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Family Day Care Quality Assurance Quality Trends Report

For the period 1 July 2006 to 31 December 2006

The purpose of this *Quality Trends Report* is to identify key areas within Family Day Care Quality Assurance (FDCQA) that family day care schemes are performing well in and those which contribute to schemes receiving a Not Accredited status.

The Quality Areas and Principles referred to in this document are detailed in the FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide* (2nd edition, 2004) available for purchase from the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) website (www.ncac.gov.au). Where references are made to numbered indicators, these are listed in the FDCQA *Validation Report* (2nd edition, 2004).

Quality Trends Reports are conducted twice annually by NCAC, in January and July each year, for each of the Child Care Quality Assurance systems. Past reports are publicly available on the NCAC website (www.ncac.gov.au) as follows:

- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2005 – 31 December 2005)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 January 2006 – 30 June 2006)

FDCQA Quality Trends Report

Of the 262 schemes that have progressed through FDCQA under the revised standards to 31 December 2006, **84%** are Accredited and of these, **39%** have achieved all 6 Quality Areas at a High Quality level.

154 family day care schemes received an Accreditation Decision between 1 July 2006 and 31 December 2006.

The Principles for which schemes most often achieve a High Quality standard are:

1.1	Carers and coordination unit staff interact with all children in a warm, friendly and respectful way	41%
1.2	Communication between coordination unit staff and families is effective and supports the child's placement in care	48%
1.3	Communication between carers and families is effective and supports the family and child to settle into care	35%
1.4	Carers' personal and family arrangements provide a positive home environment that supports the provision of family day care	49%
2.1	The indoor and outdoor areas of carers' homes and play session venues are welcoming, comfortable and child friendly	39%
2.3	Facilities used by the coordination unit are welcoming and accessible	39%
3.2	Coordination unit staff support children's learning through home visits and/or play	41%
3.3	Carers and coordination unit staff guide children's behaviour in positive ways	42%
4.5	Children's needs for rest, sleep and comfort are supported	56%
5.1	Recruitment, selection and orientation processes for carers and coordination unit staff encourage and support the provision of a quality service	55%
5.2	The scheme has a systematic process in place to monitor current practice and identify areas for continuing improvement	35%
5.4	The scheme promotes occupational health and safety	48%
6.1	Management practices are ethical and operate within relevant legislation	49%

The Principles for which schemes have most often not met the Satisfactory standards are:

2.2	All children have access to a variety of interesting materials and equipment	13%
4.1	The environments provided for children are safe	30%
4.2	Food and drink are nutritious and culturally appropriate	16%
4.3	The health and safety of all children are protected	30%
4.4	Nappy changing, toileting and bathing are positive experiences for children	27%
4.5	Children's needs for rest, sleep and comfort are supported	12%
4.6	Current State or Territory legislation relating to child protection and wellbeing is implemented consistently	18%
6.2	The scheme consults and works collaboratively with all stakeholders	11%

Quality Area 1: Interactions

Positive interactions between children, families, carers and coordination unit staff are integral to a successful program and should support the development of trusting relationships, partnerships and teamwork within the scheme and with the wider community.

Partnerships with families are promoted by responsive and supportive carers, coordination unit staff and management and are fundamental to all aspects of the program, from orientation to ongoing information sharing. It is particularly important that children experience interactions that make them feel valued, respected and capable. By modelling courteous, considerate and effective communication, adults support children as they develop their communication and problem solving skills.

Interactions should ensure that all stakeholders in the service feel valued and respected and should take into account the different backgrounds, requirements and communication skills of individuals. Effective communication strategies can be developed through ongoing consultation between all stakeholders and should be reviewed regularly. Interactions that are founded upon respect, empathy, cooperation and professionalism ensure that all communications are successful and positive (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 9).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area.

