

Parent Information



"Children learn more quickly during their early years than at any other time in their life. They need love and nurturing to develop a sense of trust and security that turns into confidence as they grow."



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Our Commitment to you

Pearl Street Child Care Centre opened in February 1995. We have always been committed to support our families and provide children with the best possible start to their education and care experience.

Our unique philosophy guides our practices and curriculum decisions. The creation of this philosophy is a collaborative process that asks for involvement by all those that utilise our service including team members, families, the children and contribution from the wider community. Our service philosophy can be found in the foyer.

Our commitment to our families is reflected in all that we do. We:

- Provide the children in our care with a happy and safe environment that recognises their skills, talents and interests
- Provide fully qualified educators to oversee your child's individual educational program and assist them with a comprehensive school readiness program when it is time for your child to make the transition to formal schooling.
- Provide a wide range of educational resources that are age and developmentally appropriate for all children in our care
- Incorporate the use of technology to provide your child with opportunities to further their interests and gain experience with real life tools that they will use once they move to formal schooling.
- Provide attractive, easily accessible environments both indoors and outdoors that invite children to explore, make choices and empower them to make decisions about their learning.
- Are committed to providing child safe environments and all educators are provided with regular child protection training.
- Seek feedback from all stakeholders in the service on our policies and procedures to ensure that they are meeting our families' needs.



Settling in to care

Introducing your child to care can be an emotional time. It is fair to expect some tearful goodbyes in the early days, however there are many ways to assist your child with this transition.

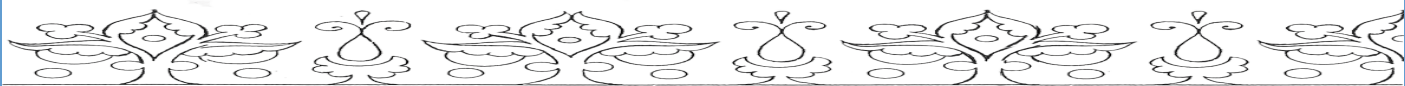
Prepare your child by spending a half hour or two at the centre before the first week of enrolment to become familiar with this new environment. This is also a great opportunity for you to spend time with the educators and centre director.

Understanding your child's needs and providing an environment that meets those needs is crucial. Our educators play an active role in gathering information from you and your family to create a smooth transition between home and the educational environment.

On your child's first day in care, room staff will assist in settling your child. Communication between parent, child and educator is crucial in helping our families to adjust. Families with children new to the centre are welcome to ring during the day to enquire about their child.

We encourage families to participate in our programs, allowing them an insight into their child's day to day activities. Families are welcome to spend time in the centre and share those special moments with their children or phone us during the day to check on their child's progress.

"Separation anxiety is a normal stage in a child's life."



Working together to increase confidence and learning

Success in early childhood is a goal both parents and educators have for their children. Learning improves when families are involved in their child's education.

We encourage families to actively participate in the care of their children through involvement in decision making with regard to their child's care and education. Families are welcome to spend time in the centre and share special occasions with their child. You can become involved by helping out in the centre's daily routine. Please speak with your child's educator for more information.

Families are also encouraged to be involved in an advisory and consultative manner. We encourage parents to be involved in the review of our centre philosophy, policies and procedures. These opportunities will be made available through regular communication in your family pocket, in the foyer and in your child's room.

Some of the many ways we communicate include: books, newsletters, information meetings, parent information areas, feedback forms, family meetings, special events, emails and day books. Please speak to the centre director in regards to your individual preference for communication.

It is important that educators and families get to know each other to develop trust and respect. Children succeed when there is an open exchange of information that links the home with the centre. It is helpful when families exchange ideas about the child's special talents and hobbies. We can then focus the child's learning through their interests, strengths and abilities.

Each child will have an individual portfolio of their learning at the centre. As their family you are able to access, view and add to this at any time. Please speak to your child's educators for more information.

Information regarding your child's day will be documented daily for you to view. This includes details of sleeping habits, toilet practices, child's response to the day and any health and safety issues that may have arisen.

Our educators will also speak with you informally upon collection of your child or through phone calls if any issues arise during the day.

