6 key focus points for your childcare's website success
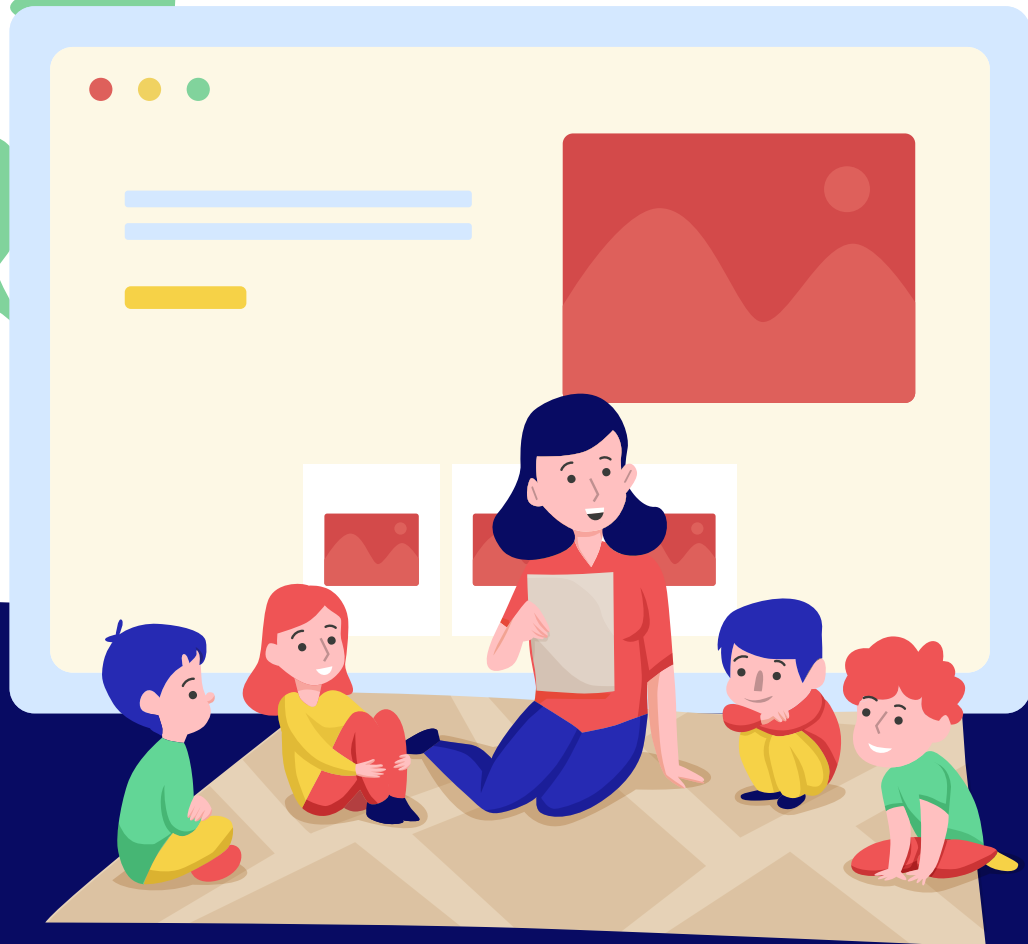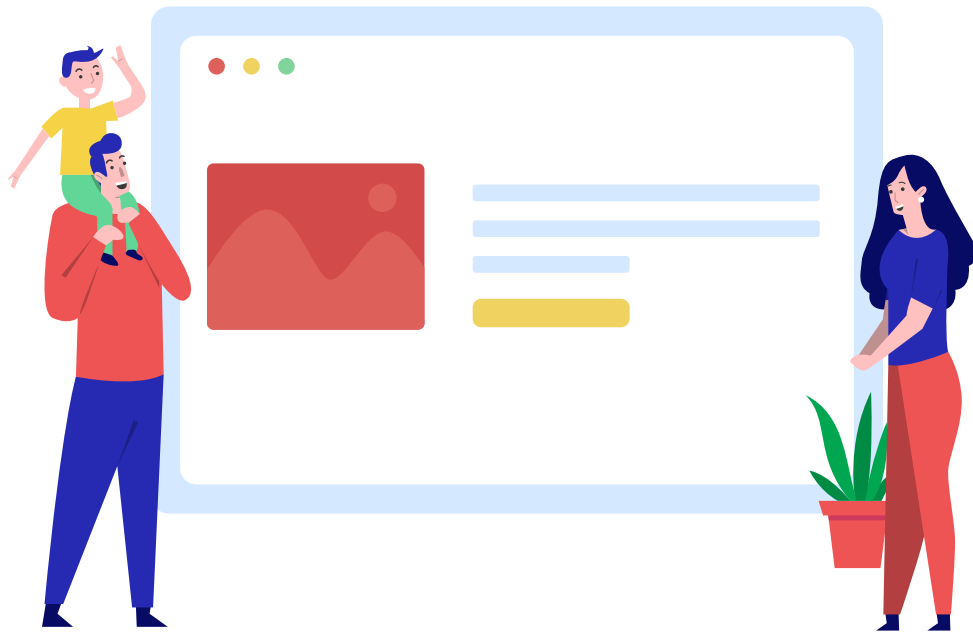
How's your website?

