

AUTUMN 2015

Swings Roundabouts

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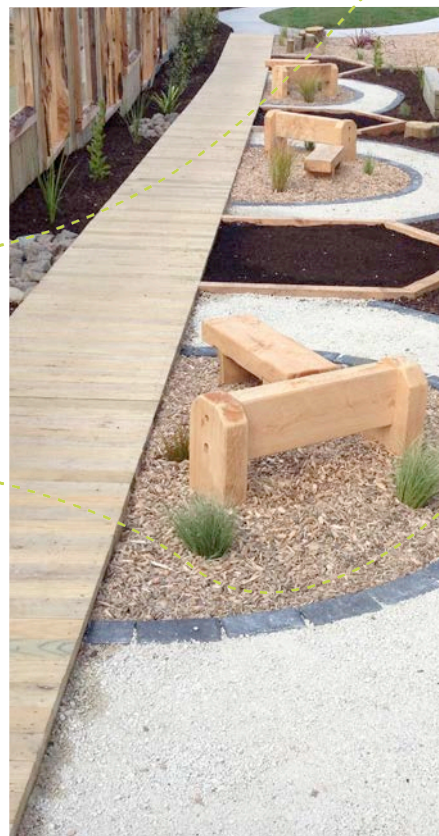
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FROM THE Editor

Kia Ora, Talofa lava, Malo e Lelei, Fakalofa lahi atu, Kia Orana, Bula vinaka, Namaste, Nihao and Hello!

One of the Government's goals in education within ECE is the raising of participation rates, particularly within the Māori and Pasifika demographics. Our Education Minister Hekia Parata reminds us of this in her article on page 12, where she shares her education goals for the education sector at large and within ECE.

Allowing our families to feel a belonging in ECE our centres is the cornerstone of ensuring our families participate and contribute in their children's learning. In our growing diversity of cultures and ethnicities we as educators have embraced this in how we communicate with many of our families who may be from a different culture to our own, but there is always more to learn.

This issue we have three *Working with Pasifika* themed articles that will guide your work when engaging with your Pasifika. We also have an interview with the ECC's new Marketing & Communications Officer, Trisha Lealiifano-Mariota. Trisha, a trained ECE teacher, shares her experience of teaching in a Samoan Agoga Amata and her personal story of being Samoan and bilingual. Also later in this issue, are some tips in engaging the Dads in our centres.

Working on your business and not in your business can seem like an impossible task for many small ECE business owners, who are juggling many responsibilities and often all at once! From keeping staff and families happy, teaching or covering staff on the floor, the ever increasing administration and making sure you stay in the red! But to be successful you need to take the time away from the everyday 'busyness' and step away to take a more strategic view on what needs to be done on your business.

To do this you should be setting a regular time weekly or fortnightly. But another option is getting away from the desk, away from the daily demands, and spend a few days away. One productive option is attending a conference, especially one where you have to pack your bags and really get away. This will allow you to be away from those draining daily demands, be surrounded with like-minded people in similar situations like yourself and give yourself the opportunity to be inspired with new and innovative ideas.

This year's ECC Conference (27-29 May 2015) is designed for ECE centre owners/managers and those in a leadership position and is the perfect opportunity to get away from the 'busyness' and work on your business. You can find out more on what is offer at this year's conference on pages 25 & 26.

To keep on the theme of working on your business we have a few tips and tricks for strategic planning, plus two articles on how you can connect the dots' between teaching as inquiry, teacher appraisals, the RTCs, professional development and your strategic goals. Plus info on getting through ERO reviews and on sustainability.

Themes in upcoming *Swings & Roundabouts* issues include:

- Promoting positive staff communication
- Te Whariki – is it time for a change?
- Encouraging Maths in your day-to-day teachings

If you'd like to write an article on any of the above articles or another topic close to your heart contact me at publications@ecc.org.nz

Trudi Sutcliffe

Editor

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CEO's Message

By Peter Reynolds



Food Act unpalatable for Childcare Centres

Two things concern me about changes created by the passing of the Food Act, and regrettably neither is limited to the food issue.

Firstly, while the Government *talks* about reducing the compliance cost and burden on small business, it busies itself adding to it. The Prime Minister promised to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy; and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment ran a project specifically targeting it. The ECC was even interviewed by MoBIE!

Yet this year alone, however, we are being asked:

- to establish whole new compliance systems for managing the food we serve to children;
- to cope with the changes still to be introduced to health and safety;
- to pay for Police vetting to protect children while large sports events deploy Police services for free.

These changes beg the question, 'how much compliance is reasonable or warranted?' It's accepted that government

has a role to collect tax and ensure the public is protected, but what seems to be missing from a number of compliance requirements is a basic, practical 'why?'

Why, for example, do we need government to impose a whole new approach to food safety when existing regulations are enforced by ERO and the Ministry of Education, and there is no evidence of a food problem in childcare centres? Why do we need to pay local authorities to "clip the ticket" once a year to confirm what others have told us already?

The second issue is something the ECC has been addressing for some time now. The Food Act specifically excludes home-based ECE services? Why? Do children who participate in centre-based services really require a new food safety regime entirely unnecessary for children in home-based services? What, I wonder, is the logic for this aberration?

The ECC has no issue with the provision of quality ECE services, whether by childcare centres, home-based services or others. We do have an issue, however, with the range of government legislation, regulations and licensing requirements that treat different ECE service types differently when there is no justification. There is no sensible reason, for example, to include centre-based and exclude home-based services from the proposed health and safety changes, and every reason to expect children to be safe and well-treated in whatever ECE service their parents choose.

The current Government and their Ministry of Education advisers seem incapable, however, of appreciating this logic.

< This cartoon is from a recent issue of the Sunday Star Times, courtesy of Fairfax Media. It portrays, with humour, the folly of proposed changes to food safety rules.





So you know

Welcome

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

- Honeybees Preschool, Auckland
- Kidz Corner Miramar Trust, Wellington
- Koru Kids Preschool, Whangarei
- Magnolia Tree Childcare Centre Ltd, Hamilton
- Sathya Sai Preschool, Auckland
- The Learning Castle, Auckland
- Noahs Ark Early Learning Centre, Wanganui
- Pukeko Preschool, Mangere East & Pakuranga Heights, Auckland
- The Learning Space (previously Uptown KidsFleet St), Auckland
- Suits and Gumboots Daycare Ltd, Te Kauwhata
- Sunrise Christian Preschool, Gisborne
- Morning Star Preschool, Auckland
- Footprints Preschool, Waihi
- Active Learners ECC, Timaru & Leeston
- Haywood Cottage Montessori, Geraldine
- Prebbleton Childcare Ltd (Prebbleton Childcare & Education Centre, Prebbleton Nursey & Education Centre, Prebbleton Kindergarten, South Hornby Kindergarten, Brynley Street Nursey & Preschool), Christchurch
- Sunflowers Preschool Ltd, Culverden (Provisional member)
- Three Little Birds Childcare Centre, Whangarei (Provisional member)

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The ECC Professional Development Programme – Another reason to join the ECC

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, with discounts for ECC members (although non-members can attend).

Teacher Workshops

inspirED professional learning (formally EC Professional

Support) design and delivers the ECC's teacher workshops nationwide.

Workshops include:

- Stepping up to Supervisor
- Inclusive practice in ECE
- Meaningful Maths
- Supporting effective transition in-centre & to school
- Introduction to open to learning conversations
- 5-out-of-5 EC Leadership series
- First Aid Refresher Courses through St John

Centre Manager Workshops

Whitireia Polytechnic delivers the ECC Centre Manager workshops nationwide.

- Workshops include:
- Compliance
- Reporting and Reviewing/Managing ERO
- Managing people/staff
- Good Governance

Plus the ECC offers: The Blue Book Workshop: For your Registration and Professional Development Journey for

registering, registered and mentoring teachers, plus a range of one-off workshops and briefing meetings for centre management including: Changes to Employment Law - Briefing Meetings, Health & Safety in the ECE Centre and in-house workshops from Governance to Strategic Planning.

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

New Zealand Teachers Council Recent Policy Change – Language Requirements

On 1 January 2015 the language requirements for overseas teachers changed. The Council no longer accepts evidence that a teaching qualification was completed in English in a country where English is an official language. There are two ways to meet the requirements set out in the policy *Language requirements for teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand*.

These are:

If English is an additional language

By passing an approved language proficiency test within the last two years.

If English is your first spoken language

By providing evidence that English is your first spoken language in the form of

1. A statutory declaration; and
2. Written statements on letterhead from your primary and secondary schools confirming that English was the language of instruction and all schooling qualifications were completed in English
3. Any other information requested by the Council.



New Zealand Teachers Council
Te Pouherenga Kaiako o Aotearoa

For more information please go to the NZ Teachers Council website: <http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/content/language-requirements-overseas-teachers>

Health and Safety Reform Bill Update

As you know, a new Health and Safety Reform Bill is due to come into force later this year with the goal to greatly reduce work-related harm in New Zealand.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is following the Health and Safety Reform Bill's progress closely.

It is important the education sector understands that while the wording in the legislation is not yet finalised, the obligation on organisations to do everything they reasonably can to keep people safe won't change. The term now in the Bill is doing everything that is "reasonably practicable" to

ensure everybody is healthy and safe when working or visiting a workplace.

The Ministry knows that higher levels of accountability and liability will be introduced. Education organisations, leaders and managers will be required to have a health and safety management system in place that complies with the new legislation when it comes into effect, as they can be personally liable for any failures. WorkSafe New Zealand (WorkSafe) has information (<http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/information-guidance/all-guidance-items/getting-started>) on its website to assist with this process.

WorkSafe has also published two new sets of best practice guidelines, one for boards on governance (<http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/information-guidance/all-guidance-items/directors-guidelines-on-their-responsibilities/view>), and one on workplace bullying (<http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/information-guidance/all-guidance-items/bullying-guidelines>). New regulations and guidelines to cover specific activities and forms of business will be introduced over time. A discussion document has been released so that regulations can be brought in at the same time as the Act (<http://www.mbie.govt.nz/about-us/consultation/archive/>

development-of-regulations-to-support-the-new-health-and-safety-at-work-act).

The health and safety reforms aim to raise the profile and visibility of safety in the workplace for all New Zealanders. If you have a good health and safety policy in place now, and that is being followed, then you are in good shape for when the reforms come in to force.

The Ministry will shortly begin working with sector representatives to review, and update if required, the Ministry's guidance on health and safety management to ensure that it is aligned with any changes proposed in the Bill.

Health & Safety in the ECE Centre workshops

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) has been delivering workshops since the beginning of the year on the new Health and Safety at Work Act. The workshops will help ECE centre owners and managers to:

- Understand the proposed content of the Health and Safety at Work Bill including discussion around the new definitions of PCBU, Reasonably Practicable and Workers
- Discuss the key aspects of the Good Health and Safety Governance and practice
- Review Case Law from recent Health and Safety incidents
- Workplace Health & Safety in your centre

- What if something happens? Issue Resolution

To find out more about these workshops and when and where the next group of workshops are being delivered, go to www.ecc.org.nz (look under Calendar of Events).

Also ECC members don't forget that the ECC has a comprehensive information section on health and safety on its member-only section of the website. This includes free downloadable tools and templates tailored for ECE Centres. (Go to www.ecc.org.nz, and head to the support menu and look under H on the Tools & Resources page).

ECC Conference 2015

Queenstown 27 – 29 May 2015

Wow! Only just over a month to go! Have you registered?

Don't miss out on this ECE Conference that has been designed exclusively for centre owners/managers, those in leadership roles and inspiring leaders.

International key note speakers include Netherland's Betsy van de Grift, an expert on brain development; American Roger Neugebauer, Co-Director of ChildcareExchange and an expert in the art of leadership in ECE.

Registration numbers are strictly limited, so don't miss out - register now!



For more information on the key note line-up and workshops head to page 25 & 26 of *Swings & Roundabouts* or go to the ECC website to register, www.ecc.org.nz under events.

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Education Minister Hekia Parata

Early childhood education matters. That is not something I need to tell readers of this magazine, but it is true. Study after study, here and overseas, has identified clear links between quality early childhood education and reading, numeracy and social skills. The benefits are particularly noticeable for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and the earlier early learning begins the more profound the benefits are.

That is why we have almost doubled spending on early childhood education, from \$830 million in 2007/08 to \$1.5 billion in 2013/14. For every dollar parents put into ECE services, the government contributes roughly another \$4.80.

By now you are all well and truly back into your regular routines, like we are in the Beehive, and I'd like to welcome you back from your holiday breaks and thank you for the work you do. The future of New Zealand is in your hands. Among your charges might be a future scientist, captain of the Silver Ferns, filmmaker or, perhaps even, a future education minister. Today might just be the day that sets that child on the path to an exciting future.

My number one priority for education is to create a joined-up education pipeline in which children can be supported to learn from birth to age 18. So I've developed and started work on a plan to help us get there. For the sector, the three years ahead should be exciting.

We know that ECE makes a big difference to learning, but we need to ensure that the foundations established during early childhood education are built on. That means the various parts of the education system need to work together more closely on good teaching and learning practice that is focused on the child. ECE services need to help schools and schools need to add to the foundations built in ECE services.

To that end, late last year, I established a specialist group to advise me on early learning. Expertise in the Advisory Group on Early Learning spans ECE and the early years of compulsory schooling. It is designed to provide practical advice on curriculum implementation, alignment, and evaluation from birth to age eight. The group will meet throughout the first half of 2015 and provide advice in June. From there, we'll be well placed to make changes to better support children's early learning.

“ I'm excited about the opportunity to work with the ECC, and the ECE sector more widely, over the next three years. Let's keep supporting our kids to be the best they can be. ”

The Government's flagship initiative for education, *Investing in Educational Success*, will also help to align the education system by providing better, clearer pathways through it. We're empowering Communities of Schools to decide what they need to focus on to maximise achievement, and how they want to get there. This leadership is a paradigm shift for the education system, and I'm excited to see the progress each Community makes over the next few years.

In recognition of the vital role early childhood education plays, the government has set itself the goal that in 2016 98 per cent of children starting school will have participated in quality ECE. We're making good progress – as at December 2014, 96.1% of children starting school had participated in ECE. Participation

rates for Māori and Pasifika children are rising particularly strongly. Since December 2012, participation has risen 2.3 percentage points for Māori children and 3.4 percentage points for Pasifika children.

