

NSW ECEEN Conference 2018

A conference for sustainability in early childhood services in NSW



Saturday 12 May
Namaroo Convention Centre
Lane Cove National Park



NSW ECEEN



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Conference Information

About the conference

The 2018 NSW ECEEN conference falls the day before Mother's Day and provides the opportunity celebrate Mother Earth and the sources of life, nourishment and learning it provides.

Early childhood educators are invited to use the day to focus on the relationship with Mother Earth and inspire dispositions to nurture ecological identities and those of young Children.

In the spirit of deepening relationships with nature some of the workshop sessions will be conducted outdoors so as the saying goes "no such thing as bad weather just inappropriate clothing".

What to bring

In order to reduce the ecological impact of the conference, please bring;

- a refillable drink bottle for water
- a device or paper to record information and ideas
- a bag
- wear walking shoes and appropriate clothing if you would like to participate in outdoor workshops.

Registration

This commences at 8:30am for a 9:00am start.

On arrival you may like to explore the Information Bazaar or the outdoors.

Meals

Morning tea and lunch will be provided and catering will accommodate vegetarians and gluten free but for any other food requirements please email info@eceen.org.au.

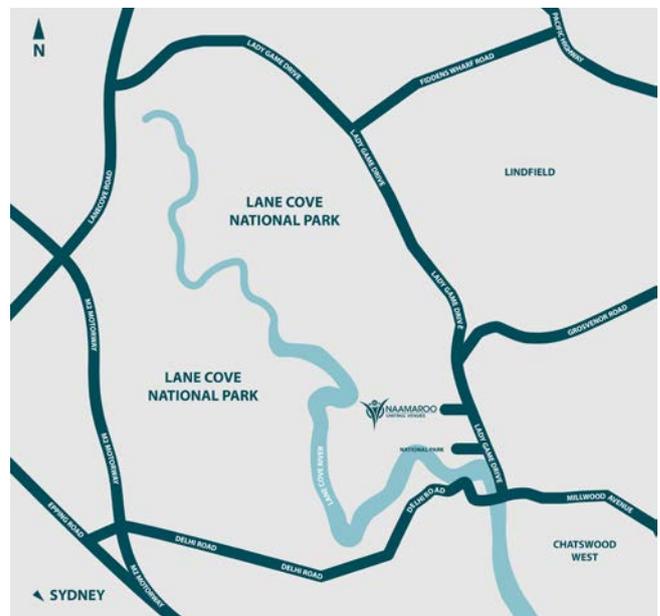
Conference Venue

**Naamaroo Convention Centre
Lady Game Drive, Chatswood NSW 2067**

For further information on the convention centre please visit:

unitingvenues.org/all-locations/naamaroo

unitingvenues.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Naamaroo-Transport-Map.pdf





Speakers + Workshops

Keynotes

9:05am Keynote A
Susan Moylan-Coombs

Caber-ra Nanga, Resting the Mind

Susan will share with us the *Gifts from the Oldest Surviving Living Culture on the Planet*. Provoking us to consider that we live in a world that is fast paced, noisy, disconnected and constant. It literally takes our breath away. We are all seeking something different from the daily grind, which has become the norm within our lives. Who are we? Who have we become? Can we remember who we truly are, deep at a soul level, the spirit and essence of self?

If you call this continent, Australia home, then you walk an ancient land with descendants of the oldest surviving living culture on the planet. We have knowledge that our Elders teach us, not only for the sake of humanity but also for the sustainability of the planet, Mother Earth.

We strive to find balance within our lives, and aim to fully understand that what gives us meaning is the connectedness, and the belief in the oneness. The Lores that we live life by, universal laws, human laws and the laws of nature as described to me by her Elders, is the balance between the Human World, the Natural World and the Sacred World, which Susan refers to as the Triangular Balance.



Susan Moylan-Coombs

Susan Moylan-Coombs is The Gaimaragal Group's founding director. The company was established to create a new story of connection and wellbeing for all Australians.

