

NSW floods: Local Area Emergency

We have declared a Local Area Emergency for child care services in 34 local government areas in New South Wales.

[Learn more about the NSW Local Area Emergency](#)

Final week to confirm 2018–19 income

Families have one more week – until 31 March – to confirm their 2018–19 income with Services Australia or lose their Child Care Subsidy (CCS).

To confirm their 2018–19 income for the purposes of balancing, families need to:

- lodge their tax return, or
- tell Services Australia they don't need to lodge a tax return. Families can do this using their [Centrelink online account](#) through [myGov](#) or the [Express Plus Centrelink mobile app](#).

Please note, families provide an income estimate to Services Australia before the start of each financial year.

They can also update their estimate during the year if their circumstances change.

This is a separate process to balancing, where families must confirm their income after the end of a financial year.

There's [more information for providers on our website](#). Here you'll find:

- [short video](#) that explains balancing
- [fact sheet](#) to share with families, and
- [poster](#) to display at your service.

If families have questions, please direct them to the [Services Australia website](#).

Eased activity test ends 4 April

Last year, the Australian Government [eased the activity test](#) for families whose employment was affected by COVID-19.

This measure currently gives families access to extra Child Care Subsidy (CCS) hours if their recognised activity level decreases.

These extra hours are a temporary COVID-19 measure and will end on 4 April 2021.

You may notice a change to the amount of CCS you receive on behalf of families from 5 April.

Please ask your families to ensure their [activity test details](#) are up to date so they receive the right amount of CCS.

More information for families is available on the [Services Australia website](#).

Have your say on quality standards

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulating the quality of early childhood education and care services across Australia. It guides your work supporting children's development and learning.

Regular reviews of the NQF ensure the regulatory system supported by all Australian governments is current.

Feedback provided during the first round of 2019 NQF Review consultations has been used to develop a [Consultation Regulation Impact Statement](#) (CRIS).

The CRIS outlines options for change. It explores the following issues:

- safety, health, and wellbeing
- family day care
- outside school hours care
- workforce
- understanding of quality ratings by families
- changes in fees within the NQF system
- oversight and governance of services and providers, and
- proposed changes to the NQF arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

You can have your say on the CRIS by completing a [survey](#) or sending a [written submission](#).

Submissions close 30 April 2021.

[Learn more about the NQF Review](#)

Did you miss bushfire webinar?

[Be You](#) recently held a webinar for educators on understanding trauma responses after a bushfire.

The [webinar is now available online](#). There's also a summary of attendee questions and answers.

The next Be You webinar is scheduled for early May.

[Learn more about Be You's Bushfire Response Program](#)

Learn about Let's Count program

The Smith Family's Let's Count program is an early mathematics program for children aged 3 to 5.

The program supports early childhood educators, in partnership with parents, to promote positive numeracy experiences for young children by noticing, exploring and talking about numeric concepts using everyday activities.

Let's Count includes:

- a professional development program for educators, and
- an interactive Facebook Messenger bot to weave learning activities into everyday life.

The program aligns with the Early Years Learning Framework and meets National Quality Standard requirements.

[Explore the Let's Count program](#)

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