

Playcentre Journal



*Welcome to
our Village*

ISSUE 162

Summer | Raumatī 2020

Matariki – Creating a Centre Culture
– Marketing on a Budget – Parāoa Poke: Playdough



A few weeks ago I stumbled across some words that spoke deeply to me. The words of my daughter's tipuna, Kai Tahu pou Kūkupa Tirikatene.

E kore e taea e te whenu kotahi ki te raranga i te whāriki kia mōhio tātou ki ā tātou. Mā te mahi tahi o ngā whenu, mā te mahi tahi o ngā kairaranga, ka oti tenei whāriki.

I te otinga me titiro tātou ki ngā mea pai ka puta mai. Ā tana wā, me titiro hoki ki ngā raranga i makere nā te mea, he kōrero anō kei reira.

'The tapestry of understanding can not be woven by one strand alone. Only by the working together of strand and the working together of weavers will such a tapestry be completed.

With its completion, let us look at the good that comes from it and, in time, we should also look at those stitches which have been dropped, because they also have a message.'

His words are a fantastic metaphor

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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 it to your local doctor's surgery, kindergarten, school reception, Plunket or music group.

for Playcentre, as well as for life. As I fill in the school enrolment form for my youngest, it's been an emotional time as I try to unweave ourselves from a place we have called home for nearly a decade. While we may be absent physically, I know Playcentre has woven its way permanently into our core being. It has not always been perfect rows of weaving – my journey has many dropped stitches. But Playcentre has created a strong whāriki as a foundation for our family for the years ahead. It is a perfect manifestation of our core philosophy – whānau tupu ngātahi.

As I pass the editorial reins over, I thank Playcentre for being my village, for nurturing my whānau. May 2020 be filled with laughter, aroha, and plenty of play.

Rebekah Lyell
Playcentre Journal
kaiwāwāhi matua



If you have an essay, feature story, photographs or research on Playcentre related topics, we would love to read them! For future issues we are looking for submissions on:

- Emergent leadership
- Navigating and embracing change
- Gifted and talented mokopuna
- Tapasā and Te Whatu Pōkeka in action

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Cover photo: Kaniere Playcentre

E te wā pouritanga MORRIS, Beverley Jean (Beverley) (nee Williams), CNZM QSO.

Born October 12, 1923. Passed away on November 12, 2019.

On behalf of Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa whānui, our sincere condolences to the whānau pani of Beverley.



Beverley was a passionate member of Playcentre since the early 1950s, when she opened a Playcentre in Newtown, Wellington.

She was responsible for the development of the original Playcentre Diploma and continued to actively support Playcentre and its philosophy – the importance of family, lifelong learning and the inherent value of play in children’s learning.

Beverley was a strong advocate for the right of children to play, believing “children don’t play to learn, they learn while they play”.

A prolific writer and National Life member of Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa.

Here is a quick look at Beverley’s life (as told by former Playcentre trustee Gabrielle Martell-Turner in the *Playcentre Journal*, Spring 2013):

1920s: On October 12, 1923 in Wellington, Percy and Vera Williams welcome a baby girl to their family... Beverley Jean Williams.

1930s: between the ages of eight and 15, Beverley wrote many stories, that were published in the Children’s Page of the *Evening Post*. She attended Island Bay School in Wellington, Leififi School in Samoa, and Wellington East Girls’ College.

1940s: Beverley married Peter Gillard Morris in April, 1944. Between 1947 and 1955 the family welcomed Ginette, Roger, Derek and Leonie.

1950s: Beverley learned about Playcentre from Gwen Somerset, and in 1951 started the Newtown Playcentre in Wellington. Then followed a move to Lower Hutt where she started teaching child development courses for Playcentre supervisors throughout the Hutt Valley.

1960s: In 1966 Beverley set up the original Playcentre diploma.

1970s: Beverley travelled extensively and attended six overseas conferences held by the International Play Association, promoting a ‘child’s right

to play’. She was made a life member of the New Zealand Playcentre Federation in 1979.

1980s: In 1987 Beverley was awarded the Queen’s Service Medal for work in integrating family organisations in Wellington. From the 1960s to the 1980s she also lectured at Victoria University of Wellington, working her way to become senior lecturer for human development with the Department of Continuing Education.

1990s: After retirement, she and Peter moved to Auckland in 1992 to be closer to family. She volunteered at the Ponsonby Citizens Advice Bureau for a number of years.

2000s: Beverley was an active member of a writers group that met each week. She welcomed numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren throughout this time too. Her contribution to Playcentre was recorded for Wellington Playcentre Association’s oral history project.

2010s: Beverley celebrated her 90th birthday at the 93rd Playcentre National Executive, held in October 2013. The celebration took the form of a ‘Beverley Morris – This Is Your Life’ slideshow, presented by Playcentre members. She was accompanied by her daughters Ginette and Leonie.

Moe mai ra e te Māreikura Beverley
E kore rawa koe e warewaretia,
Ka tangi tonu nei mou,
Moe mai ra, moe mai ra

Children's Time for Real Play

This article, written by Beverley Morris in the third person, was first published in the *Playcentre Journal*, November 1996 (p. 22). It is re-published here, unchanged, as a tribute to her knowledge, mana and inherent expertise of Playcentre philosophy. Despite being published more than twenty years ago, the article is still relevant for kaiako, and mokopuna, today.

"Freely chosen play in the child's own TIME is essential to the development of self-image and self-esteem," Beverley Morris told the IPA conference in Helsinki, Finland in August. IPA stands for the International Association for the Child's Right to Play. In a paper entitled 'Young Children's Right to Time to Play,' Beverley detailed her study of ten Auckland early childhood centres which found that while some centres valued children's play and organised routines to ensure long periods of free play, others had routines which met the adult's needs – and were damaging to young children.

Beverley, a life member of the Playcentre Federation, emphasised that TIME is required for the important learning during a child's first five years.

"To grow a healthy body the child needs hundreds of opportunities to crawl, run, hop, dance and climb.

"But too often parents and caregivers in our cities prefer the child to be sedentary and quiet," she said.

"Materials needs to be structured by CHILDREN so that they can see the relationships between means and ends. They need TIME to do this and to solve problems arising from their play.

"Social engagement is fraught with minefields in the first years of life," she said. "Unsophisticated toddlers often believe that a frontal attack, for example, pushing and biting, is the best means of initiating a friendship!

"Given TIME they learn more subtle and suitable approaches."

Social skills, such as sharing, also require TIME in order to allow the child to learn to delay "instant gratification."

"In expressing creativity children spend hours just acquiring a skill, then a lengthy period of practicing the skills follows to perfect it – before passing on to the next step. This is where TIME to perfect it and then to try it in new creative ways is so essential."

Beverley pointed to increased pressure from parents and caregivers to accelerate children's learning through formalising the curriculum.

"But such 'academic' programmes usually reflect a deficiency model demanding the premature practice of what one doesn't know how to," she said.

But another trend in parenting is also worrying Beverley. She told the conference that New Zealand parents are choosing to diminish their children's TIME to play by "allowing them to watch television programmes for extended periods and also by



having them join baby swim classes, music groups, baby gyms and other organised activities outside the home for the preschool child."

Beverley acknowledged a few exceptional children may require such activity, but for most children, what they require is TIME to (as Tina Bruce puts it) "muck about, daydream, fantasize, invent, explore and discover".

"Where a programme is excessively controlled by the clock and the staff attempt to move all the children in one group, children are deprived of taking the challenging initiatives which produce competency in young children," she said.

"As society shifts from the rigidity of the assembly line to the flexibility made possible by computerisation, children will be better served by education that fosters exploration, instead of that which fosters an unquestioning obedience to clocks and calendars."



Supporting Social and Emotional Skills

A new resource for kaiako has been launched by the Ministry of Education to help support the development of children's social and emotional skills. *He Māpuna te Tamaiti: Supporting Social and Emotional Competence in Early Learning* can be translated as 'each child is precious and unique' and comes from a model of holistic human development and learning developed by Waiariki Grace.

It was developed in collaboration with kaiako and other leaders in the sector and uses harakeke as an underpinning metaphor. "The harakeke plant symbolises the whānau, with mokopuna at the centre. The mokopuna are loved, protected, and supported by mātua, tīpuna, and the wider hapū and iwi. Every early learning service is a whānau. The wellbeing of mokopuna is at its heart, and its values and expectations ensure all members of its community are included and supported" (p. 1).

