

Playcentre

Journal



Consensus

ISSUE 151

Winter 2015

Matariki - Involving children in their Assessment
Give it a go Korero Māori - Centre news



I remember the first time I heard about Playcentre, it was when we lived in the England and I was emailing my good friend in Christchurch about my family immigrating to New Zealand. She suggested joining Playcentre as a great way to make friends as well as a great place for children. So within the first few weeks of landing in Auckland I visited a Playcentre with my son and joined. I found Playcentre to be a fantastic community and made some great friends.

We now have two children, Harry 6 and Alyssa 4. I really enjoy being on session, I love messy play and I love my centre, Glen Innes Playcentre (Tamaki Association). I have always been a very proud Playcentre mum and I am very sad to be in my final year on session at centre. Playcentre has taught me so much about being a parent, being a friend and most of all it has reminded me how to play and have a lot of fun.

I am very excited about this new role especially during this time of change for Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa. The Journal is such a great useful tool to read, keep and use. I enjoy reading what other centres, parents and children have been enjoying. My favourite part is the really useful mind maps that are often on the back page or centre pages. I am looking forward to building on what Marama has been doing and I thank her for her time during her handover.

*Stacey Balich,
Playcentre Journal Editor*

Playcentre Journal Cooperative: Stacey Balich (Tamaki Association), Marama Mateparae (Western Bay of Plenty), and Sue Stover (Auckland Association).

EDITORIAL

Contributions of written pieces, illustrations and photographs are welcome either by post to 26/8 Eaglehurst Road, Ellerslie, Auckland 1060 or by email to journal@Playcentre.org.nz; please enclose a self-addressed envelope with any material you would like returned. Digital images should be sent in the highest possible resolution: if the image files are too large to email, they can be burnt to a CD and posted to us. It is the photographer's responsibility to ensure people photographed have given permission, and to send the permission form with the pictures. You can download the permission form from <http://playcentre.org.nz/pressdocs/115.pdf>. The Journal was edited by Stacey Balich, who is supported by the Journal cooperative.

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Takapau Playcentre, Central Hawkes Bay



Hawera Playcentre, Taranaki



Manurewa Playcentre, Tamaki Association

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Finished with your latest copy of the Playcentre Journal? Spread the word by passing your copy onto a friend or taking to your local doctor's surgery, kindergarten, school reception, Plunket or music group.

If you have an essay, feature story or research on Playcentre related topics that would be appropriate to publish in the Journal we would love to read them!

For future issues we are looking for submissions on:

- Inspiring stories about your Playcentre Journey
- Incorporating different cultures through play
- Using natural resources in play and also in healthy kai

Guidelines for writing for the Playcentre Journal can be found at <http://www.playcentre.org.nz/journal.php>

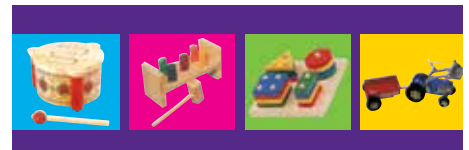
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Alyssa and Harry, Glen Innes Playcentre,
Tamaki Association



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WHY SHOP ANYWHERE ELSE!

Trip to the Pool with SPACE



Oliver Bloomfield (4 months) with mum Paula.

Before winter set in, our SPACE group took our babies to TogZone, in Upper Hutt. Used to waiting until after the 5 month vaccinations with my older two, I was pleasantly surprised that babies from 3-4 weeks old can participate as UV light and minimal chlorine is used to treat the water, which is kept at 32 degrees.

Some of the babies were more confident than others. Those who were used to the environment enjoyed the trip and Darwin was splashing with his hands straight away. Ollie (pictured) was very relaxed on his back while Harper was somewhat more nervous, and wouldn't lie on her back.



We were shown how to enter and exit the pool with babies safely, how to support them in the water, assisting floating and keeping their bodies below the water to keep warm. We enjoyed singing songs and movement to aid developmental progress and initiated cues tipping /pouring water over our heads before letting them experience the same then demonstrated submerging. Children who start swimming early benefit water confidence and are able to self-propel, hold their breath before swimming lessons begin.

If cold:

- Have a warm, fluffy, towel with hot water bottle wrapped inside
- Woollen top under swimming vest in the water
- Wear woollen hats on way home
- Dress baby first before drying off yourself
- Change baby by heater

Adults who are body shy are encouraged to participate as there are lots of different shapes and sizes and people don't tend to look. You are there for your child and to have fun! Clean t-shirts and shorts can be worn to cover up any areas you may wish to keep hidden!

TogZone holds a "Wee Squirts" session twice a week and we are sure to participate again.

Paula Bloomfield,
Totara Park, Upper Hutt
(Hutt Association)

Yes we do say, 'Come to the mat' at our Playcentre

For the last 10-15 minutes of each session, our coordinator or occasionally another parent will gather the tamariki for mat time where they engage in fun and learning as a group.

This mat time focuses on the emergent curriculum and works for our centre in the following ways;

- Children have the opportunity to share their thoughts, projects, art from the session.
- Games such as 'Bakers Shop' complete with large laminated cupcakes to 'eat straight away..' are played.
- Books on current topics of interest are read, enjoyed and discussed.
- Old favourites and new waiata are learnt and sung.
- Our very large whāriki with room for all is usually placed outside but can be on the deck or inside depending on the weather.
- Parents use this opportunity to complete the session clean up.
- Children choose to join in, the small minority who don't join in continue to explore round the centre.

Mat time is a happily anticipated routine at the end of our sessions. Why is it frowned upon in Playcentre circles? Mat time works for us.

Bronwyn Toy,
Aramoho Playcentre
(Whanganui Association)

A Playcentre kid

I have written this poem about being a Playcentre Kid. It is a reflection on my time as an adult in Playcentre and how much we value the parents' qualities just as we value the same in the children. I was a Playcentre kid myself and I have spent the most of the last 8 years heavily involved in Playcentre. My youngest has now gone to school, everything my children learnt they will carry into adult hood as I have.

Michelle Webber,
(King Country Playcentre Association)



I am a Playcentre kid – I can play all day
I am a Playcentre kid – I used my creativity today,
I am a Playcentre kid – I belong here, next to you,
I am a Playcentre kid – Facing challenges out of the blue,
I am a Playcentre kid – Successful at being me and helping you,
I am a Playcentre kid – Learning every day, it never goes away,
I am a Playcentre kid, and my children are too!

Matiu/Somes Island takes the Cake

Tuatara, giant weta and paddling in the sea were among the highlights for Titahi Bay Playcentre members on their recent visit to Matiu/Somes Island. The largest of three islands at the northern end of Wellington Harbour/Te Wanganui-a-Tara, Matiu/Somes Island is a predator-free island under the guardianship/kaitiakitanga of Taranaki tribe Te Atiawa, with day-to-day running by the Department of Conservation.

According to the Matiu/Somes Island information brochure "Māori have occupied the island for generations. In more recent times, it has served as a human and animal quarantine station, an internment camp, and a military defence position" against the Japanese.

"I liked going on the boat because it went really fast and it went brmmmm brmmmm," says Domanic Brown, 3. "I also liked going upstairs and downstairs (on the boat)."

About 40 Playcentre adults and children caught a bus and then the East by West ferry to reach the island on a perfect Wellington day.

Once off the boat Playcentre whānau

were taken into the Whare Kiore or quarantine building next to the main wharf where they had to check their pockets and bags for unwanted plants, insects and rodents. Assorted rocks, shells and bunny-tail grass were discovered and quarantined.

After a long slow hike up the tar-sealed road – one of four walks on the island – all were relieved and excited to see the buildings of Wellington across the water. Walking along paths tunnelled by native trees led to the discovery of tuatara demonstrating the art of camouflage or

"I liked seeing the tuatara there", says Aniwaniwa Poese, 4, "because they were hiding."

freezing in fright at the noise of invading pre-schoolers. One tuatara was so still he

looked like another branch of the tree he was under, visible only after one of the island's guides pointed him out.

Laura Jones, now a big school girl, was "super brave" holding a giant weta that she discovered by the edge of the path while her group were gecko stalking.

"It didn't feel wet, it was dry! It's eyes were closed...it was very ugly and prickly," Laura said.

For some pre-schoolers and Dad Jason Johnson the coolest part of the day was paddling and swimming in the sea near the wharf. Whereas some Mums enjoyed the art-show and the rangers' moving-on 'garage sale' with a winter wardrobe and chilli-bin for Dads amongst the Matiu/Somes Island bargains. For all though the best part was Bonnie Malcolm's two-year-old birthday cake eaten on the East-by-West ferry on the return to Wellington. Apologies were made to the skipper, as feet hit Wellington's wharf, for the cake crumbs that liberally decorated the top-deck. By the time the bus reached Titahi Bay most of the pre-schoolers were asleep.

Jude Pointon,
Titahi Bay Playcentre
(Wellington Association)



Titahi Bay Playcentre adults and children ready to set off on their Matiu/Somes Island adventure.

Matariki celebrations at Lynmore Playcentre



I had not heard of it as a child” Kelly.

“To me its bringing people together to remember, embrace & share,” Tegan.

While celebrating and learning about the Māori new year we began to realise that other members at our Playcentre were participating in celebrations within their own culture, which made us all aware of our member’s whakapapa. Nesrin (from Egypt) and Taybeh (Israel)

were fasting for Ramadan.

This year Lynmore Playcentre explored ways to observe the Māori New Year by celebrating the earth, and showing respect for the land on which we live.

