



Early Childhood Australia

A voice for young children

South Australian Branch Newsletter
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ECA SA Branch Annual General Meeting

The SA Branch 2010 AGM was held on 15 November. State president Kate Ryan reported on a very successful year for the organization. There has been a large increase in membership and a high level of interest in joining the branch executive and attending branch meetings.

The president's report highlighted the ECA National Conference, *Garla Bauondi*, held in Adelaide with over 1200 delegates. Developing the program for this conference successfully involved using a network of ECA members and knowledgeable early years professionals from SA who worked in collaboration with the ECA National Office. There has been overwhelmingly positive feedback from both keynote speakers and delegates about the quality of the conference.

Two members' dinners were held this year to raise the local profile of the organization and to help members feel connected. Guest speakers at these meetings were Dr Anne Glover and ECA CEO Pam Cahir.

Elizabeth Owers from the Council for the Care of Children, Caroline Warner from DECS and Alexandra Diamond from UniSA were guest speakers at branch meetings.

The year has been a busy one for the Branch with continuing representation on a number of advisory and reference groups and collaboration with an increasing variety of organizations working with young children and their families. The year has also seen an increased profile for ECA with Hon Jay Weatherill, Minister for Education and Minister for Early Childhood Development.

Kate also spoke of the challenges and priorities for 2011. These include

- Increasing involvement with the preschool sector and first years of school
- Maintaining the present rate of increase in membership
- Providing connections for ECA SA members to the national organization

A forum that took place at the AGM was an opportunity for Early Childhood professionals to

- raise and discuss issues they encounter in their work with children and families
- identify the current and possible future issues for Early Childhood in South Australia
- discuss possible solutions and new ideas for Early Childhood in South Australia
- contribute to planning the work of Early Childhood Australia.

The suggested issues for discussion were: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families, Early Childhood Leadership and National Quality Reform Agenda. Participants were also free to raise other issues.

The results of these discussions and their implications for ECA will be further discussed at the Executive planning day in January 2011.

SEASONS GREETINGS



from the
EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA
SA BRANCH EXECUTIVE

ECA Code of Ethics in Practice

The ECA Code of Ethics is meant to be a living document that is referred to regularly in practice and which enhances the way educators think about what they do. A very good example of this occurs with first year students at UniSA in the course “Children’s Services in Community Contexts” This course introduces students to young children’s growing and learning in relation to their parents, the communities they live in, and the services and staff of early childhood settings and other organisations to which they relate.

One of the first lectures introduces students to the ECA Code of Ethics, and following this they are required to use it as a reference point for all of their tutorials and their written and practical work, and its use is a criterion for grades. This approach is very successful in highlighting for the students the importance of an ethical approach to whatever they do. Their practical work includes interviewing staff and visiting communities. Each student also carries out a small research project involving interviewing a parent which has to be approved by the University’s Ethics committee. Because of this there are many practical ethical issues to be considered and ethics becomes an important and sometimes complex aspect of their study, which they are asked to reflect on in an assessed paper. The ECA Code of Ethics is the reference point for this. Here are two extracts from students’ reflections (with their consent of course!):

“As a student with the aspiration of being an early childhood educator it has been important for me to ensure that I familiarise myself with the Early Childhood Code of Ethics. Within this (interview) task I was encouraged to ‘listen to and learn from families’ (Early Childhood Australia 2006, part II) as well as to learn how to ‘develop positive relationships based on mutual trust and open communication’ (Early Childhood Australia 2006, part II).” (Lisa)

“Through this assignment and interview process, I also have a new comprehension of the importance of ethics. I now realise the extent of the impact of families and communities on parenting and children and I definitely will, as the Early Childhood Australia’s Code of Ethics (2006) says ‘respect the special relationship between children and their families and incorporate this perspective in all my interactions with children.’ I will also, as The Code of Ethics states ‘ensure research in which I am involved meets standard ethical procedures including informed consent, opportunity to withdraw and confidentiality’. These necessary aspects of consideration were discussed by our tutor, with the Code of Ethics and I followed them accordingly. This included presenting and adhering to the consent form, changing the names of everyone involved, only allowing my tutor to hear the interview and read my essay, ensuring the recording is deleted and generally being respectful of the parent’s answers. Therefore this is just the beginning of my ‘lifelong learning, reflective practice, researching with children’ (ECA 2006) in my career as an early childhood educator.” (Michelle)

We are impressed to see both the commitment of the students to this approach and the learning they gain as they discuss and grapple with the issues it raises. As part of the foundation for their careers as early childhood educators this hands on experience of using the Code of Ethics and hence an ethical approach right from the beginning of their study is an invaluable experience.

