

Professional Development Calendar 2026





Acknowledgement of Country

Lady Gowrie QLD acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our services are placed. We pay our respects to the Elders, past and present, who have raised children, taught them about the world around them and bestowed on them the gift of culture and language.

*Painting Title: **Many Journeys** Artwork by Nindi (Ros Sailor) Heritage: Waanji and Kuku Yalanji*

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WORKSHOP INFORMATION

To access sessions online via Zoom a link will be sent on registration.

TO REGISTER

please go to the link below

<https://ladygowrieqld.arlo.co/w/upcoming/>

Registrations close one week prior to date of event.



WEBINAR Statewide online
Tuesday 17th February | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | Online

Sensory processing and regulation: Strategies to engage children in the classroom.

PRESENTER - Marena Matthews

This workshop explores how the children regulate their nervous system and the impact this has on higher learning. We investigate what a sensory profile looks like and what strategies we can use to help children to engage positively with learning.



WORKSHOP - MACKAY
Saturday 28th February | 9am - 12.30pm
LOCATION - Ocean International Hotel, 1 Bridge Road, Illawong Beach, Mackay

Introduction to Key Word Sign Training

PRESENTER is from Sunshine Sign and Sing

Get ready for an engaging, joyful professional learning experience that brings learning to life! The Sunshine Sign and Sing session is a hands-on, interactive workshop where educators will actively participate and explore practical strategies they can use immediately in their everyday practice.

Through music, movement and visual communication, you'll build confidence in using sign-supported songs to strengthen children's communication, inclusion and engagement. This is not a sit-and-listen session - it's an energising opportunity to learn by doing, connect with others, and leave inspired with tools that will delight children and enrich your learning environment.





LADY GOWRIE QLD 2026 EARLY CHILDHOOD CONFERENCE

Saturday, 28th March | 8.00am - 4.30pm

LOCATION - Victoria Park, 309 Herston Rd, Herston

REIGNITE

Reigniting our passion, our wellbeing, and our shared commitment to children and community.

Welcome to Country

A member of Turrbal Dippil, founded by members of the Turrbal Tribe, will be performing a Welcome to Country at our conference. They are deeply committed to preserving and sharing Turrbal culture and supporting the development of self-sustaining communities. Through their work, Turrbal Dippil creates meaningful opportunities for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to connect with and celebrate the rich culture and history of the Turrbal people.

Keynote: Reconnecting to the Joy of the Early Years

PRESENTER - Leanne Hughes

Often referred to as a "Thought Breeder," Leanne's calling is to cultivate innovative, pragmatic ideas that maximise growth and results. She believes in breaking through traditional boundaries, turning "Why?" into "Why not?" and inspiring her audiences to think bigger and act bolder.

This keynote acknowledges the realities of work, while pivoting the focus back to the "heart work." We explore how to find the small, transformative moments that make an educator's role the "safest place" in a child's life.

An invitation to create a particular place for joy in early childhood education.

PRESENTER - Caroline Fewster

Places of joy can open our hearts to the feeling of connection. Creating time and space for joy can lead to greater overall wellbeing.

This presentation highlights:

- Stories of children's perspectives of joy
- The significance of joy in early childhood education studies
- The potentiality of materials for eliciting joy
- Creating memories of joyful encounters.

Reignite & Re-imagine: Child-Led Digital Documentation

PRESENTER - Rachel Minns

This hands-on workshop invites educators to rediscover and reignite their commitment to purposeful, child-centred documentation in the digital age. Participants will explore how iPad can empower children to actively document their own thinking and creativity, reimagining documentation as a thoughtful, participatory process. Using an iPhone or iPad, educators will trial simple, practical tools such as Camera, Markup and Pages, and learn strategies to scaffold children's digital capabilities while upholding their rights and dignity. This session supports a shared commitment to documentation practices that honour children's voices and strengthen their role as active meaning-makers in early learning environments.

RE-Igniting & RE-Positioning Visual Arts Expression as a Human Right

PRESENTER - Dr Gai Lindsay

This interactive workshop invites educators to RE•IGNITE (or ignite for the first time) a passion for visual arts in early childhood education. Grounded in Reggio Emilia principles and the UNCRC's Articles 13 and 31, we'll explore the arts as a human right and a language of learning. Participants will reflect on their use of visual arts methods, examining the intentionality behind curriculum choices. Through active RE-FLECTION, we'll RE-THINK planning strategies and RE-POSITION the arts on a continuum of experience; moving beyond event-focused production lines toward authentic, child-led exploration within flourishing communities of learners.

