

Spring 2004

Vol. 3, Issue 3

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

CEIEC

News

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

INSIDE:

New CEIEC Visiting
Scholars p4

Congratulations Diana
p4

Working with children
who challenge p5

CEIEC Public Lecture in
Singapore p5

Making children's voices count

A CEIEC team recently completed a 12 week capacity-building, action learning project with the City of Melbourne Council.

Council staff who participated in the project - *Children's voices and diversity in early childhood curriculum: a collaborative action learning project* - reflected critically on their current understandings and practices concerning the place of children's voices in their curriculum. They then used current research and thinking to include the voices of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Six children's centres within the City of Melbourne participated in the project. Staff in these centres began to consult with the children they work with (from birth to five years) about what they want to happen in their curriculum and routines.

As part of the project, these staff reflected critically on questions such as:

- "How can I listen to and respect children's voices - especially those of less dominant children - and include their interests in my program?"
- "How can I use children's voices to balance work, play and individual rhythms?"

Participants said that the project had, indeed, helped them to reflect critically on how their work affects children. The project also gave participating staff opportunities to develop networks outside of the services they work in.



Some participants' voices!

"I never would have thought that such young children could have a voice and its been fascinating watching these children who really do know what they need and most of the time when they need it and they can and do tell you in no uncertain terms!"

"The project has provided me with the opportunity to network with other early childhood teachers who are interested in how and where children's voices are woven into the early childhood curriculum. It has provided me with time and space to discuss, reflect and act on new ideas and strategies."

**More on children's voices - p2:
"Increasing child-centred practice"**

REGULAR FEATURES

"Training with a
difference" pp2, 3

"Research with a
difference" p3

"Conference Call" p6

TRAINING WITH A DIFFERENCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Dear Glenda & Merlyne
Greetings from Korea.
Glenda, thank you for your hospitality and your talk on parent involvement. Merlyne, thank you for organizing and guiding our visit.

Please give our special thanks & warm regards to Ms. Jane Page, Dr. Patrick Hughes, Ms. Heather Lawrence, & the directors of ECE centres we visited. It was great to meet all of them. The older I get, the more I appreciate meeting nice people and devoted professionals.

Wishing you the very best at home & work.

With Special thanks,
Mugyeong



Would you like to discuss a program of professional development custom-designed for your organisation?

Contact the CEIEC's
A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton:
gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au

A program for colleagues from South Korea

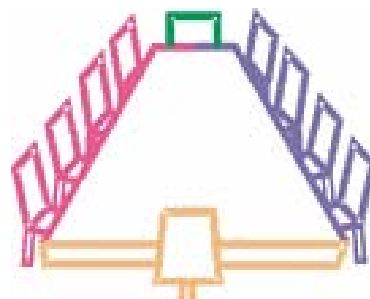
The CEIEC ran a custom-built study program in August for a group of early childhood teachers and centre directors from South Korea.

The study program mixed workshops and field trips. Various members of CEIEC led the workshops, which addressed various aspects of professional development, using evidence and experience from CEIEC research programs.

Group Leader **Dr. Mugyeong Moon** subsequently wrote this about the program:

"First of all, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the wonderful and valuable learning experiences the Korean group had in Melbourne. I gained very positive feedbacks on our study visit program organized by the CEIEC. Many directors and teachers who couldn't join the study visit this year, urge me to take them to Australia next year.

"Reflecting on our visit to ECE centres in Melbourne, I sincerely wish to learn more about Australian ECE programs (especially using natural materials, teacher training, written communication with parents, etc.), so I could introduce your ECE program to Korea in the near future."



Increasing child-centred practice

A CEIEC team is running a program of professional development for the City of Melbourne Council to make children's voices count.

Titled *Increasing child-centred practice*, this collaborative, capacity-building action research project is establishing Council officers' current awareness of child-centred practice, raising their awareness and promoting debate about the nature of child-centred practice.

