

Event: ECCC 2023 Conference
Date: 27 October 2023 (FRIDAY)

Speaker:

Associate Professor Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett
Academic Director of the Early Years, University of Wollongong, Australia



Biography:

Associate Professor Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett is the Academic Director of the Early Years, University of Wollongong. She has demonstrated leadership and scholarship in translational research with a strong track record in supporting professional development initiatives across the early childhood education sector. She has co-led six large-scale transformational research projects across 3 Australian states, in over 500 early childhood services, with more than 3500 children. She is a member of the national Early Childhood Development council, is a regular contributor to state and national advisory committees and has taken a leading role in the development of curriculum content and practice frameworks. Her current research projects focus on quality early childhood environments and workforce development, integrated early childhood service platforms, approaches to early childhood assessment along with children's self-regulation and wellbeing.

Keynote Address Title:

The Crucial Role of Effective Early Childhood Education in Setting Young Children Up for Success

Abstract:

This keynote presentation focuses on the role quality early childhood education plays in ensuring positive outcomes for all children. A child's experiences and interactions in the first five years of life are critical to their future health, wellbeing and capacity for successful participation in society. While the home environment is crucial to young children's growth and development, early educational experiences are considered increasingly important for broadening life experiences, shaping identities, and ensuring successful life trajectories.

Assoc Prof Cathrine Neilsen-Hewett will take participants on a journey through the first five years of a child's life through which they consider the key levers instrumental in shaping children's learning and development. They will explore the significance of early brain development as well as social-emotional development, executive functioning, and the role of the educator as a "brain architect". Together, they will explore key priorities, principles, and practices essential for optimising outcomes for young children and consider features of a functional and effective early childhood system with reference made to the Early Years Development Framework (EYDF) and the Nurturing Early Learners (NEL) Framework.