Navigating Change: Wellbeing Strategies for Personal and Professional Transitions

PRESENTER - Tracy Cooper

Navigating Change: Wellbeing Strategies for Personal and Professional Transitions. Change is a constant in our lives. If we want to survive - let alone thrive - embracing change is the key. Whether you're experiencing change through your work or navigating shifts in your personal life, staying focused and balanced is the key to riding the change wave with confidence. Tracy will explore the emotions that change can trigger and how to stay in control while strengthening your wellbeing along the way. She will share the "secret sauce" for successful change - the powerful connection between having a clear purpose, building the right habits, and harnessing the power of consistency.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - GOLD COAST

Wednesday 4th March | 9.00am - 2.30pm | LOCATION - Palmer Colonial Golf Course, 57 Paradise Springs Avenue, Robina, Qld.

Children's Learning Environments, Spaces, Place & Non-Places.

PRESENTER - Dr Geraldine Harris

Children's learning unfolds deeply in 'places' alive with relational, sensory, and ecological resonance, in contrast to 'non-spaces' that feel flat, disconnected or sterile. The workshop will introduce the concepts of the childhood commons© and ecoregulation© and how pedagogical decisions about learning environments can support children's embodied curiosity, social attunement and felt sense of safety. Places that are woven with textures, rhythms, sounds and patterns invite connection with and within the broader world. These silent environmental invitations can be understood as co-regulating, opening opportunities for children to experience awe exploration and wonder. The workshop will explore how co-designing environments with children, educators can support their learning play and wellbeing.

50 practical ideas to inspire children's learning and development in routine and transition times of the day.

PRESENTER - Caroline Fewster

An interactive presentation highlighting particular characteristics of a 'democratic pedagogy' approach to routine and transition times of the day including:

- Children's active participation in designing routines and transitions throughout the day
- A focus on invitational language to promote engagement in everyday learning experiences
- Introducing evidence informed practices that maximise opportunities for each child's learning and development
- And – a pop up display of teaching and learning ideas!

Tracing the learning - children and educators as co-documenters.

PRESENTER - Stephen Gallen

In this session we will identify and explore authentic and powerful approaches to noticing and mapping children's learners, with children as key participants in the process. With real world examples including floor book and related approaches we will consider practical strategies as well as the theory and principles underlying the work. We will also reflect on how children's involvement can itself be a powerful element of learning, as well as a tool for advocating for children's rights and the value of early childhood education as a whole.





WEBINAR Statewide online

Wednesday 29th April | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | Online

Behaviour Modification

PRESENTER - Kelly Oldfield

This Behaviour Modification workshop equips educators with practical, evidence-based strategies to understand, respond to, and proactively reduce challenging behaviours in learning environments. The session focuses on identifying the function of behaviour, recognising patterns and triggers, and using data-informed approaches to guide decision-making. Educators learn how to implement consistent, realistic strategies that support skill development rather than punishment, while maintaining safety and connection. Emphasis is placed on prevention, environmental adjustments, teaching replacement skills, and responding calmly during escalation. Participants leave with clear tools, shared language, and actionable strategies they can confidently apply across classrooms, teams, and daily practice to create more positive, predictable, and supportive learning environments.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - SUNSHINE COAST

Saturday 16th May | 9.00am - 2.30pm

LOCATION - Surfair, 923 David Low Way, Marcoola.

From Image to Action: How does exercising an image of children as citizens change every single choice we make as early Childhood Education professionals?

PRESENTER - Dr Gai Lindsay

What happens if we exercise an image of every child as a citizen; an active participant with rights, agency, and voice? How does this impact educational actions? This workshop explores how a respectful image of the child transforms pedagogy and leadership choices in early childhood education. Inspired by Reggio Emilia principles and Dewey's vision of educational democracy, we will confront "near-enough-is-good-enough" attitudes to inspire professional joy! Participants will play with rhizomatic mind-mapping to explore the implications of positioning children as citizens. Together, we will reframe children's rights as the grounding motivator for our mission, responsibility and commitment as professional educators.

Building strong foundations through motor skill development and physical literacy.