Throughout the year we also offer family/teacher interviews as a more formal time for a parent and a teacher to talk. Just like every child is different, so will be each family/teacher interview.

Children are encouraged to develop social skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and meet their needs without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviours.

Children are also encouraged to respect themselves and others. When educators guide a child's behavior, they aim to provide the child with clear guidelines as to why a particular behavior is unacceptable. Children are given realistic limits to follow while they are in care.

Children at times run into a roadblock or two. This is where communication is vital to solving these problems.

Our educators are here to ensure that your child is happy and healthy in their care. If there is a problem that arises that you feel you need to resolve with our educators, then please let us know

All grievances will be taken seriously and our best effort will always be forthcoming. All outcomes will be discussed with the family who is concerned. Our grievance policy is displayed in the centre foyer.

Educators appreciate it when families:

Help their children understand that learning is important.

Set expectations for learning, by taking into account their child's ability.

Show an interest in what their child is learning and what is happening at the centre.

Remember that at this age, playing is learning too!

Read the memos and information sheets that are sent home with their child.

Take note of important dates on the calendar.

"Keeping in touch and working together is the best way to ensure a high quality education for our children, and to help ensure their success not only in the centre and the early years, but also in life.





Am I entitled to Government Assistance?

Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a payment made by the Commonwealth Government to help families with the cost of quality child care. A family's eligibility is subject to an income test, which is administered by Centrelink.

It is the responsibility of the family member to register for Child Care Benefit. Information and forms can be accessed from the DHS Office (through Centrelink) or families can call direct on 136 150.

With the introduction of the Government's Child Care Management System (CCMS), families will receive a CCB fee reduction only if they have registered with Centrelink, are eligible for CCB, have a formal enrolment at the centre and the centre has received confirmation from the

Government pertaining to the percentage of CCB they are eligible for. If families are not eligible for CCB, full fees must be paid.

Most families are also entitled to 50% Child Care Rebate (CCR) which can be paid directly to the centre, further reducing your fees. Please check if you are entitled to this rebate with Centrelink.



Our Fee Structure

It is our policy that all families pay fees two weeks in advance at all times. This includes the current week plus two. The family must then continue to pay the weekly fee in advance in order to maintain a credit balance equivalent to two weeks of fees.

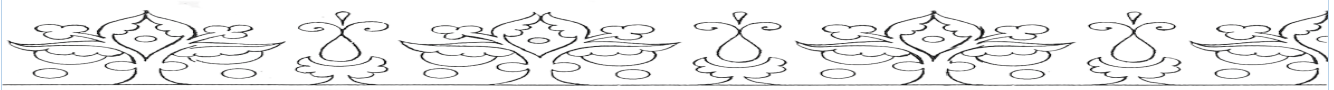
All payments must be made via EZIDebit and all families must complete an EZIDebit application form upon enrolment. Requests for other types of payment may be considered but approval is not guaranteed.

Our service has a no cash policy

All children's booked days, including Public Holidays and absent days must be paid to retain your booking. Late fees are charged if children remain in the centre after closing times.

Two weeks' notice is required if you wish to cancel a booking. Failure to do so will require families to pay two weeks full fees. All accounts must be finalized by this time as any outstanding accounts will be forwarded to debt collection agencies.





Signing in and out of the Centre

Each child must be signed in and out of the centre every day they attend. This is a legal requirement that we must follow. These records are used in case of emergencies and for the calculation of the Child Care Benefit (CCB). If a child is away, ill or on holidays the corresponding days must be signed by parents/guardians.

On arrival at the centre you are asked to do the following:

- Document the time, sign and print your name
- Present your child to the educator in charge

Before you leave the centre you are asked to do the following:

- Come into the room and greet your child
- Collect child's belongings
- With your child, say goodbye to the educator in charge of the group
- Document the time, sign and print your name

No child will be released into the care of any persons not known to team members. If team members do not know the person by appearance, the person must be able to produce some form of photo identification to prove that they are the person authorised to collect the child on the enrolment form.

In the event that a child has not been collected 15

collected 15 minutes after closing time, then the parents/guardians will be contacted on the emergency telephone numbers provided.

