2026 ECA National Conference

Holding the Past, Creating the Future

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

Melbourne
30 September–3 October

Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

Day Zero—Wednesday 30 September 2026

START TIME	END TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
SERVICE TOURS			
8.00 am	4.45 pm	**Service Tour 1:** Learning through connection on the Mornington Peninsula	Bus departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
8.00 am	4.30 pm	**Service Tour 2:** Child-led learning and relationships	Bus departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
8.15 am	4.00 pm	**Service Tour 3:** Creating environments for curious learners	Bus departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
8.30 am	2.30 pm	**Service Tour 4:** Inclusive and integrated practice	Bus departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
9.15 am	2.15 pm	**Service Tour 5:** Belonging and community at the centre of practice	Bus departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
9.15 am	3.30 pm	**Service Tour 6:** City North walking and tram tour	Departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
10.00 am	3.00 pm	**Service Tour 7:** Inner-city walking tour	Departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
CULTURAL TOUR			
11.00 am	12.00 pm	**Cultural Tour:** Koorie Heritage Trust walking tour	Departs from Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

START TIME	END TIME	EVENT	LOCATION
8.45 am	5.00 pm	**AJEC RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**	**The University of Melbourne**
1.00 pm	5.30 pm	**REGISTRATION**	**Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre**
4.00 pm	5.00 pm	**FIRST TIMER'S MEET & GREET**	**Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre**
5.30 pm	7.30 pm	**WELCOME RECEPTION**	**Exhibition Hall**

Day One—Thursday 1 October 2026

NB: Program subject to change without notice Presentations featuring this symbol will be Livestreamed.

