

Dear valued REED staff and families

As we slowly emerge from the restrictions and challenges bought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected every community, family and business, we are grateful to be seeing a return to work for most, and a 'new normal' way of life evolving. We are thankful to everyone for their joint efforts in maintaining health and well-being at each REED service.

A special thanks to the REED Board, General Manager, Senior Management Team, Educators and admin and support staff for keeping abreast of the continued changes that affected our families, staff, services and their communities. We are indebted to our dedicated staff that worked tirelessly to keep all of REED's services open, and to the families who supported them.

In accordance with advice from the WA Government's Health Department and the Education and Care Regulatory Unit, our Educators took all recommended measures to keep our services open and our staff and the children in our care safe and healthy. At this stage there will be continuance of practices that were introduced as part of the COVID-19 response, such as enhanced cleaning arrangements and daily temperature checks to ensure we all remain COVID-19 safe.

As you are aware, the Federal Government will be ceasing their additional support of the ECEC sector in July. Whilst the Federal Government has talked about child care services being provided for 'free' during the COVID-19 pandemic, there were still costs associated with running and providing our services and these were funded by REED. We were fortunate to be in a situation of financial stability, overseen by our Treasurer and the Audit and Risk committee, and were therefore able to maintain service provision.

As the Federal Government assistance ceases we understand that some families will continue to require additional support with fees. REED is keen to ensure that we provide whatever assistance is needed to those families especially those with reduced employment – for example access to Additional Child Care Subsidy. Please email admin@reedwa.org.au if you would like to find out more about accessing additional subsidies or require assistance.

On a positive note, REED services are returning to pre-COVID occupancy rates at each of our centres. We are currently recruiting several staff members to assist with the welcomed increase in demand.

We are also looking ahead to the next phase of REED's development and the inclusion of more centres into REED services. In recent months, some of the benefits REED provides have been highlighted and have attracted attention from other centres. Our Board will continue to work with these centres and look towards them joining REED in the future months. The cohesion displayed throughout REED over the past three months has really set up the organisation for positive future planning and success.

On a final note, it is interesting to observe the discussion and media attention about the benefits of 'free childcare'. This has heightened community awareness about the importance of ECEC services in supporting families to work; which will continue to be the case, but even more importantly is the role played in fostering early childhood development.

On behalf of the REED Board, thank you again for your continued support; it is genuinely appreciated.

Kind regards

Helen Creed
Board Chair