

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION
INTO FAMILY VIOLENCE**

ATTACHMENT CK-2 TO STATEMENT OF CAROL ANN KELLY

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Filed on behalf of: State of Victoria
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This is the attachment marked 'CK-2' produced and shown to **CAROL ANN KELLY** at the time of signing her statement on 30 September 2015.

Before me



**An Australian legal practitioner
within the meaning of the
Legal Profession Uniform Law (Victoria)**

Attachment CK-2

The Education State

Early Childhood Conversation Guide

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Key terms and reference in the guide

The Education State	<p>The Victorian Government recognises that quality education is essential for the State's future. Education unlocks creativity, opportunity and innovation. It is what keeps young people engaged, the economy strong, our culture vibrant and society healthy. Our Government's pledge to make Victoria the Education State is about engendering a lifelong love of learning, so we have the skills and knowledge to chart our own course in a rapidly changing world.</p> <p>The Education State is ultimately about motivating and enabling every Victorian to be the best they can be.</p>
The Education State Early Childhood Consultation Paper	<p>The Education State - Early Childhood Consultation Paper has been prepared to continue the Education State conversation by focusing on the early childhood years.</p> <p>The paper outlines seven areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is Victoria performing? 2. What needs to change? 3. Earlier engagement in learning 4. A boost to educational quality 5. More support for parents 6. More support for vulnerable and disadvantaged children 7. Better connections between services <p>We invite you to read the Education State - Early Childhood Consultation Paper to further understand the importance of early childhood. A copy of the Early Childhood Consultation Paper can be found at educationstate.education.vic.gov.au.</p>
Conversation Host	<p>A conversation host is someone who provides an opportunity for everyone with an interest in early childhood in Victoria to contribute to the Education State.</p> <p>The group should choose which area/s to focus the discussion. These can be questions that are relevant to the group or that they have the most interest in discussing.</p> <p>Records from conversations are to be submitted by 4.00pm on 9 October 2015 to educationstate@edumail.vic.gov.au.</p>

Section 1: Introduction

The Victorian Government invites you to host a group conversation about the Education State - Early Childhood Consultation Paper.

Why early childhood?

Education is not only personally beneficial; it is the foundation of a healthy and prosperous society.

Economic research definitively shows that the most cost-effective way to improve the skills and capabilities that our economy and society are built on is to support young children, particularly those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable.

Early childhood is the best time to transform a person's life. This is the time when a child's potential - their imagination, curiosity and creative spark - is first nurtured. Effort and investment well spent during our children's early years repays itself many times over - in better lives and in fairer, more prosperous societies.

About The Conversation Guide

The Education State – Early Childhood Conversation Guide is designed to assist those who wish to participate in a conversation about the early childhood years.

This Conversation Guide is one of the many opportunities for people to provide their feedback on the Education State – Early Childhood Consultation Paper by encouraging thoughtful, informed dialogue about the future of Victoria's early childhood services.

The Early Childhood Conversation Guide includes a "how to" guide, a workbook for recording the discussion and instructions about how to submit the feedback and ideas collected.

Why should I host a conversation?

Hosting a conversation provides an opportunity for everyone with an interest in early childhood development, health and wellbeing in Victoria to have input into the Education State. It allows for parents, caregivers, professionals, experts and the broader Victorian community to join together and to discuss what they think of the ideas presented in the Early Childhood Consultation Paper and to generate ideas for the Education State. Conversations using the Education State - Early Childhood Conversation Guide will help us reach a wide cross-section of the Victorian early childhood sector ensuring as many people as possible contribute to the conversation about the importance of early childhood to the Education State.

Conversations like these are designed to encourage group discussions in a non-confrontational environment, allowing participants to feel safe and open up to discuss the issues that are important to them.

The group may only be interested in one aspect of the Education State - Early Childhood Consultation Paper and choose to answer only one or a few of the questions in the Education State - Early Childhood Conversation Guide. That's okay, we are seeking all levels of feedback.

Section 2: Instructions

Hosting a conversation

Determine the time period for the conversation – a three-hour maximum is recommended. Two hours may be an optimum time for most participants to maintain concentration.

While conversations can happen in groups of two or twenty, small groups of six to eight usually work best. Larger groups can be divided into smaller conversations to encourage active participation by all.

Conversations should be held at a neutral location so that all participants feel at ease with the process.

Accessibility and special needs must also be considered (e.g. wheelchair access, language, transportation). Seating arrangements are important in a smaller group. To generate strong interaction, place seats in a circle or in a “U” formation.