START	END	PLENARY 2	MEETING ROOM 203 & 204	MEETING ROOM 210 & 211	MEETING ROOM 212 & 213	MEETING ROOM 219	MEETING ROOM 220	MEETING ROOM 110	MEETING ROOM 109	MEETING ROOM 106	MEETING ROOM 105	MEETING ROOM 207	MEETING ROOM 208
8.15 am	8.30 am	Welcome to Country											
8.30 am	8.50 am	Opening Session											
8.50 am	9.00 am	Welcome by Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education											
9.00 am	9.05 am	Welcome by ECA National President, Trevor Brown											
9.05 am	9.15 am	Platinum Sponsor Address—Modern Teaching Aids											
9.15 am	10.05 am	**International Keynote Address—Olof Gränström** From facts to understanding: Building a more fact-based future											
10.05 am	10.50 am	MORNING TEA											
10.50 am	11.35 am	**International Keynote Workshop** From data to understanding: Practical tools for working with statistics and visual representations Olof Gränström	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK From compliance to excellence: Reimagining safeguarding as a living system for children Sally Cordina, Jillian Fox, Damian Foley & Michele Rowse	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Strengthening quality through connection and reflection: A Community of Practice PL initiative Dr Bronwyn Hinz, Josephine Wise, Peta Griffin & Anne-Maree Coe	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Professional bravery in risky play: Holding purpose, trust and practice in uncertain times Lukas Ritson	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Creating the future: The role of state government in Victorian ECEC provision Nicole Pilsworth & Darren Youngs	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW From critical reflection to action: Practical tools for high-quality teaching Sarah Wronski & Karen Daniels	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Maker spaces as catalysts for professional bravery: Strengthening educators' and children's mindsets Dr Fiona Boylan & Professor Lennie Barblett AM	PLACE-BASED COLLABORATIONS AND PEDAGOGIES FLASH PRESENTATIONS **Place-based early childhood education as a foundation for social cohesion** Emma Boag, Elfie Taylor & Sam Newbury **Holding place, holding risk: Honouring children as active citizens in place-based pedagogy** Shevawn Maconaghie & Sam Jensen	AI FLASH PRESENTATIONS **GenAI in early childhood education: Navigating AI literacy with professional bravery** Professor Caroline Cohrssen & Parian Madanipour **Generative AI: Opportunities and challenges for Australian early childhood educators** Dr Ali Tehrani, Parian Madanipour & Emma Forsyth	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Finding your fizz: Joyful pedagogy in challenging times EARLY CAREER FOCUS Jo Stratton	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES The VOICE project: Empowering CALD parents through culturally responsive co-design Sylvana Mahmic & Derek McCormack	OSHC Little voices, big rights: Honouring children's rights in OSHC Karly Sheppard & Kylie Morris
11.35 am	11.45 am	ROOM CHANGE											
11.45 am	12.30 pm	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES The development of Australia's Inclusive Practice Framework for ECEC Professor Frances Press, Dr Marie White, Lisa McCoy & Professor Jennifer Cartmel	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK What is the blueprint for effective safeguarding in early years settings? Nicole Talarico	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK How trust-first teams create safer spaces for children Shirralee Ransley & Marisa Phillips	TREATY AND TRUTH-TELLING IN THE EARLY YEARS An immigrant educator's subjective journey into deepening truth-telling in the early years Dr Hanif Jaberipour	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Foundations for the future: Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework 2026 Dr. Sue Atkinson AM, Annette Sax, Professor Jane Page & Stewart Thorn	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES Intercultural ways in practice: Building social cohesion through community connection Jessica Staines	IN CONVERSATION WITH THE ECA BOARD	CHILDREN'S RIGHTS FLASH PRESENTATIONS **Courageous inquiries for children's rights in practice** Associate Professor Louise Phillips, & Nicole Tytherleigh **EYLF and children as beings: Enacting children's rights in ECEC** Mao Niida **This was never new: The rights we owe children** Mehak Gagai & Vicki Walsh	QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FLASH PRESENTATIONS **From Working Towards to Exceeding: Building a culture of continuous improvement** Katherine Hellwig & Emily Andrews **Reimagining the Quality Improvement Plan as relational practice** Betty Lam & Jessica Turner **Holding quality, sustaining people: A decade of parent and educator voices**	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW The Educational and Developmental Gains in Early Childhood (EDGE): Evaluating Victoria's 3-Year-Old Kinder reform Pippa Procter & Patricia Eadie	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Toy libraries: Bringing play and learning home Debbie Williams, Sara Barker & Louise Bell	OSHC Children's friendship and peer culture in outside school hours care Dr Saurubh Malviya
12.30 pm	1.30 pm	LUNCH											

