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Autumn 2013

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Inside this issue...

Swings+Roundabouts March 2013

Autumn 2013

7 FROM THE EDITOR

8 CEO'S MESSAGE

9 SO YOU KNOW

10 SUPPORTING MĀORI & PASIFIKA CHILDREN

22 NUTRITION

Fuelled4life

25 ECC ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2013

32 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

34 AUSTRALIAN FRAMEWORK

36 BUSINESS PLANNING

Essential Business Planning

37 TRAINING DIRECTORY

38 CENTRE INNOVATION

40 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The real reason for "boring"

42 RESOURCE REVIEWS

46 LAST LAUGH

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FROM THE Editor



New Zealand from a global perspective is a small drop in the ocean, but despite our small population we are able to offer the world men and women who have made a difference in the global arena in a wide range of fields. We churn out world-class scientists, artists, sports people and entrepreneurs from Ernest Rutherford to Kiri Te Kanawa to Peter Jackson to Valarie Vili to Weta Workshop.

New Zealand is also considered to offer world-class education that is modern and responsive. The teaching opportunities we offer in the early childhood education sector is particularly highly regarded. But unfortunately not all our children are accessing, succeeding or receiving this 'world-class education', particularly some Māori and Pasifika children and children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. These children are under-performing when they reach school and in the ECE arena many of these children are not accessing the high quality early education they need to have for a successful start.

As we know, the Ministry of Education now has in place the ECE Participation Programme, which is a variety of initiatives seeking to increase ECE participation. But how can we as educators and centre managers/owners make a difference on top of these initiatives? How can we attract Māori and Pasifika families to our centres making them feel welcome, and comfortable that their experience, their ethnicity and their knowledge is valued?

To start off it can be as simple as learning to welcome families into your centre by speaking their language, ie Kia ora, Talofa lava, Malo ni and ensuring you pronounce names correctly. But do you stop here? Can

you take this deeper? Especially in regards to the Tangata whenua, how can your centre connect and value tikanga Māori?

In this issue we have stories from several centres, a parent's point of view and more, sharing their journey in supporting and providing for their Māori and Pasifika children and families. Have a read. Be inspired to start making a change in how your centre interacts with children from Māori and Pasifika backgrounds.

Plus in this issue we have a focus on the ECC's upcoming conference this May in Rotorua. The theme this year is "Nation Building". Under this theme we have subthemes on leadership, ICT – how can we prepare children for the future and what tools can we use, how to succeed in a competitive ECE world, and whether our curriculum is still current or whether it is time to take a fresh look and approach to ECE in New Zealand. Plus the conference confirms that early childhood education is where it all starts – building the nation of tomorrow for all our children and for the good of our society.

Throughout this issue are thought provoking stories, such as a story from a centre in Australia who is at the top of their game when it comes to the new Australian framework. Would this type of framework work in NZ? Plus another article explains the reason why some children claim they are 'bored'.

If you or your centre has a story to share email me at info@ecc.org.nz

Trudi Sutcliffe

Editor



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Bianca Wood and Jess Wilson who have won their ECE centres set of Uncle Goose Maori ABC Blocks from the team at The Playing Mantis.

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CEO's Message



ECE in New Zealand – some issues for 2013

2013 comes with special challenges for ECE centres. This article outlines a few of them.

Funding

The current Government has made big cuts in funding levels for ECE centres. Most damagingly, it removed the funding band for centres with more than 80 per cent qualified staff, and caused the biggest revenue cut in the memory of those currently in our sector. The impacts of these cuts continue. Centres have reduced the proportion of qualified teachers, reduced the proportion of staff per child, and slashed budgets for staff training. Many have suffered reduced profits, a few have been forced to close, and many continue to struggle to pay bills. Poorer families, unable to pay increased fees, have been forced to either cut back on ECE hours or remove children from care – a most ironic outcome given the Government's objective of increasing ECE participation to 98 per cent.

Adding to the anxiety, the Government is undertaking currently a review of ECE funding. It was in this context that the ECC met with the Minister of Education late last year, and asked whether or not the Government intended to fund increased access for low-income children by lowering funding levels for existing centres. The answer, says the Minister, is probably not. She said the review of ECE funding, currently underway, would not be complete in time for there to be any impact on the Government's 2013 Budget, and that even when announced

changes would be 'unlikely' to involve funding cuts for existing providers.

The ECC supports the Government's efforts to lift the level of participation in ECE for children living in lower socio-economic conditions. But our sector will need to be vigilant and active to ensure the trend towards targeted funding does not come at the cost of quality everywhere else.

The review of home-based ECE

The Government is currently reviewing home-based ECE. As things stand home-based services face lower standards of regulation than centres, and provide lower levels of teacher qualification. While junior staff in centres are under constant daily supervision, home-based workers are supervised by a 'network coordinator' who is not based at the same location at which children are cared for, and whom 'educators' may see infrequently only. The ECC would like to see new home-based regulations based on the idea of 'equivalent regulated quality' – the idea that families should receive equivalent quality no matter which part of the ECE sector their child attends.

Te Whaariki

Our curriculum is almost 20 years old. It was leading edge when launched. But it is not holy writ. The ECE Taskforce noted that the implementation of Te Whaariki was mixed, and that there should be an evaluation of implementation across our sector. The ECC believes also that it is time for a review. Twenty years is long

enough. The world has changed. And our sector should, in 2013, begin thinking about how our world-class curriculum might be updated.

Other challenges

Our sector faces many other issues in 2013. Loss of government funding for the education of provisionally-registered teachers is forcing centres to rethink how this can be achieved.

Some ECC members, already under financial pressure and operating in areas with adequate ECE provision, think it wasteful that Government continues to fund and/or license new centres in their areas, while other parts of New Zealand do not have sufficient ECE provision.

The Government's new Early Learning Information (ELI) system is scheduled for roll out later this year. The system will collect data from ECE providers, and store identity and participation information for about 190,000 children. The ECC suspects the new system may reveal that participation rates are lower than estimated currently. Were this so, it would impact the 98 per cent participation target at the very time our Minister would be under pressure to demonstrate clear progress on this objective. It would be ironic were this imperative confounded by the accuracy of data generated by the Government's new information system.

To keep ahead of these issues and to compete competitively and with innovation make sure you attend the ECC Conference in May this year. I look forward to meeting you all there!

So you know



Welcome

The following early childhood centres joined the Early Childhood Council recently:

- Imagine Childcare, Petone, Lower Hutt
- Glendowie Montessori Pre-school, Glendowie, Auckland
- Acorn Meadows Education & Childcare, Pakuranga, Auckland
- Crayons Educational Services, Alexandra
- Early Education Waikato, Hamilton
- First Years Richmond, Nelson.
- Global Early Learning Centre, Christchurch
- Inspiring Minds, Kerikeri
- Rainbow Bears Preschool, Henderson
- Tiny Tots Childcare Centre, Auckland
- Palms Preschool, Unsworth Heights, Auckland
- Jojo's Childcare Ltd, Kumeu
- Good Seeds, Mangere
- BJ's Childcare Ltd, Whangarei (Provisional Membership)
- Kids Barn Child Care Centre, Hawera (Provisional Membership)

And welcome back to previous members, Alpha Early Childhood Educational Centre, Christchurch and Above & Beyond Education & Childcare in Tauranga.

ECC Annual Conference 2013

"Nation Building"

24-26 May 2013

Energy Events Centre, Rotorua

The **2013 ECC Conference "Nation Building"** gives you an opportunity to hear and learn from some of the best minds in the World:

- On competing in a tough climate
- On how technology has influenced (and continues to influence) ECE
- On how play is a critical component to learning

- On how current research is changing practice.

Supporting these key note presentations from international and national key note speakers are 40 different workshops, some aimed directly at centre owners and managers; and others aimed at teachers.

ECC members and non-members can attend this conference.

To register go to www.ecc.org.nz (under Events).

The ECC Professional Development Programme

The Early Childhood Council is offering a series of half-day practical and interactive workshops for both Centre Managers and their teaching team in 2013.

EC Professional Support, based at the Faculty of Education at the University of Auckland in partnership with the ECC are designing and delivering the ECC's teachers workshops nationwide.

Workshops on offer may include:

- Introduction to mentoring in ECE
- Self review in ECE
- Fostering social competence
- Schema – recognising and responding to schema
- Infants & Toddlers: Notice- what should I look for? Recognise – What learning do I See? Respond – How do I support and extend this? (2 part seminar)
- Authentic bi-cultural practice: more than waiata and poi

Whitireia Polytechnic (Faculty of Business and IT) in partnership with the ECC are now delivering the ECC Centre Manager workshops nationwide.

Workshops on offer include:

- Marketing in a competitive world
- Financial management
- Managing people
- Strategic planning
- Governance

The ECC is still providing the: *The Blue Book Workshop: For your Registration and Professional Development Journey.*

This is a practical and hands-on approach workshop that uses the ECC's 'The Blue Book' as a tool for implementing the Registered Teacher Criteria (RTC) and is for registering, registered and mentor teachers. To find out more about the Blue Book workshop go to page 32.

Keep an eye out for all of these upcoming workshops at www.ecc.org.nz (under Events).

These workshops are for both ECC members and non-members and are delivered around the country.

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Developing and strengthening partnerships – the key to successful early childhood education for Māori

The Education Review Office (ERO) is committed to improving the quality of educational outcomes for Māori. This commitment is explicit throughout ERO's review processes and starts in early childhood education.

ERO's revised methodology for reviews of early childhood services, *ERO's Approach to Reviews in Early Childhood Services*, has a strong focus on the Te Tiriti o Waitangi principle of partnership and how this is reflected in the practices of early childhood services. What is clear in the methodology and in ERO national reports is that the concept of partnership is integral to the success of Māori learners.

Two recent ERO reports, *Success for Māori Children in Early Childhood Services* and *Partnership with Whānau Māori* identified the challenges for early childhood services, highlighted what is working well and recommended what services can do to support Māori children and their whānau. Both reports found that services need to focus more on establishing partnerships with parents and whānau of Māori children.

Partnership with whānau Māori in early childhood education means going beyond welcoming whānau and building relationships. A genuine, culturally responsive partnership enables educators to respond to the aspirations and expectations whānau have for their children. Essential to this process is for early childhood educators to understand the significance of identity, language and culture for Māori children and their whānau.

ERO's reports provide some insight into what a culturally responsive partnership looks like and what services can do to develop such partnerships. The self-review tool (below) is a good starting point for services. The questions give services the opportunity to really think about how they interact with Māori children and whānau and what the service is doing as a whole to contribute to positive learning outcomes for those children.

