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ECC MEMBERSHIP

Applications for advertising in Swings & Roundabouts will be considered from the following:
1) Early childhood centres and/or their associated management groups that are members of the Early Childhood Council.
2) Trade and service suppliers to the early childhood industry.
3) Government and not-for-profit organisations.
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• The ECC’s online information portal and weekly electronic news

ECC Member Handbooks

For information go to the membership section of our website at www.ecc.org.nz, contact us on 0800 742 742 or email admin@ecc.org.nz

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The Early Childhood Council is the largest representative body of licensed early childhood centres in New Zealand. Our 1000+ member centres are both community-owned and commercially owned, employ more than 7000 staff and care for more than 50,000 children.
Welcome to the June issue of Swings & Roundabouts.

Another conference is behind us, and it was a really fantastic event. Thanks so much to everyone involved. In this issue we feature articles from some of our conference presenters: Julie Wylie gives you some ideas on how to incorporate music into the lives of babies in your centre; Rachel Goodchild discusses the importance of adult interactions in ECE centres; and Dr Estelle Irving talks about television in the lives of young children.

Deborah Wansbrough from the New Zealand Teachers Council, who also presented at this year’s conference, talks about the new Registered Teacher Criteria and how this will affect you and your provisionally registered teachers. Alongside this article is an account from Clare Wells, Chief Executive of New Zealand Kindergartens, on their pilot project using the Registered Teacher Criteria (draft Criteria) and Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and Mentor Teacher Development (draft Guidelines) to provide feedback to the Teachers Council as it finalised these documents.

One of the benefits of being an ECC member is that you can access our Member Benefit Schemes. In this issue we feature our scheme providers and the exclusive pricing they offer to our members. If you are not a member of the ECC, have a look – joining may well enable you to make some great savings and you can gain access to the services of New Zealand Childcare Finance and our Child Proof business insurance scheme. If you are a member, make sure you are making the most of your membership by signing up with our preferred suppliers.

There is a lot more in this issue, including some important advice from Child Protection Studies on what to do if you suspect a child in your care is at risk.

Please make sure you share this magazine with the staff in your centre. As always, feel free to photocopy or quote from any articles in your parent newsletters – please just make sure you reference where the article is from and the name of the writer.

Keep up the good work!

Sarah Ellich
Publications Manager
Early Childhood Council

The dust continues to settle post the Budget announcements and people are coming to grips with the changes announced.

By far the most contentious change for the ECE sector is the loss of the two top funding bands. The impact on those centres currently above 80% qualified, registered ECE teachers is significant, with major dollar losses of revenue quoted.

The Minister has explained the change in terms of the 100% target being one of the biggest drivers for increasing cost in the sector over the last few years, without the benefit of a growth in the number of children participating. She has wanted to identify funding to support growing participation in communities where this has been low and has indicated she wants to roll out the project the Ministry started recently in South Auckland, of supported playgroups.

The ECC’s response has been to seek the opportunity to meet with the Minister to ensure she understands the unintended impacts of this decision and what it means to those centres who have worked so hard to achieve the 100% goal. By the time you read this, we will have met with the Minister and will have had the opportunity to discuss options to minimise the unintended adverse impacts of the Budget on families and seek the opportunity to be involved around the table on implementation decisions.

We conducted a survey of the impact of this change on our members (see article over page) and will be using this data in our discussion with the Minister. I’d like to thank the members who took part in this survey – your input is crucial to our ability to represent your interests to the Government.

In addition to this, we will be preparing advice and options for centres affected by the funding cut next February and the increase in GST and changes to depreciation later this year. We have published Budget Q&As on our members’ web portal and will shortly publish a set of scenarios offering centres advice on managing in the face of such adverse changes. Finally, we are exploring additional seminars on financial planning, employment relations and business planning to help centres manage the changes.

We will also continue to work on those issues not resolved in the Budget, such as the cap on student teacher numbers, the failure to recognise the experience of some of the excellent overseas-trained ECE teachers and not just their bits of paper, and the high compliance costs driven by duplicated reporting and licensing requirements. Plenty to do.

Peter Reynolds
Chief Executive Officer
Early Childhood Council
Budget 2010

ECC CEO PETER REYNOLDS REPORTS

Budget 2010 and ECE

The Early Childhood Council supports much of what was announced for ECE in the 2010 Budget including:

- The introduction of a 2.4% CPI adjustment for non-teacher costs;
- The expansion of the 20 Hours policy to include Playcentres, all Kohanga Reo and five-year olds;
- The inclusion of registered primary teachers for the purpose of ECE service funding claims from 1 November 2010;
- The expanded recognition of overseas ECE qualifications that are equivalent to NZ level 7; and
- The intention to focus on ensuring families in most need get access to services by investing in five intensive, community-led participation projects in high-priority areas.

However, our concerns about the Budget are focused on the intention to remove the 80 to 99% and 100% funding bands.

The impact on centres

The ECC conducted a survey of our members focused on the impacts on ECE centres, children and their families of the removal of the 80 to 99% and 100% funding bands. There were 260 respondents responsible for running 526 centres. Just over a third were community-owned, just under two thirds privately owned.

The survey data has confirmed much of what has been reported in news media already: that the removal of the 80 to 99% and 100% funding bands is going to have significant consequences for the delivery of ECE in those centres currently in the top two funding bands.

The survey confirms that these impacts will include a reduction in the proportion of qualified staff in many affected centres, a reduction of service levels and service quality in many centres, an increase in fees for many families, and a reduction in professional development opportunities for staff members.

ECC recommendations to the Minister

By the time this issue of Swings & Roundabouts has gone to print, the ECC will have met with Minister of Education Anne Tolley to discuss ideas to alleviate the negative impacts on ECE service delivery of the removal of the 80 to 99% and 100% funding bands. We will keep our members informed of the outcomes of this meeting and may seek to keep the discussion alive in the media.

“However, our concerns about the Budget are focused on the intention to remove the 80 to 99% and 100% funding bands.”

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All with an interest in early childhood welcome!
This year’s Early Childhood Council Annual Conference was an action-packed one, with six breakout sessions comprising almost 40 workshops to choose from and seven keynote speakers spread throughout the three-day programme.

We got off to a great start with an energising kapa haka performance from local school Te Kura Kaupapa Maori O Te Whanau Tahi.

Early Childhood Council CEO Peter Reynolds gave the opening keynote address. Titled ‘Setting the Agenda’, Peter’s presentation focused on the ECC’s plans to improve our member benefits and services, and how we plan to address the current issues the sector is facing. These issues included teacher registration and the availability of teachers, the amount of reporting required by the Ministry of Education, the sector’s funding model, issues around multiple licensing, and the possibility of national standards being introduced to the early childhood education sector. Peter also discussed the implications for the ECE sector of what may be in this year’s Budget.

After lunch, Hon Heather Roy MP discussed the support available for children with special education needs or behaviour challenges. As Associate Minister of Education with responsibility for special education, she has been closely involved with several new government initiatives in this regard, including the Incredible Years teacher and parenting programme, and the development of a ‘Maori for Maori’ programme. You can read the Minister’s speech on her website: www.roy.org.nz

Professor Matt Sanders from the University of Queensland was our final keynote speaker for the day. He discussed the success of evidence-based parenting programmes that take a “whole-of-community” approach, rather than just targeting the parents of the most difficult to manage children.

A welcome reception was held after the day’s events in the trade fair area, giving the delegates the chance to mix and mingle with the trade exhibitors over drinks and nibbles. This year’s trade fair was a bright and colourful affair, with over 58 stands representing close to 45 different companies and organisations that provide goods and services to the early childhood sector.

Allison Mooney started off Saturday’s full timetable with her funny and insightful take on personality styles. Her book Pushing the Right Buttons sold like hotcakes over lunch, with Allison doing an impromptu book signing as well. If you missed out on getting a copy, you can order it from: www.personalityplus.co.nz/books.htm

We managed to keep Saturday’s surprise guests a secret until right up to the last minute! The delegates came into the plenary session after lunch to find blow up rhythm sticks on their chairs. The members of the Rhythm Interactive group took the stage and played a fantastic drum solo. Using only mime they got the delegates to blow up their sticks and embarked on a madcap performance, splitting the audience into three groups and getting them to play increasingly fast and complicated rhythms.

Gill Connell from Moving Smart gave the final keynote for the day on movement and the brain. Many delegates commented that they had learnt something really valuable to take back and apply to their centres from this presentation.

We held spot prizes at the end of the day; many of our exhibitors gave us wonderful prizes and Wheeler’s Books donated a prize pack of books and literary resources valued at over $500.