Your website should be a key sales platform for your childcare.

It's one of the first things that your potential families will see when they're searching for a childcare in your area.

Just like owning a car, it's important that your website has regular maintenance to ensure that it's delivering the best possible results.

With regular care and maintenance, you can ensure that your website is relevant to your target families and that it stands out from the competition.

A great website will not only attract new families, but a professional website will also help you attract and retain quality staff, and by providing key information online, free up hours of your staff's time spent answering family queries and requests.

It's not possible to build a website and magically have families find you.

Unfortunately, the "If you build it, they will come" mantra, does not crossover well into websites.

If you don't look after your website, make it easy to use, and keep it relevant for potential families, you run the risk of losing new families to your competitors.

In this short guide, we've put together 6 key areas that you should focus your attention on, to ensure that your website is operating at the highest level. The great thing is that you can get started with each of these today!

1

WEBSITE DESIGN

The design of your website and how it displays across different devices (desktop, tablet, mobile) is one of the most important things to get right.

"Responsive design" is a term that you may have previously heard. It refers to a website design that scales down to suit the size of the screen on which it is being displayed. This ensures that no matter what device is being used to visit your website, it delivers a great experience.

Why is this important you ask? Well, the average website will get 40% - 50% of traffic from users on mobile and tablet devices. This number can be as high as 80% for childcare websites as parents and carers seek information on the go.

Does it make sense to miss out on half of the potential families that visit your website, just because it didn't load well on their device?

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Tip!

Try loading your website on your smartphone and on a tablet device such as an iPad. Is the website easy to use without needing to zoom in? Can you understand the message on your website?

Updating your website can be similar to decorating your home.

Just like other technology industries, the web design industry moves forwards at a rapid pace. A design element that was a great idea and attractive in 2010, may not have the same impact on your website visitors today. It's important to regularly review and assess your website to ensure that it still has an impact on your target audience.

Refreshing the colours of your walls or choice of furnishings can have a great impact on the look and feel of your centre. The same goes for your website. Giving your website a fresh coat of paint or updating the look and feel, helps to keep you in touch with your families and take advantage of modern design trends.
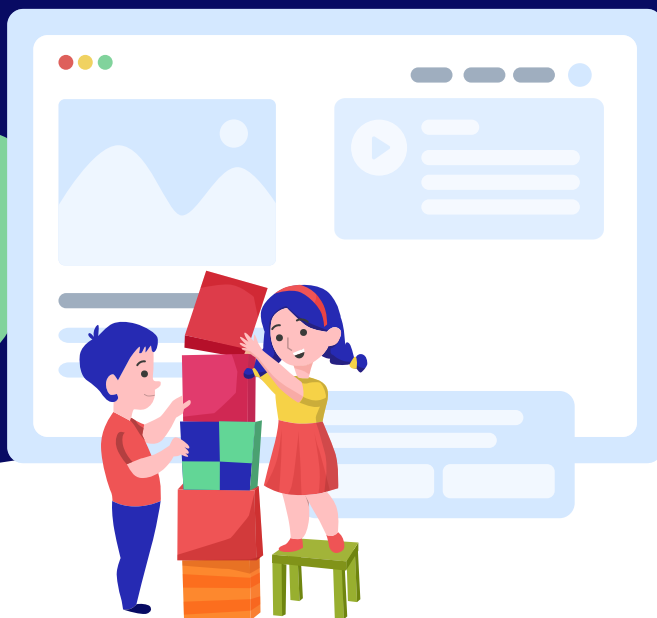
Tip!