The 2010 report, *Success for Māori Children in Early Childhood Services: Good Practice* highlights what nine early

childhood services were doing to support Māori children to become competent and confident learners.

While the way they worked with parents and whānau of Māori children differed, common across all nine services were certain features that contributed to positive outcomes for Māori children. These included:

- the importance given to establishing and strengthening relationships with the whānau of Māori children, and encouraging parent and whānau participation
- giving effect to a bicultural curriculum
- a commitment and passion to making a difference for Māori children
- robust self-review processes.

The report gives more detail about these features and includes ideas for services wanting to improve their support for Māori children. It also includes self-review questions similar to those included below.

ERO reports are available to view and download from its website: www.ero.govt.nz

Self-review questions to evaluate the extent to which your service is working in partnership with whānau Māori

Theme	Self-review questions
Culture of the service	To what extent does our service recognise and build on the knowledge and expertise Māori children and their whānau bring to the service?
Service philosophy	How well do we understand the aspirations and goals of whānau and are these aspirations and goals reflected in the learning of Māori children? To what extent do we value and implement Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles?
Self review	To what extent are whānau involved in our self review? How responsive are we to the diverse aspirations and goals of Māori children and their whānau?
Professional leadership	How confident are our leaders in building and maintaining effective partnerships with whānau? What professional learning and development would support our service to build effective partnerships with whānau?
Te ao Maori	To what extent is Māori language, culture and identity integrated into our daily interactions?
Whānau connections	What do we know about how whānau Māori view how well we support their aspirations for their children's language, culture and identity?
Utilising Māori expertise	How well do we access and use expertise on Māori language, culture and identity? How well are we developing the skills to effectively engage with different whānau?

A Te Ao Māori Perspective from Bright Stars Educare

By Natalie Paewai

We are Bright Stars Educare a bicultural mixed aged centre located in Melville, Hamilton licenced for 24 children.

"From the time a tamariki enrolls we make an effort to get to know the child and their whānau by making links through whakapapa or workplace connections, conversing kanohi ki te kanohi to find common ground and helping to ease the settling transition by embracing the whole family as they join the Bright Stars Whānau." We are very fortunate that our centre is small and caters for mixed age children as it enables the opportunity for siblings, cousins and friends to learn side by side incorporating the practice of teina-tuakana where learning and respect is given and received by all children, whānau and staff.

School readiness topics such as ABC's & 123's are embedded throughout our

programme but WHANAUNGATANGA is the foundation and key to a successful learning programme. Whānau involvement at Bright Stars means Mum, Dad, brother, sister, nan, uncle, cousin and friend are always welcomed to share their ideas, aspirations and talents. Celebrating special events such as Matariki, Christmas or going camping with all whānau members have assisted in developing strong respectful relationships where whānau can voice their aspirations for their tamariki in a relaxed and caring environment. A strong theme identified by most families is that they want their children to be happy in a home-away-from-home surrounding. Therefore Manaakitanga is crucial. "We actually love and care for all the children that attend Bright Stars Educare as if they were our own" and valuing and expressing aroha means that we receive it in return. Whānau donate and assist in the learning

programme wherever they can. Excursions to see whānau at work empower children to feel proud of their families and lots of hands on learning occur. Even when whānau have moved on they seem to always enjoy coming back to visit us or join us at the celebration events.

At Bright Stars Educare we always look for ways to stay true to the importance of the family and capitalise on the strengths of having a mixed age environment. A kaupapa Māori framework allows all children to be proud of who they are with best practices happening such as: Karakia morning, afternoon and before kai. The kotiro karanga, the tama haka and lots and lots of waiata is shared. WE aim to create an environment where children, whānau and staff can be proud of whom they are sharing talents and skills to help our tamariki grow into lifelong learners.



Providing for Māori and Pasifika Children

- Best Practices

By Lorraine Wynne

Celebrating cultural diversity promotes racial tolerance and social competence. Working with a high ratio of families of Māori and Pacific Island descent, many of whom are living in environments challenged by poverty and its' associated issues is not only professionally rewarding but personally fulfilling.



At St Francis Whānau Aroha Early Childhood and Family Support Centre in Rotorua we recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of all those within the community in line with the ethos and mission statements of the Waiapu Anglican Social Services, under whose umbrella we operate.

Relationships based on respect and social justice, form the basis to engaging children and their families in culturally relevant interactions. Such relationships begin to form from the moment the new families step through the gate. Greetings are often given in a number of languages and body language ensures families are made to feel a sense of belonging from the very first meeting.

With a resident Whānau Support Worker on staff, the parents/whānau are given every opportunity to learn alongside the tamariki, gaining confidence and sharing the teaching role with their 'funds of knowledge' creating an atmosphere that aims to empower. As the parents participate in programmes that acknowledge their cultural needs and aspirations, they learn skills that they can transfer into their home environments. This builds resilience against future challenges.

As with traditional Māori pedagogy, the environment and the use of natural

resources play a significant role in supporting children's learning.

Cultural celebrations are recognised in a number of ways such as planning activities that can be linked to traditional events. Education outside the classroom strengthens the rich cultural learning experiences with visits to culturally significant sites linked to local myths and legends, marae, geographical landmarks, school kapa haka concerts, the museum, and more.

Fitting with the acknowledgement of the kaitiaki; karakia, waiata, and role play are woven through the daily activities reinforced with a range of cultural tools and musical instruments. Pacific drumming music is played regularly and is available additionally at children's request. Costumes that reflect traditional dress are accessible to the tamariki at all times which only enhances the children's search for cultural identity.

Tikanga is observed as a natural part of our daily routine and children take responsibility for their own personal growth in relation to their health and hygiene practices, with added support and guidance from the teachers where appropriate. Language is integral to any culture and so

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we use phrases and affirmations in English and te reo throughout the day to maximise the learning opportunities for the tamariki to learn new kupu. When Pasifika families are present in the centre, we seek advice about phrases and kupu hou from the parents, to ensure their children have some level of communication as they settle into our community.

Each morning we begin the day with a karakia and a himene followed by the National Anthem in both te reo and English. While our tamariki do not speak te reo fluently, their receptive understanding of te reo ensure that they are able to follow directives when used and participate in games that are language based.

The tamariki have a pictorial pepeha in their individual portfolio's. Their name tags were designed to be an inclusive tool with their image, their name and the phrase that supports this in te reo and their first language if it is other than English or Māori.

As already mentioned, we acknowledge the place of the natural environment and this links well to the sustainable education that the families experience. Gardening provides the tamariki with knowledge relating to making healthy food choices while teaching them about how to care for the environment. Children take trips to the local trout hatchery and carry these experiences through to the themes of their play. We have community gardens planted and harvested by the children, teachers

and whānau, that contribute to the sense of whakawhānaungatanga.

We encourage strong tuakana/teina relationships and seek to extend these beyond the centre gates to the environments of the neighbouring primary school. Manaakitanga adds to the sense of well-being for the children and their families when we come together to support each other during those important events in a family's life.

The practices within our centre reflect the place of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/ The Treaty of Waitangi by ensuring the equitable opportunities for all centre users, their values, culture, taonga and beliefs are acknowledged and upheld. Professional development combined with consultation between us and members of the tangata whenua ensure that we remain focused on pedagogy that supports a growth in cultural awareness and identity.



Relationships and honest open dialogue are the cornerstones to creating an environment that reflects the collective and individual aspirations of the community. The self review process enables us to pinpoint areas within our programme that require adaptation or modification.

Our teaching team recognises that we can continue to move forward in the delivery of a culturally supportive programme yet we also recognise that there is still much to learn, and this can only be achieved through responsive, reciprocal relationships with each other and those we seek to teach. Te reo is learnt one word or phrase at a time. Introduce a new word or phrase into your centre each week and use it every chance you get. Above all, it is important to remember that 'one size does not fit all'. Each child and their family has their own sense of cultural identity and this can only be nurtured with understanding and patience developed over time.



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Pasifika Education Plan

2013-2017

Launched



The Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017 was launched by the Government in Auckland on 22 November 2012. A Wellington launch was also held in Waitangirua, Porirua on 31 January 2013. There have been five previous plans for Pasifika Education and monitoring reports show improvement across a range of indicators including ECE participation, NCEA results and tertiary completions.

The Plan sets out a five year strategy to raise achievement among Pasifika students. The Plan's vision is to see 'Five out of five Pasifika learners participating, engaging and achieving in education, secure in their identities, languages and cultures and contributing fully to Aotearoa New Zealand's social, cultural and economic wellbeing'.

Minister for Education and Pacific Island Affairs, Hon Hekia Parata says, "We know that education is a passport to a better life. That's why the Government is focused on raising achievement for all our kids."

"One of the Government's priorities this term is delivering better public services, and the Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017 is an important part of achieving our targets in education," says Ms Parata.

Targets include raising Pasifika participation in quality early childhood education from 86.2 per cent to 98 per cent in 2016, and raising achievement in NCEA Level 2 achievement from 63 per cent to 85 per cent in 2017.

Ms Parata says, "We owe it to our kids to work together, and work harder, in lifting their achievement."

The Plan adopts a Pasifika 'connected' way of working with the community and other educational agencies. It highlights the importance of Pasifika collective partnerships, relationships and responsibilities to improve results for Pasifika children.

The Ministry of Education alongside the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Education Review Office (ERO), Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), Careers New Zealand, and the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) are all working together on delivering results for all Pasifika learners and will be held accountable for achieving the targets.

The Ministry of Education is set to release an implementation plan to support ECE services, schools and tertiary providers reach the goals set out in the Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017.

There will be future Pasifika Education Plan events in Wellington and Christchurch.

The Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017 is available on the Ministry of Education's website <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/PasifikaEducation.aspx>





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Te Reo Rarotonga Bi-Lingual Early Childhood Centre – A Pasifika Best Practise Model



By Fisi Kaliatama

“Every Pasifika student deserves to succeed in education.”

Airini, Anae, M., Mila-Schaaf, K. (2010)

The early learning years are crucial to the formation of identity. “A strong sense of cultural identity in their early years enables Māori and Pacific Island children to stand tall in a wider setting, and research shows they do better educationally in all fields if their first six years of learning are in an appropriate cultural context – preferably in their own language.” Education Aotearoa, 2011

At Te Reo Rarotonga Bi-Lingual Early Childhood Centre we strongly emphasis a curriculum that nurtures, respects and encourages a Cook Islands culture.

This involves creating an environment where parents and anau/whānau/families are involved. The diverse anau/whānau/ family structures we acknowledge are:

- Traditional anau: four generations that include grandparents, parents, children and mokopuna, all fluent speakers;

- Non-traditional anau: families with one or two that are fluent speakers;
- Mixed Cook Islands parentage anau: New Zealand born with little or no language fluency capability.

