



Mountain Community Children's Centre

Supporting Educator Wellbeing After Crisis

Service Snapshot

Location: Mangrove Mountain, NSW Central Coast

Type: Community-Based Long Day Care (66 places)

Community: Rural and farming families; multigenerational households

Unique Context: Only early childhood service in the area

Background

In 2017, Mountain Community Children's Centre faced a devastating electrical fire that destroyed its main building and every resource gathered over 34 years.

Within five weeks, the educators had relocated to a temporary site 20 minutes away, ensuring that care for local families continued. Although staff demonstrated incredible strength, the event revealed the deep emotional impact of crisis and the importance of supporting those who care for others.

“We realised that while our educators were caring for everyone else, we needed to care for them too.”

The Wellbeing Initiative

The initiative was designed for all educators, including the director, recognising that educator wellbeing underpins high-quality education and care.

The centre engaged a **psychologist** to deliver a professional wellbeing session focused on recovery, resilience and team connection.

- **Cost:** Approximately \$2,500 (including psychologist fees and overtime)
- **Duration:** 1.5 hours, held after hours
- **Planning:** Collaboration between the psychologist, director and management committee

When an individual educator later experienced wellbeing challenges linked to a family interaction, a tailored **action plan** was developed with further professional support.



Approach

The initiative draws on **trauma-informed practice**, recognising the emotional effects of stress and crisis. It focuses on safety, trust and empowerment.

Wellbeing is now a **standing agenda item** in meetings, and educators are reminded that psychological support remains available at any time.

The centre's philosophy – valuing educators as central to the wellbeing of children and families – is reflected in every aspect of this approach.

“Educator wellbeing isn’t an extra – it’s essential.”

Impact

Since introducing the initiative, the centre has seen lasting positive outcomes:

- Educators report feeling **happy, confident and supported**
 - **Low staff turnover** and **minimal personal leave**
 - A strong, collaborative team culture
 - New educators seek employment due to the centre's reputation for care and stability
 - Monthly budgeting for **long service leave** reflects the team's longevity and commitment
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Key Message

Mountain Community Children's Centre demonstrates how even small, community-based services can take **meaningful, trauma-informed action** to support educator wellbeing.

By valuing and investing in educators, the centre has built a resilient, connected and thriving team – strengthening outcomes for **staff, children, families and the wider community**.

“When educators feel supported, the whole community thrives.”