The resource focuses on four key areas that are underpinned by Te Whāriki. The sections are based on key pedagogical approaches promoted by the curriculum, and include:

Creating a supportive environment – Te taiao manaaki

This section explores how to establish a positive climate, constructing values, developing and promoting expectations, establishing consistent routines, and offers advice on creating a safe and inclusive space.

Promoting emotional competence – Te whakapakari whatumanawa

This section looks at how kaiako can support children to understand, express, and regulate their emotions, how to help children build resilience and a sense of self-worth, and how to provide positive guidance during heightened emotions, as well as a closer look at biting.



Promoting social competence – Ngā pūkenga whakaratarata

This section discusses fostering peer friendships and interactions, supporting the development of empathy, helping children support others in their learning, as well as helping them to solve social problems during peer conflict.

Supporting learning and engagement – Te hāpai ako me te whaiwāhitanga

This section looks at supporting children to manage their learning, providing rich and varied learning opportunities, removing barriers to participation, engagement and learning, and supporting transitions.



The book is designed to 'dip in and out of', with key messages revisited several times in different ways throughout the resource. It is designed to be a companion document to Teaching for Positive Behaviour, a primary and secondary school resource. The resource is being distributed with a set of cards for use in daily practice and during professional learning conversations. The cards are based on the appendix of the book, which also includes a self-assessment tool for kaiako to reflect on, evaluate and develop intentional approaches.

Hard copies of *He Māpuna te Tamaiti* should have been received by all Playcentres late last year. Additional copies can be ordered through Down the Back of the Chair. Digital copies can be downloaded from the Te Kete Ipurangi website.

Moo-ving Day Opportunities

'Gypsy Day' is entrenched in dairy farming culture. June 1 means just one thing for many rural families across Aotearoa – it's time to move. As the new dairy season starts, thousands of sharemilkers pack up their lives, and their cows, and move to new farms. Playcentres, especially in rural areas, can really feel the effects of moving day with children seemingly there one day and gone the next. Here are some ideas on how we can support whānau through this transition.



Supporting new whānau

Farmers may be leaving family and friends behind when they move to a new area. For a young family, that pressure can be even more keenly felt. Most rural Centres are well equipped and 'old hands' at welcoming new farming families into the area, already aware of the pressures and unique situation. But sometimes we forget. So here's some helpful reminders:

Remember what it was like for you to walk into your Centre for the very first time. Mention to newer members who have yet to experience a moving day, that there may be new faces soon.

Double check you have enrolment forms, new profile books, a smile, and any other 'new member' items on hand.

Offer practical help – perhaps having a file of brochures or pamphlets from around the community that the new family can turn to might help (for example, the local doctors, library, school enrolment packs). If they make Playcentre their first stop, can your members cook for the new family, or offer some other practical support, to help relieve the pressure?

Rural Women New Zealand can assist with social connections and contacts for local support agencies. Branches are located throughout the country and regularly organise get-togethers for women and their families to meet and build social networks through activities and events in their community.

Remember that these new families are facing a lot of pressure and stress after they arrive. They need to get to know their new farm, new boss, and their new community. Give them space and time to settle in and feel comfortable before bombarding them with Playcentre commitments too.

For Playcentres

It can be a tricky time with roll fluctuations and uncertainty of whom may walk in the door next.

Experienced members with 'points' may be leaving, or may have to cut back their hours in order to pack up their homes. Consider how you can navigate this time – will you need to call a reliever? Will you need to alter your licence? Some Centres close or drop days over term three to ease the pressure around the start of the season. Your regional hub will be able to help you consider the options.

Be prepared to review your Centre philosophy and culture if necessary a bit later on. New members can change these, for both better and worse.

Remember the procedures and steps to get support if you need. Your Centre support worker, admin, regional hub, life members and national staff, as well as the Ministry of Education, are all there to help you. If a new family arrives that needs additional learning support, try and start the ball rolling early.

Brush up on your policies and paperwork. Do you have enrolment forms available? What does happen when a new member arrives? What is essential information for them to know on the first day they arrive? Have you thought about behaviour management or learning support lately?

Now can be a great time for rural Centres to amp up marketing. Consider popping up some social media posts, posters and connecting with the rural community to make yourselves known.

Don't be disheartened if nobody new arrives. If there are new preschool families in the community, they may not be Playcentre families. But they are still a part of your community.

Supporting those leaving

Remember to hold graduation and leaving ceremonies at a time that suits the family leaving. A simple acknowledgment and token of appreciation can go a long way. You can even download certificates from the Playcentre website.

Offer practical support – not only do those families leaving need to pack up their homes, but also their entire workplace; including the herd, working dogs, pets, machinery, and the household. If they feel comfortable, and your Centre does too, perhaps you might like to offer a 'drop off' session if you don't already allow those parents to have some uninterrupted packing time.

If you know where they are going, compiling a simple list of Playcentres in their new town can be a nice gesture.

Delegate someone to collect all their belongings at Playcentre to ensure nothing is left behind that shouldn't be – profile books, artwork, the stray sock in their cubby hole, creations on the wall, their coffee cup. Download photos of their children and present it to them.

Double check with your Centre admin about any paperwork that might need signing before they leave.

Whānau Tupu Ngātahi

Sung to the tune of *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*

C F C
Whānau tupu ngātahi

F C G7 C
Tamariki ako e

C G7 C G7
Ki ngā mahi mārika

C G7 C G7
O ngā tamariki e

C F C
Whānau tupu ngātahi

F C G7 C
Ki ngā mahi mārika

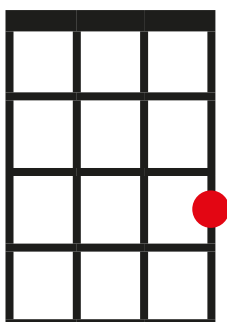
Translated as:

Families growing together
Children learning and doing awesome work

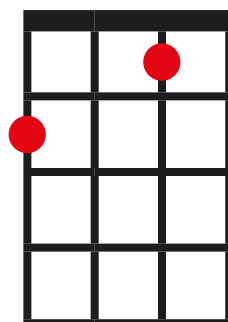
Written and gifted to Mamaranui Playcentre by Arvay Armstrong-Reid during Kahui-Ako 2018.

Ukulele chords:

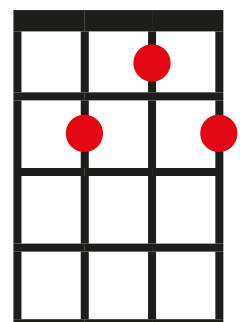
C



F



G7



Ngā mihi o te tau hou Māori

The arrival of certain stars in our night sky over winter herald the beginning of the Māori New Year. For some iwi, it is the appearance of Matariki that kicks off these celebrations.

However, in parts of Aotearoa – including Whanganui, Taranaki, Northland, Te Waipounamu and Rēkohu/ Wharekauri – the Māori New Year is marked by the rise of Puanga – or Puaka for Kāi Tahu.

Matariki is also known as the

constellation Pleiades, and, according to Dr Rangi Matamua (Tūhoe) is made up of nine tiny twinkling stars. Puanga/ Puaka is also known as Rigel and is the brightest star of the Orion constellation. The reason for iwi using different stars makes a lot of sense when you consider Aotearoa’s geography. For example, on the West Coast of the South Island, the Southern Alps block the view of Matariki, but Puaka is high enough in the sky to appear. In the Whanganui River valley the mountains block the view toward Matariki in the north-east, but the valley opens up enough to more easily show Puanga.

Different iwi have different traditions attached to Matariki and Puanga/ Puaka. Generally though, the visual appearance of the stars at their rising was a portent of weather to come. However, regardless of which stars our tūpuna looked to, their appearance signalled a time to prepare for the year ahead, to ensure there would be enough food to last until the next harvest. Once the mahi had been done, attention turned to celebrating new life,

remembering those who had passed, and to plan for the future. It is a time to spend with whānau and friends, to enjoy kai, waitata, tākarō and haka.

Because Māori follow the Māori lunar calendar, not the European calendar, the dates for Matariki change every year.

Source: Matamua, R. (2018). *Matariki: The Star of the Year* (p. 58). Wellington, New Zealand: Huia.



Year	Setting	Rise	Period
2020	15 May	13-16 July	13-20 July
2021	2 June	2-5 July	2-10 July
2022	23 May	21-24 June	21-29 June
2023	13 May	10-13 July	10-17 July
2024	31 May	29 June-2 July	29 June-6 July
2025	21 May	19-22 June	19-25 June

How many stars does Matariki have?

