

Children's Voices Centre Newsletter

Undertaking transformative, interdisciplinary research with, for and about children so all children's voices are heard and valued



Hello from The Treehouse!

The Children's Voices Centre (CVC) conducts world-leading, transformative interdisciplinary research with, for and about children. It was established in 2025 as a Charles Sturt University Research Centre to create opportunities for ALL children to share their knowledge, and be listened to with respect and action. The Children's Voices Centre affiliates are 60+ Charles Sturt researchers (staff, adjunct researchers, and higher degree research students) from many disciplines. CVC grows researchers, and creates opportunities for collaboration, mentoring, and learning to make the world a better place for children.

In 2025, Charles Sturt University is highlighting the Children's Voices Centre as a priority for philanthropic support. The Centre is dedicated to advancing research and advocacy that ensures children's voices are heard, respected, and used to shape stronger, more inclusive communities. Thanks to a recent generous donation, The Treehouse in Bathurst has been renewed with fresh painting, building works, and meaningful artefacts, creating a vibrant and welcoming home for the Centre. This transformation provides an inspiring space for children, researchers, and community partners to collaborate. Charles Sturt University welcomes further support to grow this important work. With your help, we can expand research, strengthen advocacy, and deliver lasting change for children and families in our communities.

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the lands on which we live and work together. Charles Sturt University and its staff pay respect to Elders past, present, and emerging within First Nations communities and acknowledge the continuity of cultures, languages, leadership and knowledge systems. We acknowledge First Nations peoples' continuous connection to Country, recognising the unique, diverse identities and cultures of peoples in our communities, regions and nation. As such, we value the collaboration to strongly position First Nations peoples in our university, through languages, leadership, cultures, knowledges, research and ceremonies.



Children's Voices Centre
csu.edu.au/cvc



Donate
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CVC staff, visitors,
students, affiliates

CVC research
opportunities

Listening to children's
100 languages

Research impact

Contact us
cvc@csu.edu.au

Our mission, vision and values

Undertaking transformative, interdisciplinary research with, for and about children so all children's voices are heard and valued

The Children's Voices Centre (CVC) is a Charles Sturt University Research Centre that undertakes transformative, interdisciplinary research with, for and about children so that all children's voices are heard and valued.

- The Children's Voices Centre empowers children, families, and communities to advance children's rights.
- Equally, the Children's Voices Centre cultivates and supports researchers, especially early career researchers, to advance children's rights through transformative, inclusive, equity-driven, interdisciplinary research.
- Guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Children's Voices Centre recognises children as active experts in their own lives and works to amplify the voices of ALL children, including those most at risk of remaining unheard.
- Together the Children's Voices Centre is building a sustainable regional and global network that transforms policy, practice, and systems.

Vision

- A world where all children's perspectives and experiences are heard and valued.

Values

- Child-centred, inclusive, transformative, collaborative, inspiring, capacity-building, innovative, ethical, passionate

Strategic Pillars (How We Achieve Impact)

- Inclusion and Diversity
- Partnership and Co-Design – with researchers, children, families, communities, industry, government, and global organisations (e.g., World Health Organization)
- Interdisciplinary Innovation – bridging education, health, science, arts, communication, business, justice, technology and policy
- Sustainability and Stewardship – ensuring responsible and enduring impact
- Knowledge Translation and Impact – turning research into practice and policy
- Global Engagement and Advocacy – amplifying children's voices across borders

Research Themes

- Children's voices | Children's activities | Children's health
- Early childhood workforce | Multilingual children's speech
- Children with speech, language and communication needs

csu.edu.au/research/childrens-voices-centre/research

We are finalising these guiding statements | Please provide feedback to cvc@csu.edu.au

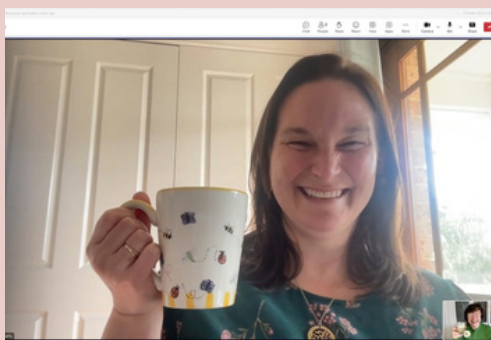


Children's Voices Centre Moves into The Treehouse

The Children's Voices Centre staff are

- **Director:** Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod
- **Associate Director Children, Families and Communities:** A/Prof Kathy Cologon (4 days/week)
- **Associate Director Workforce and Policy:** A/Prof Tamara Cumming (3.5 days/week)
- **Research Manager:** Dr Carolyn Gregoric (3 days/week)
- **Senior Administration Officer:** Lorraine Bennett (2.5 days/week)

In June 2025, the CVC team moved into The Treehouse on the Bathurst campus of Charles Sturt University – our base for transformative interdisciplinary research with, for and about children. Staff are busily transforming the building into a beacon for welcoming global visitors and undertaking research activities with children and families. Our rooms include The Billabong, The Beehive (a space for our visitors and busy bees), The Nest, The Flower Patch, and The Garden (a place where people and ideas grow). We are seeking donations for a new kitchen and other building renovations and developments to enable us to undertake more research with children. Come for a tour during our launch - or let us know when you are in Bathurst and come in and say hello.



Koffee with Kathy

Koffee with Kathy is an informal online catch-up where CVC affiliates can share their research, ideas, and priorities with Associate Director Kathy Cologon as we work together to strengthen partnerships across the CVC community (perhaps with a coffee or other beverage in hand!). Whether you have a project underway, an idea taking shape, or simply want to connect, we warmly encourage you to book a time to meet with Kathy. Your insights will help guide how we work together to grow impactful, inclusive research across the CVC. Please email Kathy at kcologon@csu.edu.au to arrange a time.



1 October 2025

Children's Voices Centre Launch

The Children's Voices Centre launch at The Treehouse on 1st October 2025

- 10:30am | Official launch by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Research, Children's Laureate Sally Rippin, Author Eliza Hull, Illustrator Daniel Gray-Barnett, children and staff (hybrid)
- 11:30am | Explore The Treehouse | Activities for children and adults
- 12:00pm | Bring your own picnic to share with us on the lawn

Children's voices: Listening with "100 languages"



Advisory group

Children plan our health research

CVC is undertaking research to inform the World Health Organisation. Members of our Australian children's advisory group visited The Treehouse to provide advice about how to talk to children about their health. We decided it was easy to draw "What makes you healthy?" It was harder to talk about health care settings. They said children mostly visit doctors for vaccinations. Thanks for your insights!



Children use clay in arts-based research

CVC visiting scholar Dr Red Ruby Scarlet spent time with children from the Bathurst Early Intervention Service (BECIS) in June. They explored clay together - considering texture, temperature, smell, and the range of shapes and actions they could make. The CVC team learned a lot from the children (and Dr Scarlet).



Children draw health research advice

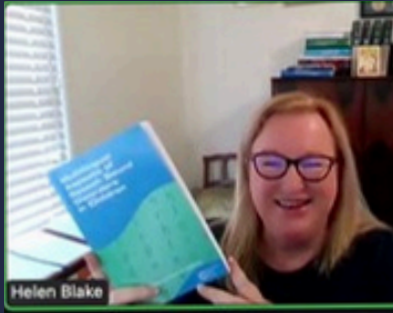
17 children joined the CVC team online and on the Bathurst campus to trial the Children Draw Health research protocol. Here are some suggestions about who helps you keep healthy: yourself, Mum and Dad, Nan and Pop (who grow vegetables), pets, the doctor, dentist, hospital, police, friends, teachers, coaches, gym, shops, supermarket. CVC used their advice to ask children across the world for their insights.



Indigenous children read research books

Indigenous children from the Central West helped CVC researchers decide which children's books written by First Nations authors would be included in four Little Libraries at the Orange Aboriginal Medical Service. The research was undertaken with the CSU Rural Health Research Institute. Here is the list of books: csu.edu.au/research/multilingual-speech/first-nations-resources

CVC affiliates collaborate on interdisciplinary research changing children's lives



Book

Multilingual Aspects of Children's Speech Sounds

Editors: Helen L. Blake, Sharynne McLeod, Kate Margetson and Brian A. Goldstein.

Submissions closed

10 CVC affiliates have written 10 chapters



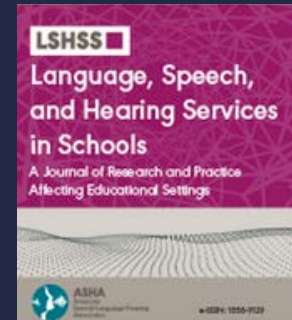
Book

The Oxford Handbook of Speech Development in Languages of the World

Editor: Sharynne McLeod

Submissions closed

9 CVC affiliates have written 11 chapters. Launched in Greece, June 2025



Journal issue

Children's Communication and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Journal: Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools (Q1)

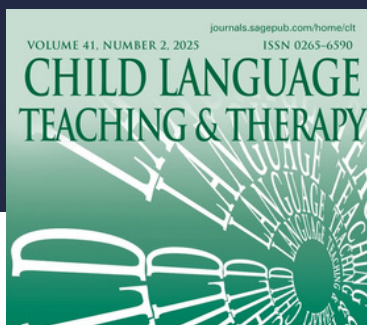
Editors: Sharynne McLeod, Kathy Cologon, Helen L. Blake

Current project due:

15 October, 2025

Contact cvc@csu.edu.au

<https://academy.pubs.asha.org/call-for-papers/childrens-communication-and-the-united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-crc/>



Journal issue

"Listening to Children with Diverse Communication Abilities"

Journal: Child Language Teaching and Therapy (Q1)

Editors: Sharynne McLeod and Holly McAlister

journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/CLT

Submissions closed

2 CVC editors, 17 CVC affiliates submitted 5 papers and 8 CVC affiliates reviewed papers



Research

Children's Perspectives of Health

CVC is working with Dr Mélanie Gréaux from the World Health Organization on a 2-year project to provide advice about children's perspectives of health and access to healthcare focusing on health equity and children with disabilities

Current project

20 + CVC affiliates involved contact cvc@csu.edu.au if interested.



