ACA Victoria Executive Board Nomination 2026

Nominee: Jennifer Kearney

Service Provider: Kekeco Childcare Pty. Ltd.

Bio:

Jennifer is a Managing Director of Kekeco Childcare Pty Ltd. which operates three regional early learning centres across Mitchell Shire.
Since the opening of the first centre in Kilmore in 2007, Jennifer, has been an active member of ACA Victoria.
Kekeco Childcare, the business she founded, joined ACA Victoria that same year.
With a corporate background in finance and marketing, Jennifer has brought her expertise to the ACA Victoria committee since 2011, where her contributions have been invaluable.
Her leadership and strategic approach continue to enhance the growth and development of the organisation and the services she leads.

Describe your experience in the early childhood education and care sector.

In 2007 I took over the operations of a 120 place early learning Centre in Kilmore- at the time it had 30 children enrolled and 7 staff working there. Over the past 19 years I have grown our business from 1 site to 7 sites - then reduced the number back to 3. Located in rural Victoria but within the northern growth corridor - we are now experiencing a lot of competitors entering the small towns where we operate.

Tell us what makes ACA Victoria's mission meaningful to you.

The fact that we are focused on positive outcomes for children attending our services as well as representing the independent operators who are part of our member ship group

Describe any Board Leadership experience you have had to date.

Before becoming an Early Childhood Education Approved Provider - I have held the following Board positions 1) Trust member of Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust, 2) Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee at GMCT, 3) member of the Tarrawarra Abbey Business Advisory group, 4) Chair of the Templestowe Cemetery Trust 5) Member of the Executive of Australian Childcare Alliance since 2010.

Outline any skills, connections, resources, or expertise you can provide to improve the services ACA Victoria offers to its members.

Working in Regional Victoria I bring a different perspective to the threats and challenges within our industry especially where supply and demand are able to identified at a micro perspective.

Confirm that you can commit to the time required for meetings and other duties as outlined in the Executive Board Position Description.

I confirm that I have the time available to undertake the tasks required for meeting and other duties as outlined.

What are your thoughts on the key challenges and opportunities facing the Early Childhood Education and Care sector?

Current Challenges 1) financial viability of the sector due to rapid changes in governance around child safety. 2) increase in developers assuming that the industry is still "profitable" and worth investing in 3) staff expectations when it comes to wages and government Worker Retention Grant extensions

Indicate how you might use your time on the ACA Victoria's Board to address these challenges and opportunities.

I continue to provide feedback as it relates to our services and other services within rural Victoria.

What are your ideas to enhance ACA Victoria’s engagement with its members?

As already discussed at one of our recent meetings - using QR codes to get responses from members more quickly. Analysis of the responses to create meaningful data sets to enable us to be more effective in our engagement experiences