We still have a way to go, but recent initiatives like the *It's More than Just a Game* partnership with New Zealand Rugby League and other agencies are promising. Working with local communities and groups to support them in increasing participation and achievement in ECE and schools is key to the government's outwards-facing approach to education.

To better support children, families, whānau, and ECE services, we're continuing work on the ECE funding review. At the moment we're focused on how to reduce the complexity of the system, which will reduce costs to parents, ECE services and government. The Sector Advisory Group on Funding has recently been reconvened to provide us with good, sector-focused advice.

We'll need good information to make sure our policies are as effective as they can be. That's why we're excited about the successful implementation of ELI, the Early Learning Information system. At the end of 2014, around 97% of eligible ECE services had connected to ELI. ELI provides us with richer data and makes it easier to track children's educational progress. In future we'll be able to use that information to develop policies that better match kids' individual learning needs.

As you can see, we're making progress, but we've got more work to do to make our education system as good as it needs to be. We're focusing on communities, and we're backing the sector and the teaching profession to lead the way. I'm excited about the opportunity to work with the ECC, and the ECE sector more widely, over the next three years. Let's keep supporting our kids to be the best they can be.

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Pasifika best practice tips for ECE teachers



We often hear on the news and read in the newspapers (amongst other things), the aggregated educational statistics for Pasifika children. Various reasons and explanations are attributed for the relative under achievement of Pasifika' children compared to others.

For many Pasifika parents, taking their child to school for the first time can bring with it many anxieties. This can be especially so for Pasifika parents whose home language and culture is completely different from the host school. Some have said that support for Pasifika languages and cultures would make a big difference to overall Pasifika achievement in New Zealand.

ECE is a great place to start a child's educational journey because once children have confidence in themselves; they will be more prepared when placed in a compulsory school setting. This is in line with Te Whaariki, the ECE curriculum based on the principles of empowerment, holistic development, family and community and relationships. This lays the foundation for a child's successful transition to the compulsory schooling curriculum.

ECE centres that value Pasifika languages and cultures, helps to bridge the divide between home and school for Pasifika families. The ECC asked a collection of Pasifika and non Pasifika academics, ECE teachers, and others, to give other ECE centres ideas for working with Pasifika children and families.

The question was asked, "What really matters i.e. what's important to Pasifika families and how can ECE centres incorporate significant events such as White Sunday and other cultural practices into their teaching practices and daily interactions with Pasifika children and their parents?"

Porirua Literacy Research Project led by Joy Allcock – M.ED (Hons)

Joy Allcock who is leading a literacy research project in Porirua, a place with a high number of Pasifika children, especially

in deciles 1-3, says that children who come from homes where English is not the spoken language bring with them a rich collection of language experiences.

"I have Pasifika parents asking me how they can help their child to learn English," she says. "We tell Pasifika parents to keep speaking to their children in their Pasifika language because it is the richness of a child's linguistic knowledge (as compared to language knowledge) that lays the foundation for learning to speak, read and write in any language."

"The ability to recognise and play with sounds (phonemic awareness), are foundation skills for English literacy," says Joy.

"Many of the sounds in Pasifika languages also exist in English. Phonemic awareness skills are easily transferred from one language to another."

"Phonemic awareness refers to sound analysis skills. It is an awareness of and the ability to manipulate individual sounds in words. This is the skill that we need for working with an alphabetic language because the alphabetic code is based on using letters to record the sounds that make up words.

- For reading we need to be able to hear, pronounce and blend sounds together to pronounce a word by sounding it out.
- For spelling we need to be able to hear, recognise and segment a word into individual sounds to write it sound by sound when we need to.
- Blending and segmenting are the two core phonemic awareness skills we are working towards for school aged children to use.

Joy says phonemic awareness skills have nothing to do with written words (we don't use print to teach them) although they are the foundation skill for using the alphabetic code. If a child's first language doesn't include all the sounds that they will hear in English, they will of course have to learn to hear and pronounce these new sounds to work with English but this is done through oral language development and playing with sounds.

“

We tell Pasifika parents to keep speaking to their children in their Pasifika language because it is the richness of a child's linguistic knowledge (as compared to language knowledge) that lays the foundation for learning to speak, read and write in any language.

”

"Language learning should be fun. Listening for sounds and sound patterns in words (words that start with the same sound, rhyming words, words with the same number of syllables), making up nonsense words that rhyme, playing guessing games for words that start with a particular sound (giving clues until the child guesses the word) all strengthen an awareness of sounds and sound patterns in words," says Joy.

"These sound analysis games can be played in any home and in any language. They strengthen the platform for literacy learning."

Is it a P or B?

A New Zealand born Samoan mum was concerned how to explain the difference between the pronunciation of P and B to her child whose name starts with P. The child was confused because his Samoan Aoga Amata ECE teacher pronounced his name like a B but when he went to primary school, his teacher and all the other children pronounced it with a P.

"He came home from school one day, dropped down his school bag and said, "Mum does my name start with a P or a B!"

This is one strategy Joy Allcock gave to the Samoan parent so that the child and parent could build their phonemic awareness between the Samoan and English language.

- “The /P/ and /B/ sounds are called paired sounds. One is made with air - /P/ and one is made with voice - /B/. There is no /B/ in Samoan. When we add voice to /P/ it sounds just like /B/.
- So you can say to your child that his name definitely starts with a P for /P/ but the /P/ sound is really similar to a /B/ sound and sometimes these two sounds almost sound the same. In the Samoan culture, a P will sound like a B because it is pronounced with voice.
- You could also tell him that being able to speak more than one language makes your brain smarter! If he keeps his brain being able to go between two languages it will make it easier for him to learn other languages too!”

¹Pasifika is a collective term used for people of Pacific descent

²As published in <http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/>

“It takes a village to raise a child” is alive and well in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We can all work together for our children.

A child's life is like a mat where everyone weaves a strand



When what the child hears is in tune, the child smiles

New Zealand's Education Profile

The Government's Better Public Services targets for ECE and compulsory education are:

- By 2016, 98 percent of all children starting school would have participated in some form of quality ECE.
- By 2017, 85 percent of all 18 year olds would have achieved a minimum of NCEA level 2 or equivalent.

The latest gathered comparative ethnic statistics are.²

ECE Participation:

Māori	93.6%
Pasifika	90.7%
Asian	97.3%
European	98.0%
Other	95.3%
Total	96.1%

18 year olds with NCEA level 2 or equivalent

Māori	63.3%
Pasifika	71.4%
Asian	86.9%
European	83.4%
Other	71.0%
Total	78.6%

We want to see a society where statistics are no longer broken down by ethnicity because there will be no over-representation of negative statistics associated with any ethnic group. A society where everyone is considered and seen as equals with equal opportunities, thriving in their chosen fields of endeavours.”

2015 Pacific Language Weeks

Samoa Language Week

– 24-30 May

Cook Islands Language Week

– 3-9 August

Tonga Language Week

– 30 August-5 September

Tuvalu Language Week

– 27 Sept-3 October

Fiji Language Week

– 5-11 October

Niue Language Week

– 12-18 October

Tokelau Language Week

– 25-31 October





Best Practice for Pasifika in Early Childhood Education

By Seiuli Sauni
- MEd, PGDipEd, BEd & DipTchg (Primary)

Seiuli was previously a Senior Lecturer and Practicum Co-ordinator for the Early Childhood Education - Pasifika specialisation in the Bachelor of Education (Teaching) at Auckland University. She is currently providing professional development in ECE centres across New Zealand. Her teaching experience has spanned over 30 years in Early Childhood, Primary and Tertiary education. Seiuli's, Masters dissertation was on Samoan Men in Early Childhood education.

Seiuli continues to explore the importance of Samoan men's roles and responsibilities in the education of young children. Her current areas of interests are Pasifika pedagogy and Pasifika research methodology, music in Pasifika ECE and professional practice in ECE.

In the early 1950's my parents migrated from Samoa bringing with them my brother and I. Their aspirations were for a better life and opportunities. This meant a better education and future for our family.

Growing up in New Zealand back in the early 1960's, the education system was mainly mono-cultural and most of the teachers came from England. English was the dominant language of instruction in school. Samoan language was never spoken and Pasifika culture was invisible at school. However in my 'aiga' (family), the importance of maintaining our heritage, language and culture was nurtured and practiced through 'lotu' (spiritual devotion) prayers and songs, every morning and evening.

My family 'aiga' have always been a significant part of my educational journey and my parents have consistently supported me throughout my years of study.

New Zealand education researchers have found that culturally responsive pedagogy is vital to learning for Pasifika students and there is a need to develop classroom instruction that is both culturally orientated and responsive to Pasifika students. (Airini, McNaughton, Langley & Sauni, 2007).

The Ula Model

In my own academic research (Sauni 2011) I have developed an appropriate metaphor (The Ula Model) for collaborative engagement with Pasifika based on the principles and values of fa'asamoa.

Ula means a lei or garland which is used throughout the Pacific Islands, particularly in Samoan culture. The presentation of the ula is an important gesture for welcoming visitors, special guests at cultural events and Samoan celebrations where people participate in performances such as singing and dancing.

The cultural values and principles of Samoa are deeply located in this ula research approach because the model represents the critical elements for effective terms of engagement when working with Pasifika children or adult participants.

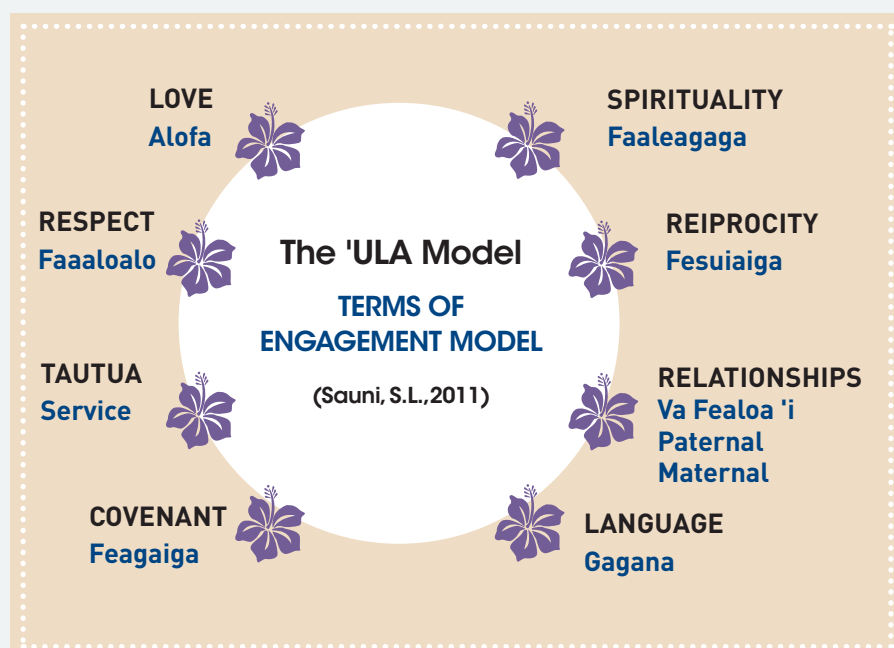
In terms of teaching and learning for Pasifika students, establishing and maintaining open, respectful, reciprocal and collaborative

relationships with children and their parents, will ensure that the wealth of knowledge, interests and confidence are strengthened in order to optimise educational success and achievement.

"When educating Pasifika learners, you are not just teaching the individual but the collective (Anae, 2010)," says Seiuli.

"In early childhood settings, the teacher needs to have an understanding of the Pasifika child and their families as an 'individual' and as a 'collective'. Therefore establishing relationships with Pasifika parents and communities is an important factor for individual success."

When a Pasifika child does well, they carry the pride of their parents. On graduation day, a Pasifika student's achievement and success is also the achievement and success of their parents, extended families and the communities they represent.



Professional Development Tools

During the past year, I have been involved in professional development for early childhood educators within Pasifika early childhood services across New Zealand. These Professional development programmes have provided teachers with further knowledge and understanding about teaching and learning approaches that are culturally appropriate when working with Pasifika learners, parents and communities.

The role and attitudes of early childhood educators is an important factor in supporting or hindering learning for young Pasifika children. To ensure success for Pasifika learners, teachers must show a commitment to diverse learners and be passionate about teaching.

Te Whaariki reflects the holistic way children learn and grow and emphasises the integrated weaving of cognitive, social, cultural, physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions of human development, and the concept of self. Culturally responsive pedagogy encompasses the curriculum document, learning, context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, and performance assessments (Gay, 2000). Te Whaariki also promotes the involvement and contribution of parents, families and communities in their child's early childhood education.

In Pasifika cultures, the concept of 'teu le va' means to nurture relationships through cultural principles as a model of empowerment. Pedagogical content knowledge for learning and teaching in Pasifika educational settings therefore needs to focus around the heritage languages, cultures, values and practices of Pasifika groups.

Some of my own observations working with Samoan Aoga Amata have highlighted the importance of using the different Pasifika ethnic greetings. When children and parents arrive at an ECE centre and hear their parents being greeted in their own language, they are able to make connections immediately because they feel a 'sense of belonging.' Using the child's first language can make first impressions positive and establish positive and strong partnerships between families and the teachers within early childhood centres.

During my visit to a Samoan Aoga Amata (preschool) in South Auckland, I noticed how parents arriving with their children in the mornings were greeted by "Talofa lava" followed by "Afio mai, Maliu mai". In response, the parents smiled and took some time to speak with the teachers before leaving.

“ Learning the Samoan language and culture 'gagana ma le aganu'u fa'asamoa' enables Samoan children to know they are of Samoan heritage to affirm their sense of identity and belonging as they use and advance the knowledge of their language and culture. ”

Afterwards I noticed the children settled in comfortably. The teachers were engaged with the children in different interactive activities throughout the day, and communicating with the children in the Samoan language.

Valuing of spiritual foundations and children's lived experiences from their home environment such as the celebration of spiritual knowledge should be valued within early childhood education. In doing so, children will be empowered and emotionally secure to make choices for themselves. This includes recognition by teachers of celebrations such as "Lotu tamaiti" (White Sunday) and "Lotu fa'a le aiga" (Family devotion).