And then, it was time for the gala dinner. This year’s theme was Come as a Country. With over 200 guests, we had some fairly spectacular costumes and it was very hard to pick the best to give prizes to – but the group from Trinity Kindergarten was the obvious choice for the grand prize, with their incredible “We Are One” costume. Gary McCormick gave the after dinner speech and then the Vague As Brothers hit the stage. They kept us dancing until after midnight. Photos of the event are available at www.pixs.co.nz

The ECC’s AGM was held on Sunday morning, and the Executive Board and officers were elected. Re-elected unopposed was Margie Blackwood as President (Kids Kampus, Auckland). Maria Johnson was elected Vice President (Little School, Wellington). Re-elected to the National Executive Committee were Maree Moselen (Next Generation, Auckland), Pam Maclean (Queenstown Childcare, Queenstown), Sue Wayman (Small World Preschool, Christchurch), and Jill Oliver (Trinity Kindergarten, Auckland). Newly elected to the National Executive Council was Tim Lainson (Kindercare, Auckland). Finally, elected from the floor were Lonnie Parker (Bright Sparks, Auckland), continuing as Treasurer;

Article continued over page...
(1) Te Kura Kaupapa Maori O Te Whanau Tahi opens the ECC Annual Conference 2010. (2) The front and back views of the winning gala dinner ‘Come as a Country’ costume entry. (3) ECC CEO Peter Reynolds meets Hon Heather Roy before her presentation. (4) ECC President Margie Blackwood explores the Playzone equipment up for auction. (5) The Sharp trade stand with the major conference prize of a 52” television displayed at front left. (6) Rhythm Interactive hit the stage. (7) The delegates start to get the hang of their rhythm sticks. (8) Allison Mooney signs copies of her book.
and Maria Johnson, who continues as Secretary in addition to her new Vice President duties.

Sunday’s programme got off to a great start with Dr Louise Porter from Small Poppies discussing many of our beliefs about children. She talked about the importance of focusing on children’s present needs rather than just their future ones, and how crucial it is to do things with children rather than to them. The ECC was selling copies of Louise’s book ‘Children are People Too’, but we quickly sold out. If you missed out, they can be purchased from Louise’s website www.louiseporter.com.au/publications.html

Our final keynote of the conference was Marcus Akuhata-Brown. Marcus’s speech ‘Lifting the lid off low expectations’ had most of us in tears as he told us his incredible story of growing up on the East Coast in a large family with little money and no expectations of carrying on his schooling or getting a decent job. A teacher saw potential in Marcus and made the effort to spend time working with him. Since that turning point Marcus has been the youngest school principal in New Zealand (at 21), he has addressed members of the UN and has met an amazing array of people from Prince Charles to Nelson Mandela, as he shares his story with the world. After a standing ovation, one of our delegates stayed standing and began to sing “E tu kahikatea” – the rest of us joined in and by then there wasn’t a dry eye in the house!

We closed the conference with a very exciting auction of equipment from Playzone and our major prize draw of a huge 52” television from ECC Member Benefit Scheme provider, Sharp Corporation.

A huge thank you to our keynote and session presenters, our trade exhibitors, Sharp, Playzone, Wheeler’s Books and our fantastic event organisers – Icon Conference and Event Management. And, of course, to our delegates – thank you for your support of this year’s conference and your continuing support of the Early Childhood Council.

Next year’s ECC Annual Conference will be held in Wellington, at the Wellington Convention Centre over the last weekend in May. Keep an eye on the ECC news if you are a member, or on our website: www.ecc.org.nz for information.

We had delegates from far and wide at this year’s Early Childhood Council Annual Conference. Not only did we have attendees from the far north and south of New Zealand, but we had several delegates from the UK, Canada and Australia. We also had three delegates from the Ministry of Education in Brunei. They came to gain an understanding of ECE in New Zealand and ECC CEO Peter Reynolds took them on a tour of several centres in Christchurch.

They were delighted to see the similarities and differences between the two cultures, commenting especially on the way the children in centres they visited were calmly and respectfully disciplined, with a hug as an important part of a ‘little talk’.

They enjoyed the range of keynotes and breakout sessions, and said that they would be reporting back to their education ministry with many new ideas for policies and practices.

Our Bruneian guests quickly came to love New Zealand’s landscape and culture and even returned home with temporary Maori and All Blacks tattoos!

This was a fantastic opportunity for the Early Childhood Council to showcase the many positive aspects of education and care in New Zealand and to build relationships with other early childhood educators and organisations overseas.

Thank you to Te Aro Tamariki, the Sheila Walker Unit and the Early Childhood Learning Centre at the University of Canterbury, and New Beginnings Preschool in Linwood, who helped to show our international guests what early childhood education in New Zealand is all about.

Photo above: our three guests from the Brunei Ministry of Education.
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The agreement is part of Sharp’s ongoing dedication to the early education sector in New Zealand.
Established by Peter Coleman and Gavin Hazelden who are childcare centre owners themselves, ECE Astute provides specialist business services for childcare centre owners and investors as well as childcare staff and centre managers who wish to purchase a centre or improve the business performance of their centre.

Through our association with Astute Real Estate, we also provide a discreet and pleasant experience for those owners seeking a change of direction.

Having recently presented a workshop at the Early Childhood Council Annual Conference we detailed a number of scenarios around expanding your centre, purchasing another centre or building a new centre. We also explored business versus building ownership and the various methods to achieve successful growth whilst mitigating several risks.

A full copy of this presentation and our regular e-newsletter are available via our website www.eceastute.co.nz. The newsletter provides ongoing business tips and advice for current as well as future centre owners and investors.

Our recent projects for centre owners, in addition to childcare centre sales have included:

- Due diligence for proposed centre purchases and developments
- Greenfield site assessments
- Finance
- Equity partnership sourcing
- Business planning
- Competitor analysis
- Revenue modelling
- Marketing and brand redevelopment

We also provide accounting services for those centre owners seeking a specialist childcare centre accountant.

All members of the ECC receive exclusive pricing and fee rates for the range of ECE Astute services.

If you would like to discuss any aspects of your childcare business then please call Peter or Gavin on (09) 415 4405 to speak in the strictest confidence. Also visit our website www.eceastute.co.nz for more details on our services and to register for our e newsletter.

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- **Greenfield Site** - A full search, assessment and research project including coordination of project providers to assess the potential of a new site.
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Breakfast – the most important meal of the day

ALISSA TOSSWILL REPORTS

Breakfast is the first meal of the day and ideally needs to be consumed within one hour of waking to ensure that you ‘break the fast’ that your body has been through since the last meal of the previous day.

While breakfast options vary widely in different cultures it generally includes a carbohydrate food such as cereal or rice, fruit and/or vegetables, a protein food that may be a dairy product, and a drink.

While people seem to know that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, not everyone consumes breakfast every day. Even if they don’t feel hungry or are busy getting ready so feel they don’t have time, it is important that adults become the role model and aim to have breakfast with their children every day. Habits such as not eating breakfast can start in early childhood, so now is the time to set a pattern for a lifelong habit of healthy eating, and there is no better way than to start first thing in the morning with breakfast. While you may not serve breakfast in your centre it is important to educate children on the importance of breakfast and also to encourage parents to provide their child with breakfast. Please feel free to take excerpts from this article to include in your parent newsletter.

Why is it especially important for children to start their day with breakfast?

Children (and adults) who start their day with breakfast are more likely to meet their daily nutrient requirements - especially if the breakfast consists of a carbohydrate such as wholegrain cereal or toast (consuming more fibre), a dairy product such as milk or yoghurt (consuming more calcium), a piece of fruit (consuming more vitamin C) and a glass of water (preventing dehydration). This will also assist with healthy growth and development. As the brain is fuelled by

Which is the best breakfast cereal to choose for children (and adults)?

It is important to compare the nutritional content in cereals when out shopping, as many cereals aimed specifically at children can contain at least 1/3 sugar. It is also ideal to use the 100g column on the nutritional information panel to compare products, as serving sizes may vary in weight. Look for products with less than 15g of sugar per 100g; if they contain dried fruit as a key ingredient look for up to 25g per 100g. Many packet products are high in sodium (salt) and this can lead to high blood pressure; look for a moderate sodium content of 400mg per 100g. Fibre is an important component, as this helps the digestive system work; look for a cereal with more than 5g of fibre per 100g but no more than 15g. Using the above recommendations the ideal breakfast cereals are wheat biscuits and rolled oats (porridge).
What are some breakfast food ideas?

Porridge is a great winter warmer; try making it with milk to increase the calcium content. Ensure that the porridge is allowed to cool before serving to avoid burnt mouths. Instead of brown sugar try adding one of the following to make porridge tasty and more exciting:

- Slice half a semi-ripe banana on porridge once cooked;
- Try a ripe banana sliced into porridge during the last minute of cooking;
- Add two chopped dates into the porridge during last minute of cooking;
- Grate half a small apple and add ¼ tsp cinnamon to porridge;
- Add ¼ cup of frozen berries during the last minute of cooking; or
- Add yoghurt at the end of cooking for a sweet treat.