It is important that we acknowledge the following heritage aspects of our Cook Islands tamariki and anau/whānau:

- There are 15 islands in the Cook Islands consisting of Northern and Southern groups;
- The individual groups are identified by the island name and tone of oral dialect spoken;
- There are eight spoken dialects of the Cook Islands language;
- Rarotonga is the officially recognised language;
- Family relationships are made up of three traditional home components. Pa Metua (grandparents/anau elders), parents and tamariki (children).

We emphasise the importance of the teacher role and invest in professional

development that promote leadership by way of:

- Annual provision for three compulsory teacher only days;
- Induction and mentoring programme for provisionally registered teachers specifically Pasifika teachers;
- A service inquiry programme is reviewing professional knowledge and learning outcomes linked to curriculum focus areas;
- OSCAR education programme as a continuum of our service programmes.

As ‘Knowledge Brokers’ we are committed to our foundations and are obligated to ensure the significance of the evolving identities for our tamariki/children, anau/ families and ourselves are ongoing (Airini et al., 2010).

Fisi Kaliatama is Programme Manager at Te Reo Rarotonga Bi-Lingual Early Childhood Centre based in Otara South Auckland.



From coconut trees to jungle gyms

By Laree Taula, ECC Policy Officer
– a parent's point of view

When we decided to partake in a family adoption of a young boy from Samoa, we had reservations. We wanted to make sure that his experience would be a positive one and that we were able to transition him with as minimal emotional disruption to his life as possible. His mother expressed her motive when she decided to have him adopted. Education, education, education.

He was three years old when he arrived in New Zealand and spoke no word of English. We enrolled him immediately in Samoana Early Childhood Educational Service (SEEDS) in Waitangirua, Porirua.

We wanted to ensure that he would be immersed in a culture that was not too dissimilar to what he was used to. Here, there were staff who spoke Samoan and also maintained other customs he was used to such as a tatalo (prayer) before eating and Christian songs. This made him feel safe and secure, a vital foundation for learning to take place.

We were impressed how the teachers instilled a love of reading, both in Samoan books and English, and that mathematical

concepts were introduced as part of play time. There was also a mixture of ethnicities who all enjoyed the bicultural nature of the centre. It was a win win as he was able to maintain his heritage language, but transition also to English both verbally and written.

When it was time for primary school, we were admittedly nervous for him because English was his second language. It was a little heart wrenching at first seeing how frightened he looked in his new class where he was the only little brown boy and the teacher and other children struggled to pronounce his name.

Teachers and parents asked me what his name meant. I explained that it was a name passed down from his late father. Pou in Samoan means pillar and niu means coconut palm or coconut. I said he suits his name because it symbolises resilience, resourcefulness and strength. This talanoa (talk) with his teacher and other parents was a valuable way of sharing a reciprocal respect for one another's backgrounds and cultural understandings. A name often

holds great symbolic importance across many cultures. The teachers and children in time learned to pronounce his name beautifully, with the help of Pouniu himself.

Soon enough, Pouniu was thriving on the next stage of his educational journey in his new school and soaking up all the new information like a sponge. It is now six months down the track and we are overwhelmingly happy to have received his school report that states that he is on track to achieving the national standards expected of his age group for mathematics, reading and writing. His teacher says he shows natural leadership and is a happy and respectful member of her classroom.

Best of all, each morning when we are getting ready he says to me, "Mama I love school".

New Zealand has wonderfully supportive Early Childhood Education services. We as parents are fortunate to be able to choose a centre that has the right combination of teaching and philosophy to suit the needs of our children, to give them the solid start they need to succeed.



Pouniu has also learnt the importance of a solid foundation as he carefully builds his tower in collaboration with his friends.

Taking a step forward with Te Reo in early childhood



By Sharon Holt

How much te reo is used in your early childhood centre? Your answer probably encompasses greetings, farewells, songs and commands. Perhaps you even manage a few words for colours, numbers, animals and clothing items. As far as beginnings go, that's great. But what are your te reo goals for the children and teachers in your centre this year? How much has the use of te reo in your centre expanded over the last five years?

For some teachers, these are difficult questions. But the answers don't have to be difficult. The obvious step forward from a focus on greetings and single words in te reo is to progress into simple sentences – even simple conversations! If you struggle with correct te reo pronunciation, the prospect of conversing in the language is even the most basic way is probably frightening. But it doesn't have to be that way.

I believe that our preschool children in New Zealand deserve to be given the chance to see te reo Māori as a vibrant, beautiful and useful language. It's one of the official languages of our country, after all. And that "official language" status isn't directed solely to our Māori children. It's available to everyone who is proud to be called a New Zealander. Every teacher is aware that language learning takes place most easily and fully at the preschool level. We also know that learning more than one language at an early age opens up the brain to even more learning. What a gift we would give our New Zealand children if we had the courage to take up the challenge and expose them to the possibility of being bilingual.

Does that mean every teacher needs to be bilingual? No, we all have our strengths and weaknesses. But we can make a

commitment to learn to pronounce te reo correctly. Many of us know the song 'A, E, I, O, U'. The next step is to use this simple song to help with our own pronunciation of te reo. Te reo Māori is simpler than English to pronounce. There are no silent letters and every letter in Māori is there for a reason. The Māori alphabet is shorter than the English alphabet, and the sounds of the vowels and consonants are consistent. If you use the pronunciation cues in the children's song 'A, E, I, O, U' every time you pronounce Māori words, you are more than halfway to pronouncing the language correctly.

Opportunities to practise your te reo pronunciation are all around us in children's names, street names, the names of our towns and cities and the names of our flora and fauna. But some people can't see the point in pronouncing these things correctly. But pronouncing names in te reo Māori correctly is a sign of respect. Don't be afraid to ask for help either. Most fluent Māori speakers are more than happy to guide you in your pronunciation of te reo if you are struggling and need assistance.

Once you have made a commitment to correct pronunciation, the next step is moving forward into simple sentences. When looking for a child's hat, I often hear teachers say "where is your pōtae?" It's great that they are using the Māori word for hat. But why not say the whole sentence in te reo? If the children already know the meaning of pōtae, they will understand the gist of "Kei whea tō pōtae?"

Another opportunity to use simple sentences in te reo is with the names of animals and insects. Puzzles, books and songs mean we often know the names for

these things in te reo. Perhaps it's time to use that knowledge to form simple sentences. Instead of saying "There's a cat", we could say "He ngeru tāā."

A challenge for 2013 could be to ask a fluent speaker of Māori to help you and the children with three or four simple sentence structures that are often used around your centre. They will more than likely be very happy to share their knowledge.

Sharon Holt is a children's author and teacher living in Hamilton. She is a non-Māori who started learning te reo at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa 10 years ago. While working at Kihikihi Kindergarten part time, she realised there were two stumbling blocks for teachers and children in their progress in acquiring te reo. The first was that many teachers lacked confidence with pronunciation, and were worried about mispronouncing Māori words. The second stumbling block was the gap in the range of resources. There were plenty of books, posters, songs and puzzles teaching individual words such as colours, shapes, body parts, numbers and animals. But few resources dedicated to teaching simple sentence structure. Sharon decided to write and publish a te reo Māori resource that would be easy for teachers to use in the form of a singalong CD. Her Te Reo Singalong series of three picture song books is successful and popular with teachers and children, and two more books in the series will be published this year. The series was a finalist in the 2012 Māori Language Awards. Sharon takes workshops for teachers wanting to improve their pronunciation.

Her website is www.tereosingalong.co.nz



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The 'Architecture' of Early Childhood

By Phil Smith

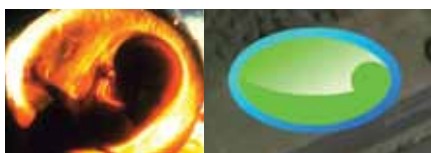
What is 'architecture' and how does it fit into a Māori, early childhood context? This was the question I asked myself when we were approached by a Māori Trust to design a new early childhood centre for them in Kawakawa, Northland.

We had designed many early childhood buildings before, but this one was to be quite different – the client stipulated that the building should be a learning tool for their tamariki, teaching them about their traditional culture and customs on a daily basis, much like a wharenuī. However, they did not want the building to bare any resemblance to traditional forms – it had to be a modern, state of the art early childhood centre.

Architecture is a very subjective thing – it can mean many different things to different people. For me, architecture has always been something rooted in its context, both physically and emotionally. It should be capable of saying something about the people who inhabit it, their culture, their customs, and their surrounding environment. It should add meaning to their lives and take on meaning. If this is achieved, then a building becomes more than just shelter: it becomes a work of architecture.

This was the approach I took with Te Mirumiru, Ngāti Hine's early childhood centre.

The concept for the building is based on the Māori tradition that all life is born from the womb of Papatūānuku (earth mother), under the sea: the word for land (whenua) in Māori also means placenta. The design is conceived by shaping the land into a womb-like form, with the building forming just like a baby within: the building literally grows out of the land.



concept for the design – baby in the womb



Playground facade

The main opening to the building is along the north facade, and reads as a cut in the earth. This cut symbolically represents the caesarean birth through which all of the tribe take their lineage: their ancestor Hine ā Maru was the first recorded Māori woman to deliver a child by caesarean section and survive the procedure about 600 years ago. It is from this opening that the children symbolically enter the 'world of light', where they play.



Form of building resembling baby in a womb

The earth that mounds up over the building makes reference to Ngāti Hine-pukerau (Ngāti Hine of a hundred hills – a local name derived from the landscape). The interior, below the earth, represents the nearby Waiomio caves where the ancestors lay buried and the Ruapekapeka pā (fortification) where the ancestor Kawiti cleverly used underground shelters as defence from attack. The circular form of the design also draws inspiration from traditional pā.

These high level concepts allow the building to take on meaning and give it a



Hallway to the classrooms showing rammed earth wall and reinterpreted tuku-tuku panelling

life of its own which is not unusual in Māori architecture – the wharenuī is often seen as an embodiment of the ancestor. Sadly most western architecture lacks this spiritual or poetic dimension which is a great loss, especially in buildings for children. Our adult imaginations struggle to see how this building could resemble a baby in a womb, but for children it's obvious – and there are many other things it could be too. A form like this is full of possibility for children.

