

‘Stronger bonds through enhanced communication’

Increasing engagement in childcare reporting through digital documentation.



From Vicki Skoulogenis - *Former President of Childcare NSW (ACA NSW)*

Voice of Experience: I have over 20 years’ professional childcare experience, operating 2 services of my own and serving on a number of Federal, National and State boards. A past President of Childcare NSW – now known as ACA NSW – for 4 years, and board member for 15 years. I’m committed to, and passionate about our industry and the children who develop within it.



Why move to Digital Technology?

Ease of use! Our staff were overloaded with paperwork that became more onerous by the month. It had been obvious from attending conferences and trade shows in recent years that Digital Technology was developing into the new ‘industry standard’. We carefully researched the market over 2 years and were disappointed to discover that the systems on offer were too complicated or lacked the features we required.

We needed something simple, effective and efficient for our staff and for the parents of our children. Kindyhub ticked all our boxes and we’ve been using it successfully for a couple of years now. It’s clear and easy to use for staff and families, with a clean look and feel which staff and parents respond well to.

Kindyhub is a tool for daily use.

Our educators access the system every day to produce the Daily Report for each child in their care; this is an up-to-date account of what’s happening in that child’s learning and development. Our Reports are customised so we maintain our own individuality as a childcare service provider within the marketplace.

All staff use the digital platform for creating and maintaining portfolios and documenting single observations. It has enabled us to remove paperwork and eliminate time spent on such unproductive tasks as cutting and pasting bits of paper into an assembled document. Together with the subsequent vast reduction in printing it means we now present a more sustainable, greener way of communicating with our families.



“The report is not just an information tool for the parents, but acts a catalyst for improved communications with children, prompting discussions on what occurred within the child’s day and allowing the whole family to be part of that experience.”

Kindyhub is easily accessible within a user-friendly application that everyone can use to great effect.

Achieving an ‘Exceeding’ rating

In terms of the new Assessment and Rating criteria within the industry, we are always looking to improve the service we provide. Traditionally, throughout Australia, one of the biggest difficulties for compiling evidence-based data has been getting written feedback from families. Our digital platform, Kindyhub, makes responding extremely easy for them, and that’s perfect for us – there’s a single button to click on every document we send out.

Whether it’s in an email, or to a mobile phone, families can respond immediately simply by clicking the button – and in our experience, they do. Our response statistics have improved dramatically, enabling us to gather the information required to help achieve the desired ‘Exceeding’ rating across all categories.