Quality Area 1 has five Principles:

Principle 1.1: Carers and coordination unit staff interact with all children in a warm, friendly and respectful way

Principle 1.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	41	58	1	0

Principle 1.1 was not rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 1.2: Communication between coordination unit staff and families is effective and supports the child's placement in care

Principle 1.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	48	49	2	1

Principle 1.2 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 1.3: Communication between carers and families is effective and supports the family and child to settle into care

Principle 1.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	35	56	6	3

Principle 1.3 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 1.4: Carers' personal and family arrangements provide a positive home environment that supports the provision of family day care

Principle 1.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	49	42	3	6

In Principle 1.4 the indicator most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 1.4.5 *The scheme has clear, written guidelines about the roles other members of carers' families have in relation to the carer's provision of family day care*

Principle 1.5: Relationships within the scheme value diversity, teamwork, mutual respect, understanding and professionalism

Principle 1.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	34	63	2	1

Principle 1.5 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Quality Area 2: Physical Environment

Environments that are welcoming, safe, well resourced and aesthetically appealing support children and their families to access and settle into family day care and enhance effective learning settings for children. When planning a physical environment that supports children's play and development, carers and coordination unit staff work together to provide a safe environment which allows all children to explore, experiment and make decisions according to their individual needs and ability levels.

When planning and obtaining resources for the physical environment, carers and coordination unit staff consider factors such as the needs and backgrounds of individual children and their families, the existing family day care home, coordination unit environments and costs.

Carers foster children's learning experiences by using inexpensive resources and aspects of the family day care home in flexible and innovative ways. Relevant professional development opportunities and opportunities to network with other carers, support carers in developing their skills and strategies for creative planning.

Regular consultation between families, children, carers and coordination unit staff and knowledge of current safety recommendations, support the provision of functional child and family friendly settings (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 21).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area. However, a significant proportion of schemes did not meet the Accreditation standards of Principle 2.2.

Quality Area 2 has three Principles:

Principle 2.1: The indoor and outdoor areas of carers' homes and play session* venues are welcoming, comfortable and child friendly

Principle 2.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	39	51	5	5

In Principle 2.1 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 2.1.5 *A place is provided for each child to store and access personal belongings*

* For the purposes of FDCQA, the term "play session" is used to describe the situation where two (or more) carers join together with their children for child focussed play experiences. Play sessions may be organised by the carers themselves or by coordination unit staff.

Principle 2.2: All children have access to a variety of interesting materials and equipment

Principle 2.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	31	51	5	13

In Principle 2.2 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 2.2.6 *Children have access to a range of commercial, natural and simple home made materials and resources*

Indicator 2.2.7 *Materials that are available to children reflect the lives of the children in care, their families and the cultural diversity of the broader community*

Principle 2.3: Facilities used by the coordination unit are welcoming and accessible

Principle 2.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	39	56	3	2

Principle 2.3 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Quality Area 3: Children's Experiences, Learning and Development

Successful learning environments recognise the value of play and positive social interactions in the promotion of children's learning and development. Children's learning and development is enhanced through opportunities to make choices and guide their own experiences according to their individual interests, personalities and skills. Children's learning occurs through planned and spontaneous experiences, during their participation in daily routines and through their experience of positive modelling by adults and peers.

A supportive learning environment is underpinned by behaviour guidance strategies which respect individual children's needs and abilities, and which foster the development of children's self-management skills.

A holistic approach to children's learning and development recognises the significance of creative and child-initiated play to the growth of children's self-esteem and personal competence.

Carers and coordination unit staff ensure that the balance between planned, spontaneous and routine experiences allows time and opportunity for children to engage in learning through a range of play and other learning experiences (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 29).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good Quality in this Quality Area. However, a significant proportion of schemes did not meet the Accreditation standards of Principle 3.3.

Quality Area 3 has seven Principles:

Principle 3.1: Carers respond to the interests and abilities of all children in ways that support learning in a home environment

Principle 3.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	18	60	17	5

In Principle 3.1 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 3.1.2** *Carers' plans for each day are child focussed*
- Indicator 3.1.7** *Use of television, computers and electronic games is child focused, carefully planned, monitored and evaluated*
- Indicator 3.1.8** *The carer shares the television, computers and/or electronic game experience and discusses emergent issues with the children*

Principle 3.2: Coordination unit staff support children's learning through home visits and/or play sessions*

Principle 3.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	41	53	1	5

In Principle 3.2 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 3.2.1** *Each home visit is planned to focus primarily on quality outcomes for children*
- Indicator 3.2.7** *Coordination unit staff evaluate the experiences provided for children at play sessions and record the children's responses to the environment as well as the children's ideas for future experiences*
- Indicator 3.2.8** *There is evidence that evaluations of play sessions by coordination unit staff have influenced subsequent play session planning*

