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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 LAUNCHES 3-YEAR PROJECT ON CHILDREN, 'RACE' AND CULTURE

CEIEC Director, A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton, has secured a Discovery Grant from the Australian Research Council (ARC) to fund a 3-year investigation of how young children understand cultural and racial diversity.

Glenda's investigation will track the emerging understandings of culture and 'race' in forty culturally diverse children between 3 and 5 years old.

Australia's cultural and 'racial' diversity continues to generate debate and young children's experiences in their preschool years influence their understandings of 'race' and culture. However, the Australian data on just how this happens are scarce and poorly theorized and so there are no foundations for an inclusive curriculum. This project is uniquely placed to

generate such foundations and to lead international thinking about social justice & education.

Glenda's success is a coup for the CEIEC. Competition for ARC research funds is always fierce, but this year, the funds available and the number of successful applicants are exceptionally low.

The project starts in May 2004. If you wish to be involved and you work with children who will be 3 years old by mid-2004 and who live in Melbourne or regional Victoria, contact Glenda: gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au



A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton

CEIEC provides training for City of Melbourne

The CEIEC has been awarded research funds by the City of Melbourne for work in 2004.

The funds support two projects.
1. *Children's voices and diversity in the early childhood curriculum: a collaborative action learning project* will support early childhood staff in the City of Melbourne wishing to involve children from linguistically and

culturally diverse backgrounds in developing programs and curricula. (G. MacNaughton, K. Smith, H. Lawrence.)

2. *Equitable staff-parent engagement in children's services* will develop equitable and inclusive approaches to relationships between staff and parents/carers.

(G. MacNaughton, P. Hughes, K. Smith, H. Lawrence)

CEIEC Visiting Scholars

Ms Marianna Egedal was a CEIEC Visiting Scholar between 1-9 November 2003.

Marianna works at the Gentofte Seminarium (Institute of Social Educators) in Denmark, where she lectures in social studies, communication, organization and management. During her stay, she met CEIEC postgraduate students and attended the CEIEC conference, where she presented a paper ... and an impromptu magic show!



Marianna's magic! The CEIEC's Jane Page (r) isn't so sure!

... and less formally

CEIEC was host to **Ms Tian Zhe** and **Ms Wei Jing** from the Chinese Welfare Institute (CWI), who attended a customized 12-week Professional Development Program. Their visit was part of CEIEC's continuing relationship with the CWI.

Ms Reiko Koike, from Tokyo University, visited CEIEC in December. She is writing a paper on anti-bias curriculum in Australia as part of her final year's studies in early childhood.

.... and finally. CEIEC has hosted its first student on a Work Experience placement. **Ms Hanna Cruz** (St. Aloysius College, Melbourne) worked in the CEIEC office, yet still offered to return! Thanks, Hanna and good luck.

New Doctor in the house!

CEIEC postgraduate student Kylie Smith is now a doctor!

Kylie featured in the first edition of "CEIEC News" (Autumn 2002). Her doctoral research explored how to acknowledge culture, class, gender and race while observing young children. Congratulations, **Dr. Smith!**

"Santa ..." is reprinted

The current edition of *Anti-Bias Connections* in NSW includes the CEIEC's first Equity Issues Paper, "Santa in early childhood services – what's the fuss?".* *Anti-Bias Connections* Editor **Alicia Flack** reports.

Anti-Bias Connections is a newsletter about anti-bias and social justice issues that goes twice-yearly to children's services and peak organizations in NSW. The newsletter includes articles (such as "Santa ...!"), news of upcoming conferences around social justice issues, advice on using children's books with an anti-bias/social justice approach, etc.

A popular feature of *Anti-Bias Connections* is "Shared stories" - stories from early childhood staff about anti-bias/social justice issues in their services. At the 2002 CEIEC conference, I heard people's stories about social justice issues and wondered how Early Childhood staff in NSW could share their stories about social justice. "Shared Stories" is the result and it attracts lots of contributions.

* The CEIEC produced the "Santa ..." paper in December 2002 to support early childhood services that wish to review their approach to festivals.

Research with a difference to make a difference

The CEIEC has three major research programs:

1. Professional Learning for Equity and Innovation in Early Childhood

2. Children's Rights, Development, Abuse and Neglect

3. Children's Constructions of Equity and Social Justice.

Research students can contribute to the CEIEC's research either through direct involvement in those major programs; or through projects they initiate that support the CEIEC's mission or its programs.

Each edition of *CEIEC News* introduces the work of one of the Centre's postgraduate students. In this edition, for change, we look at the range and diversity of postgraduate research being done under the CEIEC's umbrella. (In the next edition, we'll revert to featuring a postgraduate student.)

