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From the Editor

Sarah Ellich
Publications Manager
Early Childhood Council

This is my last message as editor of Swings & Roundabouts magazine. After five fabulous years working with the ECC as publications manager, I am leaving to further my freelance writing and editing business, Little Black Cat.

One of the best things about working for a not-for-profit organisation with a small staff like the ECC is the huge range of activities you end up undertaking. Over the years, as well as managing the publications, I’ve done everything from answering members’ queries through to helping run the annual conference, from stuffing envelopes to meeting with ministers. I have constantly met and worked with amazing and passionate people within the sector, and I want to thank all of those who have been supportive of me during that time: the ECC’s staff and executive, our Member Benefit Scheme providers, our event managers at Icon, those who have provided content for this magazine, the team at Target Media and, of course, the members of the ECC.

I would also like to thank those of you who have given me such positive feedback on this magazine over the years. I often receive feedback from managers who have passed on articles to parents and staff, from students wanting to use articles in relation to their studies and from those who are supervising teachers through the registration process. It’s great to know that the articles have been so relevant and useful to you.

In this issue we have a special post-Budget feature with three items on the funding cuts and GST and tax changes. Alissa Tosswill provides another two excellent articles on movement and nutrition, and Skylight gives us an insight into grief in children and what you can do to help. Karen Miller’s article on water will give you some fantastic ideas for teaching physics in your centre, and her article on celebrating Diwali will provide inspiration for this upcoming event. Lynette Radue documents Trinity Kindergarten’s strategy for involving dads in their children’s activities, and Colleen Lockie takes a look at a dispositional approach to education.

So, that’s it from me. You’re an incredible bunch of people doing an incredibly important job. I wish you all the very best.
Peter Reynolds discusses the challenges brought about by Budget 2010, the results of the recent ECC membership survey, and the upcoming launch of a brand new Early Childhood Council website.

The challenges bought about by Budget 2010 have been many and varied, and there has been plenty of debate. Outstanding issues for the sector to resolve include:

- The future of the ECE Strategic Plan;
- The future of the commitment toward 100% ECE-qualified, registered teachers;
- The cost of compliance; and
- The opportunities for growth in those communities where ECE participation is lagging.

While the Minister of Education was unable/unwilling to move on the funding decisions in the Budget, she did acknowledge interest in revisiting the ECE Strategic Plan. Doing so would be welcomed by many in the sector and would again provide the sense of direction that has been lost with the Budget decisions we continue to grapple with.

The ECC recently undertook a survey of its membership on the 20 Hours Policy and the 100% ECE-qualified and registered teacher goal. From the results it is fair to say the responses reflect two clear schools of thought, particularly on the 100% goal issue. Also interesting is the interpretation of 100% - some view this as relating to the ratio of qualified ECE teachers to children; and others view the 100% goal as relating to all those involved in the delivery of education and care within the centre (where there may currently be non-ECE teachers, teachers in training, unqualified people with extensive relevant experience and so on).

I recently attended the ECE Forum in Manukau in Auckland and found much the same variance of opinion over which model works and leads to quality outcomes and which does not. Nevertheless, as an organisation representing the largest group of independent centres in New Zealand, we have to show leadership and clarity in our policy approach. This is my next challenge!

Reducing the cost of compliance has won a supporter in the form of the Minister. Her decision recently to direct the Ministry of Education to review the multi-license provisions and process is a success for the ECC and those who have contributed to this debate over recent times. The Minister’s decision to embrace the one-centre-one-licence concept will make not only applying for licences simpler but also streamline reporting and auditing processes.

Finally, the government has signalled its intention to seek to increase participation in ECE in low-income, low-decile areas. Considerable work has already been done on this issue, with trials in South Auckland and elsewhere. Manukau has made progress in forging relationships with primary schools and the Ministry so that new centres can be built on primary school grounds. However, some concerning issues around this strategy remain, including the continuing policy of the government investing in buildings and assets in order to develop new centres; relatively small centre sizes leading to concerns over future viability; and the lack of partnership with private centre operators, many of whom have the resources and willingness to invest. There is greater opportunity for the government to work with the wider early childhood education sector in partnership to address these participation issues.

Over the next few months, the ECC will be launching a new website, more up to date in terms of features and with considerably more information to support centre operations.”

“Over the next few months, the ECC will be launching a new website, more up to date in terms of features and with considerably more information to support centre operations.”

Over the next few months, the ECC will be launching a new website, more up to date in terms of features and with considerably more information to support centre operations. We will have published our revised policy positions on 20 Hours and the 100% goal. We will have completed a wages and salary survey and will be introducing additional benefits through our Member Benefit Programme. We will continue to have a voice around the vexing issues above and to influence government policy and sector growth. We will be watching the Early Childhood Education Collective Agreement (formerly the Consenting Parties agreement) negotiations with interest. And, we will be up to our eye-teeth in supporting centres that struggle to adjust with the impact of the Budget!

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In recent years government spending on early childhood education (ECE) has increased rapidly to a point where it became necessary to control cost increases. At Budget 2010 some hard decisions had to be made in the current tight fiscal environment.

The government has made a commitment to increasing participation in ECE for those children who are missing out, particularly Maori and Pasifika, and children from low socio-economic status communities. Budget 2010 re-prioritised some early childhood education funding to help increase opportunities for these children to participate in quality ECE.

Savings were achieved by aligning early childhood funding rates with the 2012 80% teacher registration target. We understand that early childhood education services may need to make adjustments to the way they operate to accommodate funding changes, and that this may be a challenge in the short term. We are encouraging services to talk to their parents about the choices they can make in response to funding changes. These choices could include changes to hours of operation, the range of services offered (such as meals or excursions), fees, or the mix of registered and unregistered teachers.
The government’s 2010 Budget was an important move to attempt to realign the economic framework of New Zealand in readiness for the eventual upturn in the economy.

By now, everyone will be aware of two significant changes on 1 October 2010, an increase in the rate of GST to 15% and across-the-board personal tax cuts.

While there has been considerable debate about the merits of the GST rate change around how to compensate those who are less well off, with suggestions such as removing GST on food and essential items, the GST increase was an inevitable outcome of both the state and structure of the New Zealand economy.

Firstly, the recession meant the government had to deliver a balanced budget - something businesses and individuals should consider doing themselves rather than the recent reliance on debt-funded spending. This time the government took a “basket” approach - for everything that came out of the basket (such as personal tax cuts and corporate tax cuts) something had to go in (such as the increase in the rate of GST and depreciation changes).

Secondly, the tax system was heading for trouble. New Zealand has had a heavy reliance on receiving revenue from the taxation of business via company tax and individuals via PAYE. The problem with this approach was structural – New Zealanders are inherently mobile, and with a global economy, technology changes, an ethos of travelling and seeing the world, this is accelerating. New Zealanders are adept at doing business offshore and relocate with relative ease. The mobility of people is evidenced by our brain drain problem. Adding to this mobility problem is our baby boomers ‘bubble’ - they are starting to move out of salary and wage earning and into retirement.

If the very businesses and people relied upon to pay the majority of New Zealand taxes sharply diminishes over the next 10-20 years, balancing the budget becomes even more problematic.