Design your conversation using the workbook provided. While the Victorian Government is interested to hear any view you may have on how Victoria can become the Education State, to help your conversation we have developed a series of questions based around the following seven areas:

1. How is Victoria performing?
2. What needs to change?
3. Earlier engagement in learning
4. A boost to educational quality
5. More support for parents
6. More support for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
7. Better connections between services

Key steps

1. Plan your conversation. Select a date, time and location for the conversation. The venue should be accessible, have adequate space, seating and parking.
2. Send an invitation to your group including the details of your location, date and time with preferably two weeks’ notice.
3. A few days before the conversation, call or email your invitees to remind them about the event.
4. Each host should take a record of the conversation using the workbook included in this Guide. Make everyone feel welcome and do your best to ensure that everyone participates.
5. Each host should submit comments by email: educationstate@edumail.vic.gov.au. You will also be asked to list the nature of attendees. Comments are due by 4.00pm on 9 October 2015.

Some tips

Before the conversation

- Think about inviting a diverse range of local participants whose collective experience could bring additional insight and perspectives to the conversation.
- Send copies of the Early Childhood Consultation Paper to all your invitees prior to the event. An electronic version is available on the project website www.educationstate.education.vic.gov.au. Hard copies can be requested by contacting the Department of Education and Training Information Referral Service on 1800 809 834 or email educationstate@edumail.vic.gov.au
- Set the room up so that participants are sitting in a circle or semi-circle so that everyone can make eye contact with each other.
- Give everyone a nametag if people do not already know each other. Use first names.
- Provide refreshments (water, tea, coffee) if possible.

The conversation

- Ensure every participant has completed the attendance form.
- Explain to the group that they should discuss questions 1 and 2. Propose that they are welcome to also talk through all the other questions, or just those that interest them.
- Set up rules for the conversation such as:
 - Listen to each other – everyone should have an opportunity to speak. Seek to build on what others say.
 - Respect other opinions and ideas. There are no right or wrong answers.
 - Share your ideas with the whole group, not only your neighbour.
- As a host, aim to limit how much you will talk. Your job is to encourage the participants to discuss the ideas, and record the key points.
- If the group participants do not know each other then begin with an introduction and encourage participation from the start.
- Summarise key points at the end of each question. Repeat your summary back to the participants to ensure it is an agreed representation of their ideas.
- Make sure that you have captured the conversation accurately. Use the workbook provided in this Early Childhood Conversation Guide.

After the conversation

- It is okay to end the discussion without addressing all the questions. A sign of good conversation is that participants want to keep talking. Encourage participants to continue the conversation by participating in the online forums or register their interest in attending an early childhood symposium by visiting the project website at www.educationstate.education.vic.gov.au
- Submit your conversation by 4.00pm on 9 October 2015 to educationstate@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Checklist

Prepare for your conversation:

- Find a suitable space and date to host your conversation.
- Invite your participants and send out invitations.
- Call or email participants a few days before the event to remind them.
- Think about whether you want to offer refreshments to your participants.
- Download copies of the Early Childhood Consultation Paper from www.educationstate.education.vic.gov.au or request copies of the Early Childhood Consultation Paper to be available at your conversation by contacting the Department of Education and Training Information Referral Service on 1800 809 834 or email educationstate@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Design your conversation:

- Have a copy of the Early Childhood Conversation Guide which includes a workbook to help you to record your conversation.
- Have copies of the attendance forms for each participant to complete (available in the supporting document section of this Early Childhood Conversation Guide).

Host your conversation:

- Ensure that your participants complete an attendance form including the information about privacy.
- Ensure you have pens, paper and other tools for recording the conversation.
- Create name tags or labels (if participants do not know one another well).
- Provide a copy of the workbook to each participant to record their thoughts.

After the conversation:

- Provide participants with information about how they can make individual submissions.
- Submit your conversation by 4.00pm on 9 October 2015 via email: educationstate@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Section 3: Conversation Workbook

This workbook will assist you in having an informed conversation about the early childhood years. Design your community conversation using the workbook provided. Your conversation will focus on questions in seven areas:

1. How is Victoria performing?
2. What needs to change?
3. Earlier engagement in learning
4. A boost to educational quality
5. More support for parents
6. More support for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
7. Better connections between services

Instructions

- Agree with your participants on which area/s you wish to focus your discussion.
- Work through the questions relevant to the area/s you have decided to consider.
- Record the responses in the worksheet provided.
- Submit your feedback via email to educationstate@education.vic.gov.au by 4.00 pm on 9 October 2015.

Topics and Questions

1. How is Victoria performing?
 - What are the most important early childhood development outcomes, and why? How should we be measuring success?
 - What are your positive experiences of early childhood services? Have you had any negative or unhelpful experiences?
 - Looking at the Victorian early childhood system as a whole, what are our strengths, weaknesses and gaps?
2. What needs to change?
 - Are the challenges we face addressed by these areas of reform?
 - Which of these reforms do you think are the most important, and why?
 - Are there other areas that we should be focusing on?
3. Earlier engagement in learning
 - What are the priorities for this area of reform, and why?
 - What is your experience of kindergarten programs, as a parent or educator?
 - What do you think children need at different ages to thrive? How does this vary from child to child?
 - How can we better meet the needs of all children to participate in good-quality early learning?
 - What role should government, the community or parents play in investing in learning for children at a young age? Should these roles be different depending on whether the family is disadvantaged or vulnerable?
4. A boost to educational quality
 - What are the priorities in this area of reform, and why?
 - As a parent, what do you look for in determining the quality of an early childhood education and care service?
 - As a parent, which factors did you take into consideration when choosing your early childhood service? For example, location, access, quality, service model, facility, program, staff, time of session (that is, did you feel as though you had a choice?).

