	In depth article	Parent fact sheet	Case study
Director/Coordination Unit Staff	1,129 (96%)	1,025 (87%)	970 (82%)
All of the staff/carers	457 (39%)	487 (41%)	349 (30%)
Some staff/carers	636 (54%)	600 (15%)	515 (44%)
Management	334 (28%)	313 (27%)	248 (21%)
Parents	139 (12%)	878 (75%)	135 (11%)
Other (specified)	34 (3%)	46 (4%)	38 (3%)

As illustrated by the graph below, overall it appears that Directors/Coordinators are the main group who read the publication, with more than 80% of those who responded reporting that this groups read the in-depth article, the parent fact sheet and the case study. It was further reported that around 40% of all staff in the services that responded read the in-depth article and parent facts sheet, with around 50% of respondents reporting that some staff in these services read these components as do just under 30% of management staff. Generally speaking, the in-depth article and parents facts sheet appear to be utilised to a greater extent than the individual case studies.

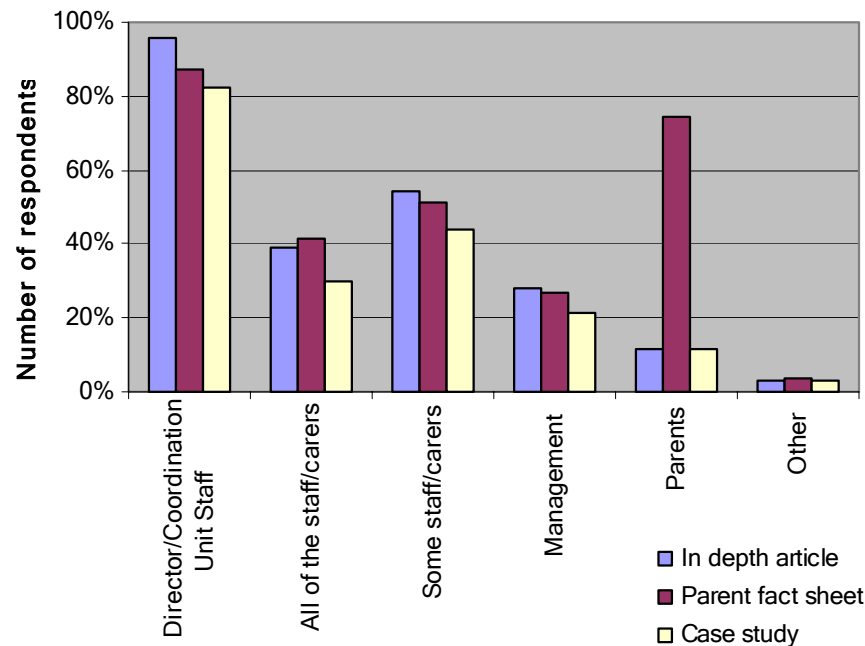


Figure 2: Percentage of respondents reading different sections of the publication

It should be noted that this information presented in the table and graph above is based on the perception of the individual who responded to the survey and therefore, the readership of each component should be interpreted with some caution. In particular, the use of the various components of this publication by parents (say the parent fact sheet as illustrated in the above graph) is based on the view of the respondent, not parents themselves, and therefore, perhaps at best reflects the level of use of the parent facts sheet by child care staff.

Centres were also asked to indicate whether there were any other readers of the publication, over and above the categories listed. Some of the more common readers specified in the 'other' category listed in the above table included:

- Centre Nurse
- OHS officer
- Parent committee
- Students
- Volunteers

3.2 Use of publication when received

Respondents were asked to comment on how they use the publication when it is received. Multiple responses were allowed. The following table and graph depict the percentage of respondents who reporting using the publication on arrival.

Table 6: Use of publication when received

Use	Frequency of responses	Percentage of respondents
Read some of it each time	458	39%
Read all of it each time	692	59%
Use as a resource as needs arise	801	68%
None of the above	47	4%

NB. Due to errors in data coding the above percentages may be slightly lower than the actual use of the publication.

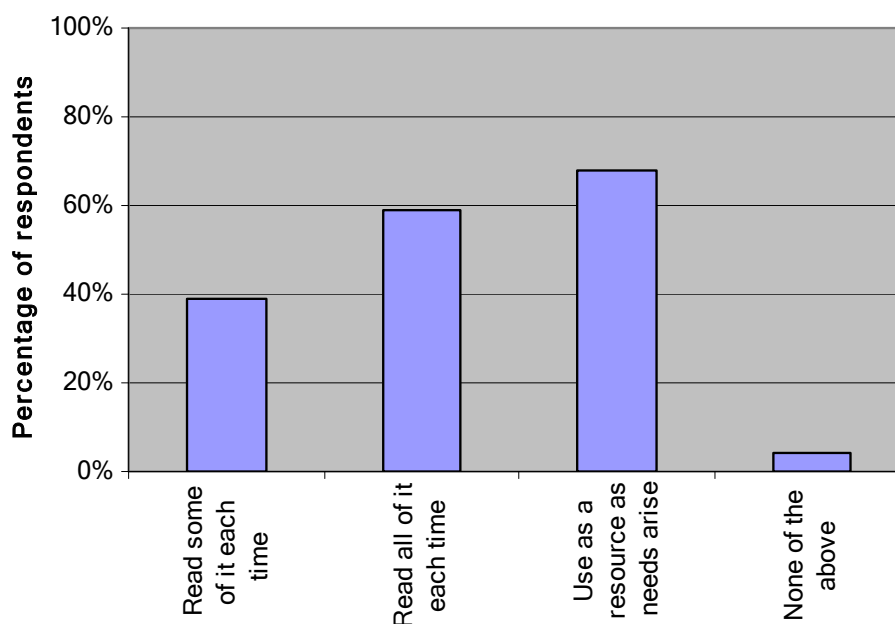


Figure 3: Percentage of respondents using the publication when received

Based on the responses provided, those who receive the publication make valuable use of it, with the majority of respondents (68%) reporting that they use *Childcare and children's health* as the need arises. Fifty-nine percent of respondents report reading all of the publication each time whereas 39% report reading the publication only some of the time. Four percent of respondents indicated that none of the above responses were suitable for describing use of the publication.