So the government’s Budget delivers a shift in the taxing regimes.

- An increase in GST to 15% spreads the tax burden across the entire population, catching those in the ‘black economy’ (cash transactions and illegal activities) by making them pay GST on their day-to-day purchases, and allows the spending public the choice over whether to spend (and pay higher GST) or save/pay off debt (without GST).

- Reductions in personal taxes to compensate for the increase in GST provide greater personal income and an incentive for people to work more effectively.

- A reduction in corporate taxes to 28% helps maintain relative with Australia and gives businesses an incentive to be more profitable.

- Removes depreciation claims on buildings (as part of a move to get New Zealanders away from the love of investing in property).

- Increases taxation of foreign investors in New Zealand through changes to the thin capitalisation regime, as part of their contribution to doing business in New Zealand.

These changes have a significant impact on the cashflows of a business for those in the education sector. While the government may have balanced their budget, the impact on each business will be significantly different and all need to be considered and planned for.

- The increase in GST will mean all contracts need to be reviewed, including government funding contracts.

- Pricing decisions have to be made for the GST rate change for enrolment and other fees, even more complicated during the middle of an education year with some billing cycles likely to span the 1 October GST rate change.

- The personal tax rate cuts may take a little pressure off wage rises, given staff will have a little more in their back pocket.

- The reduction in corporate taxes will help cashflow but only once businesses start making money again.

- The removal of depreciation claims on buildings will have a direct impact on businesses that own their own premises, and potentially an indirect impact on leases should landlords seek to recover their deficit through increased rents.

So everyone should be reworking their own budgets to reflect the changes the government’s Budget will make to their business and cashflow, and the changes that need to be made to account for this.

Further enquiries, please contact:
Greg Thompson, National Director, Tax Grant Thornton Accountants
Phone (04) 495 3775
Email greg.thompson@nz.gt.com
Drivers for change
With the upcoming funding cuts, many early childhood centres will no doubt be considering making changes. Some centres may consider ‘downsizing’, or changing other arrangements, such as hours of work, the use of relief teachers, or staff benefits. Changes such as this can give rise to redundancy situations.

It is vitally important to get these change processes right in terms of your staff morale, your reputation in the community and your legal risk – particularly if it will result in redundancies.

For a redundancy to be lawful, the employer must:
• have genuine business reasons for the change that are related to the position, not the person in that position (for example, the employer can’t disestablish a position because of poor performance); and
• follow a fair process.

This article explains these requirements in more detail.

What if the centre wants to change the hours or days of work?
Some centres may consider reducing or changing hours or days of work. Where employment agreements expressly allow reasonable changes to be made, or where staff work variable hours or on a casual basis, it is likely these changes can be implemented following consultation. However, in other circumstances, the centre either will need to obtain its employees’ agreement or go down a redundancy path to make these changes. If you are able to get agreement, that is the ideal scenario, and, of course, any agreed changes should be documented.

What does a fair process involve?
Once an employer is proposing to make changes giving rise to a redundancy, the employer has statutory good faith obligations to consult the employees affected. The employer must also consider any alternatives to redundancy, for example, whether there are other ways of saving costs across the business.

Consultation requires you to provide affected employees with quality information about the changes proposed, how they will affect employees, and the reasons for them. Employees must have an opportunity to consider this information (usually at least a couple of days), and an opportunity to provide feedback.

Employers do not ultimately have to agree with their employees’ feedback, but they have to consider it with an open mind before they make a decision on whether and how to proceed. Employers should also engage with their employees in responding to feedback provided.

This is where most employers go wrong. They consult, but do little more than go through the motions. True and meaningful engagement is the key – not just to a lawful process, but to a good process.

Employers must also follow any procedures in the employees’ employment agreements or in any relevant policies.

What if it is necessary to select between employees?
Making someone’s position redundant may sometimes involve a choice between employees, for example, where the proposal is to reduce the number of teachers from five to four. The selection process must be fair and transparent. The employer can choose the selection criteria, which might be based on experience, cost, performance, ‘fit’ or time in the role (i.e. ‘last on, first off’). However, affected employees must be consulted about the selection criteria, and employers should not apply any unspecified criteria in making their selection.

Can an employee be made redundant while on parental leave?
Yes, although higher standards apply, and the employee must be consulted in the usual way. The employer may need to be more flexible about the nature and timing of the consultation to accommodate the employee’s circumstances.

What is an employee entitled to in a redundancy situation?
Once an employer decides to make a position redundant, and before giving notice, the employer must consider any alternatives to termination, for example, whether there are any other suitable positions available. This does not mean necessarily that the employer must redeploy the employee, but the employer must at least consider the options.

When terminating an employee’s employment for a redundancy, the employer must give the employee notice, which is usually provided for in the employment agreement. The employee will also be entitled to any outstanding annual holiday pay.

An employer does not have to pay redundancy compensation unless there is an express contractual entitlement, although some employers choose to pay redundancy compensation as a gesture of goodwill and to assist their employees at a difficult time. Employers may also offer access to confidential counselling through an employee assistance programme or access to external advice and support services – these can assist with anything
from help with CV writing to job application skills. These touches, if affordable, go a long way to assisting your employees to move on – both those who go and those who stay.

**Tax issues**

For redundancies prior to 1 October 2010, tax credits may be available in certain circumstances.

KiwiSaver contributions do not have to be deducted from redundancy compensation, although tax and student loan payments should be automatically deducted because redundancy compensation is classed as taxable income.

**What happens if the centre is sold or work is contracted out?**

Special provisions apply to cleaning and catering staff. These employees are able to elect to transfer to the new employer (e.g. the purchaser of the business or the new contractor) on the same terms and conditions.

For all other employees, they are required to have ‘employment protection provisions’ in their employment agreement. These require the current employer to negotiate with the new employer about whether the affected employees will transfer to the new employer on their current terms and conditions.

Hamish Kynaston is a partner and Andrea Pazin a senior solicitor at Buddle Findlay. They are part of the National Employment Law Team. If you would like advice on restructuring or any other employment law issue, call Hamish (04) 462 0439, or email hamish.kynaston@buddlefindlay.com or Andrea (04) 498 7303, or email andrea.pazin@buddlefindlay.com. If you would like to be on the database for our monthly employment law update, email kaye.crichton@buddlefindlay.com

“With the upcoming funding cuts, many early childhood centres will no doubt be considering making changes.”

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Mat time can be an active time

A planned mat time is the perfect opportunity to develop the foundations for fundamental movement skills by providing different active games, music and movement experiences. To ensure that children are provided with lots of different opportunities it may help to plan your mat time around a different fundamental movement skill, so that children have the chance to develop the whole body. Some children may enjoy sitting and watching, which could mean they are visual learners taking in the experience to try on their own or at another session. Repeating activities helps to ensure that these children have an opportunity to have a turn on another day. Repetition is also the key to learning, as through practising the skill or the activity children develop confidence and the ability to apply the skill. The most important thing is for the children to be able to explore and have fun!
What are fundamental movement skills and how does this link to Active Movement?