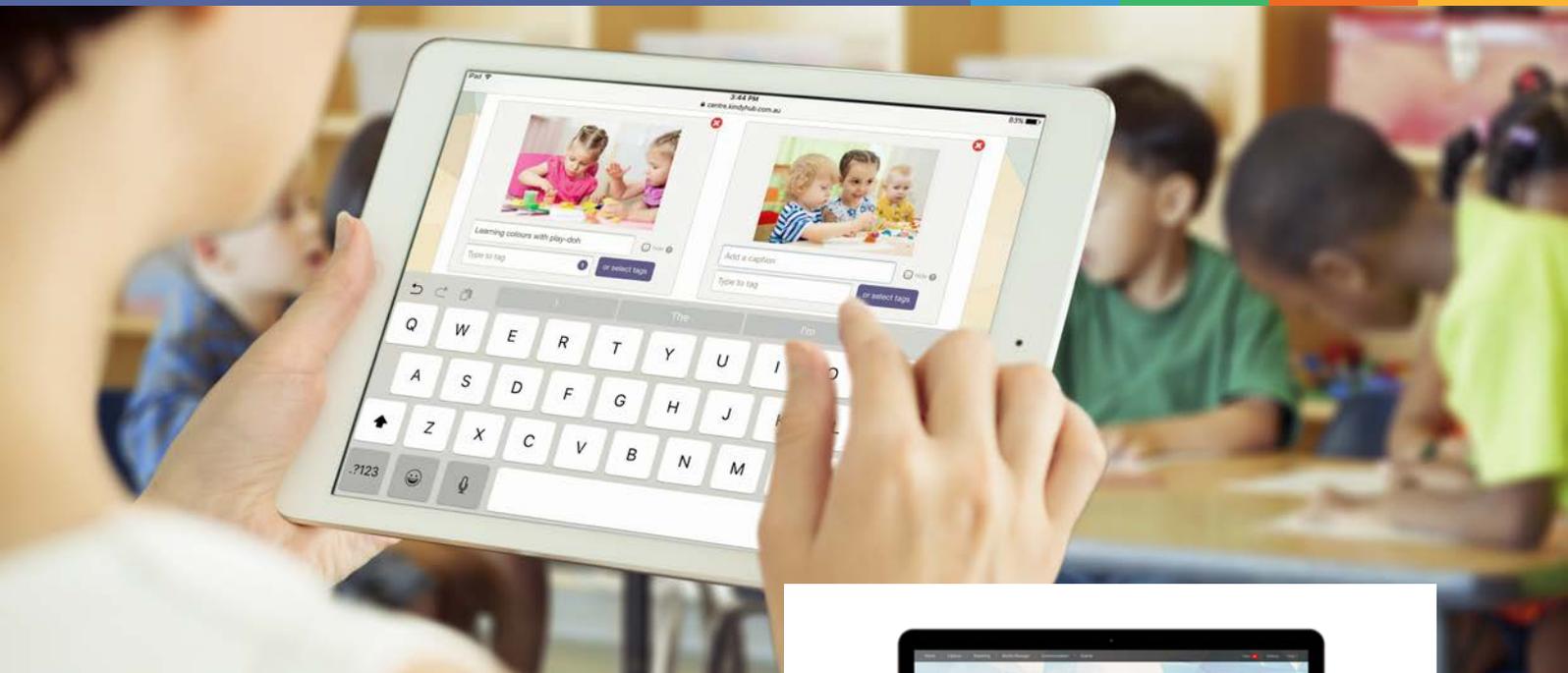
The Family experience of Kindyhub

In short, remarkable. On launching Kindyhub, we sent out a single email and were able to monitor a 98% read rate – something we could never measure previously. Parents are now accustomed to getting a Daily Report and when an internet outage prevented distribution they were straight onto the situation, chasing the missing report. The report is not just an information tool for the parents, but acts a catalyst for improved communications with children, prompting discussions on what occurred within the child’s day and allowing the whole family to be part of that experience.

KEY FEATURES

- Two-way communication allows quick correspondence with parents about anything and everything.
- Built-in planning tools, including events, calendar and messaging.
- Automatically tracks who has/hasn’t opened messages.
- Input of information related to the Australian Curriculum – e.g. literacy, maths, science etc.





Adapting to Kindyhub as an Educator

The process of adapting couldn't have been easier or more straightforward. Rather than the detailed training procedure we'd imagined, the system was so intuitive and straightforward that a half-hour demonstration and some hands-on 'trial and error' soon had everyone proficient in using the system.

Since implementation of Kindyhub a number of new staff have joined our team; none has required any formal training other than a quick demonstration of the Daily Report and Observations. Everyone has taken responsibility for their own learning about the system by using it, and the application's ease-of-use supports this type of Professional Development.

For any centre operator, having educators hit the ground running after a 15-20 minute training session is an enormous benefit.



"Kindyhub enables adults – educators and parents – to experience the world from the child's perspective by capturing and sharing the images and experiences uploaded by the children."