Internally the concept of the building as a cultural learning tool grows further. The reception was inspired by waka-huia, the treasure box and uses a simple triangular panel to make up its complex looking form. The triangle is a characteristic Māori shape, featuring in many traditional artworks and carvings, but we have used it in a modern way to give it relevance to the client's tamariki. This can also be seen in the hallway, where the triangular panelling was inspired by traditional tuku-tuku wall panelling.



Reception desk and hallway showing triangular panelling inspired by traditional Maori forms

To continue the cultural theme into the classrooms, we also designed the furniture using traditional Māori forms. Using the 'path of life' (figure of eight) we shaped the shelving to create hidden internal areas which we made into the family play or small art ateliers.

Colours are also carefully used in the furniture to reinforce the Māori identity: white, black and red.

Of equal importance to the client was the notion of 'kaitiakitanga' in the design. This notion does not translate easily into English as there is no equivalent, but it is founded on the concept that all life on earth is related: plants, animals, land features, earth, sun, moon, stars and humans – all can be connected back to Papatūānuku (earth mother). This view leads Māori to believe that their current generation are the caretakers of all forms of life on the earth and that all life must be treated with care and respect.

In Māori tradition, sustainability is therefore an integrated concept and a true Māori building should be completely passive on



Babies room featuring traditional Maori colours

its environment. With this aim in mind, the design seeks to integrate passive environmental design features into the building, so all 'symbolic' features have several environmental purposes: all glazing is oriented to the north for maximum solar gain in winter, whilst the massively insulated earth roof results in minimal heat loss, which is further assisted by the unheated circulation space placed to the south.

For maximum internal comfort, exposed concrete construction and natural ventilation allows the building to be passively cooled in summer, with minimal heating back-up in winter provided by a solar generated hot water underfloor system. All spaces are naturally daylit and will need no electrical lighting during the daytime – the rear of the rooms utilise large solatubes.

All rainwater is stored on site in a 25,000l buried tank and the clean nutrient rich water is used to irrigate the green roof and vegetable gardens and flush toilets.

The building has been submitted to the New Zealand Green Building Council for a Green Star rating and has achieved a 5 star (NZ Excellence) and is now awaiting a 6 star (world leading), the highest achievable. This will make it New Zealand's first 6 star rated education building (Green Star ratings are 4-6 star) and Australasia's first Green Star rated early childhood building, making it the 'greenest' early childhood building in the south pacific.

So far the centre has been a tremendous success both architecturally and educationally. One hundred local children now have a world class early childhood education in a modern cultural green building and there is interest globally from educators, architects, academics, environmentalists and many others – all inspired by what has been achieved at Kawakawa.

Phil Smith has specialised in designing world class education architecture for over 12 years, both in NZ and the UK and his designs have won many awards. In 2012, Phil was awarded Lexus Young Designer of the Year for his achievements in sustainable education architecture in NZ.

Phil has an office in NZ and the UK and can be contacted in NZ on 021716893 or phil@philsmith.co.nz

Website: www.casa-uk.com



Classroom showing 'path of life' shelving

Fuelled4life

Fuelled4life – Taking the hard work out of what foods, drinks, snacks or meals to serve at your early childhood education service.

Why is healthy food important for young children?

Early childhood is a time when lifelong eating habits are being formed. Early childhood education (ECE) services can play an important role in creating a culture of healthy eating and in helping children to develop the healthy food behaviours that will support them to grow into healthy adults.

“Nurturing health during the early years is more important than at any other stage in life” (Belli, Bustreo, & Precker, 2005).

“Children learn about food and when, what and how much to eat within the first five years of life” (Savage, Orlet-Fisher and Birch, 2007).



You may be thinking, how can our ECE service take charge of this?

Creating healthier eating habits and food environments now, will have, immediate positive effects both now and long term. The Heart Foundation's fuelled4life's key goal is to address this.

Fuelled4life is based on the Ministry of Health's Food and Beverage Classification System (FBCS). **For people involved in selecting foods and drinks, fuelled4life is a practical tool that can be used to identify and offer healthier food choices to children.**

Fuelled4life is a collaborative initiative involving the education, health and food industry sectors working together to make it easier to have, a larger variety of healthier foods and drinks in ECE services.

Fuelled4life simplifies the choice of foods and drinks into two categories; **everyday** and **sometimes** options. Fuelled4life has specific nutrient criteria that foods and drinks that must meet to fit into these categories.

Who is fuelled4life for?

For all people involved in the planning, selection, preparation and service of food provided to children in ECE services.

This may include:

- Managers
- Teachers
- Supervisors
- Cooks
- Parents
- Helpers

And, covers ECE and parent-led services such as:

- Education and Care centres- church, workplace and childcare centres
- Kindergartens
- Home-based ECE services
- Play centres
- Nga Kohanga Reo

- Playgroups
- Nga Puna Kohungahunga
- Pacific Island early childhood groups

Why should your ECE service join fuelled4life?

City Kids Wellington ECE Manager Rachel Foster has found the fuelled4life recipes fantastic; “The Buyers' Guide and website is great. They outline healthy options to buy if you are trying out new things on the menu as well”.

City Impact Church ECE Services Manager Shaun Vining says,

“Our chef is now aware of **everyday** and **sometimes** options, we've made changes to our snacks and we've evolved to having more variety, our Chef is passionate and fuelled4life has helped to make a positive difference in so many ways”.

Since babies, toddlers and young children can only eat what they are given, the responsibility lies with all carers, including those at the ECE service. Many children spend the majority of their day at a centre, so it is really important that the food and drink provided is nutritionally adequate.

Join **fuelled4life** and your ECE service will receive the free 2013 Buyers' Guide.

Join now and other benefits will also include:

- resources to support a nutritious and delicious ECE service menu
- workshops to attend
- regular fuelled4life newsletters – to keep you up-to-date with the latest healthy products
- competitions and promotions to jump on board with
- nutritious and delicious recipe ideas

How to be part of fuelled4life:

Sign up today - jump on www.fuelled4life.org.nz

Contact Sally Hughes
sallyh@heartfoundation.org.nz or
09 526 8425 to get more information about fuelled4life.

FUELLED 4 LIFE

Food & Beverage Classification System

Fuelled4life makes it easier to provide healthier food at your early childhood education service by giving you support and resources to make the right choices.





**Early Childhood
Council**

Annual Conference 2013

"Nation Building"

**New Zealand's largest annual
early childhood conference**

24 to 26 May 2013

Energy Events Centre, Rotorua

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND?

- International and national key note speakers including an English play specialist, an American ICT expert and a New Zealand entrepreneur...
- Top calibre workshop presenters from Professor Margaret Sims to representatives from ERO and the NZTC
- 40 workshops designed for management and teachers on topics as diverse as Innovative ways of opening genuine conversations between leaders, teachers and parents, The building blocks to a safe Cloud Computing environment to Leading effective self review to Boys Move in Mysterious Ways!
- A recent American study reported 92% of early learning conference attendees strongly agreed or agreed their knowledge had increased from attending an ECE conference.

Registrations open NOW

For all ECC Annual Conference information,
go to: **www.ecc.org.nz** or call **0800 742 742**



**A conference to inspire,
innovate and confirm that
early childhood education
is where it all starts, building
the nation of tomorrow!**

Let's be the best we can be!

2013

Conference Programme

"Nation Building"

Friday 24 May: Day One

From 7:30am	Registration desk opens for delegate arrivals				
9:15 – 10:00am	Pre-conference workshops – Choose from:				
When the going gets tough. A practical guide to dealing with difficult staff issues (Andrea Pazin, Buddle Findlay)	How to use News Media to market your centre (Anthony Keesing, ECC)	TOUCH – why we can’t keep away from it (Eva Scherer)	ActivClassroom: Preparing young learners for school using IWBs (Rachel Clapp & Susan Garrud)	Using the ECC’s Blue Book – a journey to achieving registration, professional development and beyond (Cathy & Jane, ECC)	
10:00 – 10:30am	Morning tea served in exhibition area (30 mins)				
10.30 – 11:00am	Cultural welcoming ceremony – Whakatau				
11:00 – 12:00pm	Official Opening by Maria Johnson, ECC President Key Note 1: ECE – the year in retrospect and the challenges going forward Peter Reynolds, ECC Chief Executive Officer				
12:00 – 1:00pm	Lunch served in exhibition area (1 hr)				
1:00 – 1:45pm 	Key Note 2: Hon Hekia Parata, Minister of Education Key themes for ECE in the year ahead				
Transition time (5mins)					
2.40 – 3.40pm 	Key Note 3: Melissa Clark-Reynolds – Succeeding in a Competitive ECE World Melissa Clark-Reynolds is widely recognised as an inspirational role model and entrepreneur. She is the founder of minimonos.com a virtual world for children focused on growing good green kids. Melissa’s presentation focuses on what it takes to survive hard times whilst maintaining a high-quality ECE centre service and draws on her entrepreneurial experience.				
3:40 – 4:10pm	Afternoon tea served in exhibition area (45 mins)				
4.10 – 4.55pm	Workshops – choose from:				
FOR CENTRE MANAGERS			FOR TEACHERS		
Workshop with Melissa Clark-Reynolds	ECC-Telecom Innovation Award finalist presentations	Innovative ways of opening genuine conversations between leaders, teachers and parents: Unravelling the knots. (Lisa Sonter & Rhonda Forrest, University of New England, NSW)	Making reflection relevant for everyday teaching practice (Bridgit Williams, EC Professional Support, The University of Auckland)	Learning Stories With a Movement Lens. How to write learning stories with a physical literacy and numeracy focus (Mandy Wilson and Wendy Pirie, Moving Smart)	Boys Move in Mysterious Ways! (Adele Orangi & Ellie Davidson, Moving Smart)
5:00 – 5:30pm	ECC Annual General Meeting				
5:30 – 7:00pm	Welcome reception for all Full Conference Delegates, in exhibition area				
7.00pm onward	Free time or Team Time				