Take an objective look at your website, as if you were a potential parent or carer.

Does your website feel like it presents the right message? How does your website compare to your competitors?
Are you providing information/ policies clearly and easily?

Would you leave your kids there?

USER EXPERIENCE

A poor user experience is one of the most common reasons for a visitor to leave your website.

How easy is your website to use for your visitors?

Will your prospective families know what you are about, and what environment/experiences you can provide for their children? Is it easy to contact you? Can website visitors easily find their way around the site and the information they are looking for? Are you building trust with your website visitors?

These are some of the things we will be covering in this section.

User Experience is quite a vast topic, but here's 5 things that a visitor should be able to do when they reach your website:

01
Understand your message

You have around 5 seconds to capture the attention of a visitor when they come to your website. Your USP (Unique Selling Proposition) should explain what you do, who you do it for, and why the visitor should choose you over your competition. The visitor needs to know that they are in the right place. A great photo is an easy way to show off your centre.
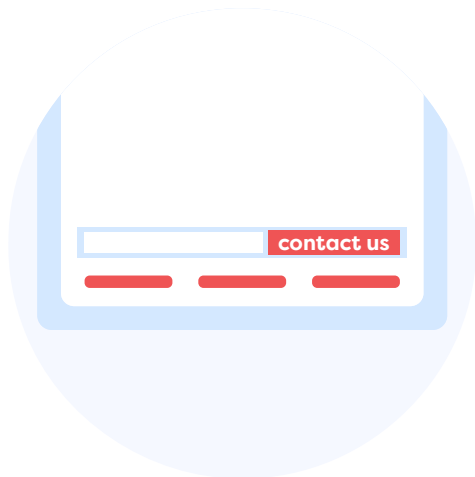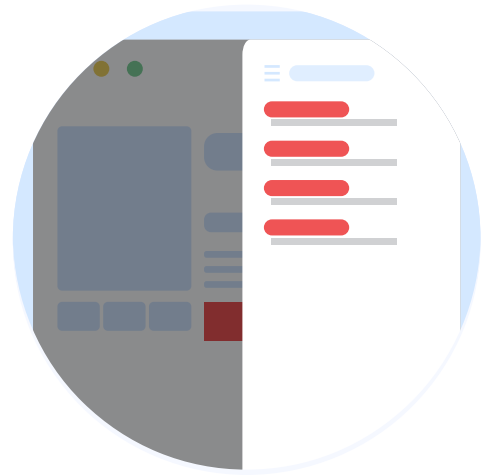
02
Easily contact your childcare

Whether you want to receive enquiries via telephone, email or a well-constructed paper aeroplane, you need to have clear and visible contact details on your website's pages.

03
Navigate your site with ease

Your navigation should be intuitive and easy to use, so visitors can browse your website and engage with your content.

04
Follow a clear call to action

Every page on your website should have a purpose for your visitors. If you're looking to generate enquiries from your website, then your Call To Action (CTA) could be an enquiry form or a button that links through to your Contact page, enrollment form or even a tour booking tool.

