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## Educator for children of defence force parents named a finalist in national Awards

A New South Wales early childhood carer, working specifically with families involved in the Australian defence force, has been named a finalist for the Outstanding Educator Award in the 2012 HESTA Early Childhood Education & Care Awards.

All Star Early Learners early childhood educator, Naomi Rumph, has been nominated for her work observing behavioural patterns of children with parents serving overseas, evaluating these patterns, and then implementing strategies to minimise the effects on the child.

According to Mrs Rumph, who is married to a Navy officer herself, children with a parent who might be serving overseas for eight months at a time have specific needs. The challenge is identifying those needs and knowing how to best respond.

“What we have found through our observations is that children are often very confused by the constant inconsistency that results from having a parent in the Navy or the Army. This can then lead to emotional and social downfalls,” said Mrs Rumph.

“The importance of communication cannot be understated. That’s why we have implemented a series of programs that facilitate ongoing communication between the child and their parents.

“This also includes community service programs where we help serving parents really spell out what their job entails, in language the child can understand and respond to.”

Mrs Rumph received praise from the judges for effectively applying the Early Years Learning Framework, whilst taking on the added responsibility of addressing the effects of extended parental absences.

The winner of the Outstanding Educator Award — and Advancing Practice Award — will be announced at a gala dinner during Early Childhood Australia’s National Conference, at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre on World Teachers’ Day, Friday 5 October 2012. The Outstanding Educator winner will receive a \$5,000 ME Bank online *EveryDay* Transaction Account and a \$5,000 education grant.

HESTA is one of Australia’s largest super funds, with more than 750,000 members and \$20b in assets. It is chosen by more people working in health and community services than any other fund.

Visit [hestaawards.com.au](http://hestaawards.com.au) to book tickets for the event or learn more about the awards.

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