Playcentre Journal

Learning and emerging as a leader

Playcentre NZ Playcentre Federation

Our pepeha our place – Sign Language – Hiapo – What might we see in our documented assessment – Embracing ethnic diversity – Making things better – Literacy

ISSUE 155
Autumn 2017

Tena koutou
Ko Stacey toku ingoa
No Ingarangi ahau
Ko Paul toku Papa
Ko Angela toku Mama
Ko Mark toku Tane
Ko Harry raua ko Alyssa oku tamariki
Ko Te Whanau Tupu Ngatahi O Aotearoa
No reira, tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa

Sue Stover the writer of Learning and Emerging as a Leader, page 22, has written about what motivates us as adults on session to become intentional learners. Parents learning and children learning make up the wings of the Playcentre butterfly. In order to fly, both wings of a butterfly need to be working. With Playcentre Awareness Week just gone, now is a great time to reflect on, what does motivate us to become learners as this is how we will inspire others.

Thank you to those who have written articles for this Journal. I am always keen to receive more so please email them through to me.

Thank you to Ellerslie, Mt Wellington, Pakuranga rahihi and Weymouth Playcentre, Tamaki Association, for your photos that I have used throughout the Journal. It would be great to see other centres in the Journal and now it is easier because the photo release form is now on Playcentre Connect.

Stacey Balich
Playcentre Journal Editor

Playcentre Journal Cooperative: Stacey Balich (Tamaki Association), Clare Ferguson (Trustee Board), and Anna Anstey (Wellington Association).

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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!
Guidelines for writing for the Playcentre Journal can be found at http://www.playcentre.org.nz/journal.php
Please email your contributions to journal@Playcentre.org.nz or post them to;
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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. The Journal was edited by Stacey Balich, who is supported by the Journal cooperative.

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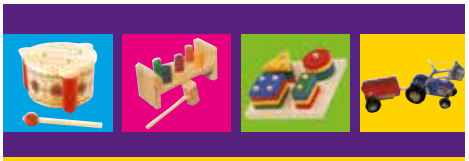

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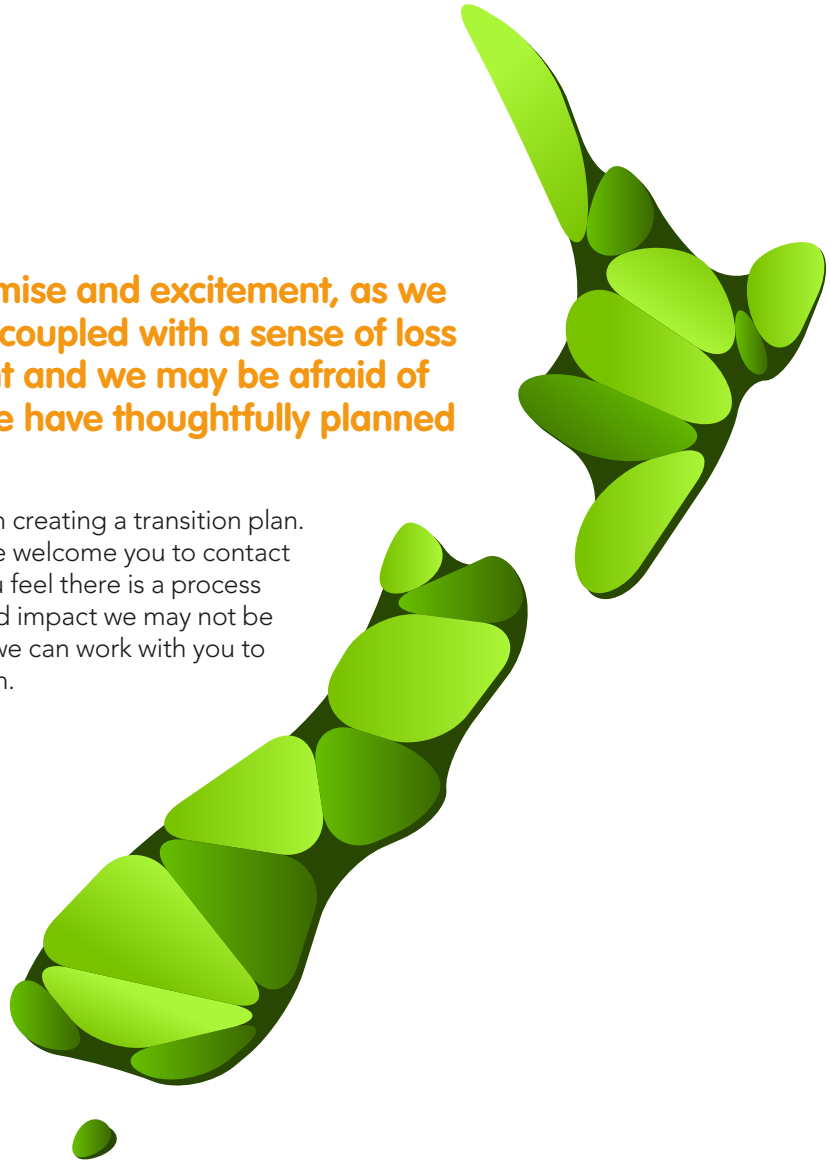
Finished with your latest copy of the Playcentre Journal? Spread the word by passing your copy onto a friend or taking to your local doctor's surgery, kindergarten, school reception, Plunket or music group.

Actions towards amalgamation

Playcentre's amalgamation is full of promise and excitement, as we create new ways of supporting centres, coupled with a sense of loss of those things that have been important and we may be afraid of losing. It is knowing this dynamic that we have thoughtfully planned for the amalgamation.



Federation has a dedicated amalgamation team, Alasdair Finnie – General Manager, Julia Frew – Human Relationships Manager, Liang Wells – Chief Financial Officer and Cissy Rock – Change Programme Manager. This team has added the extra capacity needed to create a realistic timeline to take us from New Zealand Playcentre Federation and Associations, to Playcentre Aotearoa.

As an amalgamation team, we are committed to ensuring we have clear processes for Playcentre members to contribute. Any Associations in need of extra support can contact Cissy (on change.mgr@playcentre.org.nz), who will assist with creating a transition plan. As a team, we welcome you to contact us should you feel there is a process or unintended impact we may not be aware of, so we can work with you to find a solution.

This timeline has been created to give clarity on plans for the amalgamation. It allows for a transition phase from June to November, to make sure there is a smooth beginning for Playcentre Aotearoa. Before transition can begin, we need to have a final Playcentre Aotearoa structure. The formal consultation process for this is underway, to gather feedback and ideas on the structure, which will allow for a revised final structure to be released on May 22nd 2017.

Associations will also need to complete a series of tasks to ensure a smooth transition, and to ensure Centres continue to be supported throughout. The Federation team are in contact with Associations offering tailored advice as and when needed, and do welcome questions or concerns so we can provide the best support possible.

As part of the amalgamation plan we will be rolling out a series of organisational culture workshops, based in regions, to develop and foster cultural norms. This will aid in the formation of the regions and building the connection of centres to others in their area.

It is with enthusiasm that we embark on this journey together, to create the best Playcentre Aotearoa, which we will celebrate at our conference in November 2017. We know there will be hard times while we work together on this, but through it all we will keep the focus on children and the goal of a successful and vibrant Playcentre Aotearoa with families being supported to play together.

Aboriginal Art

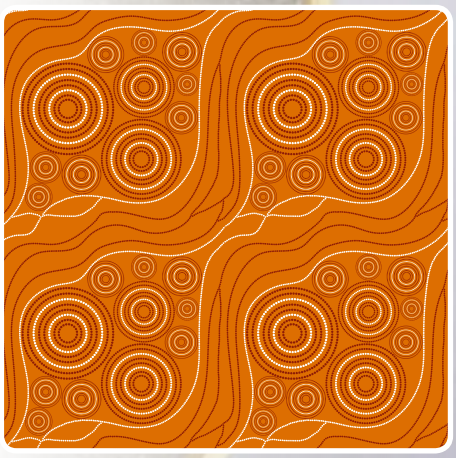
This term our theme is Papatuanuku, the Earth mother. Looking for activities which would involve the earth as a resource, we came across the idea of Aboriginal paintings. Aboriginals are the indigenous people of Australia. Their art work is based on ancient stories where they use the earth mixed with water to draw symbols to communicate and retell stories of their beginning. Making lots of little dots with sticks to create a whole picture.

Investigating

We watched a video at home on how to recreate our own Aboriginal paintings to share with our Monday tamariki. We found two different shades of colour soil and mixed them with water until it was similar to paint. Then we got ear buds and skewer sticks and a few other contrasting colours of paint to draw our dot pictures.

Creativity with children

We had some tamariki try and follow an outline circle with dots and others did freeform paintings with dots. We had examples of talking sticks and didgeridoos that were painted by Aboriginals to help guide and inspire us. It was interesting to see what patterns the different utensils made and the effect on the contrasting paper. We found that the black paper looked more similar to the ground whereas on the white paper, the paint stood out more.



How might learning contribute to Belonging/Mana Whenua?

Sammy was the first to give this activity a go. She enjoyed feeling the mud paint in her hands and in between her fingertips. She really got the hang of dipping her hands into the mud paint and then dotting them on the paper.

Max was enthusiastic and shared that he wanted to be different from everyone else so along with doing the dots he also tried rolling the skewer along the paper to create a different effect. This shows independent thought, understanding possible outcomes and creative conception.

Ben sat down and gave the dot painting a go using a combination of both mud and paint. When he was finished he wrote his own name on it. This is new for Ben, as he learns how to form letters and use a pencil in a controlled way. Claiming ownership and reinforcing a sense of belonging.

Harry tried some dots on the black paper. Then he wanted to draw with a pencil, which was hard to see on the black paper.

Ella wanted to follow the circle first with the dots.

She concentrated hard to get the spacing the same between each dot. She was clear communicating with me which colour she wanted to use next and how she wanted this to look. This demonstrated planning, independent play and pattern creation. She enjoyed repeating the dots around the initial circle changing the pattern as she went. She also was keen to try the different types of paint and mud paints exploring these different resources. The end result was very similar to the Aboriginal paintings.

What next

Moving on from here, next we can look at the storytelling aspect of Aboriginal paintings. We can try to retell one story or draw a dot painting with a symbol or story in mind. There are lots future learning paths with each child, involving more exploration of different art techniques, strengthening belonging, literacy, and motor skills.

Amie Morgan
Pukekawa Playcentre

The simple dot style as well as cross hatching may be beautifully aesthetic to the eye but has a far more hidden meaning and deeper purpose. Aboriginal people would smooth over the soil to draw sacred designs that belonged to that particular ceremony. Body paint was also applied which held meanings connected to sacred rituals. These designs were outlined with circles and encircled with dots. Uninitiated people never got to see these sacred designs since the soil would be smoothed over again and painted bodies would be washed.

Aboriginal artists abstracted their paintings to disguise the sacred designs so the real meanings could not be understood by Westerners.

Provocation provoke

A provocation provokes thoughts, discussions, questions, interests, creativity and ideas. They can also expand on a thought, project, idea and interest. Provocations can come in many forms, like the story shared by Amie, they used an interesting video which led to the artwork that was shared with the other children. Other forms of provocation could be natural items, materials/ objects displayed in a certain way, open questions and events. Often though, provocations are simple and displayed beautifully to provoke interest. Ultimately, the intention of provocations is to provide an invitation for a child to explore and express themselves. It should be open-ended and provide a means for expression where possible.