3.3 Use of publication by service

Respondents were also asked to report on the use of the publication by their service. This was an open ended question. More than 360 respondents made comments in relation to this question. Examination of these responses indicated that the publication is used in a variety of ways, most commonly:

- As a resource to inform and educate staff and facilitate staff meetings and discussions concerning the current child care and health issues.
- As a means of educating parents through the use of fact sheets which inform parents of the current child health issues.
- As a resource folder used for future reference as the need arises.
- As material for use in service newsletters.
- To assist in updating policies and procedures.
- For display on service centre noticeboards.

4 Usefulness and quality

4.1 Usefulness, clarity and layout

Respondents were asked to rate the usefulness, clarity of information, appropriateness of layout and design and the quality of photos and illustrations used throughout the publication based on a Likert scale (where 1=low, 5=high). Note that not all survey respondents rated the publication on each of these criteria, therefore, the number of responses varies, as indicated in the table below.

Table 7: Rating of publication

Criteria	Frequency of responses	Mean response
Usefulness	1,111	4.38
Clarity of Information	1,166	4.43
Layout and design	1,168	4.34
Photos and illustrations	1,161	4.27

Looking at the average ratings awarded, the usefulness of topics, clarity of information, appropriateness of layout and design and quality of photos and illustrations provided in the publication is held in high regard, with the mean response for each criteria above 4.27. More than 94% of all respondents indicated a response on each of the various components and the overall rating of the publication indicates a very high level of satisfaction amongst readers with the overall publication.

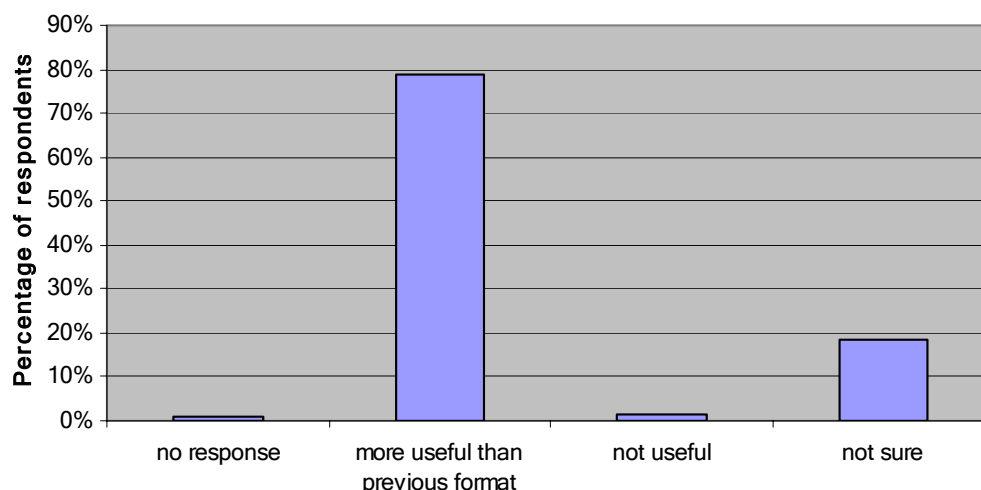
4.2 Usefulness of single topic structure

Given changes to the format and layout of the publication, and that each publication now has a single topic format rather than a number of topics covered in one issue, respondents were asked to comment on the usefulness of this change.

Table 8: Usefulness of single topic structure

Usefulness	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
More useful than previous format	931	79%
Not useful	20	2%
Not sure	215	18%
No response	12	1%
Total	1,178	100%

Results indicated that almost 80% of respondents reported that the change to the new format was more useful than the previous format. A further 18% were not sure whether the change to design, layout and single topics format resulted in a more useful publication than the previous approach. The following graph further highlights this finding.

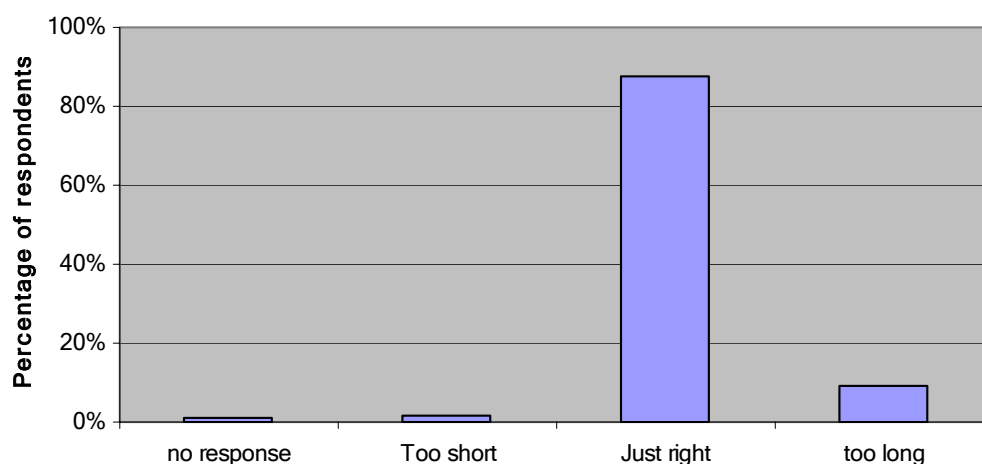
**Figure 4: Percentage of respondents rating the usefulness of single topic structure**

4.3 Perception of overall length

The publication is currently five pages in length, including the parent fact sheet. Respondents were invited to comment on their perception as to the appropriateness of the length of the publication. As indicated in the following table and graph, almost 90% of respondents reported that the length of the publication is just right, with just under 10% reporting that it is too long..