Pam Linke and Alexandra Diamond



WA 2011 Early Childhood Education & Care Conference

Windows of Opportunity

PERTH CONVENTION EXHIBITION CENTRE 18-19 JUNE 2011

Call for abstracts now open.

<http://www.waecec.com/>

***Taking children to the movies?
Hiring DVDs or videos?***

Before you do, check out the
Australian Council on Children & the Media
Know Before You Go free movie review service

**Children & Media Helpline 1800 700 357
www.youngmedia.org.au**

Early Childhood Australia SA Branch Dinner

The second ECA SA Branch dinner for 2010 was held on 23 November at Café Va Bene. It was an evening with Pam Cahir, ECA Chief Executive Officer.

Pam spoke inspiringly about the work done by ECA on Advanced Teaching standards and her vision for continuing this work and furthering the idea of a professional arm for ECA.

We look forward to holding similar branch dinners in 2011.



Caroline Donald (back), Elspeth Harley (L) & Rosemary Green



Above from left: Kate Ryan, Rod Nancarrow & Pam Cahir



Italia Parletta & Jenny Cartmel

A date for your diary:

The Western Australian Branch of Early Childhood Australia invites you to the next National ECA Conference,

Consulting the compass: Defining the directions

October 3-6, 2012.

Perth Convention Exhibition Centre



The Early Years Learning Framework
Professional Learning Program: **Online Forum**

Don't miss out on this forum which is part of the Early Years Learning Framework Professional Learning Program. There is a lot of productive discussion happening. This is your chance to engage with other professionals around Australia, have your say, talk about your problems and successes, and ask questions.

Current topics include

- Holistic approaches
- Learning through play
- Responsiveness to children
- Intentional teaching
- Links between the EYLF and the NQS
- Assessment for learning

To get involved go to

<http://forums.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/>



He ihu waka, he ihu whēnua
Where the canoe touches the land

10th Early Childhood Convention 2011
26 - 29 April 2011, Otautahi Christchurch

Discussion paper launched on an Australian Children's Commissioner

The Australian Human Rights Commission has launched a discussion paper on an Australian Children's Commissioner.

Many children in Australia are able to fully enjoy their human rights. However, the rights of some children are vulnerable. An independent national Children's Commissioner with the power and mandate to listen to, understand and advocate for children could play an important role in promoting and protecting the rights of all children in Australia, particularly of those who are most at-risk.

In particular, a national Children's Commissioner could operate as a national advocate for children's rights; ensure that government decision making processes and outcomes are consistent with the best interests of children; develop mechanisms to secure the participation of children in decisions that affect them; and provide a coordinated national approach to children's rights.

Human rights provide a clear framework for promoting, and for ensuring accountability in respect of, child wellbeing. By establishing the office of a national Children's Commissioner, the Australian Government would take an important step towards meeting its international obligations to protect and promote the rights of children in Australia.

The Discussion Paper is available at:

http://www.humanrights.gov.au/human_rights/children/2010_commissioner_children.html



New books from Early Childhood Australia

The two latest books in the *Research in Practice* series are designed to support educators in their work with the early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)



Learning and teaching through play

Anne Kennedy and Lennie Barblett

The Early Years Learning Framework: Learning and teaching through play explains how educators examine their understandings of play and how play-based approaches require intentional planning and teaching in order to support and extend children's learning. Throughout the book there are practice examples and questions for critical reflection and discussion with colleagues. The critical reflection tasks are designed to support educators, in constructing shared understandings of how to use play-based learning and teaching to promote the principles, practices and outcomes of the EYLF.

Stars are made of Glass: Children as capable and creative communicators.

Leonie Arthur, Felicity McArdle and Marina Papic

Stars are made of glass: Children are effective communicators focuses on Learning Outcome 5 of the EYLF and explores how children communicate and express themselves through different means and ideas whether through language, music, movement or images. The role of the educator is to expose children to a broad range of techniques through which self expression can take place, to empower children to utilise these means of communication to communicate confidently and to make sense of the world around them.