Principle 3.3: Carers and coordination unit staff guide children's behaviour in positive ways

Principle 3.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	42	43	5	10

In Principle 3.3 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 3.3.1** *The scheme has a written policy on positive guidance of child behaviour that reflects current childhood research and practice*
- Indicator 3.3.2** *The policy on positive guidance of child behaviour is dated and sourced*
- Indicator 3.3.11** *Skills in guiding children's behaviour are enhanced through professional development*

Principle 3.4: Carers and coordination unit staff promote resilience and social competence in all children

Principle 3.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	33	60	5	2

Principle 3.4 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

* For the purposes of FDCQA, the term "play session" is used to describe the situation where two (or more) carers join together with their children for child focussed play experiences. Play sessions may be organised by the carers themselves or by coordination unit staff.

Principle 3.5: Carers and coordination unit staff promote physical competence in all children

Principle 3.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	29	70	1	0

Principle 3.5 was not rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 3.6: Carers and coordination unit staff foster all children's language, literacy, curiosity, mathematical thinking and scientific exploration

Principle 3.6	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	20	64	10	6

In Principle 3.6 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 3.6.5 *Carers and coordination unit staff provide a stimulating environment with open ended resources and unhurried time, inviting children to play, explore and experiment*

Principle 3.7: Carers and coordination unit staff support all children's creative expression

Principle 3.7	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	18	72	9	1

Principle 3.7 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Quality Area 4: Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing

Family day care homes constitute a unique child care setting as they have the dual functions of both family home and child care environment. To ensure that children receive quality care, coordination unit staff and carers share a responsibility to keep up to date with current research and recommended practice in relation to child health, hygiene, nutrition, safety and emergency procedures.

It is essential that scheme staff and carers are aware of and meet all State or Territory legal requirements for children's safety and wellbeing, particularly in relation to child protection.

Regardless of their individual skills or backgrounds, all children have the right to experience quality care in an environment which is clean, safe, healthy and where their wellbeing is a paramount consideration in the program. In exercising their duty of care, carers and coordination unit staff consider the unique aspects of the family day care environment, and the individual needs and cultural backgrounds of children and families. This is of particular importance when planning for children's mealtimes, their sleep or rest requirements, their dressing requirements and their personal hygiene (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 45).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good Quality in this Quality Area. However, a significant proportion of schemes did not meet the Accreditation standards of each Principle in this Quality Area.

Quality Area 4 has four Principles:

Principle 4.1: The environments provided for children are safe

Principle 4.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	19	45	6	30

In Principle 4.1 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.1.1** *The scheme has written safety policies and procedures that are based on current advice from relevant safety authorities*
- Indicator 4.1.2** *Safety policies and procedures are dated and sourced*
- Indicator 4.1.3** *The scheme safety procedures are implemented consistently by coordination unit staff and carers*
- Indicator 4.1.4** *Carers use a home safety checklist, based on the scheme's safety policies and procedures*
- Indicator 4.1.8** *Every domestic pet and farm animal is kept in an area separate to and apart from the areas used by children, unless involved in a specific activity that is directly supervised by the carer, staff member or other adult*
- Indicator 4.1.13** *Carers and coordination unit staff efforts to protect children from exposure to the sun are consistent with the sun protection policy*
- Indicator 4.1.14** *Carers and coordination unit staff model sun protection practices*

Principle 4.2: Food and drink are nutritious and culturally appropriate

Principle 4.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	19	57	8	16

In Principle 4.2 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.2.7** *The scheme has written food handling policies and procedures that are based on current advice from relevant health and safety authorities*
- Indicator 4.2.8** *The scheme's food handling policies and procedures are dated and sourced*
- Indicator 4.2.10** *Coordination unit staff provide carers and families with food handling and storage guidelines based on the scheme's food handling policies*
- Indicator 4.2.14** *Drinking water is readily available to all children throughout the day*