05
Review trust factors

A potential customer is going to be someone who doesn't yet know or trust you. Trust factors such as your national rating, certifications, case studies, testimonials and reviews, can build trust in the eyes of the visitor. Remember children can also give great quotes (with parent approval of course!).
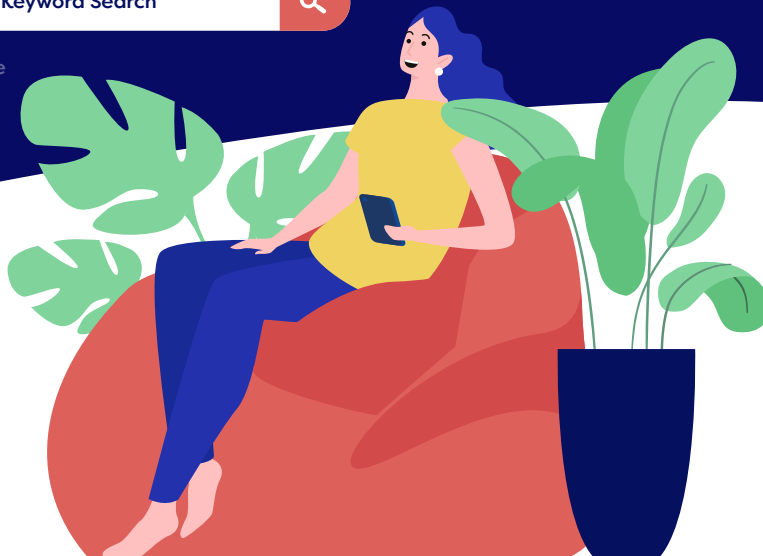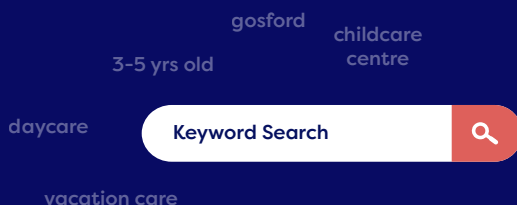
Tip!

Take a look at your website and review the above points. Is your website easy for your visitors to use?

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SEARCH ENGINE VISIBILITY

gosford

3-5 yrs old

childcare centre

daycare

Keyword Search 🔍

vacation care

It's important that your website is <mark>visible to search engines</mark> (Google), so that you can generate success. When we talk about search engine visibility, we're referring to the results that are shown when a prospective family types a search query into Google.

For example, you are based in Gosford, you'll want your website to show up on the first page of the search results for "Childcare Gosford".

<mark>When your business shows up on the first page, ideally in the first few results, you have far more chance of someone who is searching for a childcare in your area, clicking through to your website.</mark>

Where is your website currently ranking in Google for search queries that are related? (Think childcare, long daycare, vacation care, etc)

Tip!

Open your web browser in incognito mode. This is important as we want to use a clean version of your browser, without having any search history or preference and not being logged into any accounts - e.g. a Google account.

Next, load up a search engine such as Google. In your new Google window, type in search queries that are related to your childcare. Using the example of a Gosford based longday care, you might type in:

- Childcare Gosford
- Longday care Gosford
- Vacation day Gosford
- OOSH Gosford
- before/afterschool care Gosford
- Daycare Gosford

Make a note of the results that you find.

Remember you can use abbreviations and relevant suburbs inside your town or city, if appropriate.

