

Dear IFDCO Members,

Conference preparations are now finalised and go to www.ifdco.com to see the Registration Form, which includes the Keynote Speakers and the look at the exciting list of seminar presentations.

We have a very welcome addition to the Keynote Programme on Saturday 25th July. Professor Jacqueline Barnes, (Birkbeck, University of London, UK) will present on the major UK Families Children Child Care Study.

Grace McDonald (Australia) has sent an item of interest (see below.)

Geraldine O'Donnell and Siobhan Kennedy, my colleagues in *Childminding Ireland* are working hard and closely with Conference Partners, the professional events management company who is working on the registrations and all the other arrangements to make the conference and the associated tours in Ireland a memorable series of events. I cannot thank them enough – they have busy jobs in *Childminding Ireland* at the same time.

The Conference will also enable the Triennial International General Meeting of IFDCO to take place (Thursday 23rd July, 15.15pm) and I would like you to look at the Constitution of IFDCO (see below) and provide me with feedback – input – suggestions for inclusion which we can consider at the meeting. Also, please consider going forward as a member of the IFDCO International Executive Committee. All the business is done by e-mail between Conferences/Triennial General Meetings. The commitment is more to offer suggestions to the President and the Committee! If you have any items you would like included on the Agenda for the meeting, please let me know as soon as possible. The draft agenda (see below) can be extended.

I hope that you can come to Ireland, we have over 100 delegates to the conference at this time, from all over the world, and I am sure it will be a wonderful event for Childminders, providers of family home child care, their supporters, trainers and advocates.

Patricia Murray
IFDCO International President
2006 - 2009

From Grace McDonald

Family Day Care in Australia

The Australian National Family Day Care Conference is being held this month in Hobart, Tasmania. These national conferences take place every three years like our international ones, in a different State of Australia. With the current global financial situation being what it is, numbers of delegates registered to attend are not as high as expected, but we all know exactly what that is like, our own International conference

struggled a little with registrations as well. Hopefully we will have an influx of one or two day registrations closer to the time. It costs almost as much to attend the Hobart conference in Tasmania as going to the international, but both well worth the expense. Tasmania is a beautiful part of Australia with a climate all its own. The next National Conference will be held in Brisbane, here in Queensland in 2012 where the weather is 'beautiful one day, perfect the next'

In Australia currently the Child Care sector, including Family Day Care is undergoing some major changes to the delivery of services.

" The Australian Government has committed to establishing a National Quality Framework that will raise the quality and drive continuous improvement in Early Education and Care services. Families need access to high quality affordable early learning and care for their children to provide the basis for a long productive working life.

In August 2008 the Council of Australian Productivity Agenda Working Group released a discussion paper on the development of the National Quality Framework as the basis for consultations to progress these reforms. The discussion paper outlined the key features of the new Framework including

- Strong quality standards
- A quality rating system
- Streamlining or integrating licensing, regulations and accreditation arrangements to increase national consistency and
- An Early Years Learning Framework

The discussion paper also included an overview of COAGs broader Early Childhood Development Agenda and other relevant issues including developing a workforce for a new Early Education and Care system. COAG is the council of Australian Governments and is the main forum for discussion between federal, state and territory governments. COAG is made up of the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association. COAG initiates, develops and monitors nationally significant policy reforms that require co-operation between federal, state and territory governments. COAG is currently involved in several Early Childhood Education and Child Care initiatives including;

- Universal access to quality early childhood education
- National Quality Agenda
- The Early Years Learning Framework
- National Early Years Workforce Strategy

In August and September 2008, public consultations occurred on the discussion paper including 48 open public forums across Australia, 35

focus group discussions, 35 in depth interviews with selected stakeholders and a call for written submissions.

Feedback from the public consultations found broad community and sector support for the proposed National Quality Framework. Especially at the public forums it was apparent that there was a mood for reform within the sector.

The development of stronger national standards and more streamlined regulatory arrangements were particularly welcomed. There was some general support for a three tiered quality rating system that drove continuous improvement in quality delivery and little support for an A—E rating system. All participants agreed that workforce issues and cost implications represented important challenges to implementing the reforms and that transitional arrangements would need to be developed in consultation with families and service providers.

