

Swings + Roundabouts

SENT FREE TO ALL INDEPENDENT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRES IN NEW ZEALAND



**BUDGET
2014**

**SUPPORTING MĀORI CHILDREN WITH
KA HIKITIA & TĀTAIAKO
ECC CONFERENCE 2014
"Celebrating Resilience"**

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- Weekly e-News keeps you informed
- Social media discussions (Facebook, Twitter)
- Quarterly Swings & Roundabouts magazine – free to every licensed early childhood education centre in the country, containing articles on the latest happenings and issues facing our sector
- Regional social networks of centre managers
- An Employer's Help Line with up to 15 minutes free legal advice
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For further information, Call us on 0800 742 742; or e-mail information@ecc.org.nz or go to www.ecc.org.nz to complete an application form.



FROM THE Editor

To everyone who attended this year's ECC Conference during 6-8 June, I hope you enjoyed it as much as the ECC team.

This year's focus was on celebrating resilience and giving centre managers/owners and teachers a better understanding of resilience in regards to centre management, teaching and building resilience in children. I encourage you all to share your newly gained knowledge with colleagues and build your own resilience by implementing what you have learnt. Remember, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." (Thomas A. Edison). If you couldn't make conference this year, read some of the highlights from page 36.

Once again at conference the area beside the ECC exhibition booth was alive with colour. Thank you to all the creative ECE centres who entered in this year's ECC Annual Art Competition. It wasn't an easy decision for the judges! Also thank you to the ECC Preferred Suppliers: Educa, NZ Childcare Finance, n3 and OfficeMax who sponsored prizes, including a prize package valued at \$1000 for the overall winner. Have a look at the 2014 winning murals on page 13.

For many ECE centres, particularly small centres, any change in funding, or no change at all, can lead to ECE centre managers/owners feeling the pinch. In this issue read the ECC's CEO Peter Reynolds analysis on the Budget and how it may affect your centre.

With the Government's policies still promoting 98% participation the information in this issue on Ka Hikitia and Tātaiako from the Ministry of Education are an important reminder on how you can be supporting your Māori students

and whānau. Have you taken the time to read these publications yet? Both articles share reflective questions that can be used during a self-review or for your own personal teaching journey. Alongside the Ministry articles Cathy Wilson from Wa Ora Montessori School shares the journey her school has travelled on to understand and use Tātaiako through their job descriptions. This story will inspire and encourage you all how you too can embrace Tataiako.

With allergies in young children skyrocketing many of you will find the article, *Managing food allergies in ECE* useful. This article shares what an allergy actually is and how centres can support those with an allergy.

The next issue of Swings & Roundabouts is published in Spring. To celebrate this we have an outdoorsy issue. We want to share how some NZ ECE centres have embraced the concept of Forrest Schools within a Kiwi concept. Plus we want you to share your great outdoor spaces to inspire others. Send one or two high quality images of your outside area with the name of your centre, location, and a sentence on what inspires your outdoors area. A selection of images will be chosen.

Send all images to Trudi, by Wednesday 23 July, 2014, info@ecc.org.nz

Trudi Sutcliffe
Editor

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CEO's Message

By Peter Reynolds



The National Government, in Budget 2014, deployed returns from its newly balanced books to comander Labour policies as diverse as alleviation for kauri dieback disease, bowel cancer screening and paid parental leave.

It was vote buying Bill English style. Cautious. Clever. Grabbing centre ground from Labour. And creating in one document the impression of both parsimony and largess.

While it was hailed as a success in news media, it has caused me much worry. This is why...

Election 2014 is likely to be a near-run thing. There is a growing economy. And the first Budget surplus in years. The Government has both the motivation and means to play Santa, and has done so for many. But not for us.

They, instead, announced the following:

- An increase of \$155.7 million for early childhood education;
- Mostly to pay for increases in numbers of children attending and increases in the number of hours individual children are attending;
- But with \$53.6 million allocated to increase universal subsidy rates (including 20 hours) to keep parent fees 'as low as possible'.

These numbers created the positive headlines they were constructed to create. But this is what they really mean...

The \$53.6 million means the non-salary part of universal subsidies are up by 2.5%. A figure that sounds great on its own. But, as everyone running a centres knows, salaries are the lion's share of costs. And a 2.5% increase in the non-salary subsidy is another way of saying 'less than 1% overall, less than the rate inflation and therefore just another cut in revenue for centres in real terms'.

Add in the impact of recent Budget cuts and centre revenue has now fallen about 4% since 2010. 4% and falling still.

This then is the nub of my concern. If a funding cut, in real terms, is what centres get when the economy is strong and the Government is dispensing largess to secure re-election, what might we expect once the election is over – or if the economy falters?

The evidence is now substantial that the National Government believes early childhood education, at the very least, very fully funded.

In Budget 2010 centres lost the additional money they got for having more than 80% qualified staff. In 2012 subsidies were frozen and not adjusted for inflation. In 2013 the Government completely withdrew funding for professional development to help new teachers into full registration.

It is not possible to eat away at centre revenue in this manner, Budget after Budget, without evoking the consequences that many New Zealand early childhood centres know all too well: the replacement of qualified staff with the unqualified; the slashing of professional development for teachers; backward steps on teacher-child ratios; cut backs in non-essential services – and increased fees for parents.

While substantial economies of scale have allowed some larger groups of centres to cope comparatively well, some stand-alone centres have not. Many are under financial pressure, and there is, therefore, substantial risk many will sell out, and there will be an accelerating consolidation of ownership in our sector.

It is possible a National Government might welcome this outcome if it bought them 'quality' at lower cost. But it would be a tragedy for many, many centres – and reduce

substantially the diversity of service from which parents are able to choose currently.

I will pause here to point out, in the interests of both balance and fairness, that this Budget contained many components that we can applaud heartily.

There is, for example, a \$500 million family 'package' that:

- Extends paid parental leave from 14 to 18 weeks and to those in seasonal work or who recently changed jobs;
- Extends free GP visits from under sixes to under thirteens; and
- Increases parental tax credits for lower income families.

But even this good news comes with a catch. And it is very possible that the extension of paid parental leave will diminish demand for centres as caregivers spend longer looking after their own children. Not necessarily a bad thing, of course. But no help to centres from a business point of view.

So how should we regard Budget 2014?

It's not as if our sector expected the Earth. We wanted funding rate increases that kept up with inflation. And support packages so we could invest in professional development for our teachers. Schools got both. We didn't. And the fact we didn't raises important questions about how we are seen by this Government vis a vis the Primary sector and their other social spending priorities.

It raises also the spectre of gradual but unrelenting funding cuts for early childhood education centres well into the foreseeable future, and gradual but unrelenting fee increases for parents.

I rarely say this. But I couldn't mean it more sincerely... I hope I'm wrong.

So you know



Welcome

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

- Rising Stars Preschool, New Plymouth
- Bright Horizons Preschool, Oxford
- Magical Minds Early Learning Centre Limited trading as St Lukes Kindergarten, Remuera
- Millies House, Lower Hutt (Provisional)
- Existing Members Huntly Kidz has new owners and the centre is now known as Kiwico Educare Ltd

The 2014 ECC Executive Team

The ECC is governed by its constitution, which provides for an Executive Committee elected annually by the membership. The Executive Committee comprises a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and five Executive Members. The ECC recently had its 2014 AGM at this year's conference in Auckland.

The National Executive for 2014:

President: Maria Johnson; Vice-President: Theresa Dodd, Secretary: Tim Lainson; Treasurer: Lonnie Parker; Executive Members: Claudia Forts Fortalezza (new), Marie Moselen, Jill Oliver, Darius Singh, and Tracy Summerfield.

New publication outlines employment responsibilities in ECE

The Education Review Office (ERO) has recently published *Improving quality: employment responsibilities in kindergartens and education and care services (May 2014)*.

This national report presents the findings of ERO's 2013 evaluation of the effectiveness of employment practices in some kindergartens and education and care services. The evaluation focused on the recruitment and appointment of staff, support for staff development, improvement of staff

performance through appraisal, staff turnover, managing complaints and police vetting.

Many of the 235 services included in this evaluation were aware of their employment responsibilities and managed them well. The findings highlight aspects of good practice, as well as a number of employment related issues for early childhood services including the need for an effective appraisal system that reflects the service's vision, strategic plan and goals. Another area of concern was the current lack of requirements for services to report on issues associated with the competence or conduct of non-registered staff. The report includes recommendations for the Ministry of Education and early childhood services. The Ministry is working with early childhood education sector representatives to develop an action plan to address the recommendations in the report.

You can read the full report on ERO's website – www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports

The ECC Professional Development Programme

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) strives to provide quality workshops for both centre managers and teachers to support ECE centres to provide best practices in both management processes and in teaching. To do this in a cost-effective manner the ECC offers a series of half-day practical workshops.

First Aid

The ECC is now offering first aid refresher courses through St John. These six hour workshops will maintain and refresh your knowledge, teach you the latest first aid techniques and maintain your confidence as a first aider. (If you didn't complete your original course with St John, it doesn't matter; you can still choose St John for your refresher). These workshops have limited numbers so it pays to book straight away when one is advertised in your area.

Check the ECC website: www.ecc.org.nz (under events) for when the next first aid course is in your area (if none are, contact info@ecc.org.nz to register your interest in these workshops for your region or ECE centre).

Teacher Workshops

EC Professional Support, based at the Faculty of Education at the University of Auckland design and delivers the ECC's teacher workshops nationwide.

Workshops include:

- Stepping up to Supervisor
- Authentic bi-cultural practice: more than waiata and poi
- Moving from managing children's behaviour to fostering social competence
- Teaching with purpose
- Self review in ECE

Centre Manager Workshops

Whitireia Polytechnic deliver the ECC Centre Manager workshops nationwide.

Workshops include:

- Compliance
- Reporting and Reviewing/Managing ERO
- Managing people/staff
- Financial Management for ECE Centre Managers

Plus the ECC offers the: **The Blue Book Workshop: For your Registration and Professional Development Journey** for registering, registered and mentoring teachers.

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.



The Budget

The Government's 2014 Budget was read out by the Minister of Finance on Thursday 15 May. There was little inkling as to what might be in store for early childhood education prior to this date.

What we were hoping for

Given the nature of Government Budgets since 2010, few were expecting much. The Early Childhood Council, however, hoped for two things.

1. We wanted a percentage adjustment to universal subsidies equal to the previous 12 months' inflation rate.
2. We wanted a support package for the professional development of ECE teachers. Similar to what schools get.

We got neither.

What we did get

An increase of \$155.7 million.

Most of this money is to be allocated over the next four years to pay for more children to attend ECE and for individual children to attend for longer.

\$53.6 million is to pay more to ECE services for every funded child hour.

This includes a 2.5% universal cost adjustment to the non-salary component of ECE funding subsidies (universal subsidy and 20 Hours) to help offset some of the increased costs faced by ECE services.

The government states the purpose of this payment is to help keep fees affordable for parents.

The 2.5% increase for non-salary costs amounts to about 1% once salaries are taken into account. This is below the rate of inflation and is therefore a funding cut in real terms.

This is the latest in a sequence of real-terms funding cuts.

The ECE Funding Handbook will be updated and new funding rates will apply from 1 July 2014. The new rates will be paid to services in the November 2014 funding payment.

The new funding table from 1 July 2014 is on the next page...

Other new Budget spending of interest to us

A \$500 million family 'package' extends paid parental leave from 14 to 18 weeks and to those in seasonal work or who recently changed jobs; extends free GP visits from



By Peter Reynolds

under sixes to under thirteens; and increases parental tax credits for lower income families.

The extension of paid parental leave will be implemented in two stages: 14 to 16 weeks in 2015/16 and 16 to 18 weeks in 2016/17.