Day One—Thursday 1 October 2026 cont'd

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1.30 pm	2.15 pm	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Holding children's truths, creating inclusive futures: Children's perspectives on disability and belonging Associate Professor Kathy Cologon & Finbar Moynihan	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Championing children's voices: Lundy model in practice Bonnie Thomson & Carmen Cappello	**TREATY AND TRUTH-TELLING IN THE EARLY YEARS** Girls can, boys can: Truth-telling and preventing gender-based violence Kahlia Preece & Zeke Sitas	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Standing firm for play: Strengthening language and literacy in the early years. Rowena Muir	**TREATY AND TRUTH-TELLING IN THE EARLY YEARS** Culture is everybody's business: The future of cultural standards Rachael Phillips, Melissa 'Mary' O'Neill & Kelly Humphrey	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY - HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Voices from the sector: Professional bravery and digital literacies in ECEC settings Terese Griffith, Shani Fernando & Aman Khosa	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY - HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Reflexive mentoring: Enacting professional bravery to transform early childhood practice and pedagogy Dr Belinda Friezer, Dr Robyn Dolby & Associate Professor Sheena Elwick	**INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Intergenerational playgroups supporting social cohesion and play interactions between children and grandparents** Professor Emeritus Ann Farrell **Wisdom & Wonder Play: Supporting social cohesion through intergenerational play** Amanda Treanor **Excursions to engagement: Building social cohesion through community partnerships in early learning** Tearne Martin, Sharnee Fancett & Zowie Martin	**MEALTIME PRACTICES** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Building social cohesion through food: Whole service approach in early childhood servicess** Ricky Gelman **Who belongs at the table? Mealtimes and early childhood inclusion** Jessie Anderson **Brain health in the early years: A new suite of online modules** Dr Georgia Gosse	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Lively bunnies: Reimagining emotion and comfort objects in early childhood education Karen Schneider	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** All in for Reconciliation: Intergenerational learning for intergenerational change Stephanie Woerde	**OSHC WORKFORCE** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Professionalising the OSHC workforce: The OSHC Educator Microcredential—development and impact** Professor Jennifer Cartmel **The role of the educational leader in outside school hours care** Belinda Wright **What is the role of an OOSH educator in NSW?** Pam Connell
2.15 pm	2.25 pm	**ROOM CHANGE**											
2.25 pm	3.10 pm	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Consultation as core curriculum practice: Children as active partners Rod Soper	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Adapting embedded learning supports for inclusive practice in Australian early childhood settings Stephen Carberry	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Professional bravery in early science: Sensory-STEAM pedagogies for inclusive practice Dr Elise Waghorn	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Anarchism in early childhood: Why children need work, not just play Dr Basia Vucic	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Through children's eyes: Exploring human diversity through picture books Sarah Louise Nelson & Lisa Waters	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** STEM in early years education: Championing children here and now Caterina Di Carlantonio & Lindsey Allen	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Designing regulated systems: What early learning can learn from Indigenous relational frameworks Jaeden Williams-Briggs	**PLAY** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Play in adversity contexts: A cultural-historical perspective on war, poverty and loss** Dr Majida Mehana **From play spaces to public places: Early childhood settings shape social cohesion** Dr Jacinta Francis **Designing foundations: How space, time and interactions support infant and toddler learning** Dr Michele Peden	**NUTRITION AND POLICY** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Keeping children safe to learn: Food safety and allergy management in ECEC** Lachlan Clark **Feeding inequality: Remoteness doubles food costs in Western Australian early childhood education** Dr Ros Sambell **Location matters: Food provision inequities from metropolitan to very remote long day care** Connie Ihlein	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Professional bravery: Holding purpose and risk in In-home care Nicole Morgan & Sianan Tierney	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** yagunda baranggu – today for tomorrow; happy, healthy, deadly gudjagang on Darkinung ngura Mandy Shaw, Leisa Sturt & Katie Dalton	**OSHC** The uncertainty of supporting gender equity in OSHC curriculum and programming Dr Bruce Hurst
3.10 pm	3.55 pm	**AFTERNOON TEA**											
3.55 pm	5.05 pm	**Ethics in Action: A conversation on the choices that shape our practice** Catharine Hydon, Dr Simon Longstaff AO, Dr Anne Kennedy AM & Leanne Mits OAM											
5.05 pm	5.15 pm	**Day One: Closing remarks**											

Day Two—Friday 2 October 2026

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START	END	PLENARY 2
8.30 am	8.35 am	Welcome back
8.35 am	8.40 am	Address by the Hon Dr Jess Walsh, Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth
8.40 am	9.30 am	**Australian Keynote Address—Professor Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett** Inclusion as a radical act: Rethinking children's behaviour and our role in the system
9.30 am	9.40 am	**ROOM CHANGE**