There was useful information made available especially in the focus groups, in depth interviews and written submissions on the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrant and refugee families and services and people with disabilities.

Work is continuing on the development of the key elements of the new National Quality Framework, stronger national quality standards, a quality rating system, streamlined licensing and accreditation arrangements and an Early Years Learning Framework.

All the information gathered from the first wave of public consultations is being used to assist in the development of these elements.

In addition, expert advice is being sought to ensure that the National Quality Framework is supported by the best evidence currently available. This should ensure that the National Quality Framework is robust and delivers quality early childhood education and care experiences and positive outcomes for children.

The Early Years National Framework will undergo testing prior to its expected implementation from July 2009.

(Refs. "In the Loop", Autumn edition 2009)

Grace McDonald
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DRAFT CONSTITUTION

IFDCO is grateful to Dr. Irene Kyle, Canada, for working on the draft constitution below, making it more realistic in what could be expected of the Organisation and more importantly, of those who are willing to serve on the International Executive Committee, undertaking to make the arrangements for the Triennial Conference and maintain the website and the finances.

International Family Child Care Organization Constitution

Draft for Discussion

1. Mission

To promote the development of quality Family Child Care worldwide through the operation of an international network of organizations, practitioners, researchers and other interested parties.

2. Name and Language

The name of the organization shall be the "International Family Child Care Organization" (referred to in the document as the "Organization"). The official language of the Organization shall be English. Efforts will be made by the Organization to enable members to participate in and benefit from the organization regardless of their understanding of English.

3. Objectives

To establish an international network of members involved in various aspects of Family Child Care.
To hold an international conference every three years.
To facilitate an exchange of information, methods of operation and research ideas that promote the development and recognition of Family Child Care internationally, through such means as a quarterly newsletter, an organizational web page, email, and occasional meetings.

4. Powers of the Organization

To organize and participate in the provision of exchanges of information and activities between international members to further the objectives of the Organization.
To apply for and receive various funds (membership fees, donations, and grants) to be used to fulfill the objectives of the Organization.
To encourage as broad a participation of organization members as possible in relation to various committees, conferences, and other events that may be organized.
To provide support (financial or other) when possible to members and others associated with Family Child Care to further the objectives of the Organization.

5. Membership and Voting Rights

Members can include Family Child Care Organizations, care providers and other practitioners, researchers and other interested parties. There shall be two kinds of membership in the Organization:

5.1 Association (group) membership

For Family Child Care Organizations or related professional groups. Voting rights will be limited to a maximum of three votes per group.

5.2 Individual membership

For care providers, related practitioners, researchers and other interested parties. Each member will be eligible to cast one vote.

5.3 Termination of Membership

An individual or Organization ceases to be a member of IFCCO if they:

- Resign their membership
- Do not pay their current membership fees
- Are asked to leave the Organization (to be decided by the International Executive Committee)

5.4 Membership Fees

- The amount of Membership fees and the procedure for their collection will be determined by the International Executive Committee.
- Memberships are based on a three year period (pro-rated by year), with the membership year extending from March 1 to February 28/29.

6. Voting Procedure

The Organization shall respect the democratic rights of all members and whenever appropriate and possible submit decisions to the whole membership:

- The triennial general meeting will be held in conjunction with the International Conference, at which time the election of Officers will take place. General and other meetings will be conducted by the President (or an approved substitute).
- Only current members in good standing are entitled to vote.
- Mail, email or FAX voting on official forms may be used where it is necessary for the whole membership to vote on an issue; for example, when seeking approval to call a special/extra-ordinary meeting of members. Voting responses received after the declared due date will not be admissible.
- Members will be notified of voting results by email; they will also be posted on the website.

- Voting at (triennial) general meetings shall be done in person. Voting results will be announced to the members and recorded by the International Secretary as part of the Minutes of the meeting. Votes counted and recorded will be listed as: for, against and abstentions.
- Absentee voting will be permitted only to members in good standing who are unable to attend meetings and only on motions that have been circulated prior to the meeting. Motions arising from the floor can only be voted on by members who are present at the meeting. If it is determined to be necessary for all members to vote on a motion arising from the floor, then it can be carried over and the vote can proceed using the mail, email and FAX process.
- Proxy voting, in writing and signed by the member will be allowed. A member in attendance at a meeting submits the proxy vote. Each voting member is only allowed to submit a maximum of 5 proxy votes.

