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Centre for Equity and Innovation in Early Childhood C.E.I.E.C

<http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/>

# CEIEC News

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## CEIEC PILOTS INSPIRE – ‘VIRTUAL’ LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

**This month, the CEIEC pilots its INSPIRE project with groups of early childhood students in Australia and Singapore.**

INSPIRE is an interactive, online databank of equitable, innovative early learning environments in Australia. It is designed to inspire and support equity and innovation in work with young children – a unique facility in the international field of early learning and children’s services.

INSPIRE will offer ‘virtual access’ to innovative early learning environments and to the teachers who created them. It features a suite of digital photos of innovative early learning environments; audio-visual case studies of creating and using such environments; and a

advanced) about the design of early learning environments. Reflective questions – targeted to different levels of knowledge and experience - assist visitors to understand the innovations in design they encounter and to help them to create similar learning environments.



INSPIRE offers information, inspiration and advice to organizations, groups and individuals. It will be accessible to training centres, by individual childcare centres and by individuals; and it will tailor its resources to meet the different needs of trainers, centres and self-directed individual learners.

INSPIRE will support the development of learning communities (including staff, parents, grandparents and other carers) around early childhood centres, inspiring them to improve their services by giving

*continued p2*

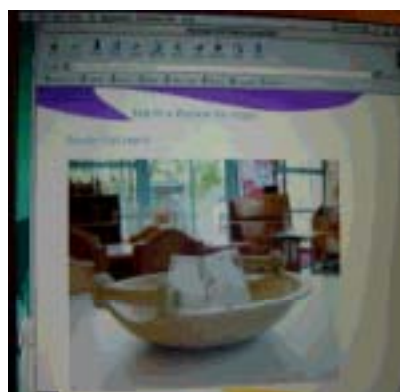
## REGULAR FEATURES

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## 'R-E-S-P-E-C-T – Find out what it means to me!'



*“RESPECT seeks effective ways to build equitable, collaborative and inclusive relationships between early childhood staff and parents or carers.”*

*“The CEIEC invites any early childhood centre in metropolitan Melbourne or Geelong to join a RESPECT program.”*

This month, the CEIEC launches its latest action research program – “RESPECT” (Researching Equitable Staff Parent Engagement in Children’s services Today).

*RESPECT* seeks effective ways to build equitable, collaborative and inclusive relationships between early childhood staff and parents or carers. The program is a collaboration between the CEIEC and the New Zealand Council of Educational Research and is funded by Research and Development and International Collaboration grants from the University of Melbourne.

*RESPECT* is an action research training program that uses research-based insights and practical steps to discover how staff and parents/carers in specific circumstances can build respectful relationships with each other.

The CEIEC invites any early childhood centre in metropolitan Melbourne or Geelong to join a *RESPECT* program. Centres should have parents and carers from diverse backgrounds and staff who want to improve their relationships with them.

A *RESPECT* program consists of an orientation meeting & interview, a custom-built action research training program and an evaluation meeting & interview. Each participating centre gains access to free research-based training and (including an experienced facilitator), & practical strategies to improve relationships between

staff and parents/carers. These strategies – like the program overall – will be socially and culturally relevant to each participating centre’s specific circumstances.

*RESPECT* programs are led by CEIEC Director A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton and CEIEC Research Fellow Dr. Patrick Hughes. Each *RESPECT* program builds on their joint research into relationships between staff and parents/carers that they have conducted over four years (see *CEIEC News* 2.1).

Interested? Contact Glenda:  
[gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au)

## INSPIRE (from p1)

up-to-date information, ideas and ‘virtual learning environments’ embodying international best practice. Its online, interactive capabilities make it accessible throughout Australia, helping to redress the current lack in rural, regional and remote areas of appropriate training resources geared to Australia’s developing social and cultural diversity.

*INSPIRE*’s development was funded by Faculty of Education’s Information Technology grant scheme and built staff from the Faculty’s Information Technology division. A CEIEC team - A/Prof. Glenda Mac Naughton, Ms Jane Page, Ms Gillian Williams and Ms Heather Lawrence - created *INSPIRE*’s content, with contributions from several early childhood centres and staff.

For more information, contact the *INSPIRE* team at:  
[education-ceiec@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:education-ceiec@unimelb.edu.au)

## Research with a difference .... to make a difference



*“The women who established the first baby health centres between 1917 and 1926 knew that the higher rate of infant mortality in these areas was preventable through improved education and were determined to give mothers in working class industrial suburbs access to free advice.”*

**Each edition of CEIEC News introduces the work of one of the Centre’s postgraduate students. This edition’s research student is Heather Sheard.**

Heather has recently begun a Masters Degree by Research, in which she will track the geographical, physical and administrative development of Baby Health Centres and regional circuits in Victoria between 1926 and 1950, highlighting the economic, political, and social influences on their growth and programs. She has a Commerce degree from the University of Melbourne, and recently left Springvale Secondary College, where she had been teaching for twenty five years!