START	END	PLENARY 2	MEETING ROOM 203 & 204	MEETING ROOM 210 & 211	MEETING ROOM 212 & 213	MEETING ROOM 219	MEETING ROOM 220	MEETING ROOM 110	MEETING ROOM 109	MEETING ROOM 106	MEETING ROOM 105	MEETING ROOM 207	MEETING ROOM 208
9.40 am	10.25 am	**Australian Keynote Workshop** Children as active stakeholders: Reframing behaviour, inclusion and operational decision making in early childhood education	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES Preventing gender-based violence: Exploring a national approach with early childhood education and care	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Protecting children and interoception: Teaching children to recognise their body's signals	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY-HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Champion model of distributed leadership: Strengthening capability and transformative practice in ECEC	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Active hope in complex times: Reframing narratives of risk, ethics and mattering	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Making brave choices about technology and movement in early childhood	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Art as language of competence: Championing citizenship for children aged birth to three	MATHS **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Confidence in supporting mathematics learning in early childhood education and care** Dr Katherine Canobi & Professor Jane Page **Attunement as a pedagogical strategy for building educator confidence when teaching mathematics** Dr Rachel Pollitt & Professor Jane Page **Exploring challenges and strategies in early mathematics: Insights from rural Chinese kindergartens** Simeng Wang	BUSH KINDER **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Early childhood educators and 'risk willingness': How perspectives and practice support risky play** Rose Major **Beyond bush kinder: The othering of infants and toddlers** Darcy Murphy **When was the last time you walked through a cave?** Kate O'Meara & Angela Lina	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES Children's empowerment and voices in KeySteps@JC: Design and practice with effective measures	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES The after-school juggle and its impact on children and families	OSHC Dancing with risk in OSHC EARLY CAREER FOCUS
		Professor Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett in conversation with Amy Shine	Samantha McGuffie & Dr Samantha Webster	Christina Keeble	Farah Junaid	Fiona Zinn & Kate Mount	Trent Davis	Dr Gai Lindsay			Dr Anna Hui	Melinda Crole & Sarah Jane Cody	Angus Gorrie
10.25 am	11.10 am	**MORNING TEA**											
11.10 am	11.55 am	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Continuity: From home visits to school visits	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Building the foundations for universal provision – turning deserts green	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Using learning progressions to understand, support and celebrate growth and diversity	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Learning with First Nations Elders and stories: Creating a culturally responsive environment	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Bringing maths to life: Building educators' capacity and overcoming barriers of practice	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES Responsible, responsive and cohesive community management through adopting a community development approach	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Where learning is felt: Regulation, relationship and presence	MUSIC **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Experiences of interconnection through music** Dr Lynn Lee-Pang **From old songs to new thinking: Music-powered STEAM for today's children** Dr Basia Vucic **Making music part of every day** Samantha Truscott	FOUNDATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Not too young for democracy: Infant and toddler pedagogy in practice** Karen Hope **Foundational teaching that matters most: Relationships and environments for birth to three-year-olds** Dr Michele Peden **Seen, heard and included: Championing birth-to-three learners in multi-age settings** Ashton Posch	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW The power of early childhood hubs: Family perspectives	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES Aboriginal parents' experiences of the transition to school	OSHC Staff and children's voices in OSHC in Sweden and Australia
		Toni Christie & Bridget McBride	Sam Page, Nathan Smyth, Jo Martin, Kate Torii & Rosie Bridge	Greta Rollo & Dr Catriona Elek	Karen Anderson, Ann Slater & Professor Carolyn Briggs	Dr Joanne Grimmond	Ian Alchin	Dr Amanda McCabe & Kelly Hanson			Tess Woods & Grace Hong	Emma Charlton & Jodie Clarke	Professor Jennifer Cartmel & Senior Associate Professor Helene Elvstrand
11.55 am	12.05 pm	**ROOM CHANGE**											