Increasing child-centred practice is part of the Council's overall strategy ("A Great Start"*) for children and families. It enables and encourages participants to inspire and support each other as they develop skills, knowledge and change that will persist after the project's end.

The project supports Council officers who wish to improve their current child-centred practices. It encourages & enables them to:

- highlight and enhance current child-centred practices in the Council
- embed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Council policies & practices
- improve staff capacity to include children's ideas and perspectives in their work.

Increasing child-centred practice is building a clearinghouse of information about practical approaches to child-centred practice for Council officers to use in their work with and for young children and their families.



"I will listen to children's voices as they play, particularly in those situations where silences arise. By seeing the personal in terms of the political, I hope to examine equity issues within those silences."

Research with a difference to make a difference

Each edition of **CEIEC News** introduces the work of one of the Centre's postgraduate students. This edition's research student is **Margaret Burnell**.

I am in the first year of a part-time Masters Degree by Research having graduated in 2003 with a B. ECS (Hons.) from the University of Melbourne. During my BECS course, I did a research project into silences in the play of children from culturally diverse groups, for which I received the Early Childhood Education Special Research Project Award (2003).

Children use silence in powerful and resistant ways as they make sense of their social settings and two influences have encouraged me to explore this topic. First, in my work with young children, I've been disturbed by the many moments of silence that exist and pass without the child's voice being heard. A background

in developmental theory has meant that I have struggled to understand silences that speak of marginalisation and rejection. Secondly, learning about inclusive curriculum during my undergraduate years opened my eyes to the possibility of new frameworks within which to practice. Engaging with both theory and practice allows me to think through those moments of inequity for children, and through the curriculum that I offer as an early childhood teacher.

My interest in silences focuses now on issues of cultural diversity. This is integral to providing an early childhood curriculum that embraces the many cultures of our Australian population. In my research, I will listen to children's voices as they play, particularly in those situations where silences arise. By seeing the personal in terms of the political, I hope to examine equity issues within those silences.

More 'Training with a Difference' ... for NZ colleagues

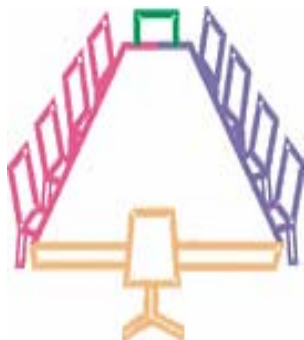
The CEIEC ran a one-day professional development program on 14th September for the Tauranga Regional Free Kindergarten Association (TRFKA) from New Zealand.

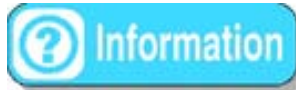
The program was a custom-built mix of classroom-based sessions and visits to centres. CEIEC researchers and trainers addressed various aspects of professional development, using evidence and experience from CEIEC research programs.

There were three classroom-based sessions. In "Leading change through research", three

CEIEC postgraduate research students (Karina Davis, Lisa McKay-Brown and Louise Taylor) discussed how to use research to support change processes. In "Making children's voices count", A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton and Dr. Kylie Smith discussed their recent research in South Australia, Victoria and the ACT; and in "The growth of empathy in young children", Ms Jane Page discussed her continuing research into this topic.

The afternoon's visits to selected centres rounded-off a satisfying day for all concerned.





Would you like to know more about the CEIEC's Visiting Scholar program?

*Contact the CEIEC's Ms. Jane Page:
j.page@unimelb.edu.au*

Jane would be especially pleased to hear from people who wish to be Visiting Scholars at the CEIEC.

CEIEC currently hosting two Visiting Scholars

Professor Anne Smith is visiting the CEIEC between October and December 2004.

Anne is Director of the Children's Issues Centre, a research and advocacy centre at the University of Otago in New Zealand, a position she has held since 1995. Her research emphasises children as social actors, interpreters and participants and her research interests include social cognition, friendships and situated learning, and with her CIC colleagues, she has developed ways to study children's experiences of a variety of contexts.

Anne received an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Oulu Finland in 1998; received the McKenzie Award for Innovative Research in Education in 1997, and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1995.