Principle 4.3: The health and safety of all children are protected

Principle 4.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	25	39	6	30

In Principle 4.3 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.3.3** *Carers and coordination unit staff adhere to accepted hygiene principles that minimise the spread of infectious diseases and encourage children to follow these*
- Indicator 4.3.4** *Carers and coordination unit staff wash their hands effectively before handling food, after each nappy change, toileting and other similar situations*
- Indicator 4.3.5** *Carers and coordination unit staff actively promote children's hand washing before handling food, after each nappy change, toileting and other similar situations*
- Indicator 4.3.6** *Carers discuss with children strategies for maintaining dental health*
- Indicator 4.3.10** *Coordination unit staff and carers develop plans to effectively manage fire and other emergencies and these plans are displayed prominently in carer's homes and other scheme facilities*
- Indicator 4.3.13** *Health plans for children with specific medical conditions have been developed in consultation with families, are based on advice given to the families by medical practitioners and are implemented consistently*

Principle 4.4: Nappy changing, toileting and bathing are positive experiences for children

Principle 4.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	29	36	8	27

In Principle 4.4 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.4.1** *The scheme has written policies and procedures for nappy changing, toileting and bathing that are consistent with current recommendations by recognised health authorities*
- Indicator 4.4.2** *Policies and procedures for nappy changing, toileting and bathing are dated and sourced*
- Indicator 4.4.3** *The scheme procedures for bathing, nappy changing and/or toileting are implemented consistently*
- Indicator 4.4.4** *The dignity and need for privacy for each child are respected during bathing, nappy changing, toileting and/or dressing*

Principle 4.5: Children's needs for rest, sleep and comfort are supported

Principle 4.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	56	31	1	12

In Principle 4.5 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.5.1** *The scheme has a policy relating to selection and use of cots, beds and bedding that is based on current advice from recognised safety authorities*
- Indicator 4.5.2** *The policy related to the selection and safe of cots, beds and bedding is dated and sourced*

Principle 4.6: Current State or Territory legislation relating to child protection and wellbeing is implemented consistently

Principle 4.6	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	28	43	11	18

In Principle 4.6 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 4.6.5** *During the initial training program and during the past eighteen months, all carers and coordination unit staff have been provided with training in responding to suspected child protection issues*
- Indicator 4.6.6** *Carers' families have been provided with information and/or training to support their understanding and response to suspected child protection issues as they relate to the provision of family day care*

Quality Area 5: Carers and Coordination Unit Staff

Coordination unit staff are responsible for ensuring there are procedures, policies and systems in place to maintain quality in the scheme's activities, programs and organisation. Coordination unit staff work with carers, families and other professionals to ensure that the scheme's personnel policies and procedures are effective and meet all relevant legislative requirements, including occupational health and safety regulations. Acknowledging and promoting the value of professional development and effective recruitment practices is fundamental in advocating for the scheme and the professionalism of its staff and carers.

Coordination unit staff, carers and families evaluate the scheme's achievements and identify future areas for improvement from the perspectives of all individuals involved. All stakeholders have regular opportunities to contribute to reviews of the scheme's quality practices and procedures and to collaborate in the development of ongoing improvement plans. Encouraging families, carers and coordination unit staff to work together on continuing improvement strategies supports the development of practical and relevant approaches to all scheme operations (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 59).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good to High Quality in this Quality Area.

Quality Area 5 has four Principles:

Principle 5.1: Recruitment, selection and orientation processes for carers and coordination unit staff encourage and support the provision of a quality service

Principle 5.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	55	38	0	7

In Principle 5.1 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 5.1.1** *There are fair, transparent and documented policies and procedures for the recruitment and selection of carers and coordination unit staff*
- Indicator 5.1.2** *Policies and procedures for the recruitment and selection of carers and coordination unit staff are dated and sourced*
- Indicator 5.1.5** *A consistent orientation program is provided to all new coordination unit staff, carers and carers' families*

Principle 5.2: The scheme has a systematic process in place to monitor current practice and identify areas for continuing improvement

Principle 5.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	35	56	3	6

In Principle 5.2 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 5.2.4 *The scheme has policies and procedures about conducting visits in a carer's home*

Principle 5.3: Professional development opportunities are accessed by carers, coordination unit staff and others involved in management

Principle 5.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	26	67	3	4

Principle 5.3 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 5.4: The scheme promotes occupational health and safety

Principle 5.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	48	46	3	3

Principle 5.4 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Quality Area 6: Management and Administration

It is the role of scheme management and coordination unit staff to establish effective and ethical management policies and procedures. Scheme policies and procedures must be informed by relevant legislative requirements, current 'best practice' in management and also reflect an awareness of community needs and issues.