Research

Children Draw Talking

McLeod, S., Gregoric, C., Davies, J., Dealtry, L., Delli-Pizzi, L., Downey, B., Elwick, S., Hopf, S. C., Ivory, N., McAlister, H., Murray, E., Rahman, A., Sikder, S., Tran, V. H., & Zischke, C. (2025).

Children draw talking around the world. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, doi.org/10.1044/2025_LSHSS-23-00190

Just published

16 CVC affiliates involved



Nicole Simone

Nicole Simone is a PhD student from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) based in Bathurst. She is undertaking research to support Indigenous children in early childhood education centres. It is a pleasure to have her working in The Beehive each week and we look forward to hearing more about her research during a CVC research presentation.



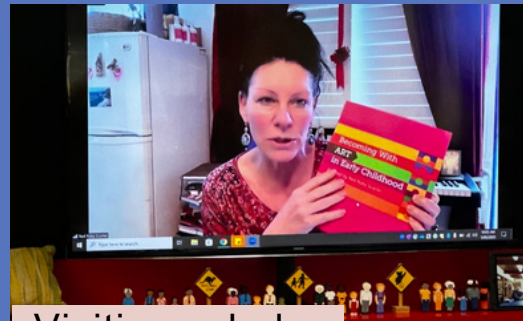
Ida Wiik Sætherskar

Ida Wiik Sætherskar, is a PhD student from Nord University, Norway. She visited the CVC during February. Ida met many staff and students at CSU, observed children at the Bathurst Early Childhood Intervention Service and presented a talk titled "Early Childhood Education Teachers' Judgments of Children's Language Skills" attended by 30 people (online and in person).



Lucy Rodgers

During April 2025 we welcomed Lucy Rodgers to the CVC. She is studying her PhD at City St Georges, University of London, UK. Lucy's visit was supported by her Wellcome funded clinical PhD fellowship. Lucy's well-attended seminar was titled: "Developing a novel, complex intervention for pre-school children with co-occurring features of speech sound disorder (SSD) and developmental language disorder (DLD)".



Visiting scholar

Dr Red Ruby Scarlet

Dr Red Ruby Scarlet has been sponsored by CVC as a visiting scholar during the first half of 2025. She has presented a 2-hour workshop to CVC affiliates on arts-based inquiry and has engaged with children from early intervention services to explore their perspectives of health using arts-informed approaches.



Visiting scholar

Prof. Lynn Williams

During September, Prof. Lynn Williams was sponsored by CVC as a visiting scholar from East Tennessee State University, USA. She presented seminars and provided mentoring to CVC affiliates. Her presentations focused on interprofessional leadership and clinical reasoning in evidence-based practice. She is Vice-President for Professional Development, National Academies of Practice (NAP) in USA.



Camilla Porsanger

Camilla Porsanger is a PhD student from Nord University, Norway. She is a Sami woman and her home is above the Arctic Circle. She has brought her family to Australia and is based at Charles Sturt University from September to December visiting the School of Indigenous Australian Studies and the Children's Voices Centre. It is a privilege to learn from Camilla and her family as they work to preserve the Sami language and culture for future generations.

On Wiradjuri Land

Prof. Lynn Williams, Camilla Porsanger and Prof. Sharynne McLeod from CVC attended the Nation Building in the Global South conference at CSU in Orange. Camilla and Sharynne were invited to present their research undertaken with First Nations children. The conference began with a welcome to country from Uncle Dale Carr that was a very meaningful experience where they learned about Wiradjuri language and culture.



Professionals and researchers

Prof. Lynn Williams' presentations brought 100s of professionals and researchers to the CVC - in person and online from across Australia and the world (Vietnam, Iceland, Fiji). For example, there were 95 people online and 16 people in Bathurst during her presentation titled "The Evolution of the Multiple Oppositions Approach: From Theory to Global Practice".



Visiting scholar presentations

Growing research and changing children's lives



Catholic Education Tasmania

McLeod, S., Verdon, S., Ivory, N., Crowe, K. (2025-2027). *Tasmanian speech sound disorder prevalence and screening pathway project (TasSSD).* Catholic Education Tasmania.
Research with over 1,100 4- to 5-year old children



Orange Aboriginal Medical Service

McLeod, S. (2023-2025). *Improving access to speech pathology services for rural children with speech, language and communication needs.* CSU Rural Health Research Institute (RHRI) grant from Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Health (Grant Activity 4-DGEJZ10/4-CW7UT14) Partnerships



Worksafe Victoria and Early Learning Association Australia

Cumming, T., Wong, S. & Bull, R. (2025-26). *Improving pathways for health and safety representatives in the early childhood sector.* Early Learning Association Australia.



Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

CVC supports Charles Sturt's contribution to the following United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals:
SDG 4: Quality Education
SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing
SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
SDG 10: Reducing Inequalities.
SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals



World Health Organization

Members of the Children's Voices Centre meet monthly with Dr Mélanie Gréaux, World Health Organization, Disability Programme in Geneva to work on a collaborative project addressing children with disability's perspectives of health. Sharynne, Helen and Holly will present CVC's findings to WHO Regional Committee Meeting in October in Fiji - stay tuned!



Nord University

Charles Sturt University Faculty of Arts and Education and the Children's Voices Centre have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Nord University. This includes staff and student visits (PhD students Ida and Camilla have visited so far), regular meetings, and collaborations.

Josephine Bampoe

Josephine Ohenewa Bampoe's submitted her PhD thesis on the 8th August 2025. Josephine's research focused on developing a culturally responsive tool, the Bampoe Ghanaian English Speech and Language Assessment (B-GESLA), designed to help speech-language pathologists in Ghana (West Africa) accurately assess and identify speech and language disorders in Ghanaian English-speaking children. Her work addresses a critical gap in clinical resources and contributes to the methodological evidence base for developing culturally responsive assessment tools for multilingual children in Majority World contexts.

PhD Supervisors:
Associate Professor Sarah Verdon,
Dr. Karen Wylie
(on the laptop) and
Dr. Laura Hoffman



Goutam Roy

PhD student Mr Goutam Roy submitted his PhD thesis on the 6th August 2025. Goutam's thesis was on developing scientific literacy among children in early years (4-5 years) in Australia. Goutam has submitted his thesis by publications mode with a total of six papers (five Q1 and one Q2; one published, one in minor revision, one in major revision, and three still under review process). Goutam, as an international AGRTP scholarship PhD student, completed his thesis within a three-and-a-half-year time frame.

PhD Supervisors: Dr. Shukla Sikder,
Associate Professor Will Letts and
Associate Professor Lena Danaia



Prof. Sharynne McLeod

Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod received the Honoured Member Award from International Association of Communication Sciences and Disorders Congress (IALP) in Malta in August. IALP is a Non-State Actor in Official Relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) fostering professional knowledge and exchange of science and services across 55 affiliated societies in 35 countries around the world representing more than 300,000 members. Over the past 100 years (since 1924 when IALP began) the website lists only 22 Honoured Members and only one previous Honoured Member from the Southern Hemisphere (Brazil). Congratulations!



Dr Kate Margetson

Congratulations to Dr Kate Margetson who was awarded the Charles Sturt University Higher Degree by Research University Medal as recognition of her outstanding academic achievement. Only one graduate per Faculty, per year, is awarded this Medal. Kate's PhD was titled: Moving Beyond Monolingual Practices with Multilingual Children: Learning from Vietnamese-English-Speaking Children, Families, and Professionals.

PhD Supervisors: Prof. Sharynne McLeod
and A/Prof Sarah Verdon





Showcasing Inclusive Play Spaces at NSW Department of Education Early Childhood Research Series

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon was invited to present at the NSW Department of Education's (DET) Early Childhood Research Series in July 2025. Her presentation, titled **"But Marley can't play up here!": Children designing inclusive and accessible play spaces through practitioner research**, highlighted how children's voices can shape more equitable and inclusive educational environments. The presentation was based on practitioner research conducted in a community-based early childhood setting in a low socioeconomic urban area of NSW. Working alongside **26 children aged three to six years and six early childhood teachers and educators**, the project used a critical pedagogy framework and Universal Design principles to explore children's concerns around playground accessibility and sustainability. Through reflective practice and inclusive arts-based methods, children and educators collaboratively developed designs and recommendations for play spaces that promote equity, inclusion and sustainability.

Outcomes

- Child-led design recommendations for more accessible and sustainable play spaces, and greater inclusivity in early childhood and community settings.
- Enhanced educator capacity for reflective practice and Universal Design thinking.
- Prototypes for playground modifications informed by children's perspectives.
- Evidence to inform early childhood policy and practice on inclusion and sustainability.

Why it matters

Kathy's presentation underscored the transformative potential of child-led, justice-focused educational research and practice. Findings demonstrated just how capable young children are of identifying inequities in their environments and advocating for change when supported through respectful collaboration.