While wholegrain toast may be the preferred option, try bread alternatives such as pita pockets, roti or rye bread, crepes, pikelets or pancakes, Lebanese or Turkish bread with avocado, sliced tomato, mashed banana, or marmite/vegemite with a slice of cheese, baked beans or a poached egg on top.

Smoothies make a great breakfast that you can prepare the night before. Try one made from milk, yoghurt, mashed banana or peaches in juice either whizzed in a blender or shaken in a milk bottle.

What are some tips to ensure breakfast becomes part of the morning routine?

It can be helpful for parents to spend a little time the night before preparing the next day’s clothes, lunch and backpack, as this may provide an extra 15 minutes for breakfast in the morning. Try setting the alarm to get up earlier! Aim to say ‘no’ to television, video games and computers in the morning, as this distraction will delay breakfast consumption. If time is really short, breakfast can be provided on the way (while this is not teaching good eating habits, for some it may be the only way) – try celery filled with peanut butter or cream cheese, dried fruits, cheese slices,

If we all know breakfast is important, why aren’t we all eating it?

Mornings can be a busy time for families. Sometimes it appears that skipping breakfast will make it easier to get out the door. This may be true in the short term, but research has shown that people who skip breakfast are more likely to run late throughout the day and take longer to complete tasks because they are low in energy and, therefore, can become unmotivated. Skipping breakfast to save time may just delay you later in the day!

Some children (and adults) claim that they are not hungry in the mornings and, therefore, don’t feel like eating breakfast. Eating breakfast kick starts your metabolism in the morning to break the overnight fast. If a child is not feeling hungry in the morning it may be because he or she is consuming a large dinner or a snack before bed, which is keeping them full until morning. Remember, a child can use their own hand to control portion size – a palm serving of protein food (lean meat/beans/egg), a fist full of carbohydrate foods (rice/pasta/potato) and the other half of the dinner plate of colourful vegetables. Overeating can lead to becoming overweight and it is much more important to eat breakfast in the morning than have a second helping at dinnertime.

What are some breakfast food ideas?

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Smoothies make a great breakfast that you can prepare the night before. Try one made from milk, yoghurt, mashed banana or peaches in juice either whizzed in a blender or shaken in a milk bottle.

Remember that while breakfast does need to involve nutritious foods something is always better than nothing - just watch portion sizes!
a hard-boiled egg, a milk carton or a wholegrain cereal bar. For those with little hunger in the morning offer milk, yoghurt, a banana or a smoothie. If breakfast foods are really not desirable, small portions of left over dinner could be offered, as something is always better than nothing! The best way to start children eating breakfast is for parents to become the role models and ensure they are consuming breakfast with their children. As a teacher it could be a good idea to start asking the children each morning what they had for breakfast. This will help you to gain a better understanding of who is eating breakfast. Then just photocopy this article and slip it into the child’s backpack for the parents to read!

**What should breakfast consist of?**

Ideally, breakfast should consist of a carbohydrate food, which will provide the body with energy; a protein food, which will help satisfy appetite; and a piece of fruit to increase fibre intake and provide the body with essential vitamins and minerals. This can be followed with a glass of water to keep well hydrated. A glass of fruit juice can count towards one serving of fruit for the day and could be offered at breakfast time. However, it is recommended that water and milk are the first drink of choice for children, so it is best not to offer fruit juice if it can be avoided. Aim to keep fruit juice as a treat rather than an everyday drink, as it does have high sugar content – it is also better to eat the fruit than drink the juice. If fruit juice is offered, dilute it with water to assist with reducing sugar intake. For some children this could be the only way they do ‘eat’ something in the morning.

Alissa Tosswill is the Active Movement Advisor for Sport Auckland. She has a double degree in physical education and human nutrition. Alissa is very passionate about ensuring a healthy start in life and has recently developed a service called Eat Play Grow, which aims to support child development through nutrition and movement. Visit [www.eatplaygrow.co.nz](http://www.eatplaygrow.co.nz) for more information on how Alissa can help you!
The vestibular system: helping children develop a sense of balance

ALISSA TOWSWILL REPORTS

Movement such as swinging, spinning and rocking helps to develop a child’s sense of balance.

Good balance helps a child to:
- learn to keep his balance;
- know how she fits into a space;
- stay still when sitting, standing or lying;
- develop eye movement and vision.

Try the following activities or refer to the SPARC Active Movement booklet: Balance: Swinging, Spinning and Rocking for ideas that will help stimulate the child’s vestibular system. It is important to do these activities slowly and to always do turning activities in both directions. Children will enjoy doing these activities daily, so do try to encourage swinging, spinning and rocking as part of your everyday routine.

“The vestibular system functions like a traffic officer, telling each sensation where and when it can go and stop.”
Newborns and infants: my vestibular system improves when I am moved around in space

- Hold and support baby while dancing to music. Slowly move him up and down, round and to the music.
- Sit on the floor with baby on your lap and rock backwards and forwards gently. Sing “row, row, row your boat”.
- Gently supporting baby, turn slowly and then turn the other way taking 6-8 seconds per turn. Always go both ways.
- Lay baby over your knees when sitting and lift alternate knees to provide a gentle up and down movement.
- Lay baby on tummy on a Swiss ball or a beach ball. Ensure you hold and support her well as you gently move the ball forwards and backwards.
- Hold baby under arms and under bottom, supporting neck and shoulders as you gently fly him through the air.

Toddlers: my balance improves if I spin, swing and rock

- Sit on a chair with a toddler sitting on your ankles or knees. Bounce her up and down.
- Lie on the floor with your legs up. A toddler can lie on the soles of your feet while you support his hands. Gently move your feet around like he is flying.
- Ask the toddler to sit on a large towel on a slippery floor and spin the towel slowly around in both directions.

- Encourage the toddlers to bend forwards to touch their toes and look between their legs to go upside down.
- Ask the toddler to lie on her tummy on an office chair and spin the chair slowly one way and then slowly back again to unwind.
- Hold a piece of string or elastic low to the ground for the toddler to roll under.
- Encourage active play using playground equipment such as the swings, slides and merry-go-rounds. You may need to support and participate with the toddler!

Young children: my balance improves if I spin, swing, rock and hang

- Have the children lie on the floor with hands stretched above head. Roll
- Ask the toddler to lie on her tummy on an office chair and spin the chair slowly one way and then slowly back again to unwind.
- Hold a piece of string or elastic low to the ground for the toddler to roll under.
- Encourage active play using playground equipment such as the swings, slides and merry-go-rounds. You may need to support and participate with the toddler!

What is the vestibular system and how does this link to balance?

The vestibular system is one of the first sensory systems to develop, starting at six weeks after a child’s conception and fully developing by six months after conception. The vestibular system controls the sense of movement and balance and is located just inside the ear. It is the sensory system considered to have the most important influence on the other sensory systems and on the ability to function in everyday life.

A child who has a poorly developed vestibular system may be a child who can’t sit still, who wriggles and/or fidgets, and is often off task, as he or she can be easily distracted. Many children with learning difficulties in the classroom situation may have immaturely developed vestibular systems.

Directly or indirectly, the vestibular system influences nearly everything you and the children do. It is the unifying system in the brain that modifies and coordinates information received from other systems. The vestibular system functions like a traffic officer, telling each sensation where and when it can go and stop.

The labyrinth of the inner ear, from the left ear. It contains 1) the cochlea (yellow), which is the peripheral organ of our auditory system, 2) the semicircular canals (brown), which transduce rotational movements; and 3) the otolithic organs.
slowly one way along the ground and then roll slowly the other way like a pencil rolling.

- Hold his hand to assist him to swing poi (or a stocking/sock stuffed with tissue). Start by swinging the poi from side to side at below waist height, then try swinging in a full circle.
- Help her to hang upside down on the monkey bars. Make sure she holds on with her hands. Sometimes it’s nice to support her gently under her back.
- At story time ask the children to roll over every time you turn the page.
- Play games that encourage movement in space and then stopping to be still.
- Blow bubbles and provide the children with a straw. As they move around to tap and catch the bubbles they will be stimulating their vestibular system.
- Wrap a child lengthwise (excluding head) in a blanket, and then unroll the blanket with the child unrolling with it.
- Holding an adult’s hands, encourage the child to walk up the adult’s legs and circle over backwards between the joined arms.
- Ask two children to try to keep a balloon between various parts of their body without touching with hands. Move forwards, backwards and sideways through space.

“A child who has a poorly developed vestibular system may be a child who can’t sit still, who wriggles, and is often off task…”

Active Movement is a Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC) initiative that aims to provide positive movement experiences for children from birth to 5 years. SPARC has produced a set of 16 resources that includes a set of 14 activity guides and two DVDs that will help to provide ideas of how you as the teacher can encourage movement from birth. This article is based on the activity guide “Balance: Swinging, Spinning and Rocking.”