Susan's ancestry is Woolwonga and Gurindji from the Northern Territory. She has extensive experience working with First Australian communities nationally and internationally, with specific expertise in community consultation, empowerment and the facilitation of voice and storytelling.

9:45am Keynote B
Tracy Young

Becoming trouble(d): Ethical leadership with animals in early childhood.



Tracy Young has been engaged with research that troubles the connections and disjunctions of children's connections with animals in family homes and early childhood education within a critical

posthuman theoretical framework. In this research, the complex relations with children, animals and environment provide a space for ethical considerations that critique how non-human animals are socially constructed, culturally reproduced and positioned in early childhood education. Tracy's research contributes to wider understandings about the significance of early childhood education in terms of relationality with animals, humans and environments.

As we become increasingly aware of diminishing resources and habitats that impact the health and wellbeing of all Earth dwellers, there is a crucial need to comprehend how humans are enmeshed in social, cultural and environmental relations with (and as) animals. Humans and animals engage with each other in a multitude of complex ways and these entanglements have always been present, motivated by both necessity and choice. As we become ensconced in the epoch of the Anthropocene, where humans are described by Crutzen and Stoermer (2000) as a geological force, these relations take on greater relevance. Drawing on years of teaching and research, including recent doctoral studies, troubling narratives will be presented which are joyful, haunting and illustrate how animals become expendable products appointed as pedagogical aids to teach children about biology, relationships and how to be a good human.



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This presentation provides a timely conversation about human-animal relations that critiques how animals are socially constructed, culturally reproduced and positioned in early childhood education. Becoming trouble(d) energises ethical leadership, sparking new ways of thinking, new ways of doing and new becomings. Haraway (2016) urges us to stay with the trouble of learning to become troubled “to stir up, to make cloudy, to disturb” (p.1). Three dimensions of human-animal troubling form part of the story: Firstly, I describe how practices with animals in ECE are ethically troubling, I then trace how normalised pedagogical practices commodify animals and finally I became coerced, despite my reluctance, to become a maker of trouble – a ‘trouble maker’, seeking ways to ethically lead the discussion. The act of troubling helps to diminish hierarchical relations, taking steps to imagine relational ecologies of education by (re)making ways of living together with ecological justice.

2:20pm Keynote C and D
Professor Sue Elliott and Rosanne Pugh

A narrative about gambusia fish and tadpoles: It’s all about balancing and belonging.

In this presentation we share an ethos of rights and respect for both children and the environment they will inherit in an era of pressing global sustainability challenges. In the environs of KU Ourimbah Children’s Centre on the Central Coast Campus of the University of Newcastle we describe a research-based narrative co-constructed by children and their researcher/practitioner. The children researched together and with expert others the real world of pond ecosystems in authentic ways as integral to a curriculum project approach, (Katz, Chard, & Kogan, 2014). Throughout the project phases children’s voices were evident in leading decision-making and problem-solving and employing multiple modes of self-expression from map-making to physical games of chasing and catching -hiding and seeking, painting, mapping and clay modelling. As the project unfolded the introduced gambusia fish and the native tadpoles inhabiting separate ponds became a clear focus and profound ecological ideas of balance and belonging surfaced were expressed and depicted visually. Throughout the project shared advocacy and action for restoring ecological balances was evident in the children’s interactions

with each other and the environment, collaborative partnerships with experts and the various artefacts created. In particular, a biotopic map depicting their local environs including physical features, animals, plants and human-made waste documented the children’s deeper understandings of their environment along with the inherent dilemmas and challenges. Such understandings and the skills practised throughout the project offer ways forward for children to continue voice their rights and take action about environmental matters of critical import to their futures.



Dr Sue Elliott is Senior Lecturer and Course Co-ordinator in the School of Education, University of New England. She has been engaged in early childhood education for sustainability and outdoor nature play advocacy and practice for over two decades and is an acknowledged author in the early childhood field.