In the children's words: ***"When we went to the playground, we noticed our friends couldn't play on many things because there were no ramps for walkers and wheelchairs. We all said, 'That's not fair! Playgrounds should be for everyone!' These conversations showed us that children can be incredible advocates for change when we take the time to truly listen to them."***

The study offers a model for researchers, educators, and policy makers seeking to embed children's perspectives into research, pedagogy, practice and policy, and demonstrates how practitioner research can drive meaningful, systemic change.

Recognition and impact

The NSW DET Early Childhood Research Series provides a platform for leading researchers to share insights that support research capacity-building and inform key reforms across the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) and Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO). Kathy's invitation reflects her national and international standing in Inclusive Education and Disability Studies to advance children's rights and inclusion.

Beneficiaries

- Children in early childhood education settings.
- Early childhood teachers and educators.
- Families and communities who experience improved access to equitable and sustainable play environments.
- Policy-makers and educational leaders seeking models of effective, collaborative research in early childhood contexts.

Impact summary

By foregrounding children's perspectives, this project contributes to the creation of inclusive, sustainable play spaces and empowers educators to act as co-researchers with children. Kathy's work continues to challenge normative assumptions and provide practical pathways towards a more equitable and just society for all children.

SDG 4 | SDG 10 | SDG 11

To read more: Cologon, K. (2024). "But Marley Can't Play Up Here!" Children Designing Inclusive and Sustainable Play spaces through Practitioner Research. *Sustainability*, 16(15), 6626. doi.org/10.3390/su16156626

Multilingual Children's Speech Research Impact

Distinguished Professor
Sharynne McLeod

Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod has undertaken research with multilingual children, families and professionals for many years. **CSU's Multilingual Children's Speech website has resources in 130+ languages and dialects:** csu.edu.au/research/multilingual-speech. This research was initiated during her Australian Research Council Future Fellowship titled "Speaking my languages: International speech acquisition in Australia" undertaken at CSU. During June 2025 she visited Greece where she:

- Presented the **keynote address at the International Society of Monolingual and Bilingual Speech** in Crete titled "Multilingual Minds are Unlocking Global Knowledge" that highlighted the critical role of multilingual researchers who provide English-language access to global knowledge
- **Launched The Oxford Handbook of Speech Development in Languages of the World** as editor with 173 authors.
- Awarded an **Honorary Doctorate** from University of Patras, Greece during a 1-hour ceremony with seven speeches, mostly in Ancient and Modern Greek that was attended by ~50 colleagues from around the world. Sharynne presented a 30-minute speech titled **"Children should be seen AND heard: The importance of communication so children can thrive"**
- Was **President of the International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association** conference in Patras, Greece where she presented papers with Dr Helen L. Blake and other CSU staff and PhD students.
- **SDG 3 | SDG 4 | SDG 10**



Using Research Translation to Support Workforce Wellbeing in Trying Times

Associate Professor Tamara Cumming

With Australia's early childhood education workforce reeling from reports of child abuse and barely recovered from a staffing crisis, attention to educator and leader wellbeing has been top of mind in the sector. Associate Professor Tamara Cumming has been in demand to share research insights from the Early Childhood Educators' Wellbeing Project (ECEWP) which she co-leads.

At a Workforce and Wellbeing Forum hosted in Melbourne by The Sector organisation in late July Tamara spoke as part of a panel exploring the power of wellbeing programs in early childhood education services. Over 160 service providers, educators, leaders and industry stakeholders attended the day long forum in Melbourne. **"Sharing research insights directly with the people who can use them to make a difference to their own and their team's wellbeing is a real privilege"** Tamara said. "Leaders and service providers are so keen to find ways to support and retain the workforce, and to make sure their people are as ok as they can be in the present circumstances."

"Speaking at this event was special as it's the first time since educator wellbeing really made it into the sector's consciousness that I've felt people have really understood the messages we have been promoting for over 7 years – that it's not about one-off solutions or expecting individuals to become resilient to cope with poor work conditions. Attending to educator wellbeing requires ongoing conversations, willingness to identify and work on root causes, and at individual, team and service provider levels. Structures and regulations also play an important role in supporting educators and leaders to thrive – so they can do their best work with children's and families".

Tamara's research insights have also been featured in an extensive blog post by Community Early Learning Australia [Prioritising wellbeing: A mindful reset in challenging times](#) and informed her Workforce and Wellness presentation and discussion at the 21st Social Justice in Early Childhood Conference in July. **SDG 4 | SDG 8**



Children Draw Health Research

Dr Carolyn Gregoric

Terms of Reference - Children's Voices Centre affiliates: Dr Helen L. Blake, A/Prof Kathryn Crowe, A/Prof Tamara Cumming, Dr Lysa Dealtry, Dr Belinda Downey, Dr Kate Freire, Prof Julian Grant, Dr Carolyn Gregoric, Dr Suzanne C. Hopf, Holly McAlister, Prof Sharynne McLeod, A/Prof Sarah Verdon

The Children's Voices Centre invite children from around the world to contribute to a Children Draw Health Global Online Gallery. So far we have received drawings from children who live in Australia, Botswana, Canada, Denmark, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Malta, Netherlands, Thailand, United Kingdom, and United States. We are looking for more submissions.

About the Children Draw Health project

Children share their drawings and creations in response to four prompts: "What makes you healthy?", "Who helps you be healthy?", "Where do you go to get healthier?", "What would your ideal hospital or health service look like?". Submissions can be made online (csu.edu.au/children-draw-health) or via email (cvc@csu.edu.au).

Why it matters

The voices and perspectives of all children should be represented in health system decision-making. This project builds evidence on the experiences and perspectives of children, especially children with a disability, with health and access to healthcare services. Without children's input, improvements to health service access will not adequately address children's inequitable health outcomes.

Recognition and impact

This study may inform the technical work of the World Health Organization Disability programme on advancing health equity for persons with disabilities.

Looking ahead

In collaboration with children, a team of Children's Voices Centre affiliates will analyse the drawings and responses. The gallery will be available to view from World Children's Day, 20 November (csu.edu.au/research/childrens-voices-centre/home)

SDG 3 | SDG 10

"Washing hands" (Shalini, 3 years). Permission to reproduce drawing provided by Carolyn Gregoric and the Charles Sturt University Children's Voices Centre (2025).



Children Draw Playing Global Online Gallery

Dr Carolyn Gregoric

Children's Voices Centre affiliates involved: Carolyn Gregoric, Sharynne McLeod, Belinda Downey, Shukla Sikder, Helen L. Blake, Jenny Dwyer, Kate Freire, Katrina Gersbach, Suzanne C. Hopf, Kasey Hillyar, Laura Hoffman, Muhammad (Alam) Hossain, Brendon Hyndman, Janine Krecko, Arifa Rahman, Azizur Rahman, Mehdi Rassafiani, Goutam Roy, Lindsay Smith, Van H. Tran.

The Children's Voices Centre invited children from around the world to contribute to a Children Draw Playing Global Online Gallery.

About the Children Draw Playing project

The Children Draw Playing Global Online Gallery was created for the Early Childhood Voices 2024 Conference. Children from Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Hong Kong HKSAR, India, Mongolia, Nigeria, Philippines, South Africa shared their artworks and answered some questions. A team of 20 CVC affiliates and adjuncts are currently analysing the drawings and writing up their findings for publication.

Why it matters

"Play is the highest form of research" Albert Einstein. Play is important to children. The drawing gallery provides insights into who children play with, when and where they play, and how they feel about playing. This study expands understandings about play from children's perspectives and results may inform where and how professionals play with children as part of their practice, and development of play environments. The gallery is available to view here: earlychildhoodresearch.csu.domains/early-childhood-voices-conference-2024/children-draw-playing/ **SDG 3 | SDG 10**

Playing "who can jump the highest on the grass" (Laura, 5 years, Australia). Permission to reproduce drawing provided by Carolyn Gregoric and the Charles Sturt University Children's Voices Centre (2025).



The Oxford Handbook of Speech Development in Languages of the World (Oxford University Press)

Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod

The Oxford Handbook of Speech Development in Languages of the World edited by Charles Sturt University Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod presents a transformative approach to overcome traditional English- and Western-centric biases by respecting and acknowledging longstanding traditions of research, theories, and knowledge from a wide range of countries and cultures – including knowledge not previously translated into English. Languages spoken by First Nations people and traditionally marginalized groups are given equivalent status to majority languages, and the language maps, resources, and pronunciation guides have been created using a rights-based, social justice approach, acknowledging the impact of colonization.

This remarkable book was written by **173 authors from across the globe. It contains 1008 pages and 80 chapters covering 49 languages and 27 dialects** with companion audio recordings of children and adults. A Charles Sturt YouTube channel presents a free summary of each chapter in English and the target language csu.edu.au/research/multilingual-speech/speech-acquisition/multilingual-childrens-speech-development

The Handbook was launched at the International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association (ICPLA) conference in Patras, Greece on Thursday 26th June 2025. The CSU authors in the book are: Prof Sharynne McLeod, Dr Helen L. Blake, Dr Suzanne C. Hopf, A/Prof Sarah Verdon, Dr Kate Margetson, Holly McAlister. CSU Adjunct staff authors are: A/Prof Kate Crowe, Dr Van H. Tran, A/Prof Ben Pham.

This volume presents a paradigm shift in the world's knowledge about children's speech development. Each of the chapters follows the same structure, facilitating comparison across languages and dialects. Researchers and students can identify relationships between common and unique elements of children's speech to develop new theories and enhance understanding. The curated data in the chapters can be used by communication specialists to collaborate with families and communities, in order to support children's home language maintenance and speech development.