In Samoan culture, learning takes place by listening and doing. Adults are not only teachers, but role models. The cultural aspects of everyday tasks for example are; caring for younger siblings, offering or serving visitors food, and providing a basin of water to adult guests to wash their hands after meals. The exchanging of fine mats and oratory speeches are also all relevant practices that Samoan children observe.

Samoan is also an oral culture. We have a saying "O le fanau o manu e fafaga i fua o laau a'o fanau o tagata e fafaga i upu ma tala" which means. 'Babies of birds are fed with berries, but babies of men are fed with words and stories.' Repetition and rote learning, although not often favoured in mainstream early childhood settings, are still an effective strategy for teaching Pasifika children.

Storytelling is one of the best practices for Pasifika children. Pasifika children learn through the singing of songs, telling and retelling stories, reciting poems and Bible verses, practicing "lotu" protocols, and celebrating culture and dance.

Educators need to find activities that are creative, innovative and nurturing. Children need to be encouraged to participate through ways that allow them to 'talk' more and express their feelings in role plays, legends and Bible stories. ECE centres should have books written in the different Pasifika languages displayed in the centre so that they are accessible for reading and increasing a child's vocabulary.

I observed a teacher in a Samoan pre school reading in Samoan to a group of children. She asked the children to look at the pictures and re-tell the story using their own words in the Samoan language. Afterwards, she used the words to sing a song to reinforce the ideas in the story.

The next day, she was asked by the children to read another story following the same procedure. The children were so excited about reading and composing the songs with the teacher until they were able to continue independently. This particular teacher had discovered a way that motivated and encouraged children to read and use the stories in songs.

"If Samoan children have the opportunities to learn and use their own culture and language to enhance their achievement, the possibility of them making connections to the wider community of Samoan speakers will increase and enable them to maintain communication across the generations so that their history, culture and traditions of Samoa are retained," says Seiuli.

"Learning the Samoan language and culture 'gagana ma le aganu'u fa'asamoa' enables Samoan children to know they are of Samoan heritage to affirm their sense of identity and belonging as they use and advance the knowledge of their language and culture."

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It takes a village to raise a child

Trisha Lealiifano-Mariota has recently joined the Early Childhood Council as Communications and Marketing Officer. We are pleased to welcome Trisha to our team. Trisha is an ECE-qualified teacher with relieving experience in the Kindergarten sector as well as teaching at a Samoan Aoga Amata in Porirua (AAPE) Aoga Amata Porirua EFKS. She has a Bachelor of Commerce from Otago University, Graduate Diploma in Teaching endorsed in ECE from Victoria University and is currently completing her Masters of Education from Victoria University. Trisha shares her personal story of being Samoan and being bilingual.

"Talofa, I'm Trisha Lealiifano-Mariota but widely known as 'Toreka'.

I was born in Auckland but grew up in the Porirua community since the age of four and now reside here with my husband and three year old son Joziah.

'It takes a village to raise a child' a traditional proverb that represents my upbringing.

My parents were my first ever teachers, endorsing into my life the importance of my Samoan language and Samoan culture. Samoan is my first language and I embraced this wholeheartedly even when I later attended an English speaking school.

My Grandfather, who was my next teacher from the ages 4-7 years endorsed into me the importance of Spirituality, Faith and God 'A'oa'o ia i le tama e tusa ma lona ala; a o'o 'ina toeaina lava o ia, e le te'a 'ese ai' (Faataoto 22 f 6) Direct your children onto the



right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it. His teachings have stuck with me right to this day.

My extended family as well as my spiritual family; Porirua EFKS taught me about the importance of being culturally responsive in a faaloalo (respectful) manner. Like many families there is a great diversity of cultures, and it is here I learned the importance of "va fealoaloai or ava fatafata". These protocols and etiquettes are needed to maintain good relationships.

So off I go to the University of Otago in Dunedin, and it is only when I left the comfort of my environment that the attributes and values that were founded in my upbringing came through. It helped form my educational career, helping me gain my qualifications both from the University of Otago and Victoria University.

What was taught to me and who contributed to my early years have given me an understanding and insight into the growing Pasifika tamaiti'iti. Strong and positive influences in a child's early years helps establish their foundation to be confident and successful regardless whether they speak one language or two. Language is a beautiful form of communication that can be a powerful tool in our children's lives.



Trisha Lealiifano-Mariota, with husband Martin and Joziah on White Sunday

Q. Having only known Samoan until you started school, do you feel this disadvantaged you, if not why not?

A. No I don't believe knowing my mother tongue disadvantaged me starting school. Language is a form of communication. It's about how you speak and the words that you use. Communication is diverse and being able to express the same message in a different language is exactly what I was taught from a young age. I was able to identify literacy but just in the Samoan context. I felt confident knowing my language and being able to communicate with my friends in Kindergarten although we did not speak the same language.

Q. What do you think would have made the transition easier?

A. At the time when I was being transitioned from Kindergarten to Primary School (like over 25 years ago!) I did not feel there was anything wrong. The New Entrance teacher was great at making me feel welcome.

Q. How have you kept your mother tongue whilst having gone through New Zealand's school system where they only speak/teach English?

A. Samoan was strictly spoken at home at all times. We were not allowed to speak English, only at school. Being part of a community that spoke Samoan and English helped maintain the

language. Attending Sunday School from 3 – 18 years old, we learned to speak, read and write in Samoan. Then when we attended school we would apply the same learning concept but in an English speaking forum.

Q. What advice would you give to other Pasifika parents who wish their children to be both fluent in their mother tongue and also English?

A. Do not underestimate the development and the knowledge your under 5 can learn. Speak whatever language is most comfortable to you. Being bilingual does not disadvantage your child's development in ECE or school. Communication helps a child develop regardless what language is spoken.

Q. What advice do you give the mainstream ECE sector who have Pasifika children in their ECE centre?

A. 'It takes a village to raise a child' The Pasifika child is represented by a various number of community members. It is important to form strong relationships with the parents, grandparents and other important people in their lives because the learning at school must transition into the home.

Q. What advice do you give the schooling sector who have Pasifika children starting school?

A. I would give exactly the same advice as I have given above to the ECE sector.



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Reviews and You: A Guide to ERO Reviews

By Marina Matthews and George McLellan

There has been much discussion about the Education Review Office (ERO) reviews for early childhood services in recent editions of Swings & Roundabouts. Chen Palmer, a firm specialising in education law, steps into the debate with some suggestions about how to prepare for and respond to reviews.

In our experience, quality assurance reviews of education services, be it by ERO for early childhood services and schools or the New Zealand Qualifications Authority for tertiary education organisations (excluding universities), can be a positive experience. It is an opportunity for education organisations to showcase how effective or how well placed they are to deliver high quality services.

We have prepared some tips and suggestions for early childhood services to consider when preparing for ERO reviews. The following tips are not legal advice and do not relate to or detract from the experiences of our past clients. The tips set out in this article provide early childhood services with general information about how to get the most out of ERO reviews.

Preparing for your review

It is helpful to read ERO's website and the information on the review process prior to commencing the ERO review. Take the time to familiarise yourself about what review officers can do, what they are looking for and what measures you are being evaluated against.

ERO will ask your centre to complete and return a self-report before the review. The self-report gives you the opportunity to tell ERO about your centre's context, challenges and achievements. The self-report is your first opportunity to demonstrate that your centre is performing well and is well placed to promote positive learning outcomes for children.

“The more prepared a centre is, the smoother the onsite visit will be. ERO understands that onsite visits put stress on ECE providers: you still need to manage day-to-day operations, while informing the reviewers about your operations and demonstrating that you are running a high quality centre.”

As well as providing the documents required by ERO, you should also start putting together and organising documentation to demonstrate your centre's ability to promote positive learning outcomes. You should have this documentation already, but early preparation of bringing it together in one place can help avoid future work and stress, demonstrate how organised you are, and will help to ensure that time at the onsite visit isn't wasted on searching for documents.

The ERO onsite visit

The more prepared a centre is, the smoother the onsite visit will be. ERO understands that onsite visits put stress on ECE providers: you still need to manage day-to-day operations, while informing the reviewers about your operations and demonstrating that you are running a high quality centre. Everyone at the centre should have a clear understanding of the agenda for the onsite visit and should do their best to assist the ERO team in gaining a genuine understanding of the centre's operations.

Preparing a comprehensive document list and keeping the relevant documents organised will make the onsite visit much smoother. It is also a good idea to keep a record of what documents ERO reviewers copy or read. This will be useful down the track if there is a dispute about any conclusions in the ERO report.

As Iona Holsted, ERO's Chief Executive / Chief Review Officer, said in the December 2014 edition of Swings & Roundabouts “the conversations we have with the service are essential to the process”. Therefore, if you are asked a question by a review officer, then do your best to answer it. If you don't know the answer, jot the question down and say you will get back to them or you will get the right person to get back to them.

Mistakes do happen and it is important to remember that review officers only have a small window of opportunity to gain an understanding of the centre. The easier it is for the review team to see that the centre is promoting positive learning outcomes, the less likely it is that the unconfirmed report will be incomplete or incorrect.



Responding to an unconfirmed report

Your centre has a right to respond to ERO's unconfirmed report if you disagree with the report's findings. A response must be sent to ERO within 15 working days, unless the report has proposed a rating of "not well placed" in which case a response is due within 10 working days.

As a public quality assurance body ERO has public law obligations to observe the principles of natural justice. Natural justice requires ERO to:

- Give centres a fair opportunity to respond to allegations or conclusions;
- Provide all relevant information to enable the organisation to respond effectively;
- Take all relevant information into account; and Keep an open mind when analysing relevant information.

A centre may decide to challenge an unconfirmed report when the review officers have, for example:

- Missed information that is relevant;
- Failed to undertake an adequate inquiry;
- Been subjective or unprofessional;
- Made an error of fact; or
- Made conclusions without supporting evidence.

A good way to respond is to mark up the unconfirmed report itself with your comments. This makes it clear what your concerns are, and what particular aspects of the report may need to be revised. All responses should be written objectively and with a professional tone and should be linked back to supporting evidence.



About the authors

Marina Matthews is a Partner at Chen Palmer and specialises in education and public policy. Before joining Chen Palmer, Marina was a senior public servant in a government education agency and advised four Ministers in the Beehive. George Mclellan is an Associate at Chen Palmer. Chen Palmer advises many early childhood services, schools and tertiary education organisations regarding quality assurance reviews.

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How do I work out what conference to go to?

The New Year brings in lots of new opportunities for busy childcare centre owners and managers.

The budgets have been reviewed, the business plans have freshened up and new targets have been agreed.

It's time to start networking!

Getting out of the centre and attending a conference could give you the opportunity to kick start the second half of your year with new ideas and energy. By attending these events you will not only have the opportunity to learn but also be able to meet and network with likeminded centre owners and managers, teachers and even new suppliers.

The trouble is there are an increasing number to choose from. It can be difficult to work out which you will get the most return from in terms of time, money and business benefit.

Here are **8 top tips** to help you choose the right conference in the ECE sector for you:

1. Research the available conferences

Whether it is through the internet or in conversation, it is important to do your research before attending any event. You need to be sure that you and your centre will benefit. If the organisation has held conferences before, do a bit of research to see how it went - talk to your connections to get their view. There are generally two types of conference in ECE:

- Those that focus on **teaching, pedagogy and research**. These conferences will contain topics and speakers that are primarily of interest to teachers.

- Those that focus on **centre leadership and management**. These conferences will contain topics on leadership and management that appeal to centre owners and managers.

Choose the conference that is going to give you the most benefit.

2. Have a plan

Attending a conference needs to be part of your business plan. Taking time out of work could be an issue for some centre managers or staff because of adult:child ratios and other centre commitments. And who is going to attend? The person who finds out about the conference may not necessarily be the one who attends. Payment and travel arrangements will also need to be considered.

3. Know what you hope to get out of the conference

Have some conference goals in mind when planning on attending. Attending a conference can be overwhelming with all the attendees. Think about what you want to learn or the type of people who you want to meet. By focusing on what you want to get out of it, you can make the most of the conference programme, and manage the time spent effectively.

4. Who's speaking?

Most events have a line-up of sector experts who will be sharing their professional experiences on the stage. Make sure that the speaker topics are beneficial to you and your centre. You could even ask yourself "Do I know the speaker?" or "Would I like to know the speaker?" Most speakers still work in their sector and could be a valuable

source of information to generate leads for your centre.

Take care to check that (at least most of) the speaker line-up is familiar with the ECE sector and/or small business management, whether a teaching conference or a leadership/management conference. It can be particularly disappointing to be lured into attending a conference with what looks like a great speaker line-up only to find they know nothing about the ECE sector and subsequently their presentations, while entertaining, fail to give you the "take-home" messages that make the whole experience worthwhile. Ask yourself, "Will this speaker be *aspirational* or will they be *inspirational*, enabling me to return to my centre with tangible, hands-on strategies that I can implement in my centre?"

5. Choices

Does the conference offer you choices of workshops? Most conferences work on the principle of a key note presentation and a series of concurrent workshops from which you choose the one you want to go to. The advantage of this concurrent choice model is that it is more likely to give you the workshops you want to go to. The drawback is that you will always feel like you've missed out on something you otherwise wanted to participate in. This "missing-out" can be enhanced if the presentation you choose ends up being poor.

Some conferences do not offer choices. In these cases, it is likely that the programme has been designed to take each delegate on a journey where each presentation has a role to play and it's the whole journey that is the purpose.

6. Who's attending?

The type of conference can give away the type of people who will be attending. Some conferences have the opportunity to network online prior to the event. This could be through the website or through the social media. This is an ideal opportunity to get to know other attendees and even set up meetings before, during and after the event.

7. The venue

Where the conference is being hosted could determine whether you attend or decline. Think about the travel – is it commutable? Will you need to spend the night there? And will the venue be able to benefit your centre?

8. And finally, keep everything!

Conferences usually have a proliferation of hand outs, flyers, business cards, satchels with promotional or advertising material, etc. Take everything! Keep everything!! Until you get home and can begin sorting what is useful and what is not.

A note about the 2015 ECC Conference



This year we are trying something a little different. In the past the ECC has had significant success offering New Zealand's most popular annual ECE conference, with distinct streams of activity for centre owners and managers, and for teachers. This year we are focussing on leaders, owners and managers solely. There are no concurrent workshops to choose from – you get to participate in everything.