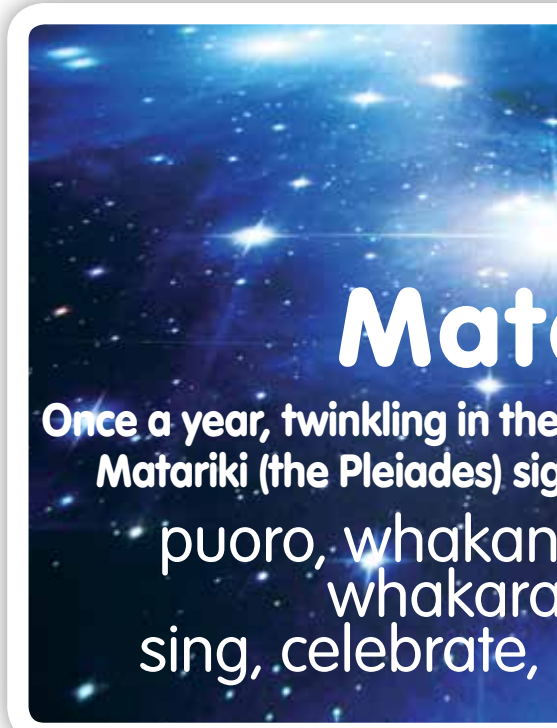
The team planned for a month of Matariki themed activities including, making bird feeders, making harakeke putiputi, inviting guests to share their knowledge of tikanga practices and to teach us to play a new waiata on the ukulele.

We made friendship soup with every child bringing in a vegetable to contribute and some picked kale from our garden to add. There was so much interest in the process of cutting the vegetables and making the soup so we also made pasta from scratch.

“This was our first Matariki living in NZ, and settling in Rotorua. For us it was a time of discovering our new city and reconnecting as a family in the dark evenings with lots of story reading and cuddling up by the fire (and now the heatpump). I am impressed and encouraged by how Matariki is now in the vocabulary of most New Zealanders. Growing up in the South Island in the 80s,



The celebrations extended outside our centre with a trip to Te puia where we invited our neighbouring Playcentre Koutu to join us for a cultural concert and a hangi lunch meal. Our celebrations were concluded with a working bee of the Lynmore Playcentres grounds, where we filled a 10 metre cube truck with foliage. In the process we found a pouwhenua under the ivy that



had gotten out of control. Now we have started doing some research as to where it has come from and the appropriate reinstatement of it with in the Playcentre environs.

Matariki has a place in Lynmore Playcentre’s annual celebrations, as their are so many activities we can extend our children’s learning and interests that celebrate the unique place in which we live, while showing respect to the land we live on.

Bronwyn Alton,
Lynmore Playcentre
(Rotorua Association)

Matariki Celebrations at Warkworth Playcentre

ariki

the winter sky just before dawn
signals the Māori New Year.

ui, wananga...
menene
learn...together



Toasting marshmallows is serious business! On sessions, our kids love having a fire in the sandpit. The brazier made a safe night time alternative.

Our Matariki celebration at Warkworth Playcentre was filled with whānau, kai and fire this year!

There was a strong sense of mana whenua amongst the families in our centre. The tamariki played, dressed up and participated in arts and crafts. They made tipare (headbands) and cut yellow stars out of playdough and then placed them on a black background to represent the group of stars known as the Pleiades.

After a shared meal, we sat around a bonfire and toasted marshmallows. This was followed by lighting sparklers, which was a hit with everyone. The kids loved playing and sharing their experiences with their mothers, fathers, grandparents and siblings; and to have everyone participating was wonderful to see.



Matariki was particularly special to our centre this year because this year has been a year of growth for Warkworth Playcentre. We have nearly doubled our membership and many of these new families joined us in celebrating. Matariki was a way of celebrating this new growth and beginning a new year full of a feeling of community and support at our centre. Our tamariki had a memorable night and formed new friendships and connections that will last a lifetime.

Kimberly Smith,
Warkworth Playcentre
(North Shore Association)

Matariki Magic

We started off with grand plans for Matariki this year: themed crafts, tree-planting in the nearby reserve, pizza for dinner – maybe even a delivery of snow. But whoops – the calendar got away on us and it was time to get back to basics. Ditch the tissue-paper window stars... Matariki's all about taking a break from hard work and spending time with friends and whānau.

We opened the centre after school on a Friday, allowing space for our children and their older siblings to play until it was dark; then gather around a brazier for soup and rolls. As an added bonus, one of our centre grandads promised to bring in his telescope for some star-scoping. Two fabulous mums decorated the entranceway with swathes of black cloth and the children's glittery Matariki-inspired artwork so that when everyone arrived there was a festive feeling. It was great seeing our gorgeous ex-Playcentre, now school-kids arrive and head straight to their favourite play areas, just as if they'd never left! Games of duck-duck-goose and a tug of war were good noisy fun and united all ages.

As it got dark we lit the fire in the brazier and enjoyed soup from a table groaning with crock pots. Our very



patient astronomer Grandad, Geoff, fixed the telescope westward as clouds came and went, revealing Jupiter's line of moons and Venus close by. Wonder if anyone was inspired to get up an hour before dawn to seek out the Matariki constellation?

What a lovely night! We learned we didn't need a heap of extra entertainment to have a good time – where there are Playcentre families, some nourishing kai and a centre with so many happy memories, there are the ingredients for true community and joy. Now that's Matariki magic!

Stephanie Chamberlin,
Cockle Bay Playcentre
(Tamaki Association)

BABY BOOM

Five months, ten babies; two boys, eight girls including a set of twins. No, it is not the statistics of a small town maternity ward, but the newest additions at New Plymouth Playcentre. We were starting to think that perhaps pregnancy was contagious!

While the additions to our Playcentre whānau were excitedly anticipated, it was also worrying for those mothers about how to juggle a toddler and a new baby on session. The situation was going to provide opportunities and challenges, and luckily our members already had their thinking caps on with how best to support these mums and bubs.

It has been a standing tradition at New Plymouth Playcentre for members to leave the two parks directly outside of the centre empty for visitors and mums with newborns. In fact, it is one of the first things you learn during orientation! And what a lifesaver it is. The weather in New Plymouth can be a mixed bag, and those parks are highly coveted by mothers, especially during a downpour, who have to struggle inside with bags, a toddler and an infant in a bulky capsule. Once inside, you are greeted by friendly faces and helpful hands that immediately relieve a mum with a baby of several items, including a toddler! Often those people will meet mum at the gate, and help her unpack the car and carry items inside.

To a sleep deprived and exhausted mother of a newborn, getting out of the house can seem an insurmountable task, especially when wrangling with a toddler or dealing with that last minute baby poo explosion. However, the thought that once at Playcentre you will receive support, an adult conversation, or even a cup of much needed coffee is a real motivator.

Members are more than happy to lend a hand by holding (or babywearing) a baby or interacting with toddlers. This has proved to be invaluable help, as it allows a mum with an infant to spend quality time with her tamariki individually. Some parents consciously try to build a relationship with a new mum's toddler, so that the toddler can ask them for help or allow them to join their play. One of the toddlers at our centre can be quite sensitive to interacting with people that aren't her mother, and a member has been slowly building a relationship with her so that now that toddler can ask her to push the swing or read her a book. As a mother, it is reassuring to see someone respect and care about your child as much as you do. And it is also helpful, when you have your hands full nursing a baby, to have someone else help



your fashion-horse toddler get into her third dress-up outfit of the session. If mum isn't feeling up to leaving the warm comfort of home with her newborn, members have also been known to bring mum's toddler to session, allowing mum to rest and bond with her baby while the toddler is able to continue their Playcentre journey.



Maternity leave is usually associated with paid positions, yet at New Plymouth Playcentre this concept is extended to new mums regarding their session days. Our maternity leave policy allows for a member with a newborn to have six months, twelve for a multiple birth, off from the responsibilities of being part of a

duty team. This is a huge relief for a mum with an infant as she is able to be more fluid with her attendance on her duty session and not feel any pangs of guilt that her team is relying on her to point a session, do the hazard check, or set up an area of play. We all understand how near impossible it can be to leave the house on time on a good day, let alone trying to fit it around baby sleeping and feeding times, or just a generally tired cranky baby. And, when it all starts to go to pieces, the mum is able to make a quick retreat home rather than stay for session evaluation. In the same vein, nearly all members have an office holder role, and although it is not a policy, expectant mothers also find that someone will offer to do their job for an extended period of time once the baby has arrived.

With the birth of a baby come the obligatory photos, birth statistics and congratulatory emails. But there is also a request email sent out by the President for members to provide some kai for the mum and her family. Trying to cook dinner for your whānau, or even to make toast, when you have a newborn can be a challenge at the best of times so this type of help is greatly appreciated.

Cellphones, Facebook and email allow members to easily keep in contact with a new mum, often sending messages asking how it's all going and whether any other help is required. Unused baby clothes and other baby items have also been known to change hands.

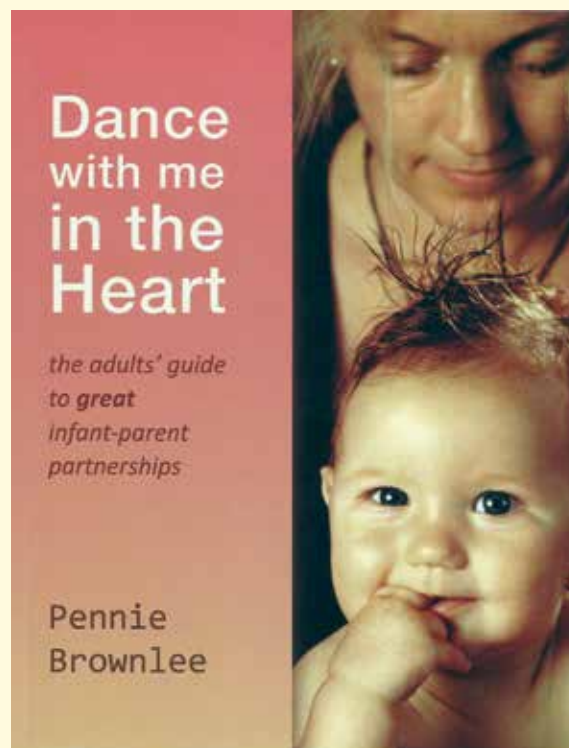
One of the mothers with a new baby was in hospital on Christmas Eve and arrived home mid-Christmas Day to find a champagne ham, turkey with cranberry stuffing, salads and an ambrosia dessert had been delivered by several members!