Comprehensive written policies and procedures provide clear guidance to coordination unit staff, carers and families in relation to management issues. Involvement of all stakeholders in policy review and development fosters an atmosphere of trust and teamwork and helps ensure that policies and procedures address real needs and are implemented consistently and effectively.

An essential element of quality scheme management is ensuring that clear and consistent procedures for the maintenance and confidential management of family, child, carer and staff records are implemented.

Decision making, grievance and complaints handling policies and procedures are transparent and clearly define accountability (FDCQA *Quality Practices Guide*, 2004, page 69).

Quality Trends:

Most family day care schemes achieved Good Quality in this Quality Area. However, a significant proportion of schemes did not meet the Accreditation standards of Principle 6.2.

Quality Area 6 has five Principles:

Principle 6.1: Management practices are ethical and operate within relevant legislation

Principle 6.1	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	49	45	3	3

Principle 6.1 was rarely rated Unsatisfactory.

Principle 6.2: The scheme consults and works collaboratively with all stakeholders

Principle 6.2	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	32	53	4	11

In Principle 6.2 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 6.2.1** *The scheme provides regular opportunities for families to give feedback about the care arrangements*
- Indicator 6.2.2** *The scheme has a statement that outlines its philosophy, aims and commitment to quality outcomes for children*
- Indicator 6.2.4** *The scheme has a process that provides opportunities for carers, coordination unit staff and families to be involved in an advisory, consultative and/or decision making role*
- Indicator 6.2.5** *Carers, families and coordination unit staff are actively involved in the development and review of scheme policies and procedures*
- Indicator 6.2.6** *Consultations on operation of the scheme are conducted in ways that enable all stakeholders to participate if they wish*

Principle 6.3: The scheme has an efficient, effective and ethical process for the management of records

Principle 6.3	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	27	56	11	6

In Principle 6.3 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

- Indicator 6.3.1** *The scheme has clear written policies and procedures for managing records relating to children, families, carers and coordination unit staff*
- Indicator 6.3.2** *The scheme maintains accurate, up to date and objective records relating to children, families and on-going care arrangements and these are kept confidential*
- Indicator 6.3.3** *The scheme ensures that records relating to carers are relevant, factual, kept up to date and confidential*

Principle 6.4: The scheme has simple, transparent grievance and complaints handling procedures

Principle 6.4	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	31	56	5	8

In Principle 6.4 the indicators that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings were:

Indicator 6.4.1 *The scheme has documented grievance and complaints policies and procedures*

Indicator 6.4.2 *The scheme's grievance and complaints policies and procedures are dated and sourced*

Principle 6.5: Carers and coordination unit staff are effective advocates for their service within the community and actively seek to build links with other agencies to benefit children and their families

Principle 6.5	High Quality	Good Quality	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
%	32	54	8	6

In Principle 6.5 the indicator that most often resulted in Unsatisfactory ratings was:

Indicator 6.5.3 *Carers and coordination unit staff liase with other children's services in the community*

Family Day Care Quality Assurance Quality Trends

The National Childcare Accreditation Council has conducted three FDCQA *Quality Trends Reports* for family day care schemes:

- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2005 – 31 December 2005)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 January 2006 – 30 June 2006)
- *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* (1 July 2006 – 31 December 2006)

These *Quality Trends Reports* demonstrate a number of quality trends in the performance of family day care schemes against the standards of quality care outlined in the *FDCQA Quality Practices Guide* (2nd edition, 2004).

As at 1 January 2007, 323 family day care schemes are registered with NCAC to participate in FDCQA. 154 schemes received Accreditation Decisions between 1 July 2006 and 31 December 2006.

Notable trends in the data include:

- The achievement of all 6 Quality Areas at a High Quality level by 46% of family day care schemes that received an Accreditation Decision during this period
- A significant increase in the proportion of High Quality ratings achieved across all Principles between the June 2006 and December 2006 reporting periods, of an average of 8.5 percentage points
- A significant decrease in the proportion of Unsatisfactory ratings achieved between the June 2006 and December 2006 reporting periods, of an average of 8.5 percentage points
- Quality Area 4: Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing, continues to receive a significantly higher proportion of Unsatisfactory ratings than any other Quality Area
- Where in the June 2006 reporting period there were eleven individual indicators for which more than 20% of schemes received Unsatisfactory ratings, there were only two individual indicators for which more than 20% of schemes received Unsatisfactory ratings in the December 2006 reporting period:

