

This is a transcript of the Bright Sun Family Day Care video available at beyou.edu.au/stories/bright-sun-family-day-care.

Bright Sun Family Day Care's Be You journey

Families choose family day care for a range of reasons.

Flexibility of care, the strong connection to culture and language because the families they want their children to stay connected with their culture and language. In my role every day is different and it's a constant adventure. We currently have more than 90 educators who are based across several locations in Melbourne.

At the moment, we have children and families belonging to more than 40 ethnicities. Our service philosophy is to provide flexible, high-quality education and care to the children and families. Cultural inclusion, educator wellbeing is very important in early childhood sector, particularly family day care because of its unique context. Most of our educators, children and families are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people from these backgrounds are reluctant to seek help relating to mental health issues.

There are many reasons for that. Sometimes they don't have trust, sometimes they are not aware of the importance of addressing these issues and concerns, so it's incredibly important for us as a service to promote mental health and wellbeing of the educators.

Bright Sun came to us in 2019, initially by attending some of our online events, some webinars and then during 2020 their engagement really increased. They were aware of some of the concerns for their educators. It's at a family day care service that educators can be quite isolated. They're all from migrant communities, their understanding is that by supporting the educators that will then have a flow on to the children and families in their care.

Be You provided them with a framework to talk about mental health with their community about how are they going to start to make some changes in their conversations and in their role as coordinators in supporting their educators.

Over the last few weeks, we have attended Be You In Focus webinar, supporting transitions to school. The one thing I love about Be You is the flexibility of the resources available. We can contextualise those resources depending on our identified need. I also find Fact Sheets very useful because they are a quick reference guide on a particular topic relating to mental health and wellbeing.

Then again how we can support families after a trauma or incident. There are many Fact Sheets which are available which can easily be shared with the educators. We have appointed a dedicated wellbeing officer and that officer will be available to provide support to the educators particularly when complex cases arise.

Yes, good it's been a long time you visited our office.

The other thing is asking questions from our educators about their health and wellbeing and particularly mental health and wellbeing.

My relationship with Shreya is getting stronger day-by-day. Her strengths as an educator is that she is very passionate, she is very flexible. Sarwat is a really nice person, very calm and supportive. She always helped me. Currently I have three families with four children and two of my own, so total in six. I think all the children are unique and they need stimulated environment to grow physically mentally emotionally and socially.

Mariam and my coordination unit are really supportive we have online meetings face-to-face meetings as well. The biggest challenge for me is like when I have to manage my time schedule for my self-care. When Shreya registered with us she was not so open and so comfortable with us.

Because of Be You we were in a better position to guide her how to cope up with these situations and these stages. In this way Shreya is now in a position that she can easily discuss each and everything with us. Just because of this strategy which was unknown to us earlier. In the pandemic I know everyone was going through really hard time I didn't had any children in my care at that time and I was just crying in front of her.

And at that time thought I have someone here in this hard time to help me. So the biggest challenges and difficulties for me is to take time out because I work long hours. It's very important to look after my wellbeing health because if I'm not healthy I can't look after the children. I have very strong relation with the service, with the coordinators. They are all very supportive.

Anytime you need, any help, anytime no matter you can call and ask they're doing amazing job. We have come a long way since we have started our journey with Be You. Initially our goal was to create awareness about mental health and wellbeing and now mental health and wellbeing is an embedded practice.

At our service in the coordination unit the next step is definitely to pass that practice to our educators and we want to embed mental health and wellbeing and self-care as part of their daily practice.

The way Bright Sun have approached working with Be You has been a really careful and considered approach to moving that conversation around mental health and what they found over time was that by using the terminology around mental health. That has actually opened up that conversation.

In Be You language we are all working towards to achieve progress not perfection.

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