PRESENTER - Phoebe Marais and Natasha Sansoni

This workshop explores how movement supports whole-child development. We examine how early movement experiences strengthen brain development, attention, and regulation, creating the foundations for wellbeing and school readiness. Participants will follow the journey of motor development - from sensory awareness and primitive reflexes to rudimentary and fundamental movement skills, and ultimately lifelong engagement in movement. We clarify what physical literacy means in early childhood and why confident, motivated movers are better equipped to participate and learn. Practical Playball activities will demonstrate how movement-rich environments nurture capable, curious, deeply engaged learners.

Spirit of Summer

PRESENTER - April Cunningham

This Workshop will yarn about how First Nations storytelling is meaningful and respectfully embedded in Early Childhood. This workshop will highlight oral narratives, songlines, art, dance and playbased stories.



MELBOURNE STUDY TOUR 2026

21st & 22nd May | Two days | LOCATION - Gowrie Victoria

PRESENTER - Gowrie Victoria

This is your chance to be part of a truly transformative professional learning experience in the vibrant heart of Melbourne-one you won't want to miss. Designed to inspire, energise, and elevate your practice, this immersive adventure will deepen your understanding of the practice of embedding inclusive and culturally safe learning environments for our Early Years learners.

On this unmissable journey, you will:

- See culturally responsive pedagogy in action first hand, and receive practical guidance on embedding it into your everyday practice.
- Explore cutting-edge approaches to equity and inclusion as we visit three inclusive Early Learning Services and witness innovative practice in action.
- Connect with passionate educators from across the region, building a powerful network that will motivate and sustain you long after the experience ends.



This is more than professional learning-it's an experience that will transform your practice, broaden your perspective, and leave you inspired to make a real difference. Don't miss out.



WORKSHOP - BRISBANE

Saturday 23rd May | 9am - 4pm | LOCATION - The Glen Hotel, Corner of Logan Rd and Gaskell St, Eight Mile Plains, Brisbane.

**MAY
ADDITIONAL
WORKSHOP**

Rhythmic Integrations

This 6-hour workshop teaches participants how to use the evidence based Rhythm and Movement for Self Regulation (RAMSR) program including simple rhythm and movement activities to support positive behaviour for children aged 3-8 years old.

You can also adapt and customise the program to suit the specific needs of your children or organisation.

Core Concepts covered

- an overview of early childhood self regulation
- the theory and evidence for linking rhythmic movement and music activities for self-regulation development
- an introduction to the RAMSR-O Program practical skills for delivering simple rhythm and movement
- activities that require no prior music experience or training, and very few resources to implement.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - TOWNSVILLE

Saturday 23rd May | 9am - 2.30pm

LOCATION - Townsville Yacht Club, 1 Plume St, South Townsville.

From Image to Action: How does exercising an image of children as citizens change every single choice we make as early Childhood Education professionals?

PRESENTER - Dr Gai Lindsay

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Sensory processing and regulation: Strategies to engage children in the classroom.

PRESENTER - Marena Matthews

This workshop explores how the children regulate their nervous system and the impact this has on higher learning. We investigate what a sensory profile looks like and what strategies we can use to help children to engage positively with learning.

Children's learning Environments, Spaces, Place & Non-Places.

PRESENTER - Dr Geraldine Harris

Children's learning unfolds deeply in 'places' alive with relational, sensory, and ecological resonance, in contrast to 'non-spaces' that feel flat, disconnected or sterile. The workshop will introduce the concepts of the childhood commons© and ecoregulation© and how pedagogical decisions about learning environments can support children's embodied curiosity, social attunement and felt sense of safety. Places that are woven with textures, rhythms, sounds and patterns invite connection with and within the broader world. These silent environmental invitations can be understood as co-regulating, opening opportunities for children to experience awe exploration and wonder. The workshop will explore how co-designing environments with children, educators can support their learning play and wellbeing.





WALK ON COUNTRY - STRADBROKE ISLAND

Quandamooka Country

11th and 13th June | 8.30am - 5.00pm

PRESENTER - Delvene Cockatoo-Collins

Please join us for a very special cultural tour on North Stradbroke Island led by Quandamooka artist, Delvene Cockatoo-Collins.

Quandamooka Walk on Country will provide an opportunity for Educators to engage in professional learning to strengthen professional practice in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in your services and to learn more about local communities First Nations' histories, knowledge systems, cultures, languages and Country.

Experience the inspirational North Stradbroke Island through the eyes of a Quandamooka woman. Delvene and her family invite you to experience the stories, culture and heritage of this special island which they and their ancestors call home.