7. Meetings and Conferences

All members of the Organization have the right to attend and participate in conferences (subject to payment of conference fees), as well as other meetings of the organization.

- The Organization will hold an International Conference at a maximum of three years. Nominations from organizations or individuals to hold the next International Conference will be presented to members at the triennial general meeting. The successful group/individual will be notified following full written submission to the International Executive Committee within 6 months of the conclusion of the general meeting.
- The International Conference will be planned and organized by a committee headed by the President (or International Conference convenor) with assistance from, and final approval of the program, by the International Executive Committee.

8. Representation of the Organization and Information-Sharing

8.1 Representation

Members wishing to represent the Organization, or its views, may do so only with the express permission and prior approval of the International Executive Committee.

8.2 Information-Sharing

Whenever possible, efforts will be made to ensure that all members of the Organization receive all official communications and newsletters of the Organization and a website will be maintained by the country currently hosting the Presidency to assist in this.

8.3 IFCCO Newsletter

- The Newsletter, written in English, will be the primary means of communicating information about the affairs of the Organization to members. To facilitate distribution, the Newsletter will be sent to members by email. The Secretary is required to inform regional representatives of members email addresses.
- Whenever possible, the Newsletter will be issued three times a year, or more frequently, if deemed necessary by the International Executive Committee.

8.4 IFCCO Research Network

- The Website will also host the Research Network, which will include a listing of researchers in member countries who are currently carrying out research in family child care or are otherwise interested in it.

9. The International Executive Committee

The management of the affairs of the Organization and the control of its finances between triennial meetings will be carried out by the International Executive Committee. The International Executive Committee will consist of the following Officers, who will be elected at each triennial meeting:

- International President:
is responsible for ensuring that the International Executive Committee carries out its functions in accordance with the Constitution; for chairing meetings, and for representing the Organization.
- International Secretary:
is responsible for dealing with the correspondence of the Organization; for helping to set meeting agendas, taking minutes and distributing them to members within one month of the triennial meeting, and for working in conjunction with other Officers to conduct the business of the Organization.
- International Treasurer:
is responsible for managing the finances of the Organization and for reporting on financial matters on a regular basis.
- International Newsletter Editor:
is responsible for preparing and distributing the Newsletter to all members of the Organization, on a regular basis (if possible 3 times/year).
- International Conference Convenor (from the host country):
is responsible for heading the committee to organize the International Conference
- Two representatives from each Regional Chapter of the Organization (Europe/Africa, Asia/Pacific, Americas).

The International Executive Committee will have powers on behalf of the Organization to:

- Represent the Organization and undertake negotiations, contracts and agreements as required
- Receive and manage all monies
- Establish sub-committees to deal with special projects
- Engage experts for special tasks as decided by the Organization
- Deal with any issues in relation to the management of the affairs of the Organization between triennial meetings
- Organizing the triennial annual meetings and notifying members of the date, location and outcome of the meetings.

10. Changes to the Constitution

Proposed changes to the constitution shall be voted on by the membership at triennial general meetings or at a special general meeting called for that specific purpose. Notification of proposed changes shall be sent to all members at least three months prior to the meeting. A change to the constitution will only take effect if more than 60% of members voting are in favour of the change.

11. Dissolution of the Organization

Submissions by members for the dissolution of the Organization will be considered by the International Executive Committee. If, in the opinion of the Committee, the Organization is unable to meet its constitutional requirements, a resolution calling for the dissolution of the Organization, together with supporting documentation, will be sent to all members and a combination of email, and mail votes be taken. All members will be sent notification of the results of the vote.

If, upon the dissolution of the Organization, after the settling of all outstanding debts and liabilities, there remains any property or other assets, the same will not be paid to or distributed among members of the Organization, but rather be given to another organization or professional group(s) having similar objects to that of IFCCO.

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