More information:

global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-speech-development-in-languages-of-the-world-9780192868862

SDG 3 | SDG 4 | SDG 8 | SDG 10 | SDG 17



CHAMPs! The Changing Hearts and Minds Project

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon is working alongside Dr Zinnia Mevawalla, Jane Catlin (University of Strathclyde) Jackie Fulton, Margaret Harper-Abdullah (Glasgow City Council) on the Changing Hearts and Minds Project (CHAMPs). CHAMPs is a research project working with early childhood leaders to build understanding and capacity for inclusive education across Glasgow. Following a successful first cohort, with very promising initial research findings, the second cohort began in September 2025.

About the CHAMPs project

Inclusive education in the early years changes lives, strengthening learning, belonging and wellbeing for children and families, while lifting the quality of education for all children. But inclusive education doesn't "just happen", leaders make it happen. That's the focus of the Changing Hearts and Minds Program (CHAMPs), a joint research and knowledge-exchange collaboration between Glasgow City Council and the Strathclyde Institute of Education.

Over four months, we co-designed and delivered CHAMPs with the initial 20 early childhood leaders, centring perspectives of children and families with lived experience of disability and drawing on leading international experts, experienced Headteachers, allied health professionals and early years practitioners. The aim was to build understanding of, and capacity for, inclusive education through leadership.

Early results show CHAMPs is shifting beliefs, language and practice – changes participants identified as foundational to building inclusive cultures. Participating leaders reported using a strengths-based lens and seeing what children can do "promotes a more inclusive and compassionate environment for everyone." Participant confidence to lead for inclusion also grew.

Recognition: CHAMPs was a finalist in the University of Strathclyde Impact Awards 2025 and we are looking forward to continuing this important impact as the project progresses. Stay tuned: this is just the beginning.

SDG 4 | SDG 10 | SDG 16 | SDG 17



Supporting All Learners as Readers

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon has undertaken research investigating effective approaches to literacy learning with children who have intellectual disability over many years. In August, Kathy gave a keynote presentation the *2025 Endless Possibilities Conference* hosted by Down Syndrome and Intellectual Disability Queensland (DSIDQ). Kathy explored practical, positive pathways for making literacy learning opportunities inclusive and accessible to every learner in her presentation, "Building on Strengths and Interests: Pathways to Supporting All Learners as Readers." Grounded in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and a firm commitment to presuming competence, the session addressed the importance of providing lifelong opportunities for reading development.

Building on the body of extant research, Kathy invited educators to start where students are, build from their interests, and design for variability from the outset. Through examples and prompts drawn from classroom practice, she showed how multiple means of engagement, representation and expression can make literacy learning doable – and joyful – for everyone.

Key messages

- Learning to read is a gateway to education and has key implications for health, access to healthcare, and quality of life.
- Presume competence: High expectations alongside genuine opportunities unlock growth for learners with diverse communication profiles.
- Comprehensive literacy for all: Pair phonics and word recognition with exposure to beautiful, high-quality literature, explicit meaning-making, narrative, and authentic reading experiences.
- It's never too early – or too late. People with intellectual disability can develop phonological awareness, decoding skills, reading comprehension and engage in reading for pleasure when teaching opportunities are accessible.

An anti-ableist stance asks us not to retrofit "special" activities, but to reimagine what literacy can look and feel like so that every child participates meaningfully alongside peers. This shift from accommodation to inclusion strengthens agency, relationships and creativity across the classroom community. It also aligns with justice-focused education practice that gathers, values, and respects children's perspectives and experiences and removes participation barriers from the start.

By centring strengths, presuming competence and designing inclusively from the outset, we can create literacy experiences where all learners can grow, and where joy in reading becomes a shared experience.

SDG 4 | SDG 10



Early Childhood Educators' Wellbeing Project

Associate Professor Tamara Cumming

The Early Childhood Educators' Wellbeing Project (ECEWP) was founded in 2018 at Charles Sturt University by Drs Tamara Cumming and Sandie Wong. The team now also includes academics from Macquarie University and the University of Melbourne, and regularly collaborates with colleagues from China, Macau, Finland and Singapore. Along with a focus on innovative ways of measuring educator wellbeing – including biometrics alongside quantitative and qualitative measures – the team has long advocated for attention to and action on educator wellbeing on the basis of its findings.

Industry collaboration and development

ECEWP projects were initially funded through seed research grants from the CSU Faculty of Arts and Education, and subsequently through contract research commissioned by early childhood education service providers and member organisations.

Why it matters

The research has shown positive effects of educators' well-being for children attending early childhood education services, as well as negative effects when educators' well-being is compromised. Educator well-being can be financially costly for early childhood services, families and the educators themselves, and has been implicated in the widespread staff shortages experienced in the years since COVID-19. The ECEWP team's research has generated evidence of aspects of educators' wellbeing in Australia including turnover intentions, bullying, physical and psychological wellbeing, as well as understanding of wellbeing and supports implemented by service provider organisations.

Recognition and impact

Throughout the lifespan of ECEWP the team has matched its scholarly outputs with translation of research findings to early childhood sector end-users. These have taken the form of numerous articles in practitioner publications and presentations at practitioner events and expert advice to the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), Jobs and Skills Australia and the NSW Cancer Council. This sustained attention to research translation has resulted in sector-wide understandings of the importance of wellbeing and action to improve wellbeing among educators and leaders. The National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy (2022-2031) includes a Wellbeing focal area that recognises the need for wellbeing supports, and following the provision of expert advice by the ECEWP team, ACECQA published a series of downloadable posters for early childhood services that link aspects of educator wellbeing to National Quality Framework Area 4 – Staffing.

Looking ahead

The ECEWP team is compiling profiles of educator and leader wellbeing initiatives undertaken by early childhood education services. These profiles will detail exactly why and how services undertook these initiatives and what outcomes have resulted. The profiles will be freely available on the ECEWP website as a resource to support services to make informed decisions about wellbeing interventions.

To read more

- Cumming, T., Wong, S., & Logan, H. (2020). Early childhood educators' well-being, work environments and 'quality': Possibilities for changing policy and practice *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 46(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1836939120979064>
- McFarland, L., Cumming, T., Wong, S., & Bull, R. (2022). "My cup was empty": The impact of COVID-19 on early childhood educator well-being. J. Pattnaik & M. Renck Jalongo (Eds.), *Effects of COVID-19 on Early Childhood Education and Care*. Springer Nature.
- Bull, R., McFarland, L., Cumming, T., & Wong, S. (2024). The impact of work-related wellbeing and workplace culture and climate on intention to leave the early childhood sector. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 69, 13-24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2024.06.002>.
- Wong, S., Bull, R., Cumming, T., & McFarland, L. (2024). Supporting leaders in early childhood education settings: An evaluation of a clinical supervision program for centre directors. *Cogent Education*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2309749>
- McFarland, L., Bull, R., Cumming, T., & Wong, S. (2022). Workplace bullying in early childhood education settings: Prevalence and protective factors. *International Journal of Early Childhood*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-022-00341-y>
- Wong, S., Cumming, T., MacQuarrie, A., Bull, R., Robertson, C., Logan, H., & Saha, M. (2022). Holistic measurement of early childhood educators' well-being: A protocol. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*. 46(5), 515-527. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2022.2128746>



Reimagining Art Through Inclusion: Arts in Early Childhood Conference

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon presented “Making Visual Art ‘Visible’ Beyond Sight: Inclusive Art Making with Children and Families” at the 10th Biennial Arts in Early Childhood Conference in Wollongong in July. Her presentation explored how anti-ableist pedagogies can transform art-making into a genuinely inclusive and multi-sensory experience.

About the presentation

Kathy’s presentation demonstrated how anti-ableist approaches go beyond simply adapting activities for children with disability and instead reimagine art-making from the ground up. These approaches invite all children – in all of the many diverse ways of seeing, moving, communicating, or participating – to engage fully and meaningfully in creative expression together. Drawing on portraiture methodology (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2016) and a foundation of relational pedagogy, the project highlighted how strong, empathetic relationships between children, educators, families and peers create conditions for inclusion and flourishing.

“Anti-ableist pedagogy doesn’t just lead us to adapting activities – it enables us to reimagine what art can be,” Kathy explained. “When we start from inclusion, rather than working towards it, we open up opportunities for every child to express themselves and connect with others.”

One educator reflected on the importance of trust in this project: *“This trust encourages children to take risks: to touch that unfamiliar sticky glue-paint, or to engage wholeheartedly with a pair of gloves on. The children teach us how to listen – with our eyes, our ears, and even through touch.”*

A child captured the joy of multi-sensory art-making in simple but powerful words:

“I like when the bell dings when I paint – it makes my hands feel happy.” (Child participant, age 4)

Outcomes

The work shared in the presentation has led to a number of significant outcomes, including:

- Multi-sensory art-making practices designed from the ground up for all children, rather than retrofitting existing activities.
- Shifts in educator practice and confidence, enabling educators to embed anti-ableist pedagogy into everyday art-making.
- Increased agency for children, who were supported to influence and shape the creative process.
- Implications and provocations for educators and allied professionals to adapt/use in their own settings.

Why it matters

Kathy’s presentation emphasised that inclusion is not an add-on but a foundation. By centring anti-ableist pedagogy, early childhood educators can move beyond default practices that privilege certain ways of seeing or communicating and instead create spaces where every child’s way of being in the world is valued.

Recognition and impact

The Arts in Early Childhood Conference is a major international forum for early childhood professionals, researchers and artists. Kathy’s invitation to present reflects her recognised expertise in Inclusive Education and Disability Studies, and her ability to translate complex ideas into practical strategies for early childhood.

