



Australian Research Alliance for Children & Youth

Working together to enhance the wellbeing and life chances of children and young people.

Final Report to ARACY/ARC NHMRC Network Seed Funded Collaboration			
Project title	Program evaluation of the national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)		
Convenor of collaboration	Prof Jennifer Sumsion and A/Prof Linda Harrison		
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email	kwoodmeyer@csu.edu.au	Total grant amount	\$ 25,000
Major activities undertaken (expand section as necessary)			
Activity	Date	Description	
Identification of the broader representative group of EYLF collaborators	September – October 2009	Over 60 participants were identified and invited to attend the ARACY-EYLF new collaboration workshop, including representatives from the 9 EYLF Case Study sites (one from each State and Territory and one from the Torres Straits), government representatives (COAG EYLF Working Party), non-government organizations, and the CSU research consortium. Each participant was asked to prepare/present a brief report/update on EYLF developments and projects and that are already underway in their organization or state/territory.	
Workshop One – Two day scoping and planning meeting	November 2-3, 2009	<p>A two-day workshop was held at the Bathurst Campus of CSU</p> <p>Day 1 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates from DEEWR, South Australia, West Australia, Northern Territory on roll out of EYLF; updates from non-government organizations on professional development and support for the EYLF; updates from EYLF case study sites; updates from EYLF-Consortium on research opportunities • Updates on publishing opportunities and current work being prepared for publication on the EYLF • Discussion of key issues requiring attention, identification of specific research questions related to evaluation of the EYLF <p>Day 2 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of potential funding sources, including industry partnerships, for research and publication • Review of Day 1 'research possibilities' and identification of projects and working groups/project teams • Working group meetings discussed potential new projects, identified strategies for action. • Development of work plans and timelines for project teams 	



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<p>Identification and preparation of Australian Research Council grant applications</p>	<p>Dec – Feb, 2010</p>	<p>EYLF Research Consortium members from Charles Sturt University, Queensland University of Technology, and Flinders University developed two proposals for an ARC Discovery grant. These proposals identified different aspects of the EYLF for research.</p>
<p>EYLF projects working groups</p>	<p>February - April, 2010</p>	<p>With the leaders of each of the project groups we confirmed where and when to hold a second meeting of the self-selected project groups and what specified outcomes could be achieved as a result.</p> <p>Group 1 – Publishing Special issue Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood Leaders (3) are co-editors for the special edition of CIEC that will focus on the EYLF. The call for papers has gone out and papers are due by 15 August. Workshop Two will provide time to discuss the issue with potential writers and be an opportunity to talk with those who have started on writing their papers or who have an abstract or a draft or idea or would like to partner with someone to write a paper.</p> <p>Group 2 – Publishing a book on the Relevance of EYLF for children under 3 years Leaders (2) are aiming to produce a co-authored or edited book that focuses on EYLF research, practice and policy for children under three. We are considering a number of possible models - one being a pairing of practitioners and academics who might work/write together.</p> <p>Group 3 – Practitioner Inquiry/ Pedagogical Leadership Leaders (3) are aiming to identify research opportunities that measure the usefulness of practitioner inquiry as a model for professional engagement with the EYLF and/or propose a model that links practitioners with academic support to inform practice around the “implementation” of the EYLF and measure the effectiveness of this as a tool for achieving pedagogical leadership.</p> <p>Group 4 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives Leaders (3) are working with the Indigenous Professional Support Alliance (IPSA) to progress the ideas discussed in November.</p>
<p>In progress Proposal to establish an EYLF sub-network of ARACY</p>	<p>March – May, 2010</p>	<p>A key outcome of Workshop One was the desire amongst all participants to formalise the ARACY-EYLF Research Network as an ARACY Sub-Network. The EYLF Network aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate collaboration across researchers, practitioners, professional organizations, service providers and policy makers. • Disseminate research findings and professional material that support the interpretation and implementation of the EYLF. • Build capacity in cross-sectoral research. • Generate new knowledge through reflective conversations about <i>Belonging, Being, and Becoming</i> across the diversity of early childhood education and care settings, including schools. • Advocate for participatory approaches that reflect multiple perspectives in early childhood curriculum and policy development.
<p>In progress Group 4 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives</p>	<p>May 5, 2010</p>	<p>Working group leaders were invited to attend and present at the national meeting of IPSU in Fremantle</p>



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<p>In progress Collation of EYLF case study data and Protocol</p>	<p>October 2009 – May, 2010</p>	<p>Data (transcriptions of interviews and field notes) collected by EYLF Research Consortium members as part of the EYLF Case Studies during the EYLF trial process will be collated in a format that is suitable for analysis. A protocol for requesting access to this data set will be developed, based on the system used by FaHCSIA for researchers wanting to use the LSAC data. We will seek approval and advice from DEEWR on the protocol.</p>
<p>In progress Workshop Two – Follow-up meeting with project teams</p>	<p>June 7-8, 2010</p>	<p>Working Groups 1, 2, 3 will meet in Sydney to progress the identified research and publication goals</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Benefits arising from the project and how these align to ARACY goals</p>		
<p>The EYLF research network was established to provide a forum for the exploration and sharing of innovative ways to track, document, research and evaluate the interpretation and implementation of <i>Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia</i>. The EYLF collaboration garnered wide interest from government policymakers, academics, researchers, professional organizations, and practitioners across all states and territories of Australia, and is in keeping with the ARACY goals to: "<i>bring together people with specific research interests and expertise, with the goals of increasing capacity, facilitating collaborations, and improving outcomes for children and young people.</i>"</p> <p>The collaboration was brought together to address the implementation of the national <i>Early Years Learning framework for Australia</i> (EYLF), which is a key component of the Council of Australian Governments' (COAG) National Quality Framework (NQF) for early childhood services. The NQF is critical to COAG's implementation of the national reform policy for early childhood education and care and its implementation will be mandatory. The work of the ARACY-EYLF in developing and progressing a research agenda in relation to the implementation and program evaluation of the EYLF is aligned with ARACY's goal of addressing 'big issues' in childhood health, development and wellbeing confronting governments, parents, early childhood educators and service providers.</p>		



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Paper 2

Please comment on the collaboration process, successes and obstacles (expand section as necessary)

The ARACY-EYLF collaboration process was highly successful. We feel that this was due, in part, to building the ARACY-EYLF new collaboration on the strong foundations formed by the CSU-led Consortium that developed the EYLF for COAG, in 2008. The existing group was widened to include other non-government organizations and professional bodies, at a state and national level. Additionally, the timing of the ARACY-EYLF collaboration tapped into the wide interest in the EYLF, which also supported the growth of new alliances.

The size of the ARACY-EYLF collaboration, and the desire to expand the membership through the setting up of an ARACY sub-network, is a huge success. We feel that the present stage of the collaboration is just the beginning, and that there are many other possibilities to tap and support.

The successes of the ARACY-EYLF collaboration have been many, as demonstrated by the project outputs recorded so far. We feel these are a great achievement, particularly the preparation and submission to two ARC Discovery grants within in the short time span between the first meeting in November February, 2010, and the publication/dissemination of journal articles through Early Childhood Australia . There are further outcomes in progress, which will be progressed at the meetings planned for May and June 2010.

The Christmas/summer holiday period and the academic timetable for university members are the only obstacles to the ARACY-EYLF collaboration. These have affected our ability to meet the expected time frame to set up and complete the proposed activities within the specified 6 month period. We ask, therefore, that an extension until the end of June, 2010 be granted.

Names : Jennifer Sumsion and Linda Harrison (Co-Convenors)

Date: April 30, 2010