Day Two—Friday 2 October 2026 cont'd

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12.05 pm	12.50 pm	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** More than words: Actioning the EYLF V2.0 principles for equity and inclusion Professor Lennie Barblett AM	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** National Best Practice Framework for ECI: Closing the loop through sector engagement Dr Kerry Bull	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Championing children's learning: Transforming practice for high-quality ECEC Meg Parnell & Associate Professor Leanne Gibbs	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Child and Family Centre: Australia's model of excellence Nioka Thorpe-Williams & Lisa Thorpe	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** When teachers feel capable: Professional Learning, self-efficacy, and early numeracy growth Dimity Franks & Dr Trish Collins	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Children's rights in compliance-heavy times: Two governance pathways, one shared purpose Dr Karina Davis	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** More than mealtimes: The best practice guide for food environments in ECEC Dr Ros Sambell & Katie Dix	**MUSIC THERAPY** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Sing&Grow: Using music to champion children's rights to learning and connection** Kristy Biber & Louise Docherty **Using music to build educator courage, confidence and capacity in early childhood** Pip Reid **g4gd®: Movement and music as relationship-centred pedagogy supporting early childhood development** Zoe Nelson	**CHAMPIONING INFANTS AND TODDLERS** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Reimagining birth-to-three pedagogy through relational practice** Dr Katherine Bussey & Saba Fatima **Infants have mental health, too** Moniek de Kievith **Development of the tiny moments supported playgroup - birth to 18 months** Amy Deverell & Samantha Rivers	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Advancing equity, early intervention and inclusion of all children through purposeful collaboration Jean Villacorta & Lana Quinn	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** The impact of long-term book-gifting on home learning environments and reading engagement Dr Claire Galea	**MENTAL HEALTH IN OSHC** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **OSHC educators' capability to recognise and support child mental health** Dr Sarah Murray **Digitising wellbeing: Preliminary findings from the CP3 Digital Platform for OSHC** Annette Cooper
12.50 pm	1.50 pm	**LUNCH**											
1.50 pm	1.55 pm	Welcome back											
1.55 pm	2.55 pm	**AI for the Early Years** Professor Suzy Edwards, Professor Michael Henderson, Professor Jane Page & Kelly Humphrey											
2.55 pm	3.05 pm	**ROOM CHANGE**											
3.05 pm	3.50 pm	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** AI literacies and AI pedagogies in practice Dr Jane Caughey, Yifei Wang, Dr Rebecca Lewis & Anna Lettia	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Less power, equal value: An approach to involving children in meaningful decisions Rachel Flottman	**TREATY AND TRUTH-TELLING IN THE EARLY YEARS** Boori Milumba: An intensive, culturally strong program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children Miranda Edwards, Tara Leslie, Charlie Ashby & Dr Anne Kennedy AM	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** When educators need the Circle of Security too! Melissa Dann & Rebecca Waingold	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Peace education in early childhood Andrea Del Rio & Samantha Gould	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Transforming early learning environments through contextual safeguarding Sara Evans, Esmee Smith & Alexandra Bloetz	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Leading with intention: Translating research into practice Dr Amie Fabry & Kellie Grose	**MULTILINGUALISM** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Supporting social cohesion through multilingual ecologies in early childhood settings** Emma McGrath & Bassima Al Hadi **Speaking up for every language: Professional bravery in multilingual early childhood practice** Asruwati Aspani-Clements **How play empowers children as Mandarin second language learners in Australian contexts** Dr Ranran Liu	**INTEGRATED SERVICES** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Hubs of the future: Education and health as ONE in ECEC** Michaeli Hillam & Renee Hanlon **Solution-focused approaches to inclusion using social and human rights models of disability** Belinda Monkman & Donna McKern	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Beyond attraction and retention: Supporting to sustain migrant early childhood teachers Amin Zhu	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Supporting wellbeing conversations through story: Using The Nest Framework and picture books Megan Daley, Kirrin Sampson & Edwina Buckle	**OSHC** From behaviour management to belonging: Neuro-affirming inclusive practice in OSHC Gee van der Watt
3.50 pm	4.35 pm	**AFTERNOON TEA**											