Babies are a blessing, but several challenges have arisen at Playcentre due to this recent baby boom. These include holding so many spots open on a full roll and the effect that has on funding, and having what feels like half the members on maternity leave and the extra pressure that adds to other members. One ongoing issue is having so many toddlers running around centre while their mothers can be tied up elsewhere dealing with a newborn. Members are conscious of the need to keep these toddlers safe and to assist them when needed in a variety of ways like turning on taps for dough covered hands, pushing a swing or delicately holding pliers with a nail in it over a piece of wood so that a toddler can practice his hammering skills.

Nicky Stephens,
New Plymouth Playcentre
(Taranaki Association)

The old adage

It takes a village to raise a child, could not be more true. Playcentre acts as an extended family, where everyone looks out for each other's child, and help is always forthcoming. The current baby boom at our centre has seen us pull together more to successfully support both mothers and children during their Playcentre journey.



“Handling your baby gently and with confidence cements the First Relationship. If babies are handled like this, they can stay in relationship with themselves. They can receive and process the feedback from their own bodies, because they are not in sensory overload or stress. They are present to, and can respond to their own ‘nature’, that is, they can respond to their own deepest inner stirrings. It’s not rocket science, but if the baby can be in relationship with himself and his won nature, then he is in a very good position to be in relationship with his mother and with her nature and deepest inner stirrings. Ultimately he is in the position to be in relationship with Mother Nature herself, and her deepest inner stirrings, because all babies are designed to do just that. It is the tenderness of touch in the First Relationship that allows the baby the space to have an inner life, to develop an understanding of his own nature, and develop his ability to access the resources that sit within him.”

Involving Children in the Assessment and Planning of their own Learning

In recent years, a buzz topic in the field of education has been “involving children in the assessment and planning of their own learning.” This is now common practice in schools, with child reviewing their own progress and setting their own goals. Is this practical and meaningful in an early childhood context? Can it be achieved with children in their early years?

Here are some ideas that not only make it possible, but make it enjoyable for children and adults.

Ideas to try

Eating Meeting

Gather together a group of children at the kai table at the start and/or end of the session for an “eating meeting”. Each child has the opportunity to share what they’d like to do that day (at the beginning of the session) or what they enjoyed about the session and what they’d like to do next time (at the end of the session).

Learning stories with the child’s voice

Let the child choose the photos to include and tell the story, with the adult recording the story as told by the child. May include ideas from the child to follow on in future learning. May include the adults’ perspective in addition to the child’s, or solely be the child’s story.

Portfolios

Accessible to children, with cover photos to help children recognise their own portfolio. Children are encouraged to revisit their own learning and share their progress. Adults can suggest ideas to build on existing documented learning through suggestions like: “Have you considered trying...?” and “I wonder what would happen if we...”

Children’s noticeboard

A noticeboard (chalkboard or whiteboard) at ground level where children are able to record their favourite experiences and suggested ideas, using words, pictures or photos. This can also be a communication tool for children to pass on messages to each other.

Displaying learning stories and special creations

Display learning stories in an accessible and appealing way so that children can see their own learning and those of their peers. For example, display learning stories in plastic sleeves at children’s eye height, create a ring binder of recent stories that lives in the library, create a display space where children can choose to safely display their art/creations/photos/collections etc.

Roving reporter

At or before end-of-session evaluation, nominate an adult to go around and ask children what they enjoyed and/or learned that day. Ask for ideas to do the next day/week.

Involving tamariki in set up

Ask children what they’d like to set up and how they’d like to do it. Older children may enjoy being part of a roster if they’ve seen their parent being involved in a set up roster.

Children in charge days

Take set up to the extreme, and only set up equipment as directed by the children. Give them the opportunity to plan ahead. What would Playcentre look like if the children were in charge of setting everything up? (Note that you may need to give extra support to younger children who do not have the same level of verbal language as their older friends).

Use multimedia

Use video and sound recording to document children’s learning, preferably stored in a format that is accessible to them in the future.

Ask

Remember to ask children their ideas and opinions when filling out child planning forms, individual education plans (IEPs), end of session evaluation forms, learning stories, planning trips. The more children have the opportunity to participate, the more engaged they become in planning their own learning.

Engage peers

Ask children’s friends what they think their friends have learned and what they would enjoy doing/learning. Sometimes a peer’s perspective is more exciting than a parent’s!

Resources

Ministry of Education Kei Tua o Te Pae Book 4
<http://www.educate.ece.govt.nz/learning/curriculumAndLearning/Assessmentforlearning/KeiTuaoPae/Book4.aspx>
New Zealand Council for Educational Research
<http://www.nzcer.org.nz/system/files/16544.pdf> (p.15)
With thanks to the families of River Downs Playcentre for many ideas.

Kara Daly
Waikato Assn, NZPF Professional Development Team

How is your Centre's Adult Education Culture?

It's a big question

A good way to start is to think about the next new family to walk through your doors: They will be the Adults educating your child or not! Are they going to find an Adult Education culture of

- why bother
- it's a pain in the bum
- we only do it to get funded.

Are you struggling to get and keep motivation? With negatives vibes high and positives low?

It can be changed, and it can start with you! Every person has the ability to motivate and inspire others, change negatives to positives. It all starts with attitude then action!

Adult Education works best in centres where there is a culture that supports all its members to get involved, stay involved and complete each stage along the way. **Playcentre is not an individual pursuit, it's a team event!**

We model the kind of behaviour we would like children to pick up on; it's no different with adults! When you see others actively involved in their education it creates a culture of normalcy, it is normal to see parents taking part, being asked "how was the workshop you went to"? Bringing the learning back into the centre and sharing it, regularly being thanked for attending workshops, completing tasks and course levels, this is carried out by the **whole** centre.

What can we do if our centres' culture needs a boost –

During the first introductions for new families ("did you know we offer free early childhood Education? You will learn so much to help support your parenting, its lots of fun") get it right from the start!

Have workshops in your centre so members can see and experience the education program where they feel comfortable and confident. Great place to start!

Going to workshops can be hard for some so can transport be arranged? Car pool? Child care? The centres need to work together to support all members to achieve. There will always be barriers of some form. It's all our job to make the right size ladders to reach the top.

Make it easy for task work to happen during sessions. 1:5 ratios are there for a reason; make it normal for adults to be able to sit in the office or area to get things done.

Centres organise homework sessions, (one on one or in groups; will evening be better for most). Make it regular, book it in, and ask your association for support if needed.

Talk about it positively, ask about it positively. You can override one person's negativity with your awesome positivity! In centre, in meetings, in your association.

Get involved yourself if you're not already. One person can start great things and make changes that can inspire others to join you.

Some centres have incentives like fee discounts for each level of course completion. I didn't pay a cent for my youngest son's entire Early Childhood Education, (love telling people that). Others have gift voucher for achievement etc... What would work for your centre?

Get in touch with your association. Let them know what you need help with or if more positivity could come your way from them?

How is that new family looking now? Are they actively involved in your child's education yet? Positive culture can start with one, be joined by many and be a rewarding to all.

Make a start; I know you can do it!

Michelle Webber,
Education convenor (King Country Playcentre Association)

Sleep Room Door – Moemoea Reka

Mahi Ngātahi o Puawai made available a great opportunity to enrich centres with resources to encourage Te Reo Māori and culture with a grant of up to \$1,000. Our members at Totaravale Playcentre worked together to come up with something that would benefit our tamariki, parents and future members.

One thing we found with our sleep room was it was always stuffy even with the window open, there was no airflow since the door would be closed while babies were sleeping, so we felt a new door in a barn door style so we could have the top of the door open. We felt it would be a wonderful functioning resource that will continue for years to come.

We worked through a Māori design that had meaning for our tamariki and members. The design chosen for our sleep room door was based around the koru, an unfurling fern frond of the silver fern. Its circular shape gives the idea of perpetual movement, and its inward coil suggests a return to the point of origin. We loved it because the koru symbolises how life both changes and stays the same. It represents a new life or beginning and even though things change with personal growth, with nurturing there is hope, peace and harmony. The koru is white representing the purity, innocence and goodness of our babies. The leaves were added to represent our baby's future maturity into well balanced, contributing individuals and the leaves are green representing nature and growth and green is said to have great healing power.

Once the door was installed we had a



blessing ceremony and it was a wonderful experience for our centre, especially for our tamariki. We asked one of our dads to

and brought to light details that we hadn't thought of, like who would unveil the door and when the door will be unveiled,

With our centre flourishing with eight new precious babies we looked at our sleep room, refreshing it and making it a safe and secure place for babies to sleep and a quiet place for our mummies to breast feed.

do the blessing, he is fluent in te reo and raised in a full immersion environment so very knowledgeable. He helped us with the schedule for the blessing ceremony

making the ceremony timely, smooth and meaningful. We named the door 'Moemoea Reka'.

Karakia for the blessing

Manaakitia tenei kuaha, kia tiaki ai tenei wahi moe.
 Manaakitia, tenei wahi moe, kia tau ai tou rangimarie ki runga ki ngā pepi o ngā
 whānau e noho ana ki tenei whare kōhungahunga.
 Amine.

Bless this door so that it may protect this sleeping room
 Bless this sleeping room so that the babies of the Whānau from this
 centre may sleep peacefully and in safety.
 Amen.