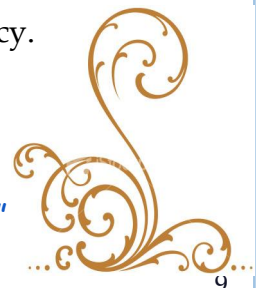
If the child has still not been collected 30 minutes after closing time, then staff will follow the Department of Communities Abandoned Child Procedures including the Child Protection and Crisis Centre 24 hour service.

Additional fees will be charged for a child that remains in the centre after the centre closing time.

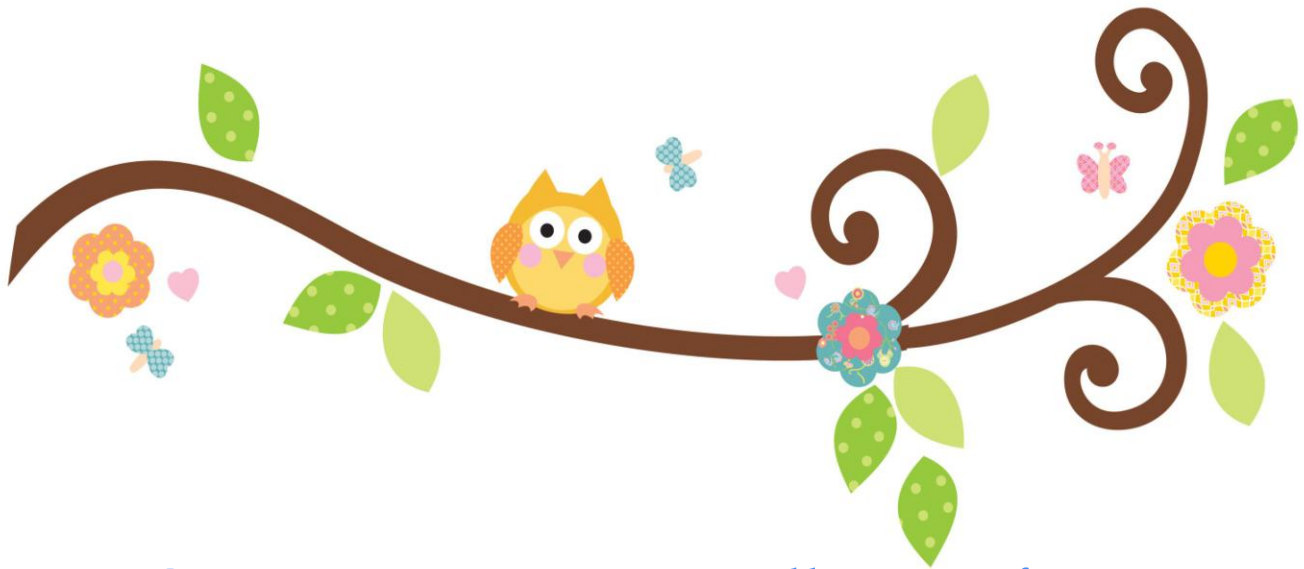
In the case that your child is absent we request that you phone the centre if your child is unable to attend their session for any reason. Notice is also required in the incidence of infectious or contagious diseases in the family.

Families receiving Child Care Benefit are allocated 42 absent days for each child per financial year. These absences can be taken for any reason including Public Holidays. Once the child has reached 42 absent days, CCB is not paid for any further absences unless listed as part of our absence policy.

"Your child's safety is
our Number 1 priority."



Open Door Policy



Our centre is open at all times for families to drop in. You don't need to call and tell us you are coming, you are welcome at any time.

We'd love for you to come in and join in our programs – your participation is valued.



Early Years Learning Framework and our centre

The Early Years Learning Framework is a National Early Learning Framework for children from birth to five years. As the early years are a vital time for children to learn and develop, the framework has been developed to ensure your child receives a quality educational program.

Educators will use the Framework to partnership with families to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities and recognise their children learn through their play.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming.

- **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationship they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be' – time to play, try new things and have fun.
- **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

Through the Framework's five learning goals educators will assist your child to develop:

- A strong sense of their identity
- Connections with their world
- A strong sense of well-being
- Confidence and involvement in their learning, and
- Effective communication skills

Our centre offers an extensive school readiness program based on the Framework. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning, providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. We aim to guide your child in becoming an effective learner through creating an environment that is challenging and stimulating. The overall aim of our programs is to help your child in developing all areas necessary for success now and in later years.