Day Two—Friday 2 October 2026 cont'd

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4.35 pm	5.20 pm	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Preserving core values and promoting democratic participation in early years education Dr Angie Zerella & Dr Anne Kennedy AM	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Professional bravery in child safeguarding: Purpose, risk and responsibility in early childhood Kate McGill	**PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK** Holding Koort and Katitjin: Professional bravery, purpose and risk in Aboriginal-led practice Jodie Clarke	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Developing allyship in early childhood: Practice-based approach for safety and systems change Jenae Tien Jenkins & Laura Stone	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Beyond teaching social skills: Building early childhood communities where all children belong Raelene Dundon	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Children's rights are our responsibility Philippa Almack-Kelly & Rebecca Po	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Strengthening FDC to support children's belonging and access through capability and innovation Michael Farrell & Lyndall Cotterill	**RISKY PLAY** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Acknowledging the complexity of risky play in the early years** Dr Hanif Jaberipour **Risky play and family partnerships** Trish Osgood	**DEMOCRACY** **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Children are citizens now: Democracy, voice and belonging in multi-age spaces** Carly Martin & Rebecca Holland **Whose voices shape policy? Reimagining early learning governance through participatory consultation** Annette Cooper **Democracy begins at birth: Reimagining mealtimes as sites of agency and belonging** Christa Fuda & Michelle Merlino	**CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW** Navigating the PALM scheme: Opportunities and insights for early childhood services Rachael Sheppard & Charlotte Corbyn	**SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES** Building belonging and connection: Facilitated peer-groups for families of children with disability Jennifer Boadle, Michelle Harrison, Madison Robinson & Amber Pleydell	**OSHC** From managing behaviour to solving problems: The 'Positive Behaviour Guidance Coaching Program' Kaela Power
6.30 pm	11.00 pm	**HESTA Dinner**											

Day Three—Saturday 3 October 2026

START	END	PLENARY 2
8.30 am	8.35 am	Welcome back
8.35 am	9.25 am	**International Keynote Address—Dr Claire Warden** Slow pedagogy and ancient wisdom: Reclaiming childhood in a world that never stops
9.25 am	9.35 am	**Award Presentations** ECA Doctoral Thesis Award, Barbara Creaser Awards
9.35 am	10.05 am	**Barbara Creaser Memorial Lecture**
10.05 am	10.50 am	MORNING TEA

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10.50 am	11.35 am	**In conversation with Dr Claire Warden** Dr Claire Warden, Sam Page & Briony Brooks	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Thinking with and paying attention: Ecological pedagogical courage Kerrie O'Neill & Lynda Salvo	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Risky by design: The Infants' Home Outdoor Classroom Project Luke Touhill & Elizabeth Robinson	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Young children as co-researchers: Digital tools and meaning making in early childhood Jo Dean	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES Listening in circles: Freirean culture circles for children's voice and social justice Dr Cristiene Carvalho	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Responsive curriculums calls for activating violence prevention in the early years Nicole Talarico	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Emotional regulation for educators: Neuroscience, practice and professional bravery Daisy Ramsden	HALT ACCREDITATION **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **From reflection to impact: Professional growth through HALT accreditation** Merise Bickley & Dr Debra Williams **Critical reflection and the APST** Dr Debra Williams	TEACHER'S PEDAGOGY **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Teacher agency in early childhood education: Meanings, enactments and influencing conditions** Shuo Liu **Teaching on the edge: Professional bravery and the fear of being wrong** Krystle Peace **Holding risk with care, bravery and purpose in ECEC pedagogy and practice** Nery Juarez Chavez	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK YARNS for Jajumms: A Community of Practice growing First Nations cultural connection Dr Kerry Smith & Dr Sara Branch	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK The Koorana Integrative Practice Model: Embedding inclusive practice across early childhood settings Morgan Fitzpatrick & Elisabeth O'Carroll	OSHC Holding space and 'documenting' what really matters Kylie Keane
11.35 am	11.45 am	ROOM CHANGE											
11.45 am	12.30 pm	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Play School at 60: Championing children here and now in children's media Laura Stone, Associate Professor Kate Highfield & Bryson Hall	**DOCTORAL THESIS AWARD PRESENTATION**	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Rethinking physical development, risk and agency in infant spaces Nellie Hodda	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Brave new world: Teacher-researchers' reflections on research with children using conversational AI Professor Caroline Cohrssen	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW From lullabies to learning: Making meaningful music to shape early childhood futures Anne Belcher	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW Children, drama and planetary wellbeing: Connecting children to nature through drama education Katherine Zachest	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Reconceptualising risky play: An everyday priority for every educator Vittoria Barbara & Eleanor Forndran	LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Building leadership capacity: Insights from the Victorian Educational Leadership Program (VELP)** Professor Megan Gibson, Dr Marie White, Dr Jessamine Giese & Kim Crisp **Illuminate your leadership: OSHC Leadership and Management Program (LAMP)** Kylie Brannelly **Stepping into practice uplift: Professional risk and leadership** Angela Chng	EMBEDDING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PRACTICES **FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Country, culture and community: A pedagogy of practice at Mogo Aboriginal Preschool** Jessica Staines, Janine Hutton & Keren Huggett **Learning, listening, leading: Bespoke acknowledgements in action** Nikki Ross **Supporting non-Aboriginal educators to engage respectfully and responsibly** Kanya Zhen Yang	TREATY AND TRUTH-TELLING IN THE EARLY YEARS Measuring what matters: Culturally responsive evaluation of a statewide ECEC strategy Dr Rowan Savage, Phillip Belling & Jessica de Jesus	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK Responding to sector need: Quality, professionalism and risk in vocational innovation Marisa Unerkov	OSHC Not just practice: Building evidence through action research in OSHC Mandy Richardson
12.30 pm	1.30 pm	LUNCH											