A \$33.2 million package of funding will be used for a Children's Action Plan, set up by Social Development Minister Paula Bennett, to address child abuse and neglect. The package includes \$16.4 million for new services and greater monitoring of children considered to be at risk of abuse or neglect. A further \$13.7 million will go to Child, Youth and Family to better support children in state care and those with high needs.

Is Early Childhood Education overfunded?

The ongoing funding cuts endured by our sector since 2010 suggest that Government views centres as either very fully funded or over funded. The Minister, for example, describes the early childhood education sector as the most expensive part of the education sector.

Early childhood education

- A child attends an ECE centre an average of 21.7 hours/week
- The average adult:child ratio in ECE is 1:6
- The cost per child per year is \$9,600 (2011/12)

Primary sector

- A child is at school 30 hours/week
- The average adult:child ratio in primary school is 1:20
- The cost/child/year (2011) is \$5,881

Source: www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/ece/annual-ece-summary-reports; www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/ece2/ece-indicators/publicexpenditure; www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/schooling/resourcing/per-student-funding.

Early childhood education services are required under regulation to maintain a much higher adult:child ratio than primary schools (or secondary and tertiary institutions), with children attending for fewer hours a week on average. They are furthermore much smaller than schools and cannot achieve the same economies of scale.

The Minister's ECE-Primary comparison is clearly a case of apples and oranges, and a poor justification for ongoing cuts in subsidy rates.

PS - the new funding rates in detail

ECE Funding Rates (GST inclusive)			To 30 June 2013	From 1 July 2013
20 Hours ECE	All Day	80%+	11.33	11.43
		50-79%	10.32	10.41
		25-49%	9.07	9.15
		0-24%	8.27	8.34
	Sessional	80%+	6.24	6.29
		50-79%	5.67	5.72
		25-49%	5.01	5.05
		0-24%	4.63	4.67
Non-20 Hours	All Day	80%+	6.64	6.70
		50-79%	5.73	5.78
		25-49%	4.57	4.61
		0-24%	3.80	3.83
	Sessional	80%+	4.84	4.88
		50-79%	4.33	4.37
		25-49%	3.72	3.75
		0-24%	3.35	3.38
Under 2s	All Day	80%+	12.01	12.12
		50-79%	10.87	10.97
		25-49%	8.78	8.86
		0-24%	7.50	7.57
	Sessional	80%+	10.68	10.77
		50-79%	9.71	9.79
		25-49%	7.91	7.98
		0-24%	6.89	6.95

ELI Live

The ELI, or Early Learning Information, project from the Ministry of Education has commenced full implementation now. Many centres, using management systems like Infocare or APT, will have noticed very little. A few others, who need to use the special web portal for ELI, will have some new technology to get used to.

The Ministry is excited about the new system as it opens up a world of new information possibilities on ECE. The ECC also welcomes the new system, but is more cautious in what the information is to be used for and from when. The Ministry have previously said that they will not use ELI information for several months until a reliable level of data is recorded. They have also said that centres starting to use ELI should face no more work than they have always done in managing their enrolment administration. And the Ministry have said that the data collected is no more than has always been collected by centres. Finally, the Ministry has promised that ELI will do away with the RS7s and RS61s.

We watch the future with cautious optimism.

For more information on ELI contact the Ministry of Education on 0800 ECE ECE or <http://eli.education.govt.nz>

Peter asked the two leading vendor system providers how the rollout has been going from their perspective:

Infocare

The much anticipated Ministry of Education online Early Learning Information System, commonly known as "ELI", went live for all Infocare users in the country on the 31st March after a very successful pilot project for a few selected Infocare clients.

The first day of integration saw Infocare sending 400 000 messages to ELI at a peak rate of 38 messages per second, a sure test of the robustness of the Infocare and ELI systems.

Infocare was the first SMS vendor to go live with ELI having successfully completed all of the development, testing and pilot phases of the project on schedule. "If required, we can make any updates required by the Ministry of Education to all of our clients overnight," said Iain Graham Managing Director of Infocare Systems.

"Part of the new ELI integration is the ECE return" said Iain. "This is essentially an online replacement of the old RS61 and will allow services to dispense with the paper based returns and instead use Infocare to submit a new electronic return."

"Infocare is continuing to work closely with the Ministry of Education to ensure that it is at the leading edge of Early Childhood Sector compliance.

For more information contact Infocare on email info@info-care.biz or call 09 476 5955 or visit www.info-care.biz

APT

The team at APT have been beavering away for over a year now getting systems prepared for the big 'Go Live' in May/June. With the updating of Official Identification Documents & NSN allocation completed record keeping should be routine with a few extra statistical fields on child & staff records.

From APT's point of view this project was huge and most of it being 'behind the scenes', virtually another database hidden in there capturing all the ELI data as you go about your daily tasks. What this has meant is little non-ELI development has been added over the last year - hopefully we can change that in the last half of this year.

What has developed, however, over the last 18 months is a closer working relationship with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and better communications all round. This project will tidy up many 'loose ends' with sending info to MoE, do it in a timely fashion (less form filling and posting) and reduce administration time eventually. It should make future requirements from MoE less of a burden. Next addition will be the funding return (RS7) within the next 12 months.

For more information contact APT on email ccsupport@aptbus.co.nz or call 0800 747 606 or visit <http://web01.aptserver.pccnz.com/apt-childcare-management-software>

ECC Art Competition 2014

This year's art award theme was **'Kings & Queen's'** and every submitted piece of artwork (36 murals) celebrated creativity and the imagination with sparkle and bright colours dazzling ECC conference attendees.

Thank you to all centres who entered into the competition, the high calibre of artistic talent, use of colour, art media, originality, and the collaboration of many children working together as a group with their teachers is to be applauded and celebrated. Our judges had a very difficult job indeed!

Overall we had three prizes. The overall winner and runner-up chosen by our judges and the People's Choice Award chosen by those attending this year's ECC Conference.



Winner

St Mary's Family Centre, Tauranga

The main prize package valued at \$1000 was sponsored by ECC Preferred Suppliers:



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



The Peoples Choice Award was sponsored by:



Runner-up

Elim Kids Preschool, Nelson



People's Choice Award

Murrays Bay Childcare Centre, Auckland

Ka Hikitia: Accelerating Success 2013-2017

Why is this document important to my service?

"The role of education is to nurture every child's potential and to support their educational success, and achievement" p. 2

Ka Hikitia has a vision for Māori learners that Māori learners will:

- have their identity, language and culture valued and included in teaching and learning in ways that support them to engage and achieve success
- know their potential and feel supported to set goals and take action to enjoy success
- experience teaching and learning that is relevant, engaging, rewarding and positive
- gain skills, knowledge, dispositions, attitudes and working theories they need to achieve success in te ao Māori, New Zealand and the wider world.

In reading this vision you may think that this vision is for all learners. That is true, however, we need to have an intentional focus on what, why and how we engage Māori learners and whānau for educational success. The reason for this is that in our history our education system has not been designed to be as inclusive of Māori learners and whānau as it could have been. We have room for improvement and *Ka Hikitia* is a guiding document to help us think about what we can do at a strategic level.

How we take responsibility for this through what we say and what we do needs to be written in our annual plans, policies and procedures to start to change (or affirm) what we do and how we teach and learn in the daily life of the ECE service. In the early years we want all Māori children to participate in high quality early learning.

What do I need to do?

Early childhood services will have systems in place to review how effective they are in accelerating success for Māori learners.

Below are some suggestions from the *Early Learning* and *Ka Hikitia* pamphlet.

- Use *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013-2017* to support our planning for teaching and learning with Māori children.
- Engage with whānau, hapā and iwi to better integrate the identity, language and culture of Māori children into the learning that occurs at our service.
- Consider ways we can ensure our early learning service is friendly and welcoming to Māori children and their parents, families and whānau.
- Find out about the iwi in our area.
- Engage with iwi to gather material on the identity, language and culture of Māori children who attend our early learning service.
- Use Māori language resources and picture books.
- Talk to the parents, families and whānau of Māori children – discuss their child's interests and progress, and suggest ways they can support their child at home.

The *Early Learning* and *Ka Hikitia* pamphlet also includes a range of useful strategies for engaging parents, families and whānau.

Reflective Questions for ECE leaders, teachers and educators

What are the ways we support and strengthen the learning and development of Māori children? How effective are these strategies?

How well do we work with Māori parents and whānau to support their aspirations for their children? How will we strengthen this?

How do we promote the benefits of early learning participation to parents and whānau in our service and in our community?

How well are we at being responsive to the identity, language and culture of Māori children that attend our early childhood service?

In what ways are we connecting the learning children gain at home with the learning that occurs at our early learning service?



The below link will take you to a PDF version of *Ka Hikitia Accelerating Success 2013-2017* http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/PolicyandStrategy/~/_media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/KaHikitia/KaHikitiaAcceleratingSuccessEnglish.pdf

The below link will take you to view a PDF version of *Early Learning and Ka Hikitia Accelerating Success 2013-2017*

http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~/_media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/KaHikitia/KaHikitiaAcceleratingSuccess/KHEarlyLearning.pdf

Tātaiako cultural competencies for teachers of Māori learners

Cultural competence and ECE Standards and Criteria

Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners is a booklet about teachers' relationships and engagement with Māori learners and with their whānau and iwi.

Three key principles underpin Tātaiako:

1. high quality teaching is the most important influence the education system has on high quality outcomes for children.
2. parents and whānau play a pivotal role in supporting their children's learning right from the start.
3. educational services need to know and be responsive to the identity, language and culture of children and their parents, whānau and families.

What is unique about this document is the inclusion of examples of learner and whānau voices to describe what the competencies mean to them. There is a strong relationship between *Tātaiako* and *Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success*, these documents provide guidance and a framework to enable educational services to respond and strengthen educational success for Māori children.

How early childhood education (ECE) services take on this responsibility and embed it in what they do through policies, procedures and practices contributes to services meeting Criteria 5 of the Curriculum Standard. (C5 – The service curriculum acknowledges and reflects the unique place of Māori as tangata whenua. Children are given the opportunity to develop knowledge and an understanding of the cultural heritages of both parties to Te Tiriti o Waitangi).

Tātaiako has the following competencies for teachers, educators and leaders (managers):

- **Ako:** taking responsibility for their own learning and that of Māori learners.

- **Manaakitanga:** showing integrity, sincerity and respect towards Māori beliefs, language and culture.

- **Wānanga:** actively engaging in respectful working relationships with Māori learners, parents and whānau, hapū, iwi and the Māori community.

- **Whanaungatanga:** actively engaging in respectful working relationships with Māori learners, parents and whānau, hapū, iwi and the Māori community.

- **Tangata Whenuatanga:** affirming Māori learners as Māori. Providing contexts for learning where the language, identity and culture of Māori learners and their whānau is affirmed.

The governance and management of an ECE service needs to consider how these competencies are realised for Māori children through the daily life of the early childhood service. This includes the learning environment, interactions between children, teachers and educators, parents, whānau, families and communities.

Reflective questions are a good place for teachers and educators to start thinking about the effectiveness of their practice. Here are some sample questions. More reflective questions are provided in the publications noted below.

Reflective Questions

What is the teachers', leaders', ECE services' role in enabling the achievement of Māori learners?

Under the Treaty of Waitangi, what does 'equitable outcomes' mean for us as staff, and as a community? How do we promote and ensure equitable outcomes for Māori children?

How do teachers and the ECE services show awareness of, and respect for, te reo Māori, tikanga Māori, and Māori culture and heritage?

In addition to these questions how do you measure teacher and leadership performance in these areas through performance management systems:

- key performance indicators of cultural competencies in a job description;
- attestations against the NZ Teachers Council requirements for registered teachers;
- appraisal processes; and
- induction processes.

Further Reflective Questions for Teachers and Educators

How is the learning environment effective for Māori learners?

How are the interactions and cultural practices that I use in the early childhood service respectful of Māori culture, language and values?