Indicator	
6.1.1	All coordination unit staff and carers are fully informed of their obligations and what is required by all relevant legislation
4.4.3	The scheme procedures for bathing, nappy changing and/or toileting are implemented consistently

- Across several Quality Areas, a significant proportion of schemes continue to receive Unsatisfactory ratings where written policies and procedures were not dated and sourced. This applied to policies and procedures related to the following areas:

Principle	Policy and Procedure
3.3	Child behaviour guidance
4.1	Safety
4.1	Sun safety
4.2	Nutrition
4.2	Food handling
4.3	Infection control, illness, administering medication, accident and
4.4	Nappy changing, toileting and bathing
4.5	Selection and safe use of cots, beds and bedding
4.6	Child protection
5.1	Recruitment and selection of carers and coordination unit staff
6.4	Grievance and complaints handling

- Failure to date and source written policies and procedures contributed significantly to the relatively high proportion of schemes receiving Unsatisfactory ratings across Quality Area 4: Health, Hygiene, Nutrition, Safety and Wellbeing.
- The strengths of family day care schemes can be seen in those Principles for which received few Unsatisfactory ratings, which include:

Principle	
1.1	Carers and coordination unit staff interact with all children in a warm, friendly and respectful way
1.2	Communication between coordination unit staff and families is effective and supports the child's placement in care
1.3	Communication between carers and families is effective and supports the family and child to settle into care
1.5	Relationships within the scheme value diversity, teamwork, mutual respect, understanding and professionalism
2.3	Facilities used by the coordination unit are welcoming and accessible
3.4	Carers and coordination unit staff promote resilience and social competence in all children
3.7	Carers and coordination unit staff support all children's creative expression
5.4	The scheme promotes occupational health and safety
6.1	Management practices are ethical and operate within relevant legislation

NCAC Support for Services

The purpose of this *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* is to identify key areas within FDCQA that family day care schemes are performing well in and those which contribute to schemes receiving a Not Accredited status.

NCAC aims to work in partnership with family day care schemes to facilitate and support continuous improvement to the quality of child care provided for children in Australia. The *FDCQA Quality Trends Report* assists NCAC to provide targeted support to schemes as they progress through FDCQA.

During 2006, NCAC has implemented several initiatives, addressing concerns raised in the *FDCQA Quality Trends Reports* as follows:

- The *NCAC Policy Development Guide* was introduced in October 2006, to assist services to research, develop and review policies in collaboration with stakeholders. The *NCAC Policy Development Guide* is available on the NCAC website (www.ncac.gov.au).
- NCAC's quarterly newsletter, *Putting Children First*, was distributed to all services participating in the Child Care Quality Assurance systems in June, September and December 2006. Articles supporting quality practices included:
 - *Meeting Quality Assurance Requirements with Minimal Resources*
 - *Planning Experiences for Children*
 - *Environmental Experiences in Child Care*
 - *Electrical Safety in Children's Services*
 - *Ask a Child Care Adviser – Dental Health*
- NCAC *Factsheets* are distributed to all family day care schemes that register to participate in FDCQA, providing information for staff and carers on a variety of issues identified to be problematic in the *Quality Trends Reports*:

Factsheets	Relevant Principles
<i>Planning for Children</i>	1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 4.3
<i>Involving Children in Decision Making</i>	1.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5
<i>Developing a Policy</i>	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4
<i>Diversity in Programming</i>	1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 4.2
<i>Training for Family Day Care</i>	1.3, 3.2, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4
<i>Guiding Children's Behaviour in Positive Ways</i>	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 6.2
<i>Mixed Age Groups</i>	1.1, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1
<i>Carers and Families Working Together</i>	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 3.1, 3.3, 4.2, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.4
<i>Operating a Child Care Service in Your Home</i>	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.2
<i>A Collaborative Approach in Family Day Care</i>	1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.3, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.1, 5.2, 6.2, 6.4

NCAC will continue to use the information provided in the *FDCQA Quality Trends Reports* to develop ways to effectively support family day care schemes participating in FDCQA.

Family Day Care Quality Assurance Principle Ratings

Comparative statistics of the December 2005, June 2006 and December 2006
Quality Trends Reports.