Because of that focus, we have anticipated a smaller audience and have chosen a venue we might otherwise never fit into – Queenstown. The venue takes a maximum of 400 delegates, so that's where we have capped registrations.

The speaker line-up is very international and very experienced in all things ECE, offering you the best opportunity for meaningful take-home messages and learning.

The ECC's goal is to do whatever we can to support you to run the most successful childcare centre you can. This conference will help you to achieve that. And have some fun along the way!

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Beside her day job, Betsy is a member of the Global Leaders Institute of the World Forum on early child care and education and is very interested in the developments in early care and education in her own country and all over the world. Betsy believes that we have so much to share and to learn from each other.

Dr Jan Deans

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Dr Jan Deans will demonstrate how dynamic leadership can empower teams of people to find the heart and vitality of what it means to work with young children.

Jan is the Director of the Early Learning Centre, which is the University of Melbourne's research and demonstration preschool. She is also a Senior Lecturer at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education taking the role of Professional Partnership Coordinator for the Master of Teaching (EC) programme. She is an experienced early childhood leader having led a team of 30 teachers for the past twenty years and advocating widely for quality early childhood education.

Howard Fancy



Howard has a unique perspective on the relationship between economy and childcare policy. This address will bring a policy maker's perspective to the future provision and challenges facing early childhood education and the positioning of providers within the sector. Issues of quality, professionalism, affordability and the interplay between economic, education, health and social policies will grow in importance and will impact on the respective roles of government, families, communities and providers.

Howard was Secretary for Education from July 1996 to October 2006. In that role he oversaw a wide range of education reforms including major changes in early childhood education.

Sue Lindsay



The rules of the game of life and business are changing. In a world where uncertainty and chaos are constant, where staff and parents are more cynical, savvier and much more selective than ever we are being challenged to redefine leadership, culture and brand.

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Dr Tom Mulholland



Dr Tom Mulholland, of The Healthy Thinking Institute will speak on reducing stress in the workplace and life in general.

Dr Tom Mulholland is an Emergency Department Doctor and GP with over 25 years' experience in New Zealand from Kaitia Hospital to Southland Hospital. He has hosted his own TV and Radio shows, written two internationally best-selling books and been a professional speaker to the likes of Google, Microsoft and Hilton for the last 10 years.

As most of what Dr Tom sees in his current role in Auckland City hospital emergency Department is preventable, he has decided to go on the road for the next five years in his retro ambulance doing house calls and trying to be the ambulance at the top of the cliff.

Roger Neugebauer



Roger is the Co-Director of *ChildcareExchange*, a magazine he founded with his wife Bonnie in 1978. Roger has also been the Co-ordinator at the World Forum Foundation. Roger and his wife Bonnie have been at the forefront of professional development and policy advice and support for early childhood education services in the USA and beyond for nearly forty years.

If you have read international articles in early childhood and in particular in leadership, you will know the value Roger adds to his conference.

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1. Are you managing change or is it managing you?

Motivate others in the face of uncertainty and communicate in a manner that inspires optimal productivity.

Change in childcare, like many other sectors, is constant. Yet many people react to change with denial or resistance. As a change leader, your ability to help people overcome their inertia and get on board with new initiatives is critical to your success. In this workshop, you'll learn practical tools that will help you to build trust and commitment and achieve positive results through change initiatives.



2. Continuous quality improvement in childcare centres

If you want to learn the basics about continuous quality improvement this is the workshop for you. At this workshop you will be introduced to continuous quality improvement concepts. You'll also learn about techniques in goal setting, measuring for improvement, planning, testing and implementing change through the use of the Baldrige quality improvement system for the education sector.

This workshop provides you with skills and knowledge to:

- Apply a selection of quality improvement tools in your day to day work
- Use the Baldrige system to develop, test and implement changes
- Use learning styles to promote work efficiency
- Introduce continuous quality improvement into your centre.

3. KPIs and benchmarks in childcare centres

Do you know how your centre stacks up against your competition? Take a giant leap forward by engaging in this KPI and Benchmarking workshop. The approach is simple. We will assist you every step of the way, from getting educated on developing and using KPIs and benchmarks to helping you to interpret your results, or helping you to develop an action plan to address your specific needs. With this workshop, you can focus on the right part of your centre and prioritise your strategies for achieving a world-class childcare centre.

4. Legal Issues facing childcare centres

The law impacts on all business activity. And childcare is no different – one of the most highly regulated business sectors in the country! Whether dealing with parents, suppliers or employees, or protecting the physical and intellectual assets of your centre, it is essential that centre managers have knowledge of the appropriate legal issues. An understanding of how the law influences centre managers in making business decisions is the purpose of this workshop. The workshop draws on examples from within the childcare sector and, in particular, the role Buddle Findlay has as a partner with the ECC in the delivery of the ECC's Employer Help Line.



5. Succession planning

All centre owners will, eventually, exit their business whether they walk out the door at a time of their choosing to pursue life's next challenge or; they are carried out the door on a stretcher. Lack of planning for the business exit or transition results in huge headaches for family members left to pick up the pieces and may bring actual business survival into question. On the other hand, a controlled and planned exit offers to lower business risk, maximises the value of the centre and preserves family wealth for later generations.

What we'll cover in the workshop:

- The Age Wave and its effect on business transfers
- What an exit or transition plan actually is and how to create one
- Advantages to creating a coherent exit or transition plan
- Discuss the 3 main goals of any exit plan
- Explore the options for exiting or transitioning your centre
- Discuss pros and cons of the most popular exit options.



6. How to present a bank's model business case to access capital

Accessing capital can be a tricky business. What needs to be in the information you present? What can you do to present the right information, in the right format, to get the right support from your bank. Obtaining additional capital when you need it need not be like chasing the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Learn how to put a business case together in a way that will impress your bank manager. We don't guarantee success, but will share with you our advice on how to give yourself every chance of success in seeking what you need to grow your centre business.

7. How to grow your centre in a competitive market

If you want to succeed, then you have to discover how to grow your centre in a challenging, competitive market. This workshop offers you the steps to help build your enrolments, build loyalty in your existing parents and fight off your local competition. This isn't easy and demands a new way of thinking about your parents and what it takes to succeed. In this workshop we talk about target or niche marketing and draw on a number of ideas from existing childcare centre experiences. Expect to leave with tangible ideas to take back to your centre.



8. Leadership styles in any ECE team mix, even generation Y!

Leading generation Y'ers requires a transformational leadership style. Leadership is about influence. It occurs anywhere. In this workshop learn more about the characteristics of generation Y employees; why attention to generational issues is important in effective leadership; what leadership style is likely to be effective with generation Y; what transformational leadership is all about and how to adapt your leadership style to maximise your team's effectiveness.



Teaching as inquiry provides evidence for teacher appraisal

By Cathy Wilson and Ana Pickering



Using teaching as inquiry has been a journey of development and discovery for the teachers at Wā Ora Montessori School in Lower Hutt. The school is unique in offering Montessori education in its preschool, primary and high school. Cathy Wilson, deputy principal, explains the work undertaken over the last year to use teaching as inquiry.

Over the last 18 months Wā Ora Montessori school there has seen quite a shift in the way its teachers gather evidence for their appraisals with the introduction of a teaching as inquiry approach throughout the school.

During 2013-14 two of our primary teachers were involved in the Montessori Journey to Excellence Pilot Programme. Our school was able to engage one of the two Massey facilitators from the pilot programme, Nicki Dowling, in our whole school development. Nicki worked with us on our new appraisal system and on developing professional learning groups across our preschool, primary and secondary school. Nicki stressed the importance of 'working smarter, not harder' and we aimed to 'connect the dots' between teaching as inquiry and teacher appraisals, the RTCs, professional development and our school-wide strategic goals.

At the beginning of each school year our senior leadership team decide on a school-wide goal, based on the school's strategic and annual plans. In 2014, the whole school began a focus on using teaching as inquiry. Using the school-wide goal as a focus, teachers in each sector of the school - early childhood, primary and secondary - then collaborated to set a deep goal relevant to their particular sector.

For our preschool, where children stay until they are six years old, the sector goal was: 'By the time they are six, tamariki who are below the expected benchmarks, will be constructing and writing their own sentence on paper'. Teachers from each preschool class then used this sector goal to articulate their own inquiry focus question. These inquiry questions included:

"To what extent are we engaging tamariki who are below the expected benchmarks, so that they will be constructing and writing their own sentences on paper in legible cursive handwriting at their transition to primary?"

"To what extent can I contribute to the achievement of tamariki in our class for them to meet expected milestones for their age group regarding language development?"

At this stage of the inquiry the teachers also defined measureable inquiry indicators that articulate 'what success would look like'. For example, the teachers from one classroom developed the following quality indicators using resources such as the Montessori Journey to Excellence quality indicators (Pickering, 2014) and from He Pou Tataki (ERO, 2013).

Quality Indicators:

1. Children will have opportunities and have appropriate materials provided which allow for creative thinking and creative expression (Montessori Journey to Excellence 3.1).
2. Teachers will engage in meaningful and enriching conversations with children daily (Montessori Journey to Excellence 3.4).
3. Teachers will regularly analyse assessment information to understand children's language learning pathways and then plan to continue and strengthen them (He Pou Tataki; Matauranga, p. 35).
4. Teachers will provide meaningful learning contexts for children to develop print awareness and increase writing ability, as well as alphabet knowledge (Adapted from He Pou Tataki; Tikanga Whakaako, p. 38).

In each class the inquiry commenced with the teacher's gathering of 'current state' or baseline data through classroom observation, surveys to whānau/tamariki, and so on. This data collection was done by all the teachers, with each taking responsibility for different aspects of data collection. The teachers then analysed this data to understand 'what is happening now'. At this stage teachers also need to engage in reconnaissance such as

background reading, investigation of current educational research/ theory, professional dialogue with peers, information gained from professional learning and development (Pickering, 2014). By gathering data in their classrooms and through research, the teachers were better informed and were able to decide on what teaching actions or strategies may be the most useful for a child, a group of children or the whole class. More data collection was then done over the following terms, so the impact of the chosen teaching actions could be observed and evaluated against the original measureable inquiry indicators. This re-gathering of data collection is essential to enable teachers to provide evidence of what has changed for their learners as a result of their teaching strategies.

Guided by Nicki Dowling from Massey, we decided to support all the teachers on this journey through the development of professional learning groups (PLGs) within our school. We developed PLGs of five to six teachers comprising a mix of early childhood, primary and secondary sectors. This is the first time in our school that teachers have worked professionally in such a focused way across the whole school rather than just within their own sector of the school. Each PLG has a facilitator who guides the focus of the monthly meetings, where teachers share the development of their inquiry and provide evidence and data. Sharing and discussions are also held at sector meetings and high expectations are placed on preparation from each teacher for each meeting, aiding in creating a culture of self-responsibility. Teachers are becoming more skilled at professional learning conversations and experiencing being challenged in a safe environment as they work with other teachers across all sectors of the school.

Other support is also provided through our appraisal process. Each class teacher meets with their appraiser by week five in the first term of school to discuss and refine their



Montessori Journey to Excellence participants March 2013



Teaching as inquiry

So what exactly is teaching as inquiry? Teaching as inquiry is an evidence-based cyclical approach to improving teaching and learning outcomes for ākonga. The New Zealand Curriculum clarifies that "Effective pedagogy requires that kaiako (teachers) inquire into the impact of their teaching on ākonga (students)" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 35). Teaching as inquiry has been used in primary and secondary schools since the mid-2000s and while the term 'teaching as inquiry' has not commonly been part of the terminology used in early childhood settings, teachers are urged to be reflective about teaching practice and early childhood centres are required by the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office to show evidence of reflection through self-review. Teaching as inquiry acknowledges the role of teachers as learners, values their voice in educational improvement and supports teachers to identify a dilemma of practice, gather data about the issue, analyse it and make decisions about teaching actions with the aim of determining which strategies are the most effective in causing improved

change. Teachers inquire into the impact of their teaching on children's (Pickering, 2014).

Teaching as inquiry was the approach used in the Montessori Journey to Excellence Pilot Programme, a joint research project between Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand and the Centre for Educational Development at Massey University. Twelve Montessori early childhood centres and three primary classes/schools from around New Zealand engaged in a blended learning approach with four face-to-face hui and online interaction over 16 months from March 2013-July 2014.

During the pilot teachers began to engage with the idea of 'backward mapping of evidence' and using teaching as inquiry as evidence for strategic planning, professional learning, teacher appraisal, RTCs, Tātaiako, how it could be included in job descriptions, used to initiate strategic plans and how it can provide evidence of progress against strategic goals. The potential for teaching as inquiry to provide evidence discovered by the pilot centres and schools is shown in Figure 1. (next page)

class inquiry question. They meet again in the second and fourth school terms to discuss evidenced challenges, changes and improvements to their teaching practice and the impact on the learning outcomes of ākonga. Should an inquiry reach its natural course during the year a new inquiry is set and discussed by the teacher and their appraiser. The observations, research, documentation and discussions that are integral to the teaching as inquiry process enable valuable evidence to be generated for individual teacher appraisal and also for the Registered Teacher Criteria. The entire process encourages teachers to reflect deeply on their practice by examining, challenging and questioning their teaching practice based on data and evidence; it also provides

meaningful feedback on performance which assists in the planning of effective targeted professional development planning.

Across our school the evidence from teaching as inquiry is vital for external review and for showing the progress we are making with our school-wide strategic aims. Although we are in the beginning stages of using teaching as inquiry it has been amazing to see the enthusiasm and progress our teachers have made with their inquiries and their personal growth in 2014. We will continue to refine this process in 2015 and are excited by the potential of teaching as inquiry in our school to provide evidence of Montessori education as an innovative and future-focused approach to learning in the 21st century.

