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

# CEIEC News

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

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## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

**The CEIEC has made a submission to Victoria's Human Rights Consultation Committee.**

The Victorian State government established the Committee earlier this year and in June, the Committee released a community consultation paper, 'Have your say about Human Rights in Victoria'. The preamble to the paper asserts a 'need to ensure human rights are valued and protected and that issues of inequality and disadvantage are demonstrably addressed by the justice system' (p.1).

The CEIEC submission applauds the State government and the Human Rights Consultation Committee for releasing the paper and highlights three weaknesses in it.

1. The paper lacks any reference to children's views on human rights and to ways to elicit their views.
2. The paper lacks any substantive discussion of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and of its role in any discussion of human rights.
3. The paper fails to pay specific attention to children's rights, subsuming them instead within a universal framework of human (i.e. adults') rights.

The CEIEC submission makes two proposals:

1. Victoria's state government should create an independent Children's Rights Commissioner.

to act as a political voice for children and to advocate for their interests and rights.

2. Any Human Rights Charter in Victoria should specifically address children as a group with specific needs and rights.

For a copy of the CEIEC submission and/or for information about further developments, contact:

Dr Karina Davis  
[daviskm@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:daviskm@unimelb.edu.au)  
Ms Margaret Coady  
[m.coady@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:m.coady@unimelb.edu.au)

### RESPECT

in Melbourne

**RESPECT** (Researching Equitable Staff Parent Engagement in Children's services Today) is an action research-based training program for early childhood centres in the City of Melbourne.

The CEIEC invites early childhood centres in the City of Melbourne to attend the orientation meeting of **RESPECT** in Melbourne.

**23 August  
6.30 - 7.30 p.m.  
104 A'Beckett Street,  
Melbourne**

Full Article: p 3.

**'Start with the child in mind'**

**CEIEC Director A/Prof Glenda MacNaughton spoke to 60 South Australian early childhood staff on July 27<sup>th</sup>.**

Glenda discussed ways to build a rights-based approach to early childhood curriculum, drawing on CEIEC projects and on contemporary scholarship.

'Starting with the child in mind' was an initiative by *Future Links* (which fosters cross sector links in early childhood services in Adelaide's northern suburbs) and *Learning to Learn* (a statewide professional learning initiative). Glenda presents regularly at such forums as a Learning to Learn 'Project Colleague'.

To learn more about *Learning to Learn* and to see the diverse resources with which it supports critical inquiry into teaching and learning:

[www.learningtolearn.sagov.au](http://www.learningtolearn.sagov.au)

### CONGRATULATIONS, DOCTORS!

**Michelle Ortlipp and Karina Davis are the latest CEIEC postgraduate students to receive Doctorates.**

Michelle Ortlipp's thesis is, 'Tertiary Supervisors' Perceptions of Assessment in the Early Childhood Curriculum'; Karina Davis's thesis is, 'Reconceptualising Early Childhood Curriculum About Indigenous Australians'. Each receives her Doctorate at a graduation ceremony in August.

To complete a PhD is a massive achievement, so let's give a big CEIEC cheer of congratulations for Doctor Ortlipp and Doctor Davis!

### *Twilight and Champagne Seminars 2005*



### **Citizenship and social justice: interdisciplinary perspectives on childhood**

The CEIEC and Dare (Directions in Action Research for Equity) are running another in their popular series of seminars on early childhood research.

On July 19, **Jennifer Sumsion** (Macquarie University) introduced 'From Whitlam to economic rationalism and beyond'. On August 16, **Sue Atkinson** (University of Melbourne) will discuss 'Indigenous elders and early childhood education and care'. Later speakers include **Merlyne Cruz** (University of Melbourne) and **Africa Taylor** (University of Western Sydney)

Each seminar runs from 6.00 - 7.30 p.m. in the University of Melbourne's Alice Hoy Building, Parkville. The series attracts practitioners, policy-makers and researchers.

Each seminar costs \$10, including the light refreshments that give the series its name!

For more information, contact the CEIEC's Dr. Kylie Smith: [kylieas@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:kylieas@unimelb.edu.au)

## 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 **Millie Olcay**.

Millie Olcay is from the UK and she is studying for a Masters in Education at the University of Melbourne. Millie has a BA (Hons) in Childhood Studies and Disability Studies from the University of Northumbria.

Following her time in Northumbria, Millie worked at the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham as a Children's Fund Participation Worker. Millie wanted children's services to be informed by the views of children and their families. She set-up and worked

with 'Children's Voice', a planning group of 5-13 year olds that became involved in planning, delivering and evaluating the Children's Fund program.

Millie has also worked as a CEIEC Research Associate in projects to increase child-centred practice in the City of Melbourne Council.

Millie is determined that children's voices should inform policies about children and this led her to enroll in a Masters program. Her current research explores the issues and challenges that face early childhood educators as they seek to include children's voices in decisions about curriculum issues.

## CEIEC promotes 'RESPECT' in the City of Melbourne

The CEIEC is launching a **RESPECT** program for Early childhood centres in the city of Melbourne.

Funded by Melbourne City Council, the **RESPECT** (Researching Equitable Staff Parent Engagement in Children's services Today) training program uses action research to build equitable and collaborative relationships between early childhood staff & parents/carers.

**RESPECT** programs combine practical steps and research-based insights to assist staff and parents/carers to build respectful relationships with each other. CEIEC Director A/Prof. **Glenda MacNaughton** and CEIEC Research Fellow **Dr. Patrick Hughes** lead the program, which develops their on-going research

into staff-parent relationships.