Saturday 25 May: Day Two

8.30 – 8.50am	Introduction to the Day and Spot Prizes				
8:50 – 9:45am	 Key Note 4: Brian Puerling – Virtual Spaces: Digital Technologies and Communications in Early Childhood Education Brian Puerling, a National Board Certified Teacher and graduate of the Erikson Institute, is the director of education technology at Catherine Cook School in Chicago. He is also the author of Teaching in the Digital Age: Smart Tools for Age 3 to Grade 3. Brian’s presentation focuses on how ECE centres can prepare children for the future while managing the demands of advancing technologies.				
Transition time (5mins)					
9:50 – 10:35am	Workshops – Choose from:				
FOR CENTRE MANAGERS			FOR TEACHERS		
Workshop with Brian Puerling	Building Family Centres for an inclusive nation (Kristina Lainson)	Outcomes for children at the heart of the matter (Dr Deirdre Shaw, Senior Education Evaluator & Sandra Collins, Manager Special Projects, ERO)	ECC-Telecom Innovation Award finalist presentations	Gifted Education: Why Year 3 is too late (Deb Clark, Gifted Kids)	Maori Inclusion and Integration into the Curriculum (Shellee and team from Brightsparks)
10:35 – 11:00am	Morning tea served in exhibition area (25 mins)				
11.00 – 12.00pm	 Key Note 5: Rachel Hunter, (Chairperson, ACECQA) – early childhood reforms in Australia Australia’s new National Quality Framework (NQF) enshrines the importance of quality education and care for every Australian child. Rachel is the Chair of the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), the national body established to oversee the implementation of the NQF, and will discuss how ACECQA is working to promote national consistency and continuous improvement in children’s education and care, and its leadership role in the sector.				
Transition time (5mins)					
12:05 – 12:50pm	Workshops – Choose from:				
FOR CENTRE MANAGERS			FOR TEACHERS		
Workshop with Rachel Hunter	Financial Management (Rubiix Accountants)	“Giving Constructive Feedback” (Sue Kurtovich, Kurtovich Consulting)	Fostering Quality Engagement with Parents using on-line portfolios (Nathan Li (Educa), Sue Cherrington & Nicola Goodman, Victoria University)	Building leadership capability through collaborative appraisal (Jenny Thomas, Manager Teacher Registration & Christina Thornley, Principal Advisor Teacher Education, New Zealand Teachers Council)	Partnering with Parents (Laree Taula, Plunket, MSD, teacher and parent)
Transition time (5mins)					
12:55 – 1:55pm	Lunch served in exhibition area				
1:55 – 2:50pm	 Key Note 6: Tracy Riley – Leadership in Learning and Teaching Tracy Riley is an Associate Professor in the School of Curriculum and Pedagogy at Massey University in Palmerston North, New Zealand and who specialises in gifted and talented education. Tracy’s presentation will focus on how can we develop leaders in early childhood education to ensure that young gifted children are identified and appropriately catered.				
Transition time (5mins)					
2:55 – 3:40pm	Workshops – Choose from:				
FOR CENTRE MANAGERS			FOR TEACHERS		
Marketing in a competitive ECE environment (Whitireia NZ)	Building reciprocal relationships with local iwi: What can this involve and how might it influence the practice and procedures of the early childhood setting? (Henare Gurney)	7 Steps 2 Safety – A Fresh Approach to Child Protection (Michael Pecic, In Safe Hands – Educators in Safety)	Workshop with Tracy Riley	Ideas for Using I-Pads/Tablets in ECE (Jenny Barrett & Tanya Greig)	Risky business: Some practicalities of intentional teaching (Lisa Sonter, Consultants at Play, Qld)

3:40 – 4:10pm	Afternoon tea served in exhibition area (30 mins)				
4:10 – 4:55pm	Workshops – Choose from:				
FOR CENTRE MANAGERS			FOR TEACHERS		
Strategies to Survive in Childcare (Ross Penman)	The building blocks to a safe Cloud Computing environment (Matt Archer, Foundation Partners)	Achieving “Very well placed” in your ERO review: how does ERO make this judgement? (Mary-Louise Stocker and Sandra Collins, ERO)	Professionalisation of Early Childhood: do we know where we are going? (Professor Margaret Sims Professor of Early Childhood, University of New England, NSW)	TOUCH – why we can’t keep away from it (Eva Scherer)	Encouraging teachers to develop construction projects with children. Provide some practical hints and skills that will assist this to happen in the centre. (Henare Gurney)
7:30 – 12:00am	Conference Gala Dinner – The Roaring Twenties! Band: Tongue and Groove				

Sunday 26 May: Day Three

8.30 – 8.50am	Introduction to the Day and Spot Prizes				
8:50 – 9:50am	 Key Note 7: Michael Follett – From Research into Action Michael Follett may be best described as a play specialist, focusing on how play and education can work together in harmony. Michael’s presentation will focus on turning research into action in early childhood and primary education fields, drawing on his play experiences. Michael is based in the UK.				
Transition time (5mins)					
9:55 – 10:40am	Workshops – Choose from:				
FOR CENTRE MANAGERS			FOR TEACHERS		
When the going gets tough. A practical guide to dealing with difficult staff issues (Andrea Pazin, Buddle Findlay)	Leading effective self-review: exploring some examples of good practice (Mary-Louise Stocker, (Project Manager ECE Review Methodology) and Sandra Collins (Manager Special Projects – Evaluation Services Unit), Education Review Office)	Early Childhood Education in China – an international experience (Maria Johnson, et al)	Workshop with Michael Follett	Using the ECC’s Blue Book – a journey to achieving registration, professional development and beyond (Cathy & Jane, ECC)	Continuity of Care: Continuity for infants and toddlers. (Jane Corrigan and Elissa Anderson, Childspace Early Learning)
10:40 – 11:20am	Morning tea served in exhibition area				
11.20 – 11.40pm	Auction, Awards and Prizes (NOTE: all prize-winners must be in attendance)				
11:40 – 12.40pm	 Closing Key Note: Cam Calkoen When someone says something’s a possibility, Cam Calkoen sees it as an opportunity - and the only reason for one to miss out on an opportunity is by not being competitive enough. Competition comes in many forms, but as Cam shares a story about the pursuit of human excellence he reveals that our biggest competitor is the one looking back at us in the mirror. Cam was born with Cerebral Palsy, but has turned a ‘can’t do’ attitude into a dynamic ‘can do anything’ personality.				
12.40 – 1:00pm	2014 Conference Announcement, Peter Reynolds, ECC Chief Executive Officer Official Close by the Incoming ECC President				
1:00 – 2:00pm	Lunch - buffet and takeaway options available				

NAEYC ATLANTA 2012



Gill, Sue and Maria

- three Kiwi's impressions

Wow – where do I begin? I have always wanted to go to an NAEYC Conference. I enjoy belonging to their organisation and receiving the valuable research and information they provide. I had heard their conferences were amazing and as the current President of the ECC I thought I could convince myself that the cost of attending was justified by wearing two hats! One as an educator and owner of preschools here in NZ and two to bring back ideas for our amazing ECC conference we hold every year. I finally made the decision and 24 hours later I was on the plane heading to Atlanta.

To try and write my experience in a short article is difficult. It was definitely worth attending if not just for the sheer size of the conference – which blew me away. The exhibit hall was just incredible! It was filled with resources that I hadn't even seen before – let alone the workshops that were being held at each stand. The buzz within the exhibit hall from Teachers and Directors as well as Exhibitors themselves was amazing.

Exhibit Hall Must Dos

- Ensure you have time to cover the entire exhibit hall



- Don't think you will return to a stand – you won't as there is not enough time
- Buy if you like – as things sell very quickly
- Take a camera to take photos of stands – there are some incredible displays
- Take a spare bag to put all of your purchases in!

The workshops held throughout the conference and Guest speakers were also fantastic. I really enjoyed attending workshops that were quite different to what are often offered here in NZ. I also found that attending the conference was reaffirming to me about what an incredible job we do as educators within NZ. It reaffirmed that we are leaders within Early Childhood Education.

It was great to have interesting dialogue with other educators and to share our experiences. Every State in America was represented at the conference as well as 30 different countries from around the world.

I was also amazed that America was so bi-lingual. In fact 70% of the children attending Early Childhood education in America are from Española descent.

Highlight – As I was reading the 700 workshops to choose from I saw that Sue Kurtovich was holding one, so I managed to track her down and catch up for a drink and dinner! We also met some local singers – from whom we bought a CD? I decided the next morning that the rap music on the CD was definitely more for my teenage sons than me. As I travelled up the escalator I also bumped into Gill

Connell! It was Incredible that for such a huge conference we would bump into three Kiwis – let alone not even realise that we would all be attending!!

Must Dos at Conference

- Check cancellations every morning
- Ensure you have at least three options for each time slot – as some workshops are cancelled or if they are not what you were expecting you can walk out and go to another workshop (you do not have to pre-book workshops)
- Wear sensible walking shoes as some workshops are 15 minutes away

Things to remember

- Your hair straightener won't work in America as it is a different voltage (Highly important fact)
- Take coins so when you land in America you can get a luggage trolley
- Stay where the conference is being held – this makes it easy to drop items purchased from the exhibit hall back to your room
- Pace yourself – it's a long journey and conferences are exhausting anyway

If anyone decides to head to this year's conference please feel free to contact me.

Maria Johnson

Gill Connell from Moving Smart was selected to speak at this amazing conference. Her topic – A MOVING CHILD IS A LEARNING CHILD (the title of her upcoming book) was extremely well received. Gill commented "it was very

evident that our philosophies and the NZ curriculum is highly thought of and our practitioners are deeply respected in the US. Their teachers are hungry for innovation especially when it comes from 'down under'!"

The venue – The Georgia Convention Centre in Atlanta was enormous and registrations were at around 20,000. That made choosing suitable workshops difficult and meant racing from one building and floor to another. However, it was wonderful to listen to legends in early childhood like Mem Fox (author) and to attend a music session by "Greg and Steve" – people whose work is used in daily practice.

NAEYC is an amazing and inspirational educational experience. Gill will be back this year as a speaker and will be launching her book at the same time. She strongly suggests if you can make it, put Washington in November on the calendar.

Gill Connell

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) was founded in 1926 in the USA and is the world's largest organisation working on behalf of young children with nearly 80,000 members.

The conference features hundreds of peer-reviewed presentations and a huge trade exhibition, and many other opportunities for educators to learn about the latest research, discuss new ideas and to network and share with colleagues. The 2012 conference was held in Atlanta in the southern state of Georgia from 7 -10 November. The theme for the conference was "Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the 21st Century".

I have been an international member of the NAEYC for a number of years and I was thrilled to present a session in Atlanta entitled "Funding and Regulating ECE: Lessons for Policy Design from New Zealand". ECE policy has been a huge interest of mine for many years and I saw the NAEYC conference as a perfect opportunity for me to share with others

from around the USA and beyond, the great work we have done in New Zealand over the past 25 years in making ECE more affordable and more accessible, while retaining the rich diversity that our ECE sector is so very proud of.

Attending an International conference is not only an excellent learning experience but also a valuable networking opportunity. In Atlanta I was able to reconnect with old friends and colleagues from many parts of the world.

For New Zealand educators planning to attend a NAEYC conference in the future I would highly recommend that you consider putting forward a workshop proposal. There is so much that we can learn from others but likewise there is also so much that we can teach the world.