The Montessori Journey to Excellence began in 2011 as a collection of essential elements and quality indicators that could be used for evaluation of Montessori teaching practice. Pickering (2013) suggested that engagement with Montessori philosophy would benefit from robust teacher inquiry and sharing of 'teacher stories' by teachers in Montessori settings and supported the view of Chisnall (2011) that critical reflection on Montessori pedagogy will be enhanced by "a similar orientation in peers and mentors as they challenge and support each other in their reflections on practice" (p.339). The pilot programme revealed several different uses for the Montessori Journey to Excellence essential elements and quality indicators as these were integrated into centre and school processes and requirements. However the pilot model of blended learning face-to-face and online within

Figure 1: Using teaching as inquiry (TAI) as evidence (from Montessori Journey to Excellence Pilot Programme Research Report (Pickering, 2014))

a small collaborative inquiry community has broadened the scope of the Montessori Journey to Excellence. Pickering (2014) proposes that the pilot model has the potential to make a long-term impact as engagement in a professional learning community grows to include more Montessori teachers, centres and schools. An important potential outcome of Montessori teachers engaging in teaching as inquiry and sharing their findings is that a strong evidence-base for Montessori education in New Zealand could be built and shared with the wider educational and parent community.



“

Teaching as inquiry was the approach used in the Montessori Journey to Excellence Pilot Programme, a joint research project between Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand and the Centre for Educational Development at Massey University.

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About the authors

Cathy Wilson is one of three deputy principals at Wā Ora Montessori School in Lower Hutt, Wellington, which caters for tamariki from 18 months to 18 years. She has been involved with Montessori for the last 19 years and currently leads a teaching team of over 15 full and part-time staff in the preschool. Part of Cathy's role involves mentoring staff from untrained to fully registered teachers. She completed her Association Montessori Internationale qualification in Thailand in 2010, is a tutor for Aperfield Montessori Trust, on the working party for the Montessori Journey to Excellence and is on the MANZ Council. She has presented workshops for MANZ, Aperfield Montessori Trust and ECC at conferences and around the country.

Ana Pickering has been involved in Montessori education since 1990 when she completed her Association Montessori Internationale diploma in Toronto, Canada. She has been the Executive Officer of Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand (MANZ) since 2002. In 2014 she graduated from Victoria University of Wellington with her Masters of Education and was the researcher for the Montessori Journey to Excellence Pilot Programme. Her current work involves developing an implementation model for the Montessori Journey to Excellence so more teachers from Montessori early childhood centres and schools in New Zealand can become part of a vibrant Montessori professional learning community.

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Teaching as Inquiry: A valuable appraisal component

By Jane Warnock

Teaching as Inquiry has been an integral component of our revised appraisal process within Tui Early Learners. In 2013/14, we recognised that our current system required a deepened approach as we identified it to be very individually based. Our aspiration was to create a community of practice approach where individual growth and development was interwoven between centres, between teachers, and embraced by our children, parents/whānau and the centre community. We wanted to ensure a comprehensive, reflective and evaluative context that would acknowledge teachers newly informed knowledge, which could then be applied in teachers' everyday practice, grounded by a pedagogical, research and theory-based approach.

Through timely Professional Learning & Development (PLD) that coincided with our self-review, we were able to unpack our existing appraisal processes. These PLD opportunities ranged from Ripples (Massey Child Care Centre) focusing on 'How to grow your teachers'; New Zealand Teachers Council Appraisal Project workshops (Phase 1) focusing on appraisals; attendance at the Teachers Refresher Course Committee

(TRCC) 'Mentoring & Leadership' conference; through to Tui Early Learners management and teaching teams across our five centres committing to exploring effective appraisals and what this could look like within our current practice. These PLD opportunities all combined to lead us to exploring teaching as inquiry.

As a result, teaching as inquiry has become one of the four components of our reviewed appraisal processes, entitled our Professional Learning Journey. With implementing an inquiry approach that complimented, deepened and strengthened our appraisals, this also enabled us to set a vision focusing on growth and development for all. This vision instils a clear direction in regard to our view of inquiry "...teachers involved in ako, taking responsibility and improving outcomes for self and ākonga" (Tui Early Learners, 2014). We have been able to recognise that teaching as inquiry provides for us a model of practice where teachers can "...reflect on who they are as a learner and the strategies that are required for their learning" (Laird & Cook, 2013). We have also recognised that being immersed in an inquiry approach has

created opportunities for a community of practice that are action focused and visible to all. Wenger (2006) provides an apt description for our inquiry approach and our evolving community of practice, where emphasis is placed around a shared practice of teaching and learning that transforms individuals own practices and results in effective change.

When identifying teaching as inquiry as one of the components for our appraisal, we went through an iterative period of trial and error to find an inquiry process that was not too complex. We implemented a cyclic inquiry model where teachers engaged in professional discussions with HT's/mentors/colleagues through: 1) Reflecting on practice; 2) Planning for improvement; 3) Implementing a plan and gathering evidence; 4) Reflecting and sharing; and 5) New cycle - reflect on practice. This particular model may denote a simplistic context, however, alongside this we also ensure that pedagogical and reflective conversations are immersed within the teaching as inquiry appraisal discussions. These pedagogical and reflective conversations both challenge and empower the appraisal recipient to formulate an inquiry that will lead to improved and changed teaching practice, ultimately benefitting self and ākonga. Education Review Office (2012) emphasise the value of teaching as inquiry as cyclical and constructive and where the process of "...continuous deep thinking ... paves the way for all ākonga to succeed" (p. 1).

When teachers are looking at teaching as inquiry as part of their appraisal there are always the questions as to how do we apply and how do we document? In regard to applying, teachers' inquiries must derive from connections within the Tui Early Learners strategic direction and in improved outcomes for self and ākonga. They must also reflect the teacher, their individual learning needs and the capacity to be inquiry minded throughout the cycle. Regarding the documentation component, we have implemented an inquiry plan template (adapted from NZ Teachers Council on-line appraisal templates). Our inquiry plan shows a process for documenting the journey of a teacher's inquiry with elements



Selina Taylor (left) and Jane Warnock immersed in a professional conversation focused on teaching as inquiry.

including: rationale/written inquiry statement/links to the Registered Teacher Criteria (NZ Teachers Council, 2010)/ links to bicultural competencies including the competencies embedded within *Tātaiako* (Ministry of Education, [MoE], 2011)/ job description links/PLD/current practice and understandings/ through to an inquiry summary which the teacher completes as they work through their inquiry. This inquiry plan template is not the only source of documentation evidence as it must be supported by teachers' individualised Professional Portfolios and reflective journals which contain the evidence that teachers gather through their inquiry process.

As teachers work through the teaching as inquiry cycle, the documentation evidence that is gathered supporting the inquiry can be individualised and personalised. Teachers are able to work with what they want as long as the documentation is relevant and meets each stage of the teaching as inquiry cycle. We also emphasise the necessity of documenting significant practice no matter how small it may seem, as this aids and supports the evidence gathering and reflective process. By teachers selecting evidence that is of significance to their teaching practices and inquires, this shows who they are as a teacher, reflects their journey and growth as a teacher and captures the essence of learning outcomes for children. Further to this, the value in connecting to the competencies within *Tātaiako* (MoE, 2011) ensures that teachers are exploring their bicultural journey and interweaving into their practice.

The teaching as inquiry and correlating cycle is proving to be a most successful strategy that we have implemented into the appraisal process. Carter (2010) writes of assisting teachers to enjoy their work and shares of the necessity when "... designing programmes to enable relationships, these programmes (SIC) should be at the heart of our thinking about quality and in transforming education" (p. 10). Teachers have embraced this designed programme of teaching as inquiry and we have been able to recognise the benefits that continue to unfold as relationships between all partnerships have been established and strengthened and teaching is transformed.

With implementing teaching as inquiry as one of the four components for our appraisal, all teachers are embracing the benefits of inquiry into their own practice. This has certainly been a journey and one that will continue to grow for each and every teacher within Tui Early Learners. Every teacher is now involved in our three monthly appraisals (teacher aides, teachers-in-training, PRT's, fully registered...) and each has the opportunity to be immersed at their own level. As a result, teaching as inquiry for every teacher is visible not only in their teaching practice, but is also supported by rich and pedagogical evidence that reflects a holistic approach to best practice.

Ka timata te haerenga roa me ngā hīkoi pekapeka

A long journey begins with small steps

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About the author

Jane Warnock is the Educational Leader/Mentor at Tui Early Learners. Tui Early Learners is a private family owned service, consisting of five early childhood centres within Palmerston North and has been in operation for over 20 years. Over 40 teachers are employed within the centres, all at various stages of their early childhood journeys.

Jane celebrates the many opportunities of being able to add to her own kete of knowledge and learning through Tui with mentoring for teacher registration through to appraisal processes as well. Additionally, under Tui, Jane provides an external

appraisal/mentoring role for centre managers/owners/head teachers/PRT's/ and teachers who require this for renewal of their practising certificate. Jane is conscious of ensuring an educative and informative approach throughout her mentoring and facilitation role and is into her second year of Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership (ECE) with Te Rito Maioha. Jane acknowledges that by being immersed in her studies, provides ongoing pathways to further strengthen, deepen and embed her leadership and mentoring role.

Jane is available to provide further information/clarity re mentoring and appraisals. Contact: jane@tuearlylearners.co.nz

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Tips and tricks for Strategic Planning



By Phil Sales

I love old English literature. There is something strangely compelling about literary works with unnecessarily long-winded titles that really captures my attention. Did you know that the long title of *Gulliver's Travels* runs to 24 words or that the full title of *Robinson Crusoe* weighs in at 65 words?

At first sight it might appear rather unusual to begin an article on strategic planning with a reference to English literature. After all, literature is fiction and the very last thing that we want our over-arching strategy to be is a flight of fantasy!

The link here is that when we go through the planning process we are telling a story and, as with any worthwhile story, we will probably have a lot to say.

So what is it worth putting into our plan and what should we leave out?

One of the first questions that I like to ask is: "Who is the plan for?"

It is quite likely that you will have multiple audiences and that each audience will be looking at your plan from a slightly different angle. For instance, the ERO's priority may be compliance-based while your Board may be interested in maintaining the ethos that sits behind your particular centre. Your own priorities, as a centre manager, might be outcome-based sustainability and your staff may be interested primarily in tasks and objectives.

Differing priorities make interesting bedfellows, indeed! If you are raising a loan for a new roof or additional buildings then banks and investors are interested in whether you can repay the money. Whether or not you have a strategic plan showing a commitment to meeting wider stakeholder expectations or to living up to a particular educational philosophy are probably very distant secondary considerations for most finance providers.

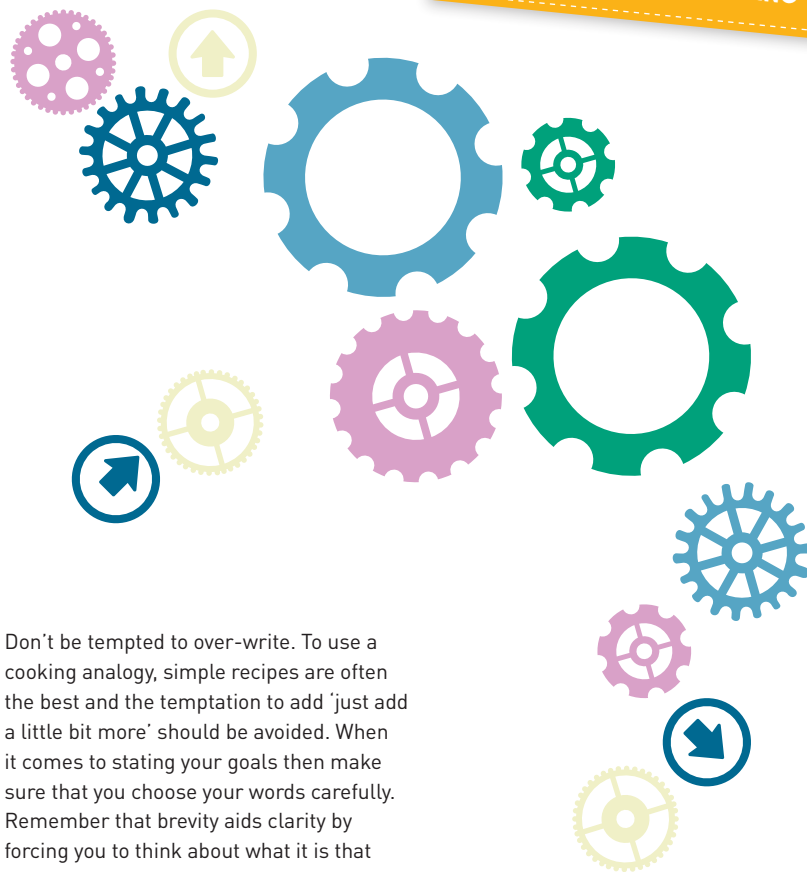
Logically, it might make sense to have a customised plan for each audience. But realistically, who has time to write multiple strategic plans, let alone make sure that they dovetail into each other and that the stated

objectives in each plan are reached? And isn't it just bad practice to have multiple documents when only one is required?

One answer is to ensure that your top level plan is brief and to the point. For instance, if your Board sets three major priorities for the year then each priority will cascade down into more detailed individual plans that can be used at an operational level.

Clever use of this 'cascading approach' will let you import relevant parts of your plan into documents intended for different audiences. Your key document for a business loan then becomes your detailed business plan rather than your strategic plan, *per se*.

Another key tip is to put yourself in the reader's shoes. This involves anticipating (aka researching) your stakeholder's expectations and writing something that answers their questions. In straight-forward cases you will probably have a fairly clear understanding of what your Board or the ERO expects from you. In other cases you might need to dig deeper to find out (for instance) what the needs of local families are and how these needs can be reflected in your plan.



Don't be tempted to over-write. To use a cooking analogy, simple recipes are often the best and the temptation to add 'just add a little bit more' should be avoided. When it comes to stating your goals then make sure that you choose your words carefully. Remember that brevity aids clarity by forcing you to think about what it is that you want to say.

Make sure that the words in your plan lead to clear actions that can be measured and assessed for effectiveness. A good test of a well-written plan is for you to hand it to someone else to read, interpret and implement. If the end result of their actions is what you originally had in mind then you have done a good job in drafting your plan.

Strategic plans are the precursors of business and operational level plans. This means that higher level plans should flow logically towards lower level plans. If you find conflicts, gaps and inconsistencies between different levels of documents then it may be a warning sign to review the primary plans.