The blessing ceremony had such a positive impact on our tamariki. We planned for 2 of our older tamariki to unveil the door and when the time came we had another eager participant, it was lovely to see their feeling of belonging. One of our 4 year old boys went home that night and was pretending to speak Māori, just hearing te reo spoken fluently made an impression for him. One of the girls who unveiled the door basically was in awe that 'Denzel's daddy could speak Māori for 'every' word' – this stems from her daddy speaking 'some' Māori words at home in amongst English

– but she was amazed that Brendan spoke Māori for every word. Also she absolutely LOVED that she got to unveil the door with the others and in her mind the 'blanket' was to help keep the sleep room warm so the babies could sleep. She took great pleasure in telling her family all about it and her older brother made connections asking 'Did he do the haka?' and he was very interested in the whole process of the blessing ceremony.

Throughout the application we really appreciated the support from our lovely Field Officer, helping to research and

bringing an outside perspective. The process itself from deciding what our resource would be, the design on the door and the blessing ceremony was all great learning for members and tamariki at centre and at home. It bought a unity to our centre and more understanding and respect of Te Reo and Māori cultural. We are so thankful to Mahi Ngātahi o Puawai for their generosity and making this grant available.

Written by Michelle Tio,
 (Member of Totaravale Playcentre,
 North Shore Association)

In our last journal, we reported that at the October 2014 National Executive a working party was empowered to develop a final detailed whole of Playcentre structure to be presented for decision making at April National Executive 2015. There was a lot of discussion about the proposal at the April National Executive meeting, but more information was requested. The information was taken to the Playcentre Conference the following month, where the decision was made to go forward with the proposed change.

The 2 main decision that were passed was the establishment of Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa Inc, which means the Playcentre National Executive agreed to:

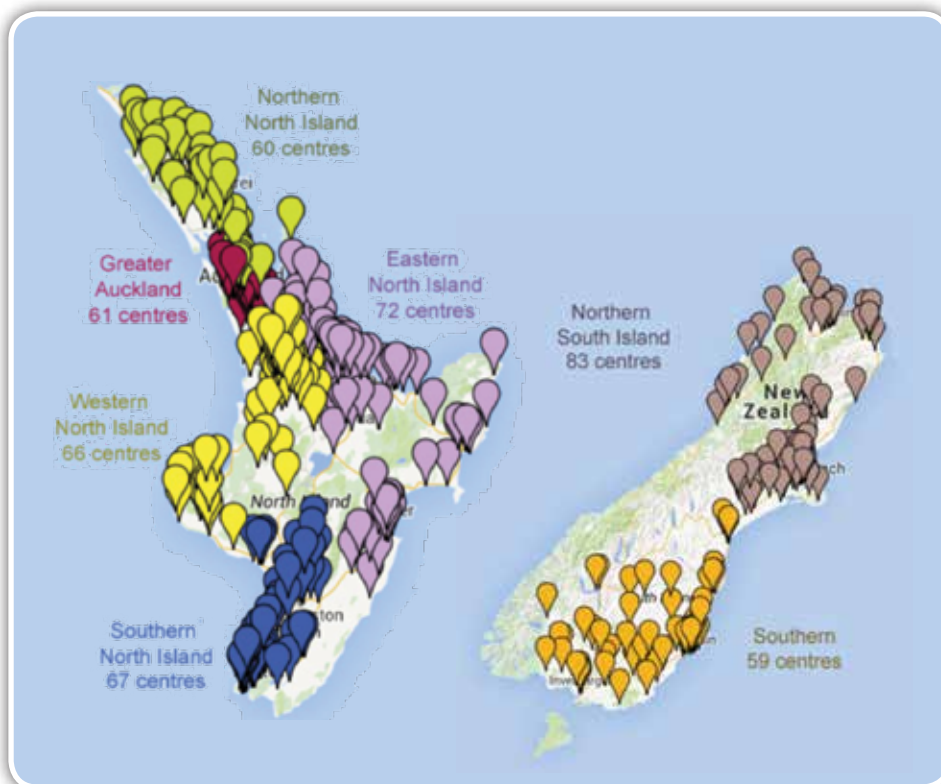
- 1 Merge all Playcentres, Associations and Federation into one national organisation, meaning that the Federation will proceed with the charitable scheme method of amalgamating.

There was a condition put on this decision, to preserve the Playcentre grass-roots style of decision making, and this was that “the amalgamation process will be carried out in phases of which the goals and timeframes of each phase will be collaboratively planned and agreed upon by consensus at national meetings”.

- 2 The meeting also agreed to a governance model for the new organisation, which is a very similar version to the current model.

Both the structure and the governance models are still being developed, and these will be covered as a series in our journal as we finalise them.

The proposed regional groupings for both islands are shown here —



What next?

It is envisaged that the transition from our current structure to the new Playcentre structure will take approximately two years. The work will be written into a transition plan as it is decided, and will be reviewed annually and fed into the strategic plan.

There is still a lot of work to be done, but with a clear way forward, we can start working on the future.

So what does Playcentre Aotearoa look like at our centres?

The changes are reflective of the needs we first identified for 'more play - less admin'. Support will be available to all centres that want it, for both administration requirements and community development, with back-up from regional offices following national service standards.

Centres will keep their identity and can make decisions about the things that are important to them. There will be standardised base policies to meet our licensing requirements that will be used throughout the country.

This should leave Centres more time for relationship building between centres and learning together. It will also give our members more time to discuss the governance of the organisation and how to keep the philosophy in light of our changing environment.

A new regional structure has been proposed to enable our future and reflect these needs. 7 regional groups have been proposed, with an average of 67 centres. These have been designed considering main centres, driving distance between the regional office, the location of properties we own and current association groupings.

These regional groupings do not have to be the definitive groupings forever. We are suggesting this is a reasonable starting position and that alterations can be made in the future.

So what does Playcentre Aotearoa look like at your centre?

Support

- An Administrator on session once a week dealing with enrolment forms, rolls, bulk funding etc.
- A Community Support Worker with your centre for 3 hours a fortnight
- Strong national systems and services delivered through regional offices

Individuality

- Key centre roles, regular meetings, budget setting and planning continue
- Centres operate in a co-governance model with rōpu Māori
- You choose your supervision model

Relationships

- Your centre helps from a cluster (which might be all the centres from your current Association, or a similar group of centres closer to each other - you decide)

Learning together

- C1 and where possible C2 delivered on session
- Regional education teams provide workshops
- Smart use of technology helps you access training wherever you are

Your voice

Through representation at cluster meetings (which send reps to regional meetings), your centre has input on the national issues that matter to you.

Lorraine Skelton,
Strategic Programme Director



President's welcome: Conference 2015



I welcome each of you and I welcome the children that are with us
I welcome
Playcentre members/families whom you represent
Your partners, your families, your friends – all those that make it possible to be here this weekend
NZPF Life member – Robbie Burke
My Co-president Marion
My fellow Trustees
Our Federation personnel – our volunteers and our staff

I welcome those that have gone before us and I welcome all those that will come after us

I welcome our collective wisdoms & I welcome the spirit of Playcentre

My name is Viv Butcher

My family roots are in the Manawatu.
My Playcentre roots are in Marlborough Association of which I am a life member. It is 23 years since I joined Playcentre.

It is my privilege to be standing here today as Co-president of NZPF representing Tangata Tiriti.

We come together for our annual

conference today as we continue our journey of organisational change. We have work to do together this weekend and we will always have work to do together as we know that change is a journey not a destination, and the journey never ends.

With our philosophy and our core values to guide us, we will discuss and debate and give careful consideration to ideas, as we build on all the work that has brought us to this point.

As we look to the future, as we consider Playcentre for the future generations of families in Aotearoa, we are building on the work of many that have gone before us.

I recall the words that our life member Robbie, gave us in 2012 when she talked about Playcentre as a garden –

She said:

“For me the garden is a compelling analogy for Playcentre. It is alive, it is capable of growing and adapting depending on the level of care, it is full of spontaneous diversity.”

“Playcentre as a garden organisation has many potential futures and many possible forms.

Renewal does not mean discarding what has gone before; it does mean building on the past for the future by determining what you need to keep and what should be discarded.”

And so as we come together from the many different corners of our garden on the cusp of renewal for this organisation, this organisation with many potential futures, we also come together this weekend in the spirit of fellowship and celebration.

We come together as a family – we will renew old friendships and we will create new ones. We will live together, sing and pray and laugh and cry together. We will take strength from each other.

We come together to celebrate and acknowledge the spontaneous diversity in our garden that is Playcentre.

And so it is that I am very honoured to open this coming together, that is our conference 2015.

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.

To honour one of Playcentre's treasures

The first experience that I had of Marion Pilkington was in 2011 at the NZPF Conference where North Shore Playcentre Association delegates were preparing to welcome Marion back to our Association after completing her time on Standing Committee. But welcoming her back to North Shore wasn't meant to be as, at this Conference, Marion was endorsed by Māori Caucus to stand as Co-President on the newly established and ground-breaking Trustee Board.¹

From this moment on my experiences and relationship with Marion has grown over the many years and I have come to admire Marion's dedication to this organisation, an organisation that she holds dear to her heart. It is because of this dedication that Marion was honoured with a NZ Playcentre Federation Life Membership and

celebration at the 2015 NZPF Conference in May.

Marion was joined by her husband, Nigel and their children: Jared, Daniel, Josh and Sara as the organisation recognised Marion as one of its treasures. The presentation and celebration included speakers from Te Whare Tikanga Māori, her home centre: Narrowneck Playcentre, North Shore Playcentre Federation, Mahi Ngā Tahī ō Puawai, NZ Playcentre Federation, Playcentre Associations and Marion's daughter; Sara. These presentations gave just a snippet of her time, over at least the last 20 years, in Playcentre and there was an overwhelming sense of respect and appreciation for the time Marion has put into Playcentre and to her family who have supported her to be able to do so.

