

Pilot Professional Mentoring Program for Early Childhood Teacher



The Pilot Professional Mentoring Program for Early Childhood Teachers offers an opportunity for experienced early childhood teachers to mentor new or professionally isolated teachers, to help develop their practice.

Mentoring in this program is about developing a reciprocal, respectful and responsive relationship between early childhood teachers to support the deepening of professional understandings, and the enhancement of practice. The mentoring relationship benefits both mentors and mentees. Mentees benefit from the wisdom and experience of their mentors. Mentors have opportunities to develop leadership and communication skills, and demonstrate their commitment to their profession.

The program will create an environment that values and facilitates reflective practice enabling the sharing and challenging of knowledge and understandings. It is envisaged that this environment will be one where all participants, both mentors and mentees, will feel empowered, as they discuss their own practice and in the process gain insight into their roles as early childhood professionals.

Participation in the program as either a mentor or mentee may also contribute to the teacher meeting their professional development requirements under industrial and/or service agreements, as well as providing evidence of meeting professional standards as part of the teacher validation process.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The program is delivered through face-to-face workshops (Shared Learning Days), purpose built online forums, informal contact as arranged by Mentor and Mentee, and personal visits by the Mentor to Mentees worksites. The workshops and online forums will enable Mentees to discuss issues with other Mentees in the program, whilst Mentors will also have the opportunity to discuss their role with other Mentors.

The Program will have 2 cohort intakes (August 2011 and February 2012). The Program includes:

- Mentor Training Day
- Shared Learning Day 1
- Shared Learning Day 2
- Celebration Half Day
- On-line Forums

The Mentors in this program will have been through a recruitment and training program ensuring that they are knowledgeable about the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and the National Quality Framework, and have experience working in the field.

Each Mentee will be assigned a Mentor, with Mentors being assigned up to 5 Mentees to support throughout the program. Where possible Mentors will be matched to Mentees in their local areas so there will be awareness of the impact of local issues / or in similar settings. However, Mentors may also be matched with Mentees in different service environments, and should be willing to adapt their approach to the particular challenges of the mentee's setting.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

To be a Mentee...

Early Childhood Teachers who are new to the profession or who have limited opportunities to access collegial support will be the target for this program.

To be a Mentor...

Experienced early childhood teachers with good understandings and engagement with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and the National Quality Framework (NQF), and an interest in ongoing professional and personal development are sought for this program.

MENTEES

Teachers wishing to participate in the program should ensure that they have discussed the opportunity with their employer, including the time commitments and the impact on delivery of the early childhood program. Teachers and employers should consider the long term benefits of effective teacher mentoring programs, including enhanced teacher professional practice and increased retention of teachers in the sector.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

The Program will enable new or isolated Early Childhood Teachers to develop their practice and build skills and confidence to deal with challenges experienced in their setting or context with the support of more experienced colleagues.

HOW DO I APPLY

Further details and an application form for Mentors and Mentees can be obtained by contacting the Project Coordinator:

Ms Jenni Beahan
Project Coordinator
Ph: 9919 7511
Email: ec.mentoring@vu.edu.au

Closing Date for the first cohort: **Friday 19th August, 2011**