Matariki has nine visible stars, according to leading Māori astronomer, Dr Rangi Matamua. Each star holds a certain significance over our wellbeing and environment, as seen from the Māori view of the world.



Waitī – Waitī watches over our freshwater environments. Our awa (rivers), roto (lakes), kūkūwai (wetlands), and waipuna (springs), among others. As the waters flow, she sees how they support us, provide for us, connect us, and sustain us.



Waitā – Waitā surveys our vast oceans, Te Moana-nui-o-Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean) and Te Tai-o-Rehua (the Tasman Sea). Waitā encourages us to respect our coasts and oceans, and treat their inhabitants – including plants, whāngote (mammals), manu (birds) and ika (fish) – like the taonga (treasures) they really are.



Tupu-ā-Rangi – Tupu-ā-Rangi has long looked out for the ngahere (forests) and our native wildlife – manu (birds and bats), mokomoko (lizards), and ngārara (bugs), as well as our ancient rākau (trees) – like tōtara, pūriri, pōhutukawa and rātā.



Tupu-ā-Nuku – Tupu-ā-nuku has a special interest in our edible plants. This includes the natives pūhā (sow thistle), kawakawa (pepper tree), kōkihi (NZ spinach), and tī kōuka (cabbage tree). In watching the preparations for their growth and harvest, she has come to understand the importance of healthy soil.



Waipuna-ā-Rangi – Waipuna-ā-rangi welcomes the winter sky waters in all their forms – ua (rain), ua nganga (hail) and hukarere (snow) included.



Ururangi – Ururangi is close friends with te whānau puhi (the wind family) – including Hauraro (the north wind), Tonga (the south wind), Hauāuru (the west wind), and Marangai (the east wind).



Pōhutukawa – Pōhutukawa holds tight to our memories of treasured people who have passed on. She encourages us to take time to remember them, and to acknowledge their impact on our lives.



Hiwa-i-te-Rangi – Hiwai-i-te-rangi is a wishing star, who helps us to recognise our hopes, dreams and aspirations for the coming year. She encourages us to hold firm to our goals, and seek out opportunities to see them realised.



Matariki – Matariki loves to gather the people together, and to connect them with our environment. She encourages us to do the same, as often as possible.

(Source: Kiwi Conservation Club. (2017). *Te Iwa o Matariki: The Nine Stars of Matariki*).

He aha te mahi i te wā o Matariki i te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi?

Things to do at Playcentre during Matariki:

- ★ Hold a Matariki evening, including a shared kai – some Centres plan ahead and buy fireworks during November to use during this time.
- ★ Bake and decorate star cookies.
- ★ Cook with traditional Māori vegetables – kūmara, taewa (Māori potatoes), kamokamo, taro, puha, and uwhi (yam).
- ★ Create an edible garden.
- ★ Weave harakeke. The Playcentre website has instructions for a harakeke star, as well as a karakia and guidelines for harvesting and using this taonga.
- ★ Make kites – mana tukutuku.
- ★ Visit a star-dome.
- ★ Plant a native tree.
- ★ Visit a local marae and learn about their kawa for the time.
- ★ Learn a new karakia or waiata.
- ★ Create black playdough and add stars – confetti or glow in the dark.
- ★ Make and play with pot and tītītoea Māori stick games).
- ★ Make star wheels and use them to identify the stars at night.
- ★ Create a fire pit or bonfire at Centre and cook over it.



Books to explore

- *Matariki* by Sharon Holt
- *The Promise of Puaka* by Kirsty Wadsworth
- *The Stolen Stars of Matariki* by Miriama Kamo
- *Together in Love: A Legend of Matariki* by Xoe Hall
- *The Seven Kites of Matariki* by Calico McClintock
- *Daniel's Matariki Feast* by Rebecca Beyer
- *The Treasure and Matariki* by Melanie Drewery
- *Tāwhirimātea: A Song for Matariki* by June Pitman-Hayes and Kat Merewether.
- *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star: Tirama Tirama Whetū Riki E* by Renee Chin
- *The Little Kiwi's Matariki* by Nikki Slade Robinson

For kaiako

- *Matariki: The Star of the Year* by Dr Rangi Matamua
- *Matariki: The Māori New Year* by Libby Hakaraia
- *Southern Nights: The Story of New Zealand's Night Sky* by Naomi Arnold
- *Te Mahi Māra Hua Parakore* by Jessica Hutchings
- *Celebrating The Southern Seasons: Rituals For Aotearoa* by Juliet Batten
- *Te Kāhui o Matariki: Contemporary Māori Art of Matariki* edited by Libby Hakaraia and Colleen Waata Urlich



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Takakau

Māori Bread

Great to share at Playcentre for Matariki

Real Takakau has no rising agent (ie. baking powder), just flour and water. This recipe uses quite a large quantity of flour. It can be prepared and baked 35 minutes before a main meal is served or served hot or cold with butter, jam and a cup of tea.

Takakau Māori Bread - Serves 20

Ingredients

- 5 cups of flour
- 5 teaspoons of baking powder
- 600mls milks (approximately)



Method

Pre-heat oven to 200C.

Sift flour and baking powder into a large bowl.

Make a well in the centre and pour in milk, combine mixture together.

Turn out onto a floured bench and knead gently with floured hands.

Roll to a flat round shape.

Ideally lightly flour a round pizza tray and knead dough into the tray and to the inside of the edges.

Bake for approximately 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Serve hot and/or allow to cool. Leftovers when cooled can be covered with a damp tea-towel and stored in an airtight container.

Flour Power

Bread making has become an important part of Fendalton Playcentre's Monday sessions. The tamariki enjoy shaping the dough and all flock to eat the warm bread. Kathryn Treeby discusses how it has become a great way of strengthening community and also making a smooth transition to end of session.

People can be put off the idea of making bread thinking that it's complicated, needing lots of time and careful planning to allow for rising, and hard work to knead.

And then, baking bread can be explosive. Baking is science – and explosions are all part of the fun.

A classic New Zealand bread-making mishap is in Lady Barker's *Station Life in New Zealand*. Living on a remote sheep station in Canterbury in the 1860s, yeast had to be cultivated and stored fresh, and it then produced gas, so lids of storage containers had to be removed with great care.

Lady Barker was not an experienced baker and having reached the moment of adding the yeast, she was nervous about opening her container and asked her husband for help. He "seized the big bottle, shook it violently, and twitched out the cork: there was a report like a pistol-shot, and all my beautiful yeast flew up to the ceiling of the kitchen".

Having made efforts to salvage the situation, Lady Barker cobbled together some loaves, but then: "That bread never baked! I tried it with a knife in the orthodox manner, always to find that it was raw inside. The crust gradually became several inches thick, but the inside remained damp, and turned quite black at last; I baked it until midnight, and then I gave it up and retired to bed in deep disgust."

Thankfully, dried yeast now comes in handy wee jars or packets, and here's a really simple recipe that's ready to eat within two hours (with thanks to Jo Kuta of Landsdowne Terrace Playcentre for sharing it with me).

Ingredients:

¾ cup boiled hot water
1 tablespoon honey (or sugar)
½ cup water
1 teaspoon dried yeast
2 cups white flour
1 cup wholemeal flour
1/3 cup seeds (optional)
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon oil

- Dissolve honey in the hot water.
- Add cold water and dried yeast.
- Pop a saucer on top and leave for 10 minutes (it should be frothy)
- Mix flours, seeds (if using) and salt in a large bowl
- Add yeast mix and oil, then mix it all up, adding flour/water if needed. It shouldn't be too sticky. It's easiest to use hands after using a spoon for the initial stir.
- Cover the bowl with a wet cloth for at least an hour. Then separate out into pieces, rubbing some flour on your hands to prevent it sticking.
- Bake for 15-20 mins at 180 degrees. Don't be disheartened if it doesn't work the first time. All ovens are different so you often need a few tries before you work out what's best with your centre's. I bake on two lined trays and swap them over after nine minutes then bake for another nine minutes, but the bottom of the rolls on one tray always seem to blacken. It doesn't stop them being eaten. Sometimes the dough just won't come together, so you add a bit more water and then it's too sticky (so you add a bit more flour).
- It's OK. Everyone makes mistakes, and you're in good company if things happen to go spectacularly wrong.



Creating Your Centre Culture

Every Playcentre has its own distinct culture and ways of interpreting Playcentre philosophy. Some of it likely created intentionally and other aspects evolving over time. What happens though if that culture is no longer serving your centre? Or you want to drastically change it? This is a story of change from Park Road Playcentre in Palmerston North.

