

## A place to learn and grow: Amir's Story

Amir's family was very isolated during his early years as they had no extended family living in Australia and they didn't know any other families with young children. Amir's mum, Nisha, and dad, Shaan, are originally from Nepal and were unable to enrol Amir in child care until they had received Permanent Residency status and could access Child Care Subsidy (CCS) to assist with child care costs.

As first time parents, Nisha and Shaan didn't realise that Amir was not reaching milestones across some areas of his development. It was only when he started child care at almost three, and they saw other children of Amir's age, that they realised that his development was significantly behind that of his peers.

When he started in our Johnson House centre Amir had very limited verbal skills, was unable to feed himself independently and did not know how to socialise and interact appropriately with other children.

The transition to child care was traumatic for Amir, and although Nisha and Shaan felt it was important for him to help him to learn and make friends, he found it extremely difficult to separate from his parents and he did not engage in the play-based educational program.

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***"It is wonderful how welcome we feel at The Infants' Home. The educators, speech pathologists and occupation therapists are always keen to share ideas and strategies with us to support Amir, and they love to celebrate his wins and achievements with us."* — Nisha, Amir's mum**

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When Amir had still not settled into Johnson House after two months his family and educators knew that this space was not working for him, and a new strategy was needed. It was decided to try enrolling Amir in our Gorton House toddler program at the beginning of 2019, as this centre's larger outdoor space and capacity for free-flow indoor and outdoor play might give Amir better opportunities to build his confidence and feel secure in child care.

Amir was also diagnosed with a global developmental delay in early 2019. Our integrated team of centre directors, educators and allied health specialists (occupational therapists, speech pathologists and social workers) began working collaboratively with Nisha and Shaan to implement individual and consistent strategies to support Amir's learning and development in the centre and at home.

Amir settled well into Gorton House toddlers and he quickly bonded with his new educators. With their support, and that of our onsite speech pathologists and occupational therapists, Amir began to participate in the daily program. He has made great progress and can now use some words to communicate his needs, wants and choices, feed himself with adult support and engages more



*An integrated small group with Occupational Therapist Justine.*

frequently and positively in play and interactions with other children. Amir made a smooth transition to Gorton House's preschool room at the beginning of this year, and he enjoyed participating in a 'Building Social Skills' integrated small group, facilitated by an educator and occupational therapist.

Nisha and Shaan were relieved to learn that Amir doesn't have to start school until 2022, as this means that he can spend another year in Gorton House preschool, getting ready for this next big step, which they anticipate will be a positive one!

With the help of our donors and supporters we are able to provide the additional early intervention services that Amir and his family receive at no additional cost to them. To make a one-off donation or to sign up to be a regular giver to help people like Amir and his family, please use the form on the back of this newsletter, call us on 02 9799 4844 or visit [theinfantshome.org.au](http://theinfantshome.org.au).



## Celebrating better times

This year more than ever it feels wonderful to be coming into the warmth and new life of spring time. After the many challenges of this year, things are beginning to settle into a 'new normal' groove, and we are now preparing for 2021 with optimism and anticipation of a better year to come.

Our early childhood care centres and family day care services are preparing to welcome new children and families in 2021, while getting ready to say goodbye and best wishes to those children and families who are moving off to school next year.

In this issue of *Insights* we say a special thank you to some of our wonderful Community and Corporate supporters—every ounce of your support counts and goes toward making a real difference to our children and families.

Finally, congratulations to Family Day Care Sydney Wide Educator Pooja on being selected as a finalist in this year's Inner West Small Business Awards—well done Pooja!

Elizabeth Robinson  
Chief Executive Officer

*each child,  
every opportunity*

# Thank you to our Community and Corporate supporters

*The support we receive from our community and corporate friends is always important, but this year it has been critical in helping us continue to deliver our unique and much-needed services and programs for children and families during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

### Specsavers Burwood

We have been a Community Partner with Specsavers Burwood since March 2018. A portion of the sale of every pair of glasses sold at the Westfield Burwood store is donated to us as part of the Specsavers Community Program. Since our partnership began, they have donated over \$5,000 to The Infants' Home. Thanks to the wonderful team at Burwood Specsavers!



### Hillview Farms

Hillview Farms, a fresh produce and grocery home delivery service, is partnering with The Infants' Home to support our fundraising. We are one of the community groups that can be selected by Hillview Farms' customers to receive a donation of 5% of their online sale. Hillview Farms is an Australian-owned business, dedicated to sustainable farming and delivering fresh produce, free of synthetic chemicals, direct from their farms to your door. Visit [hillviewfarms.com.au](http://hillviewfarms.com.au).

### City2Surf Community Fundraising

Thank you to our community supporters Cheryl, who is also a Burwood Specsavers team member, (pictured bottom left), and Maral and Margaret who participated in this year's virtual City2Surf. They raised over \$2,000 for The Infants' Home—thank you, we appreciate your energy and support, and hope to see you again at the 2021 City2Surf!



### Five Dock Officeworks

Thank you to Tracey and the team at Five Dock Officeworks who recently gave us an in-kind donation of five new large felt boards for each of our Early Childhood Education and Care Centres.

# Meet Family Day Care Educator Sally Kenny



Sally Kenny is an Educator with our Family Day Care Sydney Wide service. She has been with us since September 2018, having previously operated family day care services with Waverley Council and Multitask Family Day Care. She runs her current family day care service, 'Sally's School', from a purpose-built studio in the back yard of her semi-detached home in Kingsford.