She will continue to be a treasure in NZ Playcentre Federation as a honorary Life

Member, who will be a wealth of knowledge for emerging leaders in Playcentre, and as one of North Shore's past Presidents I am very, very proud of her.



¹In 2011 a remit was accepted to include the following into the Constitution: Clause 3.3 “Tāngata Tiriti and Tāngata Whenua members are endorsed partners of the New Zealand Playcentre Federation. Tāngata Tiriti and Tāngata Whenua are given the same rights, privileges and responsibilities.” At the 2011 NZPF Conference Tāngata Federation Officer roles in partnership with Tāngata Tiriti Federation roles were approved and for the first time Tāngata Caucus representatives were endorsed for these roles.

Megan Drawbridge,
(North Shore Association)



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ni - Playcentre Aotearoa

Te Whare Tikanga Māori Playcentre Philosophy Statement

Principles

Rangatiratanga:

In terms of relevance for Playcentre, Rangatiratanga refers to governance of the organisation, leadership in achieving objectives and guardianship of the kaupapa.

Mana:

Mana gives essence, strength and meaning to all whānau and personnel of Playcentre, to ensure all tamariki continue to learn and grow in their environment. Mana is the means by which a person or organisation maintains its clarity of vision and purpose.

Whanaungatanga:

Playcentres will operate in a manner which promotes caring, nurturing and sharing in order to grow as a whānau with aroha and understanding. Whanaungatanga encourages co-operation and unity to achieve goals and objectives.

Wairuatanga (spiritual wellbeing):

Where a Playcentre whānau takes on board the above ownership (governance) of the organisation, leadership to play, work, learn and grow together, and guardianship of the kaupapa does ensure the spiritual wellbeing of all its whānau members.

Values

- Kaitiakitanga: Guardianship of the kaupapa/objectives and purpose.
- Aroha: Always treating everyone with respect, honour and love.
- Manaakitanga: Caring, nurturing, sharing, encouraging and supporting everyone.
- Te Reo: Language is key for communication. All languages will be heard.
- Maramatanga: Working to find understanding and clarity in all areas of Playcentre.
- Tika: Correctness in terms of Playcentre objectives and purpose.
- Pono: Honesty and truth in all.



Consensus

By Robbie Burke, New Zealand Playcentre Life Member, Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi – Playcentre Aotearoa



Consensus replaces majority rule and top-down leadership with a collaborative culture where all are equals committed to a common purpose. It's about uniting behind an outcome that participants believe is the best way to go after considering all the facts, risks and implications – everyone understands why and that it fits with the vision, values and goals of the group as a whole.

What is it?

Consensus is a questioning process that allows those who have to live with the outcome to work together to develop an acceptable outcome – listening to different voices, respecting opinions, sharing information,

harnessing diversity, weaving ideas, and finding the best way forward. There are several ways to work by consensus – all require patience, creativity, flexible thinking and a co-operative spirit. Consensus building

encourages full participation, emphasises learning rather than winning, replaces competitive attitudes with authentic listening, fosters better relationships and builds respect. The consensus process seeks out the synergy of the group to reach its best solution rather than compromising to a middle ground, settling for the lowest common denominator, or overpowering a minority view. At the end of the consensus process when a solution is apparent, the facilitator will seek confirmation of the outcome by applying a decision rule agreed to at the start of the meeting.

Consensus is NOT a voting process, nor is it about unanimity, conformity, dreary discussions going nowhere, overpowering the minority, giving in, coercion/manipulation, top-down leadership, settling for the lowest common denominator.... It is inappropriate to use the consensus process when:

- the proposal requires a yes/no response
- the group has no control over implementing the outcome
- it perpetuates injustice.

What's needed to make Consensus work?

There are five essential ingredients that contribute to the co-operative spirit required for an effective consensus process:

- 1 shared understanding of the purpose and values – sense of belonging, commitment to working together
- 2 willingness to share power, to give up ownership of ideas, to consent to a decision
- 3 informed commitment to the consensus processes, connection with the culture of consensus, an understanding of how it will work and what it might look like or mean for their group
- 4 skilled facilitation that shows open-mindedness about topics and outcomes; fair treatment of participants.




- 5 a strong agenda – overview of meeting content and outcomes, informed participants.

The facilitator and participants also have significant roles in making the consensus process work!

Participants – an effective meeting depends on productive participants who demonstrate attitudes and behaviours that support the process and offer a qualitatively different kind of participation than is required by other forms of decision making. Two kinds of contribution are basic to a good consensus process – clear presentation of personal ideas/opinions and encourage of others' participation.

In the course of consensus building participants are encouraged to assume a number of process roles: contributor (ideas, knowledge, feelings...), listener, team player, creative thinker/problem solver, learner. A number of participation formats have been developed to help groups be productive and ensure the diversity



TIPS
to help participants engage in consensus building.

Do your homework

Be committed to working together

Share ideas/concerns/solutions with clarity

Listen and try to understand

Ask questions of others and don't just try to sell ideas

View ideas and suggestions from all perspectives - be open to influence by others

Don't try to talk someone out of their point of view but try to find ways to address their concerns

Criticise ideas and positions, not each other

Don't change your mind just to avoid conflict, know how to register dissent

Be aware of the reactions of others - offer support, give feedback about your feelings

Think creatively, find solutions - strive for what is best for everyone concerned

of ideas are heard: small groups, round robin, buzzing, caucusing, bus stops, two-house model, fishbowling.

Facilitator – servant of the group, assisting and guiding but not controlling, creating an atmosphere of openness and trust. The main functions of a facilitator are:

- 1 process guide - suggest/manages methods of working together, keeps discussion on track, ensures participation, monitors behaviours
- 2 neutral third party - content neutral, unbiased, assisting & guiding but not controlling, creates atmosphere of openness & trust
- 3 tool giver - skilled in range of problem solving & decision-making methods
- 4 process educator - improving group's understanding of processes
- 5 foster the spirit & intent of consensus - encouraging full participation, assisting co-operative search for solutions, fostering unity, promoting learning.

Facilitating tough meetings is a lot like cultivating roses. It's possible to obtain considerable beauty yet it's essential that you be disciplined and that you hold the flowers gently and with respect. If there's no pruning, you get chaos and few blossoms; if you hold too tightly, there'll be blood all over the place. There are times when a facilitator needs to be directive, as when the group drifts off topic, indulges in repetition, or deteriorates into squabbling. Yet facilitators can make the mistake of reaching for toughness when unsure what to do, when afraid to trust the group, or when faith in the process is weak. You want to work among the thorns, not upon them. However, just as the facilitator needs to trust the group, the group needs to trust the facilitator. They need breathing room to manifest the bouquet.

What procedures enhance the process?

Decision criteria - when the problem/issue has been identified the group should develop a set of acceptable requirements/outcomes (not negotiables, measures...) for evaluating possible solutions against. The more



specific the group can be the easier it is to shape solutions upon which the group can agree.

Ground rules — at the start of the meeting participants should discuss and agree on acceptable behaviours and proper procedures (processes, content boundaries) that will help build a culture of respect, openness and trust. The time spent creating a shared understanding of the ground rules is well worthwhile – provides a framework for better meeting habits, gets buy-in and commitment, and helps keep the group on track.

Decision Rule — accepting that there are two independent components to consensus – a collaborative agreement-building process and a decision rule that denotes the percentage of agreement required – paves the way to retain the values and goals associated with consensus and shed the agonising problems that occur when you simply can't get everyone to agree. At the beginning of a meeting, participants develop a shared understanding of what “reaching consensus” looks like for that group at that time – full consent, unanimity minus 1 or 2, no more than 2 stand asides...with maybe an 80% supermajority voting fallback as an acceptable

alternative decision-making process to use when a decision is crucial but agreement is not achievable.

Withdraw Concern — a dissenter may choose to withdraw their concern because they believe it is better for the group as a whole to consent to the proposal than spend time trying to resolve the concern. This is especially valid if the concern is based on an individual's need or preference.

Stand Aside — happens when a person, who feels that their concern (personal conscience or strongly differing individual opinion) has been listened to, understood and considered but not necessarily accepted in the final decision, recognises that it may be all right for the rest of the group and is prepared to permit the decision to go ahead. This must be a decision of the dissenter – and comes with an understanding that non-participation in implementing the decision is acceptable. If there are more than one or two stand asides then it is a signal that the group is not yet in alignment.

