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Winter 2012



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## CHILD ADVOCACY

Is Mandatory Reporting  
Of Child Maltreatment  
A Good Idea?

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We review the 2012  
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# Inside this issue...

Swings+Roundabouts June 2012

## Winter 2012

### 7 FROM THE EDITOR

### 8 CEO'S MESSAGE

### 9 SO YOU KNOW

### 11 ECC ART COMPETITION

### 12 BUDGET 2012

What's in it for ECE?

### 14 CHILD ADVOCACY

Is Mandatory Reporting Of Child Maltreatment A Good Idea?

### 15 COMMUNITY HUBS - A FAMILY SOLUTION

### 20 INNOVATION IN ECE PEDAGOGY

### 26 CHILD ADVOCACY

ECC CEO Condemns Dog Attacks on Children

### 27 PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

### 30 ECC CONFERENCE 2012

We review the latest conference

### 38 RESOURCE REVIEWS

### 41 TRAINING DIRECTORY

### 42 MEMBER BENEFITS PROGRAMME

### 46 LAST LAUGH

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# FROM THE Editor



**Education never stops, it is a life-long journey. Read Swings & Roundabouts today and keep the journey alive**

In last issue's editorial I encouraged you all to be fearless. In tight times like these we need to be fearless and move ahead despite the daily struggle of keeping your business going or working with a reduced budget. Hopefully the articles in this issue will encourage you to reflect on what you believe is quality education and act on these beliefs.

The government released its Budget on Thursday 24th May. Read our article which assesses the impact for the ECE sector.

If you want to make change and fully commit to what you believe is quality education but feel reluctant due to the instability of the economy or not sure of how to take that initial step read the article on "World-class Curriculum". This story is about an innovative Australian educator who

believes in the value of music and wanted to make a difference to all children. Read about her journey and be inspired.

There has been much talk about increasing participation in ECE and the need to engage families and build community. Under the Community Hub theme Clare Wells explains where the concept comes from and how she has seen it work in the UK. Plus we have two articles sharing how others are creating stronger communities here in New Zealand.

In the last issue we had an article discussing the pros and cons of reviewing Te Whāriki. To keep this debate alive we have an article in this issue contrasting the differences between Te Whāriki and the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Food for thought!

If you attended the recent ECC Conference in late May I hoped you walked away like I did feeling motivated and courageous and ready to embrace change. Read the ECC's review of the conference and discover some of the key points learnt. Plus see if you can find yourself among the photos taken at the conference. What a flash bunch we all were at the Conference Dinner!

Also if you are considering joining the ECC head to the back of this issue and discover the financial benefits many of our members receive through using the ECC's Preferred Suppliers.

Over the next few months I'm looking for stories under these themes:

- Public versus Private ECE, the age-old-debate
- The Pikler Approach, raising healthy babies
- Are we pampering our children too much in ECE?
- Special learning needs: telling real stories and demonstrating best practice.

If you or your centre has a story to share about either of these themes or any other burning ECE issue email me at [info@ecc.org.nz](mailto:info@ecc.org.nz).

**Trudi Sutcliffe**  
Editor

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# CEO's Message



Much of the last quarter has been focussed on the build up to the Government's Budget. We carried our concern for the last few months while we awaited the news of whether the government had plans to make more cuts to centre revenue or, alternatively, increase funding. What we ended up with was no inflation adjustment but additional equity funding, albeit targeted. More on this inside this issue with an analysis of the Budget and what it means for ECE centres.

Another highlight of the quarter has been the release of the reports from the Minister's ECE Advisory Groups on Quality and Improving Quality for Under-Two-Year-Olds. Here are the two sets of recommendations:

## Recommendations of the Sector Advisory Group on improving sector wide quality

### Recommendation

- 1 Develop a protocol between the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office (ERO) to ensure a faster response when poor quality services are identified by ERO.
- 2 The Ministry develops further information about quality risk factors for services to enable more active monitoring of at-risk services.
- 3 More active use of existing licensing sanctions.
- 4 Teacher-led, centre-based services should be required by regulations to have 80% registered teachers from 1 July 2013, and this should apply explicitly to teachers counted in ratios for children aged less than two.
- 5 Further work be undertaken to establish appropriate maximum group sizes for children in centre-based services.
- 6 Development of the new funding system should include incentives for services to meet higher levels

of quality in addition to teacher registration.

- 7 Services should be required to provide information to their families on the results of ERO reviews, and any changes to their licence status.
- 8 Research to improve our understanding of quality in ECE, with a particular focus on the following specific services and groups of learners: home-based; infants and toddlers; Māori and Pasifika learners, and learners with special needs.
- 9 Development of a medium-term plan to bring more sustainable change to the quality of ECE services by increasing the stock of high-quality professional ECE leaders.

Of particular interest in this recommendation set is the recommendation to regulate for 80% ECE qualified teachers from 2013. While there is more information yet to be released, this will have a financial impact on some services, as it seeks to remove the financial "wobble" room that exists now for those who are struggling. The focus of some recommendations on poor quality services is expected, as this was a clear focus of the group's terms of reference.

## Recommendations of the Sector Advisory Group on improving quality for under-two-year-olds in ECE

### Recommendation

- 1 Government supports the provision of specialised professional development for all staff working in services licensed for under twos
- 2 Include an infant and toddler component in ECE degrees and diplomas through initial teacher education as well as post-graduate options
- 3 A focus on infant and toddler specialisation through study awards that support post graduate study

- 4 Introduce a requirement for under two spaces to be staffed by at least 50% qualified staff
- 5 Review aspects of regulations and licensing criteria against best practice (key teacher requirements) and international criteria (such as World Health Organisation requirements for space and room temperature), with a view to improving under two settings
- 6 Introduce regulated group size. In the context of improved ratios such as 1:3 or 1:4, regulate for group size of three times the adult: child ratio. If current adult: child ratios remain in place, regulate for a maximum group size of 12
- 7 Consider introducing a review/renewal of licence process every three years
- 8 Ministry to monitor infant and toddler settings more proactively, through annual service spot-checks
- 9 Ministry of Education to work collaboratively with the Ministry of Health to support the health of under twos in ECE (ie noise levels, physical environment, spread of infectious diseases)
- 10 Ministry of Education and ERO to work collaboratively to ensure quicker responses for under twos in poor quality settings
- 11 Ensuring that ERO reports are in accessible formats for parents
- 12 Ensuring information is provided to parents about how ECE can support the needs of under twos
- 13 Ministry processes to be more proactive in supporting the planning stage for new services to ensure high quality outcomes for infants and toddlers
- 14 A review of the home-based service type be carried out as a matter of urgency
- 15 Through the ECE funding review, consideration be given to more flexible funding for infants and toddlers in ECE and how to better support infants and toddlers with special needs and their families.



The ECC nominated Professor Carmen Dalli to this group in recognition of the vulnerability of this group and the need to enhance the quality of service delivery across our sector for two-year-olds and below. The ECE Taskforce had taken its lead in this area from the previous Children's Commissioner's report. We support the recommended "beefing up" of tertiary training in infants and toddlers' behaviour and development, and the requirement for qualification standards to be spread across both age groups within a centre. It's unclear what value a re-licensing requirement would bring, as opposed to, say, a re-accreditation process led by the sector. We would point out that the roles of the Ministry and ERO need to be clear – that it's duplicative to have the Ministry monitoring service delivery when ERO are doing this already. Finally, the

ECC supports the call for a review of the provision of home-based services for under twos, to ensure these services are subject to the same standards required of centre-based services.

The Minister has signalled she is seeking advice from officials on the recommendations and hopes to be in a position to comment further by August.

The ECC Conference was held in Auckland at the end of May following the Budget announcement. A detailed report is presented in this issue, including an update on the ECC's AGM and re-election of the National Executive. At that conference, I launched the first Innovation and Improvement Award for early childhood education centres. This, with sponsorship support from Telecom and with the assistance of the New Zealand Business

Excellence Foundation, is a significant step in the sector re-kindling its interest in innovation. Not since the Centres of Innovation has there been a focus on promoting innovation in our sector. This award is a significant step toward bringing a focus on innovation back into ECE centres. There is information on the award later in this issue.

As we prepare for winter, it's business as usual for many in the sector, with the Budget making no significant changes to centre's bottom lines; but we continue to watch carefully the direction of government policy. The Minister's latest ECE Advisory Group – this time on the sector funding model – is due to be named shortly. Now, that will be interesting!

# So you know

## Welcome

The following early childhood centres have joined the Early Childhood Council from January to May:

- Otatara Preschool, Invercargill
- Pebbles Preschool, Christchurch
- Kidlywinks Childcare Centre, Upper Hutt
- Kiwi Kids Early Learning Centre, Whangarei
- Impressions Childcare, Pirongia
- Te Whare Pepe, Rotorua
- Pathways Kindergarten, Rotorua
- Pleasant Point Preschool, Nursery & Kindergarten, Pleasant Point
- Shooting Stars Daycare, Ellerslie
- Grace Kindergarten, Wellington
- Ark Preschool, Nelson
- A Step Ahead Early Learning Centre, Sandringham, Auckland.
- Kids Patch, East Tamaki, Auckland
- Little Feet Childcare Centre Ltd, Hunters Corner, Auckland
- Otago Polytechnic Childcare Centre, Dunedin
- River Kids, Kaitia
- Lil Champs, Blockhouse Bay, Auckland
- The Rumpus Room Early Learning Ltd, Point Chevalier (Provisional Membership)

Welcome back to Bambinos Early Childhood Centre in Sandringham who have re-joined the Early Childhood Council.

## Education Review Office

The Education Review Office has recently released Partnership with Whānau Māori in Early Childhood Services.

The report shows that while 78 percent of early childhood services had built positive relationships with whānau, only 10 percent had built effective and culturally responsive partnerships. The findings reflect a

lack of understanding in early childhood education about the nature and importance of culturally responsive partnerships. Partnership with whānau Māori is more than establishing a good relationship; it involves early childhood educators and whānau working closely together to create a learning environment that is responsive and relevant to Māori children.

Copies of the report have been sent to all early childhood services. Please contact [info@ero.govt.nz](mailto:info@ero.govt.nz) for more copies or download the report from ERO's website:

<http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Partnership-with-Whānau-Māori-in-Early-Childhood-Services>

*Continued over page....*

# The ECC Professional Development Programme

The Early Childhood Council is offering a series of half-day practical and interactive workshops. The Professional Development Programme is broken into two streams, one for centre managers and one for teaching staff.

The Early Childhood Council welcomes EC Professional Support, as the ECC's professional development workshop series provider for ECE teachers.

EC Professional Support, based at the Faculty of Education at the University of Auckland is an established provider of professional learning programmes in the wider Auckland region. EC Professional Support has a team of facilitators experienced in designing and delivering high quality professional learning opportunities for early childhood teachers.

EC Professional Support will design and deliver the ECC's teachers' workshops nationwide apart from the Blue Book

workshops. These are being managed by the ECC, alongside the centre manager workshops.

Please note advance bookings are essential and the ECC reserves the right to cancel workshops a week prior to the scheduled date if there are insufficient registration numbers.

## For Centre Managers

- Managing People
- Governance & Strategic Planning
- Planning for Success
- ECE Regulations

Go to [www.ecc.org.nz](http://www.ecc.org.nz) to find out times, dates and locations for all these workshops. (The workshops are being held in the main centres and in our regions.)