Table 9: Perception of publication length

Perception of length	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Too short	19	2%
Just right	1,052	89%
Too long	100	8%
No response	7	1%
Total	1,178	100%

**Figure 5: Percentage of respondents rating publication length**

4.4 Length of the in-depth article

More specifically, respondents were invited to comment on the appropriateness of the length of the in-depth article featured in each edition of the publication.

Table 10: Length of the in-depth article

Perception of length	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Too short	22	2%
Just right	1,034	88%
Too long	109	9%
No response	13	1%
Total	1,178	100%

In line with the overall rating of the publication length, respondents reading the publication are supportive of the length of the in-depth article, with almost 90% rating the length of the article as just right.

4.5 Value of case studies

The survey also sought to determine the value of the case studies provided, with respondents invited to comment on the value of these case studies.

Table 11: Value of case studies

Value	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Valuable	1,095	93%
Not valuable	57	5%
No response	25	2%
Total^a	1,177	100%

^a There was a single variable incorrectly coded in data entry. This response has not been included.

Overall, the vast majority of respondents, more than 90%, found the case study to be a valuable component of the publication. This is illustrated in the following graph.

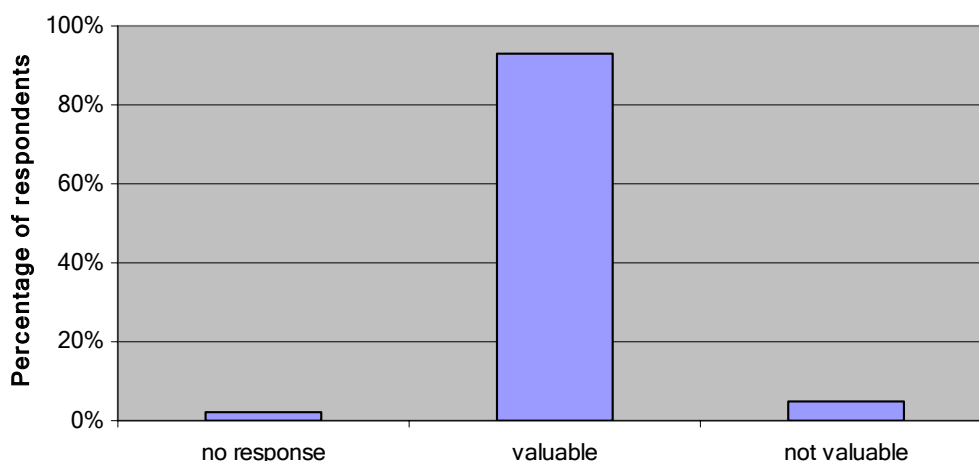


Figure 6: Percentage of respondents reporting value of case studies

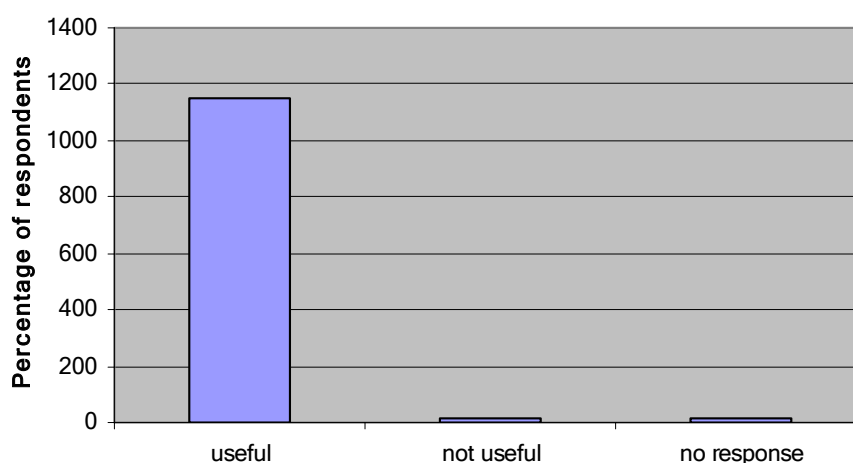
4.6 Usefulness of inclusion of QAIS/FDCQA principles

The *Childcare and children's health* publication now includes the QAIS/FDCQA principles that relate to the topic selected as the focus of each edition. Respondents were invited to comment on the usefulness of the inclusion of these principles. The table and graph below indicate that almost all respondents reported that the inclusion of these principles is useful.

No further questions were asked to determine why the inclusion of these principles is of value to child care service staff.

Table 12: Usefulness of the inclusion of QIAS/FDCQA principles

Usefulness	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Useful	1,154	98%
Not useful	12	1%
No response	12	1%
Total	1,178	100%

**Figure 7: Percentage of respondents reporting on the usefulness of the inclusion of QIAS/FDCQA principles**

5 Perceived changes in practice

In addition to questions about the usefulness of the publication, and the value of changes/improvements made in recent times, respondents were also asked to consider whether any changes have been made at their service as a result of the information provided in the publication. The following table presents the responses provided to this question.

Table 13: Changes made a result of the information in publication

Changes made	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Yes	809	69%
No	332	28%
No response	37	3%
Total	1,178	100%

This indicates that almost 70% of respondents maintained that changes had been made at their service, as a result of the information provided in the *Childcare and children's health* publication.

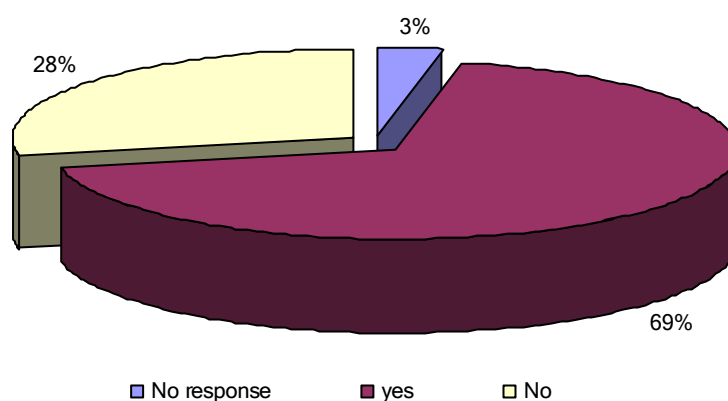


Figure 8: Percentage of respondents who have made changes based on publication information

As an extension of the above question, respondents were also asked to comment on the area in which changes have been made. Multiple responses were permitted. Therefore, the following table presents the areas in which change have been made, for the 809 respondents who reported yes to the previous question. The frequency of responses to each type of change category listed in the survey and the percentage of respondents (who reported yes to a change in practice) is presented.