Beneficiaries

- Children benefit from art-making environments that celebrate their diverse abilities and modes of expression.
- Early childhood educators and artists are supported to create inclusive arts experiences.
- Families and communities see their children’s creativity and agency nurtured.
- Policy-makers and sector leaders gain evidence for embedding anti-ableist approaches in arts education.

Impact summary

By reimagining art-making through an anti-ableist lens, Kathy’s work challenges assumptions about who art is “for” and demonstrates how early childhood arts education can become a site for inclusion, agency and social change.

SDG 4 | SDG 10 | SDG 16

CSU Masterclass Series Let's Talk Research

Masterclass #8: Doing Research With, For and About Children

Associate Professors Kathy Cologon
and Tamara Cumming

Wednesday 20 August 2025

CSU Masterclass Series | Let's Talk Research
Session #8 profiled Associate Professor Kathy
Cologon and Associate Professor Tamara
Cumming who considered why we should include
children in research, how to do research with, for,
and about children. They also provided
information about the Children's Voices Centre
and how it can support Charles Sturt
researchers.



CSU Faculty of Arts and Education: What are Schools For?

Listening to Children

Distinguished Professor Sharynne
McLeod, Associate Professors Kathy
Cologon and Tamara Cumming

Wednesday 13 August 2025

Attended by educators and members of the public
from Australia, USA and Italy



International Society of Monolingual and Bilingual Speech

Multilingual Minds are Unlocking Global Knowledge, γνώση, 认识, תדע, إدراك, ज्ञान ...

Distinguished Prof Sharynne McLeod

Chania, Greece | 16 June 2025

Prof. McLeod presented an invited keynote
address to the delegates from 26 countries. Her
presentation challenged reliance on English as
the medium for knowledge dissemination
(linguistic bias) and acknowledged the potential
of our connected multilingual world for greater
understandings of speech, language, and
communication. She commended the work of
multilingual minds (researchers, professionals,
and translators) who provide English-language
access to global knowledge and outlined the
decade of work of the International Expert Panel
on Multilingual Children's Speech.



NSW Department of Education Inaugural Regional, Rural and Remote Research Pitch Initiative

Children as Changemakers: Co-Designing Inclusive Education in RRR Communities

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon,
Professor Sharynne McLeod, and
Associate Professor Tamara Cumming

Friday 29 August 2025

Attended by the Regional Education Commissioner,
Hon. Fiona Nash, a panel of school leaders, and a
panel from the NSW Department of Education led by
Dean White, Executive Director, Regional, Rural,
Remote and Unique Settings Directorate (RRUSD),
alongside the Centre for Education Statistics and
Evaluation (CESE) and the Director Educational
Leadership.

Speech Assessment of Children's Home Languages

Dr Kate Margetson

Dr Kate Margetson completed her 1.5 year postdoctoral scholarship with Prof Sharynne McLeod in June 2025, funded by the Rural Health Research Institute. During her post-doc she equipped rural speech pathologists to work cross-culturally and cross-linguistically, especially in languages they do not speak. Using an implementation science approach she:

- Developed resources on the clinical protocol for assessing speech in other languages: the Speech Assessment of Children's Home Language(s) (SACHL).
- Collaborated with 15 multilingual speech pathologists and speech pathology students to gather feedback via focus groups and to develop language-specific resources for the SACHL.
- Provided 7 workshops (in person and online, including in Hong Kong and Orange, NSW) about the SACHL to speech pathologists and speech pathology students
- Received feedback from 459 speech pathologists and speech pathology students responded on a questionnaire about the acceptability of the SACHL, recommendations for change and barriers and facilitators to using the SACHL in clinical practice.
- Published and presented numerous papers including:
- Margetson, K. & McLeod, S. (2025). Multilingual speech assessment: Using an implementation science framework to explore acceptability of the Speech Assessment of Children's Home Language(s) (SACHL). *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. Advance online publication.
- Margetson, K., McLeod, S., & Verdon, S. (2025). Cross-linguistic transfer in Vietnamese-English speech. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*. Advance online publication



Indigeneity, Culture and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Professor Dominic O'Sullivan

The UN Sustainable Development Goals aim 'to leave nobody behind'. Yet their 231 Indicators mention indigenous peoples only twice – once in relation to their rights as subsistence farmers and once as peoples whose vulnerability should especially concern education systems. Professor Dominic O'Sullivan, School of Social Work and Arts and Yindymarra Nguluway has written a book titled **"Indigeneity, Culture and the UN Sustainable Development Goals"**. The book examines what it would mean to add substantive indigenous voice to the Indicators. One example, where children's voices are especially important, is the school as potentially a site of self-determination and cultural revival. The book has a chapter devoted to this point.

About the book

The SDGs do not listen to indigenous children. At the intersection of political and pedagogic theory, the chapter 'Quality Education', refers to Professor O'Sullivan's previous work with Bishop and Berryman to show how listening to Maori children's voices, and their families', shows us how and why culture matters to how schools do or do not 'leave people behind'. Professor O'Sullivan shows how and why the SDGs might be revised to privilege agency over vulnerability. Professor O'Sullivan connects SDG4 Quality Education to SDG16 'Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions' to consider what it means to think about the school as a just institution.

Recognition and impact

Professor O'Sullivan recently was awarded an Australian Research Council grant with colleagues from ANU. He has delivered public lectures on this book, at the Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, where he is an adjunct Professor, and at the Wellington Fabian Society. He was invited to address the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples at a seminar to inform a report to the Human Rights Council.

- O'Sullivan, D. (2023). *Indigeneity, Culture and the UN Sustainable Development Goals*. Springer Nature Singapore. doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-0581-2
- ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/indigenouspeoples/emrip/cfis/study-trad-eco/seminar-statement-dominic-o-sullivan.doc

SDG 4 | SDG 16



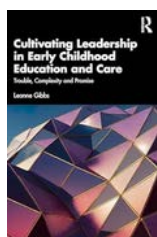
Cultivating Leadership in Early Childhood Education

Dr Leanne Gibbs

Congratulations to Dr Leanne Gibbs who has recently published the book: **Cultivating Leadership in Early Childhood Education: Trouble, Complexity and Promise (Routledge)**. This important book offers a transformative exploration of leadership in early childhood education and care (ECEC). Drawing on complexity leadership theory and practice architectures, leadership is redefined as a dynamic, relational, and context-sensitive practice. The book is structured around three themes—Trouble, Complexity, and Promise—each unpacking the challenges of leadership in ECEC, the complex environments in which it unfolds, and the hopeful possibilities for cultivating leadership across organisations. Through rich case studies and interviews, the voices of ECEC leaders are amplified, providing both theoretical insight and practical strategies to support leadership development. The book is for educators, leaders, and academics seeking to understand and foster leadership that enhances quality, equity, and outcomes for children and communities.

Congratulations to Dr Leanne Gibbs who has presented keynote speeches in 2025 at the following conferences across Australia:

- Thrive Leaders Conference CELA, Sydney
- 8 steps to leadership The Australian Childcare Association Leadership Conference, Melbourne
- Organisational architectures: Frameworks for high-quality governance and leadership in ECEC ACT Early Childhood Education and Care Governance and Leadership Symposium
- Leadership in Early Childhood Education Waves of Wisdom Conference Southern Cross University
- Looking for Leadership in All the Wrong Places, Outside School Hours Care Conference, CCC Victoria
- Leading in Early Childhood Education-Complexity, Trouble and Promise Australian Regional, Rural and Remote Forum Hunter Valley, NSW



Could School Playground Design Prevent Bullying?

Associate Prof Brendon Hyndman

Congratulations to A/Prof Brendon Hyndman, Acting Associate Dean for the Faculty of Arts and Education for all of this work about children's play that recently has been featured throughout Australia and the world including:

- **Media:** Could playground design prevent bullying? ABC Online (24/06/2025; Reach: 16,843,945)
- Guest: Brendon Hyndman. Children spend thousands of hours in school playgrounds. But a new report reveals only 2% of Australian schools are using evidence-backed strategies to make these spaces safer and more engaging. So, could changes to playground design can help prevent bullying?
abc.net.au/listen/programs/lifematters/could-playground-design-prevent-bullying-/105450354
- **The Conversation** article: Hyndman, B. (2025). School playgrounds are one of the main locations for bullying. How can they be set up to stop it? The Conversation.
theconversation.com/school-playgrounds-are-one-of-the-main-locations-for-bullying-how-can-they-be-set-up-to-stop-it-258566
- **Play Australia's State of Play Report** includes a case study by Brendon:
- playaustralia.org.au/sites/default/files/State%20of%20Play_final.pdf
- **Asia Pacific International Play Association Conference:** Brendon Hyndman presented at the IPA conference where he provoked the audience around how Australia has been faring over the past decade on the 4 x pillars of Wendy Titman's 'Special Places, Special People' from 31 years ago. That schools need: A place for doing • A place for thinking • A place for feeling • A place for being



The Second World Summit for Social Development, 2025: Addressing the Gaps and Accelerating Progress

Professor Manohar Parwar

After 30 years, the United Nations will organise the Second World Summit for Social Development in November 2025, to reaffirm its commitment to values and principles and social development goals. Three important goals of poverty eradication, full employment, and decent work and social integration, as part of the ten commitments, were agreed and declared by a majority of governments in the first World Summit for Social Development, held in 1995, known as Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development. These goals were translated and actioned into 15 years (2000 to 2015) of Millennium Development Goals with partial success. To continue this pursuit, these goals were further expanded into the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved in another 15 years target period, 2016-2030. Now, the world has only about five years to achieve these goals. Significant efforts and progress made over decades has helped to reduce poverty, improve health and education and income levels. But unfortunately, the progress made so far has been hampered and or halted due to multiple crises. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impact, slow climate change action, and disasters, avoidable wars and conflicts, geo-political tensions, increasing cost of living, technological changes and recent trade wars have altogether posed a new threat to the quality of life and caused greater inequalities within and between countries.