## For Teaching Staff

- Responding Meaningfully to children's learning

- Aligning Philosophy with Practice – Are we doing what we really believe is important?
- Integrating the RTCs into Centre Practice
- Environments in ECE – the physical and relational environments
- Introduction to mentoring in ECE
- Self-review in ECE settings – implementing a process of review in your setting
- From managing behaviour to fostering children's developing social competence
- Blue Book
- Partnership with parents – strategies for engaging parents in curriculum
- Schema – Recognising and responding to schemas
- Learning in ECE – examining the broader view of learning in ECE

## ECC Support Networks for Centre Managers

The ECC have begun to set up support networks for ECC members. It was envisioned these would be informal social get-togethers for an hour or so. These network groups will be an important source of support for participating members.

The main function of the meetings is to provide a forum for centre managers and owners to discuss any recent issues and to share experiences. Upcoming meetings:

### Wellington Support Network Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday 12 June

**Time:** 2.30pm – 3.30pm

**Venue:** Little School, 2 Ngaio Road, Kelburn, Wellington

Please RSVP your interest by **Friday 8 June 2012** to Trudi [info@ecc.org.nz](mailto:info@ecc.org.nz)

### Auckland Support Network Meeting

**Date:** Wednesday 4 July

**Time:** 7.00pm – 8.00pm

**Venue:** Country Bears, 79 Oraha Road, Kumeu

Please RSVP your interest by **Friday 29 June** to Trudi [info@ecc.org.nz](mailto:info@ecc.org.nz)

If you are interested in being part of a support network group please contact Trudi [info@ecc.org.nz](mailto:info@ecc.org.nz).

For further information or an update on future network meetings in your area go to [www.ecc.org.nz](http://www.ecc.org.nz) and go to Calendar of Events.



Little Wonders, Dunedin: The Gruffalo



St Heliers Little School, Auckland: Munch



Kidzone Preschool, Tauranga: The Lion Sleeps Tonight



# ECC Art Competition 2012

This year's art competition saw ECC's National Office inundated with colour, creativity and inspiration in the form of 29 murals created by ECC member centres. This celebration of colour and imagination was exhibited at the SkyCity Conference Centre where delegates attending the ECC's 2012 Conference were able to vote for their favourite mural for the People's Choice Award.

Overall we had three prizes. The overall winner and runner-up chosen by our judges and the People's Choice Award chosen by you.

The art competition was open to ECC member centres for the purpose of celebrating the imagination, talent and artistic skills of our children and the energy and commitment of their teachers.

Entries were judged on their originality, use of colour, extent of adult direction and connection to the theme.

The theme this year was "My/Our Favourite Story" and many classic and favourite books were represented such as "Where the Wild things are", "Dear Zoo", and we even had three murals depicting the story: "The Gruffalo".

We want to thank all entrants who entered into the art competition. The high calibre of artistic talent, use of colour and materials, originality, and the collaboration of many children working together as a group and with their teachers is to be applauded and celebrated. Our judges had a difficult time choosing! Well done to all and our sincere thanks and congratulations for your efforts.

**The overall prize package of \$1000 was kindly sponsored by:**



**The runner-up prize package of \$250 was sponsored by:**



**The Peoples Choice Award \$500 package of art supplies was sponsored by:**



## Winner

Capital City Preschool, Wellington:  
The Taniwha of Wellington Harbour



## Runner-up

City Heights Childcare, Dunedin: Dear Zoo



## People's Choice Award

Kindercare Learning Centre, Preschool 2,  
Mairangi Bay, Auckland: Daddy on the Moon

# Budget 2012

The Early Childhood Council has welcomed the extra money in the Budget to increase participation in early childhood education (ECE) by vulnerable groups. This extra money is 'sorely needed' to get ECE to the children who needed it most. The investment will have 'life-changing consequences for large numbers of children. It will make the difference between at-risk children arriving at school prepared to learn or unprepared to learn, and it will positively impact those children

for the rest of their lives. They will be more likely to do well at school and be employed, and less likely to be unemployed or in prison.

Of this there is no doubt. The research is clear. No one in the early childhood education sector doubts it or opposes the government's participation projects goals.

## So, why should the ECE sector be concerned?

The ECC's principle reservation about the Government's determination to target ECE at the most needy of children was that further money for this might be taken from existing early childhood services in a manner that would 'reduce the quality of education and care for the majority of New Zealanders.

National's policy intentions, since before election 2008, confirmed by this Budget, pose a very difficult dilemma for ECE centre providers: 'What do we do if support for measures to provide access for our most at-risk of children means, in effect, funding cuts for the rest of the sector?'

This is why the ECC has taken the view that it has. The ECC believes that support for vulnerable children is a laudable goal, one we support whole-heartedly. We have been equally clear from the outset that we do not support initiatives that target vulnerable children receiving their funding from existing ECE funding budgets.

To do this places undue pressure on existing ECE services and on the parents of children already accessing quality ECE – many of whom are vulnerable children already.

[INSERT PARATA PHOTO] The Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata, addressed the Early Childhood Council's 2012 Conference in Auckland on Friday 25th May, the day after the Budget was announced. The Minister heard the concern expressed by ECC President Maria Johnson who said "We worry, however, that the money to fund participation by vulnerable children is

being taken from existing services and the families we serve. When inflation is taken into account, we see a funding freeze for what it is. A funding cut. And we fear that this cut will lead to fee rises for parents that can afford them, and cuts in quality for those that cannot."

Some will view the loss of any inflation adjustment as minor. For some ECE services, the absence of an inflation adjustment for the 2011/2012 year maybe the straw that breaks the camel's back.

The Conference audience responded favourably to the Minister's heartfelt response. Casting her prepared speech to one side, the Minister outlined her goals for ECE; the need for an education-system-wide increase in student achievement; and the trade-off that the loss of the inflation adjustment against the cost of the increase in targeted funding for services focused on vulnerable children represents.

The unanswered question with this Budget and the approach the government is taking to the (future) funding of ECE, is whether we are now seeing the gradual reduction of funding to existing ECE services. 20 Hours remains untouched – for now.

The Minister is expected to shortly announce appointments to the ECE Advisory Group on Funding. The ECE Taskforce called for the development and introduction of a new ECE funding model, pointing to the complexity of the existing model and the need for a new approach focused on quality and incentivising behaviour that aims to support the government policies of the day. Of interest will be whether this advisory group will be allowed to focus on the Taskforce's goal, or whether it will provide an opportunity for the government to make further, more rapid "cuts by stealth" to ECE services.

**The Budget delivers against four key government goals. Under the goal "Delivering Better Public Services" has invested an additional \$500 Million over four years to "raise the achievement in education for our kids"; including achieving 98% participation of new entrants in ECE before school within five years.**

### ECE gains:

- \$511.9 million of operating funding for new initiatives in education, pushing total funding for early childhood education and schooling to \$9.6 billion in 2012/13.
- Targeting cost adjustments for ECE through \$47.9 million in new operating funding.
- \$19.1 million to improve access to Māori immersion ECE services.
- \$33 million in operating funding to accelerate achievement for priority learners.
- \$287.5 million up-front investment in the first phase of the Government's welfare reforms to support more long-term beneficiaries into work. This includes:
- \$80 million for early childhood education childcare and the Guaranteed Childcare Assistance Payment.



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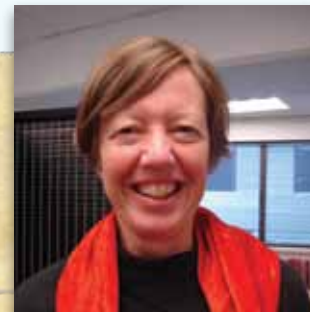


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# Is Mandatory Reporting of Child Maltreatment a Good Idea?



By Elizabeth Clements

Child abuse is terrifying for children. It is difficult for communities to know how to recognise it and what to do when they do see it. And government struggles to find effective means of reducing New Zealand's appalling child abuse levels.

New Zealanders' concerns were expressed in 9,000 submissions on the Green Paper for Vulnerable Children. Analysis of these submissions is underway and government will release a White Paper later in the year that will summarise submissions and identify planned actions.

While we do not yet know what the submissions say, we do know that government is interested in mandatory reporting of child abuse. Many national child advocacy organisations are concerned with this possibility for several reasons.

First, an Early Childhood Council's survey of members suggests that what will make the biggest difference to members is adequate information and support for identifying abuse. A further major issue for members is a lack of confidence that reporting abuse to Child, Youth and Family will result in protection of the child. A recent discussion amongst several key national agencies suggests that these are priorities for other early childhood education workers also.

Secondly, there is insufficient evidence in the international literature that mandatory reporting is effective. For example, the US has mandatory reporting. When it was introduced the number of substantiated cases of child abuse increased. There was also a reduction in child mortality. However, it seems that this drop was a result of changes to data collection and definitions rather than to mandatory reporting.

In 2006, the United Nations prepared a *World Report on Violence Against Children*. The UN Secretary General (2007) responded to this report with a range of recommendations that did not include introducing mandatory reporting. Why would New Zealand make mandatory reporting a primary response if it is not recommended by the United Nations and there appears to be no compelling evidence that it makes a significant difference?

Thirdly, unlike countries that have introduced mandatory reporting, New Zealand already has professional and employer requirements to report child maltreatment including:

- a common law duty of care on all individuals working with children and their families, and
- voluntary professional standards and disciplinary procedures for breaches of these.

Fourthly, mandatory reporting does nothing to address the causes of child maltreatment. It can be seen as a punitive response that is likely to lead to higher levels of surveillance and suspicion, with a risk that it will lead to the persecution of certain ethnic groups and the poor. This is not helpful to child-rearing and fails to create the helpful, supportive, and connected communities children and parents need.

The key to reducing child abuse and neglect is to identify families in vulnerable circumstances at the earliest opportunity and to provide supports BEFORE harm occurs. Mandatory reporting is too little too late. As Every Child Counts says, 'it will, however, lead to an increase in reporting, which the current care and protection system is not resourced to deal with.'

Fifthly, the Expert's Forum on Child Abuse that reported to the Minister of Social Welfare in 2009 states that child abuse and neglect are the result of a complex sequence of events that must be dealt with by engendering a culture of shared responsibility, removing barriers to information sharing and resourcing a highly trained workforce.

**'Child maltreatment is not just about the deviant actions of an individual. It is linked to a range of social factors, including New Zealand's high rates of adult-to-adult violence. Child maltreatment is primarily a result of relationship failure, combined with a lack of compassion, self-control, personal dignity and respect for others.'**

**-Every Child Counts**

## What Will Make a Difference?

So let's turn to what will make a difference. A New Zealand literature review identified six primary prevention approaches to reducing child maltreatment:

- Establish a positive view of children: valuing them in their own right rather than primarily for the manner in which they meet the needs of others, respecting them as individual human beings with rights to protection and gradually increasing levels of autonomy, and understanding that they are exploring and contributing to their social worlds
- Change attitudes and beliefs about physical punishment
- Reduce adult partner violence and educate about the impact of adult partner violence on children
- Address adult alcohol and substance abuse
- Create accessible and responsive support systems that parents can easily engage with
- Provide parent education and child management skills to all parents.

Early childhood education centres can contribute to achieving these goals by offering parent education and modelling respectful relationships with children, between staff and parents and amongst staff and management.

Early childhood education staff could also agree on a code of conduct that would include modelling respectful relationships, educating and supporting parents, training all staff in recognising signs of abuse, and reporting child abuse.

The final words come from Former Children's Commissioner, Dr Ian Hassall.

'We must ensure fundamental self-respect in people rearing children. This is influenced by a) parents' early childhood experience of being loved and respected, and b) being respected by their society and community through a culture of respect, including agreed decent income and living conditions and limited inequality.'

