

New Front Project report makes compelling case for system stewardship in ECEC ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

With the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector facing a complex series of challenges, from workforce shortages to maintaining quality and barriers to access, ECEC organisation The Front Project has presented a new report, articulating an opportunity for a sustainable, quality, responsive and equitable early childhood education system in Australia.

The report sets out the case for system stewardship, a concept where a steward or collection of stewards are involved in the constant improvement and advancement of the sector. Essentially, system stewardship is a networked form of governance with a strong focus on collaboration, and the horizontal ties between individuals and agencies.

Such a concept, Front Project CEO Jane Hunt explained, could be an opportunity for Australia's ECEC system to lean on research from other human services professions and develop a number of conditions, systems and processes to meet the needs of children and families, while also meeting the needs of the professionals who work within the sector.

"ECEC plays a profound role in the learning and development of children in Australia, in alleviating inequality, in supporting workforce participation and in driving economic growth," Ms Hunt said.

"It makes significant contributions to workforce participation and social equity and the sector works incredibly hard in often trying conditions."

"But the sector faces systemic challenges as it attempts to meet the growing and changing needs of Australian children and families."

In order to meet these needs, she continued, well-designed funding arrangements that support the sustainability, responsiveness, transparency, quality, efficiency and accountability of the system must be in place, along with several conditions for ECEC as a collective, including:

- A clear and unified purpose;
- Rich and transparent information;
- Strong governance; and,
- Agility and adaptability.

"In turn, an improved model can influence the way funders, service providers and system participants interact with each other for the betterment of services and care," Ms Hunt continued.

The report draws on peer-reviewed literature, international and intersectoral case studies, and more than 40 consultations with experts and leaders across systems thinking, public administration and ECEC.

Access the report here ^[3]. For more information about The Front Project, **see here** ^[4].

Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[5]

Tags: funding ^[6]

governance ^[7]

Source URL (modified on 18 Nov 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/22/11/new-front-project-report-makes-compelling-case-system>

Links

^[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/22/11/new-front-project-report-makes-compelling-case-system> ^[2] https://thesector.com.au/2022/11/15/new-front-project-report-makes-compelling-case-for-system-stewardship-in-ecec/?category=latest_news&utm_campaign=Research%20Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_source=hs_email&utm_content=233908523

^[3] <https://www.thefrontproject.org.au/media/attachments/2022/10/25/ftp-case-for-system-stewardship-full-3-new.pdf> ^[4] <http://www.thefrontproject.org.au/> ^[5]

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