How are the relationships that I have in the early childhood service effective with Māori learners?

How welcome are local Māori parents, whānau and children at your early childhood service?

How effective is your engagement with Māori parents, whānau and iwi?

How do your responses to learning opportunities acknowledge local environment, culture, tikanga and te reo Māori?

The below link takes you to a PDF version of *Tātaiako Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners*

<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/-/media/MinEdu/Files/TheMinistry/EducationInitiatives/Tataiako/TataiakoWEB.pdf>

The below link takes you to a PDF version of *Tātaiako – Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners: A resource for use with the Graduating Teacher Standards and Registered Teacher Criteria*

<http://www.teacherscouncil.co.nz/sites/default/files/Tataiako%20Cultural%20Competencies%20for%20Teachers%20of%20Maori%20Learners%20A%20resource%20for%20use%20with%20the%20Graduating%20Teacher%20Standards%20and%20Registered%20Teacher%20Criteria.pdf>

Our journey to understand and use Tātaiako through our job descriptions

Cathy Wilson, assistant principal of Wa Ora Montessori School in Lower Hutt explains how her school engaged with Tātaiako.



By Cathy Wilson

Wa Ora Montessori School caters for approximately 300 tamariki from 18 months to 18 years in Lower Hutt. – A preschool, primary and high school are located on two closely situated campuses. It is the only school in New Zealand to offer Montessori education from infancy to adolescence and the only state integrated Montessori primary and high school in the country. The shared vision and values encompass the whole school and are underpinned by Montessori philosophy. It is therefore important that all the policies, procedures and job descriptions work across the whole school.

There have been three very positive but very different reasons that we commenced working with Tātaiako, the cultural Competencies for teachers of Māori learners. Last year I attended a workshop at the Early Childhood Council conference where I met Lynley Johns from Rainbow Bears Preschool in Auckland. We chatted, as ECE educators do, and Tātaiako was discussed. Shortly afterward, I applied and was accepted to attend the New Zealand Teachers Council appraisal workshop which also had a focus on Tātaiako. Meeting Lynley, discussing Tātaiako with her and how to begin to unpack it as a centre and commencing on the NZTC appraisal workshop, were both invaluable to begin to understand this exciting document. The journey we needed to take as a school began to take shape.

At our preschool meetings we began discussing Tātaiako and the five competencies – ako, wānanga, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and tangata whenuatanga.

Different kaiako (teachers) took responsibility for researching what each competency meant and shared their findings at team meetings. As the meaning of each competency was shared we brainstormed as a team what it meant for us as kaiako at Wa Ora Montessori school, what it meant to our whānau, what it meant to tamariki, and how we could improve what we were doing. This information was then sent as an email around the preschool kaiako to be discussed further prior to the next fortnightly team meeting. This has enabled our entire team to begin to develop an in-depth understanding of each competency and how it applied to us, our whānau, our tamariki and more importantly what we could do to improve what we were doing to enhance learning outcomes for tamariki. I will share an example of the work we did for the competency Whanaungatanga;

WHANAUNGATANGA

What does it mean to us?

Building relationships and making connections with whānau.

How do we do it at Wa Ora Preschool?

- We acknowledge the Treaty of Waitangi and the importance of biculturalism.
- We welcome tamariki and whānau to the school and treat them with respect, with open hearts and open minds, being secure in our own culture and appreciating other cultures.
- We observe how we interact with others, build relationships with things we have in

common, stop and take the time to chat and acknowledge one another.

- We take time to talk to whānau, making ourselves available.
- We give information to whānau before they start with biographies of kaiako so that they know a little about the people who will be teaching their tamariki.
- There are photos of kaiako on Educa.
- Learning Stories on Educa are a source of communication between home and school. The stories themselves show whānau that we honour and know their tamariki and we share the joy in their progress and development.
- 'Educa' is building relationships because it is interactive and the wider whānau can be involved).

What does it look like to tamariki?

- Their whānau are welcome in the classroom, respected and acknowledged.
- Te reo Māori is used in the classroom and bicultural lessons/resources available and used.
- Te reo Māori is acknowledged and respected.
- Their kaiako really know them because they take the time to know them - through observing them and having personal interactions with them.
- They have the time to build relationships with their peers - time for 'free' child initiated conversations, morning teas/lunch together.

- Tamariki feel safe, secure and have trusting relationships with their kaiako.
- Tamariki know that their views are important and listened to. They can help to develop/change things in their classroom.

What does it look like to whānau?

- Acknowledging and welcoming them alongside their tamariki - valuing and acknowledging their matua / kaumatua culturally appropriate.
- Trust, respect and openness (communication) between kaiako and whānau.
- Two way communication - talking about where you come from and asking about their whakapapa.
- Te reo Māori used in the classroom and bicultural lessons/resources available and used.
- Inviting whānau to be part of special celebrations (i.e. tamariki birthday).
- Inviting whānau into our classes to teach us about things, thereby extending the principle of ako.
- Whānau are welcome to form relationships with all kaiako in the classroom and we go out of our way to chat outside of the classroom (i.e. on the deck before school, on the playground after school).
- Whānau are kept "in the loop" with emails, newsletters/communication keeping them connected to the whole school.

What could we do to improve what we do?

- Could have a small gathering for breakfast, morning tea or afternoon tea once per term.
- Cup of tea etc. offered at initial meeting with kaiako and some discussion of kaiako background/family?
- At the beginning of the year, a social 'Meet the Kaiako' gathering so whānau can meet other whānau as well as talk to the kaiako less formally.
- Make sure that all new whānau are introduced to the Class Parent reps (if we are not already doing that).
- Pass on anecdotes about tamariki to whānau to further develop relationships and confidence that we know their tamariki.

The third positive reason for commencing working with Tātaiako was that Wa Ora Montessori School was accepted as a pilot school on the He Kakano programme in 2010. He Kakano is funded by MoE and focuses on Māori enjoying education success as Māori. A co-ordinator, Darryl Waiti was already working closely with the school's senior leadership team. He attended two full staff meetings in August and September 2013 and with the additional support of our whānau hui parent group assisted the entire school staff in gaining a greater understanding the competencies of Tātaiako. So with the knowledge and understanding we had in our kite our kaiako from preschool through to high school then had to really make Tātaiako alive in our school.

We started this work at full school staff meetings. Five groups of 6-7 kaiako each took a competency and brainstormed what actions should be taken at Wa Ora Montessori school to ensure each competency was happening. We then rotated groups looking at what the previous group had written and we modified or added to it. All the ideas were collated and at the following full staff meeting we did exactly the same process, this time ensuring that we were working with different competencies. Further work was done with these competencies with assistance from Karen Hayward and Nicki Dowling from the Centre for Educational Development at Massey University. We looked at our current roles and responsibilities in our job descriptions and realised that we were able to add/modify them and use the competencies as a framework for our new job descriptions. We also looked at Montessori philosophy following the *Essential Elements of Authentic Montessori Practice at Wa Ora Montessori Area and Preschool*, the *Montessori Journey to Excellence Te Ara Ki Huhuatanga* and other Montessori best practice determined as appropriate.

So the example of Whanaungatanga from our preschool discussions, emails, school wide discussion and work with Karen and Nicki became included in our job description as:

WHANAUNGATANGA

As a kaiako I will:

- actively participate in planning and evaluation for ākonga, utilising authentic Montessori assessment tools and observation, incorporating ākonga and

whānau aspirations. These will be used in the planning and evaluation process to extend ākonga strengths, knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

- actively build and maintain respectful, authentic working relationships with ākonga, whānau and colleagues.
- actively seek ways to work with whānau to maximise success of all ākonga particularly during the first weeks of their experience at school, to encourage satisfactory adjustment for all.
- work in partnership with whānau.
- be available and welcoming to ākonga, whānau and colleagues.
- demonstrate knowledge of whānau cultures, tikanga, values and traditions through my teaching practice.
- assist in developing and implementing whānau orientation courses and seminars as requested.
- play an active part in the wider school community.

Finally, kaiako from each sector of the school wrote key performance indicators (KPIs) which were added as an appendix to the back of the job description. This ensured that job descriptions were tailored for kaiako in preschool, primary and high school.

Our new job descriptions have been adopted and will be used to hire kaiako at Wa Ora Montessori School with very clear KPIs around key tasks. Kaiako may link some of those KPI's to their inquiry to ensure that they have a bench mark of good practice. The job description can also be used as a self-review tool in order to set their inquiry, which is used for appraisal. Kaiako are not appraised against their job description but on the way they have evidenced the challenges and changes to their practice for the enhanced learning of tamariki.

Using Tātaiako has been a learning experience for our staff with many parallels to the philosophy that underpins our school. We have been fortunate to have the help from people beyond our school but also from parents and whānau from our own school community. A committed team of kaiako from our whole school made this work possible for us at Wa Ora Montessori school.

Engaging Parents



By Laree Taula

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) took the opportunity at the end of last year to send a submission to the Education and Science Select Committee's *'Inquiry into how to work effectively with parents, families, whānau, aiga, and communities to contribute to their children's education.'*

The stated terms of reference for the inquiry were to investigate the elements of an effective strategy for engaging parents, families, whānau, aiga, and communities in education; to identify the best practice examples of approaches, locally and internationally, that support parents and communities to encourage their children's learning; and to identify ways to leverage the strength of communities to lift the educational achievement of children and young people in their community.

The ECC was subsequently invited to give an oral presentation to the select committee on Thursday 12 March 2014. We utilised this time to urge the select committee to think about the ECC's Partnering with Parents' initiative, the use of digital technology, and the community hub model.

Embedded into the Partnering with Parents' philosophy is the belief that we need more confident parents, not ones who feel their experience or knowledge is inferior; that the family is the most important support group for the child and that the child learns best when their family and teachers work in partnership

to support the child's developmental learning. We gave some good examples of how digital technology can be used interactively and positively with parents, and the importance of a joined up community approach.

Questions from Members of Parliament at the end of the oral submission were positive but also included "What about those who do not have access to computers?" and "Will the use of digital technology take away the importance of face to face interaction and relationship building?"

What is evident, is the importance of both embracing digital technology alongside a partnership model with parents. This is integral if we are to provide children and young people with the digital tools to learn, function and achieve as digital citizens. When children have the digital tools they need to learn at ECE/school and at home, parents will be able to link more closely with schools and help children with their learning.

The community hub approach is about engaging parents, families, whānau, aiga, and communities meaningfully in early childhood education, seeing early childhood centres as hubs for their community and creating scaffolding services that support healthy whānau. This holistic way of delivering services has resulted in many parents understanding their role in supporting their child in education.

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The preferred technology partners of Auckland's ECEs

First NZ 'Greenstar' ECE building

By Phil Smith

Last month we achieved a momentous milestone for NZ early childhood design and for ourselves.

Our early childhood centre design for Ngati Hine Health Trust, Te Mirumiru, was awarded the first 6 Greenstar Education building rating in NZ. Not only does this make it the first and only 6 star education building in NZ (the rating tool encompasses early childhood centres, schools and tertiary buildings inc multi-million university buildings and awards ratings 4-6 stars) but it is the first early childhood building to receive any Greenstar rating in NZ and Australia. A 6 star is equivalent to World Excellence and puts the design on par with the top rated buildings elsewhere around the world in places such as Europe, USA and Australia.

The rating is given by the New Zealand Green Building Council who oversees all the Greenstar rating tools and it deals with a lot of highly technical green building issues. These are split into nine categories covering management of the building, internal environment quality, energy, water, materials, transport, ecology, pollution and innovation. Each of these categories contain individual credits which have to be met to obtain points - things like amount of natural daylight, amount of natural ventilation, etc. The greener the solution the higher the points awarded.