For more information about Active Movement, or to contact the nearest Active Movement Advisor to receive your free set of resources, call 0800 ACTIVE (228 483) or visit www.sparc.org.nz to download the resources.
What makes it difficult for people to intervene to protect a child?

Child abuse is an epidemic problem in New Zealand. We rate amongst the worst in the OECD for our deaths from child abuse, and have done for many years. Every day, New Zealand children are being abused physically, emotionally and sexually as well as suffering from neglect.

We all have a responsibility to address this shameful situation and make our families and communities the loving, caring places they should be. But keeping our children safe is not easy. And there are numerous things that can stand in the way of people intervening and protecting a child.

As with anything, though, knowledge is key. If you are aware of what the barriers are, you can make sure they don’t stand in your way.

Recognising child abuse

One of the major barriers to people helping children who are suffering abuse is that people often don’t even recognise that the child is being abused. Or they don’t recognise the significance of the signs or behaviours they are seeing. Child abuse is often very hard to detect.

It is easy to see a child with a black eye and realise that there may be cause for concern. However, most children who are being abused don’t have such obvious signs. And you may be surprised to know that most children do not disclose when abuse is happening to them either. Which means that they rely on adults to recognise the signs and symptoms and take action to help them.

So in order to help protect children you must firstly know the sorts of signs and symptoms that should be cause for concern. Training is the key to having this knowledge and keeping children safe.

CPS provides NZQA-accredited training programmes as well as workshops that cover in detail the numerous signs and symptoms that may indicate a child or family needs help. We also offer a free publication called How Can I Tell?, which provides lots of useful information that you can use as a reference. (See end of article for contact details).

Responding to child abuse

In many cases people do recognise issues of abuse. It may be as a result of their
knowledge and training. Or it may simply be common sense or that 'gut feeling' that nags at you that something is wrong.

Most people assume that they would know how to respond if they were faced with an issue of child abuse. And most people also believe that they would take the necessary action. Sadly the reality is quite different.

Nia Glassie’s death and the subsequent court case demonstrated this sad reality. Numerous witnesses saw things that made them sure that little Nia was in trouble. They could have stepped in and saved Nia’s life – but they didn’t.

As much as most people like to think that they would not have let this brutality continue, the reality is that in the same situation, and without previous training, many people would not have acted in the way they like to believe they would.

What stops people from taking action?

Child Protection Studies research has shown that failure to act is likely to be due to one or more of five major factors.

1. Lack of knowledge
   People often say that they don’t know who to turn to, particularly in the first instance.

2. Fear
   Many are fearful of being wrong and possibly making it worse. Most are uncertain over what will happen as a result of their intervention and some are afraid of getting involved with the ‘authorities’.

It is not uncommon to be afraid of violent reactions from the family involved or the possibility of being required to be a witness in court. When a family member is involved, the relative can also fear damaging the relationship.

3. Lack of understanding
   It can be difficult to appreciate the seriousness of the situation. Additionally, people can sometimes convince themselves that what is happening is normal in these circumstances.

It is also a common belief that the Privacy Act prevents them from being able to pass on information.

4. Lack of confidence
   When people have never encountered child maltreatment, they may be uncertain that what they are seeing is abuse. Different cultural practices may influence them to think that the child is not being hurt.

People sometimes also assume that if they recognised it, someone else must have too, and those people will take action.

5. Personal issues

With over 30% of all women with a personal history of abuse (particularly family violence or sexual abuse), it is understandable that people can be reluctant to get involved and have difficult feelings stirred up. When a member of one’s own family is involved, other factors may make it difficult to act and with all the other stresses in people’s lives today, getting involved in ‘someone else’s business’ can seem too much to handle.

How do you overcome these barriers and protect children?

Trust your instincts. If you are worried that a child is being hurt or that they’re not being well looked after, you are probably right. Don’t just hope someone else will speak up. Chances are the other people are thinking the same thing. You can and should do something to assist. It’s not always easy and it takes courage. But don’t be afraid of getting it wrong. Instead, ask yourself “What if I’m right?”

Helping a child doesn’t always mean “calling in the authorities”. Providing support to a family in the early stages may avoid the situation becoming serious and be the catalyst to a family getting help.

Child Protection Studies is New Zealand’s specialist child protection training organisation, dedicated to the protection of children and young people. CPS provides skills for key people working with children to recognise and respond to children at risk and take the steps needed to protect them. CPS provides NZQA-accredited training programmes throughout New Zealand, as well as child protection workshops, consultation, advice and publications.

You can contact CPS to find out about training in your area on 07 838 3370 or info@cps.org.nz. Or visit www.cps.org.nz
STEP UP – Do something personally to help

- Provide a listening ear. Parents may be stressed, unwell, unable to cope, or victims of violence themselves. An understanding ear may be the catalyst for that person to start a new and safer way of parenting.
- Offer some practical help such as child minding to provide some time out for a parent.
- Give supportive information. Parenting ideas or budgeting tips can make a difference.
- Listen to the child and let them know that violence is not OK and that they can talk to you about that issue if they need to.
- Learn to recognise the signs. Attend a workshop or a training course. Professionals involved with children should make it a priority to continually maintain and refresh their child protection knowledge.
- Never act alone. Talk it over with an experienced person. However, note that it is not mandatory in New Zealand for education or health professionals to attend any training in child protection, so you can’t assume that these people will be experienced.
- Child Youth and Family (CYF) provide a free calling number and a service that anyone can access to check over their concerns before deciding what to do next.

STEP OUT – Look for support for the family

When a personal helping hand is not enough, connect the family or child with local community agencies. A family living with stress and violence may not be in a position to seek out the help they need. They may rely on others to make the connection and introduction.

By learning about the assistance available in the community and how to access it, you can provide information and support that can be really helpful.

SPEAK UP – Report your concerns.

- If you are uncertain about these options, or have tried them and are still concerned, you can call Child, Youth and Family on 0508 326 459.
- Child, Youth and Family are able to provide support and advice, or you can choose to register your concerns with them so that they can work out if the family needs their help, and what they can do to help. There are a number of options for responding when a child or family is referred to CYF, and the situation will be assessed to ensure that the child is safe.
- If you suspect a child is at serious risk or a crime against a child has been committed this must be reported. You have a responsibility to do so.
- Call Police on 111 or Child, Youth and Family on 0508 326 459.

Whenever a child is hurt or killed there is always someone who says "I was worried about that child but I didn’t know what to do". Don’t let that someone be you.....

Children are only harmed or neglected when adults who are in a position to help lack the knowledge and confidence to keep them safe.

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Teachers need to talk to adults too!

RACHEL GOODCHILD REPORTS

One of the biggest gaps I see in the training of early childhood teachers is in the area of how to relate better to adults. We spend our days learning how to best relate to children in a positive way, how to treat them with respect and engage with them in a safe and relatable way that helps them develop positive relationships. When it comes to dealing with adult relationships, from dealing with other staff members to feeling confident with parents, we just avoid the topic, assuming that we already know how to sort that out.

I remember as a young student in my first placement being stressed about calling the other adults by their first name. Having come straight from school (where it was a sign of respect to call them Miss, Mrs or Mr) and moving into an environment where it was all first names and there was an expectation that we were equals often caused me more anxiety than anything in my teaching practice. When you add to that having to deal with corrections in how I was doing things, and parents expecting me to know things I had sometimes never heard of and wanting answers straight away, I was rather stressed out!

Becoming a more confident communicator with adults helps you become a better teacher. We often talk about the self-management skills children need before 5 to be ready to learn. What are the self-management skills employees need when interacting with other adults? There are plenty of them, but here are just three that if missing can cause plenty of disruption in your centre and prevent your team from working well together.

1. Ask for clarification or help with a new task

We often get frustrated when we see someone not working to the same level as others. Sometimes we can feel they are lazy or not totally involved in the job. It may be that they do not know what to do, and lack the skills to say this. Sometimes this comes down to a lack of confidence, as asking for help may make them feel you see them as not able to do the job.

2. Take issues up with the issuer

Most problems in a centre happen when someone feels they have been talked to inappropriately or treated unfairly compared to their peers. Whether that is true or not, or whether the person who has hurt their feelings behaved in a professional manner isn’t as big a problem as what can happen if it is not cleared up directly.

It can feel scary to communicate directly with another person, but if we don’t we never sort the issue out. Many people will leave their place of work and find another job before trying to communicate, and the cycle tends to be repeated as the matter is never resolved. A lot of damage can be done, and can involve people who were previously unconnected to the issue, if it’s not dealt with quickly.

3. Keeping home problems separate from work problems

To a certain extent most of us have been guilty of bringing feelings, issues and hurts from our home life into our workplace, allowing them to have an impact on our interactions. While we can often separate it professionally from our interactions with children, we do not always extend this behaviour to include relating to other adults. Colleagues can come into the firing line, or we overreact when pulled up for not working to our usual standard, which can snowball into a greater issue. Making an effort to let go of everything that has happened before you walk in the doors at work can prevent the rest of the day turning into a day of complete disaster.