The postgraduate program is an aspect of CEIEC's work that is growing in importance and extent. At present, fifteen postgraduate students are associated with the CEIEC; a further four are on leave of absence; and another four people are awaiting the outcome of their application to enter a Masters or Doctoral program.

2003 has been a good year for completions. Kylie Smith has become Doctor Smith (see p. 2) and Ms Hyacinth Kukemala received her MA by research (see "CEIEC News" 2.3). Ms Pat

Jewell (MA) and Ms Berenice Nyland (PhD) also completed their postgraduate studies this year.

CEIEC postgraduate research addresses a wide range of topics. Current doctoral projects include indigenous issues in the early childhood curriculum; rethinking assessment and planning; relations between teachers and students; the practicum; reflective practice, cultural diversity and gender.

Current Masters projects include post-lingually deaf children; the history of infant welfare centres; parent involvement in early childhood centres; men in early childhood education; and links between children's, parents' and teachers' knowledge/s.

For more information on current research and for advice on enrollment, contact A/Prof Glenda MacNaughton: gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au

"Identities & innovations: shaping better worlds through early childhood education"

16-19 July Melbourne

Proposals due:
26 February 2003

Contact: Janet Treweek
education-ceiec@unimelb.edu.au

Information:
www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/news

CEIEC hosts PECERA in 2004

The CEIEC will host the 5th international conference of the Pacific Early Childhood Education Research Assocn. (PECERA)

The conference themes are:

1. Creating new images of children, new early childhood programs, new policy and new professional learning and development for a better world.
2. Researching for better worlds with children, families, communities and colleagues.
3. Using new and alternative research methods and strategies

in early childhood education.

Keynote speakers include Dr. Julie Kaomea (University of Hawaii), Prof. Jiaxiong Xhu (East China Normal University) and Ms Marcelle Townsend-Jones (Southern Cross University).

CEIEC will run a Study Day associated with the conference: "Identities and innovations: shaping better worlds through early childhood education".

Look for more information in the next edition of "CEIEC News".

Equity and Diversity: a response to "Beliefs and Understandings".

Copies:

Janet Treweek:

j.treweek@unimelb.edu.au

Beliefs and Understandings: a conversation about an Early Childhood Curriculum Framework

Copies:

AECA (Victoria)

P.O. Box 2080,

Richmond Sth.

Victoria 3121

An early childhood curriculum CEIEC joins the 'conversation'.

***Equity and Diversity (2003)* is the CEIEC's contribution to a current 'conversation' about early childhood curriculum in Victoria.**

The conversation was initiated by a pamphlet - *Beliefs and Understandings: a conversation about an Early Childhood Curriculum Framework*. Its authors are a group of early childhood people in Victoria. They present what they believe are early childhood education's core assumptions; they suggest that these assumptions could be the foundations of an early childhood curriculum in Victoria; and they invite responses.

CEIEC responded with *Equity &*

Diversity. It was written by several CEIEC people, including some postgraduate students, who drew on their familiarity with current early childhood literature and research. *Equity and Diversity* introduces current thinking in early childhood education about issues affecting equity and diversity, such as gender, race and class; and current ideas about uniform curricula. A workshop at the CEIEC conference discussed and refined a draft of the document.

(The Victorian government and the Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies met the cost of producing *Beliefs and Understandings*.)

NEW CEIEC PAPERS AND PUBLICATIONS

This just a selection of recent CEIEC-linked publications.

- Dau, E. (ed.) (2003) *Enhancing children's development*. Melbourne: Tertiary Press.

Elizabeth Dau's (CEIEC Research Fellow) new book includes several chapters by authors linked with the Centre.

- MacNaughton, G. & Williams, G. (2004) *Teaching techniques: choices in theory and practice*. (2nd edn.) Pearson Education & Open University Press.

The 2nd edn. of Glenda's and Gillian's book is co-published in January in the UK and the USA.

- MacNaughton, G. (2004) *Shaping early childhood: learners, curriculum and contexts*. Open University Press.

Glenda's latest book (published in January) includes contributions by several authors linked with the CEIEC.

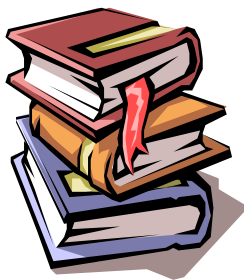
- Seckold, C. & Campbell, S. (2003) "Everybody helps on the farm: gender issues in rural early childhood settings." *Every Child*. 9 (2).

Sheralyn Campbell, co-author and CEIEC practitioner-researcher, examines gender in the bush.

