

**BRIGHT STARS FAMILY DAY CARE
OFFICER'S REPORT
JUNE 2011**

REGISTER FOR ACCREDITATION

As a result of the City of Geraldton-Greenough Amalgamating with the Shire of Mullewa the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has advised that Bright Stars will be considered as a new service and will be required to register for Accreditation.

This means that the services current Accreditation Status will no longer be relevant and that it will have to start its Accreditation process from scratch again. As previously reported a new system will be introduced in January 2012 for all services. In the interim Bright Stars will receive a Spot Visit from the National Childcare Accreditation Council within the next 6 months.

From 2012, as a new service, Bright Stars will be assessed against the new National Quality Standard and allocation of its rating will occur within three to six months. A site visit will occur before the service is approved as well as an additional visit after three months.

Bright Stars Manager, Karen McDowell, is liaising with DEEWR Officers to overturn this requirement to ensure that Bright Stars can maintain its current Accreditation Status.

MULLEWA RURAL FAMILY DAY CARE

A meeting was held with CEO of Mullewa, Tom Hartman, and Bright Stars officers on the 9th June 2011 to discuss the possibility of a Family Day Care service operating in Mullewa from a community building. A suitable venue was found that would meet licensing standards. It was agreed that a community meeting would be held to float the idea.

On the 20th June Bright Stars Manager, Karen McDowell, presented to interested people in the community the child care options available and discussed the suitability of the building identified for the service. Expressions of Interest are currently being sought to find someone to operate the service. It is anticipated, if someone is willing to take over the service, that it would be up and running by October 2011.

MIDWEST EARLY YEARS NETWORK STRATEGIC PLANNING DAY

Many towns and communities across Australia have set up Early Years Networks Groups to promote the importance of early brain development and positive experiences for very young children. These groups focus on supporting families with children aged up to eight years and aim to coordinate and support local activities and projects.

The newly formed Midwest Early Years Network (MEYN) members meet monthly and have representation from state, non government, education, childcare, health and other local agencies, Bright Stars is a member of this group. A Strategic Planning Day was held on the 1st July to allow the group to come up with a focus of what the MEYN wanted to achieve, two Bright Stars officers attended this session. There will be a follow up meeting in coming weeks to further discuss the outcomes from the Planning Day.

MONASH UNIVERSITY VISIT TO BRIGHT STARS

Monash University in Victoria was contracted by DEEWR to undertake a baseline study of educator engagement in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Bright Stars was selected as one of two services in WA to visit. Researcher Dr Avis Ridgway visited the service and an educator on the 17th June to evaluate the uptake of the curriculum framework by the service. The staff were asked to complete a series of surveys and an interview. Dr Ridgway also conducted an inspection of the staff/child care environment as part of this process.

SOLAR PANELS

Solar Panels were installed at the Bright Stars Premises in Tarcoola on the 25th June.

Summary of the specifications of the PV system, and it's output:

- Number of panels – 26
- Power output – 22 kWh per day
- CO2 savings (carbon saving) - 9 Tonnes per year
- Cost saving - approximately 70 % off yearly power bill.

**KAREN MCDOWELL
MANGER**