For any pages where you already rank on the first page of the search results, you're doing great! If you're not, then there's an opportunity for improvement.
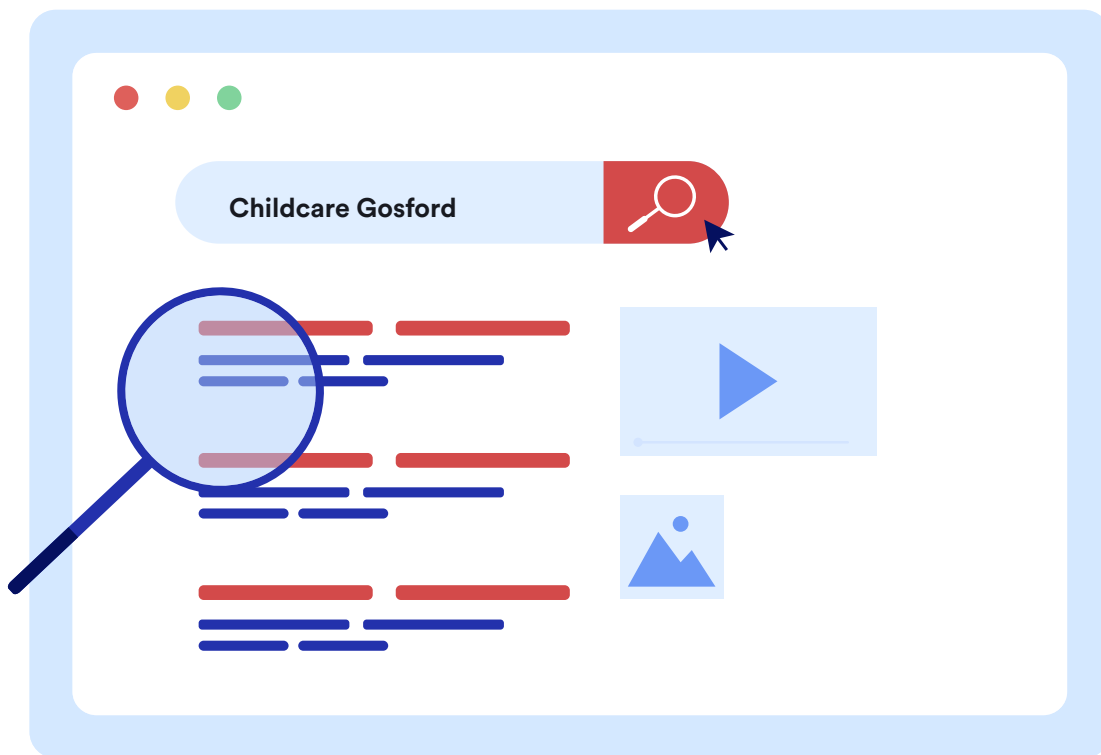
CONVERSION OPTIMISATION
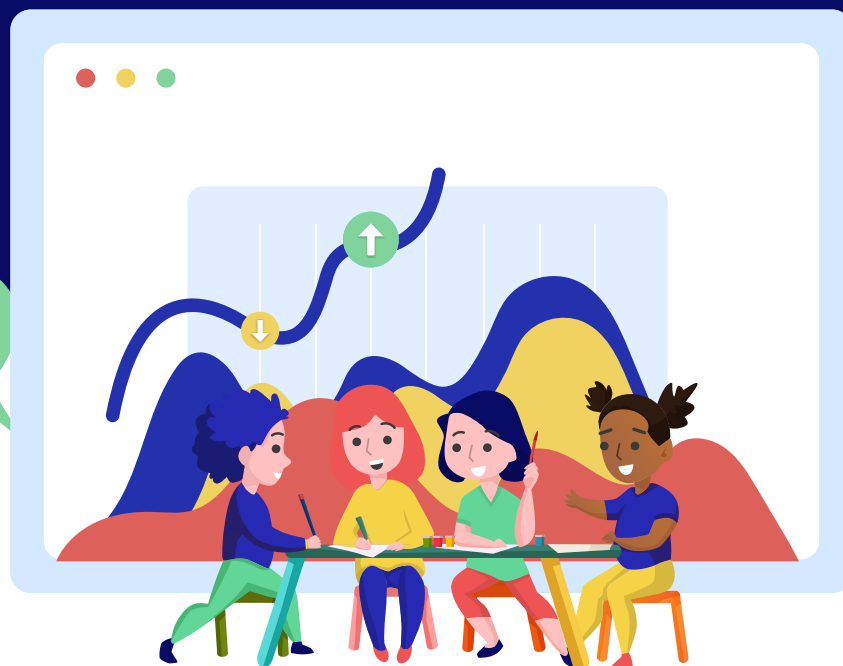
Conversion optimisation is the process where you look to increase the percentage of visitors to your website who carry out a specific action - e.g. make an enquiry or book a tour. The conversion rate is defined as a percentage.