If there are problems within your team and how its members are relating to one another, it is important to deal with the root reasons for the behaviour. It is not your job to solve the issues, but to help the members of your team to be equipped with skills to manage their behaviour no matter what the circumstances. A highly functioning team that relates well together is one that will provide a better environment for the children in their care.

Rachel Goodchild is an early childhood education professional development facilitator who runs a range of courses including one on building better relationships with colleagues and caregivers. She is the author of 27 books, and is the relationships commentator on TVNZ’s Breakfast on Thursdays. Visit www.rachel-goodchild.com

Rachel was a presenter at this year’s Early Childhood Council Annual Conference.
Who ever heard of a tiger in a pink hat?!  
Nicola Stott McCourt  
Meadowside Children’s Books  
A fun and simple book about a tiger who goes shopping and buys an increasingly bizarre set of objects. A repetitive structure and a series of exclamations (“I don’t believe it…Well, I never…Let me get this straight…” ) make it a great book to read out loud with lots of expression. The illustrations are bright and funny, and by the end the tiger looks hilarious wearing or carrying his various purchases. The book comes in a large soft cover and a smaller board book version. A bookseller recently told me that many centres are buying both versions of books like these and using the soft cover version for teachers to read out loud, and handing the more durable board book version to the children to look at. An excellent tip!
**Bedtime Countdown**

Raymond Mcgrath
Penguin Group

Having worked on over 45 children’s books and numerous children’s television shows, Raymond McGrath certainly knows what works in a picture book, and he continues to come up with fresh, new concepts and illustrations. In this countdown to bedtime a little kiwi has fun masquerading as a variety of animals before finally making his way to bed. Charming illustrations of New Zealand wildlife complement the story, and there is added fun to be had in trying to spot the little kiwi as he dons the disguise of each animal but never quite gets it right.

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**Christopher Nibble in a tale of dandelion derring-do**

Charlotte Middleton
Oxford University Press

The guinea pigs of Dandeville love dandelion leaves, but they have eaten so many that the dandelions are all disappearing. When guinea pig Christopher Nibble finds the last remaining dandelion, he knows that he must preserve it or the dandelions will be gone forever. This is a tale of great personal restraint and responsibility, with something to learn about caring for our resources and the joys of gardening. There’s humour, too, as during the great dandelion shortage cabbage replaces dandelions on café menus and the price of dandelion leaves soars on the internet. A great story by itself, but an excellent one to use as a starting point for discussions about conservation or learning to grow things in the garden.

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**The Alphabet Family**

Eva Montanari
Meadowside Children’s Books

This book follows Mummy A as she goes from room to room in her house (which is a book), and finds out what all her little letters are up to. Highly imaginative, it is the sort of book in which every child will see something different. It provides an unusual way of looking at letters, as characters who want to tell a story, and who lead a life of infinite possibility inside the book in which they live. The book provides an opportunity to identify the different letters as they scatter throughout the pages playing instruments, planting a garden, playing music and even cleaning their teeth.

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**Look at Me I’m Moving Volume 3. Action Songs for Sensory Perceptual Motor Programmes**

Tessarose Productions

Brian Ringrose and Tessa Grigg travel New Zealand and Australia presenting education workshops to parents and teachers and performing children’s music shows. They have a very clear understanding of what children enjoy, are capable of and learn from when it comes to music and movement. In this DVD, each song is introduced with an explanation of what to expect and a description of which parts of the children’s sensory and motor skills it helps to develop. Children perform the songs’ actions and there are sometimes versions for children of different ages, including babies. Some songs include props such as rhythm sticks. Watch the introduction to the song and then the performance in order to understand how it’s done. Then play the DVD and lead the children in the incredibly rich and rewarding experiences provided by this well-thought out and well-produced DVD. A fantastic resource. (Tessarose Productions can be found at www.tessarose.co.nz)
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Question: Who saves the dandelion from extinction?

With thanks to Penguin Group (NZ), South Pacific Book Distributors, Wheeler’s Books, New Holland Publishers and Tessarose Productions for all the wonderful review resources.

Win copies of these resources!
Is television compatible with the care and education of babies and toddlers?

DR ESTELLE IRVING REPORTS

In May I had the pleasure of attending the Early Childhood Council Annual Conference in Christchurch. I presented a paper that asked whether television was compatible with the care and education of babies and toddlers.

As I noted in the paper, babies and very young children are actually big consumers of television, with Australian data showing that the 0 to 4-year-old group watch more television than any other age group – and, even more worrying, they spend more time watching television than in any other waking activity. Despite this, this age group has been virtually ignored as an audience of television. It’s as though we assume that this age group is somehow immune to its impact and influences. Babies in particular have been, until very recently, an invisible audience even though they are really a captive, passive audience, unable to choose what and when they watch!

But television is particularly significant in early childhood: it is an integral part of the environment in which early childhood
development occurs, to the extent that we can say: “Children in the twenty-first century typically develop in front of a television or computer screen”.

In the talk I outlined negative effects of television both on babies and toddlers that have an impact upon:

- Social and emotional development
- Behaviour
- Play
- Language development
- Obesity
- Family/carer and child interactions
- Sleep

Importantly, there are no positive developmental or health outcomes gained when babies and toddlers watch television, and the negative effects increase as the time spent watching television increases.

Turning off televisions is necessary, but we need also to build environments that nurture optimal development. All that we now understand about early brain development helps us to understand more about the sorts of experiences needed by babies and toddlers and the environments that facilitate these experiences.

Relationships are crucial to this. Face-to-face interactions and responsive, engaged relationships provide the foundation for all child development. For young children, particularly for babies and toddlers under the age of 2, television is simply incompatible with the ‘hands on’ experiences and the responsive, engaged relationships that scaffold and optimise their development.

Babies and toddlers flourish in care settings that meet their fundamental needs for close, caring relationships, health and safety, connection to family and culture, with knowledgeable, responsive caregivers. As one of the other speakers at the conference reminded us, babies and toddlers need movement, too. Even if we leave aside concerns about the actual content of television programmes, television cannot provide these fundamental needs. Television cannot make babies and toddlers feel valued; it cannot respond to the unique needs, interests and abilities of individual children. It does not observe a baby’s achievements with pleasure or express delight at a baby’s smile.

“Television cannot make babies and toddlers feel valued; it cannot respond to the needs, interests and abilities of individual children. It does not observe a baby’s achievements with pleasure or express delight at a baby’s smile.”

Carers who contribute most positively to a child’s development are loving facilitators of emotional, cognitive, language, physical, and social competence. With babies, good teaching and caring occur with emotional support and facilitation of learning and development happening simultaneously.

This is characterised as ‘responsive care’ that meets each individual child’s needs and relates to that child’s unique thoughts and feelings.

Responsive care means looking for cues and adapting. Babies have an inborn motivation to learn and explore; they are on a constant quest for knowledge, learning from what they see, hear, feel, taste and touch – often all at once. In fact, they experience life more holistically during this age period than at any other: social, emotional, intellectual, language and physical lessons are not differentiated by the infant. The carer must let the child’s interests be the guide, understand how to read and respond to infant behaviour and delight in the types of learning in which the baby is engaged. Television can provide none of this: it cannot provide responsive care and education. It cannot care for our babies and toddlers.

Dr Estelle Irving recently joined Holmesglen TAFE after working for the Centre for Community Child Health at Melbourne’s Royal Children’s Hospital where she was the managing editor of Childcare and Children's Health. Among her many areas of research interest, Estelle has a special interest in the impact of media technology on early child development. Estelle presented at the ECC Annual Conference 2010.
The New Zealand Teachers Council, Te Pouherenga Kaiako o Aotearoa is bringing in changes to how teachers will reflect on their teaching practice and relationships as the implementation of the new Registered Teacher Criteria takes place during 2010 and 2011. The new Registered Teacher Criteria are replacing the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions (STDs), which have been used for registration as a teacher since 1998. These have framed the advice and guidance programmes and assessment of beginning teachers, and for the assessment of experienced teachers when renewing their practising certificates. From 2011 onwards the Registered Teacher Criteria will become the focus for most, and by 2013, all teachers.

The new criteria

The new criteria are framed by four overarching statements that influence the twelve criteria. These statements highlight: the critical role that teachers play in the education of all learners/ākonga; the Treaty of Waitangi and the responsibilities it confers; the need for awareness of the
multicultural makeup of this country; and the Code of Ethics that commits teachers to high standards in their teaching and professional relationships.