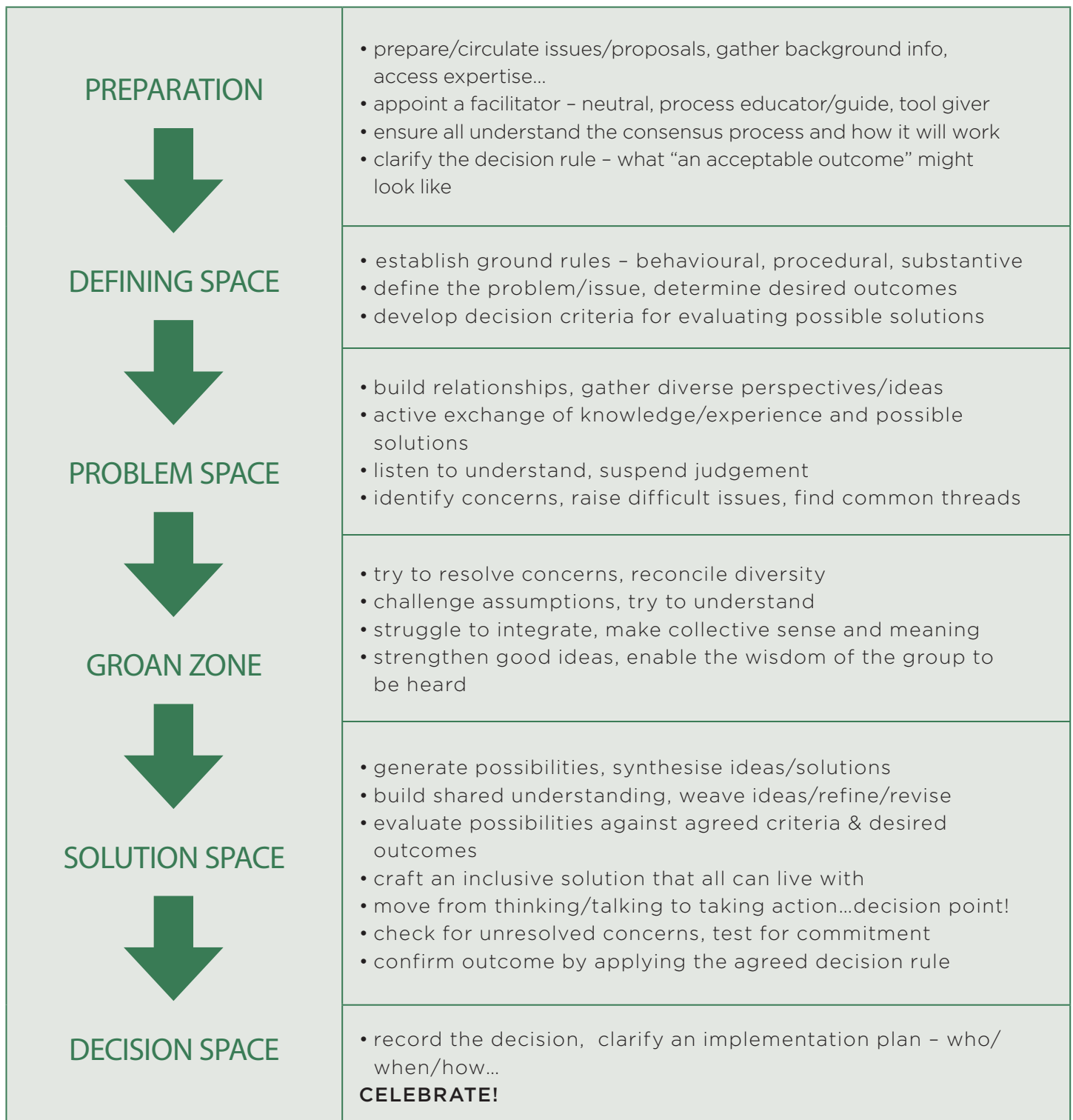
Blocking — should only be used in extreme circumstances and the blocker can clearly show why it

Decision-making in Playcentre

violates the organisation's values, underlying principles or purpose. It is helpful if legitimate grounds for a block can be determined by the group at the start of discussion. Blockers have an obligation to share their concerns and participate fully in the discussion to

find a way forward. While blocking undermines the constructive atmosphere of a group, it is inappropriate to ask a blocker to stand aside, rescind their objection or pressure them to agree.

What does the process look like?



What gets in the way?

Seldom is the process completely smooth, participation equal and everyone happy with the outcomes. Viewing issues differently may lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication as people struggle to learn from each other. Dysfunctional behaviour is often the outcome of an unproductive situation and can generally be dealt with by members taking responsibility to work at the process of the meeting. Disagreements are a necessary and creative dynamic in most groups – in consensus disagreements are explored rather than avoided, so a certain amount of tension is expected and helpful.

Actions that obstruct progress:

forced consensus – bullying, marginalisation, overpowering the minority, aggressive leadership, misuse of power, majority rule

watering down of a decision – focusing on trade-offs and compromise to get support, suppressing dissent, giving in to avoid conflict, pushing to the “middle” without resolving concerns can lead to false consensus

when the scope of change needed is too drastic – too many components required to achieve the goal, too complex/radical, the more drastic the change needed the more reluctant people are to embrace it, all or nothing approach, lack of flexibility

dreary discussions going nowhere – more information or ideas required, dysfunctional behaviours, too open ended, lack of understanding of the process, polarised factions, it’s not about decisions by endurance!

defensive listening – ‘guarding’ own position, attached to ideas, closed minds, new ways of seeing/doing things challenging people’s beliefs/assumptions, unwilling to think creatively to find solutions, unwilling to share/explain underlying concerns

ineffective delegation – predisposed capabilities, failing to define what’s expected (options or proposal/explanation of alternatives considered/how decision criteria met...), unrealistic timeframes

inappropriate blocks – blocking because you disagree, don’t like, it goes against tradition, or to get your way is abuse of the power to block



bad behaviour – tolerating disrespectful comments or behaviour, hogging the floor, lack of trust, inability to work co-operatively

starting from a proposal instead of an issue – an overly developed proposal on anything important will evoke resistance and lead to participants feeling devalued/manipulated and developers of the proposal unappreciated, how proposal is presented & discussed

hijacking the process – power/position influencing outcome, facilitator merely a puppet, withholding information, focusing on results not on process, rushing the process, patriarchy.

Why use it?

Better processes, better outcomes, better collaboration...

inclusive participation engages and empowers group

Spirit Writing

We all have stories to tell – but so many of us find it hard to put these stories onto paper. At National Māori Hui, delegates used an exercise for practising writing called spirit writing (or automatic writing). Everyone stated off with the same beginning and then wrote for a period of 10 minutes without lifting their pen. The idea is to let creative juices flow, without directing the thought

process, too much. It doesn't matter if what you are left with is a jumble, so don't worry about spelling or punctuation – if there are ideas that you want to capture you can always work on these later.

So grab a pen (or open a blank page on your computer), set a timer (oven timers are fine!) and see what you have written after 10 minutes – maybe you

could use the following as your beginning 'As I look at my son/daughter playing at Playcentre...'. Here's some of the examples from our delegates – they all are a great starting point for an article (for your local newspaper or the Playcentre Journal) or a story for your child's portfolio.

"As I look at the tamariki... I realise how far we have come. My son has gone from being a scared boy, only wanting to drive the big red car, to a boy who happily initiates play with the other children and enjoys coming to session. I see that empowering our children to play and learn doesn't happen by chance. Sometimes it is hard work, hard to step back and let them do what they need to do and not interfere. Hard work to provide lots of amazing (play) set ups. Such a wonderful place, as I look at the tamariki I see what important work we do. (anon)"

"As I look at the tamariki...my thoughts wander at the marvels of the universe, the creation story, the events that have led us all to this one moment, right here! Pictures flash through my head, fast as lightening - how, why, when, where and what really is our purpose here on this earth? I think I'm sure it's all about aroha, sharing and being together. (Natash Leef, Herekino Playcentre)"

"As I look at the tamariki...I feel a sense of overwhelming aroha - to see them laughing, talking with each other and the fun they are having. They look like they are provided with all the resources that can provide them with a fun day. The eyes of one tells a story of his own respect for another. The responding of the other tells me that that child can accept the other as a friend, whānau and mate at Playcentre. I have no idea what they are trying to accomplish in their play but oh my goodness it looks fun, bet I get my nono off the couch and join in the fun too! (Char Martin, Education Team)"

When cultures merge into one...



Māori • Chinese • Croatian • Irish • Lebanese • Niuean • Tongan

*A list of different ethnicities in a group?
Or the creation of my beautiful child?*

When growing up with a Māori/Chinese dad and Irish/Lebanese/Croatian mum, multicultural is a part of life. Aunties and uncles working with my parents, cousins around, staying for the whole holidays, Chinese meals that would put restaurants to shame, Irish blessings and family trees that stretch longer than the kitchen table.

Growing up in New Zealand, with others of different cultures, difference was accepted. Difference is normal.

But when I became pregnant with a little

Niuean/Tongan gem in my womb, things were different. Accepting difference is not the same, as living difference. “No, you can’t touch that”. “Here, eat this – good for the baby”. “It’s getting late, you need to be home by dark”. What? Why? Huh?

I was surprised. Hm. No. I was culture-shocked. Immersing into another culture – joining another family and holding the future of their generations, is daunting and confusing. All of a sudden, I became someone important to them, and all of their cultural expectations were important to uphold – for the benefit of that little baby growing inside. Things that were completely okay in my culture and my

whānau, were not okay in this new fanau – who had just as much of an invested interest in making sure I was healthy and looking after myself – physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

The wellbeing of a child begins with pregnancy for all of the cultures in my life. For Pacific cultures, that includes not preparing certain foods that can cause problems for the mother, eating certain foods that are good for the health of the baby, and definitely no contact with any possible spiritual entities. But what did this mean for me?

In my whānau, women meet, catch up, support each other and share life in

the kitchen. They learn about life from their older family members over peeling vegetables and preparing meals. In my new Pacific fanau, I was continuously told to sit down, to rest myself, to not touch this, or that. How was I meant to connect and learn if I wasn't in the same space? I was confused and felt isolated. The intention was to allow me to be relieved of all duties. It was a foreign and conflicting practice. Especially when returning to my own whānau and getting teased for being lazy if I acted in the same way.

Being given raw fish was a complete surprise to me – I was given a large bowl full, lovingly made by my sister-in-law. The fish had been physically carried over from Niue to New Zealand for our fanau and it would be great for my strength and the strength of my baby inside. But my Pākehā midwife was adamant that it equated to death pretty much, and how was I meant to appease both cultural views? I couldn't. One had to give.

