

Joan Matheson Award for Distinguished Service

This award was introduced at our 100th birthday, the purpose being to honour people who have made a significant contribution organizationally to the support of play in Australia.

The inaugural winner was Mary Jeavons, followed by Pattie Morgan, Cathy Kiss, and Judy McKinty.

At the 2018 Annual General Meeting, Robyn Monro Miller was presented with this award.

Robyn is the Chief Executive Officer of Kids Giving Back, a NSW organisation which provides meaningful, hands on volunteering experiences for children and young people 6-18 years old and their families. and for many years was the Executive Director of Network of Community Activities in NSW and is the current Chairperson of the NSW Children's Week Committee.

Robyn's has over 25 years' experience working with children and families across Education, the community sector, and local government. With qualifications in education, children's services, community management, and training and workplace assessment she is a frequent guest speaker at conferences and seminars across Australia and internationally as well as a spokesperson on children's issues in the National media. As Editor of the quarterly newspaper "Network News" her advocacy work extends to the written word and she is a regular contributor to newsletters and websites on the topic of middle childhood, children's services, leadership, and the importance of play .

Robyn has represented the School age care sector at a State and National level for the past 25 years as Chair of the National Out of School Hours Services Association (NOSHSA), delegate to the National Children's Services Forum (NCSF), NSW Children's Services Forum, NSW Industry Liaison forum, Vice President of Contact Inc. for Remote and Isolated Families and a member of the Executive of the NSW Children's Week Committee. Her bi-partisan advocacy has included presentations at a number of Government inquiries and her commitment to children recognized through representation on key Australian Ministerial and Government Advisory Councils since 1996. Highlights of this advocacy being her work on the development of the first National Quality Assurance system for Out of School Hours Services in Australia and Chairing the Inclusion Sub-Committee for the Commonwealth Child Care Advisory Council and it's report to the Commonwealth Government 'Child Care beyond 2001'. Robyn was one of the champions for the development of the first Australian school age care framework and on the steering committee for the development of "My Time, Our Place."

A member of the International Play Association since attending her first IPA conference in Melbourne in 1993, Robyn was formally co-opted to the position of Vice President of the International Play Association in 2012. Prior to this time Robyn had served in the role of Regional Vice President. In 2012 Robyn was part of the international delegation to the United Nations in Geneva to progress the development of the UN General Comment on Article 31 "The child's right to play". In 2013, Robyn facilitated an International World Café on the General Comment.

In 2017 Robyn was elected President of the IPA and is the first Australian to hold that position in the 56 year history of the International Play Association.

Robyn has been an active Play Australia member for the last 20 years, supporting Play Australia in a variety of initiatives and is a member of the National Board.