Using the Early Years Learning Framework educators will observe your child's learning so they can build on it and plan the next steps. They will do this by listening, watching and talking to your child. Each child will have their own portfolio or collection of learning. This may contain photos and children's work to show what your child is learning. This learning journey is available for you to view at any time.

Your child's room will also show on-going learning through daily journals/books, photographs, project work, learning stories and a program documenting the day's program.



National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework is a Government initiative which sets a National Quality Standard creating greater consistency for early childhood education and care services across Australia.

This initiative aims to improve educator-to-child ratios in services, increased skills and qualifications, national regulations and a quality ratings system which will help you to make informed choices about the education and care you choose for your child.

Our centre's aim is to exceed the national

quality standard across all areas of our service. Pearl Street Child Care Centre has a quality improvement plan in place to show what is happening in our centre to achieve this. This will look at areas such as educational programs and practice, children's health and safety, physical environment, staffing arrangements, relationships with children and collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

For more information in regards to the National Quality Framework, please speak with the Centre Director or you can also find more information on the website: www.acecqa.gov.au

What Families say.....

"To all my wonderful teachers at Pearl Street. Thank you for loving me and helping me grow in 2014." C. & Family

"You guys have made it so much easier for me to go back to work. Thanks for taking great care of my baby." P. & M.

"To the wonderful staff at Pearl Street, thank you so much for taking such good care of E. this year and being so willing to help us out with last minute extra days. E. loves his days at the centre and we really appreciate everything you all do to make it a safe, fun and stimulating environment for our little boy." C. & A.

"M's parents would like to thank all the staff of the child care. We really appreciate your professionalism." A. & T.

"Dear Everyone at Pearl Street, thank you for all you have done for D. – the caring, looking after him and all you've taught him. We appreciate all your hard work and we will miss you when he goes to school next year." L. & R.

"To all the wonderful staff at Pearl St. Thank you for a great year. We appreciate all that you've put in caring for E. E. & R.

"Thanks for showing M. love and care." S.A.



Room Details and Routines

Our routines allow times for individual play/learning, small group and large group play/learning sessions. Children's language and literacy skills are further developed during these times as children are involved in storytelling, drama and games. Music also plays a large part during these sessions as children are able to experiment with dancing, singing and exercising their bodies. For the 3-5 year old rooms, Pearl Street provides regular music incursions.

Physical spaces are made available for children to engage in rest and quiet experiences. Educators provide a range of active and restful experiences and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation. Families are consulted about their child's individual needs regarding rest and sleep, and room practices incorporate cultural and parenting beliefs. Kinder room children also enjoy Yoga Bugs which is included in the program.

Each of our centre's rooms is individual and unique and is tailored to suit the age and development stage of your child, the

diversity of the educators, children, families, the wider community and are filled full of laughter, fun and educational resources.

Every room caters for all aspects of children's learning including physical, social, emotional, personal, creative, cognitive and linguistic. Children's learning is dynamic and complex and the centre's environment is designed for this.

As your child grows and develops so will their needs, interests and abilities. To cater for this, your child will gradually transition to the next room after consultation with yourself.

Our transitioning procedure includes communication with families and involves educator's careful assessment of the child's records to ensure they are ready for the next step and then short visits to the new room to ensure a smooth transition.

Sustainable Practices

At our centre, our educators and children work together to learn about and promote the sustainable use of resources and to develop and implement sustainable practices. Our centre has an environmental strategy which is consistently implemented at the centre. This includes recycling, use of recycled resources, energy efficiency, water conservation, and many more. Find out how you can be involved in this by asking the director or your educators.





Centre Policies and Procedures

Our centre has a number of policies and procedures pertaining to the care of your child. Our policies are located in the centre foyer and are available to review at any time. Below are some important policies to get you started. For more information on our centre policies, please speak with the Director.