When one of our friend's fathers passed away, I didn't think twice about attending the family services and funeral. Paying our respects and giving our love to our close friend was very important in the culture I was brought up in. There were many a tangi that I would attend with my whānau, from a young age. I literally got up, ready to go with everyone and my mother-in-law broke out in Niuean in a panic, talking very fast to my partner in a worried tone. My partner calmed her and turned to me. I assumed that it was nothing to do with me, but he blurted "You can't come" apologetically. I demanded he explain, and after some reluctance, because he was worried about what I would think, he told me. It was like exposing an open soul in my womb to an old soul that had just lost its body and was looking for a home. There was an element of fear for me and my unborn child, that the spirits would be evil and there was no way anyone would allow such a terrible thing to happen to me and my child. I couldn't believe it. I argued that in my Māori culture, the mother's wairua was a protector. That nothing would ever happen because I would always protect any other spirits from ever coming close to my wellbeing. Nothing would curb the fear in my mother-in-law's eyes. From that day, I have not been to any funerals or family services within our Pacific fanau, because I have either been pregnant or breastfeeding one of our children.

Since my first child was born, there have been many a difference in cultures that continue to conflict. Money is a more fluid entity between nuclear fanau than in my European culture. It is expected whenever needed and to contribute to large events, it's not only requested, but also holds status for the fanau. The maintenance of our first born boy's hair is watched in anticipation. We are to hold a hair cutting ceremony where the invitation list will be wide and varied. We will be expected to accept money and gifts from others' for our eldest child, and in return attend others hair cutting ceremonies and contribute financially. I receive teasing jokes randomly about my children not staying with their Niuean elders enough – aunties and nana. They would like to have them for nights and weekends on a regular basis. But I find it difficult to allow them, until they are much older.

There are wonderful times, with the merging of our cultures becoming seamless. I speak Te Reo to my children and my mother-in-law with her Niuean language can pick up all of what I say and echo in her tongue. The children when they are young understand fluidly between them. It saddens me now that my eldest seems to be losing that as he gets older. We visit the fanau main home often,

and our Pacific fanau are so comfortable with me now, that they will often attempt to communicate to me in Niuean, much to my bemusement. The food is wonderful, hangi, Chinese and lasagnes going from our whare to theirs and umu, lu and raw fish coming from theirs.

What ethnicity are you?

I'm multi.

Oh I thought you were a mix. But what exactly?

I'm the new New Zealander.

Huh? But what cultures?

sigh

I'm everything.

I'm of the dark skinned people who came on waka at the beginning.

I'm of the light skinned people that were running from their past.

I'm of the slanted eyes people who were working to help others.

I'm of the Island people who were searching for more.

I'm me. And I'm different, but at the same time, I'm the norm.

I'm the new New Zealander.

Who are you?

A Playcentre Friend
Tara Moala
Glen Innes Playcentre
(Tamaki Association)

Welcome/ hello:
 Talofa Lava (Samoan)
 Kia orana (Cook Islands Māori)
 Malo e lelei (Tongan)
 Fakaalofa lahi atu (Niuean)
 Bula vinaka (Fijian)
 Namaste (Fijian Indian)
 Malo ni (Tokelauan)
 Halo ola Keta (PNG)
 Mauri (Kiribati)
 Fakatalofa atu (Tuvalu)
 Haere mai / Nau mai (Māori)
 Huān yíng (Chinese)
 Zdravo (Croatian)
 As-salam alaykom (Lebanese)

Te Rerenga Whetu... Let them Fly like a Shooting Star

Our Journey to get our fantastic Whare started in 2013 we found a need and want to extend bi-culturalism with in our centre and expand our knowledge and skill set. We decided a Hangi would be a great way to do this and also use it as a fundraiser to get a Whare for our children to play in.

This was no mean feat! It was likened to the planning of a wedding. Pongakawa Playcentre in 2013 was a small rural centre made up of about 18 families and 28 children. We got planning and we did all the who, what, when, where, whys, how's and who's. We came to the date in September as it was long enough before 3 babies were to be born and it was the perfect time to fit in with our farming families it also coincided that we didn't need to get a fire permit as it was in a safe time of year. We as a centre managed to source all of our meat from the community a local farmer supplied a whole beast (cow) 2 families supplied whole sheep we got a local home kill on board and they processed all our meat at no charge and turned the excess into sausages for our Christmas party he even offered to come on the day and carve/ serve up all our meat! We got chickens donated from a local supermarket and our centre families donated all the vegetables needed. All we needed to buy were the cloth to wrap food in and serving containers! This greatly helped our profit margin! The other local supermarket supplied us with ice cream and cones for the Tamariki after their kai. Firewood, stones, baskets and sacks were all sourced from our Playcentre Whānau too!

It made sense for us to treat this as an open day too we advertised in the local newspaper and in the local school newsletter. There was a lot of prep done on session getting our centre ready for our big special day. We enlisted help from our local correction department to get our grounds ready on session Mums wove flax flowers as decorations, Tamariki collected dried sticks and leaves to start



our fire, there was great anticipation and excitement also fear! The day before the Hangi we all came to centre to do the

prepping of the vegetables, digging the hangi pit, arranging the firewood, stones and final touches on our centre.



The day came Mums, Dads, Poppas and Uncles came to Playcentre while it was still dark and got to work organising and cooking our kai as the day continued more and more people came.

Just before the Hangi was pulled up we gathered all our members and guests and talked about what was happening and shared the experience of pulling the Hangi up as lots had not seen it before. Success! It all worked everything was cooked now to get serving! We gave people options when purchasing tickets to have take away or eat at centre the hangi was served in front of you a site many hadn't seen before either! We fed just over 200 servings! What an amazing achievement for our centre!

After a year of searching for the perfect Whare for our centre it was finally found and made locally by The Spruce Up Company in Mount Maunganui! We had seen several others in catalogues or on websites that were too expensive or the freight to our centre was just about the same as the cost of the Whare. When our Whare arrived everyone was amazed by it the tamariki

were intrigued by it (I was in awe of it!) we felt it needed some personal touches to it to make it our own. We sought the help of a wonderful local artist who lives just across the paddock from our centre and asked her to design something for our whare that represented us as parents and our children... the end result is stunning!

We held an opening ceremony where the invite was open to our community to past and present members. We started our opening ceremony with a Karakia and our president Rebecca Bell gave a speech thanking all for coming to unveil our new taonga and bless us all. Ex President Rochelle Owen gave speech about the journey we went on to get to where we are today. Robyn Williams artist spoke about the design and meaning Rebecca Bell and Robyn Williams unveiled the Whare. All our Tamariki sang a song "Mahunga, pakahiwi" "heads shoulders". We ended our ceremony with a thanks to all involved. And celebrated with a hakari a shared kai. We also held this as another open day and ran it just like a session our tamariki enjoyed having their older siblings on session with them and Dads and grandparents too!

Just as a parent today we make sacrifices for our Tamariki. For they are our Taonga our past, our present, our future. Just like shooting stars... their dreams to be fulfilled are endless possibilities.

Following is Robyns meaning of her wonderful design.

Te Rerenga Whetu retells the story in my interpretation of Ranginui Sky Father, Papatuanuku Earth Mother. It is a tale of two lovers the Sky Father and Earth Mother who lived in darkness with their children protected from the unknown within and who sacrificed each others embrace so that their children could develop and lead into the future. After many attempts by their children to separate them they decided it must be so and they released from their strong lovers embrace.

Te Rerenga Whetu... let them fly like a shooting star.

This Whare is a symbol or our Tamariki I tea o hurihuri/ the past the present and the future."

Robyn Tania Williams – artist/ designer or Pongakawa Playcentre Whare upgrade

Our Tamariki are enjoying using the Whare for lots of different things it's a great place to sit and read a book with a friend of 5, there are some cheeky pukana being pulled, a poi workshop was just held at our centre so they tamariki were keen to get amongst it too . It has been used as a place for baby dolls to have a sleep or as a rest stop when pushing dolly in the pram is too tiring! The possibilities of play are endless and since it has only been opened 1 week we are still finding many new ways to utilise it. The Whare is in line with our main entrance gate so is a great focal point and in a perfect position to be used for welcoming people in or doing farewells.

Rochelle Owen,
Pongakawa Playcentre
(Western Bay of Plenty)



Give it a go – kōrero Māori!

The theme for Māori Language Week – Te Wiki o te Reo Māori this year is ‘Whāngaihia te reo Māori ki ngā mātua’: helping parents to pass te reo on to their children. The chosen theme recognises the crucial role of parents in the language development of children, as well as the need to support parents in that role.

In order to provide that support, Te Taura Whiri i te Reo – the Māori Language Commission has released a range of helpful resources for parents and whānau to use year-round. These include a series of posters which introduce words relating to: the ‘Kīhini’ (Kitchen), ‘Papa Rēhia’ (Playground), ‘Taiao’ (Outdoors) and ‘Ko Au’ (Me).

The week also signals the start of a year-long campaign, which will introduce 50 te reo Māori phrases over the next year. Each of the phrases in ‘Ngā Rerengā Kōrero o te Wiki’ – ‘The Phrase of the Week’ relate to everyday family situations, and are aimed at encouraging the use of te reo Māori in the home. Examples include:

**“Haramai, e te tau”
(Come here, darling)**

**“Kei te hiamoe koe?”
(Are you tired?)**

**“Māku koe e āwhina”
(I will help you).**

Rhyme & Reo: aeiou



The long and short vowel sounds are:

a as in up or about

e as in egg or bed

i as in eat or be

o as in autumn or pork

u as in look or put

ā as in art or ask

ē as in dairy or weird

ī as in eve or eel

ō as in oar or awe

ū as in boot or snooze



Available from www.akobooks.co.nz

The need to support parents and teachers in their role of passing on te reo to children, is also what has been behind the development of ‘Rhyme & Reo: aeiou’. Released in May by Ako Books (formerly Playcentre Publications), the book is a collection of rhymes that illustrate the vowel sounds used in te reo Māori.