Fun in the snow with all the Playcentre whānau

Winter came to west Auckland at the end of September, with a dump of snow at the Te Akoranga Playcentre Association headquarters. It's a bit of a trek for Auckland families to reach the snow, so the Association decided to bring the snow to them!

Tamariki donned winter woollies, packed buckets, spades and toboggans, and arrived at the Association rooms keen to explore this cool new plaything.

For many it was their first touch of snow. Mum Jessica said her daughter Chloe enjoyed taking her boots and gloves off to see what it felt like. "I found great pleasure in watching her figuring out how to walk through the snow."

Co-operation and problem solving was needed at the start of the day to turn the huge pile of dumped snow into different play areas. Some of the older children chipped in, helping adults to shovel snow into wheelie bins and flexitubs to transport.

Samuel enjoyed shoveling the snow into a bin and transporting to and from a new pile – both themes in his current play at centre. Plus, he made new friends, who helped with the job. – *Toni*

For Jimmy, the melted snow glove hand became such a thing of wonder he kept it for days. He told me he was going to take it to bed with him. We managed to negotiate the shelf above his bed, sitting in a plastic container, rather than cuddled! – *Kim*

A snow slide was created. Children took turns sharing toboggans and boogie boards to whizz down the icy slope.

As they played with the snow, tamariki also explored some new science ideas. For example, Mum Melanie said the realisation for her son William that snow melts was a big deal. "Especially when he got it in his boots and mittens!"

As so often is the way, a big group of children were captivated by play that was completely unanticipated. A latex glove was filled with snow, which slowly melted. The children each wanted their own – filling it, asking for help to knot the end, and then waiting, anticipating the transformation from solid to liquid.

A big dump of snow in the city in spring was fun, but what made the day awesome was the real sense of community and belonging for both adults and children.

Kim Bowden
Glen Eden Playcentre

It was special to have tamariki from all eleven Centres in the Association come together to share the experience. The aroha and mauri shared by our Playcentre whānau was so tangible.
– *Association President Anna-Louise Fleet*

We all came together and shared spades, buckets, sleds and each other's tamariki. It was a truly awesome way for our Playcentre village to unite. – *Hannah*

Play ideas ...

Make snow on session

Mix together 3 cups baking soda and ½ cup hair conditioner, preferably white so that it looks like real snow. Kneed it together and than you will have snow!

Antarctica small world

Children learn through active exploration. Set up some animals that live in the snow with some ice. Lay out some books next to the play for the children to look through and investigate.

Ice

There are so many science experiments that include using ice. A good one that would follow nicely from snow is to make rain. To do this you need to heat some water until it is steaming. Pour the hot water into a jar so that it is about a third full. Put a plate on top of the jar. After a few minutes put some ice cubes on top of the plate and watch closely to see what is happening inside the jar.

Our pepeha our place

Tēna koutou katoa ngā whānau o Playcentre Aotearoa

Ko Ohuiarangi te maunga
Ko Te Wai o Taiki te moana
Ko Tainui te waka
Ko Ngai Tai te iwi
Ko Bucklands Beach Ohuiarangi Playcentre matou

We all strive as parents for our tamariki/children to be confident and secure in identity; to know who they are and where they belong. Ensuring our tamariki are familiar with the whakapapa/lineage of the area and the pepeha/proverb for their playcentre (as well as their own!) is important.

At Bucklands Beach Ohuiarangi Playcentre, we have been on our journey to learn and understand our Playcentre whakapapa for a while. This is our story of our journey to connect our tamariki to our maunga/mountain Ohuiarangi, and our moana/sea Te Wai o Taiki.

Around fifteen years ago one of our longtime parents, Anna Worthington, decided to investigate and write for our tamariki the story of our place, from the birth of our maunga Ohuiarangi, how our iwi Ngai Tai came to this whenua/land, through to our place today. Her story "Our land, our place, our people" became a favourite story of our tamariki.

We researched and reached out to our iwi Ngai Tai, and to our Tāmaki kuia Whaea Taini Drummond, to learn our Playcentre pepeha. We decided that we needed to ensure we connected our tamariki to our rohe/area and the people in it through physical connection: regular Playcentre trips within our community. We also employed three of our Life Members to run our Big Kids session (for three and four year olds) to retain in a living way memory and stories of our centre for our tamariki.

Fifteen years later, we still take our Big Kids to Ohuiarangi regularly. This is their favourite trip! Because we do it so often, they know every part of our maunga and love to run to the top. There we can reinforce our connection to this place while gazing around at its beauty.

We also visit our moana lots– although this isn't too hard as our centre is located right opposite! We always make sure to care for Papatuanuku and pick up all the rubbish we see. We do other trips within our community; schools, supermarkets, libraries, fire stations etc. Most important are our trips to Te Whare Matariki in Owairoa/Howick to visit our wonderful kuia Whaea Taini.

These trips cost very little in general but the benefits are immeasurable. They meet all the four walls of the tapa wha model. Most of all they make us feel grounded in our place.

Like all centres, our centre whānau changes over time and so we face the constant challenge of keeping our knowledge and connection to our whakapapa and pepeha. This term our parents are educating themselves and identifying their own pepeha and writing these for our tamariki portfolios.

So we continue on our journey, and we wish you the best in your centre's journey to learn and connect with your whakapapa. Noho ora mai.

Debbie Rowland
Ke to No Bucklands Beach Ohuiarangi Playcentre mātou

It is vitally important in Māori culture that a person knows who they are. More importantly they need to know where they are from.

Ko _____ te maunga

Ko_____te moana/awa

Ko_____te waka

Ko_____te iwi

Ko_____tōku matua

Ko_____tōku whaea

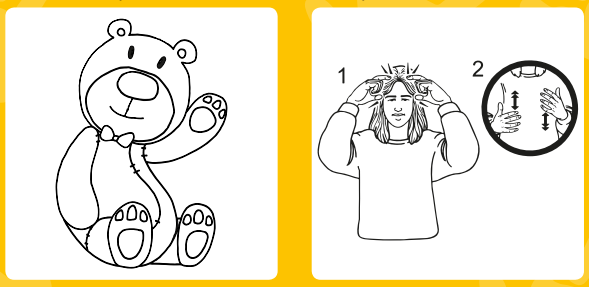
Ko_____taku ingoa

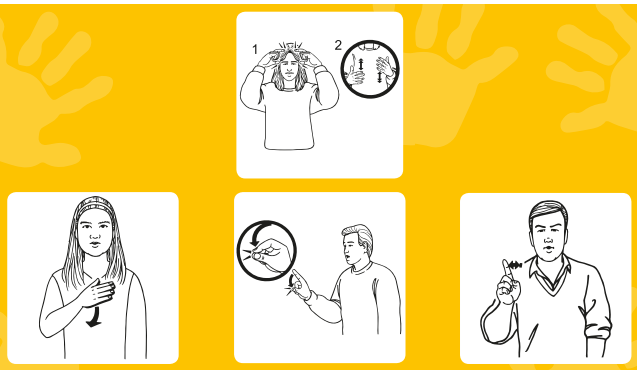
For more information on Pepeha please see Issue 145.

Sign Language

Deaf Awareness Wee
15th – 21st May 2017

What do you want to do Teddy?



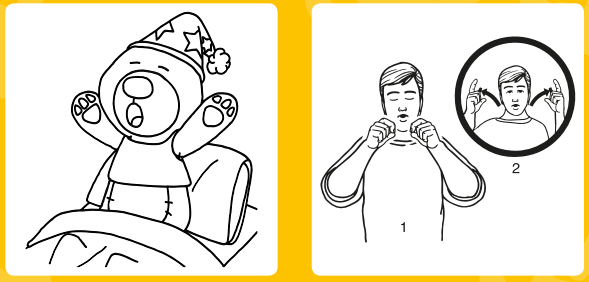


What does Teddy want to do?

Teddy Bear wants to...

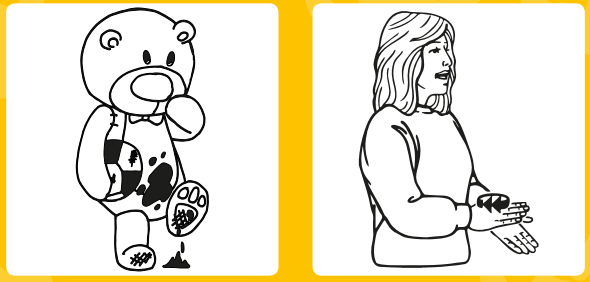
sleep

Teddy Bear wants to...



wake up

Teddy Bear is...



dirty

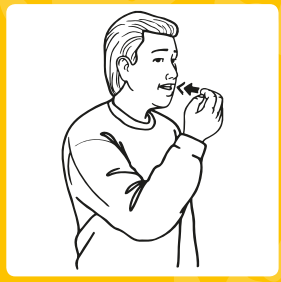
k 2017

First Signs
DEAF AOTEAROA

Teddy Bear is...

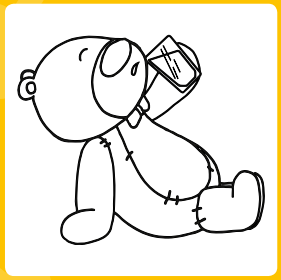
hungry

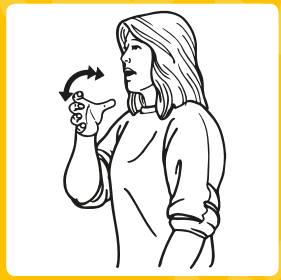
Teddy Bear wants to...



eat

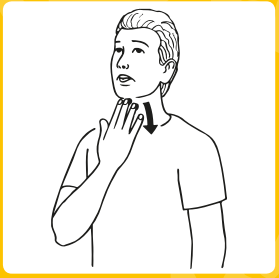
Teddy Bear wants to...





drink

Teddy Bear is...



thirsty

Teddy Bear wants to get...

clean

Blocks are noisy!

There's no place to play with blocks! I don't want blocks falling on my baby! What are the children learning in their block play anyway?

Auckland Ellerslie Playcentre

Babies and toddlers can bang two blocks together

They feel the texture of the wood and experience the timber as a percussion instrument. Toddlers will place a block on top of another block and make the beginnings of a tower. Towers grow taller as the toddler gains confidence stacking blocks on top of each other. Wider based blocks offer better success. Count how many blocks high? Children can experience delight in these early constructions, connecting the blocks vertically.

Crash! Yes, the towers will inevitably be knocked over! Ensure that there is an adult in close proximity to mind any little babies.

Blocks can also form rows along the floor

Brick blocks are easy for young hands to grasp onto. Count or measure the length of the row. Add small vehicles, animal or people figurines. Towers and rows grow into walls and roads with width. These structures tend to have uniform patterns within the block work.

Blocks can become robots, dinosaur houses, or house foundations! Children love getting blocks out into the sandpit and using wet sand to cement the blocks together. A plastic trowel can smooth the cement. A four year old girl spent an hour building a wall this way. A four year old boy built a viaduct in the sandpit by standing the quadruple blocks on their ends.