Thanks to Dr Ian Hassall and Every Child Counts for their contributions to this article.



# Partnerships

collaborating, co-operating, connecting

By Clare Wells



**Integrated services is a phrase we often hear. In the public sector, rather than government agencies operating independently from each other an integrated approach encourages them to work together. It makes sense, particularly where services such as health, education and Child Youth and Family for example work with the same families. This is not a new idea rather one that has taken some time to realise.**

An integrated approach to support children and families with complex needs in difficult situations has become a focus for the government – a focus which sits alongside its goal to increase participation in ECE. As one of the number of services in contact with young children and their families and whanau, ECE services are deliberating what and how they can contribute.

The ECE Taskforce reinforced a long held value of many in the sector, of the need for genuine engagement with families and 'building community'. It proposed integrated services or community hubs as the means, particularly for those not currently accessing ECE. The Taskforce viewed the concept in two ways: ECE services being the core of the community acting as advocates for children and families and supporting them to access other services; and where external services such as health and welfare agencies, have a connection with the ECE service. The Taskforce presented some examples of integrated services in New Zealand as well as the Pen Green Children's Centre in England.

The Taskforce views an integrated approach as a way to connect families to services. This is based on the idea that when parents and caregivers have access to a range of services in one location, they are more likely to engage with those services and access support, thereby enhancing families' well-being.

I had the privilege to visit children's centres in Haringey, North London and Pen Green last

year. I had heard and read a lot about Pen Green and while I was keen to visit the centre, I was particularly interested to understand what makes Pen Green a success.

Pen Green opened in 1983, founded on the belief that *'In every small community there should be a service for children under 5 and their families. This service should honour the needs of young children and celebrate their existence. It should also support families, however, they are constituted within the community'*.

Honouring children and celebrating their existence, and supporting families is evident at Pen Green. The centre goes beyond connecting families to services. Staff view children and parents and caregivers as critical and equal partners, valuing and respecting them as individuals, and their contribution. They take time to understand and get to know families. They support parents and caregivers to be engaged with their children's learning, be advocates for themselves and their children, and to be involved in the centre's decision-making.

It is within this context that a range of opportunities and services are offered at Pen Green that recognise the diverse and changing needs of families. Qualified health and social services staff in addition to qualified teachers, attractive and stimulating age appropriate environments, adult education opportunities, and

availability of community spaces are some of the features of Pen Green. A belief in and genuine commitment to the community, is Pen Green's success.

Our conversations about integrated services suggest different models may emerge: *co-located* services where a health worker is a regular visitor for example; *co-ordinated* services where more formal and reciprocal links are made between the ECE service and external agencies; *collaborative* services where the ECE centre works with others to achieve a joint outcome for example involving adult education; and *integrated* services where there is one team with shared goals, resources and accountability. When we think about integrated services we think about ECE services relating to external agencies. Is there scope for integrated ECE services as well, working together to extend the range of options to communities?

Supporting children, their families and whanau, particularly those in complex situations, is about building community. Simply opening a new service or extending the number of places available or providing an integrated service is unlikely to reach every family. The Pen Green experience shows us partnerships – collaborating, co-operating, connecting – are key.

Clare Wells is the chief executive at New Zealand Kindergartens.

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# Working Together For Our Children



By Elizabeth Clements

**Early childhood education workers, health professionals, family support organisations and families are all aiming to do the same thing – create the best possible lives for children. However, each of these groups has different training, different knowledge and different experiences. How can we bring all the different perspectives together to create the best outcomes for the children we all care for?**

This is the basic question that the Early Childhood Council's new 'Partnering with Parents' project asks.

Many early childhood educators are parents but not as many parents are educators. And even fewer are health professionals. Yet each of these specialities – being a parent, being an early childhood educator and being a health professional – are needed by all children.

This new project brings these people together in the same room to discuss what each needs from the other if, as one group says, we want to 'put real smiles on our children's faces'.

The four early childhood centres that are involved in trialling the project at present are in Hamilton, Tokoroa, Masterton and Lower Hutt. Each centre has a different ownership structure, different way of operating, different community base and different needs. But some common themes are emerging.

## Learning Links, Hamilton

The first workshop involves everyone 'walking in each other's shoes'. That is, parents learn what it feels like to be an early childhood educator and everyone learns what it feels like to be their child or a child they care for. Hamilton's facilitator, Regan Mayo, commented that there was a 'consciousness shift' at the first of the three workshops she held at the centre. For example, one father said 'I'm going to slow down and really engage with (my child).' Another parent said, 'we want to have the same routines at home as what you have at the centre'.

Another parent began to think of the relationship with the early childhood education centre in these terms: "As a parent it was important for me to see that I wasn't the only parent that had feelings

about the drop off process, the feelings of being rushed and not hearing what my children's teachers are trying to say to me. It has made me realise that the teachers not only care for my child but are a huge influence on their social and educational development."

Centre Manager, Robyn Humphrey, reports that 'the Partnering with Parents Project was a great way to reflect on current practice and look at where we as educators can improve practice to best suit the needs of our whanau. It was also fantastic as an educator to see where we are going right with the current partnership with our parents and whanau. It is important as an educator to keep actively thinking about how we can incorporate and value the beliefs and wishes of our parents and whanau into our current curriculum.'

## St Mark's Preschool, Tokoroa

Workshops have just begun at St Marks Preschool with Tokoroa Council of Social Services Early Years Coordinator, Megan Ince, as its facilitator. Megan reports that even before workshops start, she is aware that the lack of Plunket nurses and doctors in the region will be a problem.

## UCOL Kids Early Education Centre, Masterton

UCOL Kids is part of the adult education college, UCOL. Its parents are students at the College. Manager, Carolyn Brooks, wants to do the Partnering with Parents programme because she gets many new parents each year and she wants to work with them to build a trusting relationship. REAP Manager, Wendel Richardson, facilitates the process at UCOL. Wendel reports that parents expressed gratitude to staff while also asking for more information about the day to day activities of their children.







### Discovery Preschool, Avalon, Wellington

Discovery Preschool agreed they wanted to put 'real smiles' on their children's faces. As well as parents and staff, staff from Special Education, Plunket, Incredible Years and Strengthening Families attended sessions. The dialogues amongst these people cleared up some misunderstandings immediately. Difficulties, such as the ten month waiting time for special education sessions, were discussed and some

possible solutions identified. There is a concern amongst teachers and parents about the lack of health care available in the area, especially as some families do not have transport that is needed to get to health care providers.

One parent said, 'they tell me there's lots of support out there for parents. But I'd like to know where it is. I don't see it.' Many reported feeling isolated in their parenting role.

At the third workshop, groups drew up plans for achieving their ideals. One group's plans included:

- Forming a parent network by parents sharing their emails
- Putting more information for parents in the centre newsletter. This includes information about healthy food and recommended TV viewing
- Starting a parent library
- Having a nurse visit the centre once a month
- Holding a parent education programme
- Finding ways to give women time out

### Initial outcomes

While the evaluation of the first trials is yet to be completed, indications are that the programme has the potential to achieve its aims of strengthening the links between home and early childhood centre, providing parent and staff development and strengthening the links with health professionals.

### Where to next?

Before the project goes further, there will be an evaluation of the first four programmes. The national project team, which has representatives from the Early Childhood Council, Plunket and the Ministry of Social Development, will make necessary changes before training facilitators to work with other ECC members who want to take part.

Currently the project is strengthening its networks within the health sector. As it develops there will be more benefits for more centres, for the health sector, for parents, and most of all, for children.

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# Enriching Horizons at New Family Centre

**The Living & Learning Foundation (LLF), through the distribution of funds, has been supporting children, families and organisations in New Zealand since March 2005.**

Our desire is to create safe havens for children that are also fun loving environments which promote a zest for learning and a growing acceptance of personal responsibility. We wholeheartedly support the holistic development of body, mind and spirit to empower children and adults to reach their full potential. LLF continually develops and supports programmes that create significant positive change for children who are growing up in circumstances of social and economic disadvantage, whilst realising that these children and families exist in every community. We wish to encourage and support the development of children and families to ensure that they are on a

par with their more financially advantaged peers, giving them a better chance of success in life.

Our vision is one of a world where, in spite of such circumstances, young children and families still reach their full potential. Moreover we are underpinned by the belief that the most appropriate care and education for young children comes from their parents, families and communities.

As a not for profit foundation, LLF believes we have a responsibility to use our resources to fund work and initiatives that are bold, innovative and will have maximal benefit for families and communities. We are committed to learning from the monitoring and evaluation of our projects and to leveraging our impact through research, publications and advocacy. Our Family Centre concept incorporates an

early childhood service with wrap around family support services in communities where we believe we can make a difference.

We are guided by a holistic view of young children's development. To realise their human potential children need to be nurtured in a way that includes the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, cultural and spiritual. Moreover, we believe that the most appropriate care and education for young children involves their parents, families and communities.

In the debate about better and more affordable early childhood services, the design and finish of centres and play areas has often been a neglected variable. LLF is committed to developing the very best for communities. We want to ensure that we give the community an outstanding early





childhood service where children may grow and develop physical, social and confidence skills that will carry them effectively through life.

The first LLF centre opened in Mangere (south Auckland) in 2009 and continues to operate successfully at full capacity, ensuring that over 160 families in an area of traditional non-participation are benefitting from their children attending a quality ECE service. There are a number of wrap around family services on offer too.

Our Henderson centre, opened on 31 January 2012, was the second Living and Learning Family Centre. We are very proud of it. Community interest in our concept has been strong, and enrolments are growing.

Accessed off of Universal Drive, and only a few hundred metres east of Lincoln Road, it is a very convenient location, close to the commercial heart of the area.

This is a state of the art architecturally designed building that is modern and yet welcoming for both adults and children alike.

The ECE component comprises four classrooms for 100 children. Each classroom is well furnished, resourced and laid out to encourage children to learn in a

relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Whilst the building is modern in design, the emphasis all along has been on a "homely" centre, which we believe has been achieved.

There is another classroom in the centre where parents are invited to stay and learn alongside their children, which we call "Stay & Play". Furnished and resourced to the same high standard as the other classrooms, this is also a great place for children to have fun.

We are particularly proud of our outdoor play area which offers a wide variety of activities for children and provides play, learning and social interaction experiences. There's a bike track, sandpits, a 'magic dome', 'glow worm caves', a water games area, wooden bridge, a maze and much, much more. All of this is set in a secure, quiet, well landscaped area in which children will thrive, learn to explore and generally have a great time.

As well as early childhood education, a particular feature of the Henderson centre is the additional range of wrap around family services. These are incorporated in four office spaces of varying sizes to include Plunket, Post Natal Distress Support, child health, midwifery, law

advocacy, budgeting, WINZ advice, citizen's advice, and others at different times throughout the week.

Later in 2012 we expect to open our Teen/Young Parent service in a larger specifically designed room within the centre. This will give young parents an opportunity to continue with their education and pick up some key life skills while their children attend the centre. We anticipate that the unit will cater for approximately 12 young parents.

A number of meetings and workshops have already taken place within the centre including Parenting Education Programme (PEPE) training, a Bellyful information morning, ECE Waitakere Network meetings, a Pacific Beatz playgroup, PND Support, SKIP and Family Partnership training and information for GPs and midwives run by the College of Midwives (Christchurch) to name but a few.

We also expect to hold a variety of other workshops such as positive parenting, parenting for dads, healthy eating etc.