Accidents and Incidents

Our educators take a proactive approach to safety at our service and conduct thorough risk assessments of all play areas so that effective supervision strategies are in place and each child can feel safe and free to explore their environment.

At all times educators are present in the service that hold Level 2 First Aid Qualifications including asthma and anaphylaxis training. Should an accident or sudden illness occur, educators will immediately commence first aid and you will be contacted to collect your child or in emergency situations advised of the plan of action regarding further medical treatment.

If, in an emergency, you or your authorised nominee cannot be contacted, the Nominated Supervisor will provide the ambulance officers with information regarding your child and a team member known to the child will accompany your child to the hospital and stay until you arrive. Full documentation of the incident will be made.



Health and Hygiene

Children and educators are actively encouraged to practice good personal hygiene at the centre. We believe this helps to minimize the instances of illness at the service. We also believe that if your child is ill, the best place for them is to be at home where they can recover faster.

If your child presents at the centre with signs of illness the nominated supervisor may advise that they are not well enough to participate in the centre's daily activities and you will be asked to make alternative arrangements until they are well or the exclusion period has ended and seek medical advice. You may be asked to provide a medical clearance letter before your child can return.

Should your child become ill at the service observation, documentation and first aid will commence and you may be contacted to collect your child from the service and seek further medical advice. Please note that Panadol is not regarded as a first response and can only be administered in emergency situations and with prior written parental consent. It is important that you read the centre's medical policy carefully to know the guidelines for educators to administer medication to your child including Panadol, prescription and non-prescription medication.

A list of common infectious illness, their exclusion periods and related policies and procedures are available in the foyer.

Emergency Evacuation

Emergency evacuations as well as lockdown procedures are regularly practiced and the centre has plans in place in the event of local emergencies. Fire extinguishers are strategically located throughout the centre. As part of our fire safety measures all children in attendance at the centre are noted from the attendance sheet. This is why it is important to ensure that you sign your child 'IN' and 'OUT' of the centre each day.

Immunisation

As part of your enrolment process you will be asked to provide details of your child's immunisation status. In the event of an outbreak of an infectious disease it may be necessary to exclude any children who are not immunised for their health and wellbeing. No immunisation may also affect your Child Care Benefit. For more information, please refer to our immunisation, exclusion and notifiable disease centre policy available in the foyer.

Medication

If your child requires medication whilst in care, a medication record must be filled in and signed by a parent. The medication must be in original packaging and accompanied by a prescription label/doctor's letter (for non-prescription medication) which states who the medication is for and the dosage.



Medication must be handed to a staff member and will be stored in a secure area. Under no circumstances is any type of medication to be left in children's bags. Please refer to the Medication Policy for further information.

Nutrition

We understand the important role we play in meeting the nutritional needs of children while in care. Children who attend a full day of long day care will be offered at least 50% of their recommended daily dietary intake while in care. Guidelines around healthy eating can be found in the foyer and in each of the children's rooms. The daily menu is displayed in the foyer. Please speak with the Director or centre cook for queries or information.

Cultural Diversity

As Australia is a culturally and linguistically diverse nation, we recognise the diversity of all cultures and provide opportunities for all children to develop an understanding of these cultures. Therefore, we aim to help foster in each child an awareness and acceptance of other cultures through integrating multiculturalism into our programs.

It is important to understand that cultural awareness is not tokenism, but is incorporated into our program on a daily basis. This can be achieved through providing and offering a range of books, music, cooking, crafts, singing, clothing, play equipment and other subtle means.

Where possible, all family information can be translated into required languages. The centre will provide the Interpretation Services contact number for families to access if needed.

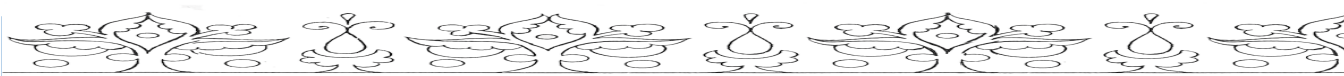
Sun Protection

Our centre takes care to protect children and team members from direct exposure to the sun. This is extremely important as children are very vulnerable to sunburn which can increase their chances of skin cancer by almost 50%. This is one of the most common forms prevalent in Australia and skin damage from sunburn can never be repaired.