Fundamental movement skills are the building blocks to more specialised complex skills and are the basic movement skills needed to competently participate in and enjoy sport, recreation and physical activity. The normal developmental milestones required before fundamental movement or sport skills can be successfully developed are the foundation skills. Building the foundations is paramount for brain development and critical in the early years. Foundation skills are linked to the principles of Active Movement and can assist children in the development of fundamental movement skills, preparing the way for higher levels of learning to occur. Some examples of foundation skills are body awareness, understanding of crossing the midline, a well-developed vestibular system, eye tracking and primitive reflex diminishing. Once the foundations are in place it may be easier for children to develop their locomotor, stability and manipulative skills – these are considered fundamental movement skills.

How to plan mat time around fundamental movement skill development

Each day of the week is an opportunity to develop fundamental movement skills at mat time. Mix and match your own activity ideas or use SPARC’s set of 16 Active Movement resources, which include a set of 14 activity guides and two DVDs to help provide ideas. 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.

Example of a weekly mat time plan

**Monday mat time**

**Body awareness activities**

Body awareness activities allow a child to develop an understanding of his/her body, how it fits in space, the length, size and way it moves. It also helps to develop left and right dominance and the ability to connect a body part with an object e.g. for catching and throwing. When doing body awareness activities it is important to move both sides of the body.

**Activity: Paint box game**

Sit everybody in a circle. The teacher explains: “There is a large paint box in the middle of the circle, can you see it? The colour of the paint is red. Red is like a fire engine. Now all we need is a paintbrush and we can paint the room! Can you take your hands, come put them in the red paint and then go and paint the doors?”

Continue the game by nominating a child to think of a colour and a body part to use as a paintbrush. Then choose somewhere in the room to paint that colour. Adapt whether the child thinks of colour, body part or part of room depending on their level of understanding.

**Activity: Scarf catch**

Throw a scarf or similar object in the air and suggest different body parts for the children to catch the scarf with. Ask the children to suggest a body part to catch the scarf with.

**Tuesday mat time**

**Locomotor skill development activities**

Locomotor activities develop the ability to be able to move from one place to another. This is moving freely through space, on large body surfaces, on the floor, in the air and through or around equipment. Examples of locomotor skills are rolling, crawling, walking, running and skipping.

**Activity: Moving to a story**

Choose a book with lots of pictures or actions. As you read the story, get the children to act out the scene. For example, if the story is about a lion, ask the children to leap like a lion across the room.

**Activity: Dragon’s tail**

Three children form a line holding each other without letting go to make a dragon.
“Fundamental movement skills are the building blocks to more specialised complex skills and are the basic movement skills needed to competently participate in and enjoy sport, recreation and physical activity.”

Wednesday mat time

Stability skill development activities

Stability activities involve the body balancing in one place (static), moving in motion (dynamic), and rotation (turning). Examples of stability skills are leaning, twisting, stretching, standing on one foot and hopping.

Activity: Sneak up

One person is ‘in’; this could be the teacher to start with. Everybody else has to try and sneak up to touch this person. When the ‘in’ person turns around, everyone tries to be like statues. If they move they are sent back to the start; the point is to emphasis stopping.

Activity: Storybook turn the page

Ask the children to lie down on their backs. Read a story aloud to the children. Ask them to roll over when you turn the page. Roll back the other way on the next page turn. You could adapt this by asking the children to jump up when you turn the page and then sit back down on the next page turn.

Thursday mat time

Manipulative skill development activities

Manipulative activities involve imposing force from one object to another and learning skills using the hands and feet. A child will develop hand-eye, foot-eye and body-eye coordination, grip strength and coordination skills. Examples of manipulative skills are throwing, catching, hitting, striking and kicking.

Activity: Feather catch

Each child has a feather. The children sit in a circle and throw their feathers up into the air. Ask the children to watch the feathers and when they all touch the ground crawl into the circle and pick up one feather. Ask the children to throw their feathers up into the air, try to blow them or try to catch the feather before it touches the floor. Repeat.

Activity: Catch the ball

With children in pairs – Child A rolls the ball to Child B and calls out a body part for Child B to catch the ball with e.g. knee, foot, head, bottom. Child B then rolls the ball back to Child A and calls for Child A to catch the ball with a body part.

Friday mat time

Children’s choice from activities done during the week

Ask the children to think about the active games, music and movement activities they have done during the week and see if they can come up with favourite activities to do for this mat time. This is a good opportunity to see what the children like to do and which activities they remembered doing. This may help to plan which activities need to be repeated whether for further practice or just because they were perceived by the children as fun to do.
Making the best food choices to develop healthy eating behaviours

ALISSA TOMSallis reports

Many of the behaviours or habits we have as adults may have come from the experiences we had during our early childhood. This is why it is important to choose foods for preschoolers carefully to achieve optimal healthy eating behaviours later in life. This can be done by ensuring that foods from the five main food groups are provided, with plenty of opportunity for children to choose what they might like to eat, and by also being a role model yourself in the food choices you make. This article is to help you to make the right choices and to influence your eating behaviour to ensure that you are a positive role model for the children in the centre, as what they see you eat they will want to eat too!

The foods we eat fuel our body

The foods we eat are the essential building blocks for life as they contain macronutrients and micronutrients. Macronutrients are needed in large amounts for healthy growth and development. They provide the energy for all the body’s everyday functions. Primarily these nutrients are proteins, carbohydrates and fats. Macronutrients are found in small amounts within foods and are the vitamins and minerals that play an important role in the normal functioning of the body and digestive processes. Every day you will eat a wide variety of foods from the basic food groups, which will provide your body with a range of essential nutrients. The foods that you are eating also provide your body with energy to support the body’s basic involuntary functions, for example, heart-rate, maintaining breathing and body temperature. You will also expend energy through activities that you are consciously doing, which range from being sedentary to demanding. Simply put, when you eat too much food and do not expend much energy you are more likely to put on weight; if you don’t eat enough food and do not expend much energy you are more likely to lose weight. This is why it is important to find the right balance of eating the right amount of healthy foods and participating in regular exercise to maintain a healthy weight balance.

Macronutrients for healthy growth and development

Protein

Proteins are for growth and development and these are main components of every cell in our body. Protein foods include meat, poultry, eggs, fish and shellfish, as well as the plant proteins, legumes, nuts and seeds. In New Zealand we have a diet high in protein, so it is very easy to meet the recommendation that protein foods make up 12% of what you eat - 1-2 servings per day is fine. Ensure that as a serving size you stick to the size and thickness of your palm, teach the children to use their palms too. You may like to ask the children to circle their palm with their finger, as we can’t assume they know where their palm is! Remember to always trim any visible fat from meat before cooking, remove the skin from chicken and choose the lighter colour meat, as this contains less fat. This will ensure you do not eat any of the saturated fat that meat can be high in.

Healthy Tip: Aim to eat red meat only twice a week - enjoy fish, seafood or plant proteins on other days!