Block play includes endless enclosures!

The long quadruple blocks can form these early enclosures, either by lying on their long face or standing up on the long edge of the rectangular blocks. Observe how children use prior knowledge to explore making these spaces for animals (paddocks or zoos) or for people. Watch to see when children place blocks within this enclosure. What categorising knowledge are the children using?

Taking blocks outside to bigger spaces

Transporting the blocks in the wooden big mac, by backing it up to the block shelves, loading the blocks neatly (the blocks do fit perfectly inside these trucks!) and driving it to their building site is great fun. Now the enclosures and patterns and shapes can grow bigger! Garages with four sides and a roof can be built and painted and used in role play. Castles can have turrets and moats and towers. Fire stations may be built, especially after visiting a fire station. Children can experiment with standing blocks on their shorter, taller side like a domino formation.

Block play can be solitary and intense and deeply satisfying

Because the blocks are rigid and uniform in size, children will experience success in their building endeavors. Once children move to parallel play, some structures may be copied or built separately by two or three children. Co operative play happens when stepping stones are made with blocks, or bridges over water. Then other children benefit in physically balancing and role play too from others buildings. Once children begin to share common interests, enclosures become ways of defining larger, more complex places. Houses with rooms get built, with beds, ovens, and other family play props get incorporated. Police stations are made and marble runs can be built.

Children can measure and draw up plans for their structures

Children can talk about the number of blocks being used. By using tape measures they can measure the height, width and depth. Talk about the faces, edges, size and shapes, both two and three dimensional. Notice and talk with children about how their buildings look different if used with vertical placing, horizontal placing and rotating block position for a different perspective. This helps lay down spatial mathematical concepts within a real context.

Let the children own the whole building process

Take photos of their work and display it within centre. Documenting children's block play can show continuity of schemas across other areas of play and development of their schematic play. Examples noticed are enclosures with blocks that are planned on paper or painted, and when social play is defined by enclosures (blocks in the sandpit), or making a house with rooms and furniture.

Re create what they are interested in

Blocks give children a chance to make something they are interested in because they are rigid and have a dimension. A four year old boy had a strong interest in draw-bridges and to support their interest he was taken to see a bascule bridge at the viaduct. We also displayed photos of the structures that are real on session and he spent hours re creating them.

Finally, I would like to thank the children from Ellerslie Playcentre who taught me the beauty and skills of block play; Alex, Harry, Leah, Evalina, Christina, Noah, Cooper, Toby, Edmund, Xavier, Harrison, Isaac and Ollie and Angus, and the New Entrants of Stanhope Rd School and Ellerslie Primary school.

Evelyn Leech
Ellerslie Playcentre

Supporting our children's interests

Block play can be intensely satisfying play both inside and outside your centre. Embrace your child's enthusiasm and richness of this area of play.

1. Space. Having space allows children to build as they want to and the size they want.
2. Look at the ways they connect their blocks. What patterns or symmetry can be seen?
3. Listen and talk to them about what they are doing. Ask the children what they have named their structure?
4. Have picture and photo books available to inspire the children; with bridges, wall, building and towers. Tana Hoban's photo book 'Shapes, Shapes, Shapes " is helpful.
5. Also set up clipboards with paper for the children to plan first, if they want to.
6. Support them to put their own ideas into practice.
7. When out walking, notice the way fences and walls are put together.
8. Visit building sites if you are able to do so safely, and talk about how the frame is being built.
9. Take a ride on a bus, train, or truck and see buildings from a higher and different perspective.
10. Make sure they are safe.

Block play can help children to:

1. Learn about gravity, stability, balance, weight, and trial and error.
2. Understand shape, size, space, depth, width, and height.
3. Develop hand-eye coordination and muscles.
4. Learn to plan and ask questions. Explore early math with counting up as well as down.
5. Developing their problem solving skills.
6. Gain confidence in their own abilities.
7. Learn to cooperate and share with others.
8. Gain confidence in their ideas of building something that they already know about and explore their own ideas.

Blocks can be washed in soapy water, and left to dry. Vegetable oil them as needed.

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http://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/teaching-and-learning/learning-tools-and-resources/play-ideas/blocks/

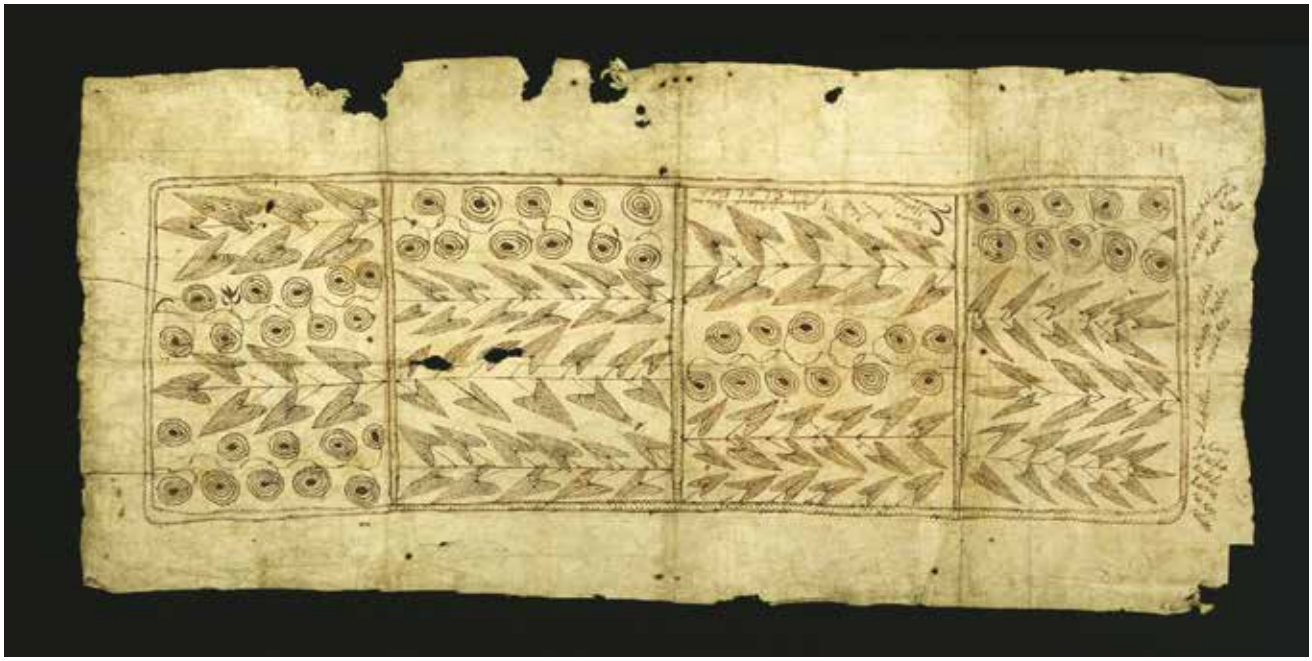
Hiapo

Hiapo is the Niuean word for tapa cloth. Traditionally it was patterned with designs unique to the island, many of them depicting events that were topical at the time the hiapo. Little is known of pre-nineteenth-century forms of Niuean cloth, except that, in the 1830s, Samoan methods of decorating barkcloth were introduced to Niue by Samoan missionaries. Consequently, the patterns and motifs on Niuean hiapo from the mid nineteenth century are often indistinguishable from Samoan pieces of the same period.

Later in the 1880s a distinctive style of hiapo decorations emerged which incorporated fine lines and new motifs. Hiapo from this period are illustrated with complicated and detailed geometric designs. The patterns were made up of spirals, concentric circles, squares, triangles, and diminishing motifs (the design motifs decrease in size from the border to the center of the textile). Niueans created naturalistic motifs and were the first Polynesians to introduce depictions of human figures into their bark cloth. Some hiapo examples include writing, usually names, along the edges of the overall design.

Niuan hiapo stopped being produced in the late nineteenth century. Today, the art form has a unique place in history and serves to inspire contemporary Polynesian artists. A well-known example is Niuean artist John Pule, who creates art of mixed media inspired by traditional hiapo design.

Hiapo is made from paper mulberry bark fibres which are beaten flat then felted together with arrowroot glue into rectangular sheets. The bark cloth sheets are soaked in coconut oil then spread out and heated over a fire which turns them a brown-yellow colour.



"It's always about storytelling, drawing

Activities to try with the children

Looking at the Hiapo

Show the children Hiapo or tapa. You could take them on a trip so they can see the size of them, bring in a book or print out some copies of the artwork.

Look at the symbols that are used in Hiapo and other tapa artwork. Look at the shapes, do you recognise any of them? Have any of them been repeated? Do they change in size?

Making your own paper

Try making your own paper to paint on. Hiapo uses bark fibres to make a type of cloth or paper. There are a few ways to make your own paper children can be involved in. One of them is to tear used paper into small pieces and put it through the blender, add water so that the blender will move easily. Once the mixture is a nice smooth pulp spread it out onto a screen. Use a towel to soak the water. When it is ready turn it out and allow it to dry for 24 hours (depending on the thickness of the paper).

Making their own artwork

The children could make their own collection of symbols to use in their own artwork. You could take them on a trip to collect some items, they could select their favourite items at centre or they could bring some from home.

Credits / further reading:

Resource Card written by Helen Lloyd, Educator at City Gallery Wellington, 2010.
http://www.nzherald.co.nz/entertainment/news/article.cfm
Hiapo Past and present in Niuean Barkcloth by John Pule and Nicolas Thomas, 2005, ISBN 1 877372 00 5.
http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/niueans/2
http://www.gowlangsfordgallery.co.nz/artists/johnpule/ http://www.art-newzealand.com/Issue99/Pule.htm http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writers/pulejohn.html#a1770 http://qag.qld.gov.au/collection/pacific_art/john_puhiatau_pule http://apt5.asiapacifictriennial.com/artists/artists/john_pule http://tinkerlab.com/how-to-make-paper/

things that mean something." John Pule

LEGO® DUPLO® and Playcentre join forces

The LEGO® Group is committed to supporting imagination and learning through play as one of life's most important skills. So when LEGO® New Zealand discovered Playcentre's mission of providing quality early childhood education through play it seemed like the perfect match and a new partnership was formed.

Starting with the Tamaki Association, it was all kicked off with an educational creative workshop in Auckland. LEGO® brought out international play expert, Hanne Boutrup, from Denmark, to lead the event, share her knowledge and tips for creative learning, and also to talk about the importance of inspiring children when teaching them.

As an opportunity to get families together and learn about creative play, the Tamaki Association also invited centres from the Auckland Association, allowing more people to come along and experience all that DUPLO® has to offer.

With more than 150 people in attendance, Boutrup talked about how parents can help children to learn by giving them the right tools and the right environment. She's a big believer in using DUPLO® as a tool for children's education.

Any parent will remember that experience where you watch your child with DUPLO®, the moment they figure out how to fit them together. They will sit and fiddle with bricks, they think "ok this is not going to fit" but then they try and all of a sudden it's there; they then know that those four studs fit in that hole. That experience is the beginning of building the skill set – knowing that they are able to transform this knowledge into another problem, and next time they build something a little more complex and continually transfer learnings in each new build.

"DUPLO® provides a range of benefits – from a visual tool to help with counting, understanding fractions and colour patterns – there are just so many basic math problems that are made easier to understand with bricks," Boutrup.