Whilst the rating is based on many highly technical areas of building design that require advanced predictive software (and a PhD in physics!), the management category awards credit for educating the occupants of the building about how to use the green features of it - in this case, the building owner, the teachers and the children. This is a particularly unique and relevant feature for early childhood and isn't in all the Green rating tools around the world.

We achieved credit for demonstrating 3 key 'green' attributes of the building to both teachers and children - these can be seen in the diagrams covering water, solar heating and natural ventilation / cooling. These have been printed out as posters and displayed in the rooms as easy reference for children.



PASSIVE HEATING AND VENTILATION

1. During winter the sun shines lower in the sky. This means that the sun will come right into the back of our classrooms during these cold months keeping us warm.
 2. We will have the doors open only a little bit during winter. This is because we do not want to lose too much heat from our classrooms but we need to have enough fresh air to keep us healthy.
 3. If you look at the glass on the doors you will be able to see that there is two layers of glass. This will stop the heat from our rooms going through the glass as quickly keeping the warmth inside.
 4. The solid concrete floor, walls and roof will store the heat from the sun. This will heat the cool winter air coming in when the doors are open.
 5. The foam insulation around the outside of the building acts like a coat stopping the heat from going out of the building keeping us warm.
 6. When the sun isn't shining our underfloor heating keeps us warm.
- Because of all these things our building uses 44% less energy than a similar Childcare building.

We chose these attributes as they are simple everyday things that young children can touch and understand - when they open the large sliding doors, they feel the breeze, they can see the solar panels on prominent display from their playground and touch the hot water that they produce and they can feel the warmth of the sun through the glass in winter - all simple easy physics in action. These simple elements are the driving force behind this simple building and account for the majority of its 6 star rating.

We also gained further credit for incorporating these green features into the curriculum, so that the children are actually taught about them within the context of the wider world and the current environmental issues that we face. I think this is particularly ground breaking for a green rating tool as it recognises the power of education, which is obviously rather poignant for any education building! One green building will certainly help towards changing the world and solving our environmental issues, but 100 green citizens has the power to transform the world much more quickly.

For anyone wanting to find out more about the Greenstar rating tool and the NZ Green Building Council, go to <http://www.nzgbc.org.nz/>. A rating can be done

during design stage or after the building is completed, although its easier to ensure its done properly at design stage. The ratings can only be undertaken 'officially' by Greenstar Accredited Professionals (although anyone can download the tool and rate their own building unofficially). From our experience, to obtain the 'official' rating, it cost close to the same price as the actual building design fees, and this can be off-putting. However, we managed to achieve another NZ first on this project - we used the Greenstar rating to successfully reduce the council development contributions by 63% - and this more than covered the costs of the rating!

Phil Smith has specialised in designing world class education architecture for over 14 years, both in NZ and the UK and his designs have won many awards. In 2013, Phil was awarded Lexus Young Designer of the Year for his achievements in sustainable early childhood architecture in NZ and his design for Te Mirumiru won two ECCCA Awards and two NZ Property Council Awards recently.

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

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Managing food allergies in early childhood centres

Most early childhood centres are likely to have children with food allergies (FA) on their rolls. This is not surprising, given that it is now a common childhood condition, affecting up to one-in-ten (10%) of children under age 5 years¹. There is no cure, and to prevent reactions, including anaphylaxis which is life-threatening, the only treatment is to avoid any contact and particularly ingestion of the food(s) concerned.

FA, as with other allergies, are due to an abnormal response of the body's immune system to an otherwise harmless substance (the allergen), in this case to protein in the food(s) concerned. The immune system sets up IgE antibodies, and whenever the food allergen is detected, the antibodies trigger a response. This culminates in the release of histamine and other chemicals, which cause the surrounding tissue to swell and leak.

Symptoms of IgE-mediated FA usually happen within minutes. Often these are skin symptoms including swelling around the face and itchy red hives on parts of the body, red and itchy eyes, and gastric symptoms such as vomiting, stomach pains and diarrhoea. FA reactions can also affect breathing, with signs including sudden development of wheezing or coughing, and/or affect the cardio-vascular system, leading to a sudden drop in blood pressure with signs of pallor or collapse. Reactions which affect breathing and/or the cardio-vascular system are life-threatening, known as anaphylaxis, and require an emergency response. While most FA reactions are not anaphylactic, there are a several factors which can increase risk, such as the food concerned, the amount eaten, and/or if the child has asthma or exercises soon after eating.

The most common food allergies in childhood are to milk, eggs and peanuts, followed by tree-nuts, fish and shellfish, soy and wheat. In New Zealand, kiwifruit and sesame allergies are increasingly diagnosed. Most children will outgrow allergies to milk and egg by 5 – 7 years of age, and soy and wheat by adolescence. However, very few children outgrow allergies to peanuts, tree-nuts, fish and/or shellfish.

Risk management is the key to managing FA and involves strict allergen avoidance plus being prepared in case of anaphylaxis. The family has to learn the intricacies of reading labels on all products in supermarkets, checking for potential cross-contamination (e.g. food from bulk bins or deli counters is often unsafe), significantly adapting the family diet, and asking questions about ingredients and food preparation in any situation outside the home. They also have to learn to recognise the symptoms of FA reactions and what to do, particularly if symptoms are severe.

Those at risk of anaphylaxis will be prescribed an adrenaline auto-injector (EpiPen or Anapen) and advised to carry one with them at all times. They should also have an Anaphylaxis or Allergy Action Plan written up by their doctor, which sets out the first aid procedures to follow, and education on how to administer the adrenaline.

As part of licensing requirements, early childhood services are required to have staff with first aid certificates. The courses include first aid for anaphylaxis. This will give some guidance on emergency response but not about day to day management. In some regions, centres may also have access to public health nurses (employed through DHBs or the regional public health service).



By Penny Jorgensen
Advisor, Allergy NZ

Allergy New Zealand's guidelines for early childhood services and schools incorporate current evidence-based practice, and can be downloaded for free from the website: www.allergy.org.nz. These were written in consultation with the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology & Allergy (ASCIA) and the Paediatric Allergy Clinic at Auckland's Starship Hospital. ASCIA's updated guidelines (2013) for the prevention of anaphylaxis in schools, preschools and childcare are available on www.allergy.org.au.

The three key objectives in managing FA in education or childcare settings are:

- i) To minimise risk to the child through procedures which enable them to avoid the food concerned
- ii) For staff to be prepared at all times to respond appropriately in case anaphylaxis occurs
- iii) For the child to be able to participate fully in all normal activities, not limited by his/her food allergies.

Minimising risk:

Given the range of food allergies, as well as types, sizes and locations of centres, it is difficult to have a 'one-size fits all' approach. However centres can develop procedures and





implement them successfully if they use a 'co-operative' approach, engaging the family concerned, as well as other families using the service, and local health practitioners such as a public health nurse. The basic steps are as follows:

i) General policy measures to minimise the risk of exposure to food allergens include:

- No sharing of food, food utensils or containers
- Children with severe food allergies should only eat food that has been prepared for them at home; and food packs, bottles etc should be clearly labelled for the child they are intended for – and staff should always check labels before giving food to children
- Children should be required to sit in one place and not move around while they are eating
- The use of play materials etc should be reviewed and removed depending on food allergies concerned e.g. egg cartons, yoghurt pottles, wheat-based dough (a recipe for a wheat-free alternative is available from Allergy New Zealand)
- If food is prepared by staff at the centre, then they should have training on how to check ingredients and prevent cross-contamination in food preparation, e.g. allergen-free food should be prepared first, and all surfaces, utensils etc cleaned thoroughly beforehand.
- Accidental ingestion can happen if a child touches a surface where a highly allergenic food has been and the surface not well-cleaned, then puts his/her fingers in the mouth. Peanut butter and egg mayonnaise sandwiches for example, are really sticky and hard to remove forms of allergens. Therefore tables or surfaces where food is placed and/or eaten need to be cleaned after eating.

ii) Specific policy measures should be based on the needs of the individual child:

- Ensure the enrolment form for the centre includes questions about allergies, and if identified, request the family provide medical information and an Allergy or Anaphylaxis Action Plan written by their doctor. Identification of other health conditions such as asthma and/or environmental allergies and/or eczema is also important.
- Arrange a meeting with the family and discuss appropriate risk-minimisation strategies for the child. Measures should be taken to remove highly allergenic foods in forms which can be easily transferred from one child to another, such as whole eggs or nuts. Parents of all children at the centre should be asked not to send meals with these foods if there is a child at risk of anaphylaxis to them.
- However cows' milk (dairy) is an important food for young children and should not be removed unless recommended by a specialist; the focus should instead be on careful supervision of the cows-milk allergic child while other children are consuming milk or dairy products (including goats' milk). This may require the food-allergic child to have a 'safe' table, where milk products and other foods they are allergic to are not served. However it is important for the child not to be isolated.

Staff training on first aid response:

Aside from first aid training, staff can access free online training from ASCIA, available through the Allergy NZ website. A signed anaphylaxis action plan with the child's photo and emergency contact details should be provided to the centre by the parents, and all staff should be familiar with it. A copy should also be kept with the child's auto-injector

(Anapen or EpiPen) and any other medication, in a container supplied by the family.

This in turn should be in an unlocked cupboard, accessible to staff but not to children. Emergency response procedures should be clear to all staff; and additional training in respect to specific action plans for individual children should be considered. Care needs to be taken when there are new or locum staff, on outings, and/or when special occasions may mean there is a risk of allergenic food being brought in.

Parents should be responsible for supplying and updating medication as required, and keeping the centre informed of any change in their child's health condition, for example if they develop asthma.

For more information and resources, go to www.allergy.org.nz

1. Sinclair et al, 'IgE-mediated food allergy – diagnosis and management in New Zealand children'. NZMJ, August 2013.
2. Vale et al, 'ASCI guidelines for prevention of anaphylaxis in schools, pre-schools and childcare: 2012 update'. Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health, 2013.
3. 'Allergy and Anaphylaxis Guidelines for early childhood services and schools', Allergy New Zealand 2011.
4. Ministry of Education, 'Health Conditions in Education Settings: supporting children and young people', 2006. (<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/SpecialEducation/PublicationsResources/HealthConditionsInEducation.pdf>).

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At the first cross word refer to the Employment Procedure Sheet on the Child Proof Website.

CRIMINAL

Criminal defence cover fights malicious or false accusations against your teaching and administrative staff.

INCOME STREAM

If you want your income to continue to flow insure at least 90% of your bulk funding and fees over a minimum period of 18 months.

DECKS

Have you added this to your Building Insurance?

CENTRE VAN

On the road or not, outings involve a host of extracurricular risks. Be prepared when you scout out the year's programme.

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PLAYGROUND

Protecting your playground can be fun and games. Make sure you understand the value of your installation. And your Health & Safety exposures.

PLAYGROUND STRUCTURES

A slippery slope are they buildings or contents?

RETAINING WALL

Have you considered the cost of repairing or replacing major landscaping features?

ANIMAL PEN

Health Closure can be a stinker, do you have Pandemic Insurance?

STORAGE SHED

Is this building insured?

PATHWAYS

Don't tread lightly. Make sure you include your paths, edges and surrounds for a realistic level of cover. Likewise your walkways.

SAFETY MATTING AND ARTIFICIAL GRASS

Are you fully covered?

PLUMBING

Pipes, plumbing, filter plants, sewage systems – they're generally hidden but they need to be covered.

KITCHEN

Child Allergies
what are the legal implications?

FENCES

Fences and gates are an open and shut case of underestimating the risks (and costs) involved.

SHADE SAILS

To avoid sun stroke check your policy excess as it can vary up to \$2,500.



Keeping your staff happy & motivated

By Trudi Sutcliffe

Retention of good, quality staff is the greatest challenge many centre managers will face. But what is the best strategy? Is it giving your staff a pay rise, renovating the staff room or is it as simple as acknowledging hard work?