To respond to regressive developments in recent years, the Second Summit for Social Development aims to identify and address the gaps in achieving the goals and accelerate progress. To contribute to these deliberations, Professor Manohar Pawar, School of Social Work and Arts, Charles Sturt University, Australia, has put together a special issue of the International Journal of Community and Social Development (journals.sagepub.com/toc/coda/7/2) by inviting leading organisations and scholars in their respective fields to provide analyses and recommendations for action. The special issue identifies major gaps relating to social development, global poverty, universal social protection, full employment and decent work, social integration, climate change action, digital divide, reforming the global financial system and financing gaps and options and the SDGs. In addition, the issue includes four regional perspectives - Latin American, African, Asian and Nordic countries - developed by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, and the World Bank's view on social protection. It also includes the review of the UN World Social Report 2025 and the UN World Economic Situation 2025.

Beyond reaffirming commitment to social development values and goals, the special issue calls for the Second World Summit for Social Development to develop actionable policies and strategies and commit adequate resources to achieve: Universal social protection, health and education to eradicate poverty, Full employment and decent work, Social integration, solidarity and resilience, Reduced inequalities and digital divide, Climate change action and just transition, Reduced defence spending, Adequate finance. To promote social development ideas, research and action, the articles in the special issue are open access and free to download as part of the journal's commitment to public good.

Professor Pawar calls for the Second World Summit to recognise and declare a World Social Development Day to raise greater awareness of social development values and goals and to mobilise resources to achieve the goals towards creating a united world in which everyone can live peacefully and prosper together.



Rural Australians' Ratings of Indigenous Children's Books to Support Communication and Literacy

Sarah Bartlett

Presentation at the Speech Pathology Australia Conference, June 2025 (Adelaide)

Presented by Jamie Newman and Sarah Bartlett on behalf of the research team

Prof Sharynne McLeod, Emily-Jane Woodhead (CSU)
 Jamie Newman, Orange Aboriginal Medical Service
 Ebony Hay, Independent Researcher
 Sarah Bartlett, and Dr Carolyn Gregoric (CSU)



An Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) in rural Australia invited researchers from Charles Sturt University (CSU) to identify and evaluate culturally appropriate, context-specific resources (children's books) to support Indigenous Australian children's speech, language, literacy, and communication. Ethical approval was gained from the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council and CSU to undertake action research.

About the presentation

The presentation focused on two cycles of action research led by ACCHO (Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation) staff meeting regularly with the university researchers to plan the project. Cycle one sought to identify potential Indigenous book resources through yarning and a literature review, then purchasing 56 books for review. Cycle two enabled community members (adults and children) to review the 56 books regarding acceptability for use by children accessing services at the ACCHO. 32 ACCHO staff submitted 149 ratings of 56 books over 2.5 months, and xxxx children. A link to the resource webpage is available here: <https://www.csu.edu.au/research/multilingual-speech/first-nations-resources>. The books were scored using emoji likert scales for their cover, artwork, text and overall, receiving high ratings, averaging cover (4.32/5), artwork (4.38/5), text (4.30/5) and overall (4.34/5); and the majority (83.9%) of the books were wanted for the service. Written feedback resulted in four themes regarding the quality of Indigenous books: culturally friendly graphics, connection with children, connection with culture and easy to read.

Why it matters

Numerous quality Indigenous Australian children's books exist. Inclusion of Indigenous content, the artwork, text, story, and messages were identified as important when selecting Indigenous Australian children's literature.

The perceived quality, relevance, and usefulness of culturally appropriate resources provides evidence to inform the ACCHO's decision-making.

Who will benefit

This project reflects the co-design process of discovery that was specific to one ACCHO, but may provide an example of initial processes for establishing new services.

Recognition and impact

The children's books were approved by both Elders during a morning tea and Indigenous children in the ACCHO's school holiday program. In response, the ACCHO requested creation of four 'Little Libraries' of 50+ books in waiting rooms and play areas at the ACCHO. In addition, Elders have initiated activities to read these books with children.

Looking ahead

When selecting appropriate resources for children, it was feasible to include children's voices in the review cycle, proving an effective method for findings that ensure positive impact from the research.



SDG 4 | SDG 10 | SDG 17

Crisis to Care: A Biopsychosocial Lens on Paediatric Mental Health for Paramedic Practice

Kristina Maximous

Did you know that suicide remains the second leading cause of death among children and adolescents, despite decades of advancements in paediatric mental health care? Yet paramedics, who are often the first point of contact, still have no validated, age-specific tools to assess paediatric mental health in out-of-hospital settings. Kristina Maximous is a paramedic and PhD candidate who has felt the weight of this gap when assessing children in crisis without the tools or guidance to do so with clinical confidence in her own practice.

Kristina recently presented her research at the 2025 Charles Sturt University HDR Symposium, where she asked: **Are we truly prepared to meet the mental health needs of children in crisis?**

This led her to research what tools currently exist in the emergency care setting, their alignment with a biopsychosocial lens, and their applicability to paramedic practice. Through a scoping review, she examined paediatric mental health screening and assessment tools used in emergency contexts. Five key themes emerged: systemic inadequacies, role and scope ambiguity, limited education, absence of age-appropriate tools, and the need for culturally responsive, trauma-informed care. What emerged was a disconnect between what children need and what current systems provide. Her research looks beyond tools. It's about reviewing systems, strengthening training, and improving interdisciplinary pathways. It seeks to reframe care, grounding it in empathy, curiosity, and a responsibility to meet children where they are.

Research team

Kristina Maximous (PhD candidate), and supervisors Dr Sonja Maria and Dr Andreia Schineanu

SDG 3 | SDG 8 | SDG 17



Out-of-Home Care: The Young Person's Perspective

Hannah Greig

Out-of-Home Care refers to the placement of children and young people into care (foster, kinship, or residential care), when they are unable to live with their families. Compared to the general population, those involved with child protection services often experience significantly poorer life outcomes. However, there is limited research exploring why this is the case from the perspective of young people themselves.

About the project

This project aims to explore how young people aged 15 to 17, currently living in OOHC in New South Wales, perceive the benefits and challenges of the care experience. Hannah Greig's research aims to better understand their lived experiences and elevate the voices of young people in care.

Why it matters

This study has the potential to influence more effective and responsive care practices. The voices of those who are in OOHC are crucial to improving outcomes in the child protection system.

Who will benefit

This research gives young people in OOHC a platform to share their experiences, helping inform policy and practice to better meet the needs of other children and young people in OOHC.

Looking ahead

The project is currently seeking participants and is calling on professionals and carers to help share the opportunity with eligible young people. For more information, email: hgreig@csu.edu.au

Research team

Hannah Greig (PhD candidate), Associate Professor Andrew McGrath, Associate Professor Rachael Fox, Professor Linda Deravin. Faculty of Business, Justice and Behavioural Sciences, Charles Sturt University

SDG 3 | SDG 4 | SDG 10 | SDG 17

Congratulations to **Dr Lindsay Smith** who has been:

- Re-Elected as Director, International Family Nursing Association (IFNA) internationalfamilynursing.org
- Appointed Member, Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) 2025 Dementia, Ageing and Aged Care Grant Assessment Committee
- Appointed Member, Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Early to Mid-Career Researchers Grant Assessment Committee

Protective Factors for Secondary Traumatic Stress of School Staff Following Student Suicide or Suicidal Behaviour

Melinda Phillips and Dr Donnah Anderson

Many school staff respond to student suicide and suicidal behaviour. Secondary traumatic stress (STS) refers to symptoms, such as intrusion, avoidance, arousal and emotional numbing following secondary exposure to a traumatic event. This study investigated whether school staff experienced STS following student suicide or suicide behaviours. Aligning with the compassion fatigue resilience model, the relationships between protective factors of self-care, detachment, sense of satisfaction and social support and STS following student suicide or suicide behaviours were investigated. Two STS measures were used, with a focus on self (Impact of Event Scale-Revised [IES-R]) and helping others (Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale [STSS]). Australian school staff (N = 134) with experience of student suicide or suicide behaviours responded to an anonymous online survey. On average, participants reported STS levels of clinical concern on both measures following student suicide or suicide behaviours measured by previous research benchmarks. Hierarchical regression analyses found fatality and greater sense of satisfaction were significantly related to greater STS–self, and females reported significantly greater STS–helping others. Greater detachment and social support were significantly related to lower STS (self and helping others), supporting further research and interventions on these protective factors. School counsellors are encouraged to advocate for trauma-informed approaches.

Why it matters

The study provides evidence for previously anecdotal knowledge about impacts of student suicide or suicidal behaviours on school staff. It identifies selected protective factors of STS and supports international studies that promote delivery of trauma-informed professional development and practices in schools.

Who will benefit

The findings carry impact for school staff, including those in leadership roles, the classroom, school psychologists and counsellors, as well as policy makers. Importantly, if school staff are better supported to prevent STS they will be able to better support students' learning and wellbeing at school.

Looking ahead

Melinda has enrolled in her PhD with Dr Donnah Anderson, Dr Jenni Greig and Dr Taneile Kitchingham, School of Psychology.