Our centre abides by all state regulations and the child care building code in regards to the amount of manufactured and natural shade available in the playground. Shade structures are maintained and regular maintenance and safety checks are conducted as required, initiated by centre management.

We recommend that families pack clothing for children that will protect them from the sun, including a hat, longer sleeved t-shirts instead of singlets and loose clothing which covers all of their body (ie. no midriffs or bare backs).

Sunscreen will not be applied to any child without prior written permission from the family. Sunscreen will be applied to children 20 minutes before going outside and regularly reapplied.



Literature on sun care is available at the centre. For more information on the centre's Sun Protection policy, please ask the Director.

Clothing

Please dress your child in play clothes that wash easily, so that your child may enjoy all the activities. In choosing what your child should wear to the centre, please consider the following:

- Your child will be working with messy materials such as paint, glue, water and sand so clothing must be able to stand a little wear and tear.
- Clothing must provide some protection and be comfortable for both indoor and outdoor experiences.
- Children will be climbing, running, jumping and swinging so they will need clothes and footwear that allow children to explore the environment safely and freely (no thongs or long skirts).
- Children will need clothes which allow for growing independence i.e. pants that can come off easily for toileting.
- Please name all clothing and footwear

Priority of Access

One of the main reasons the Australian Government funds child care is to meet the child care needs of Australian families. However, the demand for child care sometimes exceeds supply in some areas. When this occurs, it is important for our service to allocate places to those families with the greatest need for child care support.

To ensure that the centre adheres to the Guidelines issued by the Australian

Government, priority of access to child care will be given according to the following categories:

Priority 1: A child at risk of abuse or neglect

Priority 2: A child of a single parent/guardian or of parents/guardians who both satisfy the work/training/study test under Section 14 of the New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999

Priority 3: Any other child

In relation to Priority 3, there are some circumstances in which a child who is already in a child care service may be requested to give up their place or change days at the service in order for the service to provide a place for a higher priority child, but only if the family is notified of this policy upon enrolment AND the service gives families 14 days' notice of the requirement for their child to give up their place or change days.

Within the main categories, priority is also given to children in:

- Families with low incomes
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Families or children with disabilities
- Families from non-English speaking background
- Single parent families
- Socially isolated families



First Day Checklist

There are some important things you need to make sure you have completed for the first day.

Please use this checklist to make sure that nothing is missed.

The paperwork:

- ☐ Completed Enrolment form (all pages completed, initialed and signed)
- ☐ Completed 'A little more about me and my family' form
- ☐ Completed 'Blanket Permission Form'
- ☐ Completed 'New Parent Checklist' Form
- ☐ Completed EZIDEBIT form

For your child:

- ☐ Backpack
- ☐ Hat
- ☐ Two spare changes of clothes to suit the weather or 'accidents'
- ☐ Spare socks
- ☐ Spare underwear/nappies (at least five)
- ☐ Dummy (if required)
- ☐ Suitable shoes to protect your child's feet (no thongs)
- ☐ Family photo



New Parent Checklist

As the Director of Pearl Street Child Care Centre, it is my responsibility to ensure that the following New Parent Checklist has been discussed with all new families. Please circle where appropriate below.

Have you received a tour of the centre?		Yes / No	
Have you been introduced to centre staff members?		Yes / No	
Have you been informed of the management structure?		Yes / No	
Have you been informed about the various Teacher/Family communication methods used with the centre?		Yes / No	
Have you been informed of the centre's Open Door Policy?		Yes / No	
Have you completed an Enrolment Form for your child?		Yes / No	
Have you contacted Centrelink?		Yes / No	
Have you been given children's nutrition information?		Yes / No	
Have you been informed of the centre's Sun Safety Policy?		Yes / No	
Have you been informed of the immunisation procedure?		Yes / No	
Have you been informed of the centre's rating and assessment status and the centre's quality improvement plan?		Yes / No	
Parent/Guardian:		Director:	
Signature:		Signature:	
Date:		Date:	



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<http://www.pearlstreetchildcare.com.au>

RESOURCES

mychild.gov.au

deewr.gov.au

aceqa.gov.au

careforkids.com.au

centrelink.gov.au