Sue Kurtovich is an Early Childhood Management Consultant for Kurtovich Consulting and is presenting at the ECC Conference 2013 in May at Rotorua.

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From Conference to the classroom

- a centre's journey using iPads

By Megan Watson



When we first discovered that the Early Childhood Conference 2012 was going to have a seminar on iPads, we quickly signed up. After 10 years of operating, our ICT for the children was very much in need of updating. We had incorporated this into our strategic plan and were questioning if iPads were the way to go. We had old PC's that constantly crashed and they didn't seem to give the children independence.

Every week in the media you read about schools implementing iPads or tablets into their daily learning curriculum. One of our local primary schools that had just opened is committed to developing a 21st century learning environment so once again we were asking ourselves "should our pre-schoolers have a chance to explore another 21st century tool?"

We spent time researching the idea of implementing iPads in a learning environment and realised the benefits far outweighed the drawbacks – most of which

we could see a way around.

After Conference we had a long list of Apps to download and use with the children, but no iPads. That was soon solved with the purchase of five iPads, screen protectors and covers. Yes the budget was blown but we were all very happy! Initially we set the iPads up with a small selection of the apps which we heard about from the Conference.

Has it worked? Yes. Initially two members of staff were familiar with using the iPads with young children, but soon all the staff were taking time to explore and become familiar with the new technology. This enabled them to share the knowledge they gained and experiences with the children.

For our first session working with the children we chose a small group of eight, encouraging them to pair up and share. We planned to discuss what the new 'rectangle' was, how to handle the iPads, and then introduce them to the drawing pad App, so they could get an idea of how they operate by touch. After a short discussion John (4) took over, sharing his own experience from his iPad at home. He helped his friends and the teacher. Although he was a little disappointed that there was no Angry Birds!

Children use the iPads in small groups

working with a teacher, allowing us to rule out any issues that could occur. Children's time is limited and they are encouraged to have fun alongside learning.

What next for our iPad adventure? We would like to purchase a different case allowing the children to become more independent with them. Imagine taking photos of the exciting bug in the garden and then writing a story about it or putting it into your work of art? We see our iPads as another tool for teaching and learning. We believe children still need plenty of time to be outside, explore a variety of learning materials and areas of play. They need pens and pencils, they need to make mistakes and realise not everything you do gets a reward but if a teacher is available this can all be monitored.

Our teachers and children are really enjoying the iPads. Parents are sharing Apps they are using at home and also using Apps at home that we have introduced at preschool!

Megan Watson is the Operations Manager for Little School in Wellington.

To learn more about ICT in ECE attend the ECC Conference 2013 and listen to a variety of workshops including "Ideas for Using iPads/Tablets in ECE".

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The Value of the Blue Book

By Cathy Wilson and Jane Warnock



By now you will all have heard of the Blue Book – the Early Childhood Council (ECC) resource to assist you with your journey towards meeting the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) Registered Teachers Criteria (RTC) for your teacher registration.

The Blue Book is owned by the Early Childhood Council and supports the NZTC vision and the value of reflection and is designed to be used in conjunction with the Teachers Council RTC handbook (2010). The Blue Book provides further clarity and understanding that the RTC is what every teacher with registration status should be working towards and in this context, can be described both as a self-assessment tool and as a reflection tool to assist with looking deeper at your teaching practices. For registration purposes these teaching practices encompass:

- The gathering of significant evidence
- Being observed
- Being involved in professional discussions through mentoring and collegial dialogue.

Inside The Blue Book, the criteria, the indicators, the reflective questions and additional reflective questions are clearly outlined to support this process.

Since the inception of The Blue Book, the resource has been purchased by over 1500 early childhood teachers and continues to be acclaimed for its use to support the teacher registration journey. The following quotes emphasise this:

"For my registration I used content of The Blue Book reflective questions to guide me to refine my practices which facilitated achieving my teaching goals. The reflective questions (especially the additional page) inspired me at different stages of my teaching journey and continue to do so" (Maha)

"I use this resource in a holistic way with centre, personal and professional learning

and it has been an advantage to have one of the ECC's working party representatives of The Blue Book as my mentor. The Blue Book has been another tool to help me toward meeting the standard for my teacher registration" (Kathryn)

To reiterate The Blue Book as a tool and resource, Blue Book workshops have been held throughout the country to highlight the content of the resource. The workshops provide an interactive context to unpack the contents of the Blue Book and for attendees to network amongst other ECE colleagues. Cathy and Jane have to date facilitated 15 workshops, which include ECC 4 hour workshops and conferences, plus presentations at Professional Development days. The content of the workshops has a focus on The Blue Book as a self-assessment tool and provides a practical and hands on approach with implementing the Registered Teacher Criteria (RTC). The workshops also emphasise the mandatory requirement that every teacher (regardless of whether provisional, subject to confirmation or fully registered) must now be working with the Registered Teacher Criteria in order to attain or maintain their full registration.

Within a workshop, you will learn how to use The Blue Book in conjunction with the RTC in a relaxed, formative environment working through examples of linking to the criteria. The workshops content explains the Registered Teachers Criteria, The Blue Book, addresses The Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and Mentor Teachers; getting started (working with these resources); sources of evidence you could use; resources (which are helpful); and most importantly advocates the value of reflection for all teachers. The focus on reflection is paramount within the workshop content and provides an avenue for interactive dialogue between Cathy and Jane and those attending. The next edition of Swings and Roundabouts will further expound on the reflection component, providing you the value of being a reflective practitioner.

Included below are quotes from workshop attendees – if these sound like just what you need check the ECC website for more details.....

"I came away with plenty of relevant information and all of my questions answered. Well done guys, this was a brilliant course and I would recommend it to anyone needing guidance or help."

"Absolutely invaluable for our teaching team."

"One of the best workshops I have been to. All info was relevant and the templates were simple but will make the whole process so much easier."

In addition to this article, future Blue Book articles will feature in on-going issues of Swings & Roundabouts as Cathy and Jane invite the reader to regularly view the value of both the Blue Book as a tool and the workshops.

Cathy and Jane look forward to meeting you at workshops over the year so be sure to enrol in a Blue Book workshop at a venue near you. (Workshops this year will be in Auckland, New Plymouth, Hawkes Bay, Nelson and Wellington, but if your centre/area would like to hold a Blue Book workshop and can commit to at least 15 attendees contact the ECC for more information.)

About the authors

Cathy Wilson is the Assistant Principal at Wa Ora Montessori School in Lower Hutt, which caters for children from birth to 18 years and leads a teaching team of over 13 full and part-time staff in the preschool division of the school.

Jane Warnock has been teaching for 32 years in the early childhood sector and is the Educational Leader mentoring teachers both registering and fully registered teachers, supporting teachers-in-training, and co-facilitating professional learning at Tui Early Learners' in Palmerston North.

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- Authentic bi-cultural practice: more than waiata and poi

These teacher based workshops are being offered by EC Professional Support, The University of Auckland in partnership with the ECC.

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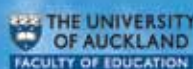
This practical workshop uses the ECC's 'The Blue Book' as a tool for implementing the Registered Teacher Criteria (RTC) and is for registering, registered and mentors teachers.

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Australian Quest for Excellence

By Galina Zenin

For many decades, kindergartens and day care centres in Australia were overlooked by the Department of Human Services and described by Professor Alison Elliott from Charles Darwin University as "a fragmented early childhood sector with a patchwork of services, little agreement on service types or functions, and a mishmash of funding and regulations" (Elliott, 2006, p.2).

Since Australia's National Early Years Learning (EYLF) was developed, educators across the country were faced with answering a number of questions.

It started in 2009 when the framework was developed with – 'What is it?'

In 2010, it became – 'Why are we doing it?'

In 2011, educators were asking – 'Where are we going?'

By 2012, most of us raised only one question – 'How can we get there?'

As we come to the start of 2013 and reflect on the past few years, many of us know where we are going, but many educators are still puzzled and searching for their ways to get there.

Year 2009 - 'What is it?'

Australia's first National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) was developed by the Council of Australian Governments in 2009. The aim of this document was to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

"The framework draws on international evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children's learning and development". (Belonging, Being & Becoming, 2009, p.5) It also states that: "All children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life". (2009, p.7).

From 1st January 2012 every early childhood service in Australia is assessed to determine to which extent the service meets the National Quality Standards (NQS) and how educators can improve the quality of early childhood education.

It also provides services and families with the benchmarks by which high quality and excellent services may be recognised.

The National Quality Standard is divided into seven areas that contribute to the quality of early childhood education and care. These areas have been identified by research and are:

Quality Area 1	Educational Program & Practice
Quality Area 2	Children's Health & Safety
Quality Area 3	Physical Environment
Quality Area 4	Staffing Arrangements
Quality Area 5	Relationships with Children
Quality Area 6	Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities
Quality Area 7	Leadership & Service Management

Year 2010 - 'Why are we doing it?'

The Early Years Learning Framework is focused on learning and the role of the educator. The framework emphasises the essential elements of high-quality early childhood practice, including play-based pedagogies, intentional teaching and strong relationships with children and families.

Early childhood education in Australia was now facing a new beginning... It was a very exciting time, but as anything new it brought many questions and challenges. The most important thing for us was to stay and think positively...

Year 2011 - 'Where are we going?'

The five rating levels within the national quality assessment and rating process were clearly outlined in the National Regulations and are as follows;

- Significant Improvement Required
- Working Towards National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Excellent

Each rating level represents a band of

quality. Only services that receive a rating of Exceeding National Quality Standard are eligible to apply to the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) to undergo assessment against the criteria for an Excellent rating.

Although every area of the NQS is important, the main focus falls on 'Educational program and practice' (QA 1), 'Relationships with children' (QA 5), 'Collaborative partnerships with families and communities' (QA 6) and 'Leadership and service management' (QA 7).

To achieve an overall rating of Exceeding NQS, the service must be rated Exceeding in four of the seven Quality Areas with at least two coming from Quality Area 1, 5, 6, or 7.

Year 2012 - 'How did we get there?'

In January 2011, our small privately run Bonkers Beat Music Kinder & Childcare centre in Aspendale, Melbourne was selected as a pilot centre to trial the National Quality Standard Framework.

February 2011 saw the centre go through its first trial assessment. Since then we have regularly held staff training sessions and worked tirelessly as a team to improve all areas of our service. The staff and management have continually taken on board new ideas and improved their knowledge, skills and practical tools for education.

To understand 'WHAT', 'WHY' and 'WHERE' took a great deal of positive thinking, courage and dedication.

To find 'HOW', involved a lot of investigation, exploring, learning, enthusiasm, commitment and discipline from the team.