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates form the basis of a healthy diet, provide the body with ready-to-use energy and are a valuable source of fibre. Carbohydrate foods include breads, cereals, pasta and potatoes and should make up 55% of your diet. It is important to choose the right carbohydrates as...
some are excellent sources of energy while others are a waste of energy - it is recommended to eat at least six servings a day. Choose wholemeal bread, pasta and whole, unrefined grains and cereals to form the foundation of your diet. Try to limit consumption of refined products such as cakes, sweets and biscuits. It is very easy to eat six servings a day as, for example, a large slice of bread or a cup of cooked pasta, noodles or rice is one serving. Make a fist with your hand and use this as a guideline for your carbohydrate serving size.

Healthy Tip: Wholegrain varieties will fill you up and satisfy your need for food for longer than refined white varieties. This will reduce your need to snack!

Fats
There are different types of fats, and some are actually vital for a healthy functioning body. Fat provides the body with insulation, helping to maintain a constant temperature against extremes of hot and cold. It also provides the body with a high source of energy. It is best to avoid saturated fats, which come from animal and dairy products as well as oils like palm and coconut. Too much saturated fat and trans fatty acids are believed to increase the risk of heart disease by raising unhealthy cholesterol levels. The better fats to eat are unsaturated fats; however, these are still high in energy, so moderation is the key. A diet high in monounsaturated fats, which are found in plant oils, avocados and nuts, helps to lower cholesterol and fats in the blood. Polysaturated fats include omega-3 fatty acids found in fish oils and omega-6 fatty acids found in vegetable oils. It is ideal to include these types of fats in your diet. Choose to have no more than 33% fat in your diet with the majority of it (at least 25%) coming from unsaturated fat options.

Healthy Tip: When eating nuts and seeds choose varieties that are natural, untoasted and unsalted. Remember to only eat a small handful, as, although high in good fats, they are high in energy.

Micronutrients for normal functioning of the body and digestive processes.

Vitamins
Vitamins naturally occur in food and are essential for health. If you eat a wide variety of foods you are able to get the majority of the vitamins you need without the need to take vitamin supplements. Vitamins are either fat soluble or water soluble depending on how they are absorbed in the body. Vitamins A, D, E and K are fat soluble, while vitamin C and vitamin B are water-soluble. We can easily become vitamin deficient if we do not consume the right variety of foods or because of lifestyle choices such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption. Fruits and vegetables are an excellent source of vitamins.

Fruits and vegetables
Improve your health through increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables; include these every day as part of both meals and snacks. Fruit is naturally sweet and is high in vitamins, such as vitamin C, low in fat and makes the ideal snack. Fruit is full of antioxidants, which help to destroy harmful substances in the body, helping to decrease the risk of developing heart disease and cancer. Vegetables are an excellent source of vitamins, such as vitamin A, to help keep your eyes and skin healthy and help build a strong immunity. We tend to eat most of our vegetables at dinnertime, but they can be included throughout the day e.g. fresh spinach with banana and apple juice in a breakfast smoothie, a green salad with lunch, carrot and broccoli segments as a snack or as a stir fry mix. Remember to always include at least two servings of fruit and at least three servings of vegetables in your diet everyday – a serving size is a good handful so make this consumption big.

Healthy Tip: If think you have had enough green leafy or brightly coloured vegetables today, then have some more! Remember the serving recommendations are at least three servings so include vegetables in the lunch box.

“Many of the behaviours or habits we have as adults may have come from the experiences we had during our early childhood. This is why it is important to choose foods for preschoolers carefully to achieve optimal healthy eating behaviours later in life.”
Minerals
Minerals are obtained in the body by eating plant foods that have taken up the minerals from the soil or by eating animals that have consumed plant foods. We need minerals, as they work together to make and break body tissues and regulate metabolism. The majority of minerals are stored in your bones, so if you have a dietary deficiency of calcium, for example, this will be released from your bones to meet the needs of the body. Dairy products are an excellent source of minerals, especially calcium.

Dairy products
Dairy products include milk, cheese, yoghurt and are a ready source of protein, vitamins and minerals, particularly calcium. Calcium is also important in the building and the maintenance of teeth and plays a key role in our cells. Within the cells, calcium is involved in processes such as muscle contraction. Calcium is considered an essential nutrient, as our body cannot make it on its own; rather it has to come from the foods that we eat, so it is very important that dairy products or foods fortified with calcium are included in your diet throughout your whole life. Fat content is one of the most important things to check for when consuming dairy products, so always look for low-fat varieties. Whole milk, for example, contains 8.25 grams of fat per glass compared to trim milk, which has only 1.25 grams of fat per glass. Try to consume 2-3 dairy or calcium-fortified products each day.

Healthy Tip: Watch your cheese portions – try grating it instead of slicing it. Grated cheese spreads further, so you consume less.

Understanding what you eat and why you are eating may help to create healthy food behaviour. Remember nothing changes if nothing changes, so even starting with one change each week and sticking to it will help you to create your own healthy eating behaviour. This will help to influence the children in your care, and being a role model will help them on their pathway to healthy eating later in life.

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 for more information on how Alissa can help you!

“Fruit is naturally sweet and is high in vitamins...low in fat and makes the ideal snack.”
Grief is the natural response all humans have as they adjust to any significant change or loss. The bigger the change or loss is, the bigger the grief. There’s no right or wrong way to grieve and everyone does it differently. It takes as long as it needs to take.

After a significant loss babies, toddlers and young children may often appear unconcerned, looking distracted, playing and doing their usual activities. Adults can wrongly assume they are not properly aware of the loss, or affected by it at all. Indeed they are, in their own ways. Research confirms the many ways early loss has an impact on a young life. How do you currently know if a young child in your care is dealing with a change or loss?

Young ones tend to grieve in short bursts, which adults may or may not even see, but then they usually look for reassurance and comfort in their normal routines, activities and games. And of course without language, or with limited language, they are not able to articulate to adults what it is like for them. And, like adults, a significant loss or change will shape how they see the world from then on. The words you use and way you talk with them about their loss will influence how they come to understand grief and life’s challenges as they move forward. Children like to be given information about what’s happening, in manageable amounts and to have key information repeated. Having caring adults around who will listen if they want to talk or stay near can make a huge difference.

And they’ll need ongoing attention, reassurance and support. It’s not unusual for grief to resurface as various things trigger it, even well after the initial loss. When the loss is very significant, this resurfacing will inevitably happen as they move through different life milestones and develop as individuals.

How a child grieves will depend on many things, such as:

- The nature of the loss
- Age
- Gender
- Their developmental stage
- Personality
- Cultural/religious background
• Ways they usually react to stress and emotion
• Relationship with the person/thing lost
• Earlier experiences of loss
• Family circumstances
• How others around them are grieving
• The amount of emotional support available to them

Babies and toddlers
Babies and toddlers experience feelings of loss and separation and are likely to pick up on the anxiety or distress of others around them, particularly adults they are close to.