Anne's many publications about education include her book, *Understanding Children's Development*, now in its fourth edition.

Dr. Mariani Md Nor is visiting the CEIEC between October 2004 and March 2005.

Mariani works in the Dept. Educational Psychology and Counseling at the University of Malaysia and her research interests are child and adolescent psychology; and cognitive and educational psychology, on which she has published and presented papers to diverse audiences.

Mariani has been a consultant to the National Association for Early Childhood Education for Malaysia and is the author of a 2003 National report on Education Indicators in Malaysia. This was published as part of the UNESCO/OECD program, World Education Indicators.

Her recent research has examined young children's transition from home through preschool to early primary school. Mariani has also examined children's images of mathematics, as well as studying quality in Primary Schools.

Congratulations, Diana!

CEIEC postgraduate student Diana Hetherington has been awarded the Pre-school Teacher of the Year award for 2004.

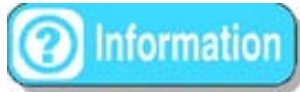
The award is sponsored by the AEU and the Herald-Sun. There were 49 nominees and four finalists and the winner was announced at a gala dinner at the Regent Theatre Ballroom.

From everyone at CEIEC - "Congratulations, Diana!"



Diana with Mary Bluett, Rosalie Kinson and Shayne Quinn from the AEU.

Working with children who challenge



*Want to know more about this project?
Want to discuss how to create a similar project in your organisation or area?*

*Contact the CEIEC's Dr. Kylie Smith:
kylieas@unimelb.edu.au*

A CEIEC team recently completed a capacity-building action learning and evaluation project for the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

The project - *Children Who Challenge* - was part of the Shire's Community Plan, "Vision 2020" and sought to provide early childhood teachers with support and training about children with challenging behaviours.

The CEIEC team ran eight workshops with thirteen early childhood staff. Each session enabled and encouraged participants to reflect critically on their work with children who challenge by exploring specific issues in the context of some broad questions.

Meeting all children's needs within the classroom places increasing stress on early childhood teachers, as one participant stated: *Every second day at the beginning of the year,*

I spent a lot of time in tears and felt I couldn't talk about it. ...Going to the (CEIEC) group has helped because I could see that others were experiencing the same issues and I could talk about it there. ('Jessica')

After completing the project, participants said that it had increased their desire and their capacity to work with children with challenging behaviours. It increased their knowledge of contemporary thinking about why challenging behaviours appear; expanded their range of responses to such behaviours; increased their confidence when meeting children with challenging behaviours; and increased their ability to reduce stress in their classrooms.

The children were stressed, we were stressed and parents were becoming stressed and concerned about the behaviour. (The CEIEC program) has made it much better working with the children and everyone has been more relaxed. ('Jessica')

CEIEC PUBLIC LECTURE IN SINGAPORE: "MAKING BETTER WORLDS"

CEIEC Director A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton gave a public lecture in Singapore on September 23, at the invitation of the Singapore Institute of Management.

Over 150 people came to the Institute to hear Glenda present, "Making better worlds: why early childhood curriculum matters to civil society in the 21st century."

In her presentation, Glenda linked curriculum, civil society and citizenship. She drew on the

CEIEC's research and professional development work about involving staff, parents and children in planning programs and making policies.





CONFERENCE CALL 4/4

“Pushing the boundaries to make a difference: Honouring the child, honouring equity 4”

“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

CEIEC will run its fourth annual conference between Thursday 11 and Sunday 14 November 2004 at the Sidney Myer Asia Centre in Melbourne. The conference title is “Pushing the boundaries to make a difference”.

This “Conference Call” outlines the program, introduces the keynote speakers and previews some of the sessions.

A stand-alone “Conference Call 4/5” (late October) will be a full conference guide; and *CEIEC News 3.4* (late December) will carry a comprehensive report of the conference.

Read all about it ... as it happens!

Conference Call will be published daily (Friday to Sun) at the conference.

