



### *Seasons Greetings to everyone in IFDCO*

Here we are at the start of the holiday season where the climate is very different for us all. Here in Australia we will be experiencing some days that will reach some very high temperatures and many people will be spending their days at the beach or in the pool. In other parts of the world there will be snow and some very cold days with children building snow men and riding around on sleds or skis. Wherever you will be spending the holidays, I hope that you have a happy time with family and loved ones and are able to take time out from your very busy working lives. Children in Australia have a six week vacation from school, so they need to be kept occupied for everyone's benefit.

With the IFDCO Conference coming up so quickly we hope that you are all making plans to attend. It is going to be a conference to remember with great speakers and presenters, a wonderful venue and location and weather that is the envy of the rest of Australia, maybe even the world...If you go to the conference

website at [www.cdesign.com.au](http://www.cdesign.com.au) you will see the progress that we are making and everything else that you would need to know regarding accommodation and costs of attending.

One of the incentives of early registration is if six people register for the full registration together, the seventh registration is free. What this means is that the cost of the seventh registration could be discounted between the previous six, thereby decreasing the cost to those six registrations by quite a lot. The other bonus is that if you are financial member of IFDCO, you will receive a discount at registration even if you don't register for the full conference, so please contact our Treasurer Cathy Castelli to find out how you can become a member prior to the conference. Some of you may be under the impression that you are already a financial member but if you have not paid since the conference in Cork in 2009 then we can tell you that currently you are not a financial member of IFDCO.

The Australian Government has introduced major changes to the way they provide care and education to the nation's youngest citizens. As from 1 January 2012, every type of Child Care service in Australia will be required to provide a Care and Education service that meets the new requirements. There will be a new National Quality Framework, new National Standards, new National Law and new Regulations. The new system allows for a consistent standard of Care and Education for every child in Australia. This has many obvious advantages and some that are not so visible. The ratios of child to adult will be 4:1 which Family Day Care has had in place for many years but Centre based care will now need to adopt similar ratios. There are many other changes that will need to be made but once the system is in place and working, we will all be operating in a similar way for the benefit of children and their families. There have been many Government changes to the Child Care and Education Sector over the years

and we have always managed to work with them, so we see these new changes as being something else that we can embrace.

I am sure that many other countries have also introduced new systems into the Family Child Care area and for the most part this must be a positive improvement to upgrade the professional image of the Educators who provide care and education to young children. Continuing Improvement should be what we all strive towards in the Early Childhood profession. It is so important to provide the best possible care and education to young children and their families and this can only be achieved through continuing to improve your/our services.

I will close this newsletter by once again wishing you the compliments of the holiday season and a year of happy and productive days in 2012.

Best wishes to you all,

*Grace McDonald*

*President*

*International Family Day Care Organisation.*