Conversion Rate = [Action Number] / [Visitor Number] * 100

For example, let's assume that your website received 5,000 visitors last month and you had 65 enquiries about your services. Using the above formula, we would divide 65 by 5,000,which gives us 0.013. We then multiply this by 100, which gives us our percentage: 1.3%.

So how do you improve this?

Here's 5 recommendations:

01
Noticeable phone number

Your phone number should be prominent on your website and easy for a website visitor to find. Consider using a larger font and placing it at the top of the site, where a visitor doesn't need to scroll down to find it. Make sure it's clickable!

02
Primary call to action

Prominent use of compelling text and buttons help to encourage website visitors to take the desired action that you want, on each page.
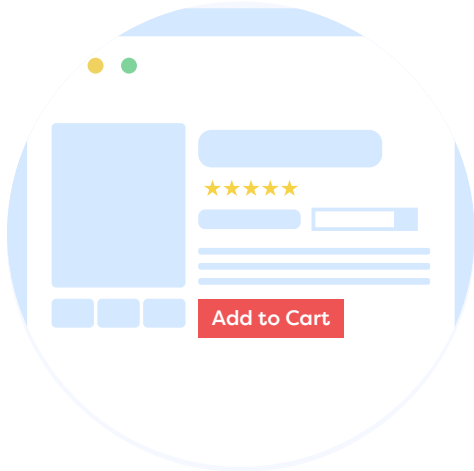
03
Lead capture forms

Capturing details of your website visitors allows you to follow up with them directly to answer any questions and provide more details on your childcare.

04
Testimonials / reviews

Testimonials and reviews are important trust factors that help visitors to trust that you can deliver a great service and kids are happy with you. These should be featured on your home page, important service pages and even as case studies.

05
Online chat / help

Offering a live chat service allows you to connect with website visitors in real-time and answer any questions. You can also have a help knowledge base or frequently asked questions page. Ensure that you can support your chat if you decide on a live stream.
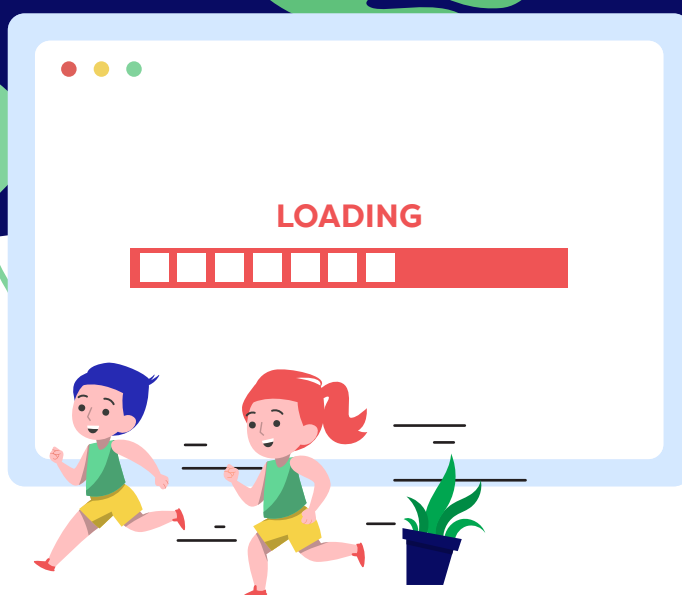
Tip!

If you aren't currently collecting data on the number of visitors to your website, you can setup a free Google Analytics account and start tracking this.

5

WEBSITE SPEED

With website speed, first impressions really do count. A slow website will harm your childcare. You have around 5 seconds to capture the attention of your website visitor, otherwise, you run the risk of them leaving and visiting a competitor's site instead.

Delivering a fast website experience allows you to build trust with your visitors, keeps them engaged with your content, and helps them understand what you do.

Website speed is also a ranking factor with the major search engines. A faster website, not only provides a better user experience but also benefits your search rankings.