- Phillips, M., & Anderson, D. (2025). Protective factors for secondary traumatic stress of school staff following student suicide or suicidal behaviour. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/20556365251351704>

Review of Child and Adolescent Participation in Parkour

Jane Muca and Dr Kate Freire

Congratulations to Jane Muca (physiotherapy student) on publication of her honours research in the *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*. Dr Kate Freire (Three Rivers Department of Rural Health, affiliate Children's Voices Centre) and Professor Rod Pope (School of Allied Health and Exercise Science) supervised Jane. Fellow student Gemma Mollenhauer was also an author on the paper. The scoping review explored the current evidence on the benefits and adverse experiences of parkour for children and adolescents. Eleven studies were included in the review which found numerous physical, social, psychological, and cognitive benefits. It highlights the potential of developmentally appropriate parkour, particularly in school settings, for promoting physical activity and health amongst previously hard to reach child and adolescent populations. The review concluded that future studies should also investigate adverse experiences, such as injuries, to ensure parkour can be safely enjoyed by children and young people while maximising its benefits.

- Muca, J., Freire, K., Pope, R., & Mollenhauer, G. (2025). Benefits and adverse experiences associated with child and adolescent participation in parkour: a scoping review. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2025.2517048>



Research by CVC staff and affiliates in 2025

Listening to Children's Voices

- **McLeod, S., Gregoric, C., Davies, J., Dealtry, L., Delli-Pizzi, L., Downey, B., Elwick, S., Hopf, S. C., Ivory, N., McAlister, H., Murray, E., Rahman, A., Sikder, S., Tran, V. H., & Zischke, C.** (2025). Children draw talking around the world. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, Advance online publication https://doi.org/10.1044/2025_LSHSS-23-00190
- Bazzocchi, N. B. M., Kokotek, L. E., **Crowe, K.**, & Washington, K. N. (2025). Beyond test scores: Using drawings and language samples to characterize multilingual children's language profiles. *Seminars in Speech and Language*, 46(2), 87-106. <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0044-1801814>
- McCormack, J., Cronin, A., **McLeod, S., Ireland, M., Wang, C.**, & Tiong, C. (2025). Children's drawings of intervention for childhood apraxia of speech (CAS): Place, people, activity, and emotion. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*. Manuscript accepted for publication.
- van Doornik, A., Franken, M. C., **McLeod, S.**, Terband, H., & Gerrits, E. (2025). Children's, parents', and experts' perception of speech and communication. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1044/2025_LSHSS-24-001

Multilingual Children's Speech

Journal articles

- **Margetson, K. & McLeod, S.** (2025). Multilingual speech assessment: Using an implementation science framework to explore acceptability of the Speech Assessment of Children's Home Language(s) (SACHL). *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. Advance online publication.
- Hooper, C., **Hopf, S., & Crowe, K.** (2025). The experiences of speech-language pathologists when collaborating with spoken language interpreters, multilingual families, and their children with hearing loss. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17549507.2025.2452903>
- **Margetson, K., McLeod, S., & Verdon, S.** (2025). Cross-linguistic transfer in Vietnamese-English speech. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*. Advance online publication
- Smith, G., **Verdon, S. E.**, Chu, S. Y., & Razak, R. A. et al. (2025). Multilingualism and developmental language disorder in Southeast Asian speech-language pathology practice: An international survey. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17549507.2024.2443052>
- van der Straten Waillet, P., **Crowe, K.**, Charlier, B., & Colin, C. (2025). Speech production skills of bilingual children using cochlear implants. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 30(2), 182-194. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jdsade/ena038>
- Washington, K. N., **Crowe, K., McLeod, S., Margetson, K.**, Bazzocchi, N. B. M., Kokotek, L. E., van der Straten Waillet, P., Másdóttir, T., & Volhardt M. D. S., (2025). Methods of diagnosing speech sound disorders in multilingual children. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 56(3), 469-487. https://doi.org/10.1044/2025_LSHSS-24-00099

Book chapters

- **Margetson, K., McLeod, S., Verdon, S. & Phạm, B.** (2025, submitted). Differentiating typical speech from speech sound disorder (SSD) in Vietnamese-English-speaking children. In K. N. Washington, K. Crowe, T. Másdóttir (Eds.). *Diagnosing speech sound disorders in multilingual children*. Routledge.
- **McAlister, H.**, Sewwandi, C., Adikaram, S., Amunugama, H., **Hopf, S. C., & McLeod, S.** (2025, submitted). Children speaking the languages of Fiji. In K. N. Washington, K. Crowe, T. Másdóttir (Eds.), *Diagnosing speech sound disorders in multilingual children*. Routledge.
- **McLeod, S., & Blake, H. L.** (2025, submitted). Overview of children's speech acquisition, SSD and the ICF. In K. N. Washington, K. Crowe, T. Másdóttir (Eds.). *Diagnosing speech sound disorders in multilingual children*. Routledge.
- **Margetson, K., McLeod, S., & Blake, H. L.** (2025, submitted). Speech sound disorders in multilinguals. In S. Piazzalunga, R. Salvadorini, N. Pizzorni, F. Todaro, & A. Schindler (Eds.), *Speech sound disorders: Scientific evidence and best rehabilitative practices*. Italian Society of Phoniatrics and Speech Therapy.
- **Margetson, K., Tran, V. H., Blake, H. L., Verdon, S., Phạm, B., & McLeod, S.** (2025, in press). Speech and language of Vietnamese-English-speaking children and their families. In Y. Holt, K. N. Washington, & E. Babatsouli (Eds.) *Linguistic varieties in North America: A primer for speech and language practitioners*. Multilingual Matters.

Research by CVC staff and affiliates in 2025

Education and Workforce Needs

Book

- **Gibbs, L.** (2025). Cultivating leadership In early childhood education and care: Trouble, complexity and promise. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003277590>

Journal articles

- Brooker, M., **Cumming, T.**, & Salamon, A. (2025). Using practice theories to understand, analyse and articulate followership in early childhood education sites. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 48(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2024.2328270>
- Garrett, S., & **Gibbs, L.** (2025). Leadership practices that enable and constrain retention in early childhood education and care settings in Australia. *Education Sciences*, 15(2), 1-16. Article 185. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15020185>
- Harrison, L. J., **Cumming, T.**, Brown, J., & Wong, S. et al. (2025). All in a day's work: job demands and satisfaction in Australian early childhood education and care settings. *Australian Educational Researcher*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-025-00855-z>
- **Hillyar, K.**, Smithers, K., Deehan, J., & MacDonald, A. (2025). What is known about simulation technologies and their application to Initial Teacher Education: A scoping review. *Australian Educational Researcher*, 52(2), 1389-1406. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-024-00767-4>
- **Langat, K.** (2025). Reflections on culturally responsive practices and pedagogies: Higher education and Initial Teacher Education programmes and support, inclusivity and diversity in the Australian context. In M. Kumar, S. Pattanayak, & N. Belford (Eds.), *The layered landscape of higher education: Capturing curriculum, diversity, and cultures of learning in Australia* (pp. 148-160). Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032715544-12>
- Mullick, J., Wang, Q., Vlcek, S., & **Sikder, S.** (2025). "The possibility of meeting the needs of all children": A framework for enhancing inclusive STEAM pedagogy in early childhood settings. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 133, Article 102705. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2025.102705>
- Phillips, M., & **Anderson, D.** (2025). Protective factors for secondary traumatic stress of school staff following student suicide or suicidal behaviour. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20556365251351704>
- **Roy, G., Sikder, S.**, & Danaia, L. (2025). Adopting scientific literacy in early years from empirical studies on formal education: A systematic review of the literature. *International Journal of STEM Education*, 12(1), 1-24. Article 26. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-025-00547-1>
- Short, M., **Gersbach, K.**, Rush, E., & Velander, F. et al. (2025). Using a kindness approach for defining key terms: A student-led, strengths focused and active-learning online activity. In M. Jarldorn, & C. Hudson (Eds.), *Tutorial ideas for educators on the run: Innovative and engaging teaching activities* (pp. 149-157). Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-96-4349-3>
- Wong, S., **Cumming, T.**, McFarland, L., & Bull, R. (2025). Clinical supervision: A new approach to supporting educators. *Rattler*, April, 32-24. <https://www.cela.org.au/shop/rattler-magazine/rattler-issue-148-april-2025>

Children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

- **Bartlett, S. & McLeod, S.** (2025). Caregivers' insights into supporting their late talkers using Target Word™ Hanen® Parent Program. *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. Advance online publication <https://doi.org/10.1080/17549507.2024.2438103>
- Hurley, C. R., **McLeod, S.**, & Anthonappa, R. P. (2025). Extraction of primary maxillary incisors and children's speech production: A case series. *Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics*. 39(4–5), 427–439. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699206.2024.2355481>
- **McAllister, L.**, Hewat, S., Penman, A., & Atherton, M., **Tran, V., Verdon, S.**, ... (2025). Stakeholder perspectives following implementation of Vietnam's first speech-language pathology degrees: Recommendations for future curriculum development. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 47(1), 259-274. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2024.2346237>
- **McLeod, S.**, Harrison, L. J., McMahon, C., **Wang, C.**, & Evans, J. R. (2025). Parent-reported speech and language in early childhood is an early indicator of Indigenous Australian children's literacy and numeracy outcomes. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 56(3), 730-746. https://doi.org/10.1044/2025_LSHSS-23-00200
- van Doornik, A., Welbie, M., **McLeod, S.**, & Gerrits, E. & Terband, H. (2025). Speech and language therapists' insights into severity of speech sound disorders in children for developing the speech sound disorder severity construct. *International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders*, 60(3), e70022. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1460-6984.70022>