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NB: Program subject to change without notice Presentations featuring this symbol will be Livestreamed.

START	END	PLENARY 2	MEETING ROOM 203 & 204	MEETING ROOM 210 & 211	MEETING ROOM 212 & 213	MEETING ROOM 219	MEETING ROOM 220	MEETING ROOM 110	MEETING ROOM 109	MEETING ROOM 106	MEETING ROOM 105	MEETING ROOM 207	MEETING ROOM 208
1.30 pm	2.15 pm	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY	CHAMPIONING CHILDREN HERE AND NOW	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK	BARBARA CREASER AWARDS PANEL	REGULATION AND RELATIONSHIPS	MOVING FROM UNCERTAINTY TO CERTAINTY	PROFESSIONAL BRAVERY—HOLDING PURPOSE AND RISK	SUPPORTING SOCIAL COHESION IN DIVIDED TIMES	OSHC
		Expanding the conversation about risk-taking and courage in ECEC	Reimagining documentation through a child safe lens for stronger programming and planning	Chronotopic pedagogies: Championing children's learning and presence from birth, here and now	Relational Legacies: Stories of mentorship and collegiality	The art of prefiguring: An act of pedagogical bravery	The hidden story of policy: From past lessons to future brilliance		**FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Press pause: Championing children through presence, regulation and intentional practice** Victoria Edmond **Co-regulation versus self-regulation: My future starts now, and you are my pedagogy** Seona Murphy **Just breathe: The magic of co-regulation** Kylie Thomas	**FLASH PRESENTATIONS** **Travelling the long winding road: Stories of First Nations co-research and commitment** Kristen Myers-Tapim & Natalie Jones **First Nations knowledges and perspectives: A qualitative case study** Paige Smith	The extension effect of external mentoring: Professional bravery for sector development	Belonging across Te Whariki: An exploration of teacher belonging in New Zealand	The here and now of physical activity and screen time in OSHC
		Dr Mandy Cooke	Renae Karayannis & Rebecca Waingold	Eli Rahimi	Koren Naylor	Catharine Hydon & Kerrie O'Neill	Preety Sehgal & Nery Juarez Chavez				Dr Sue Plowright, & Jade Dunne	Joanne Alix Ward	Bethany Robins
2.15 pm	2.25 pm	ROOM CHANGE											
2.25 pm	3.15 pm	**Australian Keynote Address** Thomas Mayo											
3.15 pm	3.35 pm	**Closing remarks by ECA National President and launch of 2027 Conference**											
3.35 pm	4.35 pm	**Farewell Function**											