

WEBINAR

THE FIRST 2000 DAYS: WHAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

WITH PLAYGROUP NSW PANEL
ALLANA MURRAY, LAUREN RALPH,
SARINA MAHONY & JESS PASCIOCCA



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Countries we are all meeting on today and recognise their continuing connection to the land and waters.

We pay our respects to all First Nations people present today.

INTRODUCING OUR PANEL

Allana Murray, Program Lead (Peer Support)

With a background spanning teaching, service leadership and inclusion programs, Allana is committed to creating safe, supportive early learning environments. Allana is the Peer Support Program Lead at Playgroup NSW, overseeing the MyTime program and supporting families to feel connected, informed and empowered.



Lauren Ralph, Program Lead (Supported Playgroups)

With a background in Speech Pathology, Primary Education and Inclusive Education, Lauren has spent her career supporting children and families to achieve their goals. She brings deep experience from community services, NDIS partners and schools, and is committed to strengthening the skills of families and the wider team around each child.



Sarina Mahony, Specialist Project Officer

Sarina is a Speech Pathologist with extensive experience in the disability sector, supporting children and families with language, speech, eating challenges, and communication technologies. At Playgroup NSW, Sarina leads the Intergenerational playgroup programs, fostering connections whilst supporting early development through play and engagement.



Jess Pasciolla, Program Lead (Community Playgroups)

Jess Pasciolla is an Early Childhood Professional who has worked in the industry for the past 14 years and specializes in service design and delivery. From in centre practice, to community based early education initiatives, Jess is passionate about giving all children the best possible start on their educational journey



PLAY BASED LEARNING



PLAY:

- allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- offers opportunities for multimodal play (linguistic (written), visual, spatial, tactile, gestural, audio and oral)
- enhances thinking skills and lifelong learning dispositions such as curiosity, persistence and creativity
- enables children to make connections between prior experiences and new learning and to transfer learning from one experience to another
- assists children to develop and build relationships and friendships
- develops knowledge acquisition and concepts in authentic contexts
- builds a sense of identity
- strengthens self-regulation, and physical and mental wellbeing.



WHAT INFLUENCES PLAY?

THE ENVIRONMENT

What materials are available?
How does the environment feel?
How accessible is the environment?
Do the children have agency?
Is there obvious collaboration?
What learning is available?

THE EDUCATORS

Are they available?
Is there role modelling?
Can they scaffold learning?
Are they approachable?

THE FAMILIES

How are families invited into play?
How are their ideas valued?
Can they make decisions about the environment?
Are they comfortable approaching educators, and engaging in the rhythm of the session?



DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

AGE	LEARNING	PLAY IDEAS
0-3 months	Voices Safe people Feeding Sleeping	Singing songs Massage Talking about routines Short floor play
3-6 months	Movement Bodies	Tummy time Floor play Cause and effect
6-12 months	Sitting, crawling, walking Babbling Asking for engagement	Push and pull Sensory (edible) Noises
1-2 years	Walking Experimenting Feelings	Safe place to play standing Drawing, painting Stories Role play
2-3 years	Separate person Boundaries "No"!	Toileting Building Talking Safety Role modelling
3-5 years	Pre literacy ideas Pre numeracy ideas Friendships Language and communication	Role play with peers Writing and drawing Counting through play

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

RAISING CHILDREN NETWORK

[Raising Children Network](#)

MY TIME RESOURCES

[MyTime - Supporting parents and carers of children with disability](#)

PLAYGROUP NSW

[Play Activities Archive | Playgroup NSW](#)



