

## Linking Schools & Early Years Project—Evaluation



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## Overview



- ◆ Evaluation summary
- ◆ Data collection
- ◆ Baseline report findings

## Summary of the evaluation



- ◆ Aim of the evaluation
- ◆ Role of SPRC
- ◆ Timetable of data collection
- ◆ Overall approach to the evaluation
  - ❖ summative evaluation
  - ❖ formative evaluation

## Data collection



- ◆ For baseline report, two primary sources of data.
- ◆ Survey data was collected from:
  - ❖ The parents of children starting school.
  - ❖ School principals.
  - ❖ Early childhood education and care services
  - ❖ Child and family community services
- ◆ Process data includes administrative and project data

## Parent surveys



- ◆ Use of ECEC services prior to starting school
- ◆ Participation in transition/orientation activities
- ◆ Satisfaction with the ECEC service and school
- ◆ Involvement in school activities and events held in schools grounds
- ◆ Service use
- ◆ Perceptions of their child's experience of school

## School and service surveys



- ◆ School surveys
  - ❖ Transition and orientation activities
  - ❖ Links with ECEC and child and family services
  - ❖ Programs and activities to respond to individual learning needs.
- ◆ ECEC services
  - ❖ Transition activities
  - ❖ Links with schools and child and family services
- ◆ School surveys
  - ❖ Links with schools and ECEC services

### Data collection



- ◆ Goal 1:
  - ❖ Parent data: participation in and satisfaction with transition to school activities.
  - ❖ School and service data: transition programs and activities, and the importance of ECEC services in transition to school.
- ◆ Goal 2:
  - ❖ Parent data: satisfaction with ECEC services and schools, and parental contact with school
  - ❖ School and service data: use of schools as a resource for child and family services and ECEC services.
- ◆ Goal 3:
  - ❖ Parent data: perceptions of their child's experience of school and the school response to any special needs.
  - ❖ School and service data: school individualised learning programs; and on referrals between schools, ECEC services and child and family services

### Sample



- ◆ There are 199 children in the sample from the parent survey. Most had attended an early childhood education and care (ECEC) service prior to starting school.
- ◆ School and service sample:
  - ❖ 18 ECEC services
  - ❖ 7 schools
  - ❖ 25 child and family services.
- ◆ The primary activity of most of the child and family services were playgroups; parent-parent child groups; parenting education course and programs; and family support services

### Baseline findings: Goal 1



- ◆ Parent data: transition to school
  - ❖ Received information about school from ECEC service (%)
 

Yes	88
No	12
  - ❖ Didn't receive transition information needed (%)
 

Yes	8
No	92

### Baseline findings: Goal 1



- ◆ Parent data: transition to school
  - ❖ Most children participated in orientation activities (93 per cent)
  - ❖ Around half visited the school (48 per cent) and/or spent a half day or longer at the school, including short sessions over several weeks
  - ❖ Parent participation in transition activities
    - ❖ 60 per cent visited the school
    - ❖ 22 per cent received information from another service
    - ❖ 11 per cent did not participate

### Baseline findings: Goal 1



- ❖ Child Participation in Orientation/Transition Activities by Language Child Mostly Speaks at Home

	English	Other
Visited the school	98	10
Half day or longer	76	2
Other	22	0
No	9	5

### Baseline findings: Goal 1



#### Importance of ECEC in transtion to school

	Mean	Min	Max	SD
<i>ECEC rating</i>				
Knowledge	3.5	2	5	1.043
Adjustment	4.89	3	5	.471
Skill	4.22	2	5	.808
Disposition	4.56	3	5	.616
Rules	4.11	3	5	.676
Environment	3.83	2	5	.924
<i>School Rating</i>				
Knowledge	2.86	1	5	1.464
Adjustment	4.86	4	5	0.378
Skill	4.43	3	5	0.787
Disposition	5	5	5	.000
Rules	4.14	2	5	1.069
Environment	3.71	2	5	0.951

**Baseline findings: Goal 2**



◆ Parent satisfaction with ECEC services (%)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
The service provided me with useful information about my child's day	1	6	13	55	25
The service offered activities and resources for parents as well as children.	1	7	23	23	19
If I needed to speak to someone about my child, I knew where to go.	0	1	5	49	45
I had a good relationship with the teachers/staff at the service	0	1	9	46	46
The service is friendly and welcoming for parents	0	2	7	44	47

**Baseline findings: Goal 2**



◆ Parent satisfaction with school(%)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
The school provides me with useful information about my child's day	1	5	12	56	27
The school offers activities and resources for parents as well as children.	2	1	30	44	23
If I need to speak to someone about my child, I know where to go.	1	0	4	46	50
I have a good relationship with the teachers/staff at the service	1	1	17	43	39
The school is friendly and welcoming for parents	1	0	4	44	52

**Baseline findings: Goal 2**



- ◆ 91 per cent of parents reported the school requested information about their child at enrolment such as special learning needs, disability or health concerns.
- ◆ 80 per cent attended an interview at school during first term.
- ◆ About 43 per cent of parents spend time at child's school other than picking them up and dropping them off.
- ◆ Of parents who spend time at school, classroom activity with children, and attending community or cultural events, were the activities with the highest response.

**Baseline findings: Goal 2**



◆ Parent attendance at School by highest level of mother's education

		Some high school	Completed high school	TAFE, Trade cert., Diploma	University or CAE <sup>1</sup>	Other
Do you spend time at school other than pick up or drop-off?	Yes	32	19	8	12	2
	No	58	19	9	10	1

<sup>1</sup> Or some tertiary institute degree, including post university

**Baseline findings: Goal 2**



- ◆ Five schools (71 per cent) reported that they make school resources and school grounds available to child and family services
- ◆ ECEC services and child and family services were asked if they organised groups or activities in school grounds
  - ❖ Number of activities held in school grounds in previous six months

	0	1-4	5-10
ECEC	10	7	1
Child and family services	6	2	0

**Baseline findings: Goal 3**



◆ Parent perceptions of child experience at school

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral/not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
My child is happy to go to school on most days.	1	1	2	33	64
My child has at least one good friend at school.	2	1	5	37	55
My child seems worried or upset a lot of the time.	51	33	9	6	2
My child likes their teacher(s).	1	1	2	27	70
My child often volunteers to help others (e.g. parents, teachers, other children).	1	2	26	40	31
My child is generally well behaved, and usually does what adults request.	1	2	9	52	36

### Baseline findings: Process findings



- ◆ What does the literature tell us about implementation?
- ◆ Time
  - ❖ To build relationships between practitioners/organisations
  - ❖ To build relationships with families
  - ❖ Other interventions: everything took longer than anticipated!
  - ❖ Risks
- ◆ Balancing inclusion and progress
  - ❖ Sustained efforts at inclusion needed to ensure engagement, *but* practical achievements and activities to maintain enthusiasm

### Baseline findings: Process findings (cont.)



- ◆ Context: history, service network, interventions
  - ❖ Presence of other interventions (e.g Best Start)
  - ❖ Relationships between ECEC services and schools
  - ❖ Power (and other) differentials

### Conclusion



- ◆ Strong foundation on which to build new partnerships
  - ❖ High level of satisfaction from parents
  - ❖ High level of satisfaction with orientation programs and individualised learning from schools and ECEC services
  - ❖ Different agencies, different perceptions?
  - ❖ Strong service network
- ◆ Different agencies, different perceptions?
- ◆ Opportunities for change