The past three years have not been easy and looking back we can say that some of our educators were understandably nervous about the change. Working together whilst asking questions and finding answers made all the difference.

Many educators in Australia are now very clear where they are going and it is just a matter of time for them to find their how. However, I believe, if we all share our experiences, we can help others get there quicker.



In September 2012, our centre went through the assessment process for a second time, this time achieving the outstanding result - Exceeding the National Quality Standard.

Here are just a few examples of how we got there...

When trying to improve Quality Area 1 (Educational Program & Practice) we took time to completely understand the EYLF to extend children's learning and development and to effectively interpret and implement an approved framework.

Throughout the year our educators were trained to understand, build confidence and deliver music and wellbeing programmes to every child, every day!

We effectively used musical experiences as a foundation for connecting and bonding with each other, with children and their families. All children were supported and encouraged to participate in a variety of activities which included creative music and movement, speech, drama and many other forms of performing arts to nourish their multiple intelligences and identity. Our wellbeing experiences included daily yoga, meditation, relaxation, bonding and releasing emotions exercises, sensory walks and so on.

Recognising the expertise of families and engaging families in the decision making process about their child's learning and wellbeing set us apart in Quality Area 6 (Collaborative Partnerships with Families & Communities).

We engaged families in our music and wellbeing programs to provide a connection between the home and the service. Our regular 'Songs of the Week' and 'Yoga Poses of the Week' Newsletters helped us share our values with families and reinforce learning at home. Our 'Harmony Nights' for families and the wider community demonstrated our strong commitment to our wellbeing philosophy and early childhood development.

Throughout the year, our families also developed a deeper understanding and interest in the Bonkers Beat philosophy and responded with increased participation in the centre's events such as Open Day, Rich Diversity Afternoon, Mother's and Father's Breakfasts, Grandparents & Special Friends Day, Parents Advisory Group, Information Night and so on.

We believe that to achieve the best outcome for a child, we needed to work together with families, support each other and provide a consistent approach at kinder and at home.

Year 2013 - Quest for Excellence

An assessment process is an exciting journey and not a destination. It is a journey where everyone learns and grows professionally as well as personally.

Everyone at Bonkers Beat is proud of the work that has been put in to achieve the NQS ratings.

However, our quest for excellence is an on-going process which I am sure will continue in 2013 and beyond...

By Galina Zenin, Bonkers Beat Music Kinder

References

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments. (2009) *Belonging, Being & Becoming, Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.

(Elliott, Professor Alison, Early Childhood Education: Pathways to Quality and Equity for All Children, Australian Education Review, Australian Council for Educational Research, 2006, p.2)

To find out more about Bonkers Beat Music Kinder visit www.musicearlychildhoodpresenter.com

Want to know more about the changes happening in Australia? Come to the ECC Conference 2013 in May and listen to key note speaker Rachel Hunter, Chair of the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), the national body established to oversee the implementation of the NQF, and who will discuss how ACECQA is working to promote national consistency and continuous improvement in children's education and care.



Essential Business Planning

By Mike Watson, CEO New Zealand Business Excellence Foundation

For childcare centres to take a strategic view of their business, they should have clearly articulated business objectives; a business plan that addresses how the objectives will be achieved; appropriate measures and targets that will track progress; and an effective means of reporting the results being achieved against the measures.

For a childcare centre to effectively evaluate its performance, the following questions might be considered:

Leadership

1. Do we have a clear vision for our childcare centre?
2. What are our key objectives and targets?
3. How will we effectively monitor business performance?
4. Do we fully understand the legal and regulatory requirements for our centre?

Business Planning

1. Do we have a robust business plan that we use to manage our centre?
2. Are there documented actions/plans that we will use to meet our objectives?
3. Do we have specific measures and targets for the objectives and actions?

4. Do our staff understand the plan, its intent and importance?

Parent Focus

1. Do we know who our customers/parents are?
2. Do we know why they use our centre?
3. Do we understand their needs and what their most important needs are?
4. How will we determine if we are meeting their needs?

Business Information

1. What information do we need to manage our centre as a business?
2. How will we collect, consolidate and analyse this information?
3. What technologies/computer support do we need?
4. How will we ensure the safety and reliability of our business information?

Workforce Focus

1. Do we have the right people with the right competencies working for us?
2. How do we encourage parent/customer focus?
3. How do we address training and professional development?
4. How do we address health and safety and business continuity planning?

Process Management

1. Are the key processes for presenting our service to our parents/customers understood by our staff and documented?
2. Are the relationships with our partners and/or suppliers managed effectively?
3. How do we know/measure whether our processes for delivering our service are effective?
4. How do we encourage innovation and undertake improvements to our centre?

Results

Do we monitor our business results effectively, including:

1. Financial success, eg: cash flow, profit & loss, debtors, etc?
2. Parent/customer satisfaction, growth and retention?
3. Staff satisfaction, absenteeism, sick leave, etc?
4. Process performance, eg: learning outcomes?

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The mural that says it all!

By Lynette Radue

With a flick of the paint brush, 2012 was added to our masterpiece and it was done! It had taken six months but as we stepped back to look at our wonderful mural, feelings of pride for our work and our kindy were overwhelming! Trinity Kindergarten has always had a special community that makes us feel like a family. We have had many projects in the past that have successfully brought us together but the mural project somehow tops the list because it represents every part of our community. It shows who we are and what we set out to achieve which is to work together to do our very best for everyone connected to the kindergarten. This is our mural experience which I would like to share with you.

Earlier in the year, one of the outside walls was repaired and painted white. This created a "blank canvas" for us to show

the world what Trinity Kindy is all about. The million dollar question? What should go on this canvas? After many discussions and a flow of different ideas, it all came together one day in March when our head teacher, Engela Nel, noticed one of our Kindy mums, Winnie Ong, doodling at our drawing table. Knowing that we were on the lookout for ideas for the blank wall, she spotted the drawing talent that Winnie had been "hiding" from us all this time! Conversations led to Winnie finally agreeing that she was good enough to create a Noah's Ark scene for the wall, and as it turned out she had created a mural before in her school days. Noah's Ark was the popular choice because this Bible story has been and still is the Kindy children's favourite Bible story from the Old Testament.

Winnie came up with the next brilliant idea. To fit in with our connection to the Trinity

Methodist Church, she thought it would be perfect to design the mural with a stain glass effect like one of the windows in the Church. Brilliant we thought, but how? Winnie had it all planned. One night at Kindy, I watched her project the image of her design on to the wall. She meticulously traced her design on the wall with black paint. Sometime after ten o'clock that night, Winnie completed the painted outline ready for the next stage.

We all agreed that this should be a Trinity community project to make it even more special. Winnie had already started working on the rainbow and other parts that were high up on the mural, but she had decided right from the start that she did not want to be the sole artist. We chose parts for the teachers and Trust members to paint. Most of the Trust members were parents too so they represented two groups



in our community. The lower part of the mural was allocated to our Rising Stars (preschool) group of children who were with us at the time. To make it easier for us, Winnie numbered each paint colour and then numbered each part of the mural accordingly.

One afternoon in May, the Rising Stars matched the paint colours to the numbers on the mural parts that they had chosen to paint. Great for numeracy learning of course! The mural experience stimulated a lot of conversations between the children

that included making decisions about what to paint, who to pair up with to paint the bigger creatures, and peer "appraisals" of the finished work. It was very obvious that the children were proud of the work they had done. At home time, they eagerly dragged mum, dad, nanna or whoever was on pick-up duty, to the parts that they had painted.

It took a bit longer for the teachers and trust members to complete their parts. We had to rely on time available and the wild winter weather. The final touch came in

October from Winnie as she painted each artist's name on the parts that they had painted and, of course, the 2012.

As I stepped back and looked in awe at this masterpiece, I realised what this mural means to us now and in the future. The mural represents the wonderful things that can happen when we work together as a community. A piece of history has been created that will remind us of this every day as long as the mural is there. What an awesome legacy to leave for those who will follow us in the future. The mural says it all!

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The real reason for “boring” A CONNECTED CHILD IS AN ENGAGED CHILD



...“I’M BORED”

When a child says “I’m bored” they could be telling us “I’m not connected with myself and my needs right now.”

Or perhaps they are having unpleasant thoughts that create feelings they aren’t able to identify or manage.

When children are feeling disconnected from themselves, and possibly the world around them, they look for a way to re-connect. They tell us they are bored as a way of asking us to change feelings that are not enjoyable.

“THAT’S BORING”

How do we decide what is boring and what isn’t? We all have preferences for activities more or less likely to give us pleasure and satisfaction, so how come kids seem to say “that’s boring” so often?

We could say that the child isn’t able to have their needs met through the activity, or it taxes a skill they are yet to achieve to the level required.

The needs could be anything physical, mental, emotional or even spiritual. Each child has their own way of being in the world that is more or less stimulating and satisfying so preferences are shaped.

FAQ’s

Q: What could I do if I have a child who continually says “I’m bored”?

A: If we focus on the idea that bored=disconnected try engaging the child in an activity that you are doing and work together. Letting them be close to you could give a feeling of safety and help reduce stress. Or join them in an activity they enjoy to make connection.

Q: Some children won’t join in anything but they want my attention all the time and I get so frustrated with them, it seems like nothing works?

A: It may be that your feelings of frustration are in the fore-ground and your child is finding it hard to connect because of this. I know it’s a big ask but perhaps

By Anya Godwin

you could try and connect in a way that the child needs. They may need you to connect with them by looking at them lovingly, using a kind voice or perhaps touching them. They may need exuberant activity or quiet space. Often the child doesn’t need a long period of time with you it is the quality of your emotional availability that helps them to feel connected.

Q: It seems like everything I suggest to my child that isn’t computer games gets the response... “that’s boring”. I can’t get them interested in anything else.

A: This is the most common theme I hear. I suggest not making a big deal of it and going with the flow instead of against it. You could join the child in their pleasure of the computer by sitting with them and finding a game or doing a Google exploration about a topic they love. It may be a stretch for you to do this but once your child is really connected with you it can be a stepping stone to other activities.

PLAYFUL IDEAS:

Making boring tasks more playful creates a WIN-WIN

1: See who can laugh the quietest or loudest. Possibly do some tickling

2: See who can whisper or sing a word (like Jelly) and go through the alphabet eg. belly, smelly, felly, zelly.....

3: Let’s imagine we are animals while we do this. What’s your favourite animal for us to be today? Make the sounds that animal would make.

Use music and sounds to make activities fun and creative

It is widely recognised that using music can change or create mood. Your child will feel more connected to you as you notice them.