**For more information, have a look at [www.livingandlearning.org.nz](http://www.livingandlearning.org.nz)**





# Literacy in the early childhood curriculum:

## a comparison of Te Whāriki and the Early Years Learning Framework

By Claire McLachlan, Massey University College of Education

**Reading and writing skills serve as the major avenue for achieving the essential learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) and in the Australian curriculum too (<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/Overview>), in which competence in literacy is stressed.**

Reading skills are the foundation for all school based learning. Reading is necessary for learning about other people, about history and the social studies, the language arts, science, maths, technology and other content subjects that are taken at school. If children do not learn to read, their general knowledge, their spelling, their writing and their vocabulary development suffer (Stanovich, 2000).

The National Early Literacy Panel Report (2009) identifies some critical understandings children need to develop in early childhood in order to become literate at school, which include knowledge of the alphabet, phonological awareness (being aware of sounds in words), the ability to rapidly name letters, numbers, objects and colours, the ability to write their own name and to be able to remember spoken information for a short period of time. In addition, children need to understand print conventions and concepts, to have strong oral language and the ability to match and discriminate visual symbols.

It's not surprising then, that many countries have been looking at what experiences children should have with literacy before school entry and exploring the implications for early childhood curriculum.

Internationally there are a number of early childhood curriculums available,

but few nationally agreed curriculum documents. New Zealand and more recently Australia are exceptions as there are nationally accepted curriculums for early childhood for both countries. New Zealand's curriculum, Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996) and Australia's curriculum, the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009) both include guidance on how to promote literacy in early childhood.

An analysis of Te Whāriki reveals that it is holistic and deliberately open to diverse interpretation by different early childhood services (May, 2011). The principles of empowerment, holistic development, family and community and relationships are all relevant as a framework for literacy, but can be interpreted in many ways. Within the principles of holistic development, for instance (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 41) it argues that "the early childhood curriculum takes up a mode of learning that weaves together intricate patterns of linked experience and meaning rather than emphasising the acquisition of discrete skills".

Although literacy is a pattern of linked experience and meaning, it also involves discrete knowledge and skills. The lack of specific guidance on how to promote literacy knowledge and skills is problematic, as argued elsewhere (McLachlan & Arrow, 2011). Te Whāriki is loosely based on a sociocultural perspective of learning, but it does not specifically advise teachers on how to promote literacy or any of the other essential learning areas.

Research supports the principle of relationships for literacy, as children need people who persist in supporting and

understanding their attempts at literacy and make literacy enjoyable. Similarly, the strand of belonging, in which links with families and communities and establishment of routines, customs and regular events are advocated, provide a context for meaningful literacy opportunities to occur (Neuman, 2007). Strand 4, Communication-Mana Reo (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 16) contains the strongest statements about literacy. It states that the languages and symbols of children's own and other cultures are promoted and protected in an environment where children:

- Develop non-verbal communication skills for a range of purposes;
- Develop verbal communication skills for a range of purposes;
- Experience the stories and symbols of their own and other cultures; and
- Discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive.

The strongest statements are in Goal 2, "children experience an environment where they develop verbal communication skills for a range of purposes" (p. 76), where language skills, appreciation of rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, understanding of syntax and meaning and the ability to listen to and enjoy verbal communication is encouraged. Unfortunately, key predictors of literacy achievement (NELP, 2009) are not listed, although it does discuss children having experiences with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. Although awareness of numbers is listed in Goal 3, awareness of the alphabet and phonological awareness are not specifically mentioned; unless "a playful interest in repetitive sounds and words" (p. 76) is meant to indicate this. In addition, it does suggest that children



will make the transition to school having developed some of the following skills and abilities (p. 73):

- Language skills for a range of purposes;
- Experience with books;
- Development of vocabulary, syntax and grammar;
- Awareness of concepts of print;
- Enjoyment of writing;
- Playing with and using words;
- Opportunities to hear and use Te Reo Māori and other community languages.

Apart from affirming the role of home languages and community involvement, the document does not discuss multiliteracies or bilingualism and biliteracy in any depth, both important issues resulting from immigration and global change, but this is not too surprising given the age of the document. It was first released in draft form in 1993, revised form in 1996 and has not been revised or evaluated since, although there is some indication that the Minister of Education is considering this.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009), by comparison, addresses many of these issues by specifically identifying what learning children will display, along with specific guidance to teachers about how they can support learning. In the EYLF, the learning outcome for communication has the strongest statements about literacy and there is also a definition of literacy:

Literacy is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use language in all its forms. Literacy incorporates a range of modes of communication including music, movement, dance, storytelling, visual arts, media and drama, as well as talking, listening, viewing, reading and writing. Contemporary texts include electronic and print based media. In an increasingly technological world, the ability to critically analyse texts is a key component of literacy. Children benefit from opportunities to explore their world using technologies and to develop confidence in using digital media (p. 38).

The communication learning outcome includes the following (p. 39):

Outcome 5: children are effective communicators

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

Each of the sub learning outcomes for Outcome 5 is accompanied with specific guidance to teachers on what they need to do to help children achieve each outcome. For instance, for the sub outcome "children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts", the predictors of reading achievement are made explicit in the following guidance (p. 41):

- read and share a range of books and other texts with children.
- provide a literacy-enriched environment including display print in home languages and Standard Australian English.
- sing and chant rhymes, jingles and songs.
- engage children in play with words and sounds.
- talk explicitly about concepts such as rhyme and letters and sounds when sharing texts with children.
- incorporate familiar family and community texts and tell stories.
- join in children's play and engage children in conversations about the meanings of images and print.
- engage children in discussions about books and other texts that promote consideration of diverse perspectives.
- support children to analyse ways in which texts are constructed to present particular views and to sell products.
- teach art as language and how artists can use the elements and principles to construct visual/musical/dance/media texts.
- provide opportunities for children to engage with familiar and unfamiliar culturally constructed text.

In addition, in other learning outcomes, there are further links to literacy, in a similar way to Te Whāriki. Outcome 1 talks about building on family and community context, children's knowledge, language and understandings and providing resources that reflect children's social worlds. Outcome 2 suggests that children

should be exposed to different languages and dialects and should be encouraged to appreciate linguistic diversity. Outcome 4 suggests that teachers introduce the tools, technologies and media and provide the skills, knowledge and techniques required to enhance learning.

So what does this brief analysis suggest for teachers and leaders of centres? First, it suggests that it is possible to frame up broad guidance on how to support literacy without compromising teachers' abilities to enact curriculum in local and culturally specific ways. The EYLF might be useful reading for New Zealand teachers and leaders who are looking for more guidance on how to support literacy in young children. The EYLF perhaps also suggests some useful things that New Zealand teachers might include in their centre's literacy policy, which would give greater guidance to staff with diverse knowledge and skills. Finally, it suggests some ways in which a revision of New Zealand's early childhood curriculum could be strengthened to support learning in the essential learning areas.

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# "World-Class Curriculum in Practise"

By Galina Zenin



**"...I am excited that you do so much music...My boy will love it!" – one mother replied.**

**"...We never listen to kids CD's, my daughter is not really interested in music..." – was another comment.**

**"...I don't think we need structured lessons... Our children should play and enjoy their childhood....they will have enough of learning at school..."**

**"...It's great that you offer structural sessions. My child is getting bored in his kinder! I want him to learn!"**

It was very clear to me that some parents had a very strong view of what early childhood education should provide and what kind of programme they prefer.

Choosing the right kinder, childcare centre or school is one of the hardest decisions parents have to make.

So how can our philosophy, values and curriculum suit everyone? How can we explain all the benefits of our programmes and stay strong in what we believe might help a child to reach their potential?

There are many different approaches in early childhood education that have proven themselves as outstanding curriculums with pioneer views and big visions. Their journey wasn't easy... How did the Montessori, Reggio Emilia and Steiner approach survive and become so strong over the years and even centuries?

## Vision, Implementation, Results & Reflection are the Key!

Starting in November 2006 with 3 children in one group was the beginning of a small and very different children's service in Brighton East, Melbourne.

From the first day of operating it was called "The First Music Kinder in Australia"...

And from the first day some people would ask: "What does this mean? Do you teach children to play instruments?..."

## Vision

After teaching music to children for more than 25 years, it was evident to me that music is powerful! I could see how music could change lives and characters of young people and could become a key for the development of the whole child. The vision was to use music as the foundation of a programme to nurture each individual, develop their sense of identity and unlock the door to reach their potential.

The question was: "How do we create a curriculum where music will become a strong and valuable foundation for children's learning? How do we include music in everyday activities? How do we make music available for EVERY CHILD, EVERY DAY?"

## Implementation

Creating a new, original or innovative idea takes a lot of work and time.

By working side by side with dedicated and open minded teachers, trusting and supportive parents, enthusiastic and honest children, and after three years of consistent and hard work, the vision was shaped, moulded and polished.

The vision of a programme where children could learn through singing, dancing and playing percussion instruments using the highly-regarded teaching approach of Kodaly and Orff, and where music is featured as an integral part in all lessons, including wellbeing, physical development, cultural identity, languages, literacy, numeracy, art and craft became a practice and the Bonkers Beat Music Programme was created.

For the first two years, running daily music sessions was part of my job, but when the second music kinder and childcare was opened it became physically and emotionally impossible for one person to drive from one suburb to another to reach all children and provide the music programme on a daily basis.

American speaker, author and toy-maker, Roger von Oech, whose focus is on the study of creativity said: "It's easy to come up with new ideas; the hard part is letting go of what worked for you two years ago, but will soon be out of date."

The idea of one person delivering the programme became out of date.

And that's when the concept of teaching early childhood educators became the opportunity to spread the power of music.

All teaching staff, from kinder teachers to assistants, were trained and became confident to deliver the music programme to EVERY CHILD... EVERY DAY! It took nearly two years to create, try out and test this new, innovative system which offered all staff continuous support as well as professional and personal development on a weekly basis.

## Results

The results were astonishing.

By experiencing and enjoying music every day, children and their behaviour started changing.

Through a number of surveys and questionnaires, parents outlined that after using the Bonkers Beat Music Programme, they witnessed significant improvements in their children's social skills, concentration,





speech, language, listening skills, gross motor and fine motor skills, co-operation and team work, patience, imagination, self-esteem, acceptance, memory, spatial intelligence, sense of beat, rhythm, singing, playing instruments, appreciation and love of music, multicultural and social identity.

Since 2007, more than 20 gifted children, children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or children with special needs and many more with English as their Second Language have attended Bonkers Beat centres. As a result of being in a mainstream environment and having music as a foundation for their learning, these children have shown a dramatic progress in their development.

In 2009 this unique "Singing Kindy" was featured on Channel 9 and in 2010 the Programme was selected by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Victoria) and presented in the 2010 DEECD Innovation Showcase.

## Reflection

In our days of pressure and fast living, sometimes we get into the habit of doing the same things over and over again. From time to time we might feel scared to make a change or try something different. Often, we get criticised for not doing things the "usual" way. Believing in your dreams and working towards one goal with a team of supportive and dedicated people, will make a difference. It will help you to put your vision into practice.

One single idea of a Music Programme for EVERY CHILD EVERY DAY, was just the beginning of a comprehensive and innovative curriculum which is now successfully run in Australia. However, there is so much more for us to learn, that we can never say that all our work is done. There will always be many more opportunities to improve, make our curriculum better and reflect on the changes of our fast moving society.

## What is the main focus of the Bonkers Beat Curriculum?

*"...Will your programme help my child to read and write before he'll start school?..."*

*"...Can you help my child become independent? He will be going to prep next year..."*

*"...Could you teach my daughter to listen? She can't sit still for more than 5 minutes!..."*

*"...Don't you teach children math in kinder? They need to know how to count..."*

So many questions and so many expectations from parents...Where do we start?