Following our 2018 AGM we had almost all members in new office holder roles including new co-presidents, a new treasurer and many members who had never held a role before. A very effective PR committee also meant we had lots of new members and not as many experienced members on hand to support them, so past ways of working were not going to work. We also had a core group of members wanting to create a change in culture. It was time and we were ready.

We knew we needed to improve our understanding of consensus decision making and embrace it more

fully. We needed to ensure all voices were heard and made changes to how our business meetings were run – from adding candles and beauty, to tightening up our systems and using consensus decision making strategies recommended by our Centre support worker. A conversation at a business meeting led to a focus on bringing the strengths we carry from our careers into our Playcentre life, acknowledging that (particularly for members not in paid employment), it doesn't mean they can't use all those previous skills. This led to an increase in science experiments and a school

teacher leading an internal evaluation on our transition to school process. We focused on ways of building a sense of community – from meals when someone has a new baby or is going through a tough time, to social events, to our now annual 'Playcentre Camp' weekend. Everything is optional but open to all.

"Since last year, the focus on what you used to do in your 'previous life' (before kids) has added more value to our centre. People have started to contribute more with their experience and expertise." Maria Fernanda Loureiro.





"I think that we have more support around us now with Arapera than we did with either of the boys, despite only living in Palmerston North for less than two years before she was born. Majority of that support has been from our Pplaycentre whānau." Sarah Paewai.

"Playcentre Camp is an opportunity for current members to get to know previous members and connect again in a different environment. We are able to explore new places and have time together to strengthen relationships outside of our normal Playcentre routine." Maria Fernanda Loureiro.

We needed to shift from a default setting of a negative view and Playcentre being hard work to a space of positivity and energy. This required a shift in mindset. No longer were 'hitchhikers' or members without office holder roles viewed as not contributing. Instead, we simply accepted people could give what they can, when they can. Whilst we encourage office holder roles, we also accept some members take longer to settle in than others and some have other things happening in their lives. We have found that with time, people all contribute in ways that work for them – from the small things like a spot of weeding, to the larger office holder roles. And even if the small things don't happen, we are grateful for the much needed funding each child brings in.

We value acceptance, kindness and caring for each other. These are values we collectively hold and expect our children to develop so it is critical we model them as adults as well. We also looked for places we could reduce

workloads and pressure on families. This meant getting rid of some old rules like attending multiple days per week. We find many people start with one day then pick up more anyway once they discover how awesome Playcentre is. It also means that instead of losing a family when life gets busy, they can drop down to one day. Because we have a facilitator on every session, we do not need to rush new members into the education programme but do encourage it.

"As someone who started just after the 2018 AGM (we started in October 2018) I feel I have really benefited from some of these changes. For me the

change in two days minimum made the most difference as it meant I was able to pick up more hours at work for six months before our new baby comes and therefore drop down to one day but still be a part of Playcentre and we will definitely be picking up more days next term when I am no longer working. I love the acceptance, kindness and caring we have for each other and support each other through tricky parenting moments, even by just sharing our struggles so we know we are not alone." Adele Kent.

"It has taken the pressure off and created a shift for me from having to do a role to wanting to do a role for myself." Hailey Brown.

"The opportunity to be part of an office holder role helped me to contribute at a time while my girl is still young and dependant on me physically on session. Being able to contribute from home helped me to feel like I was adequately contributing, so that gave me a deeper sense of belonging. The amazing one-on-one support I've received through taking on this role has been so warm, encouraging and empowering! Through this role I'm getting to know people I previously hadn't had much interaction with. All of these things have really helped me feel a sense of belonging at Playcentre."

Veronica McCaw

"This is my third stint at Park Road Playcentre and my most enjoyable one so far. 10 years ago, I remember





feeling really stink about being what felt like a really slack member compared to some amazing parents who put in their heart and soul and a lot of their weekend family time. I found Playcentre to be an amazing place for my kids that totally exhausted me, even without an office holder role. I never took one on because I knew there was no way I would manage to fulfill it. I agree that reducing the pressure on parents and

having a culture of understanding has opened up a space to contribute happily, by choice, when and if you're ready. I have taken on education and a role for the first time ever." Avon Lookmire

Internal evaluation proved a great tool for exploring how we support kaiako to develop a sense of belonging, whether they even had one and what was needed to promote empowerment and participation. Surveys were a great tool for gathering data. From this journey we established a new office holder role encompassing running new parent information evenings (a bit like the old course one) and setting up buddy pairs for new members. We are also working on ensuring new members have their parent file pocket and child's portfolio and bag labels ready as soon as we can. This remains a focus for us to develop further.

We tried a different leadership model of putting all our office holder roles into teams and working through a team model. It didn't work for us. We know it works amazingly for other Playcentres. This helped us discover what does work for us – committees of interested people to work together on a project. We have had a grounds committee, social committee, public relations committee and bicultural committee at different times. Joining a committee has become a tool for inducting new members to an office holder role. We also encourage shared office holder

roles. This builds relationships and spreads the workload. This is a shift from ensuring every possible role was full to not worrying if non essential roles are vacant and we have two people in other roles.

Another shift and perhaps an unintentional result of all this work was a change in the parenting support we offer each other. A focus on inclusion and all feeling welcomed and accepted has rippled down to our children. Children are truly valued and accepted for who they are – likes, dislikes, differences and quirks. They are each a taonga or treasure to our centre. We are focused on meeting the needs of all children and this includes changing 'rules' or ways of doing things to suit, or Ministry of Education learning support referrals. It is no big deal to need to leave early or to be running late and we try to be as flexible as possible (depending on qualifications required, of course). For new members, they simply don't know any other way. We actively talk about how no one is judging anyone else's parenting and offer support and strategies as required. Sometimes, just knowing someone else has been there and the phase will end is all a parent needs.

"Park Road Playcentre is a place that you want to go in the mornings, where you are welcomed with a 'good morning' or 'hello' from adults and kids." Maria Fernanda Loureiro.

All of this is increasing our long term viability. Something that is always on our radar. We know that we need sufficient enrolments to generate funding to cover our operating costs. We are ever hopeful of an increase in funding rates to reduce this pressure. By shifting our culture, we have more enrolled members attending more days per week. Our numbers are the highest they have been in years.

We have had a huge uptake on office holder roles, but the biggest change is in the passion our members bring to our Playcentre. It truly is a very special place loved by so many. The highly transient, ever-evolving nature of Playcentre means things will always go forwards and backwards for us with areas working well and others to strengthen. We accept this as part of the journey and go with it. It wouldn't be Playcentre if it wasn't an ever-evolving journey, but along the way we have found a way to ensure Playcentre truly is a village for our members.



The Daisies that Survived

During the warmer months, many exciting things begin to happen; sunshine, lambs, daffodils, leaves back on trees and daisies back on the grass. Northland-based early childhood educator Kate Liddington reflects on some spontaneous play and its deeper meaning to help support her practice with infants and toddlers.

The daisies springing up on the grass have become a focus for a few children. In fact they are focused on protecting the small buds until they bloom. It started with ways to create a fence around the daisies. Many things were tried but failed until someone suggested rocks. With plentiful rocks around I wondered if all the daisies would soon be protected by rock walls leaving potential tripping hazards for teachers - mainly myself. The older children also made signs to surround the rocks.

It took four days for a particular daisy to bloom, fully intact after such care and protection.

Several days later, one of the older boys stopped beside me very abruptly while in the middle of some kind of running chasing game. He looked at me very concerned and showed me a few more daisies growing. He decided that these daisies needed protecting as well. His friends were not overly happy about the interruption to their game but decided that they would help look for suitable fencing materials. They tried moving some rocks, huge rocks...far too heavy and potential daisy crushers, rather than protectors. I suggested they might need to try something different. They looked around for sometime before noticing the fire hose. Now this



fire hose is an actual old fire hose...long and heavy but potentially good fencing material.

He was quite excited about this idea, being a bit of a fireman lover himself. The other boys were more than happy to help drag the hose, a great display of team work involving children age four, three, and two years old. It was time to position the hose around the daisies. A tricky task not helped by the fact that everyone else decided that their job was over and off they went running again. But this one child persevered. He would get the hose around one daisy or group of daisies then notice more in another direction. It seemed very important that ALL the daisies were protected. He shifted the hose too and fro making small 'fences' around each patch of daisy buds. The determination and persistence was pretty amazing to watch (this is a very heavy hose). Of course now I'm thinking hose and rock fences everywhere equals more obstacles!

