



June, 2006

**Leadership is crucial in any attempt to change teaching practices, because it is of necessity about changing attitudes and beliefs.**

**The beliefs and perceptions of teachers are the most significant predictors of individual change. (excerpt from Lesley Penrose's AGM Talk)**

## From the President

Thank you to all members of the Executive for the commitment and advocacy that has been displayed throughout the last year. Recently, ECA Queensland Branch executive and members have been actively engaged in speaking up for children, families and early childhood professionals in relation to child care and the preparatory year through various media. It is important that we are heard on matters of care and education as the wellbeing of young children is at stake.

2006 marks the end of state preschools in Queensland and the advent of prep. All ECA members need to raise the awareness of parents and the community about the importance of providing early childhood teachers and full time teacher aides within prep classrooms. In addition, equipment and resources should be equal to previous preschool allocations. In order to limit the risk to young children we need to argue for toilet facilities that are in close proximity to or within the prep rooms.

In March, 2006 ECA initiated a speaker event with Anne Manne, author of "Motherhood" that enabled us to combine with like minded partners. In addition, such events provide ways to broker knowledge and information about young children and parenting to groups of parents and policy makers. We hope to host other events in combination with groups who actively support young children and their families. I congratulate all members who continue to speak up on behalf of young children.

The full AGM report is enclosed. I welcome the committee for 2006

**Executive President**

Noelene McBride

**Vice President**

Jennifer Cartmel

**National Vice President**

Margaret Brannock

**Secretary**

Lesley Penrose

**Treasurer**

Juliette Job

**Committee Members**

Sue McKinnon • Angela Hack • Susan Grieshaber • Geraldine Harris  
Jo Darbyshire • Karen Dungey • Barry Elvish

**Associate Executive Members**

Jennette Lavis • Susan Whitaker • Christine Maher • Gwen Rayner  
Megan Gibson • Wendy Boyd • Debbie Gahan • Susan Shaw

**Administrative Support**

Madonna Sharp

We hope to see you at our next public event on the 21st of June 2006. (see page 4)

*Dr Noelene McBride*





# Celebrating 50 years

## Under Eights Week 1956-2006

**This year was certainly a year to celebrate.**

A huge milestone was achieved.

Early Childhood Australia, Queensland Branch has continually coordinated the unique Queensland event for young children for fifty years. During the past 50 years ECA Qld Branch has strived to increase public awareness of the issues concerning young children and the range of early childhood services available within the community. Under Eights Week has promoted the importance of the early childhood years and highlighted the needs of young children.

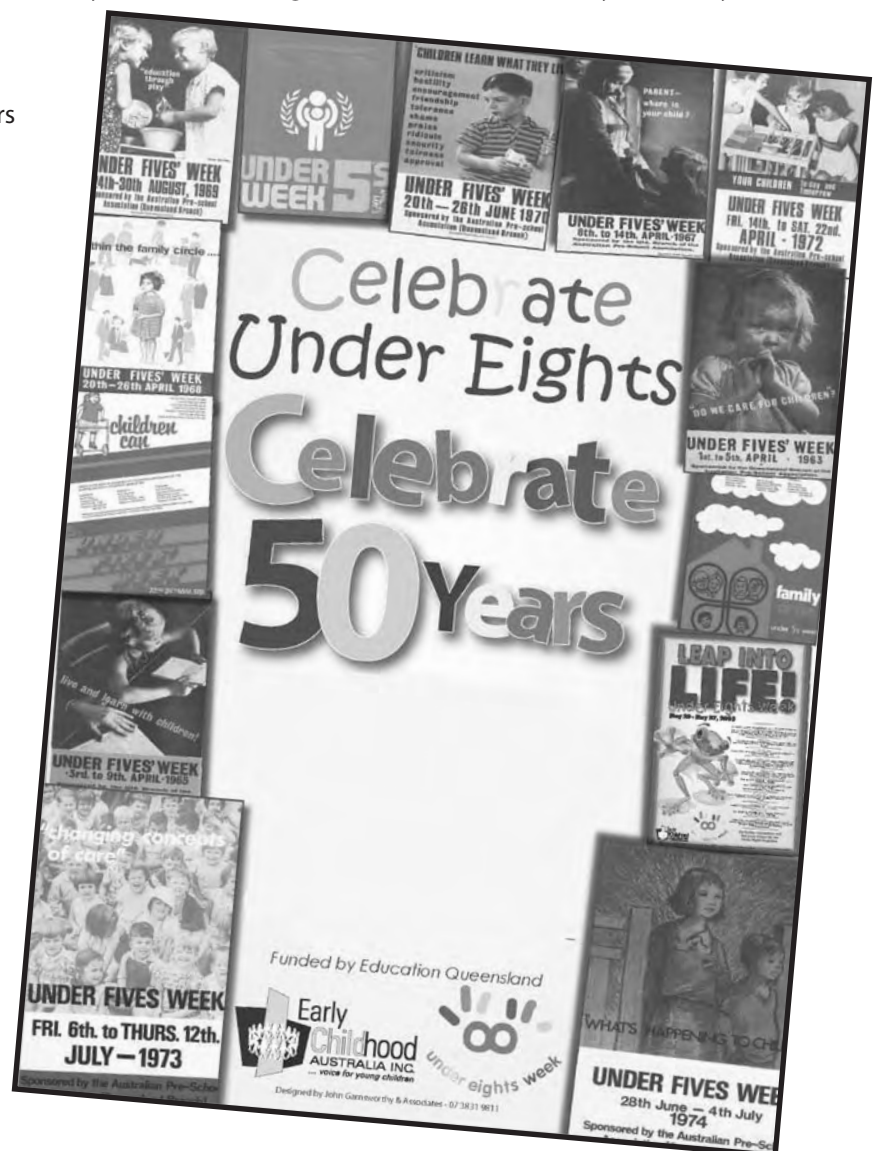
I would personally like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who contributed to the activities of the week and supported this year's program. It was wonderful to continue to receive support from Qld Museum, Qld Art Gallery, Rockhampton Art Gallery, Crèche & Kindergarten, Central Qld University, University of Southern Qld, OLI TAFE, Bremer TAFE and Southbank TAFE.