"It stimulates both sides of the brain, the imaginative and creative side, and the analytical and logical side. DUPLO® is the most effective tool I've worked with because it is creative and systematic at the same time." Boutrup.

"When we learn something we don't learn from a blank screen, we always learn from something we get inspired from. Knowledge is built by adding on top of something you know already or from something that tickles your curiosity. This is where story telling is so crucial for kids to build these vital skills," Boutrup.

1

Storytelling & Problem Solving:

Start a story, telling the children that a child has two friends they want to play with, but there is a river between their two homes they can't cross. You then ask the children, how can they help the friends meet using the bricks? What could you build to help them cross the river?

2

Cognitive Skills:

Little Thumbelina is trying to get away from the ugly toad, how can we help her escape? This will spark your child's imagination as they think about what to build to help her. The more variety of bricks you have the greater their imagination will be. Different brick sizes and colours are also very inspirational.

3

Effective Communication Skills:

To help build and refine children's descriptive language, you can both take seven identical blocks each, and sitting back to back, your child creates a build. From there, they need to help you build the same thing through explaining it to you. Repeat the process, each time providing feedback to your child on how they can refine their description that will help guide you through the build and each time they will learn how best to solve the problem.

The partnership has continued on from the event with ten Playcentres from the Tamaki Playcentre Association, who have each been donated a tub of DUPLO® bricks along with a special workbook, which was created specifically for Playcentre by DUPLO® and is full of activities that children can do with the bricks.

The idea of the Workbook is to provide both parents and kids with inspirational build ideas as well as fun learning activities. Throughout the Workbook is a raft of advice and tips for parents, to ensure they are getting the most out of creative education and play, helping children to learn in ways that suit each individual.

DUPLO® and Playcentre are hoping to expand the partnership throughout more Playcentres in the near future. Watch this space!

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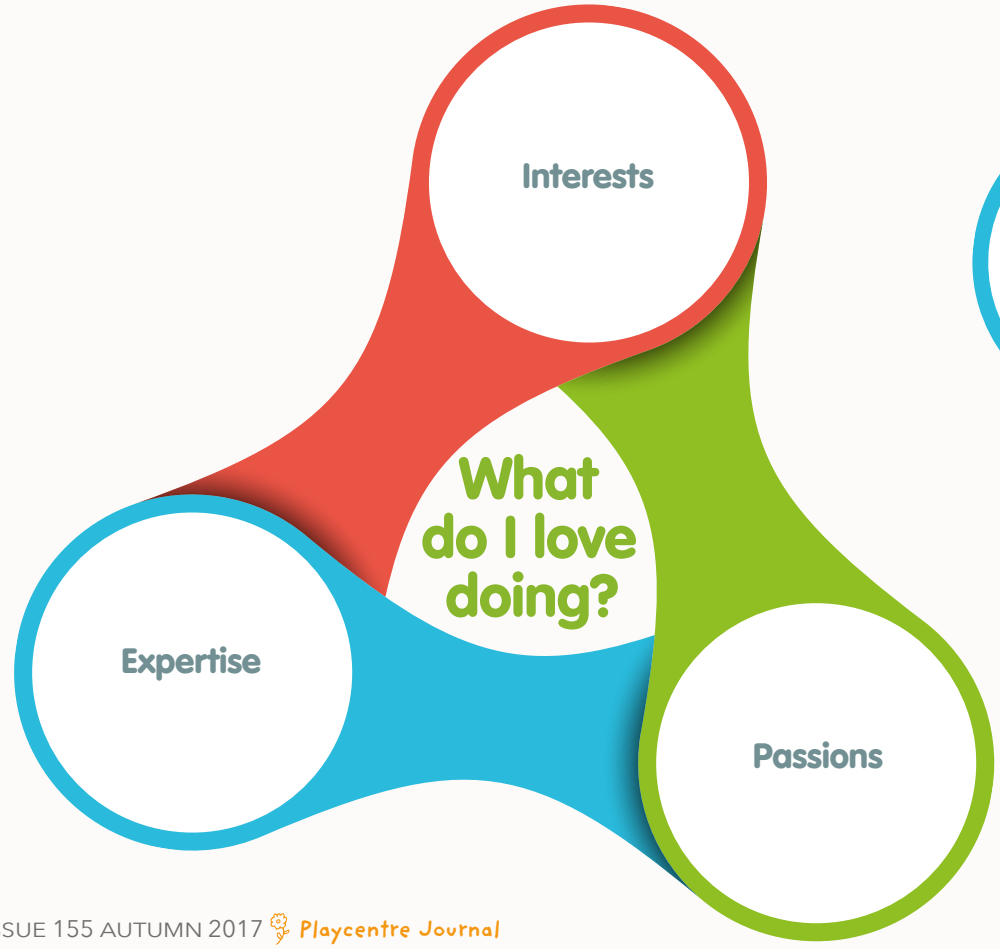

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Olivia Kelly
Federation Professional Development Team

Introducing our
Federation Management Team

We are pleased to announce the appointment of the following managers.

Alasdair Finnie
General Manager

E ngā reo, e ngā mana, e ngā waka, Tēnā koutou katoa
Ko Ilkley Moor te maunga;
Ko Aire te awa;
Ko Ngāti Kōtirana te iwi;
Ko McKenzie te hapū;
Ko Williamson tōku papa;
Ko Frances tōku mama;
Ko Kerry tōku hoa wahine;
Ko Graeme me raua ko Erica aku tamariki.
Ko Alasdair taku ingoa.

He mihi nui ki a koutou, ki a koutou whānui o Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa.
Kua tae mai i tēnei rā mō tēnei tīmatanga hou.
He taonga o tātou tamariki nō reira,
He whakahirahira tēnei mahi.
E kia ana "Ka pū te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi".

1 **What do you do for fun?**
My wife Kerry and I love to explore new places in New Zealand. We really enjoyed walking on the coastal walkway at New Plymouth and exploring Waitara for the first time at Christmas time, and remember fondly the fun we had two years ago driving along the "Forgotten World Highway" to Whangamomona, and staying overnight at the hotel. Such a friendly welcoming community.

2 **What was your favourite childhood memory?**
I loved train spotting as a child. I would cycle furiously along the back country lanes near my home in Yorkshire in time to catch a view of the Royal Scotsman steam trains as they flashed by at Apperley Bridge on their way to Edinburgh from London. Such excitement if it was a steam train I hadn't seen before!

3 **What are you most excited about right now?**
Seeing the passion there is in Playcentre and the willingness to work together to create a vibrant fabulous organisation for the future, enabling more and more families to become involved in one of New Zealand's best kept secrets!

4 **If money were no object, what would you do with your life?**
Spend lots more time with my family and friends, and focus my energy on helping a range of charities (including Playcentre Aotearoa and English Language Partners New Zealand) both locally and nationally by making my skills and experience available to them.

Julia Frew
Human Resources Manager

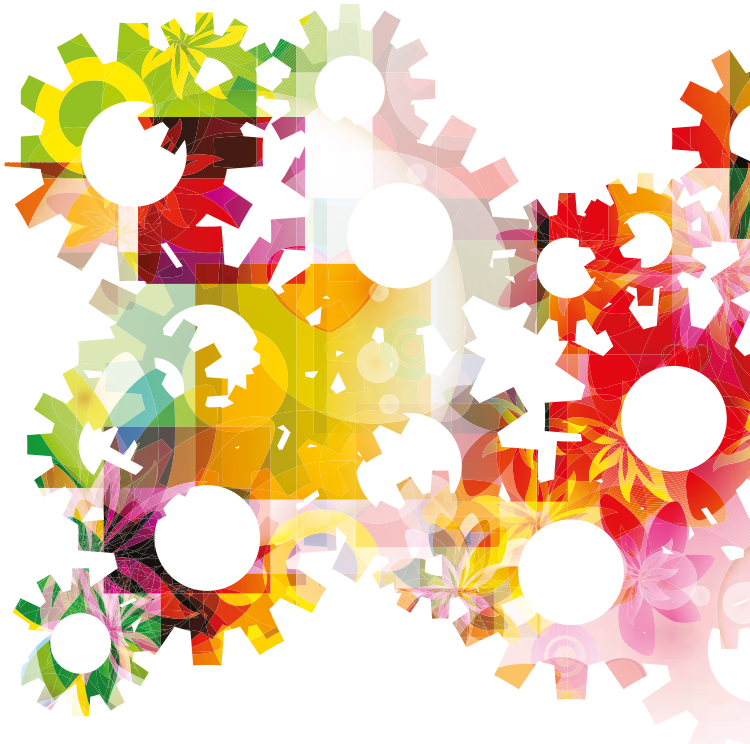
Kia ora,
I grew up in Blenheim, going to Renwick Playcentre with my two brothers. After studying in Christchurch I moved to Auckland to be with my partner Ryan who is in the Airforce. I had various HR roles in Auckland, with my most recent as a HR Manager at The Warehouse for one of their Auckland regions. My husband was given a role in Blenheim and we have moved back with my 2 year old son. We love the sun, and being close to my family, but the earthquakes less so. I am so excited to be part of the Playcentre team and getting to know you all.

1 **What do you do for fun?**
I go to Playcentre with my son, I read (a lot) and when I can I surf (not very well but with passion).

2 **What was your favourite childhood memory?**
Adventuring in the hills of our farm with my two brothers.

3 **What are you most excited about right now?**
Starting to meet and talk to Playcentre people across New Zealand.

4 **If money were no object, what would you do with your life?**
I would continue to spend time with my son and family, and would travel the world over the New Zealand winter.



Liang Wells
Chief Financial Officer

Hi! I'm Liang Wells, mother to two beautiful girls Caitlin and Sarah, who are 5 and 3 respectively. I moved to Wellington ten years ago from Sydney. I have found New Zealand to be such a beautiful country and have been so impressed with the amazing places I have visited along my travels from the beaches to the glaciers, right to the gorgeous vineyards! Both my children have attended Kelburn Playcentre in Wellington, and have really loved their experience.

1 **What do you do for fun?**
My main passions would be travelling and playing with my children. My husband is from England, and we try to spend some time in that part of the world each year.

2 **What is your favourite childhood memory?**
I come from a large extended family, so my favourite childhood memories would be playing games with all of my cousins!

3 **What are you most excited about right now?**
I am most excited about two things at the moment, which is my oldest daughter starting school with a really positive attitude and love of learning, and the second thing is starting my new position in the NZ Playcentre Federation.

4 **If money were no object, what would you do with your life?**
If money were no object, I would be travelling with my family and seeing the many wonders of the world.

Cissy Rock
Change Programme Manager

I went to Blockhouse Bay Playcentre from 1995 to 2005. My three boys all have such strong memories of sessions; hammers and saws, messy play, dress ups. I loved the shared morning teas, the great friendships (which are still strong – we have mini reunions every 6 months) and how I grew as an adult. I completed my Playcentre training and for the first time I saw myself as a learner, and I think the opportunity to hold positions at centre, association and federation level over my ten year career (yes I do think of it as a career – a professional parent) was the making of me. To try new things, find out more about myself both priceless and precious. As they say "you come for the children and stay for yourself."

