



Educators at PE4K pride themselves on providing children with interesting and educational games and activities.



The relationship between a child and their educator is vitally important to the child's wellbeing not just while they're at the centre but also into the future.

## Celebrating their contribution

EARLY Childhood Educators' Day in Australia is celebrated during the first week of September each year.

"It provides us all with the opportunity to recognise the special skills and attributes of the educators who have chosen to care for and educate young children," PE4K Wagga owner Dr Brenda Abbey said.

"Many of the parents of the children who attend PE4K centres in Wagga took time to thank the educators for the love and care they give their children each day and for how they encourage

and nurture friendships between children.

"Parents also thanked educators for always making them feel welcome at the centres and for creating an atmosphere that is a 'home away from home' for their child, a peaceful place to connect with friends.

"Hearing these words from parents made the educators' day particularly special because educators know the quality of the relationships they have with the children affect the children's health and wellbeing now and throughout their lives."

# Change for better at PE4K

DR BRENDA Abbey purchased the Wagga PE4K Childcare centres in September 2018.

Brenda chose these centres because she saw them as a not-to-be-missed opportunity to implement her vision for young children's development.

This vision grew during the many years she spent in different roles in early childhood - teacher (preschool, primary, special education), childcare centre director, lecturer, departmental officer

(licensing and monitoring childcare centres), author and producer of resources for educators.

The changes introduced to achieve this vision have been welcomed by families with enrollments increasing significantly resulting in additional educators being added to the team.

"The first change is based on the understanding quality relationships are essential to children's growth, development and learning," Brenda said.

"Children and educators now spend more unhurried time in play and learning together.

"Mealtimes are social and leisurely, and routines are more relaxed.

"It is obvious everyone cares about each other and they genuinely enjoy being together - they know they belong.

"The second is the progressive introduction of activities such as dance, simple gymnastics, yoga, gardening, mindfulness and progressive

relaxation. "These activities benefit children's health and wellbeing now and throughout their lives.

"The learning environment is peaceful and purposeful."

Changes have also been made to the school-readiness program which focuses on preparing children emotionally and socially as well as early literacy and mathematical concepts

"The program prepares children for the differences

between school and childcare they will need to cope with in the first few weeks," Brenda said.

Another change that has had an unexpected positive affect on children and educators has been sourcing the ingredients for the meals (meat, fruit and vegetables) locally.

"The children take pleasure in seeing the food arrive and they also delight in eating it," Brenda said.

According to Brenda, the successful introduction of

these changes is attributed to her team including area administrator Raelene Goesch, centre directors - Courtney Crowe, Rachele Cahill and Anna Rodway, and their educator teams.

Their commitment to Brenda's vision ensures that "children who attend PE4K Childcare centres become confident, competent, creative and compassionate individuals who are connected to their community and care about the natural world and its living creatures."



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