Thank you to our major sponsors Education Qld, Sea World, Warner Bros and Early Childhood Teachers Association for their generous contributions.

Under Eights week would not be possible if it wasn't for the dedicated early childhood professionals and pre school teachers who prepare and organise special events for young children and their families.

In addition I would also like to thank all those people of past Under Eights Week who have volunteered their time and talents over the last 50 years to ensure the success of the week and to celebrate all children under the age of eight.

**Karen Dungey**



# “Long live Under Eights’ Week”!

Jennette Lavis was the guest speaker at the closing ceremony of the 50th Under Eight’s week.

Her knowledge of this event was filled with amusing anecdotes as she explored the history of Under Five’s week that has now become Under Eight’s week. Excerpts from her talk are included below:

The first planned “Under Fives’Week” was held in 1956 by the Queensland Branch of the Australian Pre-School Association (APA), which was formed in 1955. APA became the Australian Early Childhood Association (AECA) then Early Childhood Australia (ECA).

Five voluntary organizations comprised the branch in 1955.

They were:

- **The Council of Child Care Centres**
- **The Creche and Kindergarten Association**
- **The Kindercraft Association**
- **The Lady Gowrie Child Centre**
- **The Mothercraft Association**

Two important themes for “Under Fives’Week” were:

1. to provide the public with information about issues that concern children
2. to enlist active support in efforts that are designed to improve the status of children.

The original objectives for establishing “Under Fives’ Week” were:

2. to make the public aware of the work being done in the community for young children by the five organizations.
3. to give a clear concept of the work of each of these organizations,
4. to make known the needs of young children so that the public might discriminate between good and bad child care (and education) emphasising that such care was supplementary to home care and did not replace it.
5. to encourage suggestions from the public to enlarge the scope of this work.

A state Under Fives’/Eights’ Week committee has always planned the outline of a program with similar programs organized by local committees throughout Queensland. By the 1980’s over 50 area co-ordinators were appointed for country and metropolitan districts.

“Barefoot in the Park” held annually in New Farm Park, was the idea of Pat Roberts and commenced in 1975. It was replicated in many other places in Queensland. The Creche and Kindergarten Association played a major role in Under Fives’/Eights’ Week all along in its more than 300 centres throughout Queensland and in making its premises available for the regular Under Eights’ Week committee meeting.

I became involved in the early 1980’s and it was the turn of one member organization to spearhead the Under Eights’Week planning, carrying out the program each year.

Hence, the Child Watch Committee of AECA, Qld Branch, became involved in the Week in the 1980’s .