Quality Area 1		High Quality (%)	Good Quality (%)	Satisfactory (%)	Unsatisfactory (%)
Principle 1.1	Dec-05	29	64	7	0
	Jun-06	39	57	4	0
	Dec-06	41	58	1	0
Principle 1.2	Dec-05	42	48	3	7
	Jun-06	32	62	2	4
	Dec-06	48	49	2	1
Principle 1.3	Dec-05	22	52	19	7
	Jun-06	28	62	4	6
	Dec-06	35	56	6	3
Principle 1.4	Dec-05	39	35	3	23
	Jun-06	44	39	1	16
	Dec-06	49	42	3	6
Principle 1.5	Dec-05	20	71	7	2
	Jun-06	22	74	4	0
	Dec-06	34	63	2	1
Quality Area 2					
Principle 2.1	Dec-05	38	38	11	13
	Jun-06	30	57	4	9
	Dec-06	39	51	5	5
Principle 2.2	Dec-05	18	39	10	33
	Jun-06	25	41	9	25
	Dec-06	31	51	5	13
Principle 2.3	Dec-05	39	41	7	13
	Jun-06	35	46	10	9
	Dec-06	39	56	3	2
Quality Area 3					
Principle 3.1	Dec-05	12	32	33	23
	Jun-06	10	61	12	17
	Dec-06	18	60	17	5
Principle 3.2	Dec-05	30	51	3	16
	Jun-06	20	55	3	22
	Dec-06	41	53	1	5
Principle 3.3	Dec-05	17	44	17	22
	Jun-06	28	35	4	33
	Dec-06	42	43	5	10

Principle 3.4	Dec-05	26	51	13	10
	Jun-06	33	61	3	3
	Dec-06	33	60	5	2
Principle 3.5	Dec-05	13	80	1	6
	Jun-06	22	68	3	7
	Dec-06	29	70	1	0
Principle 3.6	Dec-05	13	58	19	10
	Jun-06	13	59	16	12
	Dec-06	20	64	10	6
Principle 3.7	Dec-05	11	64	19	6
	Jun-06	13	74	10	3
	Dec-06	18	72	9	1
Quality Area 4					
Principle 4.1	Dec-05	12	22	17	49
	Jun-06	19	17	15	49
	Dec-06	19	45	6	30
Principle 4.2	Dec-05	12	39	19	30
	Jun-06	14	52	9	25
	Dec-06	19	57	8	16
Principle 4.3	Dec-05	11	19	22	48
	Jun-06	14	28	12	46
	Dec-06	25	39	6	30
Principle 4.4	Dec-05	17	31	9	43
	Jun-06	25	36	10	29
	Dec-06	29	36	8	27
Principle 4.5	Dec-05	29	38	9	24
	Jun-06	39	32	3	26
	Dec-06	56	31	1	12
Principle 4.6	Dec-05	20	20	16	44
	Jun-06	26	23	15	36
	Dec-06	28	43	11	18
Quality Area 5					
Principle 5.1	Dec-05	36	38	3	23
	Jun-06	38	38	3	21
	Dec-06	55	38	0	7
Principle 5.2	Dec-05	42	51	1	6
	Jun-06	30	57	4	9
	Dec-06	35	56	3	6
Principle 5.3	Dec-05	14	67	7	12
	Jun-06	15	68	4	13
	Dec-06	26	67	3	4

Principle 5.4	Dec-05	45	40	9	6
	Jun-06	39	46	2	13
	Dec-06	48	46	3	3
Quality Area 6					
Principle 6.1	Dec-05	35	51	8	6
	Jun-06	39	55	3	3
	Dec-06	49	45	3	3
Principle 6.2	Dec-05	27	41	13	19
	Jun-06	22	50	6	22
	Dec-06	32	53	4	11
Principle 6.3	Dec-05	15	65	10	10
	Jun-06	13	71	10	6
	Dec-06	27	56	11	6
Principle 6.4	Dec-05	25	42	8	25
	Jun-06	19	46	12	23
	Dec-06	31	56	5	8
Principle 6.5	Dec-05	27	41	12	20
	Jun-06	29	44	13	14
	Dec-06	32	54	8	6

All figures rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

Number of family day care schemes which received Accreditation Decision between:

1 July 2005 and 31 December 2005: 69

1 January 2006 and 30 June 2006: 69

1 July 2006 and 31 December 2006: 154