ORICL — OBSERVE REFLECT IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LEARNING

Information for Directors

What is the ORICL project?

This project introduces a digital tool, Observe, Reflect, Improve Children's Learning (ORICL) that was co-developed by professionals, policymakers, and providers to support infant and toddler educators to notice, record, and interpret the day-to-day interactions, relationships, and learning experiences of very young children in early childhood settings.

Project Aims and Background

It is widely accepted that the **first two years of life are critical** to positive life trajectories, yet there is still much room for improvement in the infant-toddler education and care space. This project will lay the national groundwork to trigger significant and sustained improvement in pedagogy and practice in for infant-toddler education and care. Building on pioneering pilot work demonstrating the initial acceptability and usefulness of the Observe, Reflect and Improve Children's Learning (ORICL) tool, our multi-disciplinary team will collaborate with 11 ECE Partner Organisations (POs) and 130 services for children aged from birth to 2 years, to test ORICL's capabilities as a low-cost online tool.

The overarching aim of the ORICL tool is to optimise quality of learning experiences, care, and wellbeing for children birth to 2 years in ECE settings.

Who are the investigators?

The Investigators are a highly experienced inter-disciplinary team with a combined total of over 348 years in the EC sector as teachers 'on the floor', academics, and researchers. Together they bring the requisite expertise and professional relationships with providers of LDC and FDC services to undertake the proposed project and build research capacity in the ECE sector. We have a strong record of collaboration, a deep understanding of the practical realities of ECE programs and contexts, and firsthand experience in researching with service providers, policy makers, educators, and families. We are recognised internationally for our specialist research into ECE as a critical context for infant-toddler learning, development, and wellbeing, and for our theoretical and methodological contributions to this field of research. We have collaborated with Data Central, Australian Astronomical Optics–Macquarie University (AAO) to create the ORICL.org website as a vehicle for secure online data collection of ORICL records for over 2,000 children.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?

The potential benefits of this project, to **improve program quality and optimise infant-toddler learning and wellbeing, are wide-reaching, specific and long-term**. The study will show if the vision and purpose expressed by participants in the early co-design stages of ORICL for "a tool specifically for very young children" that "increases educators' perceptions of the *competent learner* from birth" and that "gathers reliable data that reflects learning from birth-two" are realised. The **advanced knowledge of infant-toddler pedagogy and practice** generated by iterative testing and evaluation of ORICL will support evidence-based local and/or system-wide innovations and policies to improve the quality of care and education for children birth to 2 years, a goal that has been highlighted in the recommendations for updating the EYLF.

How will my privacy be protected?

All research data will be stored in line with Macquarie University Digitally Enabled Research and Research Integrity units. All participant names (educators and children) are replaced with pseudonyms and the centre name replaced with a location code for any reports, publications, and/or presentations arising from this research. Data will not be shared with any third party.

For more information go to https://oricl.org