For me, a good strategic plan links actions and outcomes but leaves the detail (such as budgets, milestones, resources and responsibilities) to be discussed elsewhere. As I write this, I have a copy of a strategic plan from one early childhood centre in front of me. This plan is reasonably broad-brush and it consists of statements in five key areas:

1. Purpose and aim
2. Philosophy
3. Strategic vision for the next 3 years
4. Principles and issues affecting strategic objectives over the next 3 years
5. Goals and objectives for the next 3 years.

The goals and objectives include sub-sections on the centre's five priority areas (in this case: staffing; regulatory environment and policies; physical environment and resources; curriculum; financial).

Overall, this plan is easy to read and easy to understand. It clearly conveys the centre's priorities by systematically identifying the goals, issues and strategies that will help it to be a successful early childhood centre.

Often it is easy to just keep replicating the things that we have said in previous plans. However, new ideas are all around us and hopefully you will have continuous input from new Board members, staff and parents. Moreover, environmental factors, changing demographics, new competitors, aging assets and legislative changes ensure that our old plans are always in need of review.

If you want to spread your net a little bit wider then try this idea the next time that you are at an ECC Strategic Planning workshop: Ask the people sitting next to you whether they are interested in swapping copies of their strategic plans with you. It costs nothing to ask and I am sure that there will be some interesting reading as a result!

Happy planning!

About the author

Phil Sales heads up Business Development and Entrepreneurship for the Faculty of Business and Information Technology at Whitireia New Zealand [www.whitireia.ac.nz]. Whitireia are the ECC preferred suppliers for the ECC Centre Manager workshops [go to www.ecc.org.nz for upcoming centre manager workshops].

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Strategic Planning and Childcare Centres

This article presents a summary of the ECC workshop on strategic planning in ECE centre situations.

What if I could show you a simple way to construct a strategic plan? By answering four simple questions?

Strategic plans are high-level documents that present the view of a childcare centre's future? Where it wants to get to and what it wants to achieve. The plan takes these high-level goals and runs them through two "filters"; one called your operating environment and the other called your Values.

Like all plans, your strategic plan gives you and your centre a *sense of direction*.

First things first

Why should you bother doing this at all – why have a strategic plan? You've probably got it all in your head anyway! Writing it down is just a hassle; no one will ever read it!! I've heard these and many other comments regarding the value of (strategic) planning.

At the end of the day, as a childcare centre owner and manager, you will prepare a strategic plan for your centre for one or both of the following reasons:

1. The government tells you to. Regulation 47 of the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008; and subsequently Section 9 of the Ministry of Education's Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres (2008) criteria GMA8 and 9. ERO WILL come to visit; they WILL ask to see your centre's strategic plan.
2. You have an investment in the future of your childcare centre business; a sense of the goals you want to achieve and a desire to focus on these.

Some centres can get away with creating a strategic plan so that they get a tick from ERO when they come to visit. It is my experience that most invest in the creation of a strategic plan for their centre because they understand the value it gives them and their business.

The four questions

The questions are simple; answering them can be a bit of a challenge.

Where are we now?

The better you understand your operating environment and the factors that impact on your childcare centre, the better your plan will be and more likely you are to succeed with your goals. "Where are we now?" means pulling together information about how your centre is operating, for example staffing, finances, facilities, etc (your internal environment) and the things that are going on around you that impact on your centre, like increased competition, changes in government policy, etc (external environment). The most common way to pull this information together in a meaningful way is the SWOT analysis (Strengths and Weaknesses (the internal environment) with Opportunities and Threats (the external environment).



Things to consider in your internal environment (the things over which you have control):

- Are your key processes written down?
- Is your management approach clear and do you have high, measured, staff satisfaction?
- Is your parent enquiry-to-enrolment ratio high? Do you have a clear view of your ideal parent? How well do you know your parents? Is your marketing activity targeted? Is it successful?
- Are your premises well-located and well-maintained?
- Do you have good cashflow?

Things to consider in your external environment (the things that happen around you that impact on your centre over which you have no control):

- Are (local and national) government and known future government policies working in your favour or working against you?
- Is the economic climate (both local and national) helpful (cost of finance, local population, etc)?
- How competitive is your market?
- Are you able to offer the best quality ECE service (ie: up with the latest trends and practices)?
- Does technology help you to run an efficient business?

Where do we want to be?

This is your view of the future. Your Vision of where you want your centre to be. The Mission statement that describes how you will get there. And the set of Values that best represent how you want to be perceived by your parents.

How do we get there?

Answering this question is a little trickier. Selecting your strategic objectives involves

thinking about what it will take to achieve your Vision, through the lens of your Values set and taking into account your operating environment.

Typically, there are two types of strategic objective: *growth objectives* and *cost reduction or efficiency objectives*. You need both. Growth objectives because no childcare centre is stable – children (for example) will always turn five and leave. Examples of growth objectives include goals to raise revenue, expand, or diversify

Efficiency objectives, because you want to operate as efficiently as possible, understand what it takes to break even and generate a profit or surplus while achieving high-quality ECE service delivery. For example, to increase productivity involves more children, less or equal staff (subject to maintaining your ratio obligations). To source inputs at lower costs means exploring the right mix of qualified staff for your centre. An example of vertical integration might be to develop and offer a supply service for other centres. Finally, efficiency through process improvement generally involves adopting a continuous quality improvement approach like Baldrige, Lean, Six-Sigma, ISO, etc. these systems can be expensive and time-consuming to start with, but very beneficial as you go on.

These factors guide your selection of the right set of objectives for your centre.

My advice – don't overdo it. Four to six strategic objectives is plenty.

How do we know we're on track?

Monitoring how things are going tells you whether your strategic plan is on track or not. No plan is set in concrete. Things change, both internally and externally. Because of this, you need to revise your plan periodically – at least annually – even though a strategic plan has a five to ten year outlook.

Having a simple set of indicators that give you enough information to tell you whether your goals remain on track or are under threat is essential to success.



The better you understand your operating environment and the factors that impact on your childcare centre, the better your plan will be and more likely you are to succeed with your goals.



Where to go for more help?

The ECC offers members detailed information on all aspects of strategic planning along with freely downloadable tailored tools and templates. We also offer all centres a strategic planning workshop that goes into a lot more detail than is possible in a brief article such as this. Finally, we offer a query service by phone or e-mail if you need help developing your plan.

There are a wide range of other services available to help with your knowledge of strategic planning as well as constructing a plan.

The Ministry of Education offers some advice on their www.lead.ece.govt.nz website (<http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz/LeadHome/ManagementInformation/GoverningAndManaging/GoverningAndManagingYourEarlyChildhoodService.aspx>).

Try your local tertiary provider (for example, the ECC's preferred centre manager PD provider Whitireia (<http://www.whitireia.ac.nz/Pages/home.aspx>), for courses on strategic planning, and try the Internet for tools.

Preparing your centre for sale



By Peter Reynolds

A number of childcare centre owners are considering selling their centres. This article provides advice on how to prepare your centre for sale; how to optimise its value; and what to watch out for.

It's important to start planning the sale of your centre early – some business owners start planning a number of years before the actual planned sale date. You should be looking to improve profits, processes, and make the centre as attractive as possible to a new buyer.

Give your centre a makeover

Make sure your centre has tidy financial records, optimal levels of staff and enrolment, and tightened control over debtors. Fixed assets (like equipment and vehicles) should work well without needing to be replaced in the near future.

Don't over commit

Potential buyers might feel locked into a direction they don't want to take if you've invested in long term spending. Be realistic when providing for bad debt, old stock and depreciation amounts.

Increase your profit

Go all out to increase enrolments, follow up leads and ask for referrals. Identify what costs you can remove to increase your net profit. Can you buy materials cheaper, switch suppliers of overheads (such as power or telecommunications), or be more efficient with processes so you don't need as many staff?

Whatever you do, make sure it doesn't impact on performance or reputation. The ECC offers its members the opportunity to enhance their profitability and obtain sensible financial advice with Rubiix Accountants. Go to www.rubiix.co.nz.

Restructure debt

Consider what debt you have and how this will look on your balance sheet. It could be useful to alter business loans and repay them at a different rate. The ECC offers its members the

opportunity to discuss their banking and financial needs with the BNZ. Go to www.bnz.co.nz.

Update signage and marketing material

Make a good first impression when buyers come to view your centre. Your premises should be immaculate, with friendly staff and lively activity. New signage, repainting, and implementing a general clean desk policy will help.

Improve processes

Demonstrating how sharp your internal processes are will show buyers that your centre is functioning efficiently. Implement ways you can collect your fees faster.

Make sure that your administration systems are as automated as possible, such as using an on-line accounting package and payroll system.

Collect market research

Speak to your most valued parents concerning what they want improved and what they treasure most about your centre. Use this information to enhance your business. Share this with your parents. Content customers are valuable assets.

Take action

Maybe organise for a mystery shopper to go through the centre before it's put on the market to get an unbiased view of any shortcomings. Create an action plan for any weaknesses in your centre that you intend to rectify. Outline the steps you'll take, timeline you'll follow, and the resources you'll commit before advertising your centre for sale or entering into negotiations.

Property issues

If the property is held by means of a lease, and a rent review is coming up in the next few months, try to agree to it up front to avoid any uncertainty for the purchaser and also to avoid looking like that's why you're selling.

If that's not possible get a valuer to provide a rental appraisal to provide some comfort.

If the vendor of the business owns the freehold of the property either:

- get the land and buildings valued professionally if it's going to be sold; or
- get a valuer to provide a rental assessment if it is going to be retained and a new lease is going to be put in place to the purchaser.

The buyer's perspective

When preparing to sell your centre, it's a great idea to consider the buyer's point of view.

One question a buyer might ask is your reason for selling. Have an honest response that doesn't suggest the need for urgency.

Buyers prefer low risk with high reward when they consider investing in a small business and will look for good cash flow and solid systems with the potential for further growth.

What do buyers want to know?

Buyers need accurate and complete information to make an informed decision on whether your centre is suitable for them. You can help this process by understanding who your potential buyer is and what they may want to know about your centre.

Questions that buyers may ask, and that you should have documented answers for, include:

- What makes your centre unique?
- How profitable is your centre in both good and bad times?
- What contracts, leases, customer agreements and intellectual property do you own? When do they expire or require renewing?
- Will you remain with the centre in a temporary role to support a smooth transition?
- What are the levels of stock and investment required in the foreseeable future?

It's likely that potential buyers will want to view at least three years of financial

statements, including income statements and balance sheets. They'll be buying into your centre's future profitability so explain any differences between what the finances are showing now, and what they could be showing in the future.

Buyers will be aware that there's a risk of parents withdrawing their children after you sell. You'll need to reassure them that your parents are loyal to the centre rather than to you. You should also remember that parents can be very loyal to individual staff.

Seek expert advice

When preparing to sell your centre, talk to your lawyer. A lawyer can help protect any trade secrets, intellectual property or commercially sensitive information by writing up a confidentiality agreement that a potential buyer would sign. Your lawyer can also advise on the best way to structure the sale, the sale documentation, including the Sale and Purchase Agreement, any warranties, and indemnities etc.

Also get expert employment advice. If you are selling the shares in the company, there is no change in the employing entity so the following considerations do not arise. However, if you are selling the assets (not the company), the employer will change and you will need to follow appropriate employment processes with your staff. You will need to consult staff in good faith about the sale, before a final decision is made. A decision to sell will also trigger employee protection provisions that must, by law, be included in your employment agreements. These provisions should set out a process for negotiating with the new employer about whether affected employees will be offered employment, and if so, on what terms. They should also outline a process for determining entitlements for employees who do not transfer to the new employer. By law, some employees (staff performing food catering or cleaning services) may have a right to choose to transfer to the purchaser, in other words, the purchaser has to take them on, and special provisions in the Employment Relations Act 2000 may apply. This legislation changed in early March 2015 to include new requirements, timeframes, etc.

If you are selling the assets in the business, then you may also need to make staff redundant following a consultation process if they are not offered roles/ choose not to transfer to the new employer, and you have no other work available for them.

An accountant, such as Rubiix, can help to accurately calculate the goodwill that's been generated over time to forecast a possible price.



“ Buyers prefer low risk with high reward when they consider investing in a small business and will look for good cash flow and solid systems with the potential for further growth. ”

Hiring a broker will assist to smooth negotiations with prospective buyers, can help keep your identity confidential so suppliers and parents don't get concerned, and will allow you to focus on running your centre while they look for buyers.

Ask these experts to mention any weaknesses they see in your centre. Do your own due diligence before offering your centre for sale and address any problems.

What to be cautious of in a buyer

- Ensure any Sales and Purchase Agreement is thoroughly reviewed, preferably by a lawyer (remember, you'll most likely have to pay for this). Don't be rushed into signing anything! Beware of agreements that are loaded in favour of the buyer, for example – the opportunity to exit from the deal if the purchaser does not meet their obligations.
- Try to deal with one person. Having a number of people to deal with as negotiations progress leads to duplication, wastes time (on your part) and can lead to misinterpretation and ill-feeling.
- Get clear answers to your questions. Ensure you are satisfied with the answers

provided. Beware of vague, unclear or incomplete answers.

- Make sure you complete due diligence from an employment perspective (for example, what do the employment agreements provide, are there any special/ unusual terms? What are the leave liabilities? Are there any unresolved employment claims?). Often the Sale and Purchase Agreement will also address these types of issues.
- If the sale is to proceed with your existing staff but under new employment agreements with the new owner, ensure they receive their agreements with enough time to read them and seek advice. Rushing things for your team can lead to issues later on for you AND the buyer.
- Do not tell people publically about the sale until it has gone "unconditional". But have a plan to inform your staff, parents, the Ministry, etc, once it does go unconditional with statements agreed by both parties.

Finally - be prepared to walk away if things don't feel right for whatever reason. You should try to be dispassionate and emotionally detached – very hard, but really important.



Noa Meatuai Singh coordinates the use of modern cloth nappies at Le Malelega a le To'elau.

Auckland Council encourages sustainability in ECE centres

By Nicola Strawbridge

An innovative programme run by Auckland Council is helping early childcare centres reduce the waste they send to landfill. Le Malelega a le To'elau, a bilingual Samoan and English early childcare centre in Mangere reduced their rubbish by a third each day after taking part. They are now sending 300kgs less waste to landfill every month, a much more environmentally friendly option.