Heather has a longstanding interest in Victoria's Baby Health Centres and wants to write a history of the baby health centre ‘movement:’ before the centres

disappear. The women who established the first baby health centres between 1917 and 1926 knew that the higher rate of infant mortality in these areas was preventable through improved education and were determined to give mothers in working class industrial suburbs access to free advice. The baby health centre staff used flexible methods to achieve their goal of equitable access to baby health services; and by 1950, there were 398 centres and 15 mobile country circuits and the infant mortality rate had fallen from 6.6 to 2.2 per cent – the lowest published rate in the world.

Heather believes that these significant contributions to the health and welfare of mothers and babies should be recorded and celebrated. She looks forward to contributing to that celebration and would like to hear from anyone willing to share their memories and memorabilia from that time.

## Training with a difference

CEIEC Director Glenda Mac Naughton ran two professional development seminars for the City of Geelong’s Early Childhood Services (May 6 and June 6), under the joint title, “Making a better world in the here and now through our everyday work: an action learning program”. Glenda visited S.A. Dept. of Education in March and June in an on-going professional development project - “Learning to learn”.

The CEIEC’s Heather Lawrence ran a professional development seminar at Wyndham Shire, west of Melbourne. Titled “Mind, body and spirit”.

## CEIEC links with “AEU’s Professional Voice”

*Professional Voice* is a quarterly online journal published by the Victorian branch of the Australian Education Union. Its editors asked the CEIEC to submit an article for its forthcoming edition, which has “Education for all” as its theme. *CEIEC News* readers should visit the AEU website, which contains advice on supporting children dealing with trauma, including ‘public trauma’ such as wars, bombings, etc. – a useful update to the first CEIEC Members’ Briefing (2002) that dealt with children’s responses to the events in the USA of 9/11.

AEU: [www.aeuvic.asn.au](http://www.aeuvic.asn.au)

*“The AEU website contains advice on supporting children dealing with trauma, including ‘public trauma’ such as wars, bombings, etc.”*

## CEIEC releases details of its 2003 P.L.I. program

*"CEIEC's 2003 PLI is an exciting chance to explore a range of issues and concerns to do with child abuse, children's rights and professional responsibilities."*

*Dr. Sharne Rolfe*

**This month, the CEIEC released details of its 2003 Professional Learning Institute (PLI), "Child abuse, children's rights and the early childhood professional: confronting roles and responsibilities".**

The PLI will run from 9.00 to 5.15 pm on 3 October in the Public Policy Lecture Theatre, Level 2, 234 Queensberry St., Melbourne. It is designed for people working with children and families, such as early childhood professionals, children's services advisors and students.

Session 1 (9.00 – 11.00) concerns *Child abuse and children's rights*, with Margaret Coady (CEIEC) and Jennifer Coate (President, Children's Court of Victoria). In session 2 (11.00 – 1.00), Sharne Rolfe and Jane Page (CEIEC) and Maree

Hammer (Monash University) discuss *Child abuse in developmental context*.

Session 3 (2.00 – 5.15) explores early childhood professionals' challenging roles and responsibilities around child abuse. Speakers will come from Victoria's Dept. of Human Services, St. Luke's Anglicare and Alys Keys Family Care. A panel discussion ends the day, with speakers from DHS Child Protection, VACCA and the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect discussing Aboriginal perspectives and inter-agency collaboration.

Cost: \$50 (\$25 for students and unwaged). Information: Sharne Rolfe [s.rolfe@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:s.rolfe@unimelb.edu.au) Margaret Coady [m.coady@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:m.coady@unimelb.edu.au)

## Champagne and social justice, anyone?

*"The series banner, 'Twilight & Champagne' has enticed people before... Researchers will discuss their work and ask how we can use it to imagine and practice early childhood curriculum in changing times."*

*Ms Kylie Smith*

**CEIEC and DARE (Dimensions of Action Research for Equity) have launched their third series of research seminars.** Under the banner, "Twilight & Champagne" that has enticed people to its predecessors, the third series is called "**Troubling truths, expanding possibilities: journeys to social justice in early childhood**".

The series should interest practitioners, researchers, pre-service trainers, students and policy-makers. Researchers will discuss their work and ask how we can use it to imagine and practice early childhood curriculum in changing times.