I believe we should start with VALUES.

The Bonkers Beat Philosophy is based on Five Principles:

- Respect for all people
- Respect for all animals & living creatures
- Respect for all plants & nature
- Respect for kinder & personal belongings
- Respect for yourself

These Five Principles should be reflected in all programmes and every curriculum should have only one Main Focus – the CHILD!

Every child is the core of any curriculum and every programme needs to be designed to foster children's learning and development.

By having the CHILD as the primary focus of our curriculum, Bonkers Beat spreads the message that music is important for early childhood development. My dream is to see in the near future all kindergartens, childcare centres and even schools in Australia and other countries implementing music as a key to enhance children's learning. My dream is to help as many educators as possible become confident in providing music and wellbeing experiences to all children, every day. I encourage you all to look at your practice and ask yourself:

"What is the main focus of our curriculum? Is this working for me and for children? Are they really interested and engaged? Do I really know and understand every single child? What new and exciting ideas can I offer? What is my purpose and what is my vision?"

Remember every educator is a creator and every educator is an innovator and if our Main Focus is the CHILD, we can all create a programme which one day we may call:

### "A World - Class Curriculum".

*"The main purpose of music is not to play an instrument in a band or to sing in an opera.... The main purpose of teaching music is to enrich the whole child, develop their cognitive abilities, increase their learning capacity and enhance the quality of their life. Remember, that music is like a language and should be practiced and used EVERY DAY!"*

– Galina Zenin

Galina Zenin (B Mus. Ed., Dip. Teach.) is a presenter, early childhood educator, qualified and highly respected music and voice training teacher, author, composer and storyteller. She writes her own music and brings to her music programme a wealth of European and Australian experience and a high level of professionalism.

Galina Zenin has established herself as one of Australia's most innovative Music and Early Childhood Educators. Her most recent credits include presentations of her creative programmes, "Music for Learning" and "Wellbeing Practices for Life" at the 2010 & 2011 DEECD Innovation Showcases. Galina has been invited to present a wide range of music and wellbeing topics at a number of conferences and seminars in Australia and overseas.





# The most important education

## The human brain isn't ready to be born until its owner is three years old. Diana Clements takes a look.

It's ironic that New Zealand pays its most important teachers – those working with the under 3s – the least, says Nathan Mikaere-Wallis, a lecturer at Canterbury University. In Canada it's the exact reverse.

One of Mikaere-Wallis' key areas of interest is tying the knot between brain development and education.

Understanding the brain, he argues, leads to new insights into learning. The brain is most absorbent up to three years of age, and money targeted at the ECE sector has greater long term benefit than any other sector of education.

"No education is as important as the first three years," says Mikaere-Wallis.

The body of international research is unequivocal on the subject:

- Compared to other animals' brains and humans' other organs, our brains aren't ready to be born until we are three years old. "The human brain is not just formed by genetic material. It is formed partly by genetic material but also the environment of the early years." For the first three years the human brain gathers data on the environment, which goes directly to forming the adult brain.
- The brain is only 15 per cent connected when we are born, but 85 per cent connected by age 4.
- An adult brain weighs 1.4kg. At birth a human brain weighs 300g, but has grown to 1.2kg by the age of three years old.
- 70 per cent of human genes are "transcription genes", which are reliant on pickup up of a transcription from the environment to be activated.

Given that the brain is most capable of change and development during the years from 0 to 3, the more input children have at

this age, the higher the probability that that person will be successful later in life and develop into law-abiding tax-paying adults.

Yet in New Zealand, Mikaere-Wallis says the focus with babies in ECE is still on hygiene and changing nappies with a belief that the real learning comes later.

"We tend to think that secondary school is more important," he says.

Mikaere-Wallis cites Nobel prize winner Dr James Heckman of the University of Chicago, who concluded that for every dollar spent on the 0-3 age group, \$17 is saved on adolescent services.

"Here we are still focussing on the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff...and building more boot camps, even though they are phenomenally unsuccessful."

Mikaere-Wallis, who started his career as an early childhood and primary teacher, believes the 2010 budget cuts for early childhood education were a move in the wrong direction.



He believes money should be prioritised for parental intervention with policies such as increased parental leave. But accepting that more than 50 per cent of children are in some form of early childhood centre by the time they are one year old, more needs to be spent there as well.

The budget cuts mean that more centres will use untrained staff in their baby sections, where trained staff members are needed more.

"What the centres tend to do is put untrained staff with the young babies. They think that the young babies need cuddling and nappies changed. You end up with (babies) in the most crucial stage of brain development with the least educated carers. It is very ironic that this most important area (the centres) will have the most untrained staff."

The 2010 cuts targeted centres employing between 80 per cent to 100 per cent of qualified teachers.

Economist Suzanne Snively, a former partner at Pricewaterhouse Coopers,

**"The brain is without doubt our most fascinating organ. Parents, educators, and society as a whole have a tremendous power to shape the wrinkly universe inside each child's head, and, with it, the kind of person he or she will turn out to be. We owe it to our children to help them grow the best brains possible."**

- Lise Eliot, *What is Going in There?*

argues that employing qualified ECE teachers provides individuals with employment, generates higher household incomes, which in turn result in increased consumption, economic growth and increased tax revenue. "On the education side of the benefits equation, there are likely to be different sets of benefits."

Snively says that by creating consistent, nurturing, safe environments for young

families and their children there will be a quantum leap in their productivity both as students and in later life.

She adds that the outcome of spending more money on ECE is "win, win, win":

- win for the child and its family
- win for society
- win for the taxpayer because the child will be:
  - more productive, learning more
  - healthier, costing less.

Another issue to be considered, Snively says, is the ballooning costs at the other end of a neglected childhood.

"I know this personally because I informally fostered a child from a neglectful environment when he was 17. By that stage, it took at least 10 different government agencies to keep him on the straight and narrow – and that was even with my husband and I spending hours each day with him."



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# ECC CEO Condemns Dog Attacks on Children

Here are some headlines from New Zealand newspapers. All are from 2012. All refer to dog attacks on children under five.

- Dog attack toddler: 'He didn't look like our baby'
- Dog attack toddler out of intensive care
- Toddler-injuring dog destroyed
- Child attacked by dog
- Toddler recovering after dog attack
- Dog attack toddler in stable condition
- Trio saved dog attack boy from choking on own blood

There will, I fear, be many more headlines like these in the months and years to come – unless something is done.

The Ministry of Health has released information to the ECC that paints a sobering picture. In the 2010/2011 year, 95 children under five were discharged from a hospital having been treated for the effects of a dog attack. The greatest number of events occurred in the Counties Manukau District Health Board region (18), followed by Canterbury (16). Dog attacks occurred in these two regions at more than twice the rate of any other in 2010/2011. The total cost to the taxpayer for the treatment received: \$311,577. One can only imagine

the psychological cost to the children, many of whom required plastic surgery, post-discharge support, counselling, and other services.

Consider also the cost to the justice system in the event of prosecution, and the cost to local authorities who continue to 'police' dogs and their owners, and commence prosecutions.

Many early childhood education centres take interaction between children and dogs seriously, and provide learning opportunities for both children and parents, including 'how to avoid intimidating a dog', 'how to safely approach a dog', and so on. These efforts are important and valuable. And I suspect they have helped avert many a disastrous encounter.

Unlike many pets, however, dogs are more reliant on their human masters to learn the rules associated with living amongst people. This training and socialising of dogs is critical, as is an appropriate living environment and, if necessary, precautionary measures such as muzzling, using a lead, and the controlling of unaccompanied roaming.

One cannot escape, however, the propensity for certain dogs to attack more than others. Such dogs can scar a child forever. On the outside and the inside.

This is not an anti-dog article. It is clear that the violence in many dogs is the work of incompetent or malicious owners. My questions, however, are these:

1. Do we allow the perpetuation of the circumstances in which New Zealand children are hospitalised almost every week of the year, with certain breeds repeatedly implicated in these attacks?
2. Or do we say 'no more' and act? Our political system is one of the most accessible in the World and I suggest those who feel as I do on this issue consider taking at least one of the following actions:
  - Write to your local MP. All you have to do is write their name on an envelope and address it to 'Parliament, Wellington'. Or send it as an email. (Go to <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/MPP/MPs/MPs/> for contact details.)
  - You can ask to meet with your local MP at their electorate office. Contact details are in the phone book.
  - You can invite your local MP to meet with you and a number of concerned parents at your ECE centre.
  - You can write to the Minister of Local Government David Carter. His contact details are at <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/MPP/MPs/MPs/>.
  - You can ask your local MP (if they are an opposition MP) to ask a question in the House of Parliament of the Minister of Local Government.
  - Should you provide dog safety classes for children in your centre, you can ask your local giveaway newspaper to report on these classes, and use the opportunity to call for the banning of dangerous dog breeds.

We have a small country with an accessible political system. Let's act together, and put an end to the abomination of dog attacks on our youngest and most vulnerable of citizens.



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# How to Design an Effective Marketing and Communications Budget

## Question: What percentage of an early childhood centre's budget should be spent on marketing and communications?

What a great question! The answer is (as you probably expected) "it depends".

You definitely need to have a comprehensive, realistic budget. It's a critical component of your annual marketing and communications plan and, like the work plan, serves as a map to ensure you reach your goals. The budgeting process helps you to determine whether your plan is realistic. If not, cut the plan to focus on ultimate priorities and retool the budget.

In the for-profit world, it's fairly standard to determine a marketing budget by allocating 10-20% of projected gross revenues to marketing and communications. However, things aren't so black and white in the non-profit world with the dual bottom line of people and dollars. You can take the percentage approach OR the flat dollar approach.

What's most important is that you establish a detailed marketing and communications budget prior to the start of each fiscal year, and track costs (by strategy and programme or project) and results AS YOU GO so that you can analyse cost vs. benefit. The budget should be integrated into your annual marketing and communications plan, with a dollar cost allotted to each strategy (direct mail, email, paid advertising, media relations, etc.) and programme or project, each of which should be broken out by its various components (consulting, evaluation, printing, postage, etc.).

Each centre's plan (and budget) will cover a unique set of components. Don't forget to budget for the tasks – such as researching your audiences and evaluating outcomes – that give you the information to make your selected strategies as successful as possible.

## The Percentage Approach

This approach is favored by those who believe that marketing and communications expenditures should directly reflect a non-profit's evolution and the size of its budget. Personally, this is the approach I prefer. The advantage of developing a budget based on your centre finances is that it's organic. Communications spending grows as does your centre. Of course exceptions are made for special needs such as the launch of a new programme, introducing new leadership, or tackling an urgent advocacy campaign.

The average allocation is from 9-12% of your annual centre budget (start with 10%).

Here's a highly-simplified example of a budget shaped by the percentage approach:

2%	Purchasing all advertising and promotion media, including internet, newspaper, radio, TV, and direct mail (postage).
+4%	Producing (design, artwork) and printing all communications. This includes newsletters, brochures, web sites, press kits, etc.
+1.5%	Producing special events.
+3.5%	Salaries, consultants and freelancers.
=11%	Total percentage of the organisational budget going to marketing and communications.

## The Dollar Approach

Others in the field consider a flat dollar approach to be more relevant (and safer) than the percentage approach since your total budget has to cover utilities, rent, taxes, health insurance, etc.

Defining the dollar figure is challenging the first time round but becomes much easier once you have records of several years' marketing expenditures to work from. Start out with a quick-and-dirty calculation based on last year's costs and revise it to reflect special campaigns, inflation, etc. Or, if this is your first year out, estimate the costs of what you think you'll be doing

based on what you know today. Contact colleagues in the field and prospective vendors to get your projections as accurate as possible. Either way, you'll end up with a baseline budget.