WEBINAR Statewide online

Tuesday 16th June | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | Online

Rituals: A pathway to self-regulation

PRESENTER - Toni Christie from Childspace

Rituals are a powerful way of using gestures, actions, and conscious behaviour to bring positive energy and intention to our daily routines and rhythms in early childhood. Within the early childhood setting, and our own daily lives and interactions, rituals assist us in creating a healthy emotional environment. This webinar will illustrate the difference between routines and rituals and inspire us to think more deeply about the daily experiences we are offering our children in early childhood education, their cultural relevance, and the messages of worth they convey to children and families.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - BRIBIE ISLAND

Saturday 20th June | 9.00am - 2.30pm

LOCATION - Bribie Island Hotel, 29 Sylvan Beach Esplanade, Bellara, Bribie Island.

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WEBINAR Statewide online

Wednesday 22nd July | 6.30pm - 8.30pm | Online

Tell us a story

PRESENTER - Associate Professor Louise Phillips

This workshop provides a strong case for weaving storytelling regularly into your children's programs. Louise will share insights on how to craft stories for telling with children, and how to weave them into children's tangled webs of learning.

A range of told stories and key storytelling techniques for engaging young children and sparking rich learning will be explored, and insight gained on:

- Choosing suitable stories for different age groups;
- How to tell stories in ways that captivate young children's attention, imagination and curiosity;
- Why storytelling works as a powerful teaching strategy; and
- How storytelling can catalyse rich learning inquiries.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - MACKAY

Saturday, 25th July | 9.00am - 2.30pm

LOCATION - Ocean International Hotel, 1 Bridge Road, Illawong Beach, Mackay.

From Image to Action: How does exercising an image of children as citizens change every single choice we make as early childhood education professionals?

PRESENTER - Dr Gai Lindsay

What happens if we exercise an image of every child as a citizen; an active participant with rights, agency, and voice? How does this impact educational actions? This workshop explores how a respectful image of the child transforms pedagogy and leadership choices in early childhood education. Inspired by Reggio Emilia principles and Dewey's vision of educational democracy, we will confront "near-enough-is-good-enough" attitudes to inspire professional joy! Participants will play with rhizomatic mind-mapping to explore the implications of positioning children as citizens. Together, we will reframe children's rights as the grounding motivator for our mission, responsibility and commitment as professional educators.

Sensory processing and regulation: Strategies to engage children in the classroom.

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WORKSHOP - SUNSHINE COAST

Saturday 1st August | 9.00pm - 12.30pm

LOCATION - Surfair, 923 David Low Way, Marcoola.

On the Wings of Wonder Training Song, Stories, Language and Literacy

PRESENTER - Presented by Pathways to Resilience

A fun interactive program that encourages educators to talk, sing, chant rhymes, move, tell stories and read with children to support language and literacy.

Educators will be provided with:

- Current research on early literacy, brain development, numeracy and movement
- A deeper understanding of the importance of stories & songs for children's wellbeing and how story, song and movement impacts attachment
- The impact on connection
- Interactive, early literacy skills and strategies that can be embedded in everyday practice.
- A booklet of songs and stories that support children.

WALK ON COUNTRY - STRADBROKE ISLAND

Quandamooka Country

19th August | 8.30am - 5.00pm

PRESENTER - Delvene Cockatoo-Collins

Please join us for a very special cultural tour on North Stradbroke Island led by Quandamooka artist, Delvene Cockatoo-Collins.

Quandamooka Walk on Country will provide an opportunity for Educators to engage in professional learning to strengthen professional practice in embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in your services and to learn more about local communities First Nations' histories, knowledge systems, cultures, languages and Country.

Experience the inspirational North Stradbroke Island through the eyes of a Quandamooka woman. Delvene and her family invite you to experience the stories, culture and heritage of this special island which they and their ancestors call home.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - BRISBANE

Saturday 8th August | 9am - 2.30pm | LOCATION - The Glen Hotel, Corner of Logan Rd and Gaskell St, Eight Mile Plains, Brisbane.

The Power of Storytelling to Enhance Childrens Play

PRESENTER - Gwen Rayner

This fun, interactive workshop explores the power of storytelling in enhancing children’s play and learning experiences. Participants will discover how oral storytelling, nursery rhymes and simple songs nurture language development, boost imagination, and encourage social connections. Through playful demonstrations educators and carers will learn to weave stories into everyday play, making learning more memorable and meaningful. Attendees will leave with some hands-on skills and resources to enrich play through the magic of shared stories.