Of the 12 Registered Teacher Criteria five concern ‘professional relationships and professional values’, and seven encompass ‘professional knowledge in practice’. Each criterion is accompanied by 1 to 4 key indicators that will help to explain what the criterion means in practice. Professional leaders and teachers in each ECE service are expected to work through what the indicators mean for teaching their group of ākonga/learners in their type of setting. They will then become clear what the evidence for each criterion might look like. To inform this discussion and debate the Teachers Council will be making resources available as they are developed during the year.

In the trial during 2009 teachers responded very positively to the criteria:

“All the new criteria I can go ‘yes’ to. I can see how we can focus on that and gather evidence and extend the PRTs [provisionally registered teachers]. I think it has been a lot clearer for them. We’ve had better discussions around them.”

ECE mentor teacher.

A number of early childhood education teachers and professional development providers attended the Council’s World Teachers Day in October 2009, which had presentations from the facilitators in the Registered Teacher Criteria pilot. They also embraced the potential for the criteria to be well received in the sector.

The criteria are broad enough to apply to teachers throughout their career. They can be used as a framework to guide career long learning and aid reflection and setting goals for continual improvement of teaching practices.

Mentor teachers working with beginning teachers may expect the evidence of meeting the criteria to be different from what a professional leader will expect of their experienced teachers. However, it is important that the profession is consistent in its expectations of a beginning teacher entering the profession as a fully registered teacher.

What does this mean for 2010?

This is the year for teachers and particularly professional leaders to become familiar with the Registered Teacher Criteria. The Teachers Council is hosting workshops around the country to enable professional leaders and others to understand the new criteria and how they will be used. In preparation for 2011, professional leaders may seek to revise their performance appraisal processes, especially those that relate to registration, so that they incorporate the criteria. From 2011 onwards, having appraisal discussions aligned to the criteria will ensure an informed endorsement of their teachers’ applications for renewal of their practising certificates. As 2011 is a peak year for renewal of certificates, the sooner these preparations are made the smoother the transition will be.

What about teacher induction programmes?

Mentor teachers (supervising teachers, registration supervisors) who are currently working with PRTs can continue their programmes as usual during 2010 and continue using the STDs in 2011. However, if they would prefer to change to incorporate the Registered Teacher Criteria in their induction (advice and guidance) programme they can do so if they feel adequately prepared. This may follow their attendance at the Teachers Council’s workshops or their own study and preparation. Teachers involved in the trial of the Registered Teacher Criteria can continue to use them for their induction or renewal of their practising certificates in 2010. In 2011 all new PRTs will be expected to have an induction programme using the Registered Teacher Criteria.

Registered Teacher Criteria workshops

An email invitation has been sent to ECE services, kura, schools, tertiary teacher education providers and professional development providers. We hope that the
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New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) administers the fund on behalf of the trustees. It covers assistance with travel and accommodation for overseas study for up to 3 months and not less than 6 weeks. The 2010 award is set at $16,000.

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- Programmes supporting refugee families;
- Infant and toddler programmes

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Deborah Wansbrough is the policy adviser: Early Childhood Education at the New Zealand Teachers Council. She has been involved in early childhood education for 25 years and prior to the Teachers Council has had roles in teacher professional development and teacher education. Her role at the Teachers Council is mainly to ensure it is aware of issues concerning ECE and that the sector is aware of the Teachers Council’s initiatives and policies. She oversees the Teachers Council’s Early Childhood Education Advisory Group and provides an ECE perspective on strategic projects.

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Introduction to the profession

CLARE WELLS REPORTS

“At the start, teacher registration always felt it was about the PRT (provisionally registered teacher), and now I understand that it is a journey for both parties and learning for both.”  ECE mentor teacher

In 2008, New Zealand Kindergartens (NZK) became involved in the New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) project to trial models of support for mentors working with newly qualified teachers and for the induction process to support these teachers reach teacher registration. We used the New Zealand Teachers Council Registered Teacher Criteria (draft Criteria) and Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and Mentor Teacher Development (draft Guidelines) to inform the pilot and provided feedback to the Council as they finalised both these documents.

The pilot was designed ‘by practitioners for practitioners’ and had a strong focus on sustained professional development. It was about teachers working with teachers to identify what they need as newly qualified teachers – provisionally registered teachers (PRTs) – and as mentors, to share and build understanding of NZTC’s draft Criteria and draft Guidelines, to develop skills, and to enhance their knowledge and teaching practice and specifically for mentors, to enhance their mentoring practice. Dr Val Podmore, researcher for the pilot, examined how the programme made a difference to mentors’ and PRTs’ learning and teaching.

Over 100 mentors and PRTs were involved in the pilot. The key feature was a series of four workshops in three regions and one national hui for mentors, providing a wide community of learning and support beyond teachers’ own kindergartens and centres. This approach reflected the New Zealand Teachers Council’s research on effective induction and mentoring practice, and was consistent with the principles of Te Whariki.

The framework for each of the workshops was designed by the national advisory group overseeing the pilot, drawing on their observations and interactions with PRTs and mentors in their regions and reflecting on the previous workshops. Feedback from participants informally and from the focus group sessions held in February and July as part of the research element of the pilot also informed the design. It was within the framework that the workshops were developed to reflect and best meet the needs of the regional groups.

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PRTs, even if they have been working in early childhood education services for some time, need to work through an induction programme. It is the next step along the path towards entry to the teaching profession, focusing on the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions and, from next year, the new Registered Teacher Criteria, which identify the critical areas of teaching practice. PRTs need to have time to make sense of the dimensions/criteria, to understand how they look in practice and to demonstrate that understanding through their teaching practice and documented evidence such as a reflective journal, a wiki conversation or blog. It takes time to work through the process with the support of a mentor or tutor teacher.

The mentor teacher has a key role. It is their guidance that supports the PRT through the induction programme, observing their teaching practice, offering critical feedback, assisting goal setting and, at the end of the process, recommending the PRT for full teacher registration.

Building relationships and making time to talk were the most important elements of effective programmes highlighted by the pilot. Open and honest communication, respecting views, taking risks, and setting clear expectations were seen as central to a trusted relationship. Goal setting, ‘courageous conversations’, seeking and giving feedback, understanding generational differences, and mentoring and coaching models were among the topics we explored and skills that were developed. For mentors, focusing on these aspects in particular was important, enhancing not only their mentoring skills but also their leadership capability.

Having the time and opportunity to talk about what is expected of the provisionally registered teacher and of the role of mentor, and giving meaning to the draft Criteria and draft Guidelines for mentors was important. Time spent in networks discussing, debating, exploring and testing the criteria and guidelines provided clarity and shared understanding.

The pilot confirmed the importance of taking the time to build relationships not just between the PRT and mentor, but within the teaching team. PRTs, particularly if they are new to a centre, need to know that an effective induction process and support is in place for them.
They want to be in a programme where they:

- are a valued and respected member of the teaching team;
- work with the mentor and other teachers and can expect their help and support - a collegial rather than hierarchical model, which recognises both PRTs and mentors are learners;
- are clear about what is expected of them; and
- have time and resources to confidently participate in the programme.

PRTs participating in the pilot were enthusiastic about the shared learning that took place, and felt the experience had changed their teaching practice by making them more reflective, confident, objective and open-minded. Their involvement contributed to enhanced relationships with their mentors, which had a positive influence on their teaching, which, in turn, meant better outcomes for children.

For mentors, participation in the pilot meant they were more confident in the role and had a clearer understanding of what they should expect of PRTs and what PRTs should expect of them. Examining their own practice and engaging in genuine professional dialogue around the draft Criteria, developing strategies to provide more effective mentoring and working with more confident PRTs were major shifts for mentors. It was clear from the pilot that the induction process is a learning experience for both PRTs and mentors.

The pilot was just a beginning, and although it only ran for one year, the results highlight the benefits of having a planned and sustained programme of professional development for PRTs and mentors, for early childhood education services and, most importantly, for children.

"...although it only ran for one year, the results highlight the benefits of having a planned and sustained programme of professional development for PRTs and mentors..."

The New Zealand Teachers Council will release the report on the pilot later this year. In the meantime, we are working with the Teachers Council to find ways to disseminate the findings of the pilot, and to provide advice and resources to support induction and mentoring programmes in early childhood education settings.

Supporting effective induction and mentoring programmes

- As a management team, commit to offering a programme based on reflective teaching practice.
- Make sure there is current information about teacher registration and the induction process available.
- Encourage the teaching team to take the time to build trusted relationships.
- Make meeting with the PRT a priority for the mentor in particular, and for the teaching team.
- Support the mentor teacher by sharing their workload, particularly where more than one PRT is being supported by the mentor.
- Provide paid release time and access to resources and professional development.
- Use the support grant to best effect, such as to contract a mentor from outside the centre, or to provide paid release time for the PRT to observe teaching and learning in other settings.
- Work with other early childhood education services in your region to provide professional development.