Using a well-known song tune (like Mary had a Little Lamb), speak-sing about exactly what you are doing now.

For example:

“We are putting books away, books away, books away, we are putting books away we sing until it’s done.”

By Anya Godwin, a Children’s Specialist Counsellor, for Home and Family Counselling in Auckland.

Go to:
www.homeandfamily.org.nz to find out how you can participate in the Counselling Awareness Week in April.

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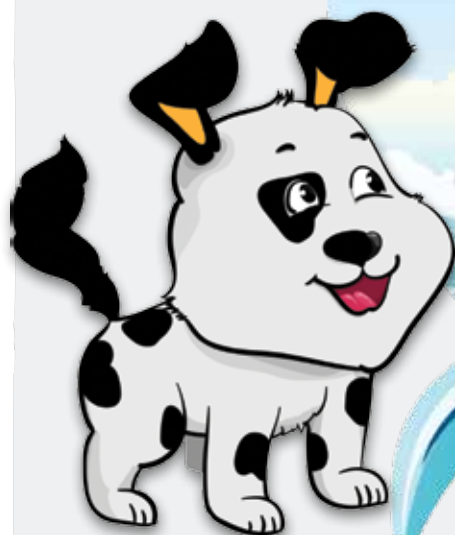
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Resource Reviews

Reviewed by Trudi Sutcliffe and Maree Moselen



How Maui Found the Secret of Fire

By Peter Gossage

Penguin

Many of you will recognise this book from your own childhood. This book and the other five titles of this series have been repacked and re-designed for a new generation of readers to enjoy.

If you haven't come across Maui before, you will soon discover he is a curious trickster. In this particular myth Maui after gazing into a fire wonders what would happen if all

the fires went out. So of course, Maui puts out every fire to see what would happen! He then leaves his Pa in search of the Fire Goddess for answers. But her simple explanation isn't enough, so Maui pushes the boundaries further in his quench for knowledge.

The story's illustrations are simple but effective and what I like best is that this story celebrates curiosity, even if it is somewhat unorthodox, and has a cheeky protagonist!

If you want to introduce Maori myths and legends to the children at your centre this story and series are a perfect introduction.



The Margaret Mahy Treasury

Penguin

Margaret Mahy needs no introduction to most New Zealanders with many of us having been introduced to her from an early age by being read her entertaining stories or learning to read through her participation with the School Journal and the Ready to Read series. This treasury has eleven of Margaret Mahy's favourite stories including, *A Lion in the Meadow*, *A Summery Saturday Morning*, *The Great White Man-Eating Shark*, *The Man whose*

Mother was a Pirate, plus seven other favourites.

The bonus of this treasury especially for ECE centres is the CD of six of her stories, perfect for listening posts, mat time or rest time.

Margaret Mahy's stories are childhood essentials with her wacky larger-than-life characters, language that bounces off the page and her priceless humour.

The treasury itself might be cumbersome for mat time, but perfect for small group and one-on-one readings.





Big Bad Bill on the Naughty Step

Written by Mark Sperring

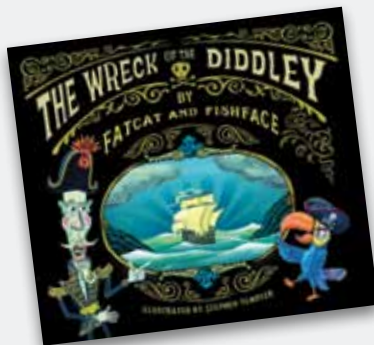
Illustrated by Tom McLaughlin

Penguin

This is a lively story about a Sam who has been naughty at home and has been sent to the 'naughty step'. Sam is joined by Captain

Buckleboots who sits with him on the step too, plus the naughtiest cowboy in the Wild Wild West who refuses to say 'sorry', Big Bad Bill. These two characters represent Sam's consciousness, and together the three discuss the consequences of never saying 'sorry'.

The humorous and animated illustrations add to this witty morality tale and will be enjoyed by all pre-schoolers.



The Wreck of the Diddley

Written by Fatcat and Fishface

Illustrated by Stephen Templer

Craig Potton Publishing

This story was originally a song by the authors. It's a devilishly dark pirate's tale that ends up badly off Island Bay in Wellington. The captain and his extremely rude parrot tell the story, but cannot agree on a single detail of their adventure: "And

we clung to bits of wood and anything we could. No we didn't we were sinking hopelessly".

Accompanying the book is a DVD animated version of the song. Once you hear the song it is really hard not to sing the story as you read it. The story is a fun rhyming tale that will be irresistible to pre-schoolers, especially those who love pirates. And if you use the DVD, it won't take long for those listening to hook on to the catchy tune. A fantastic resource for mat time.



Kaha the Kea

Written by Craig Smith

Illustrated by Bruce Potter

South Pacific Books

From the author of *Willbee the Bumblebee* and *The Wonky Donkey* comes *Kaha the Kea*. Kaha is possibly the cheekiest kea in New Zealand who gets away with everything...or does he?

This book like the others by Craig Smith is humorous and is sure to be a hit with pre-schoolers with text like: "*Kaha the Kea was*

flying around. He gnawed on my belt and my trousers fell down!"

It will not take long for pre-schoolers to start singing along to the accompanying CD. Also additional to the story and CD are links to various websites, Kea Conservation Trust, a fun and informative 12-minute educational resource so you can learn more about the kea and which is presented by Smith. Plus there is a link to the Apple App Store where you can download "*Kaha the Kea*" for the iPad, which is an interactive e-book loaded with animation and music.

This book will be enjoyed by all and like his other books perfect for mat time.



Stupid Baby

By Stephanie Blake

Gecko Press

Here is another book from the author who brought us '*Poo Bum*', a bestseller in New Zealand.

This book is perfect for those pre-schoolers who have a new baby in the house, bringing

humour to the feelings of resentment that some pre-schoolers face when there is a new addition to the family: "*When's the stupid baby going back to the hospital?"*

This is a great book for group/individual discussion and will be enjoyed by all children listening to the story whether they have a new baby in the house or not due to the humorous text and bold illustrations. A story to be enjoyed at mat time or one-on-one.

That's Mine

Michel Van Zeveren

Gecko Press

In the jungle, the mighty jungle, a little frog finds an egg.

"That's mine!" he says.

But the snake wants his egg, and so does the eagle, and so does the lizard...So

what happens when the egg lands on an elephants head?

The moral to this story? What you might 'want' is what you might get and you may not like it!

This is a fun simple story which is perfect to read at mat time with younger children. It is the type of story children will quickly memorise, but still enjoy the 'twist' at the end of the story.

Teaching in the Digital Age Smart tools for age 3 to Grade 3

By Brian Puerling

Redleaf Press

The summer holidays are a great time for catching up on new books. Usually I don't choose ECE curriculum. However, I have an interest in ICT in early childhood and I couldn't resist a peek into "Teaching in the Digital Age".

The first chapter had me reaching for my phone to check out the QR codes, perfect on an iPad or a tablet as it provides an instant link to videos where teachers expand on their ideas.

I was initially excited with the templates. I am not sure I would use them in the way shown, but they are a topic for discussion and adaptation.

For me, the best parts were the lists of ways to use photographs to inspire. Followed by; using projectors, audio recordings, webcams, multi touch devices and more exciting topics.

Brian has included a clear table to compare tablet computers with website addresses to visit for information. This will bring a sigh of relief for those of us who are now confused about which products to buy.

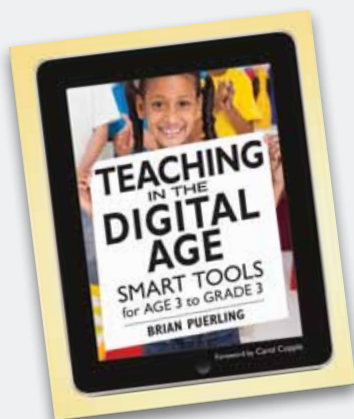
I think this is a book that will have us revisiting it again and again, it is a technology book that will not be immediately superseded with the pace of technology. It is a book for both the technophobic and the ICT convert.

One point I disagreed with, page 191, suggested that a child is introduced to a multi touch device in early September and in January they can use it independently. In my experience 10 minutes after introducing an iPad to a child they have already reviewed which app is for them and are sharing it with their friends.

It was nice to see Brian's New Zealand friends acknowledged with their "Have a Play". The best way to use technology.

I look forward to Brian Puerling's Key note at the ECC Conference in Rotorua 2013.

Maree Moselen



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1. Two cartons of yogurt walk into a bar. The bartender, who was a tub of cottage cheese, says to them, "We don't serve your kind in here." One of the yogurt cartons says back to him, "Why not? We're cultured individuals."
2. Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
3. We never really grow up, we only learn how to act in public.
4. In filling out an application, where it says, 'In case of emergency, notify:' I put 'DOCTOR.'
5. I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
6. A clear conscience is the sign of a fuzzy memory.
7. You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.
8. Money can't buy happiness, but it sure makes misery easier to live with.
9. I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not so sure.
10. You're never too old to learn something stupid.
11. Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

Q: What is a horse's favourite sport?

A: Stable Tennis!

Q: What did the digital clock say to the grandfather clock?

A: Look, grandpa, no hands!

Q: What is smarter than a talking bird?

A: A spelling bee!

Q: What do you get when you cross a dog with a phone?

A: A golden receiver!

Q: How many chiropractors does it take to screw in a light bulb?

A: One, but it takes 5-8 adjustments.

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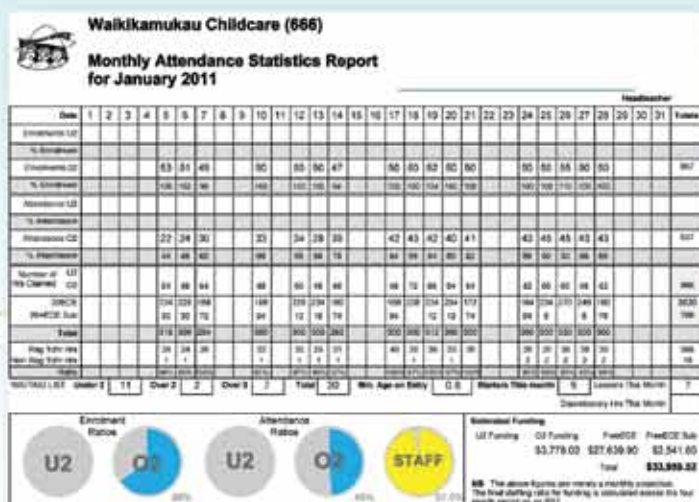
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