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

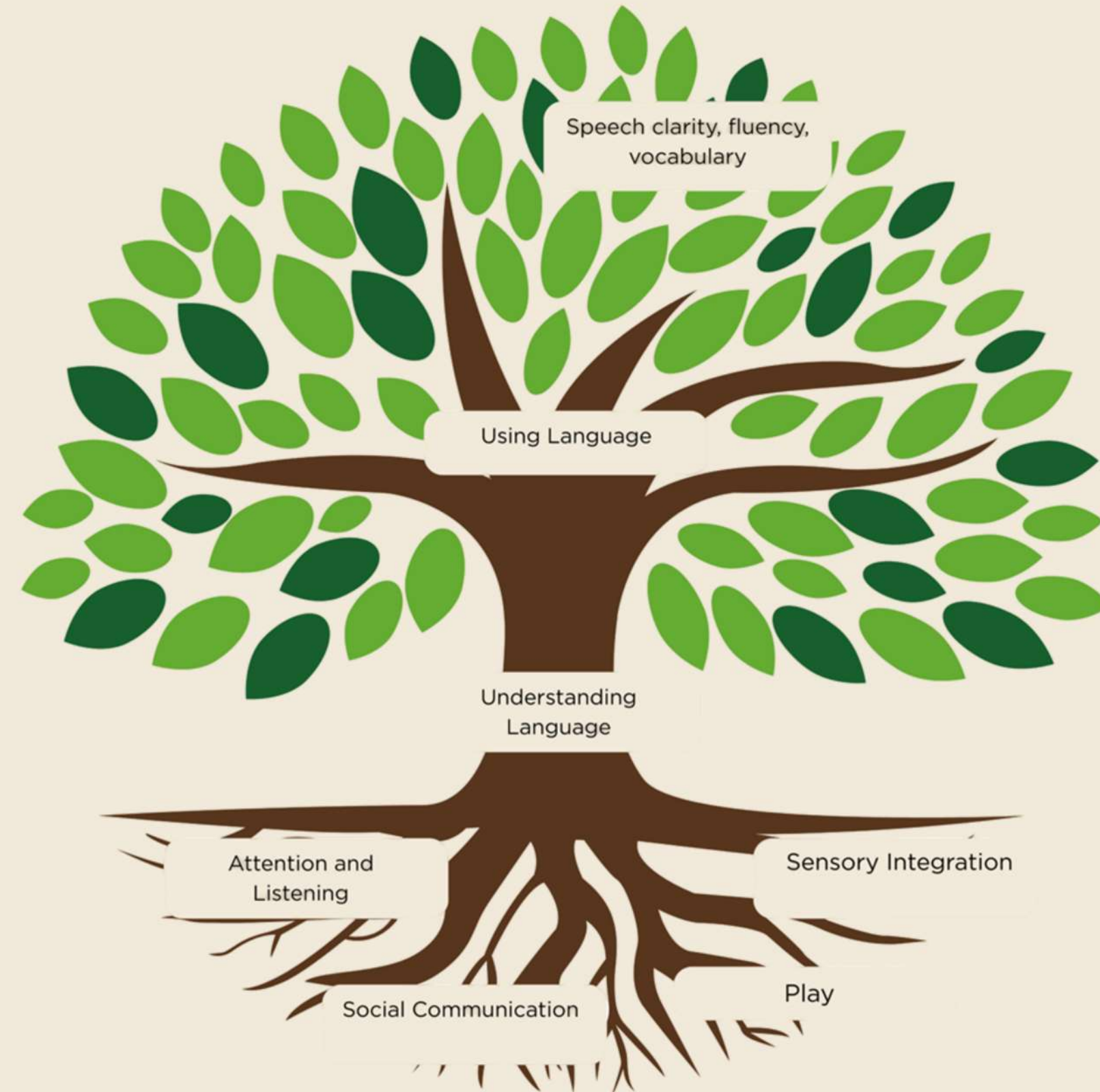


WHAT IS COMMUNICATION

- attending
- listening
- understanding
- expressing



COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT



WHAT DOES EXPRESSION LOOK LIKE

- Eye contact
- Sharing a toy or an interaction (taking turns)
- Gesturing (pointing, reaching, leading)
- Facial expressions
- Body language and movements
- Sounds, babbling and vocalisations
- Signs, pictures, Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC).