Table 14: Changes made a result of the information in publication

Changes made	Frequency of responses	Percentage of respondents (reporting yes to change in practice, n=809)
Service policy	591	73%
Staff/carer confidence	396	49%
Staff/carer practices	684	85%
Equipment purchases	133	16%
Physical design	50	%
Other	60	7%

Of those respondents who reported that changes had been made as a result of information from the publication (n=809), 85% indicated that these changes had been made in relation to staff/carer practices, with 73% reporting changes in service policy and almost 50% reporting changes in staff/carer confidence.

Services were also asked to indicate other areas in which changes had been made and some of the more common responses indicated in the 'other' category were:

- Assisting staff in educating parents through facilitating greater communication and having support from the publication.
- Increasing staff and carers knowledge of current child health issues.
- Increasing knowledge of safety policies and practices.

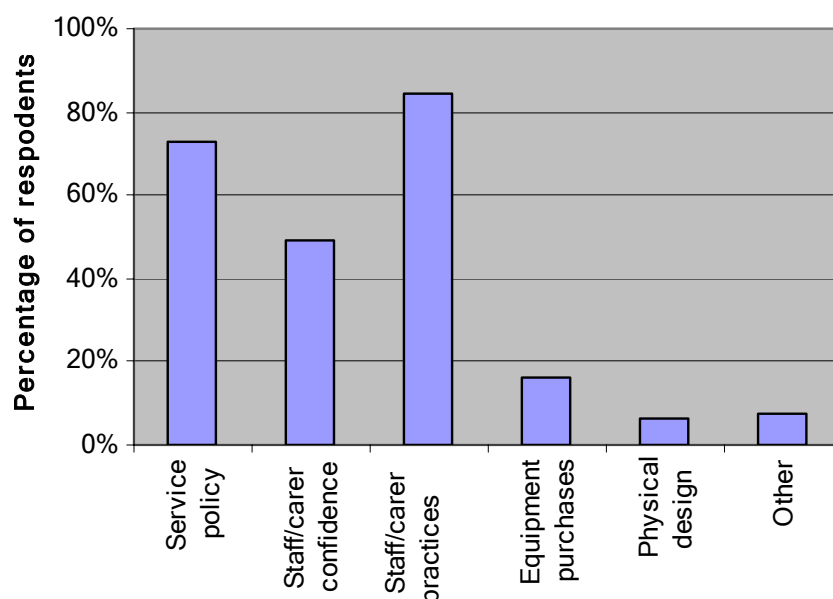


Figure 9: Percentage of respondents who reported change by area of change

6 Improvements to the publication

6.1 Information to assist with delivery of quality children's services

The survey asked respondents to indicate the Quality Assurance Areas they believed the provision of articles in *Childcare and children's health* would assist with. Respondents were asked to indicate whether articles were required for each area and to identify the specific issues related to this area that would be of benefit.

Table 15: Quality Assurance Areas and provision of articles in the Publication

	Article in CCCH needed for this QA area	Article in CCCH needed for this QA area	No response
Quality Improvement and Accreditation System response			
Relationships with Children	699 (59%)	113 (10%)	366 (31%)
Respect for children	690 (59%)	111 (9%)	377 (32%)
Partnerships with families	793 (68%)	64 (5%)	321 (27%)
Staff Interactions	686 (58%)	125 (11%)	367 (31%)
Planning and evaluation	740 (63%)	101 (8%)	337 (29%)
Learning and development ^a	727 (62%)	81 (7%)	367 (31%)
Protective care	809 (69%)	62 (5%)	307 (26%)
Health	873 (74%)	38 (3%)	267 (23%)
Safety ^b	828 (70%)	49 (4%)	300 (25%)
Managing to support quality	709 (60%)	104 (9%)	365 (31%)

	Article in CCCH needed for this QA area	Article in CCCH needed for this QA area	No response
Family Day Care Quality Assurance (if relevant)			
Interactions	144 (12%)	10 (1%)	1024 (87%)
Physical environment	141 (12%)	10 (1%)	1027 (87%)
Children Experiences, Learning and Development	150 (13%)	10 (1%)	1018 (86%)
Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing	159 (13%)	4 (0%)	1015 (86%)

^a There were two variables incorrectly coded in data entry. These responses has not been included.

^b There was one inappropriate response for this question. This response has not been included.

The response rate indicating 'yes' for the provision of articles across the various Quality Improvement and Accreditation System areas ranged between 58% and 74% which demonstrates that overall respondents believe that the provision of articles in these areas would be beneficial in assisting in the provision of quality children's services.

The response for the need for Family Day Care Quality Assurance Areas to be provided in *Childcare and children's health* was similar across the various quality areas, with between 12-13% of respondents indicating articles relating to these areas would be beneficial.

The following table presents some of the most commonly reported specific issues relating to each quality area reported to be useful for inclusion in future *Childcare and children's health* publications.