Frankly, I've heard a lot about this method as a viable alternative to the percentage approach, but have never seen it put into practice.

## What Budgeting Does for You

Whichever approach you take, you'll find that a formal budget is a great aid in decision making. To begin with, your marketing communications budget (and plan) will help you distinguish between needs and wants. You'll see clearly how much you have to spend to reach your goals and, via tracking results, will gain a sense of what strategies work best to achieve which goals. For example, based on your budget framework, you may decide to promote your advocacy campaigns via direct mail and email, media relations, and paid advertising in order to match legislative timeframes. However, you may decide to hold off on enhancing your already strong membership campaign with the launch of a members-only web site.

So, start your budget process today, even if you're in the middle of your fiscal year. Make sure that you track costs by category and maintain a spreadsheet of actual vs. projected expenses. By next year, you'll have an accurate map of expenditures that will serve as a great foundation for next year's planning process and a sure means of ensuring you make the most of your marketing and communications budget.

Do keep in mind that your budget will have to be adjusted each year to reflect increasing costs and changes in your organisation. For example, launching a new programme requires an increased marketing budget for the first year or two so you'll need more dollars or do less on other fronts.

# A Perspective on Innovation



**The exhortation to think outside the box has become ubiquitous in business. So much so that it has become the new box inside of which everyone thinks. It pays lip service to the notion of transformation without really understanding the difference between transformation and change, and often without tolerance for the real thinking that must occur for an idea to be truly outside the existing paradigm.**

But worse than that, the advice is backwards. You cannot possibly think outside the box unless you understand the nature of the box that bounds your current thinking. You must come to know that nature deeply. You must have real insight into it. You must accept it, and embrace it at some level, before it will ever release you.

There's a Zen saying: "What you resist persists, and what you allow to be disappears."

Thinking outside the box without understanding the box is a petulant exercise in resistance – every idea that comes from the process has the box written all over it. It's a reaction to the box. It's fighting the box. It's a child of the box. "Zune" was Microsoft trying to think outside the box, which they saw as the lack of a product to compete with the iPod. The doomed MP3 player became a monument to the real box, which was Microsoft's inability to innovate. It was screaming so hard "Look, we're innovative" that it never had a chance of being anything but the antithesis of innovation.

You should always start by trying to grasp the nature of the box within which you're thinking. It is a process bordering on meditation. If you're not calm, it won't come to you. The box thrives on your impatience with it.

So figure out the box you're in. If you try to get out before you understand the box's parameters, you'll just stay stuck inside of it. And that's exactly what it wants.

Over the past year I've shifted my presentation materials so they include mostly pictures and 96 point font. That's good for audiences (at least, I think it is), but bad when I get the kind of request that landed in my in-box last week.

"I'm doing an innovation update at one of our meetings and I'm hoping you can assist me with some conversation starters," a senior leader said to one of our clients. "The main point of the presentation is to get the audience thinking proactively and positively about how they can contribute to innovation."

I had presented a slideshow on this exact topic in April. Unfortunately, my slides consisted of a big picture of a black box, a photo of Steve Jobs, headshots of eight academics, a screenshot of an Old Spice advertising campaign, and a picture of my favorite haircut place in Singapore. The slides are pretty, but they won't help a third party who lacks the context.

So, my colleague and I put our heads together and came up with the 10 innovation myths that we encounter most often in the field.

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Myth	Reality
Innovation is random	Innovation is a discipline — it can be measured and managed. Consider how Procter & Gamble's structured approach to innovation allowed it to triple its innovation success rate and double the size of a typical initiative.
Only creative geniuses can innovate	Innovation is distinct from creativity. While creativity can help, people who aren't intrinsically creative can create high-impact innovation if they follow the right process.
You're either an innovator or you're not	Research recounted in The Innovator's DNA described how innovation is about 30 percent nature and 70 percent nurture.
Innovation happens in the R&D lab	Innovation — something different that has impact — can happen anywhere in an organisation. Everyone should be looking for new ways to solve old problems.
We will win with superior technology	Most market disruptions rest on innovative business models — new ways to create, capture, or deliver value
Innovation is all about improved performance	Sometimes innovation is about improving performance along traditional dimensions, but some of the most powerful disruptive innovations sacrifice raw performance in the name of accessibility or affordability.
Our customers will be a critical source of innovation insight	Your customers might tell you how to make your current offering better, but they won't point the way to disruptive growth; you have to explore new markets in new ways to identify new growth businesses.
Game changing innovation is done only by entrepreneurs	Many of the most exciting disruptions in recent years — such as GE's low cost imaging solution and Cisco's TelePresence solution — have come from big companies.
We will win by targeting the biggest markets	Markets that don't exist are difficult to precisely measure or analyse; the most powerful innovations create new markets.
Innovation requires big bets	As Peter Sims writes in Little Bets, if you want to win big, you should start small.

There's no doubt we missed something important in our list. What other innovation myths have you encountered?

### Why innovation matters

Now more than ever before, innovation has a vital role to play if we are to continue to improve outcomes for children and deliver value for money. Rapidly spreading changes that improve quality and productivity to all parts of the ECE sector, in addition to creating the right conditions for rapid diffusion of good practice, is an urgent priority for us all.

This requires a fundamental change to the way in which people currently work. At the heart of this is strong leadership – both educator and managerial at all levels in the system. It will require all leaders to identify and tackle the behaviours and cultures that can stand in the way of innovation. We will need to align incentives to support and encourage innovation. We will need to create 'pull' for new ideas from parents rather than relying on the traditional top down 'push'. We should reward those individuals and organisations that adopt best practice and new ideas, and

we should ask those organisations that don't to explain why. We need to have the courage to make changes and be less risk averse, we need to take a longer term view on investments, and we need to ensure staff are supported to introduce new ideas and technologies.

The ECE Taskforce recommended the introduction of a focus on innovation in our sector – to drive efficiency and (most importantly) effectiveness in ECE. Do we wait for the government to act on this recommendation, or seize the nettle ourselves and take responsibility as a sector?

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# The ECC's 2012 Conference Review

*"I thought this was an outstanding conference! I loved Ray Avery and That Blind Woman (Julie Woods); both lived up to my expectations. And of course Nigel."*

*"I would just like to take this opportunity to thank you for an amazing three days. It's the first time I have ever been on an ECC conference and because of the experiences and I have just experienced, I will certainly be at your next one in Rotorua in May 2013."*

One of the biggest events in the ECC's calendar has just ended. Two and a half days of organised pandemonium – excluding the centre tours that took place on the preceding Thursday.

We re-introduced centre tours in 2010 and were particularly pleased to see over 80 people enjoyed four tours around ECE centres in Auckland. The chance to see what others are doing; how they handle the same sort of issues you face each day – a chance to be nosey!

Day one of the conference is always special. Opening key notes, the Minister's

address and the ECC's AGM. Maria Johnson's opening address to conference was very representative of the sector's mood over the last year – reflecting on the impact of the 2010 Budget revenue cuts, the earthquakes in Canterbury and the economic realities for many centres.

Minister of Education Hekia Parata wooed the conference audience, discarding her prepared speech and instead speaking with passion about the value she places on early childhood education, the amazing job and commitment of our ECE teachers and the need for the whole education sector to focus more on achievement. She responded to questions on the 2012 Budget and the absence of any inflation adjustment by confirming that this was traded off against the increase in equity funding targeted at increasing participation among the children of Pasifika and Maori living in lower-socio-economic communities.

Of the workshops on day one, highlights included Modelling and the Early Childhood Teacher, Home-Based Childcare – supporting innovation in participation, How

to Lobby your MP and Erin Devlin's ever-popular "Puppets, Props, Stories and Songs."

Later on Friday afternoon, conference delegates were entertained, challenged and provoked by Nigel Latta. Nigel spoke, in his own inimitable style, of the challenges in raising courageous children and the dangers of too much pampering. The social function at the end of the day was a welcome opportunity to mingle and start the networking – as well as an opportunity to get around the 85 exhibit sites – a record for an ECC conference. I can still hear the tinkling from the stand with the xylophones!

The ECC Annual General Meeting was held on Friday afternoon. Elected to the incoming ECC Executive are:

- Maria Johnson (Little School Auckland and Wellington), President
- Theresa Dodd (Penguins Early Learners, Auckland), Vice-President
- Tim Lainson (Living & Learning Foundation, Auckland), Secretary
- Lonnie Parker (Bright Sparks, Auckland), Treasurer
- Pam Maclean (Queenstown Childcare Centres, Queenstown), Maree Moselen (Next Generation Childcare, Auckland), Darius Singh (Fern Garden, Auckland and Tauranga), Jill Oliver (Toddlers Turf, Auckland) and Lyn Eder (Portobello Preschools, Canterbury).

Saturday started with a wake-up from CEO Peter Reynolds, including housekeeping and the awarding of a number of spot prizes. Peter managed to obtain "special prizes" from the SkyCity Hotel and joyfully awarded his collection of complimentary shampoos and conditioners from his room to unsuspecting delegates... along with more attractive spot prizes from sponsors Bank of New Zealand, Telecom, OfficeMax, and exhibitors GSB, Mum2Mum, Solutions NZ Ltd, Te Reo Singalong and Playscape.

Gordon Dryden presented the first key note of the day, speaking of his experiences with innovative education projects in places





like China and Mexico. He shared how the best schools now don't use traditional classrooms, but digital hubs instead, using the example of Stonefields primary school in Auckland as an example, and how our future pre-schoolers will be heading into these types of schools and how important it is for early childhood education centres to be using interactive technology.

Professor Martin Devlin was unfortunately unable to join us at conference, with Auckland airport being closed due to fog! A "pretend" Professor Devlin stepped up to deliver the key note presentation – not a bad effort with an hours' notice! Well done Peter!! The messages were clear – that the ECE sector needs a quality improvement system in place to provide assurance to parents and government of the very high standard of service that is provided. Such a system can also be the cornerstone of ongoing improvement of services within the sector. Professor Devlin made the point that it is not government's role to oversee quality and that this should not be confused with regulatory compliance. The sector must take charge of its own destiny!

The regular herd of sheep marching off to the 28 workshops available throughout the day was enhanced by "Tinkerbell" Marleen from Icon rounding everyone up with her little bell. Workshop highlights from Saturday included Strengthening Learning Foundations Through Inclusive Practice, Resiliency with Infants and Toddlers, Innovation in Infant and Toddler Curriculum, Born Risk Takers, Green Sticker Green/Blue Land – Our Centre's Colours of Christchurch, i-Possibilities, and others.

Saturday night delegates truly let their hair down, with the Gala Dinner. This year's theme was "Night of the Stars", and those who chose to come along in costume were a sight to behold. The key note speaker



at the Gala Dinner – one "Professor John Trimble" had everyone fooled from the start and was tremendous fun. Everyone danced the night away after a sumptuous feast to the sounds of the band "Tongue and Groove".

A very quiet Sunday kicked off with a few more prizes and ribbing from Peter. Sir Ray Avery captured the audience with his personal story of his challenging up-bringing, arriving in New Zealand in the 1970s and the manner in which he subsequently embraced the Kiwi way of life. It is this "Kiwi-ness" that enabled him and others to meet the challenges of returning sight to tens of thousands of people in third world countries through the Fred Hollows Foundation. Sir Ray's story was inspiring as he described his leadership journey. Along the way we found out he was quite the lady's man!