Each rhyme highlights a Māori vowel sound, using English words to demonstrate the sound and notes to assist with pronunciation. Intended as a book to be read to or with pre-school and primary school aged children, the key aims of the book are that:

- children will enjoy the rhymes and pictures, learn some useful Māori words and hear te reo used naturally, and valued equally, alongside English; and
- adults can refer to the tips and guidance on pronunciation to build their own confidence and skills.

The overall aim of the book is to support parents and teachers



to learn and improve their own te reo Māori alongside their children.

Māori Language Week began with a spotlight on the issue of correct pronunciation of te reo Māori. This was thanks to Kāpiti College student, Finnian Galbraith, whose speech on the topic went viral on Youtube, and which has attracted attention from media around the world. It's a fantastic speech, which challenges all New Zealanders to give it a go and ensure we are pronouncing Māori words correctly.

Probably my favourite part of Finnian's speech is this:

So, why do people pronounce these words incorrectly? It could be down to lack of education...

But it could be that people are almost afraid to try, because they are scared of making a fool of themselves. And so they just follow everyone else, pronouncing them wrong. This is something we really need to work on.... What matters is that you are trying. And that creates an atmosphere where others will feel okay to try as well.

Te Wiki o te Reo Māori is the perfect time to renew our commitment and resolve to making this effort – for our children and for te reo Māori itself. The

resources and support (from Te Taura Whiri and many others) are available to help us do this. Kia kaha tātou!

Jessica Ngatai,
Author of Rhyme & Reo: aeiou.
The Book can be purchased through
AKO Books, www.akobooks.co.nz.



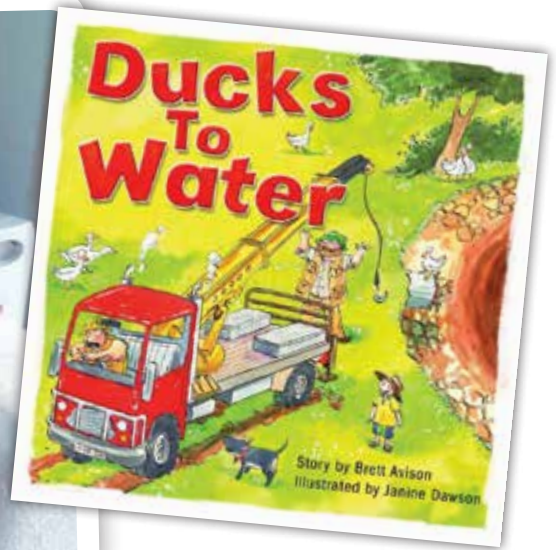
Links:

Māori Language Week resources are available from Te Taura Whiri i te Reo, at: <http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/what-we-do/te-wiki-o-te-reo-māori/te-wiki-o-te-reo-māori-resources/>
'Rhyme & Reo: aeiou' is available from Ako Books at: <http://www.akobooks.co.nz/shop/Teaching+Resources/Rhyme++Reo++AEIOU++Jessica+Ngatai++DUE+FOR+RELEASE+IN+MAY+2015.html>

Finnian Galbraith's speech, 'The importance of correctly pronouncing Māori words' is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6-SdrRxPOQ>

Duck to Water

By Brett Avison



The front makes you want to pick it up, because it has ducks and a crane on it. It is fun to listen to as it rhymes and the pictures area really nice and clear. The story is about returning water to the duck pond. It had no water in it because the pipe was

blocked and Bryn and Ted set up a plan to once again fill the duck pond with water. My favourite part of the book is when the water comes rushing down the pipe and splashes out into the pond. The next page is very good as the ducks pop out of the page,

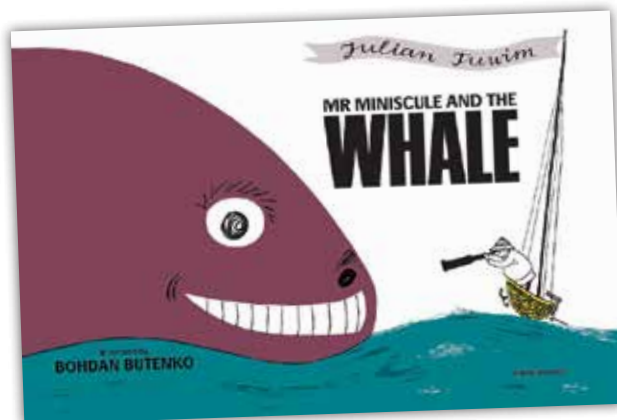
as they jump into the pond. My sister and I really enjoyed this book, happy reading.

Harry Balich,
Playcentre Graduate
Glen Innes Playcentre
(Tamaki Association)

Mr Miniscule and the Whale

By Julian Tuwim

Mr Miniscule, albeit short in stature, has a rather big dream to meet a whale. He sets out on his adventure in a boat made from half a walnut shell with many items on-board, one of which is a barrel of wine and another being his rifle and bullets. If these items are of particular distaste to you in a children's story, you need not read any further. Mr Miniscule has a dream and the determination to see it through. With a rhyming pattern, a wide selection of vocabulary and some lovely imagery, this book is easy to read and simply but well-illustrated. It will appeal to those of us who enjoy verse in children's stories and perhaps already have a collection of similar books, such as Hairy Maclairy or The Gruffalo. After sharing this story with my own children, I think this book would be

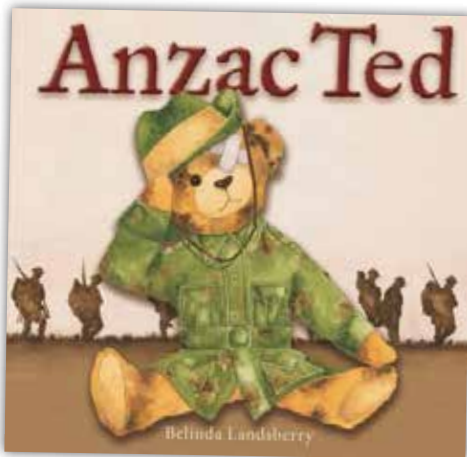


of wide appeal, both to pre-schoolers and school-aged children and as they grow, so will their appreciation of the text, vocabulary and illustrations. And, if you are concerned about Mr Miniscule's rifle, be assured, that

due to his size, the only thing he is able to shoot is one pesky mosquito.

Marcelle Comins,
(Northland Association)

Anzac Ted



Anzac Ted with its beautiful pictures and rhyming story line hooks you in from the first page. Who would not love a Teddy? I asked. When I first read this story it brought tears to my eyes, Anzac Ted is a forgotten hero, ignored and misread by those who don't know who he really is, but loved and cherished by those who do, those who know his story and what he stood for.

The children who didn't vote Anzac Ted as being cute and cuddly or didn't want him as part of their play made me realise how oblivious we can become to things that don't look pretty or cute, and how we don't stay around long enough to hear stories behind the stains, the scraps and the missing ears!

The tears were for the forgotten heroes that Anzac Ted made me remember, how

even grown men in the middle of war still need a hero, a thing that reminds them of home and what they left behind, and Anzac Ted did that for them. He was their hero that reminder of home and he saw things that we can not even comprehend. The tears were for the people who we have forgotten, a reminder that generations need these stories – or 'Lest we forget'.

A beautiful story that children will love and hopefully ask more of the why questions and a story that to adults can be a gentle reminder that we all have our special heroes that need remembering. A lovely edition to the book collection. Happy reading.

Carmen Tarrant,
Inglewood Playcentre
(Taranaki Association)

Changing the World is Child's Play

Changing the World is Child's Play is a book to encourage mindful parenting – a blend of gentle parenting and engaging your family in small changes to engage with the environment. Recognising the value that families have in educating their children through participating in simple everyday activities together – and inspiring some new activities to share your values with your children.

Changing the World is Child's play recognises the value of including children in everyday activities like cooking, housework, looking after family pets. Lots of other experiences are suggested that may be normal to your family or new and are linked to their value in children's learning and development. The book also includes topics such as supporting children through anger and anticipation making it a well-rounded parenting toolkit – empathetic to the struggles of parenting.

This book is a lovely small format – easily slipped into a handbag or nappy bag to read a section while waiting for an appointment. Sections are a beautiful balance of description and bullet point ideas – each section is only 2-3 pages

making it a nice easy read for parents on the go. It is beautifully illustrated and inspires great play ideas – my 9 year old had a quick flick through and spotted the section "Little places to call our own" and headed off to make a blanket fort of his own.

This would make a lovely gift for parents – there are ideas and inspirations that will work from toddlerhood through to the end of primary school age. But would be equally useful in the adults library at your Playcentre – for families who are looking for new ways to connect their Playcentre life with their home life, and to reinforce

the philosophy of parents as first and best teachers outside the gates of your centre. It makes a great manual for school holidays where you can pick experiences for your family to fill up the long break from Playcentre and school.

Lisa Mayne,
(North Shore Association)



Would you like to write a book review

Receive a free children's picture book to read and review. Please contact me at journal@playcentre.org.nz for more information.
Thank you!

The Many Benefits of Messy Play

Physical Development

Develops hand-eye co-ordination

Builds fine motor skills

Improves body control, poise, balance and co-ordination

Explores colour shape and texture in two and three dimensions

Creative Development

Use of different media and material fosters imagination

Focus on process over product enables individual interpretations

Communication, Language and Literacy

Informal context encourages confidence in communicating

Provides opportunities for mark-making

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Builds independence through choice

Encourages a positive attitude to new experiences

Many thanks to HappyArt for the words and idea.

Mathematical development

Teaches about sequencing and patterns

Offers opportunities for counting, measuring and sorting

Develops the concept of size and shape

Encourages representational play and story telling

Knowledge and Understanding of The World

Teaches cause and effect

Enables risk-taking and experimenting in a safe environment

Fosters children's natural curiosities