Common reactions can include:
• Looking for the person/object that’s been lost
• Irritability
• Crying more
• Wanting to be held more – clingy
• Less active – quiet, less responsive
• Appetite and/or sleep pattern changes
• Possible weight loss
• Jumpy – anxious
• Fretful, distressed

How to help them
• Keep routines and normal activities going as much as possible
• Speak calmly and gently to them – and be calm around them
• Tell them you know they are sad – start to teach and use words that describe feelings
• Tell them they are safe, and who is looking after them
• Keep separations as few as possible
• Comfort them with appropriate touch and by encouraging them
• Explain change and loss as part of life, so they come to understand it bit by bit. Using some examples in nature may be helpful, such as watching plants grow, bloom and die or seasons change, or select books to read that address change/loss
• Provide comfort items, such as a cuddly toy, special blanket etc

Preschoolers
At this age children can find it hard to understand that a loss or change is permanent. They are also at a stage of ‘magical thinking’. For example, thinking someone can come alive again or thinking somehow they made a parent move out from their house. They do understand separation means feeling bad and so they feel insecure and frightened when familiar things around them change. This age group needs a lot of reassurance that they will be safe and looked after.

Common reactions can include:
• Dreams, or sensing the presence of the person who has died/moved away
• Fearfulness, anxiety
• Clinginess
• Fretful, distressed
• Irritable, more tantrums
• Withdrawal, quiet, lack of responses
• Changes in eating patterns
• Difficulty sleeping, or sleeping more
• Toileting problems, bed wetting, soiling
• Regression in progress, e.g. returning to crawling, wanting a bottle

How to help them
• Keep up routines and normal activities as much as possible
• Speak calmly and gently to them – and be calm around them
• Tell them you know they are sad – start to teach and use words that describe feelings
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• Explain change and loss as part of life, so they come to understand it bit by bit. Using some examples in nature may be helpful, such as watching plants grow, bloom and die or seasons change, or select books to read that address change/loss
• Provide comfort items, such as a cuddly toy, special blanket etc
• Encourage play – children can often use play to help them process what has happened, e.g. sand play, puppets, dolls, writing, drawing, painting and different physical activities.

Tricia Irving Hendry is the Resource Manager at Skylight. Skylight is a national not-for-profit agency helping children, young people and their families/whanau move forward through change, loss, trauma and grief - whatever the cause. We also help those supporting them. 0800 299 100 www.skylight.org.nz
“But the rain doesn’t have ears”: education for sustainability in action

COLLEEN LOCKIE REPORTS

Conversations over tea

In May this year I had the pleasure of attending the Early Childhood Council Annual Conference in Christchurch, my home town.

I knew that a large group of early childhood teachers would be attending, and that many of them would be associate teachers for students enrolled in the early childhood initial teacher education qualifications.

My intention was to use the conference as an opportunity to share with conference delegates some of the key fundamentals of two courses I have been involved with teaching and developing at the university over the last few years: Assessment for Learning and Education for Sustainability (EfS), and to have some conversations with colleagues over tea breaks.

The presentation was called “‘But the rain doesn’t have ears’ – making connections between education for sustainability, narrative assessment documentation and a dispositional approach in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context’.

The student visit

The title of my presentation was inspired by an interaction that happened while I was visiting one of our third year students on teaching practice. It was raining on the day I visited this early childhood setting, and the student was engaged with a group of children doing art experiences in the covered awning attached to the side of the building – a space that was dry and spacious but not overly warm. At one point the student looked out the plastic window and started chanting the classic rhyme ‘Rain, rain, go away, come again another day’. One of the children in the group looked at her, head to one side, with that thoughtful, puzzled look children sometimes get when they think adults have said something very strange.

“But the rain doesn’t have ears”, he said.

The student and child talked for a short time about rain clouds, all the while engaged with the art experience, until the rain stopped and the children could re-present the art space for the next participants and go out into the clean, cool Christchurch air.

This short interaction was then written up as an assessment narrative (some might call it a learning story) by the student, shared with the child, colleagues and family and then included in the child’s assessment portfolio. In the narrative, reference was made to this child as a communicator, respectful listener, deep thinker, connector of knowledge and creator of new knowledge. I was pleased to note that the student was not tempted to make this assessment documentation about rain clouds.

Assessment for learning in action

In the Assessment for Learning (A4L) course this student had just completed, we had talked about the key purpose of writing assessment documentation as “making visible what is valued in this place”, and making it visible to the widest of audiences. For me, this was a heartening example of making visible what is valued in this place using the dispositional framework outlined in Kei Tua o te Pae; assessment for learning, early childhood exemplars, the resource developed by the Ministry of Education to support assessment practice in early childhood settings. The dispositional framework suggested by this resource is:

• Taking an interest

Without missing a beat, the student replied, “You are right, I wonder how it knows hen to stop and start”. The child thought for a while and said, “Well, I think it starts because the clouds have drunk too much”. A meteorologist would probably take a much longer time to explain it, but would essentially be saying the same thing.
• Being involved
• Persisting in difficult times
• Communicating increasingly complex ideas and feelings
• Taking increasing responsibility for self and others

EfS as dispositional

This student had also just completed a third year course called Education for Sustainability (EfS) and so was aware that EfS also uses a dispositional framework, but one which highlights:

• A strong values base
• Critical thinking and reflective learning
• Future focus
• Participation
• Learning for life
• Learning across boundaries
• Transformative action

The student was aware that I would be on the lookout for the EfS values of:

• Compassion
• Equity
• Justice
• Peace
• Cultural sensitivity
• Respect for the environment
• Recognition of the rights of future generations

Assessment for learning makes visible what is valued in this place at this time; and in Aotearoa/New Zealand at this time, the issues around sustainability are becoming increasingly valued at local and national levels. If you look at the last bullet point in the EfS list, you will see that it is about recognition of the rights of future generations, and here was one of the next generation taking an interest in the natural world, being involved in making sense of a natural phenomenon, persisting in showing puzzlement with an adult, communicating very clearly about complex things and being responsible in leaving the art area ready for the next participant before going out in the fresh air. As you can see, this was definitely not just about the rain.

EfS and A4L – like a horse and carriage

There is an increasing interest in sustainability in early childhood settings. Soon, edible gardens, worm farms and recycling systems will be so common that they will only rate a mention if they are not part of the setting. However, EfS is more than worm farms. It is about world transformation. The world that my and previous generations have created is definitely in need of some transformation. Together, my generation and the next generation can start that transformation – through supporting children to be competent in the A4L dispositions as well as the EfS dispositions and values – and along the way we will all learn something about such interesting questions as how the rain knows when to stop and start.

Reference:

Colleen Lockie is currently senior lecturer at Canterbury University, teaching early childhood initial teacher education qualifications. She holds the additional role of practitioner specialist, which involves actively making connections between early childhood practitioners and those teaching the early childhood courses at the university. She began her early childhood history as a kindergarten teacher in 1980, and from 1995 – 2007 was involved with the then Christchurch College of Education professional development contracts, particularly the implementation of the Kei Tua o te Pae: assessment for learning, early childhood exemplars resource. Her current research interests are around education for sustainability, peace education and building sustainable communities for a positive future. If you are interested in any of these areas, feel free to contact her on colleen.lockie@canterbury.ac.nz
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“Understanding the nature of science as both durable and changing is important because this supports facilitation of children’s exploration and sharing of scientific ideas.”

This article supports development of scientific literacy, which is about understanding scientific terms and concepts, the nature of science and the impact of science on society and the environment. Here are some ways to support scientific literacy in your centre through active learning and exploration.