In a survey by *American Express*, pollsters asked employees; "What do you want most from your employers?" With 46% of employees stating they wanted personal feedback and only 32% stating financial rewards.

Of course earning a good wage or salary makes a difference, but how many times have you heard someone say, "They couldn't pay me a cent more to stay there?"

In *Self-Motivation: Motivation at Its Best*, by Roger Neugebauer 64 early childhood teachers were interviewed and were asked what factors in the job either satisfied or frustrated them. The major frustrations were the rate of pay and the style of supervision. These conditions suggest Neugebauer relate to the environment and although the teachers were frustrated, these factors when addressed made no difference to an individual's desire to do their job well. But the part of the job that satisfied teachers the most such as observing progress in children, relationships with children and families, and recognition of doing a good job stimulated teachers to perform better. This means that paying your staff well does make a difference, but if they are not feeling acknowledged or a sense of satisfaction within their job, such as understanding child development and observing the learning going on, the money in the end will mean you keep your staff but they won't work any harder or passionately!

The Ministry of Education (MoE) publication, *Perception of Teachers & Training: A Focus of*

Early Childhood Education (2008) key findings also reinforce this view. Their research showed people didn't become ECE teachers because they were motivated for financial reasons but due to their passion for working with children, their desire to have a rewarding and worthwhile career and their commitment to children's development and learning. Another key finding stated that there was an overriding view that professional development needed to be valued by management and that feedback was also an essential element of high performance and motivation in staff.

The University of Kansas psychology department studied ways to motivate staff. Their results showed recognition was also a strong factor in developing employees with high work standards.

So what can you do to make your teachers feel more valued?

Sending teachers to professional development workshops/conferences is obviously valuable, as this gives teachers further knowledge, and with this knowledge often comes renewed enthusiasm and an understanding that yes, they are valued and respected as professionals. But PD costs money, and there isn't always a lot to go around, so what else can centre managers do to show their staff that their work is valued and important?

Best practice for centres generally means involving the teaching staff in the centre's vision and philosophy. Do your teachers get the opportunity to discuss their own teaching philosophy and how it fits with the centre's philosophy? Also if you're the centre owner do you talk openly about your desires, hopes and dreams for the centre, and then listen to what your teachers want or believe in? Get your staff excited in what inspires you and your vision!

Do you involve all teachers in policy discussions and other decisions or just senior staff? One idea that many centres

believe in is treating each member of their team as equals in order to develop a sense of ownership for all. Another idea is to use your team meetings not just for the minutia of regulations, delegating daily tasks and programme planning, but as an opportunity to focus on professional development. Have you spent time as a team discussing the big questions, such as everyone's beliefs about children, childhood, families, and community? What does quality ECE look like to each of your staff?

Many of the above ideas can enthuse staff and encourage them to understand the importance of their role as a teacher within your team and within the wider community of teaching.

If teachers believe their teaching has an impact they may work harder to provide a positive and stimulating environment. A teacher must feel personally responsible for the results of the work they perform. If they are only carrying out the plans of their supervisor/centre manager, little personal satisfaction will arise.

Another idea is to shift control of appraisals/performance reviews from the centre manager to each individual teacher. This can be done by teachers revising and helping to write their own job descriptions. The ECC's appraisal/performance review model explores some of these types of ideas. Find out more by attending the Appraisal/Performance Review workshop (go to the ECC website, look under events for more information). Or if you are an ECC member, the support section on the ECC member-only section offers templates and guidelines on appraisal/performance reviews. (go to the support section and look under Managing People).

Also encourage teachers to outline their personal interests and career goals during their appraisals/performance reviews. Together develop ways in which individual teachers can work towards the

accomplishment of their own goals and the organisations goals at the same time. For example if a teacher wants to develop their creative movement skills and the centre's goal was to stimulate children's imaginations, the teacher might be assigned to develop and use movement activities which challenge children's imaginations.

Another key factor is to provide regular feedback for teachers by acknowledging their hard work. You can do this by devoting some of your team meeting to allow teachers to share their highlights of the week. Maybe begin team meetings by pointing out the inspiring work of individuals or the 'amazing' team effort demonstrated since the last meeting. Remember to be specific. Thoughtful and focused feedback means so much more than general praise. Centre managers or mentoring teachers need to build observations into their schedules. We need to get past our worries of making someone feel uncomfortable with our observations and feedback.

You can also acknowledge the work your teachers do by sharing the learning happening in your centre, and highlighting the specialised work and extra efforts teachers have contributed through your whānau newsletters. Also announce any professional development workshops your teachers have been involved in. This shows your centre whānau that as a centre your teachers are always learning and developing new skills and it shows the knowledge your teaching staff has and how committed they are to their profession and to the children they work with.

Another key component is to create learning communities by encouraging teachers to share their knowledge and skills with other teachers and families. This can be done by encouraging teachers to act as mentors to other staff and even hold mini in-house workshops for teachers and families. If you send staff on external workshops, conferences, and seminars make sure they know they are required to share this learning.

Also learning from in-depth self-reviews and reading articles, recent research and industry newsletters can also be shared.

If some of your teachers are providing great in-house workshops encourage them to present their findings/knowledge through external conferences or workshops. Many of the ECC Conference workshops are facilitated by experienced and confident teachers who were willing to keep learning and to take risks. Aren't these the type of teachers you want working in your centre? By treating teachers as professionals they begin to expect more of themselves and take greater pride in their work.

So yes your staff will be happy and feel valued with a pay rise, but the buck doesn't stop there, they need to know they are valued as professionals and remember, "Research indicates that workers have three prime needs: Interesting work, recognition for doing a good job, and being let in on things that are going on in the company." -Zig Ziglar

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Business plan

Childcare centre business plans: Why you need one

Why do you need a business plan? First and foremost, a business plan is a basic requirement to getting your license and surviving an ERO Review; as well as bank loans. It is also a great way to focus the complete picture of your childcare centre, get it out of your head and down on paper.

There is something about writing a plan down on paper that brings it into reality, and requires greater precision. This is what a business plan will do for you and your childcare centre business. It doesn't matter if you've been open for years or just starting out – you will gain tremendous value from writing it down.

Preparing a business plan can be a long and daunting task, but I recommend using the ECC childcare centre business plan template to give you a head-start and save you hours of time.

If you're not already convinced, here are 10 big reasons why should have a business plan:

1. Sets specific objectives for your childcare centre. Good owners set specific objective that can be measured. This allows you to keep

track of how you are doing and make changes if needed.

2. Helps define your strengths. A major part of any plan is learning what your strengths are in a business both personal, professional and as a business. Knowing your strengths will allow you to play to them.

3. Helps uncover your weaknesses. Just like with your strengths, knowing your weaknesses can be a massive advantage for you. If you know where you are weak, you can focus more energy on this area, or find somebody else who can help you. Or best of all, delegate this area to someone else completely! An example is a member I recently spent some "quality planning time" with. Christine runs her own childcare centre, and she is weak at keeping track of her business paperwork and finances. Luckily, her husband Robert is an accountant. He handles ALL the paperwork, receipt tracking, payments, and accounting for her. Sounds like a perfect marriage!

4. Helps you know and understand your competition. In developing your plan, you will get to know your competition, what

their unique benefits are, and what their weaknesses are. From this you should be able to determine where you can compete with the greatest success.

5. Enables you to deal with professionals. Having a business plan will allow you to deal with other professionals, such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, and consultants, in a confident manner.

6. Understand who your customers are and what they want. To be successful in childcare you need to give the customer what they want, not always what they need or what you are best at. The business plan process will help you to find out more about your customers.

7. Determine how much money you will make. Knowing your customers, your competition and your strengths, you will be much better able to make an accurate projection about how much money you will make, how much you may need to pay out in expenses and how much you get to keep!

8. Understand how much it will cost to start your childcare centre. If you haven't yet started your childcare centre you will learn

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how much money you will need to get started. Depending on the size of your centre this may be almost nothing to six figures for a new child care centre. Knowing the costs will help you figure out where you can save some money too.

9. Help you sell your childcare centre.

Right now you may not be thinking about selling the business you are just starting but down the road you may decide to. It is always good to get paid a large amount for all the hard work you put into your childcare centre. A good business plan that has made you successful goes a long way in receiving a good sales price.

10. You simply must have one to apply for grants and loans. To get any money from the government or banks you need to have a business plan. Not having a plan is one of the biggest reasons people don't apply for government grants and loans and why that

money goes unused. The money is out there for the asking, but you must have a business plan to get any of it.

Yes, preparing a business plan can be a daunting process. And if you take it on from the beginning alone it will be. But luckily you have several great options:

Firstly, the ECC, in partnership with Whitireia, offers a really great Business Planning workshop. These workshops are very practical, half-day, low cost affairs and will provide you with the start you need to get your plan completed.

There are also several inexpensive business software programmes on the market you can use. These are good and they walk you through the process with examples for each section.

Another option is to have a business plan created for you by a professional. This is the

easiest but also the most expensive route. Search the web and you should find several companies willing to do all the work for you and send you a professional plan. An example is the ECC's preferred accountancy provider, Rubiix.

A third option is a "done for you" childcare business plan template, like the one available for ECC members on our website.

It's up to you how you go about writing your business plan, but you should strongly consider getting started today writing one if you don't have one already. Success is just so much easier with a good business plan for your childcare centre.



By Peter Reynolds

What a Great Time to Sell Your Childcare Centre!

"Did you know Childcare Centres are highly desirable and sought after businesses on the market today?"

On average I get 4 to 5 calls per week from prospective childcare buyers. The majority of them are experienced ECE qualified and have ready cash to buy childcare centres. They are keen to buy anywhere in New Zealand.

I am an experienced childcare broker with a proven track record.

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Knocking down walls: Writing to suit your community

Do parents read the notices and newsletters you send home? Do they understand them? The way you write may be building walls that barricade your community against your messages.

This article looks at some of the common ways that messages fail parents, and what you can do about them. By writing more clearly, you can help parents to better understand what your early childhood centre contributes, what it needs, and what they can do to support you at home, in the centre, and in the community.

Rewrite complex sentences

Long sentences can be hard to follow. Split and shorten sentences. Such sentences might have several main ideas. These are easy to split; just give each main idea its own sentence.

Slightly harder are those sentences with a main idea plus consequences or modifiers of that main idea. When splitting such sentences into two or more, take care to keep the relationships between ideas. Words that show relationship, such as 'therefore' and 'then,' help to make the logic clear.

The following example from a preschool-to-parent newsletter may leave people confused about who ran the training and what it was about. We also have to guess whose early years are being assessed and documented – teachers or pre-schoolers.

The teachers started off the year with professional development facilitated by CORE Education based on assessment and documentation in the early years.

We've untangled this into two sentences. The first main point is that teachers did the

training. The second main point is what the training covered, but also who ran it. By repeating the word 'training' at the start of the second sentence, we link the two sentences.

The teachers started the year with training to help them develop as professionals. The training, run by CORE Education, gave them better ways to assess and document the progress made by preschoolers.

Prefer common, familiar words

Words that are familiar to early childhood teachers might not be easily understood by parents. Replace specialised terms if you can. If you must use a specialised term, give a definition using familiar words.

The next example also came from a newsletter for parents.

Incorporated into this [teacher-only day] was reflection on how our environment/curriculum incorporates and values children's learning dispositions and working theories. We also discussed formal documentation; learning stories and other daily assessment methods including teacher dialogue, sharing and receiving info between the home and centre, reflection meetings etc; How these all support learning outcomes for children, and how we plan and respond to children's learning and interests within our daily curriculum.

Will the people in your community understand terms like curriculum? Learning dispositions? Teacher dialogue? Reflection meetings? Learning outcomes? What will they think you did during your teacher-only day? Will they see the value to preschoolers (therefore to them) of your work during the day?

We had a go at rewriting that paragraph.