Sally provides early childhood education and care for four children per day, ranging in ages from 19 months to four and half years. She believes that the 1:4 adult to child ratio in family day care enables educators to build strong relationships with children which supports the wellbeing and development of children and helps create a broader sense of community for families.

There are many benefits to being a family day care educator Sally says, but she feels that the one that really stands out for her is the privilege of working with young children. She is constantly reminded of how amazing they are and she loves being part of their learning and development. Having completed her Diploma in Early Childhood this year, Sally has an even deeper understanding of and respect for the importance of early years education.

Through her emergent curriculum Sally engages the children in her service in learning experiences based on their interests. She uses intentional teaching strategies to scaffold their learning in meaningful ways, ensuring this is child-led. Over the years Sally has introduced a variety of pets, including George the miniature dachshund, some native bees and two ducks and two chickens, all of whom have become part of the educational program.

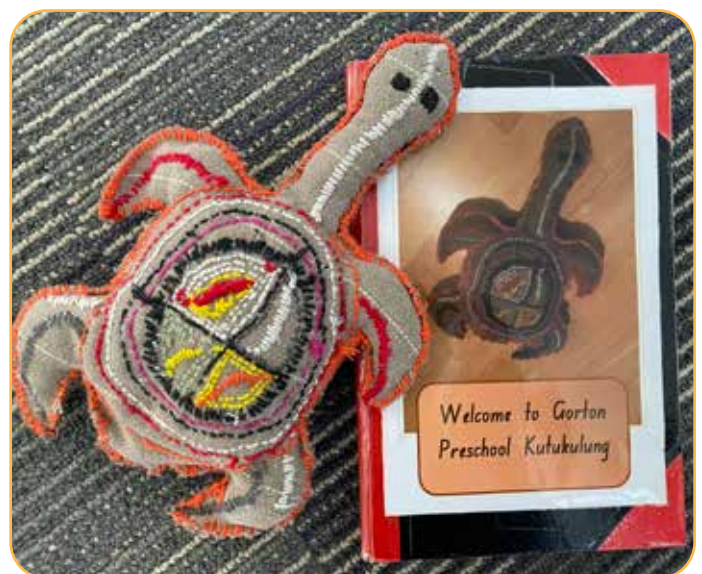
While working from home presents some challenges, such as being isolated from peers, Sally has found a way around this by collaborating with other educators to create her own family day care network. This also gives the children opportunities to be in larger groups, which supports their social and emotional growth.

Sally says that providing care for children within a home environment is unique and personal, and that the children who come to her service become part of her family. You can find Sally and her service on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/sallysschoolest2007>

## Warimi Mittigar (“Hello Friends”)

The children in our Gorton House preschool room have a friend called Kutukulung, which is the Aboriginal Darug language name for 'long necked turtle'. Kutukulung is a toy turtle who lives in the preschool, but travels home with children to share their adventures. Kutukulung has been with the children in Gorton House preschool since January, and has visited many of the children's homes (although this was interrupted for a while, because even Kutukulung spent some time in self-isolation when taking precautions against COVID-19). Kutukulung is indigenous to Wangal and Gadigal land; eastern long necked turtles were in abundance in the many wetlands that made up local areas all the way up and down the eastern coast.

Kutukulung has a special job in helping the children in Gorton House preschool bring the area's first language, Darug, back to the land on which it once flourished. Kutukulung travels with a special book that children and families read together, learning a little bit about our area's Indigenous history and the local language. Children and families then contribute to the book, adding photos and writing stories about the adventures they



have shared with Kutukulung during their time together. One family took Kutukulung to the zoo, hoping to see other turtles, while another went to their local wetlands in the hope that Kutukulung could visit the other long necked turtles they had spotted there in the past.

# Spring Harvest!

At the beginning of spring the children from Robinson House were keen to help our chef Charoen harvest some yummy spinach and broccoli from our kitchen garden for the week's lunch menu. The children were also very interested to learn more about Charoen's job as a chef as they have recently been doing lots of cooking and food preparation experiences. A visit to our onsite kitchen is also being planned so that the children can see where Charoen, Lisa and Michael prepare our daily meals.



# Our history



*Lady Woodward, our Patron in 1958, at the opening of an antique furniture exhibition.*

In 1958 our then committee President Mrs CP Johnson and our patron Lady Woodward helped to put together an antiques exhibition, with tickets sold to raise money for a new ward (which today is our Rigby House child care centre). There were some interesting items up for show including; a woman's eyebrow pencil from an Egyptian tomb, Babylonian seal, Louis XV cupboard, convict mug and flintlock pistols.



# Congratulations Pooja



Congratulations to Family Day Care Sydney Wide Educator Pooja who was a finalist in this years' Inner West Small Business Awards—great work Pooja!

*"Wow! What a journey. I started working as a child care worker 12 years ago as a casual, then in 2010 I got my first permanent position. From there I got my first job as a room leader in a centre in Croydon Park, and then started my own Family Day Care business five years ago. Now here I am becoming a finalist for the Inner West Small Business Awards! Thank you to all the families who have supported me all along my journey!"*

## ✂ Yes, I would like to help children like Amir at The Infants' Home.

I would like to make a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ today

I would like to become a regular giver, please debit \$ \_\_\_\_\_ monthly from my credit card.

My donation will be made by:  cheque (made payable to The Infants' Home Ashfield), OR by  credit card (Mastercard / Visa)

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Name on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### My contact details:

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Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_



Please return this form in the enclosed reply paid envelope, call 02 9799 4844 or email to fundraising@theinfantshome.org.au.

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