Another dozen workshops on Sunday made for a tiring but challenging day. Highlights

included Governance and Strategic Planning, the Blue Book – one year on, Great Leadership in ECE, and a very popular "Reggio in Drag".

Who can forget Julie Woods – That Blind Woman – walking through the audience on Sunday afternoon to "I am Woman" and a chanting and clapping audience. Her story of grit and determination at losing her sight as a mother of two young children. And her mantra "why not?!" Many centres will now have this mantra printed on a poster and pinned to the wall.

That's it for another year. Our sincere thanks go to you, our membership, and other people from throughout the sector who came to learn, network, be challenged and enjoy the environment that is an ECC conference. Our special thanks go to the 85 exhibitors and our other sponsors for their support, and to Icon Conference and Event Management for their organisational tenacity!

See you in Rotorua in 2013!



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# Navigating the 21st Century

Highlights from the Early Childhood Council's 2012 National Conference

Korea and Hong Kong are beating us in the literacy stakes. Singapore and China use make better use of IT in their teaching methods. We can do better.

These are messages given by Minister of Education, Hon. Hekia Parata, and key note speaker, Gordon Dryden, at the Early Childhood Council's National Conference in May 2012. Parata described early childhood workers as "nation builders".

"To remain a first world country, we need to move into 21st century by reorienting towards Asia, and changing our education system to grow our economy."

## How can we do this?

### Learn from Asia

Asian countries are increasingly New Zealand's main trading partners. "It is Asia that will feed us in the future", says Minister Parata.

And if you look at who is a New Zealander now, you will discover that what counts as a "Kiwi" is changing rapidly. Every

immigrant brings their own ways of being in the world as well as their own languages. These people become "Kiwis". Every person brings new knowledge, a new richness to our society. New Zealanders are not alone in this. The latest census figures in the USA show that minority groups now outnumber the majority group in the USA. This has huge implications for the political and economic future of the US as well as cultural, social and educational implications.

### Be Inclusive

Minister Parata spoke of the need for "ALL New Zealanders to succeed". She challenged early childhood educators to "reach out past your comfort zone to children's families – make them feel comfortable in your centres by going past your 'taken for granted' ways of doing things and finding out, and doing, what makes them comfortable. Everyone wants the best for their children." She asked early childhood educators and centre owners to "make Maori and Pasifika feel comfortable

in ECE. Make them companions in making their children successful".

### Work alongside children and adults

Minister Parata described early childhood educators as role models for schools in their understanding of how to work alongside children. "Gone are the days", she said, "when teachers stand in front of the class imparting knowledge". The role now is to be interactive, to work alongside children, who are often ahead of us. What we want is "a collaborative journey with the NZ education system working together with parents, whanau, aiga and families." She also said "we have a responsibility to reach out to immigrants because they have chosen New Zealand as their home."

Many workshop presenters reinforced the message that working WITH families is a key factor in high quality early childhood education.

### Innovate!

Leading scientist, business man and entrepreneur, Sir Ray Avery, talked of New Zealand as a country of innovators. He says it's no use teaching a child to use a computer "mouse". This technology will soon disappear. Children need thinking skills so they can constantly update their IT knowledge as new technologies emerge. Minister Parata adds that "to stand still is to fall behind".

### Love and respect children, staff, parents, whanau and aiga

Ray Avery's life story was a tale of searching for love, and eventually finding it in with his wife and children.

### Get the missing children into your centres

This was Minister Parata's key message. Ministry of Education presenter, Karl du Fresne, described the Ministry's plans to ensure 98% of children attend early childhood education. The Ministry's figures





show that Maori and Pasifika are the two biggest groups of children most likely to be "missing". He challenged centres to support the drive for 98% participation. Those attending his presentation engaged in a lively debate about the "real" participation figures and described how Ministry regulations such as the frequent absence rule limit their ability to keep "missing" children enrolled.

### Be courageous leaders

The leadership panel shared their personal stories of overcoming childhood shyness and lack of confidence to step into leadership roles. Their messages included:

- Walk alongside your staff.
- Deal with conflict as soon as it arises.
- Walk the talk.
- Be precise and timely with decision making.
- Be self disciplined - get enough sleep.
- Build trust and hold crucial conversations.

And Minister Parata also commented that "leadership is not tied to the male gene".

### Free us to Focus On What Matters Most

Early Childhood Council's CEO, Peter Reynolds, called on the government to free the sector from unnecessary bureaucracy so that owners, managers and teachers can focus on making a difference to children's lives. Martin Devlin's keynote presentation on quality stressed the need to be customer focussed. Participants wanted more time away from satisfying government so they can focus mostly on children and their families.

### WHAT ABOUT MONEY

Early Childhood Council's President, Maria Johnson, opened the conference with a call to the government for a stable and sensible funding system. Minister of Education, Hekia Parata's response was that "after 2014, when our economy is growing, we can look at possible growth".

### Practical tips:

- Learn to pronounce children's names properly.
- Understand children's heritage.
- Find out what the words are for everyday concepts in your clients' cultures.

- Find out what your clients' values are e.g. all cultures value love and generosity. It's just the packaging that changes.
- Slow down! Take more time to build relationships with children, parents, whanau and other staff.
- As a parent, if you're not comfortable going to a centre or talking to a manager, take your whole family with you – or whatever will make you feel comfortable.
- Don't be so precious! Key note speaker, Nigel Latta advised participants children need love and affection, clear boundaries, and appropriate consequences for their actions but don't "bubble wrap" them.
- ALWAYS know you can be wrong. Latta describes this as "silly and dangerous".
- Build mental resilience – learn not to give up too easily.
- Love and respect yourself, the children in your centres, their parents, families, whanau and aiga.
- Don't say no, say "why not?" advises closing speaker, Julie Woods, known most for her courageous approach to being blind.

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Educational Resources

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"The whole conference was the best I have been to."



"I thought this was an outstanding conference, Peter you did a fantastic job, especially stepping up to present the key note. I loved Ray Avery and That Blind Woman, both lived up to my expectations. And of course Nigel."



### I most liked:

- Friendly, relaxed atmosphere
- Ray Avery presentation
- Bodies Grow Brains workshop
- Nigel Latta presentation







Group winners at the gala



Bright Sparks Childcare



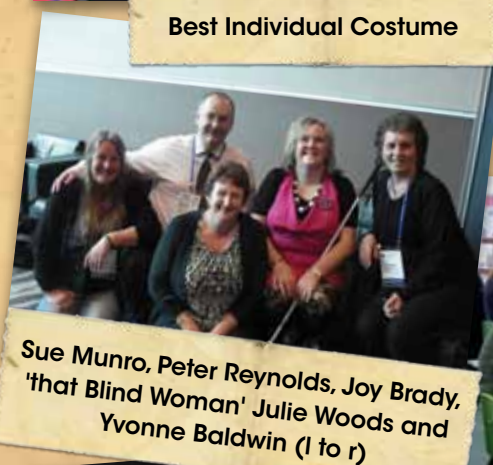
Best Individual Costume



'That Blind Woman' Julie Woods



Judging Team



Sue Munro, Peter Reynolds, Joy Brady, 'that Blind Woman' Julie Woods and Yvonne Baldwin (l to r)



Eating lunch kindly donated by Kiwicare on a centre tour



Bright Sparks Shellee Hancy imparting knowledge



Best Individual Costume



Send [info@ecc.org.nz](mailto:info@ecc.org.nz) your best caption for the above photo!!





### One thing I am taking with me to put into action is:

- 'Love the children and their families'.
- 'You can do small things that can make a big difference'.
- 'Give respect and you'll get it'.
- 'I will bring my own philosophy back into my centre.'

### 'Where to find web based and paper based resources for pronouncing Māori words'.

- 'To refocus on my customers. I have probably focused on government too much.'
- 'I will toughen up children. We over protect children.'







"I was really impressed by the organisation of the ECC Conference. As a regular exhibitor in expos and conferences this was certainly the best I have participated in. Everything was made so easy for us. Thanks for a fun time too - definitely coming again to the dinner! I am looking forward to participating in next year's conference."



# Resource Reviews

Reviewed by Anne Barrowclough, Elizabeth Clements and Trudi Sutcliffe



## Hairy Maclary and Friends - A Touch and Feel Book

By Lynley Dodd  
Penguin

A favourite New Zealand classic has been adapted to appeal to younger readers, with simplified text and a tactile experience. This new edition has different textiles on

each page from a black hairy body on Hairy Maclary to silk on Schnitzel von Krumm's cushion to Scarface Claw's pink rough tongue.

This book, like many touch and feel books lacks a plot but it does introduce the characters from these well-loved stories using previous artwork and the delicious language we have all come to love.



## Spot's Fun First Words - a slide-and-see book

By Eric Hill  
Penguin

Young Spot fans (aged 2-4 years) will enjoy sliding the colourful pictures to show the words underneath in this study board book. Each slide shows a picture of a familiar object, and by moving it from left to right,

children will uncover the written word and a descriptive word, from noisy drums to ginger cats. Although most descriptions are easy to guess by the pictures, not all are which can lead to new words being said out loud and young children's vocabulary extended.

This book is perfect for one-to-one interactions between a toddler/young child and an adult.



## People

By Blexbolex  
Gecko Press

Blexbolex is a French comic artist and illustrator, who created this inviting book. Visually gorgeous and quirky in equal parts, there is something here to entertain most minds. The publisher has given it the age bracket of 0 to infinity.

Real, mythical and imaginary people come together, with opposite pages showing pairs or opposites – a teenager facing a diva, a pirate facing a deep-sea diver, a mother facing a baby. Some 'people' may not be so suitable for an early childhood centre though – a grandma facing a body, for example...



## The House that Jack Built

By Gavin Bishop  
Gecko Press

This book has just been republished with Gecko Press, including a Te Reo Maori edition, and is a definite must for all early childhood centres. The story has two strands, the traditional text which tells the story of Jack Bull, who travels to New Zealand from London in 1798, alongside illustrations that tell the story from a Maori perspective using the myth of creation: Papatuanuku the earth mother, Ranginui

the sky father and their children as guardians of the land.

It is a story that can be read at two different levels depending on the age of the child, but to share the full meaning of the story teachers need to have a thorough read first and also read Bishop's explanation of the story at the back of the book.

One thing I liked about the illustrations is that it reminded me of Australian author Jeannie Baker and her environmental story Window, with its poignant environmental and cultural message. Aimed at 4 to infinity.





## My Very First Bible, My Very First Prayers.

**Words by Lois Rock**  
**Illustrated by Alex Auliffe**  
**Lion Hudson**

These two little hard cover books come as a boxed pair and are illustrated with small pictures. The book of prayers includes made up prayers and those attributed to others or traditional sources. There are good indexes in both books. The prayers are grouped for different times of the day, year and other categories. A good paraphrase of the 23rd psalm is included.

My Very First Bible gives the usual bible stories. It is written from a Jewish perspective, without mentioning the words 'Jew' or 'Jewish people' and, as a gentile, I became irritated by references to 'Great, great, great, great grand-father Abraham' and the dismissal of Jesus and his efforts for mankind in the first few pages when Adam and Eve, after being banished from paradise wondered, "Can things ever be put right again?" and the author comments, "People have been wondering ever since." These books would be an excellent present from a God-parent or religious grand-parent for individual reading but are far too small to read to a group of children at mat-time.