STRATEGIES

- Talk
- Use a variety of language
- Create opportunity
- Use sign and gestures
- Follow your child's lead
- Comment rather than question
- Repetition
- Add one more word
- Watch, wait, and listen



GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

- PLAY!
- Interests
- Routines
- Songs
- Books



RESOURCES

- Raising Children's Network
- Speech Pathology Australia
- Your GP/Child Health Nurse



KEY WORD SIGN



WHAT IS KEY WORD SIGN?

- A simplified form of manual signing
- Designed for people who have communication difficulties
- The signs used are the same signs as the Deaf community
 - However, speech is used with signs
 - Only the key words in a message are signed
 - Deaf community in Australia uses Auslan



BENEFITS OF KWS

Provides visual information to accompany speech

Signs last longer than speech

Promotes & maintains attention & eye contact

Signs often look like what they mean

Promotes good language models



INTERACTIVE VOCABULARY

eat/food

sorry

more

drink

toilet

bubbles

finished

sit

help

like

happy

play

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

[WHAT IS KEY WORD SIGN? | KEY WORD SIGN AUSTRALIA](#)

[Shop | Key Word Sign Australia](#)

[Archives: Resources | Key Word Sign Australia](#)

KWS FOOTY BOOK (ELECTRONIC)

[SCOPE AUSTRALIA KEY WORD SIGN](#)

[SIGNPLANET WWW.SIGNPLANET.NET](http://WWW.SIGNPLANET.NET)

AUSLAN DICTIONARY APP



CONSIDERING CHILDCARE



OVERVIEW OF CHILDCARE OPTIONS

PRESCHOOL

- For ages 3-5 years
- Shorter hours, typically 9-3
- Community based or run by Department of Education

FAMILY DAY CARE

- Care in educators' home
- Small groups (usually 4 children)
 - Quieter environment
- Flexible hours and pay-for-use

LONG DAY CARE

- Suitable for working families
- Longer hours, typically 7-6
 - For ages 0-5
- Run by council, private or community providers

OCCASIONAL CARE

- For irregular or unpredictable schedules
 - Useful for one-off days
- Can be limited availability