Clare Wells is the Chief Executive of New Zealand Kindergartens (NZK), which represents 29 regional associations covering 430 kindergartens and early childhood services nationwide. Clare was the pilot leader and coordinator.

Facts on the pilot

- A national advisory group was set up to oversee the pilot, which included researcher Dr Val Podmore, independent advisor Ruth Mansell, kindergarten senior teachers from each region, and representatives from Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa and NZEI Te Riu Roa.
- The pilot took place in 2009 and was one of four commissioned by the New Zealand Teachers Council. Other pilots ran in Maori medium, primary and secondary settings.
- Five regional kindergarten association areas were clustered for the pilot: Ruahine/Wellington, Nelson, and Dunedin/Southland.
- A total of eighteen workshops, including a two-day national hui for mentors, was held.
- Primary teachers and teacher education providers participated in the Dunedin/Southland workshops.
- Over 100 PRTs and mentors participated in the early childhood pilot, including a number in Nelson working in education and care centres, and in Wellington the four national mentors employed by Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa.
Music is our first language - a universal language of the emotions. Sound, movement, rhythm – the basic elements of music are imprinted upon the child’s senses long before birth. As infant ears are fully functioning at twenty weeks after conception, the unborn baby hears its mother’s voice without apparent difficulty. It is the musical qualities of the mother’s voice – the tone, pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics – that acquire meaning for the foetus. Music is a whole body experience for the baby. They are surrounded with rhythm: the sound of the mother’s heartbeat, the sounds of her digestive system, external sounds and the sounds and movement of her body (Wylie, 2006).

At birth, the newborn recognises and actively seeks the mother’s voice. S/he knows the mother by the tone and musical inflections of her voice. From birth, the baby is able to engage musically with parents and caregivers and is sensitive to the emotional quality of the music, especially if someone is holding the baby face to face and singing interactively.

The power of the lullaby
It is no accident, then, that newborns immediately respond to calming lullabies. The lullaby calms both caregiver and baby, bringing them into a synchrony of movement through the pulse, slow tempo, rocking action and emotional experience of connectedness as the mother or caregiver expresses feelings for the baby through singing.

Try rocking and patting a baby gently from side to side while singing softly to the tune of ‘Row, row, row your boat’ with its 1, 2, 3 tempo: “Rock, rock rock your boat, gently side to side, rock with me, rock with me, gently side to side”. Gradually sing softer and slower so that the baby calms. Music that has a regular pulse close to or a little above a resting heart rate will encourage the lower parts of the brain and thus the body to fall in sync. This will produce a calm, well-regulated baby who may even drift off to sleep.

Such a rocking activity calms both players and promotes a sense of wellbeing and belonging. Wellbeing depends upon each of the levels of the brain being regulated. The regulation of each area of the brain is dependent on the levels below being well regulated. Slow, calming music used appropriately promotes a calm brain that is ready for learning. Musical play
with children needs understanding and sensitivity, for example, music sessions should not be too big, noisy or fast, as this can overwhelm young children and take them into a state of high arousal. Busy, noisy environments can also have the same effect. Babies and young children cannot calm themselves; this is a skill that we need to help them with. The music that we use with babies should always take the baby back to a place of calm at the end. (Wylie & Foster-Cohen, 2007).

Musical play for babies

Babies universally demonstrate a love of singing sounds, dancing gestures, and melodramatic narrative games. They know a lot instinctively, but they also learn quickly, especially about the experiences of being in the world of loving, communicating humans. Music is used differently in the different stages of an infant’s development: first to calm and arouse, then to provide an opportunity for performance, communication and sharing. The infant quickly learns to use its own voice in various ways in musical ‘conversations’.

By two months the baby can take part in earnest conversations that involve turn-taking vocalisations. Such early musical play has a powerful role in building memories and helps to lay the foundation for speech and language.

Explore a range of different sounds as you talk or sing to the baby. Babies adore face-to-face conversational games including peek-a-boo games with use of dramatic pauses and lots of use of facial expression. Play babbling games using sounds from the babies that involve vocal gymnastics with high and low pitched vocal rhythmic play. Make sure you leave plenty of space for the babies to contribute their own sounds and actions. Copy their sounds, fostering baby vocalisation, turn-taking games. This can be done when changing a baby’s nappy, in music sessions or with a group of babies as they sit in their high chairs waiting to be fed.

Music is made up of sound and silence. Allow time for babies to listen and respond to the music.

This is especially effective when pausing on the 5th note of the scale e.g. ‘Up, Up, Up, Up, Up!’ (with a dramatic pause) then waiting for a vocalisation before continuing ‘Down, Down, Down, Down, Down’. The babies quickly learn to anticipate and respond to these ‘musical questions’.

Bouncing, rhythmic patting / clapping and movement activities that incorporate a clear “stop!” in the music help the baby to understand phrasing and build their sense of anticipation, which promotes listening and engagement.

Music underpins all learning. It is the warp and weft of Te Whariki (Wylie, Foster-Cohen). Narrative songs about what you are doing provide clear step-by-step support to daily routines such as meal time, washing and sleep time. It promotes positive relationships and time for children to process and respond accordingly to the sung request. Musical play makes daily routines enjoyable and easy.

The importance of nursery rhymes and rhythmic stories

Nursery rhymes contain all the rhythms of childhood movement: walking, running, galloping, skipping, jumping. They include much use of repetition, which is so important for a baby and young child’s learning. When the infant is involved in musical play, finger plays, lap games and peek-a-boo games, the baby begins to anticipate and to move in precise, shared rhythm with the organisation of the speech structure. The art of music grows from our need to move and is a natural part in all communication, including speech and language, dance and drama.

The elements of music

The elements of music all have an impact of the brain’s systems.

Rhythm

Pulse, pattern, repetition. Rhythm is everywhere. Rhythm is one of the first elements the baby instinctively detects when experiencing music. Rhythm governs neural firing in the brain, heart beats, sleep cycles, breath pacing and is the basis for communication and sequencing. When a child cannot keep the beat, as we so often see with children who have been born prematurely or who may have special needs, the unsteadiness of the beat has a domino effect that has an impact on overall development. When a child has a non-paced system, this causes physical distress, anxiety, inefficient task execution, lack of coordination and a lack of regulation.
Melody or tune is the pattern of musical pitch.

Start on the first note C on chime bars, or sing from thumb up to little finger, singing up the first five notes of the scale: up, up, up, UP.... pause and hold this fifth note, which is the note that babies instinctively respond to. Wait for their vocal responses. Sing a baby massage song while changing a baby or to calm after an active music session: Feet x 4 on first note; knees on second note of scale x 4; tummy on third note of scale x 4; shoulders of fourth note x 4; head on fifth note x 4.

Dynamics

Loud or soft sounds. Changing dynamics in your conversations with babies and young children naturally introduces a dramatic quality into your conversations or songs with young children and promotes good listening and engagement. Children’s attention is drawn to changes in dynamics.

Form

Music has shape. It has a beginning, middle and end. It begins, evolves, peaks then resolves. Musical form relates to the development of task creation, task organisation, and task completion. It promotes the development of attention span and an understanding of a sequence of actions.

Every baby, like each of us when we were young, continues the musical discovery of the universe. All babies from the moment of birth are born to communicate and share musical experience. Zero to 3 is the vital stage for musical and neural development. If we don’t foster musical play at this young age, the capacity for music making can be lost. As parents and caregivers, it is vital to use music appropriately and effectively at home and in your centres to help children develop their innate musicality, creativity and love of music.

References:


New Zealand Early Childhood Convention (PowerPoint presentation) The Champion Centre, New Zealand Musical Parenting Association, the Brainwave Trust, University of Canterbury.

Julie Wylie’s work in early childhood and pediatric music is internationally recognised, and her Musical Play philosophy has seen her invited to present her work all over the world. She is Senior Pediatric Music Specialist at the Champion Centre, Early Intervention Trust, in Christchurch. Julie is the composer and producer of the award-winning “Sing & Play” series of CDs for children and, along with Louise Shand, runs the Julie Wylie Music School in Christchurch, offering classes for babies through to school-aged children and their parents, and professional development workshops for early childhood centres, professionals, teachers, parents and caregivers in the art, science and psychology of Musical Play. Further reading and information is available at www.juliewyliemusic.com.

Julie Wylie and Louise Shand presented at the ECC Annual Conference 2010
Peripheral observing - participating with a difference

Lynette Radue Reports

I am four years old and I am standing in my preschool playground. I look across to the other side of the playground and I watch the children gathered around the jungle gym. At the centre of this gathering is Amy, who seems to be in charge. She has so many friends around her and I do not understand this. My parents and Amy’s parents are close friends, so our two families see each other often over the weekends. When our families are together, Amy and I are expected to play together but I don’t enjoy being with her. She takes over our games and she can be destructive. I decide not to join Amy and her friends. This is one of my first memories of my preschool years. I do not remember solving the mystery of Amy’s popularity, and I do not remember joining her group of friends. I would imagine I based my decision not to join them on my play experiences with her outside the preschool environment as well as my observation of her taking control of the game. After investigating articles and studies relating to observing and learning between children, I quickly realised that this memory involved peripheral observation in my early years.