I owe so much to Playcentre and the women leaders who taught me. It feels a huge honour to be involved once again, our values of co-operation, emergent leadership and community building, coupled with families growing together seems like an iconic recipe to me.

1 What do you do for fun?
I love reading detective novels, hanging out with groups of friends and fancy dress parties are my favourite.

2 **What is your favourite childhood memory?**
My Dad told the best bedtime stories, they were long and funny and always had my brother and me in them.

3 **What are you most excited about right now?**
Its pretty exciting renewing my connection with Playcentre, I have lots of really good memories resurfacing and feel very passionate and energised.

4 **If money were no object, what would you do with your life?**
I'm really interested in creating systems that support all of society, universal basic income and the like, if money was no object I would spend time talking to people, finding out what matters to them and hopefully together we could work out ways to create what was good for all of us.

Learning and emerging as a leader

Flicking through recent Playcentre calendars, I find myself noticing the beautiful photos of children – messy children, thoughtful children, laughing children, learning children.

In this photos it's much harder to see evidence of the beautiful adults that make up all Playcentres: messy adults, thoughtful adults, laughing adults, learning adults.

These lovely photos of children learning could have been taken at any quality early childhood service. Showing learning adults is harder; adults aren't as cute perhaps; perhaps we don't get the frisson of excitement or pleasure that we might experience looking at quality photos of learning children, but as Gwen Somerset used to say, parent learning and children learning make up the wings of the Playcentre 'butterfly'. In order to 'fly', both wings have to be working. Both wings have to be learning: parents and children learn alongside each other. What do photos of learning parents look like? Could we show parents' well-being, their sense of belonging, their ways of exploring learning, their ways of communicating, their unique contribution?

What motivates adults to become intentional learners? In Playcentre I found a key to answering this question. I realised that RESPONSIBILITY is a powerful motivation to learn. This means that responsibility can arrive first; it can arrive before we know fully what it is that we are doing. Parents are particularly good examples of this: the presence of young children in our lives is transformative. Our sense of responsibility for these fascinating small humans drives us to engage, to know more, to learn more.

Having responsibility before we have in depth understanding, means we have to have permission to make mistakes and to learn 'on the job'. The 'job' may be being a parent. In Playcentre, the 'job' may be a responsibility for an aspect of running the centre. It may be a leadership role. Playcentre has a long history of positioning parents to take leadership roles and to grow into capability, (hopefully with support).

Playcentre members of earlier generations talked about the BDI system (also known as the 'beady eye system') by which newer members were informally assessed as to likely position of responsibility. It is also described as 'emergent' leadership: leadership that emerges out of the group. Often that means a person recognising that it's their turn to pick up responsibilities –

Auckland Association, group sculpture on Communication strands of Te Whāriki.

responsibilities that may have seemed unlikely/impossible only weeks or months earlier. But in many cases, we have to be asked.

I remember when I got shoulder-tapped to be Education Officer in Playcentre – I was shocked but also flattered. What did these capable people see in me? Could I do this job? Well yes, I could – but only because others recognised something that I struggled to see in myself.

In Playcentre, parents often have to step into leadership roles as learners. But this can be problematic when our best efforts may not be seen as good enough – by other parents or by authority figures inside and outside Playcentre. A major challenge in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand is both holding on to valued knowledge (such as happens when a family commits to Playcentre for say more than five years), and at the same time allowing office-holders to make mistakes. Playcentre is always building

Auckland Association, group sculpture on Wellbeing strands of Te Whāriki.

(and losing) institutional capacity and institutional knowledge. This year's new parents are next year's officers. It is a steep learning curve.

There are several important things to say at this point:

(1) Those who take on leadership roles can be very vulnerable and are often likely to go straight from having major responsibility to premature departure from Playcentre, with very little time in between. Burnout is one explanation and the complexity of running a licensed early childhood setting can be overwhelming.
In many cases, the promises of support are elusive or just not 'right there' when needed. Spouses may object to the many hours away from family responsibilities. But I think it is also important for a centre to consider how leaders are viewed and whether NZ's social disposition to 'knock down tall poppies'

doesn't contribute to how leaders in Playcentre become vulnerable to unnecessary bickering, 'back biting' and put downs.

(2) Emergent leadership runs counter to how professional organisation are usually organised. While Playcentre can argue that we provide quality learning experiences for children, organisationally Playcentres can be judged by the quality of their administration and record keeping. This emphasis can be understood as 'managerialist' – that is, that how an organisation is judged is by the evidence of good management which underpins 'accountability'. Holding individuals responsible is an inherent part of how the ECE sector is organised –but this is problematic when the emphasis is on the collective, on the democratic.

When accountability is emphasised, organisation structures tend towards the hierarchical. When the collective and the democratic is emphasised, the tendency is towards authentic adult learning, towards sharing of skills and resources, and towards celebrating the possibility of learning through active participation. Relationships are the key; relationships that allow adults to learn by doing.

In the big picture of early childhood policy and provision, Playcentre continues to be a disruptive voice among those who argue for a more professional educational sector which struggles to accommodate both the best interests of children, and the economic interests of their families. But in the even bigger picture of how we live in our society, Playcentre provides an 'arena of encounter' – Te Papa Whakawhitwhiti, when families become aware of their neighbours and recognise what they can do together. Shared leadership, and the emergence of new leaders remains a key to this process of learning and community renewal.

Sue Stover
Grandmother at
New Windsor Playcentre,
Auckland Playcentre Association

Further reading:

'The business of leadership' – special feature. (2009) Playcentre Journal 135, pp. 23-26

Conran-Liew, T. (2001). *Working in a group: Leading and relating co-operatively.* Auckland: Playcentre Publications.

Goldschmidt, J. (2003). How leadership emerged in Playcentre. In S. Stover (ed.) *Good clean fun: New Zealand's Playcentre movement,* (pp. 47-62). Auckland: Playcentre Publications.

O'Malley, A. (2008). Te Papa Whakawhitiwhiti: Disparate discourses in the arena of encounter. *The First Years: Ngā Tau Tuatahi. NZ Journal of Infant Toddler Education,* 10(1), 32-37.

Reid, R. & Stover, S. (2005). Am I in the right place? A reflective model of individual agency. *The First Years: Ngā Tau Tuatahi: New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education* 7(2), 36-40.

Reid, R. & Stover, S. (2006). Can we do what we set out to do? A reflective model of group agency. *The First Years: Ngā Tau Tuatahi: New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education* 8(1), 23-27.

Introducing Ann Langis

Trustee Board, New Zealand Playcentre Federation

Tēnā koutou katoa!

Ko Ann taku ingoa. No Narrowneck Playcentre ahau.

Right, so my path to Playcentre can be charted by a course of improbable events:

Improbable Event (I.E.) #1: I am 14 years old, living in the USA. My wandering hippy Uncle Marc informs me that New Zealand is my spiritual homeland and that I must go there to see for myself.

I.E. #2: A two week holiday to NZ in 2001 stretches to two years, and I get pregnant. Hubby (who is also American) and I realise that if we head back to the US at this point we have no health insurance and would have to sell an organ on the black market to pay for maternity care, so we opt to stay in NZ a bit longer.

I.E. #3: Baby's first Christmas 2003, we are camping. Our tent spontaneously combusts in the midst of a midnight storm. A group of kindly neighbouring campers take us under their wing. Watching my baby being held and cared for by their pack of older kids over the next few days, I think, 'Wow, this is really special.' On cue, one of the nice Mums says, "Hey have you heard about Playcentre?"

What follows is a fantastic year at Glen Innes Playcentre, during which I am totally hooked. I think, "I was born to be at Playcentre!" When my confused parents ask me when I am coming 'home' with their granddaughter, I practice my new reflective listening skills and reply, "It sounds like you would like to spend more time with her. You are welcome to visit anytime!"

After moving house we spent ten more wonderful years at Narrowneck Playcentre, added two more kids into the mix, and the grandparents got the hint and sorted out their passports.

Currently my kids are thirteen, nine, and five, and I'm still enjoying all things Playcentre… in the sandpit one session a week at Narrowneck, facilitating courses, and serving as Tāngata Tiriti Trustee Board member. Once a month the Trustees gather together in stuffy hotel rooms to hash out issues on behalf of our Playcentres, and I love it! Partially because it's the only time that someone else makes my dinner, but mostly because it's more of what I've always loved about Playcentre; working together with passionate people who care deeply about children and families… who know that Playcentre is an absolute taonga which teaches us the skills needed to be healthy, whole members of our diverse communities. Wherever you are in Aotearoa, thank you for sharing your precious time and energy with your Playcentre whānau, I'm honoured to be part of this journey with you.

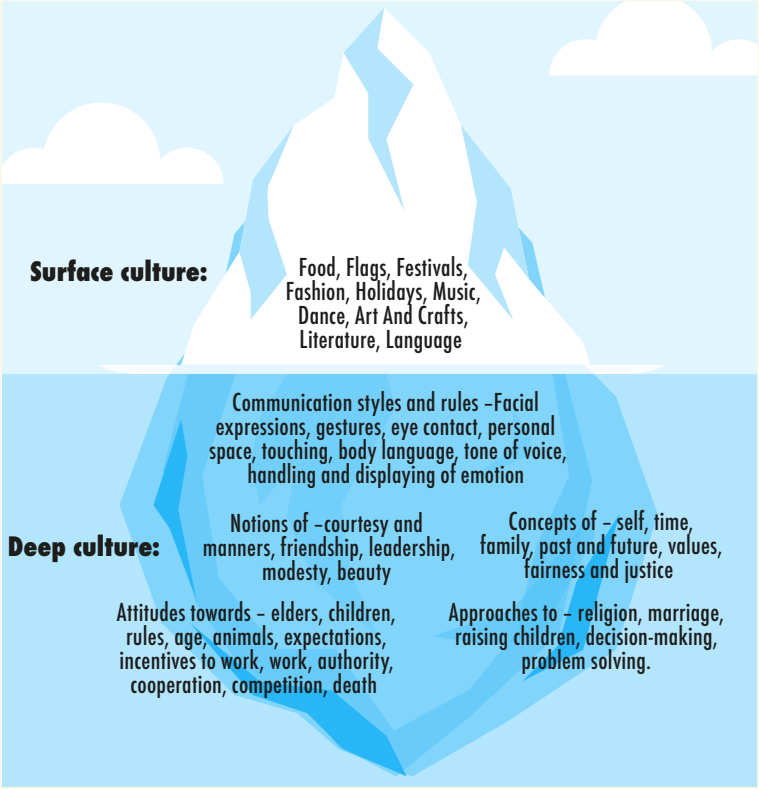
Embracing ethnic diversity

A decade and a half into the 21st century and we are seeing less and less cultural homogeneity. Everyone in the world lives everywhere in the world. New Zealand has become increasingly diverse and this encourages us all to look beyond our cultural bounds to the wider world and can be an enriching experience. From the information collected in the 2013 consensus 25.2% of people living in New Zealand were born overseas. This is an increase from 22.9% in 2006 and 19.5% in 2001.

The culture we grow up around educates us about what is appropriate behaviour and how to interpret the behaviour of others, it becomes part of our socialisation. It becomes our norms because it seems natural. We only realise that others may have a different perspective and values when we meet people from a different culture.

