

21 August 2018

## Australia's best early childhood professionals & services revealed

Australia's top early childhood education professionals and services have been recognised, with finalists announced in the 2018 HESTA Early Childhood Education & Care Awards.

The awards recognise early childhood educators, carers, and services who demonstrate outstanding dedication to practice improvement and development, leading to enhanced learning outcomes for children. There are nine finalists across the award categories Advancing Pedagogy & Practice and Building Inclusion. The winner of the Outstanding Graduate award category will be announced at the awards dinner in September.

HESTA CEO, Debby Blakey said the finalists were selected for their leadership in creating engaging and inclusive learning environments for children.

"These finalists have shown outstanding leadership in implementing and designing programs that support children's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development," Ms Blakey said.

"We're honoured to help shine a spotlight on the vitally important role early childhood educators play in developing and nurturing the next generation of young Australians."

ME – the bank for you – a longstanding Awards sponsor, are generously providing a \$30,000 prize pool, to be divided among the winners of the three award categories.

Winners and finalists will be recognised at an Awards dinner on 21 September in Sydney and will receive \$10,000 in a ME Everyday Transaction account towards further education or team development.

### The 2018 finalists are:

#### **Advancing Pedagogy & Practice**

##### **Karen Hugo and KU Mayfield Preschool Team Mayfield, NSW**

Recognised for their innovative approach to integrating science, technology, engineering, and mathematics into their early childhood learning curriculum.

##### **Lady Gowrie Tasmania Integrated Child and Family Centre South Hobart, TAS**

Recognised for their evidence-based action research project 'Physical Health and Wellbeing: Innovative approaches in an inner-city community' which aims to build educators' capacity to provide opportunities for children to develop their physical health and wellbeing.

##### **Little Beacons Beaconhills College Pakenham, VIC**

Recognised for their 'Early Explorers' program and camp for four to five-year-olds which encourages children to explore the outdoors and learn about Aboriginal culture.

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**Wellbank Children’s Centre  
Concord, NSW**

Recognised for designing a learning curriculum that builds children’s awareness of social justice issues and encourages them to participate in philanthropic activities.

**Building Inclusion**

**Courtney Glazebrook  
Towri MACS  
Bathurst, NSW**

Recognised for lobbying the government to implement inclusive and culturally appropriate childcare policy, that ensures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to quality early childhood education and care.

**KU Chatswood Community Preschool  
Chatswood, NSW**

Recognised for their welcome program that builds inclusion amongst its culturally diverse community, by encouraging parents and children to participate in orientating new families and socialising outside of school.

**Learning Links Preschool  
Peakhurst, NSW**

Recognised for providing education and support services focused on ensuring children with disabilities and learning difficulties aren’t disadvantaged in their learning and educational development.

**Mikarie Child Care Centre  
Kirrawee, NSW**

Recognised for providing early childhood education and care services for children with and without a disability in one setting.

**Sandcastles Early Education Centre  
Evans Head, NSW**

Recognised for connecting Aboriginal families to health care services by arranging for agencies to provide in-house healthcare consultations and appointments.

For further information please visit [hestaawards.com.au](https://hestaawards.com.au).

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