Ms Rosanne Pugh is the Director of KU Ourimbah Children’s Centre, Rosanne Pugh is Director at KU Ourimbah Preschool and Children’s Centre, winners of the UN Environmental Education Award, 2016.

Her background in curriculum delivery in nature extends beyond 15 years both in the UK and Australia.



Workshops 11:20-12:50

Outdoors

1. A Dreaming Story: Mapping and Culture

Incorporating Aboriginal cultural stories and concepts into classroom practice is important across all levels of education, however it is a sensitive subject. Many teachers feel anxious, as they want to present information that is culturally appropriate and respectful. This session will use a popular and publicly available dreaming story to show how we can acknowledge, learn from and enjoy Aboriginal culture in the classroom, while remaining sensitive to the ownership and responsibilities Aboriginal people have regarding stories of this kind. The session will conclude with a groupwork ground mapping and creative expression activity that brings the story to life in the classroom.



David Harrington

David Harrington of Stones and Bones is a botanist, ethnographer, educator and ecologist with a lifelong passion for learning from and working with Aboriginal people. I have

spent a rewarding career working with Aboriginal communities developing and delivering education programs which enable the broader community to discover the richness, innovation and resilience of Aboriginal culture. I believe all Australians should respect and cherish this cultural richness and I am active in the education system providing teacher training and cultural education to teachers. I recognise the importance of Aboriginal knowledge to the western scientific community and have participated for 17 years in cooperative field research with Aboriginal communities around Australia learning about their culture, archaeology, fire management, bush foods and bush medicines.

2. Lane Cove Bush Kids – Connecting Families with the Nature

Lane Cove Bush Kids is an initiative of Lane Cove Council and the Lane Cove Bushland and Conservation Society. The program encourages families with children aged 2 to 10 years to connect with the natural environment by providing regular nature activities in local parks and reserves. Join Valerie as guides participants through the Lane Cove National Park as 'Bush Kids'. Experience the strategies used to support the children to reveal the wonders of the bush and learn to care for it.



Facilitator: **Valerie Close**,
Lane Cove Bush Kids
Manager.

Indoors

3. Pedagogies for Sustainability in Bush Kinder

The research is situated in the growing movement to connect children with nature in outdoor settings in early childhood. The assumption that children's connection with nature equates with education for sustainability (EFS) is a key issue, as is the educators' understandings of their own pedagogical roles in relation to a nature-sustainability nexus (Elliott & Davis, 2018). This study explores how the links between nature and sustainability are perceived by early childhood educators in bush kinder settings with young children and the implications for their pedagogy.

The session will involve some time outdoors.



Facilitator: **Fran Hughes**
Randwick TAFE Early
Childhood



4. Green cleaning for happy, healthy children

Using the 'less is more' approach Sharon will share the naturally based Green Cleaning Kit developed for use with young children and families.

Our skin and bodies, particularly our gut are home to billions of micro-organisms which keep our immune systems healthy. Chemical use eliminates these friendly micro-organisms and play havoc to human and environmental health. The overuse of these products in the environment have been linked to an increase in childhood diseases including asthma, allergies and autism spectrum.

Changing cleaning habits will instil values in our younger generations to care for their own health and the environment by saying "no" to chemicals. Sustainable thinking in our local environment has far reaching impacts globally.

EYLF Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

EYLF Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing



Facilitator: **Sharon Dodd-Gilhooly** believes Family Day Care is a truly sustainable model of child care operating within the footprint of an established community. During this session she will draw on her many years of work in Family Day Care describing strategies that support sustainable practices in Family Day Care settings. Her educational background consists of a Diploma of Children's Services, a Bachelor of Adult Education, a Diploma in Human Resources, a Certificate 4 in Work Health and Safety and a Certificate 4 in Training and Assessment.