Dr. Karen Williams (University of

Wyoming) talked on June 17 about how parents and teachers in China and Mongolia see play and curriculum. On 2 July Miriam Giugni (U. of Western Sydney) presents "Epistemologies of difference in early childhood research"; Dr Sheralyn Campbell (Eden Childcare Centre) will present "Risky business in the bush" on 9 August; Dr. Mindy Blaise (RMIT University) will discuss her work on 3 September. For more seminars, see the next *CEIEC News*.

The seminars run between 6.00 and 7.30 p.m. at 234 Queensberry St., Melbourne. Each costs \$10; all 6 cost \$50. More information: Kylie Smith [kylieas@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:kylieas@unimelb.edu.au)

## NEW CEIEC PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

The CEIEC continues to be represented in diverse public forums. This is a selection of conference papers, presentations and publications from a particularly productive quarter.

Coady, M. (2003) "Can ethics trump the power of money? The role of codes of ethics in regulating advertising to children." Paper to the *Brandchild 2003 Kids Marketing Congress*.

Lawrence, H. (2003) "Challenging children." Paper to the S.A. Dept of Education conference, *Our children the future (3): Respect, Connect, Reflect*. May 2-5.

MacNaughton, G. (2003) "The possibilities and challenges of 'not knowing': early childhood teachers' knowledge and thinking in uncertain times." in Spodek, B. and O. Saracho, O. (Eds.) Studying Teachings in Early Childhood Settings. Information Age Publishing.

MacNaughton, G. (2003) "Eclipsing voice in research with young children." *Australian Journal of Early Childhood* 28 (1), pp. 36 – 43.

MacNaughton, G. (2003) "The place of doubts and uncertainties in early childhood pedagogies." Invited research seminar at the S.A. Dept of Education conference, *Our children the future (3): Respect, Connect, Reflect*. May 2-5.

MacNaughton, G. (2003) "From 'mountains of impossibility' to 'islands of possibility': children as citizens inspiring us to make early intervention matter now." A keynote address to *Beyond the rhetoric in early intervention: bridging the gap between education, health and community*

*services and crime prevention*. Adelaide. March 26-28.

MacNaughton, G. (2003) Invited contribution to the Commonwealth Government's "Think Tank of Workforce Issues in Children's Services." Canberra April 8-9

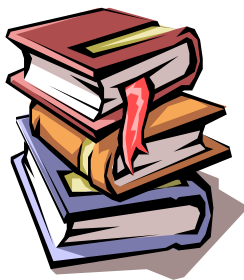
Newman, B. (2003) Review of Rethinking Gender in Early Childhood *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*, 28 (1), p44.

Page, J. (2003) "Reviews of Rabbits Wish and of Carr, M. Assessment in Early Childhood Settings." *Every Child*, 9 (2), pp 24/5.

Page, J. (2003) "Laying foundations in futures in the early childhood/primary years". Paper to the Australian Foresight Institute forum, *Futures in Education*. Swinburne Institute of Technology. April 7.

Page, J. & Hammer, M. (2003) Curriculum considerations: choices and emerging possibilities." Paper to the Australian Research in Early Childhood Education 11th Annual Conference. January 22-24.

Rolfe, S. (2003) "Relationships with babies and toddlers in child care and their current and future well-being: inspirations from attachment theory." A keynote address to the preconference symposium, "Birth – 3" at the S.A. Dept of Education conference, *Our children the future (3): Respect, Connect, Reflect*. May 2-5.





## CONFERENCE CALL 1/3

*“Conference Call” appears in each edition of CEIEC News. It keeps you up-to-date with outcomes & developments from the last CEIEC conference and the planning for the next one.*

*In a “Conference Call”, conference participants – past and future – can exchange views about issues linked with the conference. For example:*

- *If the last CEIEC conference inspired you to act – from reading a book to changing a regime – tell us.*
- *If the next CEIEC conference can help your work, tell us.*

*A “Conference Call” can:*

- *continue discussions from the last conference*
- *call for action on issues raised at the last conference*
- *suggest Special Interest Groups & Learning Circles for the next one.*

**A “Conference Call” puts you in touch with CEIEC’s constituency.**

Contact Patrick Hughes:  
[patrickh@deakin.edu.au](mailto:patrickh@deakin.edu.au)

### “Acting Together To Make A Difference: Honouring the child, honouring equity 3”

**CEIEC will run its third annual conference between Thursday 6 and Saturday 8 November 2003 at the Sydney Myer Asia Center in Melbourne. The conference title is “Acting Together To Make A Difference”.**

The last “Conference Call” described the aims of “Acting Together ...” and reported that the first “Call for Papers” was on the conference website:

[www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/confer03](http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/confer03)

The organizers have announced the second and final “Call for Papers”. Proposals are due on 28 July and should include a title, the name/s, affiliations and contact details of the presenter/s, an abstract or summary and an explanation of how the proposal addresses the aims of “Acting Together ...”. The proposal should also describe the nature of the content (e.g. theory, practice, research) and the preferred format (e.g. workshop, seminar, poster, panel). The full details are on the website.