Children really are active investigators and inventors capable and confident in complex thinking and problem solving. Children from a young age can work collaboratively; negotiating, communicating, and taking on leadership roles to strategise to get done what they endeavor to get done.

As teachers (well adults really) we can further these children's experiences by providing ways for other areas of the curriculum to be used within their current investigations (for example here; discussion, physical team work, and writing).

When we view children as competent and capable and give them time and freedom to explore and create as they wish without giving them the answers to their many questions we encourage all kinds of skills to develop. Skills and attitudes towards thinking and learning that they will use their whole lives.

It would have been easy to walk away from this daisy protection project, thinking daisies are nice enough but I will probably run them over with the lawn mower. Instead this is a simple example of children seeing something completely differently to adults. I have to say every time I go outside now I really do notice the daisies everywhere and the ones in full bloom I think "yeah you survived".

So let the children cover the lawn with little rock walls and winding fire hoses to protect the daisies. While it's probably a nightmare for you (I'm picturing many stubbed toes) they are investigating something, even if we do not know exactly what that something is.



**KEI TE
PĒHEA KOE?
HOW ARE YOU
FEELING?**

Roll this die if you're
feeling "WELL"

**KEI
TE ORA**

I'm well

**KEI
TE PAI**

I'm good

**KO TAUA
ĀHUA ANŌ**

Same same

**TE
MUTUNGA
MAI O
TE PAI!**

Great!

**TE REO
O TE TARI**

**MĀORI FOR
THE OFFICE**

'Kia ita!'

Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori
MĀORI LANGUAGE COMMISSION



tetaurawhiri.govt.nz

Parāoa Poke – PI



pāhiwihiwi
– bumpy



maene
– smooth



nui –



roa – long



poto – short

Ānei te parāoa poke –

He aha tō mahi? Wh

Pokea te parāoa poke –

Whakatūpā te parāoa poke kia maene

Pokaina te rārā/rākau ki roto i te parāoa pok

Roraia te parāoa poke ki runga i te tēpu

Kōpēa te parāoa poke ki roto i tō ringarin

aydough



big



iti -
small



tūtahi -
whole



hāwhe - half



mātotoru - thick

rahirahi - thin

Here is the playdough

What are you making?

- Knead the playdough
- Flatten the playdough so it is smooth
- Poke the twigs/sticks into the playdough
- Roll the playdough out on to the table
- Squeeze the playdough in your hand

Spotlight on Playcentre: Weaving Te Whāriki at your centre

A recent resource added to Te Whāriki Online is a 'spotlight' on Playcentre. The resource was created in consultation with Playcentre representatives.

This spotlight is a slideshow for Playcentre parents and whānau. The intention is to stimulate thinking and discussions about parents as kaiako, underpinned by Te Whāriki, our national early childhood curriculum. The spotlight describes ways to use learning conversations and learner maps to support children's learning; and includes discussion points about building relationships with tamariki, whānau, and community.

You can view the slides online or download them and adapt them to

your centre's needs. The spotlight can be found in the professional learning and development section of Te Whāriki Online.

Some of you may not be aware of Te Whāriki Online. This is the Ministry of Education's website for the early learning sector. The resources on the website are carefully designed to support kaiako and whānau working with Te Whāriki. For example, spotlights on Te Whāriki Online are built around different topics with key ideas, reflective questions, and resources to

enrich professional learning and team discussions. They can be adapted to suit your centre, and can guide you through internal evaluations. On the site, you can also read stories of practice from pedagogical leaders (including Playcentre), view webinars, access a digital copy of Te Whāriki and discover its history, and the research and theory underpinning it. The website is continually updated and refreshed with more and more support resources, so it pays to keep an eye on it.

Part two: Weaving your whāriki at Playcentre

Te Whāriki and children's play

The introduction to the Exploration | Mana aotūroa strand states:

Children learn through play: by doing, asking questions, interacting with others, devising theories about how things work and then trying them out and by making purposeful use of resources.

Te Whāriki, page 46

Discuss

How does your Playcentre enable or constrain these kinds of learning?



Te Whāriki Online
Te Whāriki | te Kōwhiri Rau o te taiao and Te Whāriki Early Childhood Curriculum Online

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri

Ko te mahi, ko te kori – learning through play

Gwen Somerset, one of the founders of the Playcentre movement, understood that:

To children, play is work, hard work, their business in life.

Gwen Somerset

Reflect

How are you using Te Whāriki to support the idea that children's play is their work?

Share with your team.

Somerset, G. (2000). *Work and play in the early years*, page 14. Auckland: Playcentre Publications.



Te Whāriki Online
Te Whāriki | te Kōwhiri Rau o te taiao and Te Whāriki Early Childhood Curriculum Online

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri

Spread the word and visit Te Whāriki Online at tewhariki.tki.org.nz to view the Playcentre spotlight.

Marketing on a budget

Financially viable. Two words that can quickly suck the fun from Playcentre.

We knew the only real way to increase our centre income was to increase our enrolments. The only way to increase these is marketing. We had a PR officer role that had been unfilled for some time. Marketing simply wasn't a priority for us, amongst everything else involved in running a Playcentre. In 2017, the role was filled and it was quickly realised that successful marketing was a far bigger task than one person could manage, so we formed a committee with our awesome PR officer at the helm. She suddenly had a team of people around her to help with initiatives, to spread the load, bring new ideas and the magic happened. Within a year we went from having 21 families enrolled to have 37. We now generally have around 50 children enrolled at any time. We know this isn't guaranteed and are not complacent. Marketing continues to be a focus for us. This article is going to explore some of the things that work for us – without spending a lot of money. It isn't intended to be a "how to guide" or the only way to market a Playcentre as each community is very different and will have different marketing needs. We also recognise the wealth of marketing support provided by Playcentre Aotearoa.

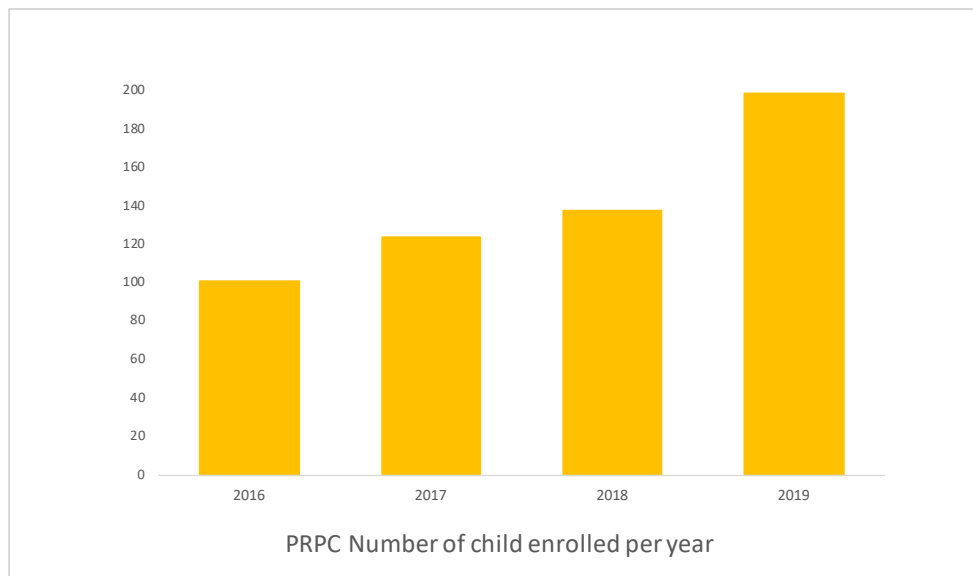
Social Media

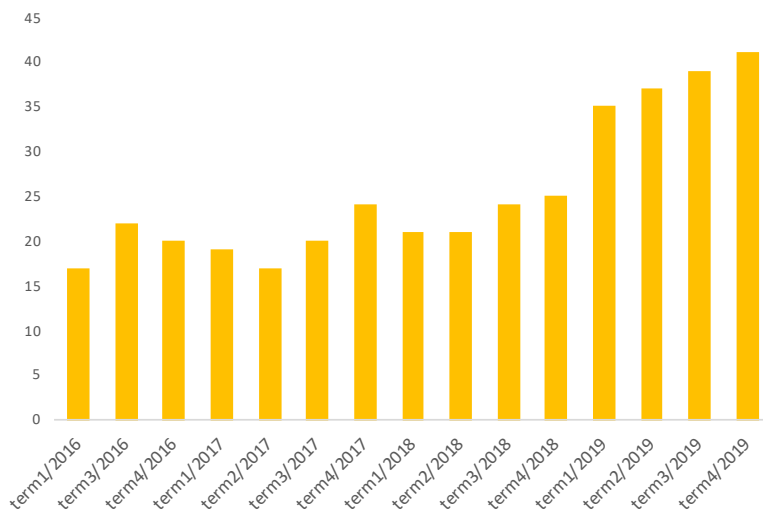
Social media is a brilliant, free tool and often the first place someone will go when looking for a Playcentre. Linking your centre's Instagram account and Facebook page makes it easy to do one thing and market in two different places. Have a list of favourite hashtags to use each time then add in topic specific ones. This widens post reach quickly. We recommend these as essentials for every post:

#playcentrenz #playcentreaotearoa
#childledlearning #playcentrewānau
#YOURNAMEplaycentre
#learningthroughplay

Getting members to recommend your Facebook page is a quick and easy way to increase the value of your page. Remind members regularly to keep fresh reviews coming in and like, comment and share posts. Be sure to ensure the quality of your photos reflects your centre and your values. Check backgrounds of photos carefully in case there is something there you don't want the public to see. Use photos that really show what you are about. It is okay to build up a stockpile to use over time instead of ensuring a photo is shared the day it was taken. Adding your centre logo is an easy way to ensure the branding remains with your centre when images are shared beyond the original post – "Canva" or "Watermark P" applications are good options for this and logos are available on the marketing section of the Playcentre website.

There are lots of useful tools on the Playcentre website to help lift the





PRPC - Number of families per term - 2016 to 2019

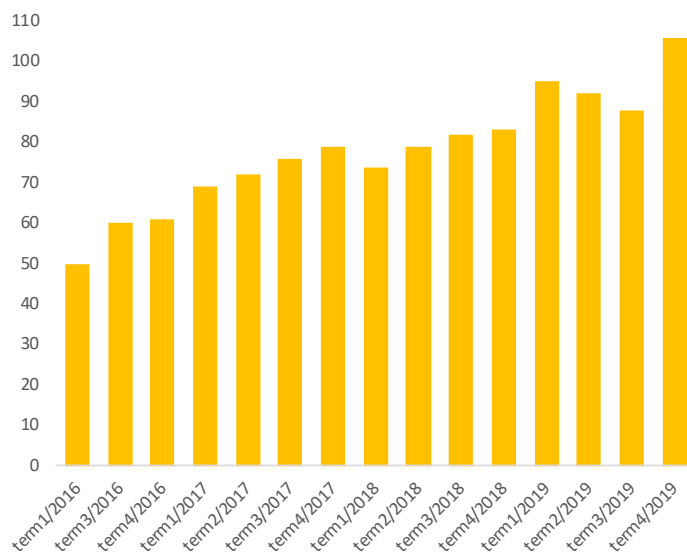
professionalism of your public pages. Consider using these for profile pictures and Facebook banners. When it comes to writing posts, it may seem obvious but always spell check. Spelling and grammatical errors do put some people off visiting a centre. Consider having themes of posts – a post a day on a particular topic. Ideas include:

- a typical day at Playcentre
- key elements of what Playcentre is about

- how Playcentre can become part of your village
- learning areas at Playcentre

Google Presence

We didn't realise until we received some helpful feedback from another Playcentre but we didn't have much in the way of Google presence. We quickly remedied this with an updated Google description, photos added and member reviews. Have you Googled



PRPC - Total of children attending session per week by term



your Playcentre lately? What comes up? If you haven't got a strong Google presence, it is quick and easy to create it.

Open Weeks

We never used to do open weeks since every day is technically an open day. Then, we realised that open weeks serve a special purpose. They create space for people to visit who may not be ready to enrol or are not even really looking for Playcentre. The decision to visit a centre outside of an open week usually means you are seriously considering enrolling. Open week has a lot less pressure and is a chance to look around. Advertising options include via Facebook event, asking members to share electronic copies of flyers, posting an event in local community Facebook groups, Eventfinda, in school newsletters and in your local free paper. Most of these options are free and there are templates to use on the Playcentre website. Eventfinda is quite useful as local radio stations look there for current happenings and you may get free air time. We focus on getting people in the door so they can see all we have to offer. We don't mind if open weeks get treated as a free excursion for someone with no intention of enrolling because they will have a great time and may well tell someone else about us.



Visibility in Community

Being visible at community events is important. We know people will often see us at an event and check us out on Facebook well before they first visit. This can take a lot of work and cost so we opt to do one or two large events a year. For us it is having a stall at our local Parent and Child Expo with toys for children to explore so we can talk to their parent, once the child is engrossed in play. We also enter a float in our local Christmas Parade which is enormous fun for our whānau and contributes positively to our community.

Signage

We are tucked away on a back section and had zero street presence. The two roads we hide behind are extremely busy with thousands of cars travelling past each day. We know the lack of visibility makes us hard to find and have heard from people who tried to visit but gave up because they simply couldn't find us. Putting up a sign on each of these two roads was a simple way of increasing our street presence, help people find us and hopefully give us a whole lot of marketing for minimal effort.

Plunket

We have been hearing a lot lately that some whānau wish they had found Playcentre sooner. Plunket nurses go into so many homes of parents with young children. One of our next steps is to try and connect with our local nurses, at one of their education days. A fifteen minute slot to tell them all the essential information on Playcentre. We will leave them handouts and a few of the Welcome to Playcentre books (on the Playcentre website under current members > useful documents, or available to purchase in hardcopy from the Playcentre Shop). We considered inviting the nurses for special morning tea but decided the education is likely to have a wider reach.

Whilst this list may look like a lot of work, we simply focused on one aspect at a time and worked our way through the different ideas, at a manageable pace. Working within a team and seeking support from other members really did make all the difference for our centre. We are now in a much stronger financial position and hope that a continued focus on marketing will ensure that continues.

Resources on the Playcentre website

If you log in to the Playcentre website, the 'PR and Communications' tab contains a wealth of information available for Playcentres to use. It is well worth checking back often as these are continuously updated and added to. The tab, so far, includes:

- branding procedures to ensure consistency across the organisation
- logos to download, as well as the Playcentre font
- photo release permission forms
- media release templates
- letterheads
- email signatures
- certificates for tamariki and adults
- Playcentre name badge templates
- bumper sticker templates
- 'My Kids Village' website guides
- visitor sheets to give to whānau when they visit
- flyers for both Playcentres and clusters
- A4 and A2 promotional posters – including for open days, garage sales, and fundraising
- Future Villagers marketing material
- Facebook cover, profile and post templates
- Instagram profile and post templates
- Twitter profile and post templates
- Premade social media posts highlighting some of Playcentre's values and philosophy



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.ecg.govt.nz/learning/curriculumAndLearning/Assessmentforlearning/KeiTuaotePae/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

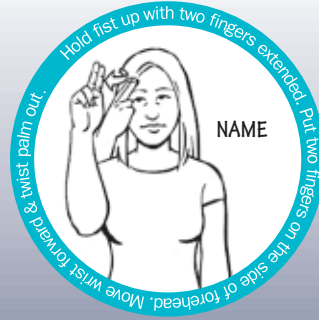
Waikato Assn, NZPF Professional Development Team



NZSL ALPHABET

Have fun with your whānau, family and friends.
Learn your name and teach others theirs!

NOTE: NZSL grammar structure is different to English. Just sign 'my name what?', then fingerspell your name.



Transition to work

Transferrable Skills

Playcentre offers the opportunity for you to up-skill in a variety of ways.

There are many different roles at Playcentre, so there are different options to suit everyone.

Some members like to take on an office holder area they have some knowledge and expertise in, others like to take on an area that will offer new learning. Members can also utilise the opportunity to build areas of their skills to enhance their curriculum vitae and transferrable skills for future employment opportunities.

The roles and professional development opportunities at Playcentre include: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Education, Bi-cultural, Health and Safety, Property, Equipment, Caring and Sharing, Special Needs, Policy, Employment, Public Relations, Library and many more.

Playcentre also offers a NZQA programme within Playcentre that supports the informal learning taking place in a centre, leading to an expansion in parenting and early childhood education skills for anyone keen to learn. It is an NZQA accredited qualification that is recognised outside of Playcentre and develops your skill set for employment while developing your capacity as an educator and parent.