Table 16: Quality Assurance Area and the specific issues that would be of benefit

	Number of comments	Responses to open ended responses
Quality Improvement and Accreditation System response		
Relationships with Children	143	<input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate language, discipline and comforting practises <input type="checkbox"/> Attachments <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour management <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Interaction practises and positive reinforcement
Respect for children	134	<input type="checkbox"/> Case studies <input type="checkbox"/> Childrens competence and involvement in decision making <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural issues including sensitivity <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting independence
Partnerships with families	195	<input type="checkbox"/> Creating bonds <input type="checkbox"/> Communicating information <input type="checkbox"/> Encouraging parental involvement and participation in activities <input type="checkbox"/> How to deal with difficult parents
Staff Interactions	143	<input type="checkbox"/> Importance of positive role modelling <input type="checkbox"/> Boosting staff morale <input type="checkbox"/> Importance of communication and staff interaction/teamwork <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict resolution and respect

	Number of comments	Responses to open ended responses
		<input type="checkbox"/> Motivation and incentives <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development <input type="checkbox"/> Stress management <input type="checkbox"/> Support and networking
Planning and evaluation	178	<input type="checkbox"/> Childrens programs and interests <input type="checkbox"/> Children with special needs <input type="checkbox"/> Emergent curriculum ideas and support <input type="checkbox"/> The importance of program planning and effective evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Ideas/ examples of good planning <input type="checkbox"/> Suggestions for informing/teaching about health issues <input type="checkbox"/> Time management
Learning and development	130	<input type="checkbox"/> Language development <input type="checkbox"/> An age related guideline/ checklist for developmental stages <input type="checkbox"/> Current child development literature <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive and productive environments <input type="checkbox"/> Milestones for parents <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition <input type="checkbox"/> Reading
Protective care	145	<input type="checkbox"/> Child protection issues i.e. Abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Warning signs <input type="checkbox"/> Dental care <input type="checkbox"/> Hygiene practises <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Health and Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Immunisation <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical and Legal issues <input type="checkbox"/> Poisons <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep patterns <input type="checkbox"/> Stranger danger
Health	232	<input type="checkbox"/> Allergies and Asthma <input type="checkbox"/> Biting <input type="checkbox"/> Infectious control <input type="checkbox"/> Head lice and Hygiene <input type="checkbox"/> Current trends/health alerts <input type="checkbox"/> Dietary requirements and food handling <input type="checkbox"/> Smoking (passive) and children <input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion policies and support <input type="checkbox"/> Immunisation <input type="checkbox"/> Medication management <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Health and Safety
Safety	177	<input type="checkbox"/> Playground standards and safe behaviour <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate food/snacks for various age levels <input type="checkbox"/> Back care <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous chemicals

	Number of comments	Responses to open ended responses
		<input type="checkbox"/> Hand-washing <input type="checkbox"/> Insects and spiders <input type="checkbox"/> Safety in the home <input type="checkbox"/> Safety updates and where to access information
Managing to support quality	129	<input type="checkbox"/> Discussing difficult issues with families <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of current policies <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills <input type="checkbox"/> Planning for children with special needs <input type="checkbox"/> Professional development and staff assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Team building and supporting staff
Family Day Care Quality Assurance (if relevant)		
Interactions	31	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication styles <input type="checkbox"/> Respectful interactions <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding and respecting diversity
Physical environment	39	<input type="checkbox"/> Baby/toddlers and child friendly furniture <input type="checkbox"/> Play spaces <input type="checkbox"/> Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping environment <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of resources for children with special needs
Children Experiences, Learning and Development	35	<input type="checkbox"/> Behaviour Management <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Hygiene <input type="checkbox"/> Importance of play <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor play environments <input type="checkbox"/> Developing resilience and social competence
Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing	46	<input type="checkbox"/> Dental health <input type="checkbox"/> Food safety <input type="checkbox"/> Hand-washing <input type="checkbox"/> Infectious control <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health issues <input type="checkbox"/> Pet safety <input type="checkbox"/> Playground safety <input type="checkbox"/> Seat belts/car safety <input type="checkbox"/> Sun protection <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet training
Carers and Coordination Unit Staff	24	<input type="checkbox"/> Professionalism <input type="checkbox"/> Communication, cooperation and respect <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational health and safety <input type="checkbox"/> Policies <input type="checkbox"/> Managing difficult situations/ sensitive situations
Management and Administration	28	<input type="checkbox"/> Advisory committees <input type="checkbox"/> Creating and building links with services

	Number of comments	Responses to open ended responses
		<input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/> Grievance procedures <input type="checkbox"/> Policy development <input type="checkbox"/> Time management

6.2 Additional topics of interest for inclusion in future editions

Respondents were invited to provide details of other topics they would like to see featured in upcoming editions of *Childcare and children's health* that would be of benefit in the delivery of quality children's services. It is noted that several topics areas suggested in response to this question have been the focus of previous publication editions – see publication topics listed in Appendix A.

More than 390 respondents offered suggestion as to additional topics for inclusion. Some of the more common responses included:

- Provision of medicines/medications to children.
- Specific health issues concerning areas such as various allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma, temperatures, diarrhoea, gastro, head lice, flu, common cold, infections.
- General hygiene issues including hand washing, food safety, head lice, cleaning product usage and, poisoning.
- Information relating to each of the Quality Assurance Areas.
- Immunisation and infection control information.
- Caring for and communicating with parents/carers - strategies and methods for effective education and communication.
- Behaviour management – including strategies for toilet training and bedwetting, difficult behaviour and developmental delays i.e. ADHD.
- Nutrition information including dietary requirements, healthy recipes, safety and hygiene.
- Information on engaging staff and effective staff capacity building practices.

Additional suggestions, though less frequent than those mentioned above included the desire for topics around:

- Cultural awareness.
- Educating parents on the awareness and monitoring of their children's health.
- Children's emotional needs such as anxiety, separation and security.
- Dental care.
- Biting prevention and management.

6.3 General improvements suggested

In general terms, respondents were also asked to comment on how the publication could be improved to better meet their service's needs. There were 343 responses to this open-ended question and some of the common responses are presented below:

- Providing a larger folder or additional folders and perhaps an index.
- More frequent editions i.e. bi monthly.
- Providing the publication in languages other than English.
- More than one copy.
- A backorder system or where to access old editions.
- Tips for carers and staff on the same page as the particular health topic.
- Provision of websites for further information relating to a topic.
- Include an area for administration and staff/carers issues.
- Provide surveys for families.