The conference website also describes how to contact a CEIEC mentor if you’d like some help to submit a proposal; and it invites suggestions for Learning

Circles during the conference.

“Acting Together ...” features the CEIEC’s orientation to grass-roots change and its characteristic diversity of events, including seminars, workshops, panels, screenings and stalls.

To date, the keynote and featured speakers are Prof. Judy Atkinson, Senator Bob Brown, Richard Franklin, Dr. Brian Kean, Karen Martin and A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton.

CEIEC would like to hear from individuals, groups and organizations wishing to run a stall at the conference and/or to launch books, videos, DVDs, CD-ROMs, etc. that relate to the conference theme and aims.

For information, please contact:  
[education-ceiec@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:education-ceiec@unimelb.edu.au)

#### DRAFT PROGRAM

##### **Thursday 6 November**

17.30 Registration, light buffet

18.30 Welcome by Wurundjeri elder; opening; keynote.

##### **Friday 7 November**

8.30 – 9.30 Registration

9.30 – 17.30 Sessions.

17.30 Champagne!

19.00 Conference dinner.

##### **Saturday 8 November**

8.30 – 9.30 Registration

9.30 – 17.30 Sessions.

17.30 Wine and cheese!

##### **Sunday 9 November**

11.00 Brunch and Action Plans

14.30 – 15.00 Closing session.

#### NEW FAME!!

The CEIEC’s conference website ([www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/confer](http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/confer)) is now in the National Library of Australia’s PANDORA archive. Access is via the Library’s online catalogue.

## “Look what happens!” Introducing equity into teacher education in the USA

The 2002 CEIEC conference inspired Dr. Sharon Solloway and Dr. Janice Kroeger to “honor the child, honor diversity” in their teacher education courses.

Sharon used ‘mindfulness’ to support social justice in elementary classrooms in two ways: in one assignment, the student analyzes how self-selected readings associated with the course content have affected his/her thinking; and in another, the student undertakes breath meditation for 8 weeks and keeps a journal of their experiences of ‘mindfulness’ outside of that meditation.

This is risky practice! Self-evaluation challenges the teacher-student relationship by allowing students to decide what counts as knowledge; and meditation is hardly standard practice in teacher education! However, students have said that their understandings are deeper, because they’ve had the chance to think about their thinking; and novice teachers welcomed their first chance to decide what counts as knowledge.

Janice asked her students to document current education policies that concern children



Janice's class listens to a guest speaker

from poor families and to discover what poor families themselves want for their children; and she brought in guest speakers from a local Afro-Centric School. Each student worked with parents and many improved their ability to work more effectively in communities of color. Students worked with parents to campaign against proposed budget cuts to the Head Start program. Head Start teachers’ contracts forbade them from lobbying for their program; and parents’ ability to lobby was limited by high mobility, low voter registration and lack of relevant information.

Students helped parents to gain a local voice by collecting over 250 signatures to a petition and 35 letters from parents of Head Start children; informing parents how to contact Congressional representatives and workforce committees; and sending children’s drawings about Headstart to Congress.

Dr. Janice Kroeger is at Kent State University, USA. Dr. Sharon Solloway is at Bloomsburg University, USA

## “Revolutionary Program Planning”

The Revolutionary Planning Group started at CEIEC’s 2002 Conference. The last “Conference Call” reported its work to date. Yarrow Andrew gives an update.

We want to revolutionize planning by involving children, parents and unqualified staff and

using their time productively; and we want to use planning to enrich children’s lives, document their *significant* learning and support their first language, if this is not English. “We” includes practitioners, tertiary teachers and local government representatives.



Revolutionizing planning!

At our recent quarterly meeting (22 June), we discussed how we might contribute to the AECA’s Draft Curriculum Document. We also continued to adapt the New Zealand project, ‘Learning Stories’ for use in local childhood settings. The ‘Learning Stories’ approach to planning benefits our relationships with children (rather than the opposite!) and has inspired many parents to help write stories for their children. We are discussing new ways to plan with a Children’s Services Advisor and we see this as a first step to seeking support from all levels of the children’s services bureaucracies. We invite all members of the early childhood field to bring their different perspectives our group.

### NEXT MEETING

12<sup>th</sup> October at 2.00 p.m.  
Booroondarra k/g, Richmond.

### CONTACT

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[kookak@vicnet.net.au](mailto:kookak@vicnet.net.au)