Cultural Iceberg Concept

Culture can be identified by general categories, such as food, art or music. However, there are many more aspects that define a culture which can often go unnoticed, for example, body contact, relationship to elders or the behaviour expected from children in their family home. Typically, icebergs are something like seven-eighths below the surface. That's how it is with human behaviour.



Further reading: A guide to ethnic groups in New Zealand, New to New Zealand. ISBN 0-7900-0809-2

RUSSIA

Russia

Privét! ("pri" pronounced like for "pre-order" and then "vét" like in "vet clinic" :) – that's how friends greet each other in Russia.

Food

Russian food traditionally was all about grains (buckweed, millet, porridge, barley, rye) with different seasonal fillings, and it still stays as garnish. But mostly traditional Russian food is associated with crepes (filled with sour creams, or honey, or caviar, or salmon etc) and dumplings. Lots of Russian families make conserves because 90% of harvesting falls on autumn (savory veggies and sweet berries and fruits) so it's very traditional food for all Russians.

Music

Traditional music is not really popular now and Russians listen to world music, but it started with sung couplets and roundilays with gusli, balalaika, wooden spoons and harmonica. Lots of families still have singing tradition during family events when everyone is gathered at the dining table and sing some lyric songs all together.

Russian Christmas

We have Russian Christmas on the 7th of January and it's a quiet family dinner without presents. Russians celebrate New Year with presents and partying till the morning. Our Santa is called Ded Moroz (Grandfather Frost), he's an ancient ethnic character with more than two thousand years history and comes with his granddaughter Snegurochka (Snow maiden) to dance roundilay with the kids around the Christmas tree singing New Year songs. He hits the floor with his massive walking staff and lights the garlands on the tree.

Our Playcentre Journey

We came to New Zealand two years ago. I was talking to another mum in the swimming pool, asking her what there was to do with children and she told me about Playcentre. We visited and fell in love with it at first sight (a year ago and been living on the North Shore and went to Onepoto Playcentre, now we're happy to be a part of Glendene Playcentre Whānau). In Russia we have nothing like this, only daycares (from which kids go to school on the 1st of September when they are seven years old) or short structured classes/workshops for kids. Our summer holidays last for three months.

All the approach to early childhood education in Russia is pretty different, less space for imagination, activity, creativity, no messy play at all (still some parents have it at home, and I must say that I'm totally happy to delegate this privilege to Playcentre premises) as in our Moscow kindy we had one teacher for 15-30 kids.

Maria Varlamova
Glendene Playcentre

PHILIPPINES

Philippines is a Southeastern Asian country in the Western Pacific, comprising of more than 7,000 islands. It has a population of 100 million people, slightly more than New Zealand. Manila is the capital of the Philippines with Tagalog and English being the official languages.
Filipinos greet one another with a smile, a wave, a hand shake and by saying "Hi, kumusta ka?". In English the means "hello, how are you?".

Food

The staple diet in the Philippines consists of rice or corn. Fish, chicken and pork that are also common are usually fried although people are becoming more health conscious and others may choose alternative methods of cooking. Filipino food is not spicy.

Music

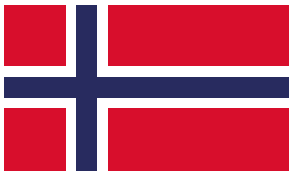
The Philippines has a variety of cultural dances. Tinikling for example, is a dance originated from the islands of Leyte in the Visayas group. It got its name from the tikling bird – its legendary grace and speed in avoiding bamboo traps set by farmers among the rice stalks. Dancers step and turn between two long bamboo poles struck together rapidly to the beat of music. Tinikling is honored as the Philippines national dance.

Our Playcentre Journey

Ngaio Playcentre has been excellent for me in seeing how my son and other children have developed and how they interact with one another. Their coordination in playing with the toys and their artistic ability when painting and playing with playdough is a joy to watch.
In the Philippines there aren't any Playcentres as such, instead there is a house over the road where my family live for example that parents and their children come together to play games and colour in. It is more like a crèche rather than a playcentre as there aren't any toys to play with in comparison to what we are familiar with here at Ngaio Playcentre.

Mary Matabang
Ngaio Playcentre

NORWAY



Norway is pretty much exactly on the opposite side of the world from New Zealand. Yet I find Norwegians to be quite similar to Kiwis. Loving nature, laid back and friendly, down to earth people.
We normally greet each other with a firm hand shake if we are not very familiar or a good hug amongst friends, family and co-workers.
Norwegians don't like talking to strangers so we can seem a bit cold and distant. Maybe it is because of the cold climate and dark nights and days that surrounds many Norwegians during the winter season. We like to "kose/hygge oss". There is no translation for this, but it means to enjoy ourselves in a cozy way (read: on a dark cold winter night cuddle up in front of the fire with a hot chocolate is "Kos/hygge").

Food

Norwegians are in all honesty simple people originating from a country with farmers and fishermen. This is reflected in our traditional food. "Gravlaks" is salmon that has been buried in the ground and smells terrible! Christmas dinner is lamb spare ribs, pork belly or "lutefisk" (fish treated with lye) depending where in Norway you live. And we bake at least 7 different types of cookies and cakes for Christmas. We also celebrate Christmas on the 24th and not the 25th. Norwegians love waffles (we eat a lot of waffles) and we prefer sausages served in a potato wrap rather than a slice of bread.

Music

National day on the 17th of May is probably the biggest celebration in Norway. Every school and musical band in the whole country participate in parades nationwide waving flags and singing our national anthem. The biggest parade is of course in Oslo, the capital, with the most schools and bands. Everybody (women, men and children) dresses up in national costumes with lots of expensive bling bling. The people not participating in the parades line up along the side of the roads cheering and watching. The king and queen of Norway come out in front of the palace to greet all the people.

Our Playcentre Journey

When it comes to childcare there is only one type of government funded kindergarten which all the kids attend usually from the age of one when maternity leave is over. Mind you the dads get ten weeks of mandatory leave too.
There is not such a vast diversity of choice when it comes to day care and there is no such thing as Playcentre in Norway. It's pretty unique to have a childcare option run by passionate parents. It's great to feel that I can choose between so many different options and that Playcentre is one of them.

Magnhild Elise Fundingsrud aka Elise Bolton
Ngaio Playcentre

New to New Zealand

At Mornington Playcentre, in Dunedin, we are lucky enough to have a diverse group of whānau coming together with a common purpose – to provide a friendly, fun, educational community for our tamariki. Some people living in the sunny north may be under the impression that we are a little mono-cultural down here. That is certainly what I thought before making the move ten years ago. However, due in large part to the presence of the university, Dunedin is a multicultural city. As well as students and teachers from other countries coming here to the university there are parents with young children who have located here because the lifestyle in Dunedin appeals to them.

Often moving to another country, far from family, can be very isolating. Playcentre is the perfect place to welcome families with young children who are new to the country. At Playcentre they can meet New Zealanders, meet others new to Aotearoa, and learn how our society works in a friendly and encouraging environment. Most importantly they will be empowered to provide a great education for their children. We are lucky enough in our centre to have, alongside our Pakehā and Māori families, parents who have immigrated, or are visiting here, from the following countries – Fiji, Canada, Ecuador, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Britain, and the Czech Republic.

Zahra Muhammed-Shah, who is from Canada, and moved here with her Fijian husband says Mornington Playcentre has "become my 'village', it really is a group of like-minded parents who accept me fully and completely. It's a place where my children quite notably feel free to be themselves, uninhibited by the fear of being different." We have certainly enjoyed Zahra and her sister-in-law Mushirah sharing their Muslim culture with us. We have celebrated Eid festival, prepared and eaten delicious food, and had a lesson on how to put on a hijab. With families of various religions, and those with no religious affiliation at all, we have a welcoming and open environment for all.

Hana Jakubik from the Czech Republic describes her Playcentre experience. "Mornington Playcentre has been a lifesaver for me and my son Tim. Teachers and parents have been very supportive in times when I felt isolated, away from my family and coping with the challenging behaviour of a two year old. They always listen, have words of comfort, and offer advice on how to positively guide my son.

I have learnt so much, now I find it easier to guide my son safely and positively through 'certain moments'. It is a place where nothing is impossible, children are allowed to be themselves. Tim loves going to Playcentre and he asks about the people there, they have become a part of our lives. Thank you all for that!"

The multi-cultural environment the tamariki experience at our Playcentre provides a great model for the future lives of the children. We hope the acceptance and inclusion they experience here has a long term effect on the way they relate to others.

Karla Lawrie
Mornington Playcentre

I didn't expect to break out crying while buying vegetables. I'd been back living in New Zealand for maybe two months. And I'd gone to a well-known Korean supermarket in Auckland to buy ingredients to cook my favorite Korean dish.

Just before Christmas in 2014 we packed up all our belongings and said goodbye to the city that had been our home for the better part of a decade. I'm American and together with my Kiwi husband we had made a cozy home and life for ourselves in Seoul, South Korea. Seoul is definitely a vibrant and buzzing city, with the greater metropolitan area bursting with over 25 million people. There is always something to do or see 24/7.

We drank sweet cinnamon tea made by grandmothers, we danced with

drinks and music mixed by our friends in their bars, we bought poop-shaped buns (called dong bang-yes really!) from the bakery down the street, we ate bugs and sipped rice wine, I stripped down with Korean grandmothers and sweated on jade stones in bath houses, we held hands while climbing mountains listening to the chanting of monks ringing through the forest, we had a baby, and we got grey hairs.

Eventually many Kiwis feel the call to come home. We did live in NZ for a short time together before Seoul. Our little son, who was born in our apartment in Seoul needed fresh air and green grass to run around on and grandparents to cuddle.

The cold was just starting to set in as the autumn leaves began to fall, so stepping off the plane into a warm NZ summer was magical. Nothing compares to the tang of a vine-ripened New Zealand tomato, listening to a Tui sing in the tree above your head, breathing fresh air and looking at blue sky.

I first learned about Playcentre from a mom I met at Plunket. My son gravitated towards hers like a magnet. She was kind and welcoming, I'm pretty sure we discussed messy kids play and glitter. The other parents I met there opened up their hearts and homes to us. My child was learning, forming relationships with different kids and developing his own sense of belonging in a new place.

We become familiar with the places in which we live. We know which side of the street to drive on. We understand the appropriate distance to stand from others while communicating. (In Korea, this is as close as humanly possible to avoid some grandmother walking between you with her giant shopping trolley full of cabbages rattling behind her). We know how to greet someone when we walk into a shop. Many of the things we do on a daily basis are completed without our conscious awareness. Over time these little cues become predictable and we depend on them to direct us in how to behave. In a way, the culture in which we live actually helps us to define who we are. In Craig Storti's book The Art of Coming Home he says, "The essence of home can be described in three key elements: familiar places, familiar people and routines, and predictable patterns of interaction."

We end up making a lot of mistakes. Walking into a shop in the Britomart and bowing at the shopkeeper or listening a little bit too hard or staring too intently in public spaces. Having trouble paying for things because we keep staring at the money or getting the pin numbers mixed up. Coffee shops in Auckland do not serve iced Americanos.

One day on session, after hearing me moan about my homesickness for the 101 millionth time, another tired mom asked me when I would get over it. I felt like I was at the end of a long holiday somewhere exotic, in that period on the plane ride home where you happily dream about sleeping in your own soft bed, pad across your floor in the cozy old slippers with cats on them and make a cuppa in your favorite mug, except I was trapped on the plane, knowing the destination I was dreaming about did not exist. How do you get over that?