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As part of a research assignment for a university paper, I investigated observation and imitation between peers. I concluded the study with results that showed many valuable instances involving imitative learning between children; that is, children who imitated skills they had observed. This supports the results from previous studies that state that this is a natural way for young children to learn from each other (Barr & Hayne, 2003). The unexpected findings of my research centred on the value of peripheral observation in children’s learning, which I had underestimated.

My study revealed peripheral observation in different forms. This included children who used quick glances of other children playing. In one instance, I observed a child doing this several times but never entering the play of the group that he kept walking past. He was clearly interested but, for “I have modelled social skills, encouraged participation, and introduced what I believed to be suitable play friends. The strategies worked for most of the children but, every now and again, there have been exceptions who have proved to be more challenging” reasons only known to him, he decided not to join these children. I suspect his reasons may have been based on previous experiences of either that particular group of children or the type of activity or play in which they were involved.

The children who paused for a short while, as I did in my abovementioned memory, either joined the play they were observing or chose not to enter the play. In my teaching experience, most children easily do one or the other after brief consideration. However, there are some exceptions of children who observe for long periods without becoming noticeably involved in the observed activity, despite appearing interested. I am sure that many teachers are very concerned about children who consistently tend to observe for such long periods.

My teaching experiences of these children have led me to implement all the ‘right’ strategies to help children participate in the play they observed. I have modelled social skills, encouraged participation, and introduced what I believed to be suitable play friends. The strategies worked for most of the children but, every now and again, there have been exceptions who have proved to be more challenging.

The most recent example of this was a three-year-old called Adam. He would watch children play for half an hour at a time, sometimes even longer. His ‘secure spot’ was the play dough table where his mother would often settle him. If a teacher tried to enter play at the table, his body language clearly showed his discomfort. Sometimes he would get up and walk away. Different plans were implemented to help him, but there appeared to be no progress. This continued for more than a year.

When the opportunity arose to do a small-scale research project on peer interactions, I was hoping that Adam would be in the recorded observations.
I was not disappointed. The observations from my research revealed some interesting information about Adam. For the first time I was able to see his enjoyment as he watched his peers play. The recorded observations captured his quick smiles as he watched his peers. He also made brief attempts to talk to children. His brief interactions were quick and always occurred without teachers being present. Without the observations of this study, I would not have known that he was doing this. Clearly, Adam did not enjoy the pressure of teacher intervention. The observations also revealed him watching his peers’ skills at the play dough table. Once the children moved on to other activities, he would often imitate their play dough creations. Adam was learning more than I realised as he observed without becoming noticeably involved. He was participating by learning new skills and by gaining information relating to the rules of play.

After my research concluded, I continued observing Adam. I watched with amazement as one day he suddenly progressed from being the most consistent peripheral observer to being a more noticeable active participant in certain areas of play with specific children. Adam chose boys who had the same interests as he did and who were not boisterous by nature. These decisions were most likely based on the information from his many hours of peripheral observing. Adam seemed to know that to be included meant imitating the others. I believe that Adam’s observations guided him towards achieving his goal of finding friends whom he believed would be suitable.

While I am not suggesting that teachers withdraw from intervening with children such as Adam, I do believe that in some cases it is necessary for children to learn from a distance before their confidence develops enough to attempt the skills that they have observed. Different learners require different strategies, as in the case of Adam.

Expert opinion states the view that peripheral observing should be seen as one way in which peers participate within the group because this will often lead to imitating the skills and behaviours that have been observed (Barr & Hayne, 2003; Williams, 2001). As teachers we need to appreciate that peripheral observing is in fact participation within the group because skills are being learnt. These skills may include, but are not limited to, social rules such as turn taking and entering play successfully, rules in play areas such as pushing up long sleeves before water play, learning skills such as hammering nails into wood, and learning centre routines such as washing hands before eating.

Adult thinking may not acknowledge the importance of peripheral observation, but for young children observing from a distance is one way in which to participate in the learning environment. I have no recollection of my teachers intervening and encouraging me to join Amy and her group of friends. Instead I believe I was left to continue my peripheral observations of my peers until I found more suitable play friends. My understanding of peripheral observation has made me appreciate the value that this has to children in their learning, with some children needing to learn this way more than others. I have come to appreciate that I, too, use this form of observation in my practice as a way in which to gather information about children to learn more about them. Peripheral observation should not be underestimated but should be appreciated as valuable participation with a difference in the learning environment.

References:

Radue, L. (2009). When the teachers aren’t looking - a study of the transference of knowledge between peers in spontaneous interactions. A research project submitted to Massey University as a partial requirement for the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Early Years Education).


Lynette Radue is the head teacher at Trinity Kindergarten in Auckland. She has a teaching diploma and degree through New Zealand Tertiary College and is currently studying for her postgraduate diploma with Massey University.
ECC Membership
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

BELONGING
The Early Childhood Council is the largest representative body of licensed early childhood centres in New Zealand. Our 1000 member centres are both community-owned and commercially owned, employ more than 7000 staff, and care for more than 50,000 children.

The Early Childhood Council regularly provides advice to government to help shape early childhood policy development.

The Early Childhood Council represents the early childhood sector in the wider early childhood and business communities.

Being a member of the Early Childhood Council means accessing the unity and strength that come from a common voice and shared direction.

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The ECC produces a number of resources for the early childhood sector; some, like our Incident Register, are available to Early Childhood Council Members at reduced prices.

Many more of our resources are available exclusively to ECC Members and provide valuable information for you and your centre, such as the Policy, Employer’s, Health and Safety, Performance Appraisal, and Good Governance Handbooks.

Other resources provide comprehensive information about the early childhood sector that is not available elsewhere.

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Gain access to ECC Member prices for the hugely popular ECC Annual Conference - the largest annual early childhood conference in New Zealand, the ECC Seminar Series, and other professional development opportunities.

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The ECC’s membership year runs from 1 January – 31 December

Management Representative: (first name) (surname)
Position Held: Email:
Postal Address:
Phone: Fax: Mobile:

Eligibility for Membership: The ECC Constitution defines members as follows:

- **Rule 2.4**: “Member” means an Independent Early Childhood Centre, (see definition below) or group of centres under the same Licensee, or Management Group (see definition below) who is recognised as such by the Association and whose subscription is current.
- **Rule 2.16**: “Independent Early Childhood Centre” means any centre not part of the Free Kindergarten Movement, Te Kohanga Reo Trust or New Zealand Playcentre Federation.
- **Rule 2.17**: “Management Group” means the person(s) or legal entity(ies) which has the responsibility for managing the centre(s) and is recognised as such by the Ministry of Education for Charter purposes.

New Member Fee: The New Member Fee of $155.00 is payable only once by a management group of a centre/centres on application for membership. If membership lapses at any time, a new membership fee must be paid on rejoining.

Joining after 31st July: Half rates on subscription apply if joining after the 31st July. The new member fee still applies.

Subscription Calculation

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Total Licensed Capacity (see over – page to calculate this)</th>
<th>Annual Subscription Rate (halve the rate if joining after 31st July)</th>
<th>Add new member fee if applicable</th>
<th>Total Payable</th>
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<td>Over 25 and under 120</td>
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<td>Over 110</td>
<td>Your no. of places less 119 = 0 x $1.00 plus $794 = 0</td>
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Not Sure of Your Calculation? Email: admin@ecc.org.nz or phone us on 0800 742 742 to calculate it for you.

To Pay

- **Cheque** made payable to EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL
- **Internet** to the account of ECC, 02-0278-0099404-25. Be sure to put in your centre name and five digit MoE licensing number in the payment details as a reference.
- **Post** or **Fax** this form with your credit card details. Mail to: ECC, PO Box 31-672, Lower Hutt, 5040. Fax: 04 566-4611
- **Credit Card** Please charge my: □ Visa □ Mastercard

Name on card: [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Card Number [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] Expiry date

PTO to provide centre details and calculate your total licensed capacity
List below all centres in your Management Group (continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

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<th>Centre Name</th>
<th>MoE license number(s)</th>
<th>The centre director’s/supervisor’s name</th>
<th>Physical address</th>
<th>Centre email address</th>
<th>Auspice (please tick)</th>
<th>No. of child places licensed for</th>
<th>Total no. of child places</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enter total licensed capacity of all centres here. Use this figure to calculate your subscription (see first page)

I declare that the information provided on this form is correct, that I have included all the centres in my management group in the list provided, and that my centre/s meet the criterion for ECC membership. I agree not to share with non-members any information provided by the ECC or any of the benefits of membership.

Signed:  
Date:  
Print name:
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