Each edition will feature news of the day’s events, profiles of keynote speakers and interviews with participants. It will also note any program changes, room changes, etc.

Participants: make your own *Conference Call*. Lost something? Want to start a Special Interest Group? Need a lift? Want to network? Make a *Conference Call* about it! Just leave a note at the Registration Desk before 5.00 each day.

Draft Conference Program

Thursday 11 November
17.30 Registration, light buffet
18.30 Welcome
Wurundgeri elder
19.00 Formal opening
19.30 Keynote 1
Ms. Moira Rayner
20.30 Evening finishes

Friday 12 November
08.30 Registration
09.00 Sessions
13.00 Lunch
14.00 Keynote 2
Prof. Gunilla Dahlberg
15.00 Sessions
16.30 Keynote 3
Dr. Michel Vandebroeck
17.30 Champagne, my dears!
19.00 Conference dinner

Saturday 13 November
08.30 Registration
09.00 Sessions
13.00 Lunch
14.00 Keynote 4
Dr. Cairo Arafat
15.45 Keynote workshops
TBA Keynote 5
Senator Bob Brown

Sunday 14 November
09.00 Registration
09.30 Sessions & Brunch
12.30 CEIEC Advisory Group
13.30 Special Interest Groups
14.30 Closing Session
15.00 Conference finishes



An international early childhood conference with a difference to make a difference

CONFERENCE AIMS

To be a conference for all who care for and work with young children

To push the boundaries that stop us from creating better worlds with and for children.

To push boundaries so that we can:

- Respect diversity, equity and social justice in our pedagogies, curricula, research, policy and practice.
- Hear and respect children's voices.

CONFERENCE FEATURES

Keynotes

Workshops

Special Interest Groups

Learning Circles

Networking

Exhibits

Web Site:

www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/CEIEC/2004



A cosmic range of sessions!

CEIEC's 2004 conference will feature more sessions than any of its three predecessors; and the range of topics is cosmic!

The next, stand-alone edition of Conference Call will present the full program - this is just a taste of it.

The conference theme - pushing boundaries to make a difference - is represented strongly. Several sessions explore **teachers pushing the boundaries**. For example: *Inclusive curriculum*; *The marginalized curriculum*; *Living together - is arts education the key?*

Broad policy issues are addressed in sessions such as, *Children's voices influencing public policy*; *Child labour in Nepal*; and *Public discourse, private practice & social justice in early childhood education*; *Exploring 'No Child Left Behind' in the USA*; and *A Head Start for Australia*.

The boundaries of **staff-parent relations** are pushed in several sessions, including, *Listening to the voices of parents and children*; *Involving parents who speak English as a second language*; and *Child and family support hubs*.

Pushing boundaries around **Indigenous peoples' concerns** is the focus of, for example, *Issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families entering preschool and school*;

Among our Keynote Speakers

Prof. Gunilla Dahlberg

Prof. Dahlberg works at the Inst. of Education, Stockholm. Her keynote will explore how best to create early childhood environments that welcome 'the Other' and respect difference.

Ms Moira Rayner

Ms. Rayner is acting Commissioner for Equal Opportunity, Western Australia and is writing *The A-Z of Children's Rights* (Amnesty UK). In 2000, as the first Children's Rights Commissioner for London, she drafted the Greater London Authority's first Children's Strategy

Dr. Michel Vandenbroeck

Dr. Vandenbroeck is a co-founder and steering group member of the European network DECET (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training). Michel has a long association with Gent University's Training, Resource and Research Centre for Early Childhood Education, which is the leading training centre for Flanders.

Framing contemporary Indigenous issues in early childhood education; and *Repositioning Maori at the centre of early childhood education*.

We push the boundaries of **non-traditional roles** in, *Gender performances in a kindergarten*; *Queering home corner*; & *Why is 'Play School' on the news?*

Finally, we push boundaries of **research practice** in, *Children's participation in research*; *Researching for change*; and *Documentation dialogue*.

..... and there's more!

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.