We talked about how the environment and activities we offer, and our learning plans,



By Judy Knighton

adapt to suit the different ways that children learn. The learning activities we plan for each day are designed to help children to follow their interests as they learn.

We also discussed different ways to assess and document children's progress. Some of these ways include recording the children's stories about their learning, keeping notes about what teachers have observed, and meeting with families to reflect on how the children are doing. We talked about how assessment supports children to achieve, by highlighting successes and areas for improvement.

Use informative headings and sub-headings

Good documents have clear, informative headings that summarise the content in the section that follows.

Avoid 'label' headings – that is, headings that use one or two words that don't give the reader the key message contained in the content. Instead, use 'statement' headings – informative headings that encapsulate the key message.

In this article, we've used five subheadings. Each subheading summarises the content that follows. If you read nothing more than the subheadings, you still know what the article is about.

Check for spelling, grammar, and punctuation

Some people say that spelling, grammar, and punctuation don't matter; that people don't care. We don't agree.

For one thing, spelling, grammar, and punctuation are part of the way we convey meaning. Bad spelling, grammar, or punctuation may stop people from understanding what you've written. Can you read the following once and understand it, without going back to fix the spelling errors and the punctuation?

The teachers and children have been buys over the winter months talking short walks around the community going to the gym, regular visits to the library and music sessions for the infants and toddlers.

The second reason to take care is that correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation are part of the way you show what type of centre you are. Are you organised and careful? Or are you sloppy and chaotic?

Your readers are more likely to think you're well organised if your writing reflects that with correct spelling and grammar.

Respect your readers

Writing in plain English is writing that respects your readers. They can read what you say, understand it, and act on it. They don't have to spend extra time trying to work out what you meant. The tips we've given in this article will help you to write clearly, so that you and your communities can work together for the wellbeing of the children you all care for.

About the author

Judy Knighton is a plain English specialist at Write Limited. Judy holds a Masters in Communication, and is accredited in public relations through the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand. Judy is passionate about writing text that people understand on first reading, and using compelling layout and design to help readability and understanding. She applies her clear writing skills to topics as diverse as climate change, insurance, incident investigation, energy, health and safety, and disability awareness.

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Better computing

One of the most rewarding experiences I have had in my working relationship with ECE centres is the energy and enthusiasm that surrounds you when you visit one.

For more than 6 years now I have been visiting several ECE centres to provide IT related services. The children, when they see a new visitor ask questions like: What's your name? Why you are here for? What are you doing to our computers? Initially I was struggling to understand them and but now I have learnt to answer all their questions. Sometimes I envy the job of ECE teachers, aren't they lucky to work with such cute kids?

ECE teachers go through so many golden moments with children in a day and they try to capture these moments on a camera. Many teachers seem to struggle with the huge amounts of captured data and often somewhere along the line it becomes completely unmanageable. Let's look at what happens to all the photos and videos once they have been saved on the computer.

Issues:

1. First of all most images taken by camera are very high resolution. This is increasing with more and more sophisticated camera options available in the market. Each image ranges from 5 MB to 20 MB, which is a huge size. I understand that most people find the cost of hard disk drives (HDD) relatively cheap and so who cares as we can always buy a bigger HDD later!!
2. Many centres share several cameras and laptops between a group of teachers. Photos are often imported to a specific laptop. Two issues here:

- These images are generally reused in story writing so it is a duplication of the data, which also decreases the available storage limit.
 - Teachers have to wait and can only use the laptop for their story-writing when it becomes available from another teacher.
3. Teachers often print some pictures many times, for examples of their programme, for children's portfolios and often on notice boards. Remember those files are high in resolution and colour printing isn't cheap. It is one of the biggest expense of ECE centres.
 4. It has been observed that most centres do not have a backup process in place so the photos which reside on different laptops can get lost if there is an issue with the laptop itself.

Suggestions:

Many centres unknowingly create a bit of tangle but are unsure on how to solve it as they don't have any dedicated IT companies to suggest or to help. Below are a few simple housekeeping rules which will definitely help:

1. Consider resizing images once imported to the laptop. There are plenty of free software applications that can resize multiple images. It can either create a duplicate with a smaller size or overwrite the original images. Resizing compresses images by 20 to 30 times making it more cost effective and environment friendly.
2. Now try using resized images in your stories. You will save more than 50% of your time as the whole process of inserting, cutting & pasting and moving becomes faster with smaller sized files.

3. You need to see this to believe it. Print out an image before and after resizing. You will see only a marginal difference in image quality but some huge savings in printing costs.

4. My last suggestion is for centre managers to seriously consider getting a NAS (Network Area Storage) Drive at the centre. These come in very handy for common storage for all images, stories, templates and files. A NAS drive comes with two or more HDDs to back up each other with an option of offsite backup. This removes the dependency to backup individual laptops and creates a collaborative data sharing environment too. And in case if you are wondering, yes – it is possible to access this remotely too!



Firoz Wadhwanja
Technical Director
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Helping children to succeed in reading and writing

By Aunty Alice

Ever wondered why the sense of hearing and no other sense is fully developed before birth, and, incidentally, is the last sense to be lost at death? Intriguingly, recent research indicates that the language centres of the brain are also fully developed at birth, ready for language to be fed in. Furthermore it is also known that children without language fed in often have learning difficulties, cannot reflect on theirs and other's experiences, make connections or empathise with others. Simply put, children need meaningful communication to thrive.

Speaking and listening therefore, are crucially important from the foetus to the grave. Writing and drawing pictures is simply the unique code of symbols which allow words and thoughts to be preserved and allows them to be laid out for analysis by both the writer and the reader.

But children cannot understand the written word (read), until they can recognise and decode simple to begin with, then increasingly complex symbols associated with reading: symbols such as pictures, whole words, letter/sound relationships, punctuation, capital usage, paragraphing, synonyms etc which are there to enhance the ability of the reader to hear the authentic author's voice and follow their thinking when they read.

Over the years there has been a huge deluge of resources flooding into schools and several changes in methods of teaching literacy, (the renewed emphasis on phonics instruction being just one of them). Yet too many students still fail to acquire literacy at huge cost to society and themselves. The burning question is how do we empower all students to succeed? How do we get inside their heads?

I found the answer by analysing thousands of pieces of students' writing.

For many years I did this with children of all ages, whether they daubed paint on a blank space, scribbled left to right, wrote poetry or crafted exciting stories. I set up systems that recorded pertinent dialogue between the student and myself related to improving their writing. Together we set goals related to specific needs and they were encouraged to evaluate their progress to give them a sense of involvement and empowerment. The shift in

emphasis from reading ability to their writing ability as an indicator of progress paid great dividends. Students were only offered reading they could read (decode) with ease, to explore examples of what they needed to develop in their own writing. Thus they were only offered reading below their reading level. Reading mileage increased dramatically and reading became a pleasure.

For me, the teacher, this approach revealed a structure to literacy acquisition common to all children whether they be dyslexics, slow learners, gifted or those from language deprived homes. This structure bore no relationship to the prescribed curriculum. It was an organic structure for literacy acquisition that was embedded in all children.

I was surprised to say the least. In my entire long teaching career I had not come across a usable and assessment-based structure that was easily tailored to the literacy needs of any student and which clearly indicated to the teacher what to do next. There were many forms of literacy assessment that met the needs for accountability of the school and teacher, but these gave no guidance as to what to do to bring about progress.

This new way of looking at the problem was the breakthrough I was looking for. Written language was definitely the place to start to open the door to a child's thinking and was an effective way to "listen" to what children understood about literacy. Focused easy reading was the way to lead them forward and a bonus was reading levels dramatically improved as the written language improved.

The book, *Helping a Child to Read and Write Well* lays out this structure of literacy acquisition as well as offering suggestions as to how to record what is being done with each child. It also suggests ways for the child/teacher/parent to comment on and evaluate progress. It is easily followed and has hundreds of ideas to propel the child forward into literacy whatever age or type of learner they are.

It simply works.

Read more about 'Helping a Child to Read and Write Well' on the Resource Review pages.





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Fuelled4life aims to make it easier to select healthier food choices and develop environments that support nutrition and reinforce lifelong healthy habits for our children.

The children at Frankleigh Park Kindergarten in New Plymouth are among the thousands of children throughout the country who are learning life-long lessons in healthy eating thanks to Fuelled4life.

Run by the Heart Foundation, Fuelled4life helps schools and early childhood education (ECE) services provide cost-effective, nutritious options for children. Over 2500 schools and ECE services are signed up to the programme, reaching tens of thousands of children across the country.

Frankleigh Park Kindergarten teacher Trisha Crawford says since signing up with Fuelled4life the children now bring healthier lunches and snacks each day.

"We've used the Fuelled4life resources to give suggestions to parents about what to put in sandwiches and encourage fresh fruit,

yoghurt, rice crackers, vegetables, cheese and eggs," she says.

"We also give caregivers advice about which foods are not suitable to bring to kindergarten. Overall, we've had really supportive feedback from parents."

Trisha believes that through the programme the centre is supporting the children to grow and to learn.

"One of the best things is, we hear the children saying to each other 'Oh that's not very healthy food,' so we know the message is getting through."

Fuelled4life Manager Sally Hughes says early childhood is a time when lifelong eating habits are being formed.

"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," says Sally.

Heart Foundation research showed that Kiwi mums were united in the belief that healthy food in schools and early childhood education (ECE) centres is important for their child's wellbeing.

The Heart Foundation commissioned the research in 2012 to gauge the level of support for healthy food provision in schools.

Sally says the research showed that nine out of ten mums were aware that a healthy diet can help improve learning in the classroom, but only one out of three were confident that their child's school or ECE was doing enough to promote healthy eating.

"Fuelled4life is a practical tool that can be used by ECE services to easily identify and offer healthy food choices to children."

Wellington ECE service City Kids provides its students with lunch and snacks, which are cooked onsite. City Kids Supervisor Rachel Foster says Fuelled4life provides new and simple ways to help understand what a healthy food and drink is.

DID YOU KNOW?

- One in ten children is obese (MoH 2011/12)
- The obesity rate for children aged 5-14 years was stable between 2002 (9%) and 2006/7 (8%) but increased to 11% in 2011/12
- One in five children aged 2-14 has had fizzy drink three or more times in the past week
- Children who are obese in childhood are more likely to go on to be obese in adulthood
- Overweight and obesity are major risk factors for type2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and common cancers

"We found the Buyers' Guide really helpful to refer to as it outlines healthy options to buy," says Rachel.

Based on the Ministry of Health's Food and Beverage Classification System (FBCS), Fuelled4life is ideal for people involved in selecting foods and drinks for ECE services and schools. It has specific nutrient criteria that foods and drinks must meet to fit into its **everyday** and **sometimes** categories.

Fuelled4life is a collaborative initiative that involves the education, health, and food industry sectors working together to make it easier to have healthier food in schools and ECE services.

Join **Fuelled4life** and your ECE service will receive the free 2014 Buyers' Guide as well as:

- resources to support your menu
- regular newsletters
- competitions and promotions
- nutritious and delicious recipe ideas

CONTACT

Please visit www.fuelled4life.org.nz or contact Sally Hughes sallyh@heartfoundation.org.nz or 09 526 8425 for further information.



ECC Annual Conference 2014 - Celebrating Resilience

By Trudi Sutcliffe

"The capacity to be resilient is an important factor in teacher effectiveness."

- Barbara Kaiser (2014 ECC Conference key note speaker)

Celebrating Resilience was the theme of this year's Early Childhood Council (ECC) conference. The conference began with over 80 delegates being inspired by ECE centres on the centre tours. Thank you to those ECE centres who offered their centres up to the tour groups. We know having so many visitors adds pressure to you, your staff and your children, but the value others get from seeing other ECE centres in action is inspiring, a reminder of the possibilities and showcases the variety of ECE offered to our diverse communities.

