

Media Release

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Child care centre receives praise for pioneering new inclusive initiatives

A child care centre in Karratha has been asked to demonstrate how they implemented a series of inclusive practices to make services accessible to all.

One of the children benefiting from the inclusive practices at One Tree Millars Well is three-year-old Kate Hill who has a rare genetic disorder called Costello Syndrome. The condition causes developmental delays and health problems.

Kate is one of just 500 people diagnosed worldwide and has high inclusion support needs and requires daily therapy.

New inclusive initiatives which have been implemented have been so successful that the director of Millars Well, Hailey Farrell will be guest speaker at an inclusion workshop in Karratha on Thursday.

“We knew that with a few changes, Kate and her mother would feel welcome and supported by the service and all that we had here on offer. This is a remote child care centre, but it doesn’t prevent us from being inclusive to all,” explains Hailey.

“Kate’s speech and occupational specialists undertake her therapy at the centre weekly, which is then shared with the educators who continue this therapy daily,” Hailey explains.

“We also obtained funding for an additional educator for not just Kate but also the kindy room, providing care and education for an extra 5 hours per day.”

“I’ve also empowered educators to give them the confidence and skills to support all children and families. We have a visiting inclusion team who can offer new strategies and a visiting psychologist has also offered some behavioural advice to children.”

“We work very closely with the families to ensure communication pathways are open and honest and that we are working towards the same goals,” Hailey outlines.

The director of Millars Well, Hailey Farrell arrived at the service in January. Since the beginning of the year, numbers at the child care service have increased from 61% capacity to 81%.

The service has also been facilitating visits from the local Indigenous community. Children have been painting with a local Indigenous teenage artist and learning the local Aboriginal language from the Nguluma Aboriginal Corporation.

Next month the children will have the opportunity to participate in cooking classes from ‘Bushlolly cafe’ where the children will be able to experience cooking and eating bush tucker.

Notes to media:

The Inclusion in Practice Workshop is being held in Karratha on Thursday 13th September and has been organised by the WA Inclusion Agency. The workshops also feature leading education expert Rhonda Livingstone.

Kate’s mother Estelle Hill is available to talk to the media.

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