"We were always running out of rubbish bin space" says centre supervisor Lotu Talapa. "The bins would be full before collection day. We always had two full landfill bins, now we have about half a bin a week."

Last year the centre took part in Auckland Council's eight-week Cloth Nappy Trial. The trial is free to early childcare centres in the Auckland region and is part of the Council's drive to encourage Aucklanders to reduce the amount of waste they send to landfill. The Council loans the participating centre a kit of modern cloth nappies and provides expert advice and support.

Lotu was inspired to take part in the trial by a Council-subsidised nappy workshop run

by the Nappy Lady, Kate Meads. "I was really affected by the figure Kate gave on how much unnecessary waste is going to landfill." In Auckland, approximately 12% of waste to landfill is sanitary waste including single use nappies. "I thought, hey, we could use cloth nappies at our centre. That would really help our families and the environment," Lotu said.

"In South Auckland a lot of families are really struggling with the cost of basics – our centre wanted to find a way to support them," says Noa Meatuai Singh, a staff member who oversees the use of cloth nappies at the centre. "There has been lots of positive feedback from parents too," she says. "There are the immediate financial savings as the families only have to send one

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There are the immediate financial savings as the families only have to send one disposable nappy each day now.

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disposable nappy each day now." But many also commented on the big improvement with nappy rash.

It had been a problem for many children at the centre, possibly due to the cheap disposable nappies coming from home. "It was one of our goals to reduce nappy rash," says Noa. "Once we changed to cloth nappies the incidence of nappy rash reduced almost immediately."

Noa said new families to the centre initially envisage the old cloth nappy squares of their childhood – the complicated folds and sharp pins – but when they see how simple and easy to use the cloth nappies are, they're immediately impressed. The fact many of the children at centre are in cloth nappies gives the new families confidence too.

Most of the challenges came in the initial stages of the trial, said Noa. There was some resistance from the older children to start with. "Like many children, they reacted to the changes in their routine. But we gave them choices – many were learning their colours so they'd choose the colour or pattern of their nappies. Before long they were comparing nappies and saying 'look at mine' to their mates."

Likewise the biggest hurdles for the staff were in the first week or so as they figured out a routine for the washing and drying. "Kate and the Council staff were so much help when the trial started. At first I didn't like the idea of it. I was especially concerned about cleaning the nappies. But they gave us so much practical information and support that I soon got over that hurdle."

Noa said the staff quickly established a roster system, and now have three staff who share the role of washing and administering the nappy stock. "It was a good opportunity to communicate and work together as a team, and now everyone knows what is expected of them."

Noa commented that the trial gave her a chance to share information with her team and develop her leadership skills. "We learn as we go. Nobody's perfect. Teachers are similar to children; we can take a little while

to adjust to a change. But it's all learning. If children see us working together calmly and harmoniously it helps them to settle. So we focussed on getting those nappy admin systems sorted early, and that meant everything could run smoothly."

Both Lotu and Noa commented that toilet training has become a lot easier with the cloth nappy pull-ups. "The children like them as they're more like underpants. It's empowering for them as they can easily pull them up and down too. That coupled with the 'wet sensation', which makes them aware they are actually wet, has definitely shortened the toilet training period," says Noa.

"The trial focusses on reducing nappy waste, but it also helps you see the bigger picture," said Lotu. It has motivated us take positive action to reduce our centre's impact on the environment and inspire our children and families to make positive choices too."

"Through the trial we also improved our other waste processes" said Lotu. "We set up a compost bin in our garden to deal with our food scraps. We also set up waste separation stations around the centre so staff can easily separate out recyclables like paper, cardboard and plastic. The Council staff really helped

and encouraged us with this." Forty percent of what Aucklanders send to landfill is food waste, but it can easily be diverted through composting or worm farming. Both these processes offer lots of potential for involving children in positive waste wise behaviour too.

The trial includes a waste audit carried out by Council staff at the beginning and end of the trial. It allows each centre to see exactly what their waste is made up of – highlighting what is going to landfill and what could be diverted through better recycling and introducing worm farming, composting or bokashi.

Following the trial Le Malelega invested in a kit of cloth nappies for their children under two. "The Council's Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund made it possible for us to buy our own nappies," said Lotu. The fund supports projects to reduce and minimise the amount of waste going to landfill. It is open to community groups, businesses, iwi and educational institutions. In this case it also provided funds for extra staff time to co-ordinate the programme. This allowed the centre to provide co-ordination around consultation, written material and parent workshops which ensured ongoing commitment.



^ Cloth nappies are worn by the under two children at the centre

"The cloth nappy trial was the start of an amazing journey for our centre. There are so many positives. We highly recommend other centres take up the challenge," says Lotu.

For more information on the Auckland Council Cloth Nappy Programme and the Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or email Nicola Strawbridge nicola.strawbridge@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz, phone 890 7903.

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FUELLED4LIFE

Fuelled4life's great new resource *Healthy Habits Cook Book!*

It's a new year and Fuelled4life welcomes an exciting new resource to help your early childhood education (ECE) service make healthier food choices and support lifelong healthy habits.

Last year, we surveyed ECE services to find out what the most valuable tool or recourse is to help make positive and healthy changes in your centres. We had a strong response with 65% of you saying recipes were the most useful resource. As a result, we are proud to bring you our new Fuelled4life *Healthy Habits Cookbook*.

All centres signed up to Fuelled4life will receive the cookbook along with 8 recipe cards. Each year a further set of recipe cards will be added to the collection. These recipes are perfect for centres that prepare food on site, and can also be given to parents for lunch box ideas. It's a win-win.

Why is healthy food important for young children?

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

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

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 helping children to develop the healthy food behaviours that will support them to grow into healthy adults.

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

Creating healthy eating habits and food environments will have immediate positive effects both now and long term. The Heart Foundation's Fuelled4life's key goal is to address this.

By signing up to Fuelled4life your ECE is well on its way to taking charge of creating these healthy habits. As a Fuelled4life ECE you will receive the *Healthy Habits Cookbook* as well as access to guidance, advice and workshops on healthy food choices and healthy food environments.

Another key resource, the Fuelled4life *Buyers' Guide*, simplifies the choice of foods and drinks into two categories; **everyday** and **sometimes** options. Fuelled4life has specific nutrient criteria that foods and drinks must meet to fit into these categories. This is great for centres that provide food onsite or to use to guide parents on better choices.

What is Fuelled4life?

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.

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

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

Who is Fuelled4life for?

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

This may include:

- Managers
- Teachers
- Supervisors

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.

- Cooks
- Parents
- Helpers.

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

- Education and Care centres – church, workplace and childcare centres
- Kindergartens
- Home-based ECE services
- Play centres
- Nga Kohanga Reo
- Playgroups
- Nga Puna Kohungahunga
- Pacific Island early childhood groups.

Join now and other benefits will also include:

- resources to support a nutritious and delicious ECE service menu
- workshops to attend
- regular Fuelled4life newsletters – to keep you up-to-date with the latest healthy products
- competitions and promotions to jump on board with
- nutritious and delicious recipe ideas
- online Fuelled4life *Buyers' Guide*
- other new resources in 2015 such as a lunch box resource for parents and a catering guide for centres.

How to be part of Fuelled4life:

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

Contact Larissa Beeby
larissab@heartfoundation.org.nz or
09 526 8550 to get more information about Fuelled4life.





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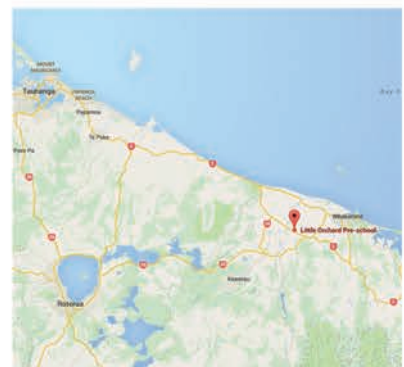
Little Orchard Pre-School Putiki Road was established nearly 20 years ago with a vision of creating an environment where children could explore the outdoors and interact with animals.

In the technological age that we live in, teaching our children to appreciate adventure and fun in the outdoors is more important than ever - this sale provides an exciting opportunity for the right person, who shares this vision, to make a difference.

- Set on 5.29 hectares of Rural A classed land on Putiki Road close to Edgecumbe in the sunny Bay of Plenty
- Approx. Travel Times: 1 hour to Rotorua & Tauranga, 15 mins to Whakatane
- Licenced for 58 Preschool children
- Extensive Outdoor area with mature trees for shade
- Fully fenced in-ground Swimming Pool
- Bike Track
- Spacious playground and large sandpit
- Farm animals (sheep, chickens, alpaca's, miniature horses, pigs, deer)
- Small Orchard

Included but completely separated from the Preschool is a newly renovated and carpeted 3 Bedroom home with open plan living and a wooden deck, north facing alfresco dining/entertaining areas, along with 2 space carport and an implement shed.

Contact Lynne or Brian on 021 547 708 or email brian@lops.co.nz



By the Numbers

145

the number of years we've had the same flag.

643,438,425

the total number of hours all children in New Zealand who are under six years of age watch TV each year (2013 Census plus TVNZ research).

365

the points scored for "quixotry" in 2007, the highest scoring word actually played in Scrabble history.

19,733

the number of notifications requiring further action to Child, Youth and Family for the 2010/2011 year for children aged 0 to 5 inclusive.

\$9,700

the investment in dollars per child participating in early childhood education in New Zealand in 2013 (MoE, excludes home-based and under twos).

\$13,135

the current investment in dollars per student participating in tertiary-level study in New Zealand (2005).
(www.educationcounts.govt.nz)

481

the number of education and care centres reviewed by ERO from January to October 2014 with a review result score of 3 or 4 (there were 78 with a score of 1 or 2) (ERO).

1,078

the number of licensed childcare centres that are members of the Early Childhood Council (ECC).

94

the number of professional development workshops offered by the ECC in 2014.

2,435

the distribution of the ECC's Swings & Roundabouts quarterly magazine.

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**Early Childhood
Council**

Ten ways to involve fathers in their children's education

By Leah Davies, M.Ed.

Parent involvement in schools and ECE centres has traditionally been carried out by mothers. Yet boys and girls need positive, male role models. When fathers take an active role in education, schools report an increase in student achievement.

However, there are many barriers to participation by fathers such as:

- The belief that a child's education is a mother's responsibility
- A tendency for ECE centres and schools to communicate primarily with mothers
- Divorced or separated mothers having sole custody of children
- A lack of awareness on how to help
- Fathers' often overwhelming work schedules
- A failure to recognise the importance of becoming involved
- Literacy and language difficulties.

How can educators foster involvement?

- 1 Make sure specific information concerning the mother and father is completed on the enrolment form. Address all communication to both parents when appropriate. If the parents are divorced or separated, send student progress reports/ portfolios and other related information to the absent parent unless the separation exists to protect family members. Ask for the father's feedback or contribution to their child's learning story. When calling the home ask to speak to the father as well as the mother. Keep both parents informed through newsletters, e-mail and notes concerning their child's progress.
- 2 Maintain a father-friendly environment. Have welcoming signs near the front door in all languages represented in the centre. Make a special effort to involve males in leadership positions on advisory councils or in governance roles. Encourage fathers to personally invite other adult males to become active.
- 3 Request that both parents attend teacher-parent conferences. Provide child care and offer an interpreter when needed. Involve the father in a discussion concerning the child by asking non-threatening questions

like, "What do you and your child enjoy doing together?" (See "Guidelines for Educator-Parent Conferences Concerning Angry Children" under Teacher Ideals at www.kellybear.com.) If time permits, give both parents a survey form concerning their careers, hobbies, interests, and schedule. Include space where parents can write concerns and list their specific needs. (See "Inviting Parental Involvement through Survey Forms" under Teacher Ideals at www.kellybear.com.) If completion of the form appears to be difficult for the parents, interview them. Collect the forms and if possible, address their comments before they leave.

- 4 Search for opportunities to include fathers in centre activities. Encourage them to attend school events and to observe in their child's classroom. Have a "Father Night" where fathers or other males such as grandfathers, uncles, or family friends are invited to bring the child to the centre. Have adult-child teams play simple relay games or participate in other enjoyable activities that require little skill. Serve refreshments and provide parenting information in a non-threatening way.
- 5 Have a "Dad Lunch" or "Father Breakfast" where children are invited to bring a father, or male relative, "Big Brother," or other "dad figure" to be honoured. Ask some dads to include an additional child, so that no child is left out. After eating together have a father-only discussion on ways to help their child learn.
- 6 Sponsor a Saturday work day where fathers are asked to bring their child to clean up the grounds and/or make needed repairs. Provide T-shirts for those who help.
- 7 Involve fathers in a day or weekend retreat in the community where bonding can take place. Provide activities that promote fellowship and leadership. Based on expressed interests of the fathers, create useful committees and/or support groups. Formulate a Father-to-Father Programme during which experienced dads mentor young fathers.
- 8 Provide classes on fatherhood, parenting, literacy, English as a second language, or other requested topics.

- 9 Recognise the special role fathers play during family events such as plays, programmes or other activities. Have them stand to receive applause and point out ways they can participate in their child's education. Pass out volunteer sign-up sheets for various activities such as art, science or cultural enrichment projects.

- 10 Inform fathers that volunteering is not the only way to enhance their child's learning. Active involvement with their child at home is a form of participation. Stress that maintaining an open, sensitive father-child relationship will have a positive impact on their child's growth. Encourage the following behaviours in fathers:

- Telling childhood stories
- Reading with their child
- Modelling reading behaviours
- Using the library
- Playing games and/or sports
- Taking the child on outings to a park, zoo, museum, and/or participate in cultural activities.
- Completing routine jobs together
- Teaching the child a skill
- Watching educational television
- Having a weekly family night
- Modelling perseverance
- Exploring interests
- Eating family meals together and encouraging discussion. For example during the meal, have each family member tell about the best thing that happened to them that day or an important thing they learned
- Most of all, express love and pleasure in being with your child.

About the Author

Leah Davies received her Master's Degree from the Department of Counseling and Counseling Psychology, Auburn University. She has been dedicated to the well-being of children for 44 years as a certified teacher, counsellor, prevention specialist, parent, and grandparent. You can find more about Leah at <http://www.kellybear.com>. *(Article re-printed with permission by author.)*

Reading aloud to children

By Leah Davies, M.Ed.