Back in that Korean supermarket in Auckland I didn't make any mistakes. I knew she was frowning at my seaweed choice because she is the expert. She helped me haul the giant 10kg bag of rice into my shopping trolley. Why am I buying all that rice? I no longer own a pink little singing rice cooker. So, I cried.

We've been back in New Zealand for a little over two years now. A couple of weeks ago we unexpectedly found ourselves at an event in Mangare hosted by a Samoan man for his employees. Like many many events during our time in Korea, we were the only white people of European descent in the house. The children all came to greet us one after the other, like good Korean children are made to do by their parents, we all ate taro in coconut cream together and we struggled to listen to the host's speech over the giggles of our kids running in and around the hall. For the first time since returning to NZ, in a room full of people we hardly know, we felt at home.

Mary Notton
Pakuranga rahihi Playcentre

Making things better

There is no escaping self review or internal evaluation. It is an essential part of Playcentre, required by ERO. Luckily it is also fun, easy, and all about improving our centres for our families.

There is no need to be daunted. You are doing it already every time you think about fixing an issue or doing something better in your centre. There are some new documents out from ERO, which explain the process really clearly. They cover the whole education sector and are not specific to Early Learning. The examples are about schools, but can still give us some ideas.

What we do is much more important than what we call it.

The language has all changed, and you may find some ERO reviewers are using the new lingo. But if you already have strong processes in your centre, you probably don't need to change much, and will notice that the new language aligns fairly well. The Professional Learning and Development team are still talking about what the new documents mean and what to do, and what new templates we can use, so this article is a quick introduction and starting point- not a detailed instruction that 'you must do it this way'.

Common questions about evaluation/review

Who needs to be involved?

The more the merrier! Not everyone is going to be passionate about every topic. But if you choose topics with wide appeal you may get more involvement, and therefore more lasting change.

Does it have to be about children?

Can it be about adult concerns like our clean up process? Adult processes need review too, and the 5-step process may work well. However your strategic/in-depth reviews should usually result in improvements for children, and improvements to curriculum and teaching and learning. Usually an in-depth review will result in improvements for children, adults, the environment, and perhaps centre culture.

How do we document it?

That's up to you. For some emergent or regular reviews, before and after photos and references to meeting minutes would be enough. For others you might collect documents related to each stage of the process and put them in your internal evaluation folder.

How long should an internal evaluation take?

An in-depth one may take a term or a year. Shorter won't have the depth, longer may lose momentum. Do whatever works. You can take breaks between reviews, or start another as soon as you finish one.

What do you mean this is fun?

In-depth evaluation is a chance to lift your head above the day to day concerns about which dishwasher to buy, and which colour to paint the roof. It involves getting back to our core values, focusing on our children, our relationships, our education, and ways to make things simpler and more effective. We are in Playcentre because we are passionate about education. Evaluation is a chance to geek out, have great conversations, see what other centres are doing, and dream about possibilities. What's not to love?

There are 3 levels of internal evaluation/review

1. Spontaneous or emergent – we deal with an issue that has arisen
2. Regular evaluations – monitoring progress, policy reviews
3. Strategic or in depth reviews.

Internal Evaluation has 5 steps

Step 1 the process starts with noticing. You may choose a question for review and then start **'noticing'**, or the review may start because you notice an issue.

Step 2 is **investigating**. Remember to look thoroughly at what you already do and how well it works rather than starting by looking for something new. Possible evidence could include parent surveys, child's voice, session evaluation forms, portfolios, time samples or other observations of sessions, enrolment data, or many other things. Investigate what is considered to be good practice in your area of review. Use ERO and Ministry of Education websites, books, Playcentre Journal, your neighbour centres, Te Whāriki or Playcentre philosophy.

Step 3 is **collaborative sense making** – what have you found out? What does it mean?

Step 4 is **prioritising to take action**. What are we going to do? How?

Step 5 is **monitoring and evaluating**. What changed? Did our plan work? How do we know? Do we need to change anything else? It can help to look at the same evidence you used at the beginning. Redo the photos, surveys, time samples, review portfolios. What has changed?

The process can be a lot less structured in practice, and that is fine.

Sometimes you take action as part of your investigating – will this new idea work? Sometimes you start making sense and decide you actually need to do more investigating. Sometimes you realise that your initial question wasn't quite right and you need to go back to noticing. Some steps may be long and slow and others quick and easy and this will be different for each review.

For more information

http://www.ero.govt.nz/publications/effective-internal-evaluation-for-improvement/
http://www.ero.govt.nz/publications/internal-evaluation-good-practice/

Carolyn Hogg, Federation Professional Development Team

Te Tiriti audit highlights an urgent need for change

In 1996 the New Zealand Playcentre Federation (NZPF) Conference agreed to commission a Treaty Audit (later changed to a Te Tiriti Audit) of its constitution.

The WYCA Consultancy Group's work used a framework based on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and included an analysis of the constitution, the history of Playcentre's journey to honour Te Tiriti and a questionnaire sent to all Associations for Māori and Tauiwi (non-Māori) to answer separately.

The authors presented the report to the 1999 Playcentre Federation Conference.

Selected Findings:

- There is a low level of formal compliance with the requirements of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- In spite of goodwill and informal processes to honour rangatiratanga, this is obstructed by the requirements of the current constitution.
- NZPF has made significant attempts to allow input into decisions by both Tiriti partners, but decision-making structures do not protect Māori input
- Some Associations have structures for Māori to control Māori matters.
- It is clear that a minority of Playcentre Associations reject the idea of a Tiriti-based relationship entirely.
- In most Associations, the Māori group controls less than five percent of Association resources. Few Associations have provided budget allocations to Māori that match the percentage of Māori children in the Association.
- Some Associations clearly have a comprehensive process in place for the protection of Māori interests, including training for Māori adults, providing a culturally appropriate environment and Tiriti training for Tauiwi.
- Many suggestions were made for practical improvements to honour Te Tiriti including structural changes, improved consultation, promoting Māori values and concepts.

Criteria used by the consultancy:

Criteria 1
Evidence of kawanatanga *("Crown's right of governance")* is:

- decisions are made by both Tiriti partners with mutual respect for Māori and other cultures
- Māori input to decision making is protected by structures (Article 1, Te Tiriti o Waitangi)

Criteria 2
Evidence of rangatiratanga *("Māori are guaranteed control of their own tikanga, including their social and political institutions and processes and, to the extent practicable and reasonable, they should fix their own policy and manage their own programmes")* is:

- Māori control their own processes
- Māori control policy and practice on Māori matters including Te Reo Māori
- Te Reo Māori is recognised as a taonga (Article II)

Criteria 3
Evidence of equality is:

- resources shared with equal respect and support to Māori and Tauiwi (Article III)

By Patricia Laurenson
Journal Editor

Summary of recommendations

That Playcentre:

1. Decide whether to continue with the "compromise" of constitution required by the Charitable Trusts Act (NZPF is a registered Charity).
2. Incorporate the commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi in an overarching mission statement.
3. Include a statement that Playcentre policies and practices shall give effect to Te Tiriti.
4. Convene a hui for Māori members to decide the formal relationship between Puriri Whakamaru and other Association Māori groups, and processes for deciding tino rangatiratanga at Federation level.
5. Give Associations the right to dual membership at Federation. "Kāwanatanga membership" to be decided by all members. "Rangatiratanga membership" to be decided by Māori within the Association. Associations with no Māori members or ones that have decided not to implement a Tiriti based relationship would have only Kāwanatanga membership.
6. Institute dual kāwanatanga / rangatiratanga positions for President and Vice President of the Federation and an equal relationship for Standing Committee.
7. Incorporate consensus decision making into the constitution.

This article has been re-printed from a previous Playcentre Journal.

It's time we picked up this challenge

The audit hands a clear challenge to the NZ Playcentre Federation (NZPF) with very specific ideas of what we could do.

There's meat in it for Associations too with criteria for judging whether an Association is applying Te Tiriti, and published results of the questionnaire to all Associations.

The audit notes that decision making within NZPF is "highly complicated and hierarchical" (p 30). For an organisation that prides itself on responding to community early childhood education needs and on being a co-operative, that's a challenge we can't ignore.

The report also says the constitution "probably only works for a minority of Pākeha and risks constipating the entire organisation" (p 30).

In short this report is an excellent educational tool. Its analysis would be valuable for Associations planning change to their constitution or for any group examining how and if Playcentre is really a co-operative.

As a Treaty educator I know its value too, for use in workshops that are educating about Te Tiriti and its relevance to New Zealand, to education and to Playcentre today.

We continue to say, through national decisions that we want to bring the Treaty into Playcentre, to be bicultural, to have both Treaty partners represented in decision making.

It's time the Federation picked up this challenge because

1. The Federation decided it wanted a Treaty audit (a decision made through a remit, which like all remits was able to be discussed and voted on in all Centres and Associations)
2. There have been many decisions and discussions searching for ways to make Playcentre more user friendly, more inclusive and more equitable for Māori families. There is genuine willingness in many Associations to share decision making and resources with Māori Treaty partner groups
3. The audit's recommendations build on Whānau Tupu Ngātahi, and the Federation's Vision document, adopted in November 1999.

Let's do something. Let's start now. Playcentre turnover is high, so if we wait

too long the findings may appear less relevant.

How can you take part?

- Read the audit
- If you have Treaty workshops in your area, ask the facilitators for information
- Find others who are interested, find out about support for, concerns about and questions about the audit in your area
- Put the audit recommendations on your Centre and Association agendas.
- Support debate about if, how and when the recommendations are to be actioned.

By Janet Leggett
Midland Pakeha Treaty Worker
(abridged)

He Arotakenga - Kei Hea Nga Hua?
An Audit - where are the deliverables? A personal insight

As a Māori parent I am enthused with the seven recommendations of the audit as they confirm to me why Playcentre is good for Māori. It is a positive response to the changing fabric of our Playcentre environment, as it promotes the ability for diversity and celebrates:

- the differing views about what rangatiratanga means for each whānau, hapu, iwi and Māori;
- the provision of a set of recommendations which the NZPF can positively consider as well as being ***"pono"*** (truthful) about the intent of such recommendations:and
- the need to "deliver" on the intent of the Audit's recommendations.

Māori management of things that matter most to Māori

In order to deliver on the recommendations there appears to me a growing need for Māori in Playcentre to manage their own affairs or those things that matter to Māori the most.

Recommendation 6 is the only difficult one. The difficulty is in timing and risk management. There is a lack of Māori capacity in Playcentre to warrant such a consideration, that is, Māori are only a small minority. Furthermore, there is no such thing as a "one Māori voice" in Playcentre. We are a collective of whānau/ hapu / iwi / Māori voices.

Dual positioning becomes dangerous because for some reason the "Māori position" will always end up with the Māori issues or with all the "Treaty issues" and a wave of abdication begins to prevail.

What matters to Māori is the control over being able to exercise the notion of rangatiratanga in an environment that supports Māori endeavour. Playcentre is such an environment.

What are the deliverables?

There's an expectation (oh well from our whānau in Karori) that there are clear deliverables set in place by the NZPF on how these seven recommendations will be realised. That is, who's doing what, by when and how?