There were some changes this year to the conference programme due to feedback from previous delegates; this included some sessions being twice as long, a long lunch break on the Saturday so delegates get the opportunity to have a look at the exhibitor booths and a chance to re-boot their overloaded brain! Another change this year was the offering of pre-conference forums for centre managers, centre owners and teachers. This was to allow the opportunity for networking and for each group to discuss issues of particular interest to them. These forums were a new initiative for the ECC Conference. Overall the feedback so far from the forums has been positive with people walking away feeling confident they are on the right

track and others wanting to know more on various issues. Any feedback on these changes is welcome.

Other highlights from day one at the conference are the key notes from the ECC's CEO Peter Reynolds, ECC's President Maria Johnson, the Hon Hekia Parata, and the Political Panel.

A key message from Peter and Maria were the issues affecting all ECE teacher-led services: Quality in early childhood education: why it's more important than bums on seats. (You can read Peter's key note address on the ECC website, www.ecc.org.nz.) Peter reminds us that every dollar we invest in quality brings a generous economic return, reducing teenage criminality, reducing teenage mortality, reducing the welfare bill and the prison population, and increasing the skill level of our workforce and that this investment needs to be with at least 80 per cent qualified teachers in centres and not 'supported play groups', and initiatives like the 'Flexible and Responsive Home-based Solutions'.

For the last three ECC Conferences the Hon Hekia Parata has addressed conference delegates with many admiring her orator skills, her strength and her charisma on stage. She not only speaks passionately on

what she believes in, but can also laugh at herself, and constantly adlibs. This year Hekia reinforced her message, that there is only so much in the Government Budget to go around. She explained the vision the National Government has for the education sector, 'Raising Achievement for 5 out of 5' and that this is where the majority of money needs to go to achieve these goals. She acknowledges that it isn't always enough but that like any mother at home on a limited budget she has to prioritise. In ECE this means the majority of money is going to the goal of raising the participation level for all. This may not be what some want to hear and as the few that were brave enough to ask Hekia questions discovered, she is not one to back down!

Being election year the ECC decided that delegates should have the opportunity to hear from some of the major parties, participating parties included; National, Labour, the Greens, New Zealand First and the Conservative Party. The audience listened to the panel answer questions composed by ECC members. Once all had answered a particular question, Linda Clark, the panel host, encouraged the audience to vote! This meant lifting a red (no thanks) or a green piece (love it) card. Interestingly not all votes were a showing of only red or only green, once again



showcasing the fact that the ECE sector is diverse and that there isn't a one solution that fits all.

Key note speaker highlights

Deputy Children's Commissioner Dr Justine Cornwell

Dr Justine Cornwell reminded us of the factors associated with resilience including: intelligence and problem solving, gender, parental attachment and bonding, and early temperament and behaviour.

She reinforced that the issues that arise from children living in poverty had an economic cost estimated at 3-4% of GDP or NZ \$6-8 billion. Justine then reiterated how this affects children living in poverty:

- Short term impacts: Going to school hungry, living in cold damp houses, worse educational and health outcomes, and high rates of offending.
- Long term impacts: Lost productivity in the workforce and poor health and criminal justice outcomes.

What can we do?

- Start early: Greatest gains are made the earlier you can start, ECE is a critical component, early engagement of families into wider social services, and empowering and supporting parents to be their child's first educators.
- ECE centres can function as a hub by: supporting transport solutions to help children and their families' access services, connect families to other services such as early child health services, Books in homes and toy libraries, parenting, budgeting and

life skills programmes, and family violence services.

- Ask yourself: What can I do as an individual to support others? What can I do as an ECE professional? What can I do as a business owner and leader in my community?

Professor Richie Poulton Director

Professor Poulton from the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Unit and Co-Director for the National Centre for Lifecourse captivated the audience (with one delegate saying she could listen to him all day!) with his unit's research. Professor Poulton explained the role of high self-control in early childhood and its relation to positive outcomes in adulthood, such as a high satisfaction with one's life, less likely to have addictions, better health, etc. He shared how low self-control in childhood played a role later in crime, poor health, high use of social welfare, and being less financially secure. Once again reinforcing to ECE educators the importance of the work they do in managing and teaching in their ECE centres and how it only takes one to make a difference!

Barbara Kaiser

Barbara awoke us all during her key note address, encouraging us to 'talk' to our neighbours sitting beside us and even dancing to Sesame Street's video 'What We Are'. This key note addressed the importance of teacher/manager resilience, what resilience looks like (survival and growth, bouncing back from a terrible event, being determined and mentally strong) and how to manage stress. Barbara reminded us of the factors that built resilience, such

as strong relationships, a clear sense of identity, sense of self-efficacy (grit, tenacity, persistence), hopefulness, looking for your strengths and the setting of goals and achieving them! Finally she reminds how resilience makes us a better teacher:

- Foster a positive and inclusive classroom culture
- Provide positive feedback, reassurance and encouragement
- Help children learn to understand and express their feelings
- Encourage the building of trusting and cooperative relationships
- Provide flexible learning and assessment opportunities
- Have fun!

This conference was about celebrating resilience and the variety of key notes speakers spread their message along these lines including the final key note speaker, Lisa Tamati. Lisa as an ultra marathoner who recently ran in a race in the Indian Himalayas, running (or crawling) 222km over the two highest passes in the world! Some may say she is absolutely insane, but most would agree that Lisa's message of having a good team behind you and the need for grit and determination to succeed runs true for all of us. I know I came away from the ECC Conference once again with a stronger belief in the importance of what we do in ECE, what we can do to make a difference and with a belief that nothing is impossible!

This year as part of the ECC Booth (to win a Nespresso Citiz machine) we asked conference delegates to write down their No. 1 wish from the incoming government after the 2014 General Election. Throughout the next few Conference pages we have shared some of these wishes.



WINNER!



"Extend 20 hours funding to 2 year olds."





"Pay
parity and
professional
recognition."

"Equitable
funding
based on
providing
quality."





**"More funding
on ICT."**



**"Funding for
supporting
provisionally
registered teachers."**



"Return the funding rate to the previous 100% funding band rate."



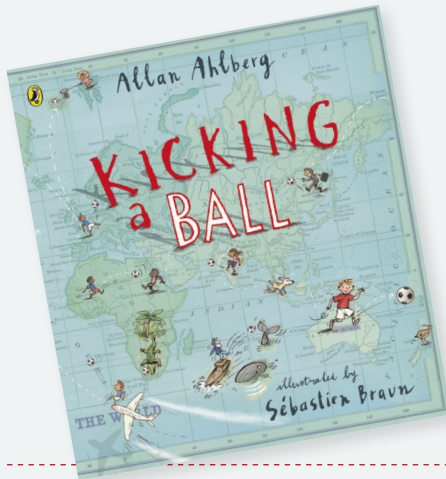
"Have higher regulations for home-based, if they get the same funding, they should have the same requirements."

"More funding for our children with special needs."



"Quality ECE teaching graduates."

Resource Reviews



Kicking a Ball

By Allan Ahlberg

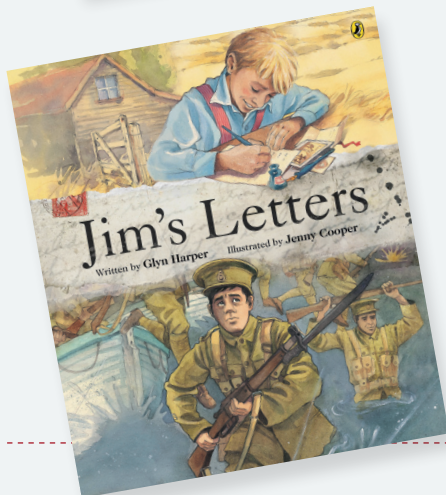
Illustrated by Sébastien Braun

Puffin

This story is for all budding footballers who spend their day kicking a ball, playing football and scoring goals: "Kicking a ball, Kicking a ball, That's surely the purpose of life, after all."

This is a fantastic rhyming story to read out aloud and perfect for mat times. The story

takes us on a journey from childhood to fatherhood with warmth, humour, friendship and of course...football. Throughout this footballer's life we see his love/passion for kicking a ball unwavering despite getting older and having a family of his own. His passion is passed onto to his daughter (which makes this story not just for the boys) who in the last two pages takes up the passion of kicking a ball, "Yes life's a circle, endless and small. And when all's said and done...the world's a BALL".



Jim's Letters

By Glyn Harper

Illustrated by Jenny Cooper

Puffin

Jim's Letters is a moving story (a tear-jerker actually) about two brothers, Jim and Tom, who are separated by war. Throughout the story Tom talks about his life at home on the farm while Jim writes from Egypt and then from the trenches of the Gallipoli Peninsula giving an insight on what he is facing, which

at first is excitement and anticipation, but eventually turns to anguish and nostalgic feelings toward home. This story is based on the thousands of letters sent by and to Anzac soldiers fighting at Gallipoli.

This story is advertised as for those 5+, but older preschoolers (4+) should be able to understand the gist of the story. It's also a perfect story to introduce why we celebrate Anzac Day and the casualties of war in general. This story is best read one-on-one or in small groups.



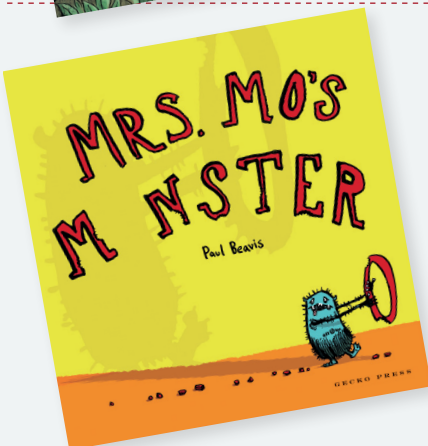
The Lazy Friend

By Ronan Badel

Gecko Press

This is a wordless picture book about a sloth who does absolutely nothing and who lives in the jungle with friends who look out for him. When the sloth's tree is cut down and he is taken away on a truck, his friend the snake does everything he can to get the sloth home safely.

The main theme of this story is friendship, i.e. how to be a good or a not-so-good friend! The illustrations are humorous and simple, but clearly describe what is happening in great detail, such as the feelings of the animals (through the expressions of the animals in the illustrations) allowing for children to increase their visual literacy. The saying that a picture tells a thousand words is definitely true for this story.



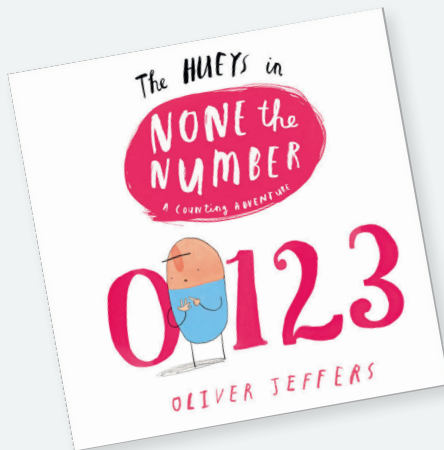
Mrs Mo's. Monster

By Paul Beavis

Gecko Press

I loved this book. It's a great book to read aloud from a one-on-one situation to a mat type interaction. This is a story about a monster with a one-track mind who meets his match in an elderly lady, Mrs. Mo. With Mrs. Mo's help, the monster is surprised to discover he can do more than he realised.

The story form and repetition will make it an instant hit with your listeners and readers who will quickly learn the words, "CRUNCH, MUNCH & CHEW" and happily join in with the reading of the story. As a teacher this book is a simple story to read out loud with plenty of opportunity for child participation and voice characterisation (if you're inclined in this way). Also the story sublimely (through humour) teaches good manners. The simple bright and humorous illustrations will also appeal.



The Huey's in None the Number. A Counting Adventure.