Connection and Clarity in Action: Behaviour support strategies for real early learning environments.

PRESENTER - Dr Siobhan Kennedy-Costantini.

This interactive session supports educators to respond to big behaviours with confidence, calm and clarity. Grounded in attachment science, developmental psychology and nervous system regulation, the workshop explores how connection can settle the stress response and how clear, kind limits guide behaviour without shame or fear. Educators will leave with practical tools they can use immediately in their rooms to support both children and themselves.

Sensory processing and regulation: Strategies to engage children in the classroom.

PRESENTER - Marena Matthews

This workshop explores how the children regulate their nervous system and the impact this has on higher learning. We investigate what a sensory profile looks like and what strategies we can use to help children to engage positively with learning.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - TOOWOOMBA

Saturday 22nd August | 9am - 2.30pm

LOCATION - Burke and Willis Hotel, 554 Ruthven St, Toowoomba City

Tracing the learning - children and educators as co-documenters.

PRESENTER - Stephen Gallen

In this session we will identify and explore authentic and powerful approaches to noticing and mapping children's learners, with children as key participants in the process. With real world examples including floor book and related approaches we will consider practical strategies as well as the theory and principles underlying the work. We will also reflect on how children's involvement can itself be a powerful element of learning, as well as a tool for advocating for children's rights and the value of early childhood education as a whole.

Neuroscience and Technology

PRESENTER - Tammy Gooch with Pathways to Resilience

This workshop will provide an:

- introduction to neuroscience for educators and how educators can use it to help children to regulate in everyday practice
- share the latest research around the impact of technology on children's brains, minds and bodies and will introduce the key components of neuroscience and explore the impact of technology on children's emotional and social wellbeing. The session will introduce strategies that support children with healthy interactions with technology.

8 Aboriginal ways of Learning

PRESENTER - Sally Lawrence

8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning - Learn how to embed "8 Aboriginal ways of Learning" within play-based learning and explore the opportunities to engage all learners through this culturally safe pedagogy. Let's bring the home corner, outside environment and knowledge of the local landscape together with Sally as she demonstrates ways in which to explore the Aboriginal perspectives within everyday texts and play based learning experiences. It's not all about what you teach, it's the way you teach.



MELBOURNE STUDY TOUR 2026

27th to 28th August | Two days | LOCATION - Gowrie Victoria

PRESENTER - Gowrie Victoria

This is your chance to be part of a truly transformative professional learning experience in the vibrant heart of Melbourne—one you won't want to miss. Designed to inspire, energise, and elevate your practice, this immersive adventure will deepen your understanding of the practice of embedding inclusive and culturally safe learning environments for our Early Years learners.

On this unmissable journey, you will:

- o See culturally responsive pedagogy in action first hand, and receive practical guidance on embedding it into your everyday practice.
- o Explore cutting-edge approaches to equity and inclusion as we visit three inclusive Early Learning Services and witness innovative practice in action.
- o Connect with passionate educators from across the region, building a powerful network that will motivate and sustain you long after the experience ends.

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Through music, movement and visual communication, you'll build confidence in using sign-supported songs to strengthen children's communication, inclusion and engagement. This is not a sit-and-listen session - it's an energising opportunity to learn by doing, connect with others, and leave inspired with tools that will delight children and enrich your learning environment.



WORKSHOP - TOWNSVILLE

Saturday 12th September | 9am - 12.30pm

LOCATION - Townsville Yacht Club, 1 Plume St, South Townsville.

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PRESENTERS BIOGRAPHY

BIO - Toni Christie

Toni is the Director of Childspace Early Childhood Institute, holding a master's degree in education. Originally qualified as a nanny, Toni's experiences in education range from running a community parenting programme for single mothers to advisory roles with the Ministry of Education and tertiary training providers. She oversees the Childspace Institute's professional development programmes, is an author of books and articles, and is editor of The Space magazine.

BIO - Tracey Cooper

Tracey Cooper is a highly regarded Change Specialist, recognised for her expertise in leading organisational transformation and guiding leaders through complex change. She works closely with boards, executives, and teams to strengthen culture, enhance alignment, and unlock performance. As a coach, facilitator, and speaker, Tracey is particularly passionate about helping people pause, reflect, and connect their professional and personal purpose for greater impact. Combining warmth, lived experience, and a practical approach, she supports and guides her clients to create meaningful and sustainable change in their lives and organisations.