A **RESPECT** program consists of an orientation meeting & interview, a custom-built action research training program and an evaluation meeting & interview. A participating centre receives free research-based professional development with an experienced facilitator, & practical strategies to improve relationships between its staff and parents/carers.

The CEIEC invites any early childhood centre in the City of Melbourne to join the **RESPECT** program. A participating centre should have parents and carers from diverse backgrounds and staff who want to improve their relationships with them.

For more information:  
[gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au)

*For your  
Diary*  
5<sup>th</sup> CEIEC  
CONFERENCE  
17 - 20 Nov. 2005

**Oct. 3**

Deadline for 'early bird' registrations.

**Today!**

Request information:  
Janet Treweek

[education-ceiec@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:education-ceiec@unimelb.edu.au)

**OUT NOW!**

**International Journal of  
Equity & Innovation in  
Early Childhood  
Vol. 3 No. 1.**

Contents include:

Taylor, A. 'Situating whiteness critique in Australian early childhood: the cultural politics of "Aussie" kids in the sand pit.'

Davis, K. 'Troubling practice: exploring white dichotomies in early childhood practice.'

Cave, L., King, S. J. & Giugni, M. 'Chromatics: a whiter shade of pink.'

Rau, C. & Ritchie, J. 'From the margins to the centre: repositioning Maori at the centre of early childhood education in Aotearoa /New Zealand.'



## CEIEC Diversity Dolls attract new interest

The CEIEC's research and training program around its Diversity Dolls (see [CEIEC News 1.4](#)) continues to attract interest from diverse organisations. The CEIEC's Heather Lawrence reports.

The University of Melbourne's Education Faculty's Early Learning Centre (in Abbotsford, central Melbourne) is the latest centre to purchase some CEIEC Diversity Dolls. I've run two training sessions with the staff, who are now using one of the dolls in their program and plan to introduce a second doll.

The CEIEC Diversity Dolls - and the associated training - enable staff to explore and investigate issues of cultural diversity, bias and discrimination with children. The Early Learning Centre staff will submit a proposal for a session at the CEIEC Annual Conference in November (see 'Conference Call' in this edition); and two of them have said that they are interested in collaborating with CEIEC staff in 2006 in a research program around the Diversity Dolls.

In August, I'll run a Diversity Doll training day for TAFE Tasmania Children's Services Team; and the CEIEC has received requests for Diversity Doll training from Randwick College of TAFE & Illawara Children's Resource Unit, both in NSW.

If you want to learn more about the CEIEC's Diversity Dolls and the research associated with them, or if you'd like to discuss using Diversity Dolls in your work, contact Glenda MacNaughton:  
[gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gmmacn@unimelb.edu.au)

## Children's voices in literacy programs

CEIEC Director A/Prof. Glenda MacNaughton ran a workshop, 'Children's voice in literacy practices' in July for South Australia's Department of Education and Children's Services.

Sixty staff participated, from ten networks of early childhood services. The workshop was part of a series - 'New Dimensions in Early Childhood Teaching and Learning' - that the Department is running in 2004 - '05.

The 'New Dimensions' workshops aim to establish cross sector networks and to support teachers of children 0 - 8 as they examine their literacy beliefs and practices. The 2005 workshops were open to childcare centres, preschools and schools who are willing to establish a cross sector network and who had not participated in the 2004 workshops.

Participants in Glenda's workshop had been to one in June, where they had each generated a question about literacy and had planned how they could answer it. Glenda invited participants to review their projects and to reflect on how they could increase children's decision-making in their literacy programs.

Glenda ended the workshop with a question: 'What three things could you do next week to increase children's voices in your project?'. The workshop will reconvene in November to hear the answers and to share the lessons of participants' inquiry into their current beliefs and practices around literacy.



## CONFERENCE CALL 1/2005

### “Reconsidering Rights and Relationships: Honouring the child, honouring equity (5)”

“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)

CEIEC will run its fifth annual conference between Thursday 17 and Sunday 20 November 2005 at the University of Melbourne’s Carlton campus. The conference title is ‘Reconsidering rights and responsibilities’.

Proposals for sessions are starting to arrive and the Conference Committee is pleased to have received several proposals for Group Sessions and requests for a Mentor. Group Sessions and Mentors open-up the conference to people who want to ‘make a difference’ but are unsure how best to do so.

**Group Sessions** feature two or more people who present together. These sessions offer a broader range of views and help to reduce ‘stage fright’ for people who are unused to talking in public.

**Mentors** are ‘old hands’ at conferences. They help people to put together a proposal for a session and/or to present their session on the day.



The Conference Committee invites proposals for stalls and/or launches of books, videos, CD-ROMs, etc. directly relevant to the conference theme and aims.

#### CONFERENCE THEMES

- Linking rights, relationships & early childhood pedagogies.
- Innovative ways to enact children’s rights.
- Social justice & reciprocity in relationships with children.
- Resistance & responsibilities in creating greater equity with & for children.
- The challenges & possibilities of respectful relationships with children & their communities.

#### Keynote & Featured Speakers

Several keynote and featured speakers have confirmed their appearance at the conference.

- Dr. Deevia Bhana (S. Africa)
- Mr. Bevan Cassady (Australia)
- Prof. Alan Pence (Canada)
- Ms Rita Walker (New Zealand)

The next CEIEC News will introduce keynote and featured speakers and highlight leading sessions.

#### We’re on the Web!

‘Reconsidering rights and responsibilities’ has its own page on CEIEC’s website: [www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/conf05](http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/CEIEC/conf05)

Look here for the call for papers, posters, workshops, etc.; for background on the keynote speakers and for news of further speakers.

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