Playcentre 

Business New Zealand has identified the **following 10 competencies** (listed in the first column) as the most **valued transferrable skills** by employers. We have developed the table to support you when considering office holder roles that align with areas of skills valued by employers.

10 transferrable skills as desired by employers (from Business NZ)	Examples/more detail in the Playcentre context	A guide to roles or training that will support skill development
1. Communication skills	Conflict resolution skills, having the “hard” conversations, active and effective listening, communicating in different contexts, working within a bi-cultural community, developing and building teams with effective communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All roles - On session as an educator responding to children and parents
2. Customer service skills	Educating children on session, working with other parents to support the learning of the child, serving the parent and the child. Listening, reflecting and acting upon requests from parents or children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All roles - On session as an educator responding to children and parents
3. Ability to work well in a team	Working on team as an educator, working at business meetings, training opportunities or other group situations. Contributing within sub groups or the whole membership to actively participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All roles - On session as an educator responding to children and parents
4. Literacy and numeracy skills	Working to write up learning stories, area reports or plans for the centre. Prepare budgets, analyse financial information, book keeping, GST Returns, RS7 returns, statistical reports or summaries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On session write ups, evaluations and learning stories - All roles, but especially Treasurer and any role involved in writing plans or reports
5. Confidence learning about and using computers and technology	Being involved and responding to new ways of communicating and using technology at Playcentre. Examples may include regularly using social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), creating online events and administration software. Using the technology at Playcentre to improve learning outcomes for children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All roles - Information officer - Public Relations officer - Enrolments officer or other systems or IT roles
6. Planning and organisational skills	Multi-tasking, time management, managing multiple projects such as office holder role alongside the Playcentre Education programme and raising a young family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All roles - Any role specifically involving projects
7. Initiative and a can-do attitude	Roles at Playcentre involve getting involved and giving it your best – all in a voluntary capacity. A solutions focussed positive attitude is what builds Playcentre communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All roles
8. Problem-solving skills	Decision making, using consensus, fundraising, planning and analysing policy and operations, positive guidance, working with children, handling crisis situations such as illness outbreaks or other hazards that come up. Tackling issues like elevating education levels at the centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Property and/or Health and Safety Roles - Leadership roles - All roles - All parent educators on session
9. Good work habits and independence	Being a strong contributor in a voluntary capacity speaks volumes to your work habits and your ability to work independently without supervision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All roles
10. Health and safety skills	Managing health and safety processes, checklists, organising first aid, assessing and following up on issues, communicating and training team members in matters of safety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health and Safety Officer - All parent educators on session



I came into the Playcentre environment with a variety of management skills, but found the Playcentre environment an incredible opportunity to explore and deepen my understanding of leadership, decision making and the importance of team work. The skills I developed were a key component of me securing my next step in my career.



In addition to the above employers most valued list, Playcentre members also felt the following skills were developed during their time in office holder roles. What skills would be valuable to add or grow to in your skill set going forward for life and your career?

Other transferrable skills	Examples/more detail in the Playcentre Context	A Guide to roles that will support skill development
Bi-cultural confidence and expertise	Encourage the use of Te Reo Māori, understanding and applying appropriate cultural practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bi-cultural officer - Any role at Playcentre - NZ Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care L4. B404 Te Kāhano module as part of the Playcentre Education Award.
Management expertise	Delegating, empowering, nurturing, advocating, and developing capability and skills in people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President, Education Officer
Strategic thinking	Planning, investigating, researching and writing plans. Contributing to regional and national strategic plans, workshops and reviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President and other leadership roles at the centre
Self-review and evaluation	Self-review, improvement capacity, evaluation techniques.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education officer - Planning and Evaluation officer - Project work
Decision making	Using consensus, gathering information, using surveys, brainstorming or gaining information from other research methods, being guided by legislation and licensing requirements, empowering groups to contribute and valuing all contributions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President - All members involved at business meetings etc.
Relationship management skills	Communication, dealing with sensitive issues, resolving conflict.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Playcentre Roles

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“

I didn't have the opportunity to develop a career prior to starting a family, the time at Playcentre has given me more experience and skills than I ever thought possible.

“

I led a \$200,000 renovation project at my Centre. The project involved planning, communication, budget management and relationship management with the varying groups of people I needed to keep informed.

Playcentre 

Results orientated	Getting things done, achieving big projects, pulling groups of people together to achieve extraordinary things, managing the day to day regulatory requirements of the centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presidents and other leadership roles - All centre positions involving project work
Meeting facilitation and management	Planning, preparing and facilitating positive outcomes through effective meeting management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presidents - Secretary role
Information management	Implementing or developing new improved systems of managing information. Using technology to improve outcomes and communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrolment Officer - Public Relations - Secretary role
Policy writing and development	Developing policy, understanding legislation and licensing, communicating and getting teams on board with procedures, running effective consultation processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy Officer - Health and Safety Officer
Building Project Management	Project budget management, logistics and time planning, communication and coordinating groups during building works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Centre Property Officer - Project Coordinator - Fundraising Officer - Property Officer
Marketing and Public Relations skills	Developing materials for advertising and building public awareness. Developing and running member communication systems, web based activities to coordinate and communicate within your community. Media releases and applying for and receiving grants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Relations Officer - Fundraising Officer - Enrollment Officer
Event Management	Fundraising, organising whānau events, running centre excursions, helping with conferences or other Playcentre meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Relations Officer - Fundraising Officer

Playcentre office holder roles can be personally rewarding and can help build transferrable skills for your life and your career.



Initially I didn't see much personal benefit for me in the office holder space, but I took on health and safety and it's added unique skills to my work-set and it's good to have H&S in my resume for the future too.

Car Seat Stickers Designed to Help in Crashes

A new St John initiative may help emergency services identify children involved in car crashes.

St John attended 95 serious car accidents between 2018 and 2019, involving children aged under eight-years-old.

Now the organisation has released stickers that attach to car seats, providing emergency services information about the child that usually travels in the car.

St John South Island community programmes manager Suzy Mitchell said the sticker should be placed on the side of a car seat, and has space for caregivers to write the child's name, birth date, and National Health Index number.

There is also space for two emergency contacts, such as next of kin.

The stickers are designed to act as an identifier in a vehicle crash if a child is left without a conscious adult who knows them at the scene of the crash, she said.

"We know that accidents can happen at any time and are frightening at any age. There are occasions when first responders attend car crashes and the adult in the car is unresponsive, leaving children in car seats scared and confused and not able to communicate their details.

"By being able to address the child by their name, emergency services can provide comfort and ultimately make the situation a little less terrifying. The sticker also outlines two different emergency contacts which allows support to be accessed faster."

New Zealand Police said when there was a crash, officers were focused on providing immediate support.

Acting Superintendent Amelia Steel, National Manager for Road Policing, said one of the key responsibilities of police is locating the family or friends of victims.

"This would definitely help our ability to do that quickly, and to locate the most appropriate people."

The stickers are available free of charge from St John's 43 community stores around New Zealand.



Exploring Down the Back of the Chair

Did you know your Playcentre has access to a wide range of resources direct from the Ministry of Education?

Down the Back of the Chair, www.thechair.co.nz, is the Ministry's online catalogue of teaching and learning resources for early childhood education services, schools and kura.

Access to the resources is restricted to Ministry approved education providers only – so every Playcentre has a login.

Just like the back of your favourite chair, the catalogue is a place where you can rummage around and always come away with a treasure or two.

Many of the resources are free, and the catalogue is constantly updated so it pays to allocate the role to a Centre member who can then check it frequently.

Each Playcentre can check out which resources it is entitled to and order them online. Just use the options in the left menu to search Down the Back of the Chair.

Many resources also have a yearly allocation to keep bookshelves stocked up – for example Centres can request two copies of Te Wh riki each year for free.

If you have forgotten your login details, the customer services team is super helpful and can be contacted on 0800 660 662 or orders@thechair.minedu.govt.nz

Searching for nuggets

You can search the latest education resources and then order copies via the website. There are a number of ways to search Down the Back of the Chair:

- Type a keyword, product title or code in the search box and click the Search button. This will bring up a list of products that you may browse, order or add to your favourites.
- Use the "Advanced Search" located in the left menu. This allows you to enter more advanced search queries, and provides an overview of how to use wildcard search and special keywords such as and, or and not.
- Browse the search through the product categories in the left menu
- You can also check out the most ordered products in the left menu.