7 Awareness and use of translated facts sheets

7.1 Knowledge and access

When respondents were asked to indicate whether they knew of the translated parent fact sheets available on the www.wcconnections.com.au website, 60% (n=695) respondents indicated that they were **not** aware of these (see figure below), with 40% (n=468) reporting knowledge of the sheets.

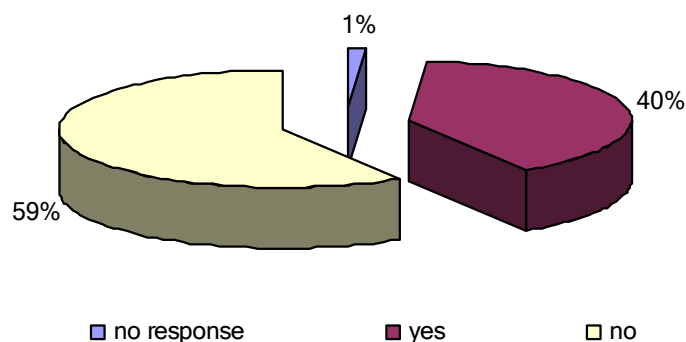


Figure 10: Percentage of respondents aware of translated parent fact sheets

Of the 468 respondents who were aware of the translated facts sheets, 92% (n=431) reported that they are able to access these sheets, however, only 28% (n=133) of those respondents aware of the sheets reported that they had actually used them.

The survey failed to ask about the demand for multi-cultural information in child care services and the need to access translated fact sheets. Therefore, the estimates of access and use of the translated parent fact sheets provided in this report may not be a true indication of their value.

7.2 Usefulness of translated parent facts sheets

The survey also asked those participants who had indicated they had used the translated parent fact sheets to rate the usefulness of the sheets as either useful or not useful. Of the 133 respondents who reporting using these sheets, 100% indicated that they had found the sheets to be useful.

8 Internet access within services

Given the use of Econnections website as a means of promoting and providing access to the *Childcare and children's health* publication, the survey sought to identify the number of services which have a computer with internet access. The following table indicates that more than 80% (n=950) of survey respondents reported that their service has a computer with internet access, with a further 3% (n=39) planning to provide internet access in the future.

Table 17: Services with a computer with internet access

Internet access	Frequency of responses	Percentage of responses
Access	950	81%
No Access	153	13%
Planning to connect	39	3%
No response	36	3%

Respondents who indicated their centre had a computer with internet access were asked to indicate who has access to this computer. Multiple responses were permitted. As highlighted by the following table, this computer is predominantly accessed by the directors and coordination unit staff (100%), with just under 50% of both management staff and carers also accessing the computer.

Table 18: Computer access by service staff and users

Computer users	Frequency of responses	Percentage of respondents with internet access (n=950)
Director/Coordination Unit Staff	950	100%
Management	470	49%
Some staff/carers	440	46%
All staff/carers	339	36%
Parents	47	5%
Other	54	6%

Where respondents indicated that there were any other people who accessed a computer/internet at their service, the most commonly specified person was an accounts officer or administration manager. Children and students also used this computer from time to time.

9 Summary and conclusion

Overall, the responses to this survey indicates a strong use of the *Childcare and children's health* publication and support for its continuation. The feedback obtained also provides suggestions to be considered in the future development, production and dissemination of this valuable resource.

A summary of the key findings of this survey are presented below - in headings that align with sections of the report.

Demographics about services that responded

- The overall response rate for survey returns was 25%.
- Almost 60% of the surveys returned were from services with more than 41 licensed places available.
- Seventy percent of the services that responded currently offer places for children under 24 months, with almost 80% offering places for children between 24 -36 months.
- Services within capital cities accounted for almost half of the services to submit responses, with around 30% returned from services operating in regional centres.
- The response rate to the survey is similar to the demographics of services throughout Australia – with the largest return rate from New South Wales and the lowest from Tasmania.

Use of publication

- Directors/Coordinators are the main group who read the publication, with more than 80% of those who responded reporting that this groups read the in-depth article, the parent fact sheet and the case study. More than 40% of staff in the services that responded read the in-depth article and parent facts sheet, as do just under 30% of management staff. Other readers of the publication, as nominated by survey respondents included the centre nurse, OHS officer, parent committee members, students and volunteers. Generally speaking, the in-depth article and parents facts sheet appear to be utilised to a greater extent that the individual case studies.
- The majority of respondents who receive *Childcare and children's health* reported using it as the need arises, with almost 60% also reading the publication on arrival.
- Open-ended responses indicated that the publication is used in a variety of ways—most commonly:
 - As a resource to inform and educate staff, and to facilitate staff meetings and discussions concerning current child care and health issues.
 - As a means of educating parents through the use of fact sheets.
 - As a resource folder used for future reference as the need arises.
 - As material for use in service newsletters.
 - To assist with updating policies and procedures.
 - For display on service/centre noticeboards.

Usefulness and quality

- ❑ According to the survey results, the usefulness of topics, clarity of information, appropriateness of layout and design, and quality of photos and illustrations provided in the *Childcare and children's health* publication is held in very high regard.
- ❑ Results indicated that almost 80% of respondents reported that the change to the new format was more useful than the previous format.
- ❑ There was very strong support (by more than 90% of respondents) for the overall length of publication as it currently stands (at five pages in length, including the parent fact sheet) and the length of the in-depth article. More than 90% of respondents also supported the case study as a valuable component of the publication.
- ❑ The inclusion QAIS/FDCQA principles that relate to the topic selected as the focus of each edition was perceived as useful by almost all survey respondents.

Changes in practice

- ❑ Almost 70% of respondents maintained that changes had been made at their service, as a result of the information provided in the *Childcare and children's health* publication. Of these respondents, 85% indicated that these changes had been made in relation to staff/carer practices, with almost three quarters reporting changes in service policy and around half reporting changes in staff/carer confidence.
- ❑ Other areas in which changes had been commonly made included assisting staff in educating parents through facilitating greater communication and having support from the publication, increasing staff and carers knowledge of current child health issues and increasing knowledge safety policies and practices.