By Oliver Jeffers

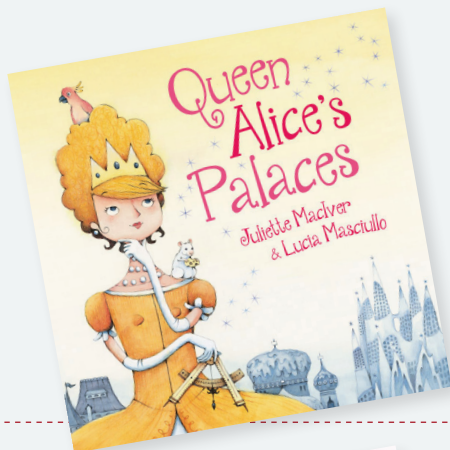
Harper Collins

This is a counting book with a difference, it explores the concept of 'none' and whether 'none' is a number in its own right. It begins the story by asking: "How many lumps of cheese do you see just there?" "Um... I don't see any." "That's because there are none!" "Is none a number?" "Of course. It's one less than one....."

The story then counts all the way to ten in a humorous manner, for example: "Then FOUR. That's how many tantrums Kevin throws

every day." Or "EIGHT party guests trying to guess the gift ". But what happiness when you take it all away, you are left with 'none'.

There is also an explanation at the end of the book for adults/teachers, highlighting that there is good argument for including 'zero' when counting numbers, because 'none' is sometimes the right answer when you've asked to count something, as this story demonstrates. This is a deceptively simple book but is very imaginative, original, funny and clever.



Queen Alice's Palaces

By Juliette MacIver

Illustrated by Lucia Masciullo

Harper Collins

Children (and teachers) will enjoy this fun rhyming tale where the villain, the greedy Sir Hugh ends up with a 'burnt bottom'. This book is in the same family of the classic fairy tales, but instead of using fear, it uses humour.

The story is about a Queen Alice who has the finest palace in the land, but around the corner is the cunning Sir Hugh who tries to trick Queen Alice into building a fancy pad for him too through trickery and conquest.

The fun illustrations work perfectly with the story bringing another dimension to the story, which young children (3+) will be able to relate to and enjoy.



Blackie the Fisher-cat

By Janet Pereira

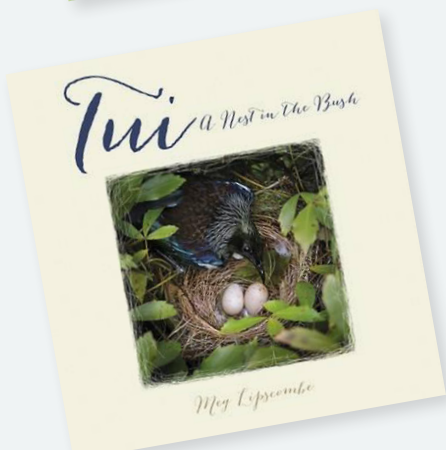
Illustrated by Gabriella Klepatski

Craig Potton Publishing

This is a heart-warming tale about a 'Grandpop' who goes camping for the first time since 'Nana' died, and discovers that friendship can occur in the strangest of places and with the strangest of creatures, a stray cat. The cat turns up one morning on the step

of Grandpop's caravan. This is no ordinary cat, for every day the cat follows Grandpop down to the river mouth to fish. A special bond develops between the two of them, but eventually its time for Grandpop to head back to the city...

This story is easy to read and would be perfect for any discussion on friendship, death or grief. The descriptive illustrations share the magic of the iconic New Zealand coastline. A book to be read together in small or large groups.



Tui: A Nest in the Bush

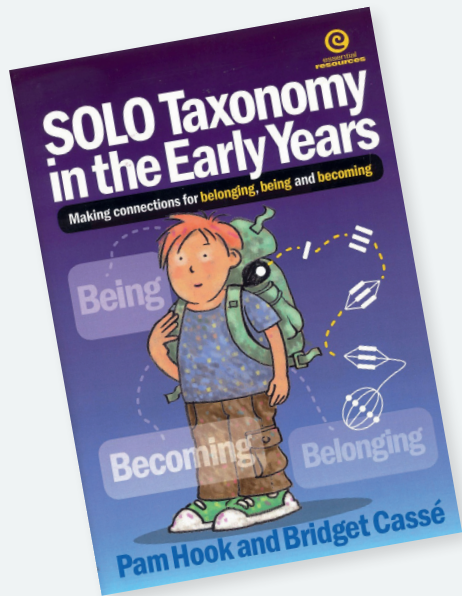
By Meg Lipscombe

Craig Potton Publishing

At first glance this book, *Tui: A Nest in the Bush*, isn't a book you'd first pick up in a book store when looking for books to buy for your early childhood education centre, but that would be a mistake.

This book is an intimate and rare look at the beginning of a tui's life through a series of

photographs showing the 37-day development from a pair of tui from eggs to fledglings. Alongside the images are journal entries describing the author's observations when she took the photos and how she responded to their environment. These entries will be of importance to most children, although they could help the teacher with discussion ideas. This is a book best explored in small groups and offers plenty of scope for discussion and wonder.



"SOLO Taxonomy in the Early Years" Making Connections for belonging, being and becoming

By Pam Hook and Bridget Cassé

Essential Resources Educational Publishers

Hook and Cassé have nailed it! Tailored to the audience, the authors show a clear understanding of the way young children learn and an appreciation of the life of a junior school teacher! They have pared down the text to the 'nitty gritty' understandings that any teacher (even the inexperienced) might need to know, in order to use SOLO as an exciting tool in their classrooms.

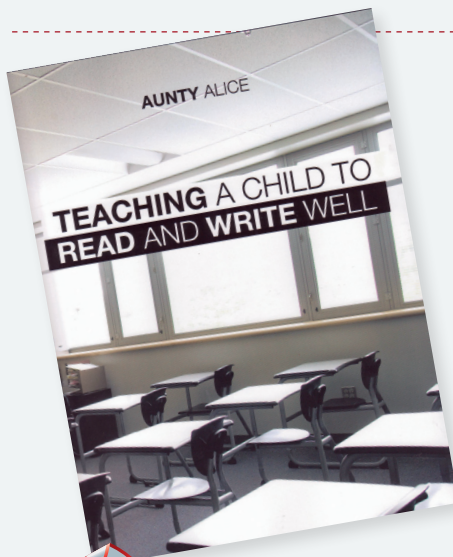
From both a planning and assessment perspective, this resource is the 'must have' text on the bookshelf. While aimed at Years 0-2 in primary schools, there is great value here for early childhood teachers in helping to build connections and make visible, what 'kindy kids' already know and can do so well, assisting in a seamless transition to school.

From developing an overview of the SOLO, to using HOT and Hook ED tools and maps, this text guides teachers wishing to help learners know how to 'grow' their own learning. In other words - how to 'be a learner'.

Promoting learners to self-assess, the text clarifies (for teachers, children and their families) those somewhat murky key competencies while also making suggestions for working with them.

Good teachers know that by raising the level of engagement in learning, we accelerate learning. Hook and Cassé show us simple and multiple ways to use SOLO to promote engagement achieving positive learning outcomes.

Reviewed by Shelley Quinlivan, (M. Ed Admin), currently owns and leads Ponsonby Montessori Kindergarten and in a former life worked in leading the use of SOLO across all levels of primary school.



Teaching a Child to Read and Write Well

By Aunty Alice

Partridge

This book focuses on the concept that written expression is akin to using a code to speak. Mastering the code involves not only mastering letter-sound relationships, but also mastering spelling, vocabulary, punctuation and contractions.

So how can this book be used by those working in ECE?

For ECE centres who teach reading and writing this book will offer new ideas and will be particularly helpful in offering new ideas

for those children already showing signs of struggling to learn the basics. For those centres that don't formally teach reading and writing, but have a rich literacy programme reading this book will give you a deeper understanding of literacy development, which may be helpful if you teach children who are showing a keen interest in writing. Within each stage are fresh ideas on supporting children and creating a literacy rich environment. The book has been written primarily for primary school educators, but anyone interested in literacy, regardless of the age you work with will gain knowledge and insight. (To buy/download from Amazon as an e-book or buy a hard copy online from various sites)



A PUFFIN PRIZE PACK!

Puffin has kindly donated THREE prize packs for Swings + Roundabout readers, each pack containing FIVE Books!

To win a free pack of Puffin books answer this question:

The story 'Jim's Letters', is about soldiers in which world war?

Email your contact details and the answer to the above question to info@ecc.org.nz by Thursday 31 July 2014 and be in to win.



Puffin Competition Winners

Congratulations to the following winners who have just won a Puffin Prize Pack:

- **Nicola McGregor**, Montessori Children's House, Wanaka
- **Sue Fergusson**, Dudley Creek Preschool, Christchurch
- **Stephanie James**, Tui Room, Little Wonders Early Childhood Centre, Mt Eden

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Last Laugh

Q: What did the bee say when he returned to the hive?

A: Honey, I'm home!

Q: What is the best way to carve wood?

A: Whittle by whittle!

Q: What do bees chew?

A: Bumble gum.

Q: What happened when the owl lost his voice?

A: He didn't give a hoot.

Q: Why did the cow jump over the moon?

A: Because the farmer had cold hands.

Q: Why do giraffes have long necks?

A: Because they have smelly feet.

During Show and Tell, Miss Johnson showed pictures of different birds.

"George," she said, "what kind of bird do you like best?"

George thought for a while. "Fried chicken," he replied.

A teacher wrote home to a student's parents:

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

Our teacher has a bad memory. For three days she asked us how much is two and two. We told her it was four. But she still doesn't know.

Today she asked us again.



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Peter Reynolds, CEO, Early Childhood Council

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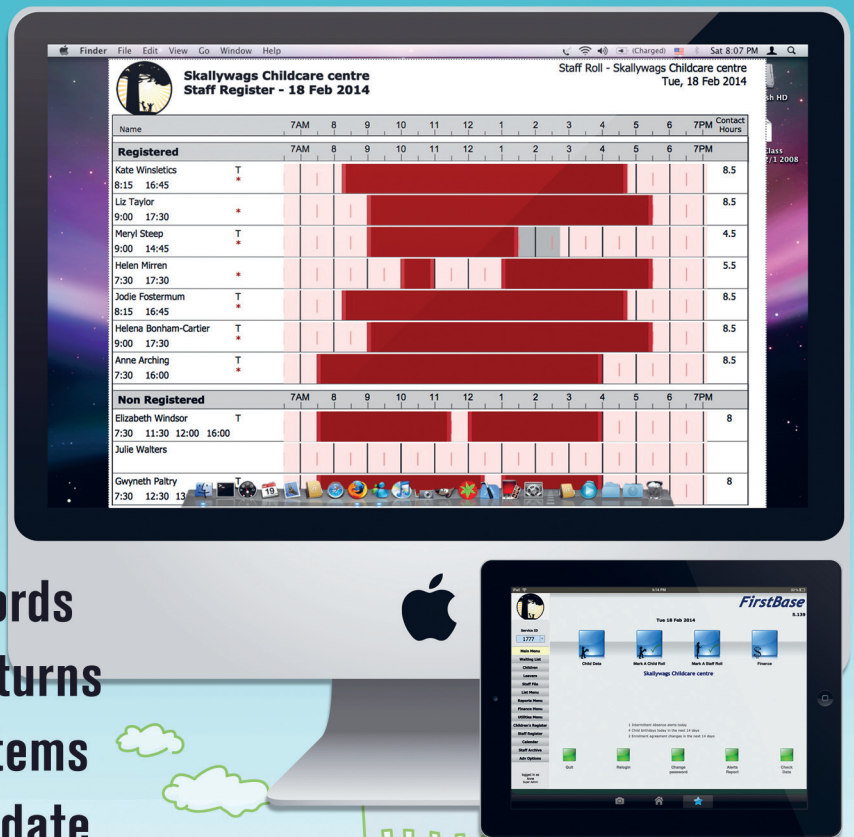
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