RĀRANGI PUKAPUKA – BOOK LIST: CREATIVITY

For our mokopuna, ‘the arts’ play a vital role in communication and expression of ideas. Creativity – in this case meaning the use of symbols of expression, movement, gesture, image, and sound to convey meaning – can often be the first literacy for children. When creativity flourishes at a Centre, mokopuna can develop many of the skills and attributes that are embedded in *Te Whāriki*, including, but not limited to; identity, cultural ways of being, doing and knowing, collaboration, thinking critically, communicating, well-being, and evaluating. Here are some pukapuka to help mokopuna, and kaiako, embrace the process of creativity, rather than the product.

Fuzzy Doodle

by Melinda Szymanik

Fuzzy Doodle is a sophisticated picture book in which the text and illustrations work together to create a metaphor for the creative process. Fuzzy, who started as a squiggle, comes to life and despite being nothing more than just a scribble, a dazzling book emerges to show great things from little scribbles grow.



Iggy Peck, Architect

by Andrea Beaty

Iggy has one passion: building. His parents are proud of his fabulous creations, though they’re sometimes surprised by his materials – who could forget the tower he built of dirty diapers? When his teacher declares her dislike of architecture, Iggy faces a challenge. He loves building too much to give it up.



Not a Stick

by Antoinette Portis

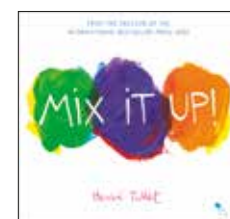
This book captures the thrill of when pretend feels so real that it becomes real. With a stick in hand, the options are endless – whether it’s conducting an orchestra, painting a masterpiece, or slaying a dragon – give a child a stick and let imagination take over and the magic begins.



Mix It Up!

by Hervé Tullet

Known in France as the ‘Prince of pre-school books’ Hervé Tullet’s books are always an exuberant invitation to play. *Mix It Up!* is a joyful exploration of colour, and colour theory, that will enchant readers both young and old. Tullet entices readers to use their hands to mix up the colours – it’s like magic. Smudge, rub, shake, and squash the book, then get out and do it in real life.



Beautiful Oops

by Barney Saltzberg

For those children who are worried about their art being perfect and planned out, *Beautiful Oops* encourages children to think outside the box. Here the non-perfect, the mistake, the accident, is just the encouragement a young artist needs to create.



For kaiako: *Michael Rosen’s Book of Play*

by Michael Rosen

Former children’s laureate and best-selling author Michael Rosen states the case for the importance of play. He explains why play matters so much for creativity, resilience, and much more. Rosen explores play theory – from word play, to play as a way to learn things like empathy or conflict resolution, to digital play and physical toys. The rich history of play, from our caveman ancestors to Ancient Egypt, the “bizarre world” of Surrealism to today, is delved into. Rosen looks at how we can bring “this rich history to bear on how we play today”. Theorists and leading educators are explored, and so too is the impact of education and Government on play. Each chapter includes a handful of prompts and ideas designed to offer the reader an “extra dollop” of play in their life. The activities can seem a little structured to start with, but by giving them a go the reader slowly loses their inhibitions and the games become pivotal to the point Rosen is trying to prove – that play, while enjoyable, is far from trivial.



Other ideas: *Du Iz Tak?* by Carson Ellis, *A House that Once Was* by Julie Fogliano, *This is Sadie* by Sara O’Leary, *Chalk* by Bill Thompson, *The Book of Mistakes* by Corinna Luyken, *Weaving* by Rejeli and To, *The Dot* by Peter H Reynolds, *The New Zealand Art Activity Book* by Helen Lloyd

Book reviews

Hello! Kia ora! Welcome New Friend!

by Rachel Weston

This beautifully illustrated book models the importance of a kind and caring attitude. Ruby is the new girl at her early childhood centre, and she feels like an outsider. However, the fellow pre-schoolers have learned a smile is easy to do and costs nothing to share. Their kind actions have a transforming effect.

Author Rachel Weston was inspired to write the book after her experience with her children – who attended various early childhood education settings, including Playcentre.

The book is wonderfully illustrated by Deborah Hinde. Children from many cultures will recognise themselves within the pages.

Weston also includes 24 ways to say hello at the back of the book, as well as an informative spread that could be described as teachers' notes. The questions prompt children to think about body language, and why smiles are so important.

This is a brilliant book for whānau and kaiako to use to support mokopuna transition in to, or between, early childhood education services.



Māui's Taonga Tales: A Treasury of Stories from Aotearoa and the Pacific

by various authors

This taonga of a book evolved out of an animated television series, which aired on Māori TV. The fresh approach uses taonga from the Te Papa collection to tell aspects of Aotearoa history.

Told through the voice of Māui, the stories are from both long ago and more recent times, and were chosen in consultation with Te Papa's mātauranga Māori curators and iwi.

A kete leads to the retelling of Tāne and the kete of knowledge, while a hoe, or paddle, leads to a story about Captain Cook and the deadly encounter of 1769.

While some stories might seem like they are covering dark times in our shared history, each author draws on the positive – compassion and kaitiakitanga are strong core themes woven throughout the pages.

The book helps build te reo Māori skills for learners of the language, while also sharing valuable knowledge about taonga and prompting an understanding of mātauranga Māori. *Māui's Taonga Tales*, and its te reo Māori companion *He Paki Taonga i a Māui*, is an absolute taonga and one that should be in every household and school across the country.



Whakarongo ki ō Tūpuna - Listen To Your Ancestors

by Darryn Joseph

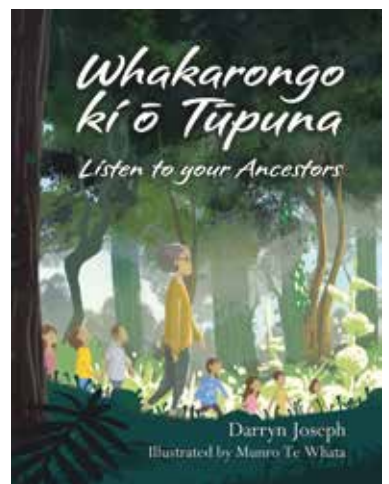
One night in June 2016, Massey University language lecturer Darryn Joseph (Ngāti Maniapoto) sat in a hospital room minding a teacher who had become a dear friend and mentor to him. Darryn wrote her a poem of appreciation, kissed her hand and said goodbye; the next day she passed away.

That poem is contained in *Whakarongo ki ō Tūpuna/Listen to your Ancestors*, written in te reo Māori with English translation. The story follows a beloved teacher giving her pupils and granddaughter guidance by directing them to follow the examples of Māori gods and ancestors. At its heart this is a story of love and respect, harking back to the friendship that inspired its writing.

This is not a book that has been translated into te reo Māori – here te reo Māori is first, it is the valued language. It is so lovely, and empowering, to see te reo Māori allowed to exist in its own powerful self.

The book, by its very nature, also provides an overwhelming rush into te ao Māori and tikanga Māori. Concepts such as ako, manaakitanga and aroha are front and centre.

It is also a wonderful book to help younger children deal with grief as it deals with death in a subtle, yet powerful way. The theme of whakamana (empowerment) also runs throughout the story. It is a book that should be prescribed reading in every early childhood or primary school. It is that powerful.





KARAKIA TĪMATANGA

Kia hora te marino

Kia whakapapa pounamu te moana

Hei huarahi mā tātou i te rangi nei

Aroha atu

Aroha mai

Tātou i ā tātou katoa

Hui ē!

Tāiki ē!

(This Māori incantation is for the beginning of the day, meeting, session, or workshop asking people to respect each other and bind all present together as one.)



OPENING KARAKIA

May peace be widespread
May the seas be like greenstone
A pathway for us all this day
Let us show respect for each other
For one another
Bind us all together!

*(This Māori incantation is for the beginning
of the day, meeting, session, or workshop asking
people to respect each other and bind all
present together as one.)*



KARAKIA WHAKAMUTUNGA

Kua mutu ā mātou mahi

Mō tēnei wā

Manaakitia mai mā katoa

O mātou hoa

O mātou whānau

Aio ki te Aorangi

(This Māori incantation is a closing incantation used at the end of the day, meetings, sessions, or workshops. Blessing everyone present, as well as their families and friends.)



CLOSING KARAKIA

Our work is finished

For the moment

Blessing upon us all

Our friends

Our families

Peace to the Universe

(This Māori incantation is a closing incantation used at the end of the day, meetings, sessions, or workshops. Blessing everyone present, as well as their families and friends.)