However, Playcentre shouldn't have to wait for direction, we should also be considering what the recommendations mean to us on session, in Association meetings or at any Playcentre hui. The rangatiratanga / kawanatanga paradigm is fluid enough to plan for the year 2000 and beyond.

Kia kaha ake a koutou mahi. Kia māia, kia ū ki ngā mea e pai ake ki a tātou katoa.

By Roy Hoerara
Makara Playcentre
Wellington Association (abridged)

Literacy in nature

literacy ˈlɪt(ə)rəsi/*noun* the ability to read and write."tests of literacy and numeracy"
synonyms: ability to read and write, reading/writing ability, reading/writing proficiency.

When we first started our Wild Wednesday Explorer sessions a lot of thought went into what we needed to bring along with us on sessions for the children to 'do'. We brought along clipboards, paper and pencils with the thought of 'if the children wanted to do some drawing of what they are experiencing" then we had the tools with us.

I think we took these with us to two sessions, at which time my mind had changed dramatically and was thinking clearer. Yes, these 'tools' are great and could be of great use – but why did we have to use paper and pencils? Looking around on our sessions there were so many opportunities for drawing, writing, and written literacy in nature

and that didn't require me to carry along a truck load of resources.

Yesterday we went to Cave Rock for our Explorer session and I had just finished talking with one parent about all the things we used to bring with us and why we don't anymore when we looked up and clearly saw that the children used nature as their tools. One child was using their hands to draw and write on the sand, another a stick to write their name, one had a shell that they were scooping through the sand to draw pictures, and another with their finger delicately drawing a butterfly.

In New Zealand, our Early Childhood Curriculum, Te Whāriki, promotes a socio-cultural perspective of literacy in early childhood. It encourages a holistic view of literacy where infants, toddlers and young children engage with literacy in ways which reflect their growing expertise.

Eleven month old Poppy, unaware that she is developing literacy skills, watched the older children on the sand drawing and writing, and joined in making patterns on the sand with her hands.

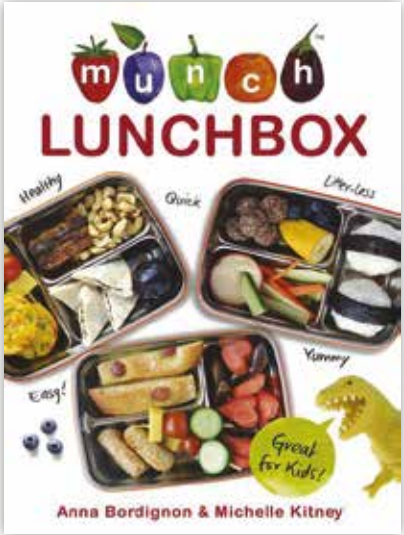
Three year old Bethan tells me about the castle she made, told me a story about who lives there and what the castle looks like. A story teller, fully immersed in literacy in many ways, Bethan used a rich vocabulary describing the size, texture, colours, the people, what the people did every day, how they were feeling.

Four year old Rhia wrote her name expertly over and over in the sand. Rhia is confident at writing letters and lots of words and the other children love watching her writing and then start trying their own letters and words. Learning from each other. Younger children learning from the older children. Older children being the teachers. This is Playcentre, where we keep all ages together, birth until six years old.

And so, while we don't bring all our resources and 'tools' to help our children during our Wild Wednesday Explorer sessions, we have all the tools around us to help support no matter what.

Kirsty Bell
Avonhead Playcentre

Munch Lunchbox
– Anna Bordignon & Michelle Kitney

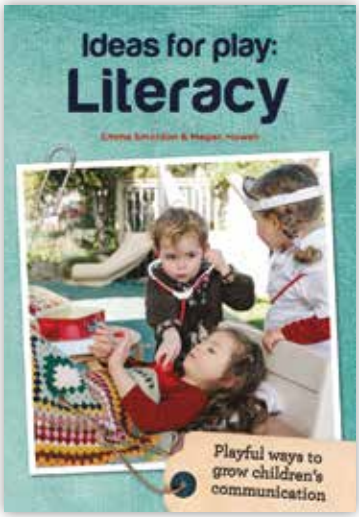


Aimed at making litter-less lunchboxes, this colourful book starts with tips and tricks for making great lunchboxes, such as lists of easy healthy foods to include and ways to make the common sandwich more interesting. It is then full of yummy sweet and savoury recipes for homemade additions to those lunchboxes. A lovely book to delve into when in need of inspiration or when wanting something delicious!

Sarah Bewick
Glen Innes Playcentre

new shoots publishing

Special for April and May



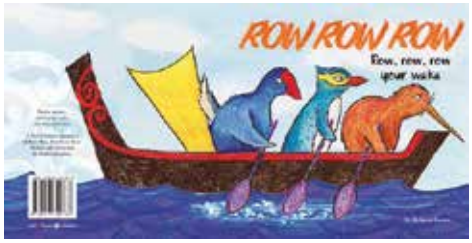
Purchase a copy of the book "Ideas for Play: Literacy" and receive a mystery book free to the value of $20. This offer is only available during April and May 2017 and by emailing your order through to publishing@newshoots.co.nz.

(As all of the books available from New Shoots Publishing are early childhood educational resources the free book will have some educational content.)

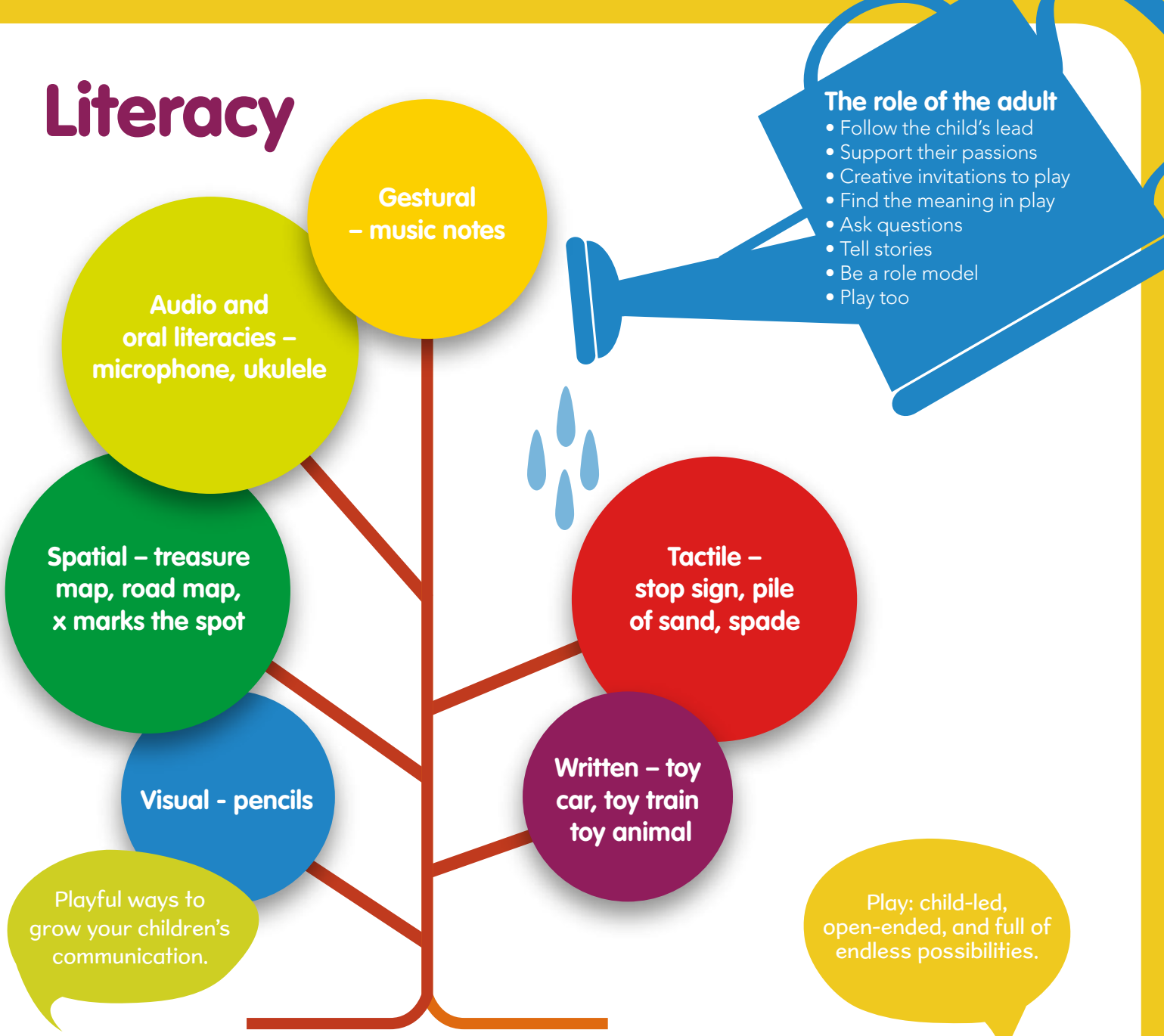
Row row row your waka
– Rebecca Larsen

I thought Miss 3 would love this book as it's her favourite action song to sing with me – and she did. But Master 6 did too...we tested our te reo knowledge and examined the detail in the illustrations. Master 6 learnt the meaning of Aotearoa and discussed how there is no English version of taniwha. The kids tied in their te reo knowledge of words such as waka and moana with new words like Tangaroa and pukana. As Miss 3 and I have recently started a bilingual session at Ngaio Playcentre this will further cement our knowledge and will be a great resource to share using the CD to sing along to the te reo version on session.

Anna Anstey
Ngaio Playcentre



Literacy



The role of the adult

- Follow the child's lead
- Support their passions
- Creative invitations to play
- Find the meaning in play
- Ask questions
- Tell stories
- Be a role model
- Play too

Audio and oral

sing waiata. Recall the waiata, songs and rhymes from when you were a child.
talk kōrero. Provide playthings such as telephones, dolls, puppets to encourage children to talk.

Gestural literacies

dance kanikani. Dance to action songs or like different animals. Dress up rerehua kā kahu. Provide open ended materials to create costumes.

Tactile literacies

mix whakaranu. Add a range of materials in different ways. You could change the temperature, texture, consistency, colour or chemical reaction.
dig keri. Add a range of materials to explore, transport and mold. Also have materials at hand that could be used to make signage by the children.

Spatial literacies

run, jump, roll, swing oma, peke, pī rori, piupiu. Create stimulating and safe environment for movement. Play action games.
map whakamahere. Start building mental maps by going on walks, talk about landmarks and directions. Draw imaginary maps.

Visual literacies

arrange whakarā rangi. Provide thick card and small containers of good stick-able materials. Explore ephemeral art.
Explore toro. Go on a scavenger walk or fact-finding mission and take note book and pens to sketch what you see.

Written literacies

sort wehewehe. Sort toy trains, cars and animals. You could classify them by size, colour and even speed.
write tuhituhi. When a child tells you something important, write it down and say it aloud that you will write that down. Encourage children to write their own story.

These ideas and many more are found in Ideas for play: Literacy by Emma Smoldon & Megan Howell. Available from New Shoots Educational Resources www.educational-resources.co.nz