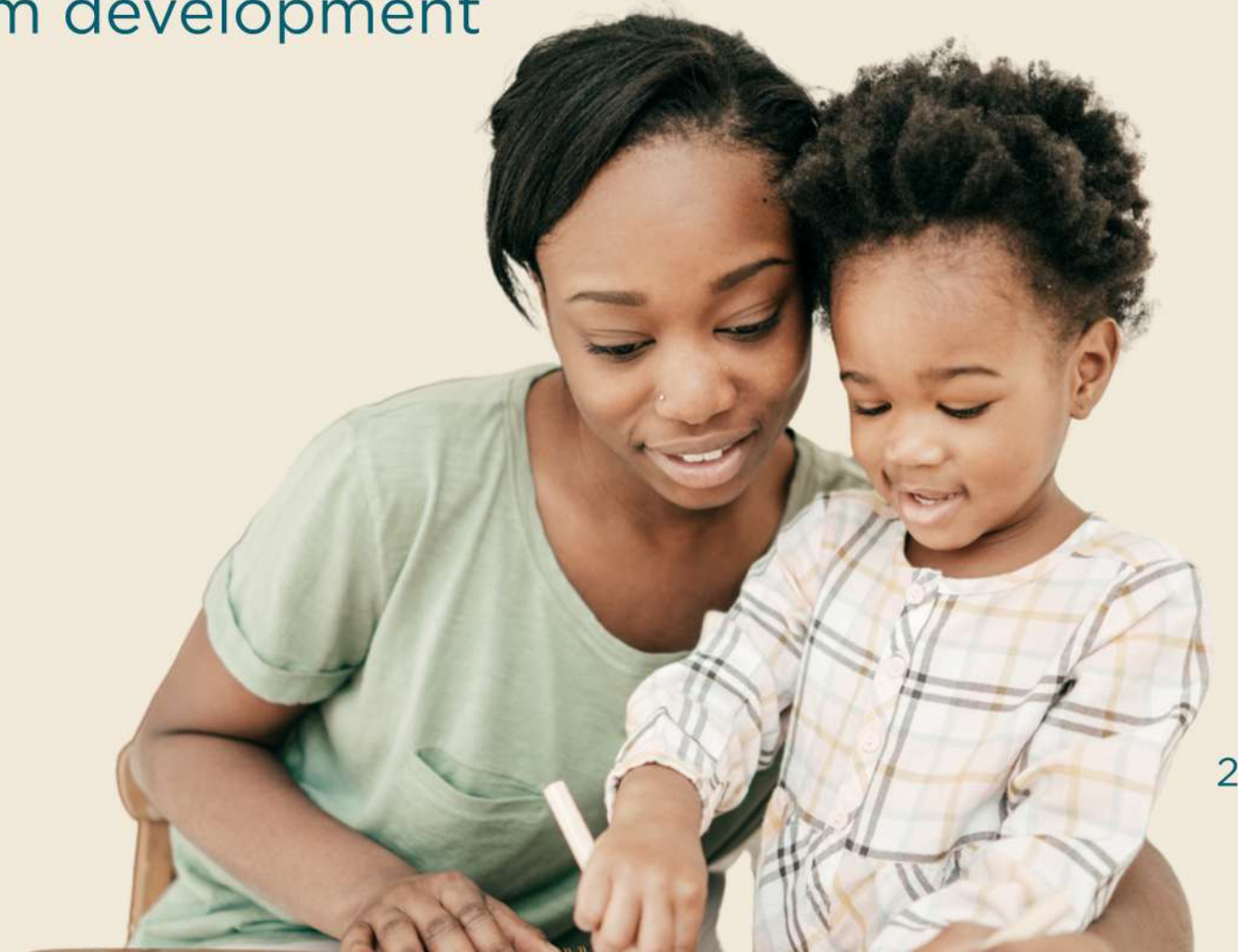
WHY IT MATTERS

Childcare shapes social, emotional and cognitive development

Early education experiences influence confidence, curiosity and relationships

Quality care provides more than supervision

Choosing carefully supports long term development



QUESTIONS TO ASK

ABOUT THE CENTRE	ABOUT THE ROUTINES AND PROCEDURES
<p>Licensing and regulation compliance</p> <p>Opening hours and costs</p> <p>What's included (food, nappies, extras)</p> <p>Staff qualifications and experience</p> <p>Educator-to-child ratios</p> <p>Communication with families</p> <p>Curriculum and activities offered</p> <p>Outdoor play and sun safety</p> <p>Toileting and toilet-training support</p>	<p>How your child's routines are accommodated</p> <p>Safe sleep policy and practices</p> <p>Illness and injury procedures</p> <p>Food provided and mealtime support</p> <p>Behaviour guidance and discipline approach</p>