Improvements to the publication

- ❑ The majority of respondents reported that the provision of articles relating to the various Quality Improvement and Accreditation System Areas would be beneficial in assisting in the provision of quality children's services. The need for Family Day Care Quality Assurance Areas to be provided in *Childcare and children's health* was not as strongly highlighted by the survey responses.
- ❑ Common topics believed to be of benefit in the delivery of quality children's services that could feature in upcoming editions of *Childcare and children's health* included:
 - Provision of medicines/medications to children.
 - Specific health issues concerning areas such as various allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma, temperatures, diarrhoea, gastro, head lice, flu, common cold, infections.
 - General hygiene issues including hand washing, food safety, head lice, cleaning product usage and, poisoning.
 - Information relating to each of the Quality Assurance Areas.
 - Immunisation and infection control information.
 - Caring for and communicating with parents/carers - strategies and methods for effective education and communication.

- Behaviour management – including strategies for toilet training and bedwetting, difficult behaviour and developmental delays i.e. ADHD.
- Nutrition information including dietary requirements, healthy recipes, safety and hygiene.
- Information on engaging staff and effective staff capacity building practices.

It is noted that several topics areas suggested in response to this question have been the focus of previous publication editions – see publication topics listed in Appendix A.

- In terms of general improvements to the publication, the following suggestions were most common:
 - Providing a larger folder or additional folders and perhaps an index.
 - More frequent editions i.e. bi monthly.
 - Providing the publication in languages other than English.
 - More than one copy.
 - A backorder system or where to access old editions.
 - Tips for carers and staff on the same page as the particular health topic.
 - Provision of websites for further information relating to a topic.
 - Include an area for administration and staff/carer issues.
 - Provide surveys for families.

Awareness and use of translated facts sheets

- Based on the survey respondents, knowledge of the translated parent fact sheets available on the www.wcconnections.com.au website is low, with more than 60% of respondents indicating they were **not** aware of these.
- Of those who were aware of the translated parent facts sheets, more than 90% reported that they are able to access these sheets, however, less than a third reported that they had actually used them. Despite the low usage, all of those using the sheets reported that they had been useful.
- It is acknowledge that the survey failed to ask about the demand for multi-cultural information in child care services and the need to access translated parent fact sheets and therefore, the estimates of access and use of these sheets provided may not be a true indication of their value.

Internet access within services

- Given the use of Econnections website as a means of promoting and providing access to the *Childcare and children's health* publication, the survey sought to identify the number of services which have a computer with internet access. More than 80% of survey respondents reported that their service has a computer with internet access, with access of this computer predominantly by the directors and coordination unit staff. Less than half of both management staff and carers accessing the computer.

Appendix A: Childcare and children's health topics

Current Publications for professionals

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Medication management in children's services	Vol. 8 No. 2 April 2005
Exploring the Nature of Parent-Professional Partnerships	Vol. 8 No. 1 March 2005

Current information sheets for parents

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Giving medication	April 2005
Parent-Professional Partnerships	March 2005

Each of the information sheets for 2005 have been translated into the following eight languages and are available for download via www.ecconnections.com.au .

- Arabic
- Bosnian
- Chinese
- Croatian
- Somali
- Spanish
- Turkish
- Vietnamese

Past publications for professionals

2004 Publications

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Stress management for carers of young children	Vol. 7 No. 6 December 2004
Music experiences for young children in childcare	Vol. 7 No. 5 October 2004
Healthy teeth in childcare	Vol. 7 No. 4 August 2004
Child care links	Vol. 7 No. 3 July 2004
The Social Baby	Vol. 7 No. 2 May 2004
Recognising serious illness in young children	Vol. 7 No. 1 February 2004

2004 Information sheets and translations for parents

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Baby massage	December 2004
Music experiences for young children	October 2004
Healthy teeth in childcare	August 2004
Childcare services are community centres	July 2004
The Social Baby	May 2004
Recognising serious illness in young children	February 2004

Each of the information sheets for 2004 have been translated into the eight languages listed in the above section.

2003 Publications

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Food safety plans - what are they?	Vol. 6 No. 4 December 2003
Grandparents are family too: insights from the experience of grandparents	Vol. 6 No. 3 September 2003
Importance of handwashing and nose wiping	Vol. 6 No. 2 June 2003
Inclusion	Vol. 6 No.1 March 2003

2002 Publications

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Understanding and responding to the grieving child, Helping young children to self-regulate.	Vol.5 No.4 December 2002
Dads want to 'be there' for their children - Childcare staff can help them 'get there', Self-regulation in early childhood.	Vol.5 No.3 September 2002
Meningococcal disease, Update: colds and flu, Partnerships with families: resources for accreditation.	Vol.5 No.2 July 2002
Survey results for Childcare & children's health, Behaviour problems in young children, Health initiative.	Vol.5 No.1 March 2002

2001 Publications

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Touch, Sleep time for babies, Sourcing current and relevant information.	Vol. 4 No. 4 November 2001
Children with food allergies, Emergency care for food allergies, Drinks for young children.	Vol. 4 No. 3 September 2001
Obesity in young children and promoting outdoor activity. The focus for the linkage column is the Queensland Hub strategy.	Vol. 4 No. 2 June 2001

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Working with children with developmental disabilities and delays, including a case study. The focus for the infection control column is an evaluation of the educational kit, 'Improving Infection Control'.	Vol. 4 No. 1 February 2001

2000 Publications

Topic / Date	Date / Volume
Primary caregiving systems for infants and toddlers and supporting the caregivers of infants. The focus for the infection control column is on Chickenpox vaccination. Supporting the caregivers of infants and toddlers.	Vol. 3 No. 4 November 2000
Understanding and working with the protective urges of parents of infants and Working with families in developing staff-parent relationships in infant care. The focus of the linakges column is on a new resource to support good partnerships.	Vol. 3 No. 3 September 2000
The challenges of cultural diversity in caring for infants and toddlers & Promoting bilingualism with infants and toddlers. The infection control column focuses on the resource 'Improving Infection Control in Child Care Services'.	Vol. 3 No. 2 May 2000
Infant and toddler care - what is the message from brain research? & Common misinterpretations about the brain research. The Injury Prevention column focuses on Playground Planning.	Vol. 3 No. 1 February 2000

Appendix B: Childcare and children's health 2005 Survey

CHILDCARE AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH PUBLICATION SURVEY



Please let us know your thoughts about Childcare and Children's Health so that we can meet your needs as much as possible.