Physics is about making reversible changes. For the ultimate in reversibility, let’s consider water, a major element on our planet. Water can be a liquid, a solid, (ice) or a gas (steam). These changing states occur as energy in the form of heat is added or removed, providing a great platform for children to hypothesise (predict) as they develop and refine their working theories, supporting the continually developing nature of scientific knowledge.

Watery facts
- Unlike most liquids, water expands when it freezes.
- Ice floats – if it didn’t, we would have a permanent ice age because the sea would eventually freeze from the bottom up.

Splash splash! Water, water, everywhere!

FINDING PHYSICS IN YOUR CENTRE
KAREN MILLER REPORTS

“Understanding the nature of science as both durable and changing is important because this supports facilitation of children’s exploration and sharing of scientific ideas.”

Photo courtesy of Karen Miller
• 71% of the earth is covered in water, 97% of the world’s water is in the sea - 2% as ice.
• 61% of our body, 80% of our skin and 90% of our brain is water.
• Water is a chemical compound consisting of two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen, in a molecule with the chemical formula of H₂O.

Where does water come from – where does it go?

Look at clouds, splash in rain puddles, examine frost, hail or snow, make steam and ice and look at dissolving, soaking and evaporation. Support scientific exploration and literacy by predicting or hypothesising results and reversing changes. Incorporate mathematics by measuring, comparing and graphing results.

• Discuss cloud types and how they help us to predict rain.
• Collect rain water in a gauge.

Some questions about water and the environment

How does water get to our taps?

Consider water collection – dams, tanks, and plumbing. Some pipes are visible; others are hidden in walls or underground. Some travel a very long way.
Where does water go after we drink it?

Some biological learning here – think about sweat, saliva, tears and, of course, urine.

What happens to water we don’t want?

This is where sustainability and ecology come in. You could find out about stormwater drains and the impact of pollutants on the environment.

Curriculum links

The nature of science is the overarching unifying strand of the science learning area of The New Zealand Curriculum. Key elements are the durability of scientific knowledge and continuous re-evaluation in the light of discoveries. These fit well with the emergent nature of children’s working theories, which are refined through connections between new and previous learning.

Understanding the nature of science as both durable and changing is important because this supports facilitation of children’s exploration and sharing of scientific ideas.

The close fit between the exploration strand of Te Whariki and the science learning area in The New Zealand Curriculum means that the level 1 and 2 achievement objectives found in the charts at the back of the book should provide inspiration for exciting ways to explore science in relation to the interests of children in your centre. Explore science and other learning areas in: The New Zealand curriculum for English-medium teaching and learning in years 1-13: nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/curriculum-documents

Karen Miller is a lecturer with New Zealand Tertiary College.

Sources of further information

There are lots of great physics activities in Making Better Sense of the Material World: www.minedu.govt.nz/~/media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/PrimarySecondary/PublicationsAndResources/MakingBetterSenseOfTheMaterialWorld.pdf

Chemistry is about reactions that irreversibly change a substance - you can check this out in: Fun with Fizz: Finding chemistry in your centre. Swings and Roundabouts, December 2009: www.ecc.org.nz/swingsandroundabouts

You can learn more about scientific literacy in early childhood education from: Scientific literacy and supporting children’s scientific learning in ECE: www.lead.ece.govt.nz/sitecore/content/educate/EducateHome/learning/exploringPractice/Literacy/ScientificLiteracyInEarlyChildhood.aspx

The Auckland Regional Council have fantastic downloadable resources for teachers about a range of environmental issues including water at: www.arc.govt.nz/council/sustainability-education/education-resources/education-resources_home.cfm

Explore Watercare services for information relevant to the Auckland region, including information about water storage dams and a downloadable education newsletter in the education section: www.watercare.co.nz
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Celebrating Diwali

KAREN MILLER REPORTS

A fun way to bring Indian music and culture to your centre and strengthen links to the Indian community is to celebrate the Indian Festival of Light, Diwali, or Deepavali. This comes around each October/November and is now a festival occasion in many countries. Do invite Indians in your community to help with celebrating their culture – they are likely to be keen to be involved and could start by helping you to choose a suitable date for the celebrations. As there are religious and regional differences around the date a practical compromise might be appropriate. In Aotearoa/New Zealand Saturdays are usually chosen for public Diwali festivals.

Diwali is about bringing light from darkness. The Sanskrit saying related to Diwali is ‘Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya’, which means ‘from darkness lead me to light’. In te reo Maori it can be said as ‘mai te po ki te ao marama’. Tiny lamps called diyas are lit. These are clay dishes of oil with a cotton wick. To do this in a centre, a small number of diya could be put on a shiny metal tray or glass mirror to increase the glow and provide a fireproof base. The children can sing before the flames are blown out. The flames are slightly brighter than those from birthday candles, so the children must be well supervised and seated at a safe distance with water available nearby.

Preparing for this is a great opportunity to talk about fire safety and address the Te Whariki strand of wellbeing.

“Diwali is about bringing light from darkness. The Sanskrit saying related to Diwali is ‘Tamaso ma jyotirgamaya’, which means ‘from darkness lead me to light’. In te reo Maori it can be said as ‘mai te po ki te ao marama’.”

Roses and their petals are traditionally used in Indian celebrations. Diwali coincides with rose-flowering time in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Petals can be added to the water trough, to collage and playdough as well as scattered during dancing. Fresh roses are a lovely decoration at any time.

Dancing, new clothes and sharing of food are part of the festivities. Think about wearing a sari! Some of the children might wear their finery to your Diwali celebration and bring Indian sweets. These sweets are very rich and can be cut small for sharing. Another, healthier option is to make roti with the children. These are thin flour, oil and water pancakes cooked in a lightly oiled pan.

Beautiful henna or mehndi patterns can decorate hands and arms. Patterns are usually swirly, freehand designs, often featuring flowers. For children a small simple pattern on their wrist or forearm can work well. Henna lines stand out on the skin and need to dry until the henna falls or is lifted off, leaving the beautiful patterns. Children can be encouraged to blow on the skin to speed up the drying process. Henna can be purchased in a ready-to-use container similar to the piping bags used in cake decorating. Alternatively, dry henna can be mixed with water and piped through a folded plastic bag. The designs can last for several days so it is wise to gain parents’ consent first and to start with a tiny spot of henna to check for any adverse reaction.
The children can also use henna to decorate their own hands. Get the children to cut out paper tracings of their hands and, using cotton buds, apply small amounts of powdered henna and water mixture.

Traditionally rangoli designs are made on the doorstep with rice flour to distract small insects from coming indoors to look for food. The flour can be sprinkled onto stencils or mixed with water and piped into a pattern. Brightly coloured powder is also used – tempera paint powder works and can be held in place with hairspray. These designs look great and last longer on black paper. Rangoli designs can be screen printed with black paint and the outlines filled with colours.

As well as images from nature, rangoli patterns can be geometric designs of repeating patterns with unbroken lines. The creation of a symmetrical pattern is guided by a series of dots. This process is a structured form of art involving counting, geometry and algebra. Pastels on black paper are particularly effective. Outdoors, rangoli patterns can be made with chalk on concrete or by drawing on sand or dirt with sticks and can incorporate natural items such as shells, flowers, twigs or leaves. Wet sand arranged in patterns works well.