The speed of your website will usually come down to the following factors:

01
Quality of your website hosting company

Cheaper companies that offer "unlimited" services for less than the price of a coffee each month, aren't always the best option.
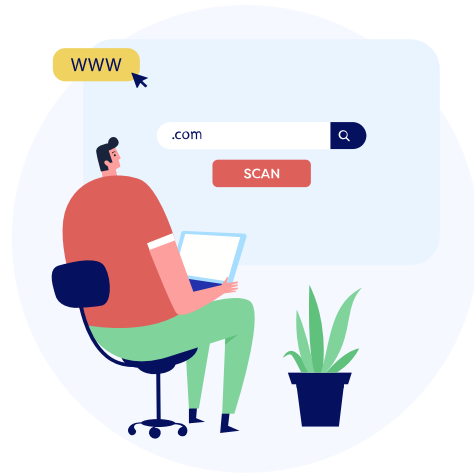
02
Size of your website

The size of code elements that make up your website, any images that you use on the site, videos, etc. The smaller the better here.

03
External requests

In an ideal world you want to try and minimise any external requests for content. By this, we mean embedding content such as an Instagram feed or Facebook content. These load last on your page and can cause slowdowns.
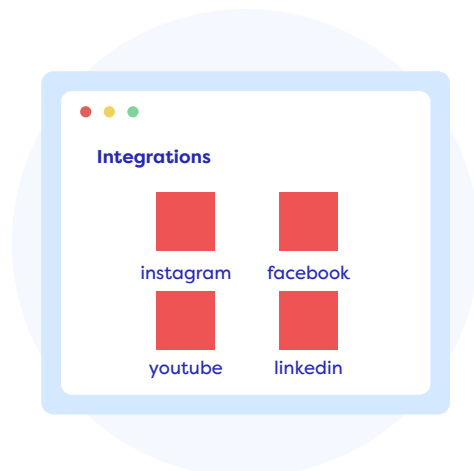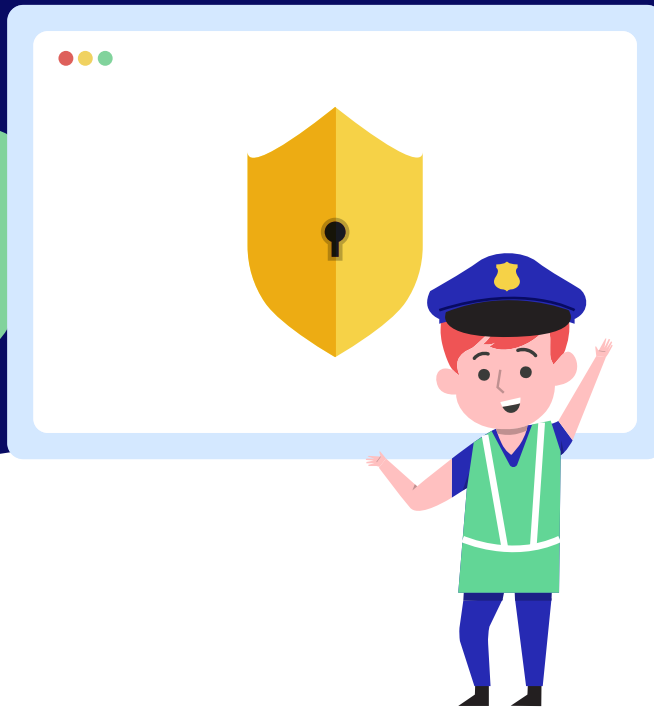
Tip!

You can check how fast your website loads by going to a website such as https://gtmetrix.com. Simply type in your website address, choose the test location nearest to you and start the test.

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WEBSITE SECURITY

Whilst not specifically related to sales on the front-end, the security of your website is vitally important. If your website were to be hacked or go offline, you can instantly lose credibility with both existing and potential families.

You might ask why would someone care to hack your childcare website in Gosford, because they shouldn't consider you to be important... and it's a good question to ask!

Malicious attacks on websites are not just about stealing data these days. Many attacks can also be aimed at using your website to send out spam emails or even intercept informations to use in malicious ways.

What can you do to keep your website secure?

01
Always keep your website software updated

Your website may have regular core updates, security fixes or plugin updates available. These can usually be managed and updated through your admin dashboard. Installing updates and security fixes help to keep you protected from possible exploits and malicious attacks.