Return your survey by **Monday 23rd May** in the reply paid envelope and your service can be included in the draw for one of three \$50 book voucher and a copy of Professor Oberklaid's recent publication titled "Health in Early Childhood Settings".

Instructions: Fill in the circles like this: ● Please do not tick or cross the circles. Please write clearly.

ABOUT YOUR SERVICE

1. Please provide information about the size of your Childcare Service or Family Day Care scheme.

Child Care Service:

40 and under licensed places

41 and over licensed places

No. of licensed places for children under 24months

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No. of licensed places for children aged 24-36months

--	--	--

Family Day Care Scheme:

No. of carers in FDC scheme

--	--	--

2. What is the location of the service?

Rural

City

Remote

Regional

3. In which State or Territory is your service located?

VIC

NSW

QLD

NT

SA

WA

TAS

ACT

ABOUT CHILDCARE AND CHILDREN'S HEALTH PUBLICATION

4. This publication currently consists of three sections: a) An in-depth article on one topic,
b) a parent fact sheet. c) a case study.

For each section of this publication, please indicate who usually reads each?
(Please fill in **one** or **more** circles in the table below)

	In-depth article	Parent fact sheet	Case study
Director/ Coordination Unit Staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All of the staff/ carers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Some staff/ carers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (Please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. How would you rate the publication on each of the following aspects?
(Please fill in the circle for **one** number for each aspect in the table below.)

	1 LOW ←————→ 5 HIGH				
Usefulness	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Clarity of information	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Layout and design	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Photos and illustrations	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5

6. Generally, when you receive your publication, do you?
(Fill in one or more circles)

- Read **some** of it each time
- Read **all** of it each time
- Use as a resource as the need arises
- None of the above

7. Overall how is the publication used by your service (e.g to inform staff/carers meeting agenda/discussion, in interactions with parents)?

8. The publication is currently 5 pages in length, including the parent fact sheet. Is this length?
(Please fill in **one** circle)

- Too short Just Right Too Long

9. Each publication now has a single topic format rather than a number of topics in one issue
(the old format). Is the change to a single topic format? (Please fill in **one** circle)

- More useful than the previous format Not useful Not sure

10. In general, is the length of the **in-depth article**?

- Too short Just Right Too Long

11. The publication also includes a **case study** that relates to the topic. Is this **case study**?

- Valuable Not valuable

12. In the publication QIAS/FDCQA principles that relate to the topic are identified. Is the
identification of related principles in the publication?

- Useful Not useful

13. Have any changes been made at your service as a result of information provided in the publication?

- Yes No

If no go directly to **question 15**

14. If yes indicate areas in which changes have been made
(Please fill in **one** or **more** circles)

Service policy

Staff/carers confidence

Staff/carers practices

Equipment purchases

Physical design

Other (Please specify) _____

15a. For each of the following Quality Assurance Areas, please indicate whether (a) the provision of articles in Childcare and Children's Health on the area would assist with the provision of quality children's services and (b) describe specific issues related to this area that would be of benefit.

	Articles in CCCH needed for this QA Area	Specific issues related to this QA area that would be of benefit (please list)
Quality Improvement and Accreditation System		
Quality Area 1 Relationships with Children	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 2 Respect for Children	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 3 Partnership with Families	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 4 Staff Interactions	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 5 Planning and Evaluation	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 6 Learning and Development	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 7 Protective Care	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 8 Health	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 9 Safety	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 10 Managing to Support Quality	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Family Day Care Quality Assurance (if relevant)		
Quality Area 1 Interactions	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 2 Physical Environment	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 3 Children's Experiences, Learning and Development	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 4 Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 5 Carers and Coordination Unit Staff	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	
Quality Area 6 Management and Administration	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	

15b. Are there any other topics you would like to see featured in upcoming editions of Childcare and Children's Health that would assist you in the delivery of quality children's services?

16. How could the publication be improved to meet your service's needs?

17. Do you know about the translated parent fact sheets available on the www.econnections.com.au website?

- Yes No If no go directly to **question 18**

17a. Are you able to access these translated parent fact sheets from the website?

- Yes No

17b. Have you used these translated parent fact sheets?

- Yes No

17c. If yes to Q17b, have you found the translated parent fact sheets?

- Useful Not useful

18a. Does your service have a computer with internet

- Yes No Planning to connect

18b. If yes go to question 18a, at your service who has access to the computer?
(Please fill in **one** or **more** circles)

- Director/ Coordination Unit Staff
 Some staff/carers
 Parents
 All staff/ carers
 Management
 Other (Please specify) _____

Thank you for completing this survey**Remember:****Return by Monday 23rd May 2005****To Centre for Community Child Health
In the Reply Paid Envelope provided**

Details of centre (OPTIONAL - Please complete only if you wish to be included in the draw for one of three \$50 Book Vouchers and a copy of Professor Oberklaid's recent publication titled "Health in Early Childhood Settings").

Centre _____

Address _____

_____ State _____ Postcode _____

Email _____

Director _____

Thank you for completing the details of your centre. The winning centres will be announced in the next edition of *Childcare and Children's Health*.

Would you like to contribute a case study to include in this publication? Please contact Tonia Godhard for more information.

Email: toniagodhard@pacific.net.au