BIO - April Cunningham

April Cunningham, Ngugi (Noonuccai woman from North Stradbroke Island Cuninjeirban). Early Childhood consultant.

BIO - Caroline Fewster

Before developing Bond University's Bachelor of Children's Services' program Caroline enjoyed a long and varied career working starting as a pre-school teacher in ACT progressing to advisory and consultancy roles with regional and government education authorities. Her experience encompasses all aspects of early childhood learning from classroom teaching to managing services and from educating future teachers to consulting and developing professional development programs. She consults for a range of organisations, local state and the Commonwealth government offering early childhood educators a wealth of real-world knowledge combined with high level qualifications and superior teaching skills, developing customised professional development programs.

BIO - Stephen Gallen

Stephen has 35 years' experience in ECEC as a teacher and consultant. He has practised across all service types and as a consultant he has worked with a range of organisations to support their capacity to expand their pedagogy and professional practice with a focus on children and educators' rights. His work currently involves enabling educators, children and organisations to design meaningful, inclusive and generative contexts in which to live, work and play.

PRESENTERS BIOGRAPHY

BIO - Tammy Gooch with Pathways to Resilience

Tammy has a both passion for movement and the influence of technologies on children's wellbeing. Tammy is deeply passionate about children's development and believes that through foundational movements and an understanding of the brain, educators have the power to transform young lives. Tammy's favourite part of her role is "spending time with the children coaching and mentoring because they bring so much wonder and awe to the things we find mundane. It really changes your view of the world, we can learn a lot from our little humans.

BIO - Dr Geraldine Harris

Geraldine brings over 30 years of experience in early childhood leadership in place-based approaches, integrated services in Australia and in England. Geraldine has authored the new Wings to Fly 2.0, Foundations for Families a Birth to Three Framework of Effective Practice, written book chapters on Transpirational leadership focussed on place-based approaches of collective action and on the emerging field of Playwork leadership. As the Executive Director of the Pathways to Resilience, Geraldine combines her passion as an advocate for children's rights, together with a neuro-informed approach to understanding child development & children's wellbeing; and her belief that a collective approach is required, to enhance children's wellbeing.

BIO - Leanne Hughes

Leanne Hughes is an internationally acclaimed keynote speaker, facilitator, and author who helps individuals, team, and organisations create extraordinary outcomes. With a career spanning industries, continents, and economies, Leanne's work blends bold creativity with practical strategies to inspire action and deliver lasting impact.

Often referred to as a "Thought Breeder," Leanne's calling is to cultivate innovative, pragmatic ideas that maximise growth and results. Her workshops and keynotes have sparked transformation in industries as diverse as mining, retail, education, and professional services. She believes in breaking through traditional boundaries, turning "Why?" into "Why not?" and inspiring her audiences to think bigger and act bolder. Leanne's expertise includes influence, group dynamics, leadership, and engagement strategies.

She is the author of the best-selling *The 2-hour Workshop Blueprint: Design Fast. Deliver Strong. Without Stress*, which has revolutionised the way professionals design and deliver impactful workshops.

As the host of the *First Time Facilitator* podcast and the *Leanne on Demand Daily* podcast, she continues to share actionable insights with a global audience. Her articles have been featured in *Smart Company*, *CEO World*, and other leading publications.

Recognised as one of fewer than 50 members of the prestigious Million Dollar Consulting® Hall of Fame, Leanne is a sought-after speaker for conferences and corporate events. She has also received accolades such as Asia-Pacific Learning Professional of the Year, highlighting her influence in the fields of leadership and professional development.

PRESENTERS BIOGRAPHY

BIO - Dr Siobhan Kennedy-Costantini

Dr Siobhan Kennedy-Costantini is a developmental psychology specialist and Circle of Security facilitator who cares deeply about children's attachment, temperament, and emotion regulation. Through Science Minded, she translates cutting-edge developmental research into practical strategies for parents, educators, and early learning professionals across Australia. Her work focuses on bridging research and practice to promote secure relationships and children's social-emotional wellbeing.