02
Backup your website

It's always a good idea to backup data. We all know someone who has lost family photos or important documents after a computer crash. The same type of issues exist for your website. Your hosting company may provide backups, but you should have your own backup solution that automatically backs up your website regularly and saves this data with a secure third party - e.g. Dropbox, Google Drive or Amazon's S3 service.

03
Use strong passwords

Your password is the front door key to your website. Using an insecure password runs the risk of a malicious attacker breaking in and causing havoc. Use a website such as https://strongpasswordgenerator.com to generate a strong password (letters, numbers and special characters). Passwords should be updated regularly, at least every 3-6 months.

04
Use a password manager

In today's modern world, you should never be sharing passwords via email or similar methods. You'll also find that strong passwords can be quite difficult to remember! Thankfully there are password manager tools such as 1Password & LastPass, which will help you securely store and use your passwords.

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Tip!

Log-in to your website and check to see if there are any updates that need to be actioned. Make a note to do this at least once every 2 weeks.
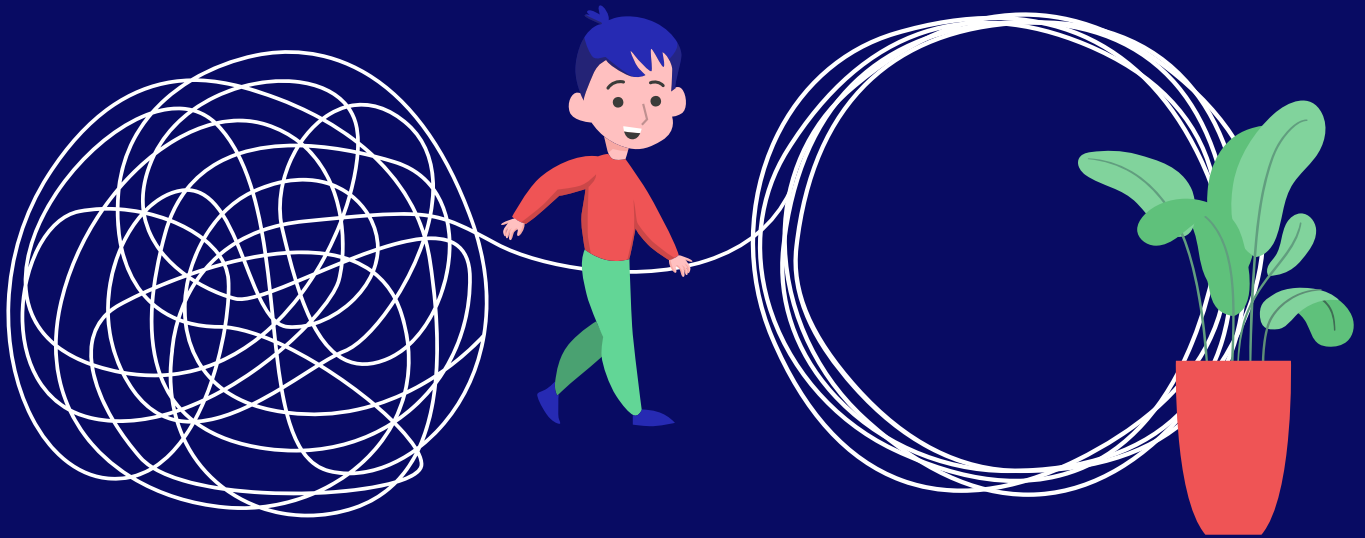
WRAPPING UP

We hope you've enjoyed our short guide on the 6 Key Focus Points for Childcare's Website Success.

By focusing on the 6 sections that we've walked you through above and carrying out regular maintenance on your childcare website, you can keep your childcare business moving forwards.

If you have provided your email address, we've got some additional tips and ideas that we'll send you over the next few days, with some more insights on the above topics. If you haven't provided it, and want to receive then please send us an email at team@mywebadvantage.com.

If you have any questions in the meantime, or would like to understand a little more about anything in our free guide, please get in touch.

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Hey!
Would love to
hear from you!