A sari makes a wonderful five metre parachute to lift and float to an accompaniment of Indian music. It can also be cut into shorter lengths for dancing, dressing up and decoration. If you drape a sari over the ceiling, take care not to put it over an exit where it could become a fire hazard.

Diwali spans several Indian religions, and there are various religious interpretations. In essence it is about lighting the way for an exile’s return from darkness. In mainstream centres it would be unwise to become overly involved in the religious aspects of the festival; and use of images of deities or gods in ways that could cause offence must be avoided. It is also important to be aware that a swastika is often incorporated into Indian designs to symbolise good fortune and prosperity. Since the Second World War this ancient symbol is usually drawn in a reversed form.

The diya, henna, stencils, and CDs of Indian music and sari can all be purchased from specialist Indian shops at a reasonable cost. It would pay to check with the shopkeeper that what you are buying is suitable for the purpose. Lots of rangoli and mehndi patterns can be found with a simple internet search.

Celebrating Diwali can be a project that involves all of the curriculum areas and brings the community together for a festive occasion that is lots of fun. While each strand and principle of Te Whariki can be identified in celebrating Diwali, the strongest links

“Celebrating Diwali can be a project that involves all of the curriculum areas and brings the community together for a festive occasion that is lots of fun.”
are through the family and community principle: “The wider world of family and community is an integral part of the early childhood curriculum”. The strands are addressed as the children support belonging through exploration of artistic and cultural experiences, contribute their own ideas, and communicate through art. Wellbeing is supported through learning about safety precautions.

Celebrating Diwali is an exciting project that draws on all learning areas of The New Zealand Curriculum. The way in which these come together to support learning about another culture and how it is expressed makes a strong connection to the areas of social sciences/tikanga-a-iwi and the arts/nga toi.

Describing the public celebrations of Diwali that are held in Aotearoa/New Zealand, Johnson and Figgins (2006) suggest they express and celebrate “cultural difference with an emphasis on social harmony in the New Zealand context”, drawing from the South Asian area through the medium of an Indian festival. Social harmony is a vital learning outcome for the centre community and our country.

References


Karen Miller is a lecturer at New Zealand Tertiary College
After reading Tim Kahn’s article in this publication in June 2009, I decided to write about our experiences with dads at Trinity Kindergarten – an independently owned private kindergarten in Auckland. This has been a focus of mine in my work for a number of years, although I have to admit that at times it takes a back seat due to other focuses in our work place. My aim in this article is to describe the work that we have been doing at our kindergarten in Auckland, as I believe it is also important to draw on other teachers’ experiences.

As expected, my experiences with parents have involved working more with mothers than with fathers. This was an issue for me because that meant we were working with only 50% of parents in our parent-teacher partnerships. It was time to take action!

The first step we took was to survey 15% of the kindergarten’s fathers. I spent some time explaining to dads the reasoning behind the surveys, as well as encouraging them to participate. They were a little reluctant to begin with but, fortunately, they responded to the surveys, which enabled us to gain a better insight into their perspectives of early education. This information has since guided us in our choice of changes and strategies that continue to be part of our practice three years later.

The most informative part of the survey revealed that communication with the teachers was the biggest obstacle for fathers. The main reason for this was work commitments, which meant that face-to-face contact with teachers was impossible on a regular basis. At the time of the survey, the kindergarten already had an annual night set aside for dads and their children to be together at the kindergarten after hours. While this evening was (and still remains) one of the most popular events of the year, it was impossible to find the time to have lengthy conversations with each of the seventy fathers who usually attended this event. Dads’ Night was also precious time for fathers to enjoy...
“One change has been the noticeable but steady increase of fathers bringing their children into the kindergarten in the mornings. This gives the teachers opportunities to have contact with fathers, as well as creating opportunities for special father-child time.”

time with their children, as well as catch up with and meet other dads. The busyness of this event meant that communicating effectively with dads could not happen at this time. We had to be more creative.

After much discussion, it was decided to create a letter specifically addressed to each of the children’s fathers. Rather than emailing the letters, we chose to print them and attach kindergarten business cards with our contact details. The letter invited the dads to contact us by email or telephone at any time for any reason. We made the effort to include those fathers who did not live permanently with their children. Fortunately for us there were no court orders to consider, so it was possible for us to post the letters to these dads’ addresses.

I am pleased to report that there were some responses to the letters. Dads who had never contacted us before, emailed us. Most stated their appreciation for contacting them. A few asked questions relating to their children. This was a great start! The success of the letters prompted us to create a dads’ email list, which we use from time to time to communicate something specific to the fathers, for example, reminders for Dads’ Night. The past three years have seen some gradual changes, which I am convinced are the result of the initial letters and subsequent emails. One change has been the noticeable but steady increase of fathers bringing their children into the kindergarten in the mornings. This gives the teachers opportunities to have contact with fathers, as well as creating opportunities for special father-child time.

We decided to implement a second strategy at the same time as the letter. We created special pages entitled “Dad’s voice” in the children’s portfolios. Fathers responded well to this and continue to do so today. We have had many dads write to their children, which is very special, as the children will be able to read this when they are older. Occasionally fathers ask us questions through these pages, which we always take the time to answer. Dads have also used the “Dad’s voice” pages to tell us about their children, adding to our knowledge.

Another successful strategy has been inviting fathers to specific weeks that we set aside for them to enjoy some time with their children during regular sessions at kindergarten. The invitations, usually sent by email, encourage dads to come during those weeks, but we also make it clear that they are welcome any time during the year. During Dads’ Week we sometimes have many fathers come in and sometimes only a few. We are never discouraged if only a small number come in, or if the time they spend at the kindergarten is short. Instead we view Dads’ Weeks as an opportunity to reach out to fathers and to remind them that they are important to us too.

Writing that letter three years ago has initiated communication, and proved to be the most successful way for us to reach fathers. I have learnt from my experiences that dads respond best to short and to-the-point letters and emails. We avoid including details such “housekeeping” information in our dads’ letters or notices. Instead we only include the message or information that we would like to convey to them. We don’t send out a weekly/monthly email to our fathers. Instead we wait for a specific purpose or reason to do this. While we may not be constantly ‘targeting’ dads with letters and emails, I believe that our occasional communication with them conveys the message that they are indeed very welcome at our kindergarten. At the same time we don’t place pressure on them with expectations and recommendations that they should attend certain functions or participate in a certain way for a certain amount of time. Instead we welcome them when we see them. We respond to their emails and telephone calls. We ask for their help and we thank them.

Recently, almost three years after the first dads’ letters were sent, I sent notes home requesting help of any kind to assist us with our exploration of flight and aircraft. This is a very technical subject and I definitely needed some
assistance! This is what I received from some dads and one grandfather:

- Posters of aircraft, which we laminated and displayed in the teaching room.
- A worksheet of an airplane picture designed by a dad for us to photocopy for the children to colour in.
- Equipment used to fly a microlight aircraft. This father’s child explained to the group how these instruments helped his dad fly – what a special moment for this boy!
- Photographs of aircraft and airports. The children all had stories about these photographs, which they shared with the group.
- A DVD of a flight, which the children watched on the laptop. A few children had never flown, so this was a new experience for them.
- Flight magazines, from which the children ‘read’ and/or cut out the pictures.
- One amazing model of the front of a Cessna airplane, including the propeller and flight instruments, all of which were made from collage and junk materials. It was big enough for the children to play with (this was a family project that included the grandfather and his grandson).