WHAT TO OBSERVE DURING A VISIT



Safety and room setup

Variety of activities and learning spaces

Outdoor environment and sensory play

Children's interactions

Educator engagement in play

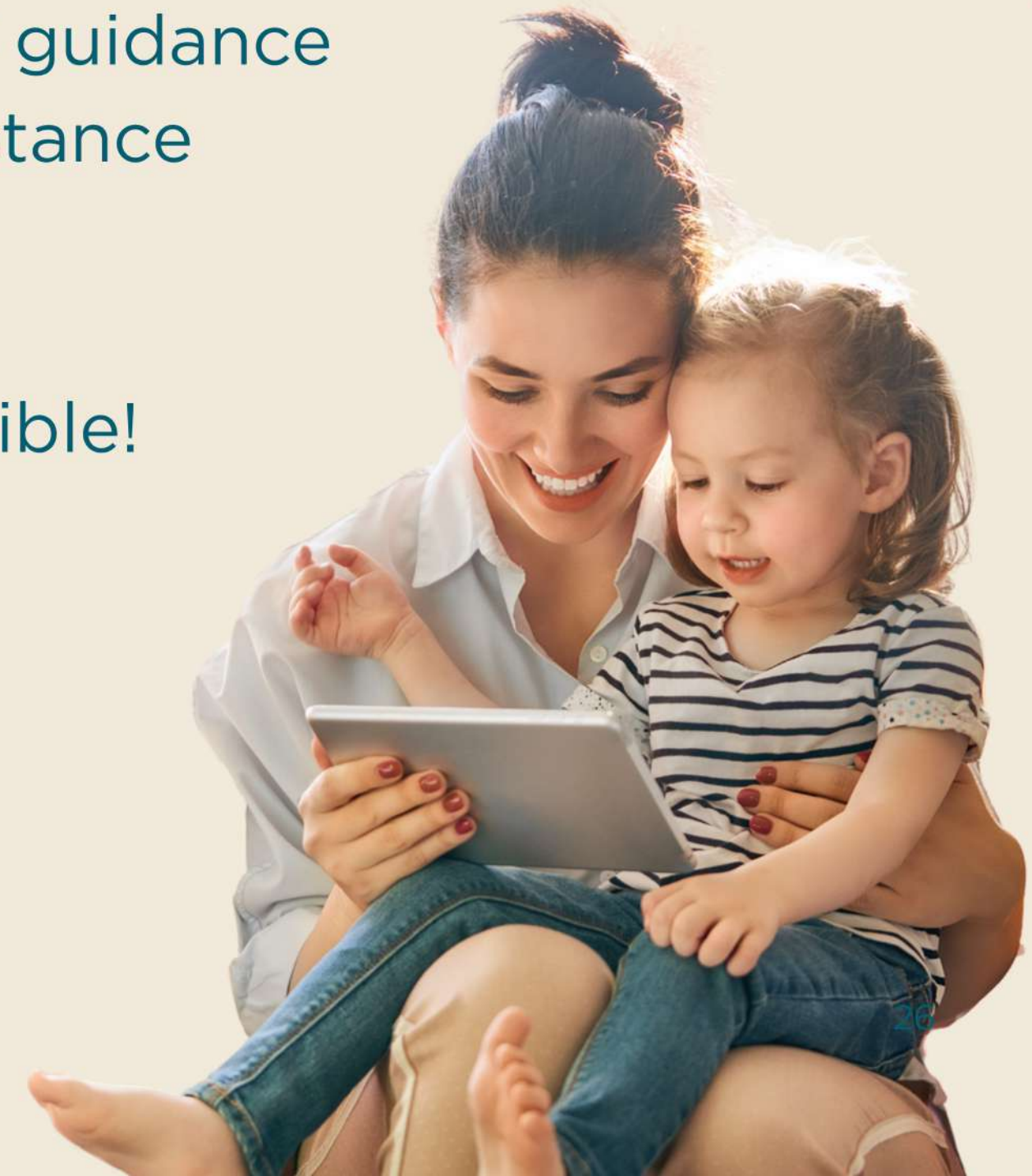
How staff interact with your child

Ask your child what they think (if old enough)

RESOURCES & SUPPORT

Starting Blocks – service finder & quality ratings
NSW Education – preschool and ECEC guidance
Child Care Subsidy – financial assistance

NOTE: It's important to join
multiple waitlists as early as possible!



THANK YOU



Become a member



Complete our survey

WEB: www.playgroupnsw.org.au

FACEBOOK: [/PlaygroupNSW](https://www.facebook.com/PlaygroupNSW)

INSTAGRAM: [@PlaygroupNSW](https://www.instagram.com/PlaygroupNSW)

LINKEDIN: [Playgroup NSW](https://www.linkedin.com/company/playgroup-nsw)