Our members organized appropriate educational and fun activities at the Barefoot in the Park held in New Farm Park for a number of years. By this time lots of Child Care Centres, with children and staff in their centre buses, brought their picnics and turned up expecting involvement and entertainment.

There was a low point to Under Eights’Week in the 1990’s when the committee consisted of Robyn Coffee, Director of Kindercraft and me. I knew that if I stayed with Robyn, a leader would emerge and Sally Pym emerged as a great Under Eights’Week chair, who, with her committee, made a major contribution over some years.

Thank you to Shae Conomos and Karen Dungey for their leadership and commitment to the continuation of Under Eight’s week.



**Jennette Lavis**



**Sally Pym**

## Under Eight’s Week feedback...

The Healthy Bodies and Healthy Minds Kit training held at Bremer TAFE was “a great workshop providing a great resource.

Re Under 8’s Day we had a fabulous Under 8’s Day at Richlands State School. We invited local childcare centres and special schools. We set our oval up with heaps of hands on activities and got the year 6 and 7 kids to help out. One of our Samoan parents taught traditional dancing, and indigenous parent doing craft, the police and fire brigade came and the local PCYC. The children rotated around the activities in small groups - a great day was had by all. Melanie Halliwell, Richlands Preschool



# C & K Murri Kids in the Park

This year Gundoo Mirra Community Kindergarten hosted its first "Murri Kids in the Park" for Under Eights week. It was a particular challenge this year coordinating a big event like this as we are team of three staff only. We decided to involve as many other community groups as well to ensure a great event for children and to promote our wonderful kindergarten to the local community.



YMCA, the Murri School and Lifeline's Inclusion Support Agency, prepared and brought an experience to the park. QLD Indigenous Health brought 'healthy eating' to the forefront of people's minds with samples of healthy home made foods to demonstrate easy to make healthy eating ideas. Southbank TAFE Child Studies students assisted with setting up, facilitating and cleaning up the experiences and C&K Acacia Ridge Community Kindergarten assisted with collecting resources.

The event was very popular with parents and grandparents with almost a one to one ration of adults to children for the excursion to the park next door. The

grounds were packed with people and full of art and craft experiences and the sounds of different cultures. African drummer, Tunde Solanke with his drums and chanting, didgeridoos and children playing and dancing filled the air with happy sounds. Face painter and Koori, Aunty Dawn came and painted the children's faces with Indigenous designs until Spider Man and butterflies 'took over'. Activities also included palm frond weaving with Nerrie Simba from PNG.

We discovered that families had wondered why they were preparing so much material for the event and the father playing the didgeridoo had been overawed when he saw how many people from the local community had come along. They had thought that it was an event for the local

Kindergarten children only. They were able to see the value of their participation to make a wonderful day and experience for their children. The overwhelming feedback is that parents and grandparents would like to hold the event annually and will be willing to participate more to ensure its success. We just need to keep spreading the word.

Marilyn Beale.

## Date Claimer...

### Let's Talk:

### Professional Development, Skills and Career Pathways

#### What's new for child care professionals?

What skills should child care staff have? What are the plans for professional development? What support do individuals who work with children need? What are the career pathways in children's services?

Guest Presenters include Julie Price from the Professional Support Coordinator Queensland and the Queensland Community Services and Health Industry Training Council.

**Date:** Wednesday June 21, 2006

**Time:** 7 -9 pm

**Venue:** Windtree Theatre, Griffith University, Logan campus, University Drive, Meadowbrook.

#### For More Details

**Email:** ECAQld@earlychildhood.org.au or j.cartmel@griffith.edu.au

## Playgroup Conference Feedback.

Dr John Irvine at the Playgroup Conference 27th May, 2006.

A talk that is scheduled for two hours cannot be written about in anything less than a book. There were just so many 'bits' to the talk. That is why he has written his books, articles and does radio and TV sections.

But three bits to remember were:-

1. Children turn off in .5 of a second (yes, half a second) if they have heard it before.
2. Children do not have brakes. They go but they cannot stop. So harness this. Talk in the positive eg "Come here", "Do this" etc rather than the negative eg "Don't do that".
3. And the word "don't" is the start of a game. Eg "Don't pinch your sister. A child hears 'don't' and knows that the game has started and thinks "what was the game?" Oh yes, 'pinch your sister'. OK!" Another of these games is "Don't run away". Ever seen an unhappy child running away when Mum's calling out 'Don't run away'?

An interesting and entertaining speaker; well worth listening to.

Juliette Job