- Campbell, S., MacNaughton, G., Page, J. & Rolfe, S. (2004) "Beyond quality, advancing social justice and equity: interdisciplinary explorations of working for equity and social justice in early childhood education." *Advances in Early Education and Day Care*. Vol. 13.

- *International Journal of Equity and Innovation in Early Childhood* 1 (1)

The first edition (out now) of the CEIEC's online, peer-reviewed journal includes several articles by CEIEC-linked authors, e.g. Mindy Blaise, Brian Newman.





CONFERENCE CALL 2/1

“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

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

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

The conference was previewed in a special, stand-alone edition (1.5) of “Conference Call” at the end of October. An edition of “Conference Call” appeared each day, giving program updates, changes, etc.

When the CEIEC’s Jane Page sought participants’ reactions, she let a genie out of the bottle!



Judy Baird (CSRDO, Maroondah Council, Melbourne)

Thanks for another fabulous conference. As always, it was stimulating and challenging. Thanks for all your hard work.



Judy Baird

Catharine Hydon (Multicultural Resource Centre, Melbourne).

This is a good environment to share what you know to be true in your place. It doesn’t have to be the answer for everybody but if you present with somebody else who shares information about their place, together you’ve got some insight for other people.

I think the collaborative presentations are a great idea, because they can bring in people like early career practitioners and practitioners who are doing innovative stuff in rural areas.

Collaborative presentations are especially good for women in early childhood. They may think that what they’re doing isn’t good enough to talk about, but when you get up with someone else, your message becomes more legitimate.

Alicia Flack (Resource and Training Officer, Lady Gowrie Child Care, Sydney)

WOW, what a weekend, what a conference, what a wonderful group of people, what great presenters, what fantastic ‘behind the scenes’ people, what an amazing conference, what a lot I have taken away with me.

I feel so much more confident to take larger steps in my EC professional (early childhood) life as well as in my personal life. Thank you.

4th CEIEC
CONFERENCE
11 – 14 Nov. 2004
(Melbourne)

*“Pushing the
boundaries for
change”*
(‘Honouring the child,
honouring equity’ 4)

The conference themes:

1. “Pushing boundaries to respect equity, diversity, children’s voices and intergenerational justice”
2. “Pushing boundaries to honour diverse approaches to creating a better world with children”

The conference will feature keynotes, workshops, learning circles, special interest groups and posters, together with an Action Planning day to make our plans and dreams come true!

A ‘Call for Papers’ is on the conference web site:
www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/conf04

Proposals due: July 28.
To collaborate with others, try making a “Conference Call”!

“All these risks make the CEIEC conference about life, not just about early childhood education. It’s very exciting!”
(Miriam Guigni on this year’s conference)

Miriam Guigni (University of Western Sydney)

The CEIEC Conference offers a safe space for really practical discussions and it features a huge amount of indigenous wisdom, which is unique. We’ve embraced so many perspectives in that way. As well as the full range of people in the early childhood field, we have people from outside it, such as people from political parties. I think that’s really important because you have got to get political to make any sort of change.

Collaborative presentations move us away from the individualism that people often associated with academia. The conference fosters collaboration – intense sessions, but lots of time for talking! Presenters engage with their audience and people are willing to engage and to see things differently.



(L–R) The CEIEC’s Merlyne Cruz, Sharne Rolfe, Jane Page, Margaret Coady at the opening ceremony.

Whiteness – the group

At the conference, several people discussed establishing a Discussion Group around Whiteness. The CEIEC’s Karina Davis reports.

Whiteness has emerged as an issue in anti-racist and postcolonial studies. I’ve become interested in it through my doctoral research. Interested?

Contact me:
k.davis@optusnet.com.au
or Kathy Kent:
kkent@cqd.vic.gov.au

Action research from the ground up: real collaboration and real action, for real change! **Brian Newman** (NMIT, Melbourne)

Wendy Lee’s presentation on Learning Stories At the 2002 CEIEC Conference inspired some early childhood practitioners who had been talking about these issues for a few years. We convened a Special Interest Group at the conference, which began a year of excitement, meetings, emails and change!

A Revolutionary/Revolutionising Planning Group is on its ‘long march’! We’ve met to discuss our work, to share frustrations and ideas and to support each other. We’ve responded to the proposal to create an early childhood curriculum in Victoria, discussed with our Department of Human Services how their Regulations are interpreted and we’ve written about our experiences. Most importantly we’ve changed how we work, in ways that have excited staff, children and families.

We told our story at this year’s CEIEC Conference to encourage more people to try new ways to plan and document their work. Our link with the CEIEC and the Conference has enabled us to build the group as well as providing informal and theoretical support for our efforts to plan early childhood programs that are relevant to children and their communities.
Contact:

yaz@netconnect.com.au
(Dust off your red beret first!)