- As an early learning professional, what's your experience of the quality of early childhood education and care services? What makes it easier or harder for you to deliver high-quality education?
 - What can Government, service providers and early childhood educators do more of, or do differently, to improve the quality of early childhood education?
5. Support for parents
- What do you think are the priorities for supporting parents, and why?
 - As a parent, what are your experiences of services that support parenting? How easy were they to access? Was there a time when you needed more parenting support than was on offer?
 - As a professional working with parents, what are the highlights and challenges of your role?
 - What can government, services and professionals do differently to better support positive parenting that nurtures children and supports their health, wellbeing and learning and development?
6. Support for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- What do you think are the priorities in this reform area, and why?
 - What is your experience of services designed to help vulnerable or disadvantaged families, as someone who received a service or as a professional providing the service?
 - What can government, the community sector, services, and parents do more of, or differently, to support vulnerable and disadvantaged children to have strong health, wellbeing, learning and development?
7. Better connections between services
- What do you think are the priorities for better connecting, integrating and funding services, and why?
 - What are your experiences of services that have been effective in joining together to improve the outcomes for a child?
 - What can government, services and professionals do differently to better connect and integrate services? What are the key barriers and enablers?
 - Each level of government is involved in funding, delivering or regulating early childhood services. How could they work better together to ensure the delivery and effectiveness of these services?
 - How can government improve connectedness and transitions across all stages of the education service system – early childhood, schools and tertiary education?

Any other comments

- Please record any other feedback, comments or ideas you may have about the Early Childhood Consultation Paper.

Submitting your conversation

- To submit the record of your conversation, please email it through to educationstate@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Section 4: Supporting material

Example talking points for host

Welcome and thank you for attending.

Before I begin, I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting. I pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

Today we're here to continue the conversation about our shared vision for the Education State by focusing on early childhood.

More particularly, we want to hear your thoughts on the Education State – Early Childhood Consultation Paper, which has been prepared about our experiences of early childhood in Victoria, and your ideas for what a truly outstanding early childhood system would look like.

The paper outlines:

- How Victoria is performing?
- What needs to change?
- Earlier engagement in learning
- A boost to educational quality
- More support for parents
- More support for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- Better connections between services

My role today is to facilitate our conversation – to make sure we stay on track, we are respectful and that everyone contributes equally.

Firstly some housekeeping:

- bathrooms, food, start and finish time
- I'll be taking notes and will be summarising our conversation
- unless you specifically request, we will aggregate all conversation topics, and will not attribute comments to individuals
- you will be welcome to make specific submissions or contributions to the importance of early childhood to the Education State at different stages over the coming weeks.

In front of you are:

- today's agenda to guide our discussion
- spare copies of the Education State - Early Childhood Consultation Papers for your reference.

Today / tonight is about you talking and listening and providing your feedback on a number of topics.

Before we get started, let's take a minute to introduce ourselves including:

- your name
- your work
- how long you have lived in the community/worked with early childhood services

Facilitation tips

- Speak slowly, loudly and clearly.
- Keep the discussion positive, fun and engaging as much as possible.
- Try to keep the conversation moving along, yet without feeling rushed.
- If the conversation is not moving, instead of addressing the table as a group, ask the opinions of the individuals.
- If by half way through the allocated time, you have not made much progress in seeking feedback on the engagement question – but feel that the conversation has been useful and productive, do not rush to complete all the questions.
- Ask which key questions the group would like to discuss in the remaining time and prioritise those.
- Consider having a second meeting to continue the discussion – agree the best approach for this.
- Remember you are not here as content expert on “all things early childhood”. Try to avoid being drawn into deep conversations or questions and answers about content, policy or specific issues. Ensure that you capture the question or point accurately, paraphrase it, record it and move on.
- If people start talking over each other or the discussion becomes heated, consider pausing the group discussion on that topic, and instead ask each participant to each write down their individual key comments, questions or their feelings on post it notes. Collect, display, observe common or different views and move on.
- If the discussion goes off track and guests are talking about detailed issues, acknowledge what is being said and try to refocus the conversation around the early childhood services. “...so, how should the Education State - Early Childhood Consultation Paper reflect that issue?”,
- “... OK, with this example, how should early childhood services in the Education State be designed ...?”
- The host should try to document the key points that guests say at the end of each day. You will need to be active in determining the priorities.
- As you prepare to ‘wrap up’ the meeting, you may wish to invite each individual participant to say (or write down) in five words or less:

“On your behalf, if we could give one message to the Premier about “early childhood in the Education State” – what would it be?