



# HECIS Report | 2021

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## Message from the President

A warm welcome to our client families, committee members, staff and anyone with an interest the HECIS service and early childhood intervention (ECI) in general.

2020 was the year of COVID19, changes and epic challenges for HECIS staff and Management as we learned all about living and working in a pandemic and all that COVID brought us and our client families.

We continue to provide Assessment and Referral Services under our Advisory Program with no reduction in the demand for this program from families and local Education & Care Services.

The Department of Communities and Justice NSW have approved funding to continue with both the Advisory Program (referral and assessment screening) and to provide an open playgroup for the families of the Hawkesbury. We have also received funding to add a Parent Book and Visual Resource Library service to our programs.

As an NDIS provider HECIS underwent a mid-term accreditation assessment against the NSW Disability Standards and we were approved in December 2021 to continue until 22 June 2022.

During the COVID 19 shutdown some of our Staff moved to working at home for part of the year (where appropriate), and HECIS developed several activity packs for families to use and continue supporting their children at home during the shutdown period.

Staff caseload rosters have returned to maximum levels, with new clients being placed on a short waitlist and added to caseloads as places become available.

HECIS Financial Reports indicate that during 2020 we received some job keeper and cash flow boost assistance from the Aust Govt. and received a bequest from our benefactors estate.

Thank you Staff and Management Committee Members who have continued to guide our service through the turbulent previous year, and into the next hopefully post-COVID one of the future. Your contributions have been invaluable and I thank you for your efforts.

We welcome all feedback, comments and suggestions from our client families, members and other HECIS Service users. Please email us on [info@hecis.org.au](mailto:info@hecis.org.au) or post to 12 Stewart Street, South Windsor 2756.

Thanks for reading,

*Emma Charlton*

President HECIS

## HECIS

### Vision and Values

The Staff and Management Committee of Hawkesbury Early Childhood Intervention Service believe in:

- The right of children with special needs to be provided with a range of services that meet their needs and promote optimal growth and development.
- The right of children with special needs to gain access to mainstream services as appropriate for the individual child and for their inclusion into such services to be positively supported and professionally facilitated.
- The right of families who have a child with special needs to access services available within their own community.
- The right of children with special needs to be valued as individuals with strengths and abilities who can contribute to their environment in many positive ways.
- The right of families to be supported in their parenting role and to be encouraged to have input into their child's Individual Education Program and the services provided by HECIS.



HECIS Staff facilitate this by:

- Open communication, sharing of information, ideas and abilities.
- Engaging in respectful and responsive relationships with client/families and other professionals and agencies.
- Respecting families' personal beliefs, culture and heritage.
- Being active in their own learning and critically reflect and adjust their practices accordingly.
- Being committed to achieving best practice, quality outcomes, confidentiality and continuous self-improvement/development.

## HECIS CoOrdinator's Report

In 2020 HECIS has continued to provide advice, assessments, referral, and special education support to children and their families in the Hawkesbury LGA with assistance of:

Dept. of Communities and Justice for:

- Early Childhood & Care grants for the Advisory program (renewed)
- Open playgroup
- Parent book and Visual resource Library

HECIS continues as a registered service provider for the NDIS offering Early Childhood Early Intervention Supports to participants.

The HECIS Speech Therapy Program continues to grow, providing speech therapy to

- NDIS Participants with an NDIS Plan
- Non NDIS-participant families under the Medicare rebate scheme
- Non NDIS-participant families who self-fund speech therapy

HECIS Staff continue to collaborate with other services and professionals in the area, and forging new networks and links outside the Hawkesbury

- Speech and other therapists both private, and at Hawkesbury Area Health
- Hawkesbury Community Interagency with other disability and community support organisations
- ECIA (NSW Chapter)

HECIS Staff have embraced the challenges that a worldwide pandemic (COVID19) brought us, working at a very professional standard at all times, developing new and innovative ways to deliver ECEI supports and as a result HECIS continues to be a strong provider of EI programs and supports to the children and families of the Hawkesbury.

I am very proud of the HECIS Staff and how they have pulled together to ensure our HECIS Service maintained the highest standards of service during the period of COVID19 shutdown and non-contact thereafter, and the teamwork and mentoring that was a part of that period.