The kindyhub platform for educators

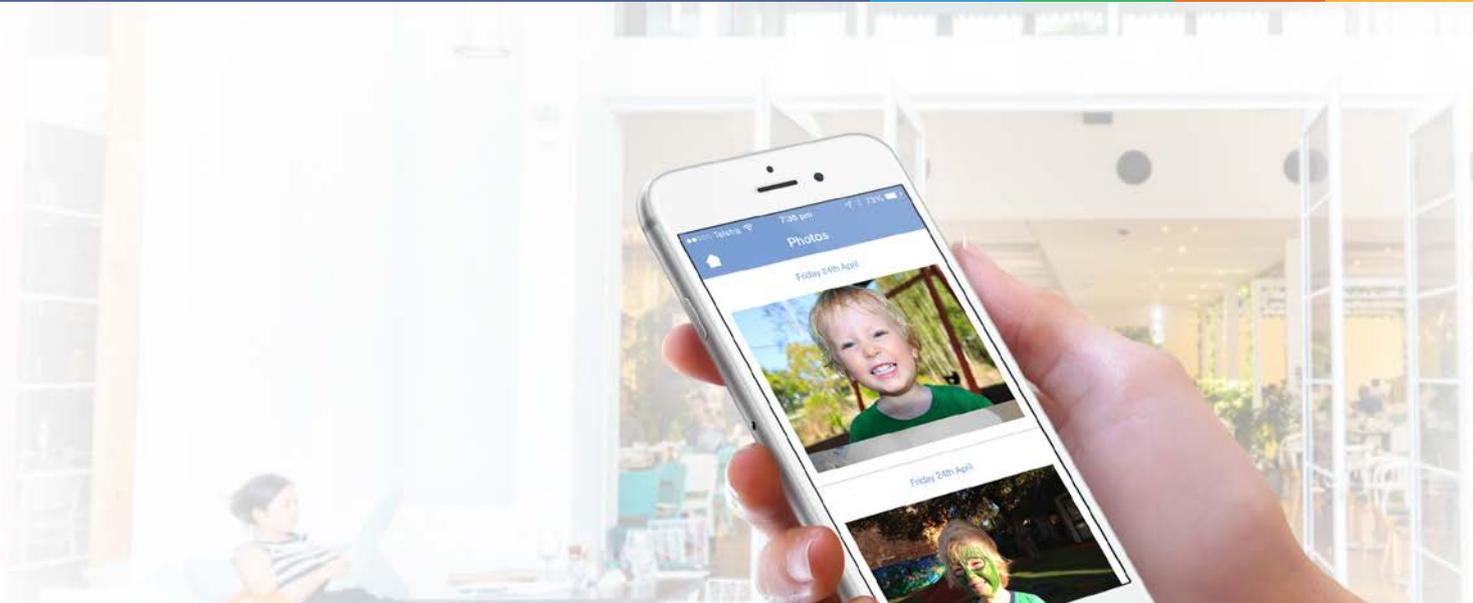
Programme planning using Kindyhub

The Organiser within the platform is something we'd hoped would finally remove the last of our paperwork, and so it has proved. We no longer have to shuffle between two separate programs (e.g. Excel and Word) now all the information we require can be efficiently recorded in a central place.

For instance, if we are planning an experience and need to extend on that experience, we can do it instantly within the Organiser. Data is recorded immediately and the next day it triggers what you need to do to ensure appropriate action is taken. This works fantastically well for us and ensures nothing gets forgotten in the midst of a busy schedule.

Linking Programmes and subsequent Experiences

The Organiser is populated by data from the Daily Report, adding experiences on a daily basis and prompting a follow-up or lead or child's interest. However, children's Observations are also fed into the organiser, generating follow-up actions of their own. The Organiser links up all the information showing the flow throughout the programming cycle and making sure nothing goes missing and everything is followed-up or extended on as necessary. This is of great benefit from an Assessment Rating perspective as it gives us exactly the information that assessors are looking for.



Enhanced communication with families

We've demonstrated the effectiveness of our general daily communications with families via Kindyhub, but another important aspect for us is when something out of the ordinary occurs, such as an outbreak of a highly infectious disease like Whooping Cough. Urgent messages can be sent quickly, with an attachment from the Department of Health, giving as much information as possible.

The system's statistics let us see who has opened and read the information, prompting us to follow-up with any parents who haven't for whatever reason. Aside from the unusual events, communication of standard information such as newsletters is now a much more streamlined and effective process. No more printing or emailing newsletters only to have them diverted to junk mail.



“All data must be stored on Australian soil. Kindyhub is based here in Australia and complies completely with all relevant legislation.”

The simple, easy to use interface saves time on documentation; time that educators can spend with children instead.

Kindyhub lets us quickly create and send a short written introduction with our newsletter attached. Special events and reminders are all sent via the system and parents have come to rely on this service to keep them up-to-date. The most enriching feature of the platform's communication capabilities is that it's two-way – parents can correspond quickly with us.

They can acknowledge receipt of information, can advise us when a child won't be present on any given day and instantly update us with new address or contact details. The all-around improvement in communication has been of great benefit to both the centre and to our families, enhancing the already excellent personal communication channels we enjoy.

Interacting with the team at Kindyhub

Throughout the implementation process and since, we've certainly put them through their paces – and they've never come up short. Whenever we need to call for assistance or advice, they're always very accommodating with exceptional phone manners. Each of our requests is attended to with patience and outstanding attention to detail.

Whether we contact the team by phone or email, we get the same quick initial response so we know our problem, and our thoughts on the matter are with the right people and are being fully considered. That is followed-up by swift resolution once the team has discussed the issue. I think it's important these days being able to speak to people rather than simply wait for an email and the team at Kindyhub are incredibly co-operative in this respect.