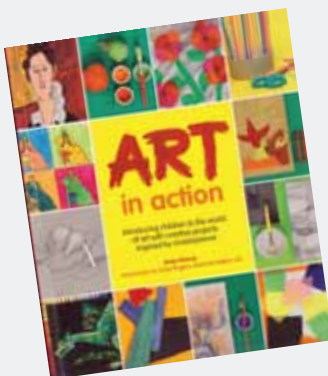


## Jollytime CD

**By Kelvin Roy**  
**Martian Music**

If you are looking for new music that promotes coordination, working collaboratively and celebrates language you will enjoy Jollytime. The music has a range of tempos that explore a variety of motion from "making a face" to "stepping

to the side, make it glide". What I liked was that the music was clear, gave time for the actions and used rhymes and a play on words to make the music more lively and fun. Also helpful is that you can download simple instructions to the songs from [www.kidsounz.com](http://www.kidsounz.com) to use with a group of children. So if you enjoy having a giggle while you boogie, go to the above website and have a listen.



## Art in Action

**By Maja Pitamic**  
**New Holland**

This book is designed for children 5-12 years of age, with each chapter exploring a theme using a well-known painting. For example the chapter that explores 'colour', uses Matisse's The Snail, Lipundja's Aboriginal Bark Painting and Seurat's The Circus to explore not just colour but also the style of paintings and the stories behind the paintings and artists.

Twenty-one masterpieces of Western Art are explored to inspire young artists and discover new artistic techniques using diverse media from tissue paper mosaic to charcoal. Although many of the projects would be quite teacher directed if followed step-by-step early childhood centres who have or would like to have a strong art focus will no doubt be inspired by the ideas from this book and adapt the art projects to the ability of the children they work with.



## A PUFFIN PRIZE PACK!

Reader's Competition – 25 books to give away!

**In the story 'Hairy McCleary and Friends', what is the name of the toughest 'Tom in town'?**

Email your contact details and the answer to the question above to [info@decc.org.nz](mailto:info@decc.org.nz) by Monday 30 July 2012 and be in to win!

**Puffin has kindly donated**  
**FIVE prize packs, each**  
**containing FIVE books!**



### Puffin Competition Winners

Congratulations to the following winners who have just won a pack of five Puffin books each.

Ellen van Dijk, Alexandra Goodwin, Lisa Saunders, Bear Park Centre of Education, The Nurtury



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## Turning Trash Into Treasure for Young Children

By Adam Buckingham

Be inspired by this innovative book written by a New Zealand early childhood teacher. This book is small in stature but huge in what it offers, with over 200 photos, helpful guidelines throughout the book which correspond with the photos, such as what type of resources were used in making various projects, any safety issues some resources may have and how to solve it, and what children can learn from these activities. Although these activity areas are made from 'trash' they enable young children to work and play in a stimulating environment.

All educators or interested parents will be stimulated by what they read and will want to assess their own environment and then reduce, reuse, recycle, respect, repair, reflect and refuse, concepts which underpin the book.

There are also guidelines on how to gather resources, how to engage parents (particularly fathers/men) and encourage them to be more involved in early childhood centres.

This is a hands on book which will encourage educators to be more adventurous in how to use 'trash' and in doing so will engage children in learning about recycling and waste reduction.



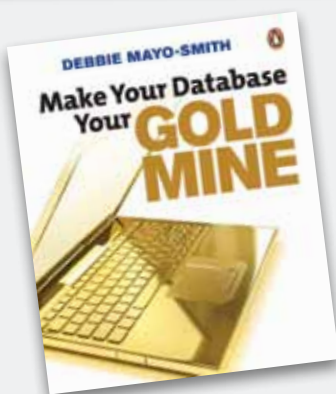
## Soothing Flora and Fauna

By Kelvin Roy  
Martian music

This CD is perfect as either soothing background music to be used while children play or for listening to at rest-time. The rhyming songs celebrate language and careful listeners may even learn a thing or two about various animals or insects

by listening closely to the lyrics: "Flying High, it's almost like a dream, A moth's life is not all that it seems Puriri Moths have just two days to live to lay their eggs and start all over again" [from the song, Puriri Moth]. The CD has songs about well-known animals such as bears that all children can relate to but also has songs about New Zealand's own flora and fauna. Go to [www.kidsounz.com](http://www.kidsounz.com) for more information.

# Management Resources



## Make Your Database Your Goldmine

By Debbie Mayo-Smith  
Penguin Books

This book is a must for early childhood centres. Learning to use a database well will greatly enhance your contact with your families because you will be able to use a range of personalised approaches with minimal time and effort. And it will also

allow tightly targeted marketing rather than 'en masse' marketing. Of course, not all families are 'email-oriented' but a good database will enable you to track your communication with families. Different approaches are needed in different areas.

This is a book about using databases rather than tips about business. The computer instructions are detailed, designed for Microsoft users (2003-2010). A useful book to have alongside your computer.



## Making Consensus Work: Decisions that all can live with

By Robbie Burke  
Wellington: NZ Playcentre Federation. 2011

'Each person's view is a unique perspective on a larger reality. If I can look through your view and you through mine, we may both see something we may not see alone.' Consensus decision making is about

bringing together the best of different people's views. It requires respectful listening and an openness to different ways of achieving an objective.

This beautifully presented 76 page book provides all the information a group needs to learn how to use consensus decision making. It tells you how to build consensus, what facilitators' jobs are, and how to evaluate what you have done.



# TRAINING DIRECTORY

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# Early Childhood Council

## Member Benefits Programme

Benefits of joining up with ECC's Preferred Suppliers

Now, more than ever, many early childhood centres are struggling financially. To help support centres the Early Childhood Council established the ECC Member Benefit Programme to help centres access a range of goods and services at favourable rates. As a member of the ECC you can save money by using our Preferred Suppliers.

Choosing an ECC-accredited Preferred Supplier means you avoid the hassle of finding your own supplier, or one with an understanding of the early childhood sector.

For example every year you can save \$100 just by using Christmas Gouwland for your annual audit. Join up with Ezypay this year,

quote this advert and you will not have to pay any establishment fee, a saving of \$295.00 (which non-ECC members pay). For many centres this saving has paid for their ECC subscription, without even considering the other benefits from other Preferred Suppliers.

As an ex-teacher I shudder about how much money was spent on office supplies, art and craft products, cleaning products, technology products and teaching resources. By using OfficeMax as a preferred supplier, members receive a retail discount. This discount ranges depending on the product but you can save up to 20 per cent on some lines.

Also another ECC preferred supplier, GSB, guarantees that if your savings don't cover the cost of your annual GSB ECC Savings Scheme membership fee, they will give you one year's free membership. Membership fees range from \$165 to \$295 +GST (fee depends on how many children a centre is licensed for). Non ECC members pay \$400. And don't forget you can save up to 70% off RRP on selected products.

The above examples only give a glimpse of the savings to be made. Read the following advertisements and discover the benefits of joining up with ECC and their Preferred Suppliers.

**The ECC is very pleased to announce a new preferred supplier to members. Mercury Energy has now formalised an agreement with the ECC to offer electricity supply for member centres and energy advice. More details, including contact details are on ECC's website: [www.ecc.org.nz](http://www.ecc.org.nz)**







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- Technology Products
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### Member Benefits:

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- Free phone (0800 577 700) Free fax (0800 367 724)
- Order by 5.00pm receive next business day delivery nationwide
- Orders over \$50 receive free shipping
- Shop in our retail stores and receive ECC pricing (see our website for store addresses and open hours)
- Pay on account, by credit card or even via direct debit!

To switch your current OfficeMax account to the Early Childhood Council agreement or set up a new account with OfficeMax, contact one of our New Business Representatives.

South Island - Pam Boland 03 344 6503  
 North Island - Neil Donoghue 09 259 7436  
 - Joseph Silvanus 09 259 7413



## Educa is an online portfolio system designed for New Zealand's early childhood centres.

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Centres also say that Educa helps them save on non-contact time and cut the cost and environmental waste of printing portfolios.

And the portfolios they create are more relevant and exciting, because Educa makes it easy for teachers to post photos and videos and to link entries with learning stories, Te Whariki and the centre's own curriculum and goals.

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No matter what size your centre is, call us to discuss how we can save you time and money handing your customers payments.

To help even further join Ezypay before the end of 2012, quote this advert and receive an additional

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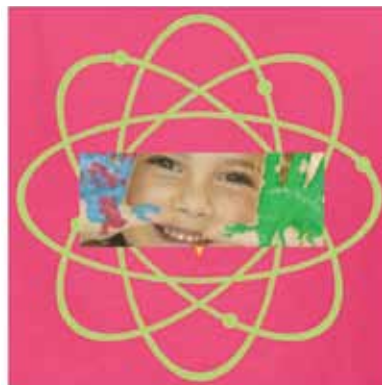
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## THE 2013 INAUGURAL ECC INNOVATION & IMPROVEMENT AWARD

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This award is open to any ECC member centre and will be presented at the ECC Conference in May 2013.

A prize to the value of \$3,000 is available to the winning entry, along with the recognition of your peers and a feature in Swings & Roundabouts.

**For more information, see [www.ecc.org.nz](http://www.ecc.org.nz)**



**Early Childhood Council**



# SHARP

100<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

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# LAST LAUGH



A mother walked into her son's room and said cheerfully, "Up. Up. It's time to go to school."

The son replied, "I don't want to go to school."

"You have to go," said the mother.

"I hate that school. The kids are mean and rotten."

"You still have to go," exclaimed the mother.

"It's like a jungle. One fight after another. They threaten me at least 100 times a day," cried the son.

"You have to go to school."

"Why must I go?"

"Because," replied the mother, "You are the Principal."

Finding one of her students making faces at others on the playground, A teacher stopped to gently reprove the child.

Smiling sweetly, the teacher said, "Charlie, when I was a child, I was told if that I made ugly faces, it would freeze and I would stay like that."

Charlie looked up and replied, "Well, Ms Smith, you can't say you weren't warned."

A teacher wrote home to a student's parents:

"If you don't believe half of what goes on in school, then I won't believe half of what she says goes on at home either."

It was the kindergarten teacher's birthday and the students decided that they would each buy their teacher a gift.

The first student, whose parents own a florist shop, gave her a present. She held it and said "I guess that it is flowers".

How did you guess?" asked the little boy. She laughed and thanked him.

The second student, whose parents own a candy store, gave her a present. She held it and said, "I guess that is some candy."

How did you guess?" asked the little boy. She again laughed and thanked him also.

The third student, whose parents own a bottle shop, gave her a box which was leaking. The teacher touched the liquid with her finger and tasted it. "Mmmmm is it wine?" she asked.

"No," said the little girl.

So she tasted it again. "Is it champagne?" she asked.

"No," replied the little girl, "It is a puppy."

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Construction area with drawing board, wood working, collage and clay work benches, lift out tool box, drawing display, art easels and storage for work materials, tools and work in progress



Family Play area with purpose built kitchen which includes stove, sink, oven, microwave cupboard, pantry, side board and work benches



Inclusive playground for children of diverse abilities which includes a large deck area with 4 different climbing and tactile experiences, a sand pit with water play, and a water wall with recycled water trickling down a stone wall.



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- >>> Auto-activation of future enrolment agreements
- >>> Keep medical & vaccination records
- >>> Staffing ratio optimisation



JANUARY 2011										Service No. 666	
Subsidy Funded Child Hours					30 ECE Funded Child Hours					Staff Hour Count	
Wk 1					Wk 2					ECE Qualified and Registered	
Wk 3					Wk 4					Wk 5	
Wk 6					Wk 7					Wk 8	
Wk 9					Wk 10					Wk 11	
Wk 12					Wk 13					Wk 14	
Wk 15					Wk 16					Wk 17	
Wk 18					Wk 19					Wk 20	
Wk 21					Wk 22					Wk 23	
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