Research by CVC staff and affiliates in 2025

Children's Activities

- **Freire, K.,** Pope, R., Size, I., & **Andrews, K.** et al. (2025). Social exercise interventions for children who have complex developmental needs: A systematic review. *Journal of Child Health Care*, 29(1), 245-287. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13674935231190984>
- Lee, S., **Curtin, M.,** & Clutterbuck, G. L. (2025). Breaking down participation in sport and physical recreation for children with disabilities: What it means and what can be seen. *Sport Sciences for Health*, Article e20476. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11332-025-01366-1>
- Muca, J., **Freire, K.,** Pope, R., & Mollenhauer, G. (2025). Benefits and adverse experiences associated with child and adolescent participation in parkour: a scoping review. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14729679.2025.2517048>

Children's Health

- **Curtin, M.,** Iellamo, T., **Anderson, D.,** & **Rassafiani, M.** et al. (2025). Royal Far West's allied health telehealth services for children post-bushfires. *The Australian Journal of Rural Health*, 33(1), e13218. Article e13218. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajr.13218>
- Fatorehchy, S., Sadeghian Afarani, R., **Rassafiani, M.,** & Akbarfahimi, N. et al. (2025). Validation and reliability of the Persian version of Gillette functional assessment questionnaire in patients with cerebral palsy. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2025.2472985>
- Foster, M., Giambra, B. K., **Smith, L.,** & Coyne, E. et al. (2025). The importance of advancing international family nursing practice across the lifespan. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 80, A1-A3. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pedn.2025.01.011>
- Girma, B., Sasahu, L. D., & **Rahman, A.** (2025). Spatial distribution of stunting among breast feeding children in Sub-Sahara Africa. *PLoS One*, 20(6), Article e0325812. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0325812>
- MacDonald, J. B., **Dobud, W.,** & Muir, S. (2025). Building resilience in children and young people. *Australian Institute of Family Studies*. <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-papers/building-resilience-children-and-young-people>
- Quilliam, C., Wakely, L., French, L., & **Ellis, N.** et al. (2025). Placing rural in the National Disability Insurance Scheme Review. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.70024>
- Riyahi, A., Hassani Mehraban, A., **Rassafiani, M.,** & Pournasiri, Z. et al. (2025). Challenges in toileting evaluation and interventions for children with cerebral palsy: A Delphi study. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 79(1), Article 7901205160. <https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2025.050717>
- **Rassafiani, M.,** Babazadeh, N., Behnia, F., & Gharebaghi, S. (2025). Applying CO-OP approach in children with specific learning disorder: Single-subject outcome study. *Occupational Therapy Journal of Research*, 45(2), 160-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15394492241289623>
- **Stenson, S.,** Hutton, A., Fenton, A., & Grant, J. (2025). Pre-service education for registered nurses on mandatory reporting of child maltreatment: An integrative review. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 81, 126-135. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pedn.2025.01.024>

Social Development

- **Pawar, M.** (2025). Social development: goals, gaps and guts. *International Journal of Community and Social Development*, 7, 122-146. Article 25166026251345253. <https://doi.org/10.1177/25166026251345253>

Children's Voices Centre Submissions

- Background Paper for the first meeting of the World Health Organization External Technical Working Group for Global Health Policy and System Research Agenda for Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities
- Government of Australia Disability Discrimination Act

CVC Staff Leadership and Advisory Roles

Distinguished Professor Sharynne McLeod

- President, International Clinical Phonetics and Linguistics Association (ICPLA) (2023 –)
- Member, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia - Panel D Fellowship Committee (2025 – 2027)
- Member, Royal Society of New South Wales Fellows and Members Assessment Committee (2023 – 2025)
- Honorary Professor (Adjunct), Australian Catholic University (2022 – 2027)
- Honorary Professor (Adjunct), University of Technology Sydney (2019 – 2027)
- Honorary Doctor, University of Patras, Greece (2025 –)
- Guest Editor: Child Language Teaching and Therapy (special issue); Language, Speech and Hearing Services in Schools (clinical forum)
- Editorial board member of International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, Clinical Linguistics and Phonetics, Child Language Teaching and Therapy, Speech, Language and Hearing, Journal of Monolingual and Bilingual Speech, and Advances in Communication and Swallowing
- Invited Member, Speech Sound Disorders Committee, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention, Washington DC (2025)

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon is a Member of Disability Strategy Professional Learning consultative group for the NSW DET

- This group provides an opportunity to contribute to research dissemination in ensuring that the NSW DET professional learning opportunities for teachers are evidence-based and reflect current research. This is important in working toward better outcomes for children, families, teachers, allied professionals and the Australian community.

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon is a Director on the board of All Means All: The Australian Alliance for Inclusive Education

- All Means All (AMA) is a national alliance for inclusive education working to remove barriers and uphold Article 24 of the UNCRPD by driving legal, policy and cultural change through advocacy, research, resources, and collaboration. AMA unites families, educators, experts and communities to work toward inclusive education as a reality for all students. AMA has 11,000+ members across Australia. Serving on the board enables contribution toward bridging the gap between research, policy and practice and upholding the fundamental rights of every child.

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon serves on the Advisory for the Technical Committee for the Investment Dialogue for Australia's Children (IDAC) Measuring Child and Family Wellbeing Project for the Commonwealth DSS

- The IDAC project aims to develop and test improved ways to measure the wellbeing of children and families, supporting evidence-based policies and programs. The Technical Committee guides project design, provides expert feedback, and supports methodological rigour and relevance of the measures and their implementation—working toward better outcomes for children and families in Australia.

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon served as a facilitator for the National Disability Research Partnership (NDRP) in their Evidence to Action process

- The NDRP is an independent body established by the Australian Government to facilitate collaborative and inclusive disability research. This role supports the implementation of research evidence within policy and practice and helps inform NDRP's directions toward inclusive research, contributing to better outcomes for children and families across the lifespan.

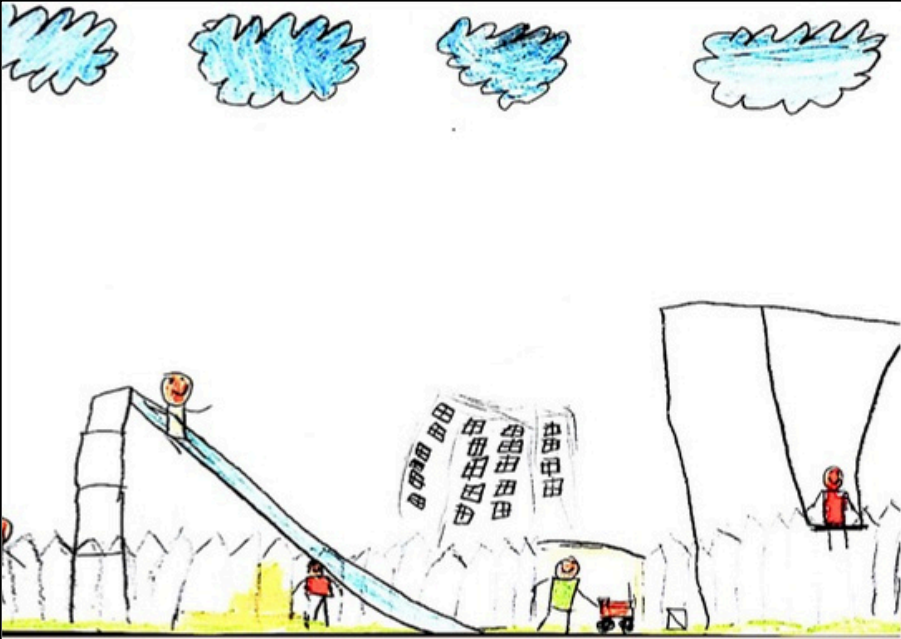
Associate Professor Kathy Cologon is a Member of the Advisory Group for Nurturing Healthy Futures Project: Best Practice Guide for Food Environments in ECEC

- Nurturing Healthy Futures is a two-year project (2025–2027), funded by Healthway, developing a comprehensive Best Practice Guide for improving food environments in ECEC settings, aligned with ACARA early years priorities, the National Quality Standards (NQS), and EYLF v2.0.

Associate Professor Kathy Cologon is a Critical Collaborator providing advice on the development of an Inclusive Practice Framework for ACECQA.

- The project, led by a consortium of Griffith University (GU), Macquarie University (MU), and QUT is working with ACECQA on the development of an Inclusive Practice Framework. The purpose of the Project is to develop a national, evidence-based Framework to achieve a nationally consistent approach to addressing the inclusive capability levels of NQF education and care services.

Children Have The Last Word | Children Draw Play




What are you playing? ID: mg022
I'm playing with a toy car in the sand, on the swing, and slide

Where are you playing?
I play in the playground

Who are you playing with?
I am playing with my four friends and my brother

What are you talking about?
I talk about classmates

How is playing good for the world?
I practiced running to improve my speed. I fearlessly embrace heights

How do feel about playing?
 I am so happy

Language(s) spoken at home
Mongolian

Name Age Country

Charles Sturt University | Children Draw Playing Global Online Gallery | Early Childhood Voices Conference 2024

Permission to reproduce this drawing provided by Carolyn Gregoric and the Charles Sturt University Children's Voices Centre (2025).

Learn more about being part of the Children's Voices Centre
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- **CVC Affiliates** are Charles Sturt University staff, students, or adjuncts who undertake research with, for, and/or about children
- **CVC Friends** are anyone in the community (individuals or groups) who would like to be on the CVC mailing list to find out more about our work
- **Engage with us as a research partner, student, donor, or volunteer**
- We extend an invitation to join us in our work by providing funds or in-kind support for our work (we welcome support on specific projects, equipment, personnel, digital presence).
- Learn more about other ways you can engage with the Children's Voices Centre here:
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