I count the above as valuable father contributions in early education as well as in parent-teacher partnerships. This was the result of a written request for help. I can’t express enough how much fun we had teaching and learning with these contributions.

In March, we celebrated our kindergarten’s tenth birthday with a party for past and present families. The afternoon was filled with many reunions and that included hugs from many of our past dads, as well as many lengthy, comfortable conversations with dads past and present. This showed us clearly that we had reached many fathers in the way that we had hoped. It was clear that they felt welcome at the kindergarten and, best of all, they felt that they belonged.

Communication has proven to be the starting point that has helped us to reach the fathers. Each kindergarten is unique in its combination of teachers and dads. Successful father-teacher partnerships can only be created and maintained between teachers and dads if the right strategies are used to start the communication process. Whatever strategies are implemented, teachers shouldn’t expect changes overnight, but should be satisfied with the small, gradual changes. Over time it will be obvious that reaching out to dads was well worth the effort.

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.
The Gobble Gobble
Moooooo Tractor Book

Jez Alborough
HarperCollins Children’s Books

“Early one morning, when Farmer Dougal was still asleep... Sheep climbed up on to the big red tractor.” So begins a fun story about a group of farmyard animals pretending to drive a tractor and imitating the noises it makes. All the animals contribute a sound: Sheep baas like the engine; Turkey gobbles like the sound the tractor makes as it drives off down the lane; Mouse squeaks like the wheels; and so on. Energetic and expressive pictures of the animals, including a four-page fold out, make it very visually appealing. A great book to make for a fun, noise-filled reading session!

Wake Up!

Katie Cleminson
A Red Fox Book
Random House Children’s Books

A book full of verbs as a boy gets up, gets dressed, goes to school, plays and gets ready for dinner and bed.Filled with pictures of people and animals doing daily tasks, there are some surprising images that children will enjoy – the teacher is a bear, a lion showing its enormous teeth is a guest at the dinner table, and an elephant tucks the boy into bed at the end of the day. Excellent for getting the children to act out parts of the story while you read – there’s so much to get done in a day!

Hairy Maclary, Shoo

Lynley Dodd
Penguin Group

A new Hairy Maclary book always makes for an exciting adventure, and Shoo is no exception. When Hairy Maclary decides to go snooping in a delivery van, he ends up getting taken for an exciting and somewhat alarming ride. Getting shooed out of a furniture store, Magnolia School and Gulliver’s Garden Supplies, Hairy ends up lost at the end of the day. Hiding between some flowerpots, he is spotted by Miss Plum, who takes him home. With rhymes that trip off the tongue and humorous illustrations, this is another wonderful addition to the series.

Hairy Maclary and Friends

Lynley Dodd
Penguin Group

This wee boxed set is a great introduction to Lynley Dodd’s characters. The books introduce Hairy Maclary, Slinky Malinki, Zachary Quack, and Schnitzel von Krumm by reciting a list of what each of the characters can do. Slinky Malinki can “roll in the sun, open the door, climb the Christmas tree, squeeze through his cat flap and roll in a ball”. Accompanied by the gorgeous illustrations we are all familiar with, made of heavy card and containing just a few carefully chosen words, the four books are perfect for very young children.
Baby’s World of Shapes
Terry Fitzgibbon
Penguin Group

These ‘Kiwi first focus Books’ are aimed at babies aged 0-6 months. As with others in this series, Baby’s World of Shapes contains a series of eye-catching black and white illustrations. The images in this particular book have an almost ‘magic eye’ feel to them; a series of spirals, hearts, spheres and cubes. They are excellent for helping young babies to focus on and begin to engage with books.

Rhino? What Rhino?
Caryl Hart and Sarah Horne
Hodder Children’s Books

A rhino escapes from the zoo and creates havoc as he runs through the town, eating people’s pies, stealing clothes off their lines and trampling toys and tree houses as he goes. The other domestic and farmyard animals get blamed for his mess, so they decide to teach him a lesson. The rhyme scheme, the words which trip all over the page and the madcap imagery all add to the sense of chaos that the rhino creates and make for a book filled with energy and humour.

Wrong Way
Mark Macleod and Judith Rossell
ABC Books

This is a sweet story about those among us who always do things their own way. Wrong Way is a duckling whose mother is about to teach him and his siblings to swim. The other two ducklings are called ‘Right Way’ and ‘Your Way’ – they are no trouble at all. But Wrong Way always wants to do things differently. I thought this might end up being a book with a stern moral about how one should always follow instructions, but actually Wrong Way keeps on doing things his way and ends up learning to swim after all. As a confirmed doer of things in sometimes-unconventional ways, I was relieved! With simple language, cute but realistic illustrations and a bit of sibling rivalry thrown in, this is an enjoyable story.

The Tui NZ Kids’ Garden
Diana Noonan and Keith Olsen
Penguin Group

This book is absolutely jam-packed with pictures, interesting facts, gardening tips, recipes, activities, and garden design ideas. It’s aimed at children, so the information is simple and straightforward, and it makes eating your veggies seem appealing. Although it is too complex for under-fives to read themselves, it could certainly be used in a centre to work through with the children as you create your own garden. And because it’s written for New Zealand children, all the plants are familiar and the planting calendar is relevant. Definitely one of the best children’s gardening books around.

Ruby and Leonard and the Great Big Surprise
Judith Rossell
Little Hare Books

Ruby and Leonard are a pair of mice who decide to bake cupcakes as a surprise for their friends. It’s a lovely tale about two friends working together to create something, and the mess they make along the way. The book contains a cupcake recipe at the back, which you may need, as they do look very tempting! The book follows the basics of making the recipe (“First, they measured the sugar… And weighed the butter… ‘Beat until fluffy,’ shouted Leonard”), so you could follow the instructions along with the mice in the book to make it a truly interactive reading experience. Although, don’t forget about the mess!
Win copies of these resources!

We have a review copy of each of these books to give away. To be in to win one of three fantastic parcels of books, simply write the answer to the following question on the back of an envelope and post to:

ECC September Book Giveaway, PO Box 31672, Lower Hutt. 5040 by Friday 1 October 2010.

With thanks to Penguin Group (NZ) and Wheeler’s Books, for all the wonderful review books.

Question: What is the name of the school Hairy Maclary gets shooed away from?

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ECC Membership

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

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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.

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.

RESOURCES
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.

EXCLUSIVE INFORMATION
Early Childhood Council members get members-only access to our weekly email news and HyperECC, the web portal containing an online library of sector advice and information. Members also get exclusive access to expert advisors.

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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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CHILD PROOF INSURANCE SCHEME
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Membership Application and Renewal Form

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

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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:  
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  - Mastercard

Name on card:  
Card Number:  
Expiry date:  
Signature:  

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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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.

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