Listening comprehension is vitally important if children are to achieve reading comprehension. Children who come from homes with minimal language enrichment need to hear new words if they are to become proficient readers. Reading aloud to children, even if only for a short time each day, enhances their language skills, as well as their love of literature and learning.

In 1983 the Commission on Reading was created and funded by the U. S. Department of Education to study the best way to increase knowledge and reading in children. The commission evaluated ten thousand research studies over the course of two years and reported their results in *Becoming a Nation of Readers*. Among the findings: "The single

most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children." The study supported reading aloud in classrooms throughout all grades.*

Experts agree that the way to motivate children to read on their own is by arousing their interest and curiosity. Reading exciting stories to children helps them associate reading with pleasure. When the teacher and children share suspense, emotions, and enjoy fascinating characters, their relationship is strengthened. In addition, when children listen to a teacher read, they learn grammatical form and story structure. Reading stories, poems, books and factual texts to children builds their vocabulary,

attention span and knowledge base so that they can speak, read, and write more fluently.

Children need to be exposed to nonfiction, as well as fiction. Teachers may begin with simple nonfiction books to introduce science, math and social studies concepts and then move on to more difficult texts. Model reading for information and investigation by stopping and asking the children to review, define and/or comment on the material. For example, stop reading and say, "Let's see, what did she say about insects that only live twenty-four hours?" Let the children respond and then say something like, "I wonder what insect she will tell us about next?" Sometimes teachers have the children make a picture dictionary to go along with a story, chart what happened, or create graphics to further understanding. Involving students reinforces inquisitiveness and cognitive skills. Listening to teachers read nonfiction material increases student's ability to read and comprehend newspaper articles, directions, complicated writings, as well as to perform well on tests that require an extensive vocabulary.

The classroom teacher is a powerful role model for the enjoyment of reading. When teachers demonstrate a love of reading, their children will more likely become avid reader themselves.

**Richard C. Anderson, Elfrieda H. Hiebert, Judith A. Scott, Ian A.G. Wilkinson, Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading, (Champaign-Urbana, IL: Center for the Study of Reading, 1985), p. 23 and 51.*

Ideas to enhance reading picture books aloud to children

1. Choose stories that you have read and that you enjoyed reading.
2. Read a variety of books.
3. Choose a colourful book that is large enough for the group of children to see.
4. Reread favourite books.
5. Read some stories that lend themselves to children repeating a phrase or filling in a word.
6. Practice reading aloud if necessary.
7. Pick an area in the room that is quiet and comfortable.
8. Sit higher than the students so that they can see the pictures and hear you.
9. Help the children settle down before you begin by leading them in a calming game or song.
10. Hold up the book and call attention to the author and illustrator.
11. Ask a question that will spark their interest.
12. Move the book back and forth so that the children can see the illustrations, or show the pictures after you read each page.
13. Read with expression and enthusiasm.
14. Let your facial expressions reflect the emotions of the characters.
15. Use character voices.
16. Pace your reading to fit the story, but read slow enough so the children can understand it.
17. Use puppets or other props.
18. Accept children's comments or questions unless they interrupt the flow of the story.
19. If the children become distracted, stop and ask, "What do you think will happen next?" You could also do a "finger play" or have them stand and sing a song before continuing to read.
20. Allow time to review the story and/or have the children act it out.

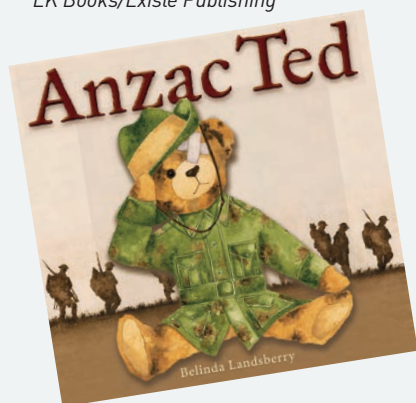
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Resource Reviews

Anzac Ted

By Belinda Landsberry
EK Books/Exisle Publishing



Anzac Day has always been an important date for many New Zealanders and in recent years this commemoration day has had somewhat a resurgence in honouring and remembering those who have fought, served and died in wars New Zealand has participated in. This interest has increased discussion for many, including children, on why we are celebrating Anzac Day. This book will be another fabulous resource for teachers to help explain the importance of the day.

This book shares the story of Anzac Ted, a little boy's tattered and worn teddy bear that accompanied his grandfather when he

fought in the First World War. The story gives a general overview of the war – soldiers leaving family and travelling overseas to places where they felt scared and alone at times, but who found comfort in Anzac Ted, a mascot that became a symbol of family and home for the Anzac soldiers.

The watercolour illustrations are beautiful, particularly the sepia-toned illustrations of the yesteryear. The author/illustrator has cleverly separated the two time periods by using sepia-toned illustrations for the past, while the colour illustrations depict the present. A book to be shared in large or small groups or one-on-one.

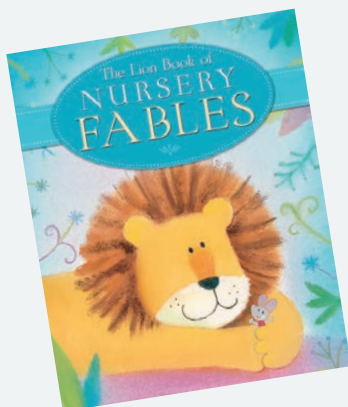


Tottie and Dot

By Tania McCartney
Illustrated by Tina Snerling
EK Books/Exisle Publishing

Tottie and Dot are two little girls who live side by side, enjoying life together such as drinking marshmallow tea and eating apricot sandwiches together. But one day the good friends start to redecorate and as the story unfolds, jealousy takes a hold and their competitive spirit gets increasingly out of control with their homes becoming more and more elaborate, until disaster takes hold...will Tottie and Dot realise the importance of their friendship before it's too late?

This is a fun story, with exquisite illustrations that complement the storyline about keeping up with the Joneses, the importance of friendship and being true to oneself. A great story to read in large or small groups, but with so much detail in the illustrations small or one-on-one readings will be more beneficial and pleasurable.

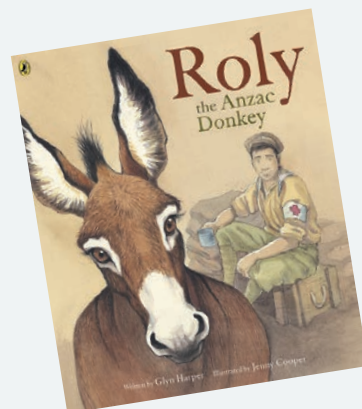


The Lion Book of Nursery Fables

By Sophie Piper
Illustrated by Dubravka Kolanovic
Lion Hudson

This edition of Aesop fables has been retold for the under fives. The 31 fables are short and to the point and impart the wisdom Aesop's fables are known for, with each fable finishing with a reminder on what can be taken from each fable, ie after the fable *The Crow and the Jar*, the story reminds us: *So remember....Little by little does the trick.*

The simple illustrations capture the traditional feel of the fables and the book is presented in a hardback cover, with padding front and back, so perfect for young readers. It won't be a book for everyone, but for those who enjoy these traditional tales, this book will be best enjoyed one-on-one or in small groups for discussion on the fable's message.



Roly the Anzac Donkey

By Glyn Harper
Illustrated by Jenny Cooper

Here is another fantastic resource for those wanting to share and describe the experience and events of the First World War during Gallipoli with young children.

The story is based on real people and events about a soldier, Richard, who works together with a donkey, Roly, to help save the lives of wounded soldiers. The story is written from Roly's perspective. This book is a retelling of the author's 2004 story, *The Donkey Man* and commemorates the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli invasion.

The story alongside the beautifully detailed illustrations will captivate the imagination of young readers/listeners. Definitely a story for older pre-schoolers and a book to be read in small groups or one-on-one as it's sure to provoke lots of discussion.



Moonman

By Ned Barraud
Craig Potton Publishing

This is a story about Moonman, the moon's curious caretaker, who often wonders what the glowing blue globe is that he can see from his home on the moon. But when he hitchhikes a ride on a passing shooting star, he discovers a world that is completely different to his own. He at first feels scared of the difference, but soon discovers difference can be fun and exciting, that is till daybreak, and the scorching sun hurts Moonman.

This book explores the idea that although curiosity and exploring is an opportunity to discover something different and wonderful there is still nothing like being home! And despite Moonman being happy when he returns home his curiosity doesn't wane: when Moonman lies in his 'warm and cosy moonbed' after his adventure on Earth he notices a red glow of another planet and begins to wonder....

This book visually is a pleasure with its atmospheric night setting and the very characteristic Moonman. A good book to share from one-on-one to larger groups.



The Little Kiwi Book of Months

By Frances Chan

This book has been designed and written especially for 'Kiwi kids' with each month relating to the right time of the year for New Zealand seasons, from sunny January to wintry July and Christmas on the beach. It's a fun simple book with catchy rhymes, "Matariki is Māori New Year, it begins in JUNE. Plant new crops and see seven stars rise above the moon."

Another highlight are the bright photos of children and families that accompany the text. These images represent the various cultures that live in New Zealand, something that is often missing in New Zealand children's literature. The only snipe that some may have is that being a New Zealand book it could be more bicultural, but with it's generic Kiwi flavour and at the very cheap price of \$8.99 plus postage and packing, it would still make a great addition to any ECE centre. It is rather a small book so lends itself to small groups and one-on-one reading. This self-published book can be purchased directly from franceschan.net.



Māori Art for Kids

By Julie Noanoa & Norm Heke
Craig Potton Publishing

This collection of 15 projects offers children a range of Māori art experiences within sculpture, photography, design, print, mixed media, and more. Although it's predominant audience is for children over the age of 7, many of these ideas can be used or adapted for the under 5s. Art projects include making a koru spiral using natural materials and then taking photos of the spirals, or making a hei tiki neck pendant from oven-bake modelling clay, or a manu tukutuku kite using plastic bags and bamboo sticks. The easy-to-follow instructions include illustrations of the steps and use everyday craft materials, recycled and found objects. Alongside each art project is an example of a taonga created by a leading contemporary artist with a brief explanation of the artwork, its purpose and use in the past and present.

If you are looking at ideas for extending or introducing art projects that focus on Māori art and culture, this book may be your answer and a stepping stone into creating other ideas.



WIN BOOKS FOR YOUR CENTRE!

Swings & Roundabouts is giving readers the chance to win a **Prize Pack** containing a selection of 5 books for your centre. All you need to do is answer this question:

What planet did Moonman land on?

Email your contact details and the answer to the above question to publications@ecc.org.nz by **Friday 22 May 2015** and be in to win.

Competition Winner

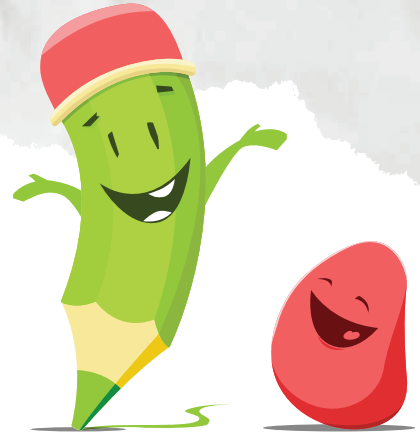
Congratulations to the following winner who has won the December Prize Pack:

- **Alex Goodwin**, Wanganui

Last Laugh

Why is it so....??

- Why isn't the number 11 pronounced onety-one?
- If people from Poland are called Poles, then why aren't people from Holland called Holes?
- If a pig loses its voice, is it disgruntled?
- Why is a person who plays the piano called a pianist, but a person who drives a race car is not called a racist?
- If it's true that we are here to help others, then what exactly are the others here for?
- If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen defrocked, then doesn't it follow that electricians can be delighted, musicians denoted, cowboys deranged, models deposed, tree surgeons debarked, and dry cleaners depressed?
- If Fed Ex and UPS were to merge, would they call it Fed UP?
- What hair colour do they put on the driver's licenses of bald men?



“Quote du Jour:

*I am no longer
young enough to
know everything.*

- Oscar Wilde. ”

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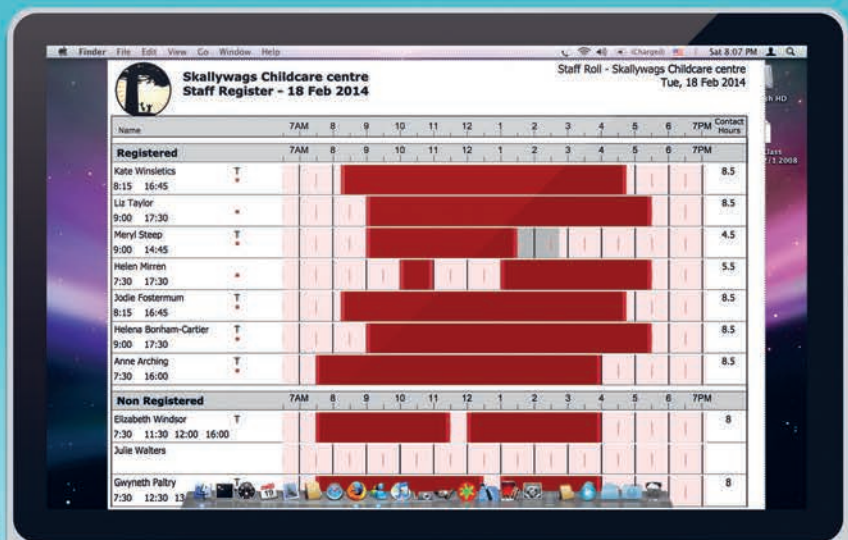


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		7AM	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7PM	Contact Hours
Registered															
Kate Winsletics	8:15 16:45	T													8.5
Liz Taylor	9:00 17:30	*													8.5
Meryl Steep	9:00 14:45	T													4.5
Helen Mirren	7:30 17:30	*													5.5
Jodie Fosterum	8:15 16:45	T													8.5
Helena Bonham-Carter	9:00 17:30	T													8.5
Anne Arching	7:30 16:00	T													8.5
Non Registered															
Elizabeth Windsor	7:30 11:30 12:00 16:00	T													8
Julie Walters															
Gwyneth Paltrow	7:30 12:30 13														8



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