BIO - Sally Lawrence

Sally is a non-Indigenous education consultant with over 30 years of experience, dedicating the past 26 years to working exclusively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Sally collaborates with Early Childhood Services, schools, communities, and educators to embed First Nations perspectives. Sally has held significant roles, including Manager of Indigenous Education for the Queensland Department of Education's North Coast Region, where she influenced state strategies and programs. Services such as curriculum development, professional development workshops, cultural awareness training, and Tours on Country. Notably, she is the lead author of the award winning "Our Land, Our Stories" series, and her work reflects a deep commitment to cultural integrity and community-led education.

BIO - Dr Gai Lindsay

Informed by two decades as a preschool teacher/director and 14 years as an early childhood academic and researcher, Dr. Gai Lindsay is a consultant and passionate art-play advocate. Her work examines educators' visual arts pedagogy, with a focus on building confidence and content knowledge through targeted professional learning. Inspired by John Dewey's philosophies of education, art, and democracy, and the Reggio Emilia educational project, Gai champions meaningful arts experiences for children and educators. Her goal is for all children and educators to experience joyful, authentic visual arts learning.

BIO - Phoebe Marais & Natasha Sansoni

Phoebe and Natasha bring together over 35 years of combined experience supporting children's development through movement, sensory integration, and physical literacy.

Both have collaborated extensively with families, educators, and health professionals. Natasha, an occupational therapist, has worked across disability, education, and health settings, consults to special schools supporting students with complex needs, and led the development of In The Zone for Learning, endorsed by the Department of Education. She is currently developing Sense Alive, a sensory-based wellbeing toolkit.

Phoebe holds an Honours degree in Biokinetics and has extensive training in youth physical literacy and motor skill development. She is part of the Playball Australia team contributing to curriculum development and educator training, and is the director of Playball Fraser Coast.

Together, Phoebe and Natasha offer a practical, integrated approach that combines occupational therapy and physical literacy to help all children - those typically developing and those with additional needs - grow, learn, and thrive through purposeful movement.

PRESENTERS BIOGRAPHY

BIO - Marena Matthews

Marena has been a paediatric OT for more years than we would like to mention and has been collaborating with educators, families and children with regards to developmental skills, school readiness and sensory regulation and processing and how this relates to learning and behaviour in the classroom. She loves sharing information and skills and loves to advocate for children and their families.

BIO - Rachel Minns

Rachel Minns is an early years educator and Apple Professional Learning Specialist passionate about the purposeful, safe and creative use of digital technologies in early learning. She empowers educators to see iPads and other tools as means for children to document, communicate and share their learning stories. Through hands-on, play-based experiences, Rachel highlights how technology can amplify children's voices, foster creativity over consumption, and connect learning between classrooms, homes and communities - showing that when used meaningfully, digital tools become powerful platforms for self-expression and connection.

BIO - Kelly Oldfield

Kelly Oldfield is an experienced Child Development and Behaviour Specialist with over 17 years of practice supporting educators, schools, and early learning settings across Australia. As the founder of Child Development and Behaviour Specialists and the creator of the FILIT Behaviour & Wellbeing System, Kelly is known for her practical, evidence-based, and capacity-building approach. She works closely with educators to reduce challenging behaviours, strengthen consistent practice, and build safe, supportive environments for children. Kelly's work combines data-informed decision-making, trauma-aware strategies, and real-world application, empowering teams with the confidence, skills, and tools needed to create meaningful, sustainable change.

BIO - Associate Professor Louise Phillips

Associate Professor Louise Gwenneth Phillips (PhD, SFHEA, PCC) is a professional storyteller, coach, consultant and a highly accomplished storytelling pedagogy scholar. After successful careers as an academic at The University of Queensland, trainer/ consultant with Gowrie Qld and NSW, and an early childhood teacher, Louise now leads Lou. P. Tales Coaching & Consulting. Louise has expansively researched and published on storytelling pedagogy (see <https://louptales.education/publications/>) and designs a suite of gifts and resources which gift the wisdom of folktales. She is also on the Australian Fairy Tale Society committee.

BIO - Gwen Rayner

Cert Ed, Bed, Grad Dip - Arts in Early Childhood, Cert.IV WT&A. Taught in all areas of education - Kindergarten to High School - in UK, Kenya & Zambia. Worked in Early Childhood Multiage classrooms, a primary school deputy and EA for EQ in Australia. Gwen created the Butterfly Wings/Koala Joeys Programs for families with before school-age children focusing on Early Literacy & Early Years Brain Development. Gwen is well known for delivering fun, interactive professional development workshops for educators and other professionals using song, rhyme, movement & oral storytelling activities for over 20 years.