HECIS has been very proud to be associated with a very generous anonymous benefactor in the past who has supported the programs we have delivered over the last few years, financially assisting our Speech Therapy Program in particular. Following a very kind bequest he has made from his Estate, we will be able to continue our current programs and look to expanding our services into the future.

*Tracy Brown*

HECIS CoOrdinator

**Reports and outcomes for our individual programs are:**

### **Advisory Program**

The funding for this program is provided by *Communities and Justice* under the Early Childhood Education and Care Grants Program and has been renewed for 2021.

The funding body's aim of this program is to enhance children's early learning and developmental outcomes.

The HECIS Advisory Program provides:

- Special education services including screening of speech and language skills, pre-academic/cognitive skills, fine and gross motor skills, social and behavioural development.
- Suggestions for individualised programs and teaching strategies
- Professional support for Early Child Care staff
- Advice and support for parents/families
- Advice regarding referrals to other professionals and support services

**Many families also receiving support under our other programs.**

### **The HECIS Playgroup Program**

The HECIS Open Playgroup Program providing:

- A Special Education Teacher and is open to any family
- Families may self-refer their child for the HECIS Advisory program for an assessment/screener
- The playgroup also provides support for families and links into the local community.
- The playgroup program supports each child's interests, abilities and family culture and encourages parent/family involvement in the playgroup.

**COVID 19 pandemic impacted on the HECIS Playgroup having to remained closed for much of the year, however has reopened in 2021.**

### **The Family Support Program**

- A Family Support Worker assists Families with their needs including advocacy, linking with local services and choosing supports for their child.

### **The Early Intervention Program – NDIS ECEI Education Supports**

- A Special Education Support teacher works on a 1:1 basis with the child and in small groups, as is appropriate, (at the child care service, school, or home) on a regular basis, depending on the identified needs of the child, family and child care staff, being guided by the participant's plan goals.
- Provides support and assistance to 'build capacity' with families, child care centre staff and others involved in the child's care and learning to increase their knowledge, skills and abilities to support the child in all areas of their life and their environment

### **The Early Intervention Program – Speech Therapy Supports**

- Highly experienced and qualified Special Education Teachers and Support Educators implement individualized education programs and supports to achieve NDIS goals across the home, community and learning environments

## 2020 Membership and Management Committee

Our 2020 membership consisted of 7 members.

Our Management Committee for 2020 consisted of 4 Executive members and 3 general members.

Committee members included Child Care Centre staff.

We sincerely thank the 2020 Management Committee members for their continued support of our service by contributing their time and expertise to our management during this year of change and upheaval. Your involvement has been vital in navigating us through this year of growth and change.

## Looking Forward

### **Finance:**

*Education & Communities (ECEC)* – Funding agreement continues in 2021

*NDIS (Provider income from participants under a plan)* – Outgoing service agreements

### **Programs:**

- Our Advisory programs will continue to be offered
- HECIS Open Playgroup – Mondays 10am to 12pm
- Parent Book & Visual resource Library
- Family Support Program
- NDIS Provider supports (Education and Speech) – for children with an individual NDIS plan that complete a service agreement with HECIS, and is funded from the child's plan.

### **Staffing:**

The HECIS Staff are dedicated and professional, work well as a team, offering great mentoring and support to each other. They seek to build strong relationships with the child & family, child care centre staff and allied health and other professionals working with the child.

HECIS Staff are active in their development and training and share their knowledge and resources with the other staff of HECIS and the early education and care centres, and are one of HECIS' greatest resources.

HECIS is supported by committed leadership through our Committee Executive and Management staff who will be relied upon to guide us through the future.

## Resources and Financial Management

### Treasurers Report

The financial reporting period for HECIS is 31<sup>st</sup> December of each year.

Funding for *Communities & Justice* is acquitted as at 31<sup>st</sup> December each year.

HECIS Financial reports are prepared and audited by ***mtwo accounting partners***, and are presented at the AGM in the following March. The full financial reports for 2020 are available for viewing at the HECIS office.

**The financial reports for 2020 are available for viewing at the HECIS office, by appointment.**