

24-25 June 2026 | Online

Hosted by the **Centre for Policy Futures**
(The University of Queensland) and
supported by the **Australian Women's
and Gender Studies Association**

Organising Committee

Dr Belinda Eslick (The University of Queensland)
Dr Fabiane Ramos (University of Southern Queensland)
Dr Laura Roberts (Flinders University)
Dr Felicity Joseph (University of New England)
Dr Emma McNicol (Monash University)
Dr Briony Lipton (UNSW Canberra)
Dr Sarah Duffy (Western Sydney University)
A/Prof Emilee Gilbert (Western Sydney University)
Ms Emma Lang (Director, Effortless Communications)

Who Cares? Imagining Feminist Solutions to Australia's Childcare Crisis

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE 2026

9.30AM

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Dr Belinda Eslick (The University of Queensland), **Dr Liz Young** (Centre for Policy Futures UQ), **Dr Sarah Casey** (Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association), **Dr Felicity Joseph** (University of New England)

10.00AM

Dr Somayeh Ba Akhlagh (University of New England): 'Waiting for Care: Childcare Shortages in Regional Areas and Their Impact on Working Mothers'. **Isabella Wilson** (The University of Sydney): "'When it Comes to the Safety of my Child": Mothers' Perspectives of Male Carers in Early Childhood Education and Care Settings'. **Dr Alice Cranney** (Southern Cross University): 'Caring in the Classroom and at Home: The Experiences of Australian Secondary School Teachers who are also Raising Young Children'.
Chair: Dr Briony Lipton

11.15AM

Morning tea break

11.30AM

Dr Maddison Forcha (Macquarie University): 'Matrescence as Self-Narrative'. **Ruke Kong** (University of Ottawa): 'The Impossible Position: Maternal Normativity and the Symbolic Limits of Care Reform'. **Dr Felicity Joseph** (University of New England): 'Between the Hyper-Professional and the Hyper-Maternal: Inclusive Childcare and "Wanting the Good of the Other"'.
Chair: Dr Emma McNicol

1.00PM

Lunch break

2.00PM

Associate Professor Julie Smith (Australian National University): 'Infant Care as Sexed Care Work: Equality for Mothers via Reducing the Cost of Care'. **Professor Kylie Smith** (The University of Melbourne): 'Pitting Women Against Women'. **Dr Talia Fell** (The University of Queensland): 'Teresa Brennan's "Foundational Fantasy" and the Devaluing of Care'. **Dr Belinda Eslick** (The University of Queensland): 'Slowing Down to the Speed of Life: Framing the Work/Care "Juggle" and Parents' Time Poverty as *Haste*'.
Chair: Dr Felicity Joseph

3.30PM

Afternoon tea break

3.45PM

The Economic Conditions of Mothering in Australia: Past, Present, and Towards a Feminist Future (Panel Discussion): **Associate Professor Luara Ferracioli** (The University of Sydney), **Associate Professor Emilee Gilbert** (Western Sydney University), **Dr Kate Murphy** (Monash University), **Associate Professor Leonora Risse** (Queensland University of Technology), **Associate Professor Julie Smith** (Australian National University).
Chair: Dr Belinda Eslick

5.00PM

Concluding remarks (finishing at 5.15pm)

DAY 2: THURSDAY 25 JUNE 2026

9.30AM

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

9.45AM

Dr Sophie Brock (The Good Enough Mother podcast): 'The Care Career Conundrum: Invisible Labour and the Contradictions of Contemporary Motherhood Beneath Australia's Care Crisis'.

Lucinda McKimm (Ready or Not podcast): 'The Tension (and Intersection) of the Perception of Choice (and the Systems that Influence those Choices)'. **Tahlia Isaac** (Project: herSELF): 'Remembering we have Mothers in Prison'.

Jane Saxton (Early Childhood Educator and Higher Degree by Research student): 'Perspectives from Inside the Sector: Care, Relationships and the Need for Change'.

Chair: Dr Fabiane Ramos

11.15AM

Morning tea break

11.35AM

Tegan Gilchrist (The Parenthood): 'Care is Infrastructure: Building an Australia Where Every Family can Flourish'. **Virginia Tapscott and Alannah Batho** (Parents Work Collective): 'A Holistic Approach to Early Learning and Care'.

Mary Winkels (Care Economy Consultant): 'The Invisible Care Workforce: Family Choice and the Future of Child Care'.

Chair: Emma Lang

12.50PM

Lunch break

1.50PM

Dr Terese Edwards (Single Mother Families Australia): 'The Care Argument: A Policy Debate That Should Have Ended Long Ago'. **Jenny Davidson** (Council of Single Mothers and their Children): 'The Critical Importance of Childcare for Single Mothers'. **Debbie Kilroy OAM** (Sisters Inside): 'The Care Crisis We Created: Imprisonment, Child Removal and the Punishment of Mothers'.

Chair: Dr Emilee Gilbert

3.10PM

Afternoon tea break

3.30PM

Roundtable discussion

4.45PM

Concluding remarks (finishing at 5.00pm)