5. SPROuts Practice Awards Winners share their stories

Join the educators from:

- The Point Preschool, Oyster Bay as share the story of their amazing 'Chicken Dreaming';
- Explore and Develop, Annandale as they unravel the story of how their commitment to reduce plastic bags has change life in their community; and,
- Yoorami Children's Centre, Werrington will share how they supported the children's passion to rehabilitate and protect their local lake.

6. Sell your sustainability message to your families and community – Daisy Kelly – Clean Up

How can you involve your local community in your sustainability initiatives? Daisy will share some tricks of the trade used by advertisers which could possibly be just what is needed to boost your project for the Planet in your community.

7. Nature Explorers: Igniting Children's Learning Naturally

'in the end we will only conserve what we love, we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught'

Baba Dioum

Nature School Programs have the ability to empower the next generation of leaders and creative thinkers, by sharing cultural roots and ancestry in nature, seek out diverse partnership in the wider community and bring children into nature at an early age.

Facilitators: **Sofia Machado** and **Cassy Read**, Pottsville Preschool



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Program

8:30–9:00am	Registrations and Information Bazaar
9:00 -9:05am	Welcome
9:05-9:45am	Acknowledgement of Country and Speaker 1 – Susan Moylan Coombes: Caber-ra Nanga, <i>Resting the Mind</i>
9:45-10:45am	Speaker 2 – Tracy Young: <i>Becoming trouble(d): Ethical leadership with animals in early childhood.</i>
10:45-11:00am	ECEEN announcements
11:00am	Morning tea and Information Bazaar
11:20-12:50pm	Workshops <i>Outdoors</i> 1. A Dreaming Story: Mapping and Culture 2. Lane Cove Bush Kids – Come on a bush adventure <i>Indoors</i> 3. Pedagogies for Sustainability in Bush Kinder – Fran Hughes 4. Green Cleaning for Happy Healthy Children – Sharon Dodd-Gilhooly 5. SPROuts Practice Awards Winners share their stories- The Point Preschool, Oyster Bay; Explore and Develop Annandale; and Yoorami Childrens Centre, Werrington. 6. How to sell your sustainability message to your families and community – Daisy Kelly - Keep Australia Beautiful 7. Nature Explorers: Igniting Children’s Learning Naturally – Sofia Machado and Cassy Read
12:50-2:20pm	LUNCH – Information Bazaar – photos/activities
2:20-3:20pm	Speaker 3 – Sue Elliott and Rosanne Pugh research - <i>A narrative about gambusia fish and tadpoles: It’s all about balancing and belonging.</i>
3:20-3:30pm	Wrap up – door prizes from sponsors – Thank you to all

2018 ECEEN Conference Registration

Members: Conference only: \$225

Become a member of the NSW ECEEN Community at www.eceen.org.au



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Information Bazaar

There will be stalls with information, resources and skills to pick up so please allow some time at registration, morning tea and lunch to see what is on offer.

We look forward to you connecting with others in the ECEEN community at 'Celebrate Mother Earth'.

- **Seed Harvest Spoon** – native bees in early childhood settings
www.seedharvestspoon.com.au
- **Koori Curriculum** – Aboriginal perspectives
kooricurriculum.com
- **Pademelon Press** – books
www.pademelonpress.com.au/
- **Birdlife Australia / Birds in Backyards** – connecting young children with their local birds and citizen science
birdlife.org.au
www.birdsinbackyards.net
- **Boomerang Bags** – reduce single use bags
boomerangbags.org
www.facebook.com/boomerangbagssydneyinnerwest
- **Lane Cove Bush Kids/ Lane Cove Council**
- **Inspired EC** – early years sustainability resources
inspiredec.com.au
- **Planet Ark** – sustainability resources and information
planetark.org
- **Pallet Play** – making pallets work in your early childhood setting
www.facebook.com/palletplay/?rc=p
- **Reverse Garbage** – creative reuse
reversegarbage.org.au
- **ECEEN/ Early Years Nature Connections**
www.eceen.org.au/index.asp
www.facebook.com/NSW-Early-Years-Nature-Connections-826013747475510

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