

A message from the SA Branch President

Hello to all our South Australian ECA members, particularly those who have recently joined our branch, and welcome to our first newsletter for 2008. My name is Kate Ryan and I have recently become the president of ECA – SA Branch.

My role is to facilitate and co-ordinate the business of the branch and to support our members and executive in maintaining ECA's standing within the community and the Early Childhood sector as an organisation that advocates strongly for the rights of children from Birth to Eight Years.

I commenced my work in the Early Childhood field though my Child Care studies in Port Augusta and then relocated to Adelaide to complete my Bachelor in Early Childhood Education. After graduating I worked as a Team Leader, Assistant Director and Director in Long Day Care for 15 years mostly with children aged from 3-5 years at il nido Child Care Centre. Looking for further challenges I worked as a trainer at Gowrie Training Centre and enjoyed visiting early childhood services and staff across the state, Mt. Gambier in the south to Coober Pedy in the north.

Currently I am the Director at Halifax Street Children's Centre & Preschool in Adelaide city. This is an integrated DECS Preschool and Community Based Long Day Care Centre and I am enjoying the opportunity to work within a multidisciplinary staff team to explore ways of providing high quality care and education for very young children and their families.

Kate Ryan
President, ECA SA Branch



Marte Meo workshop

Those who attended this workshop have been very enthusiastic about their experience. Here Kerry Moretti reports.....

In February I was fortunate enough to attend a workshop on *Marte Meo* (a developmental support program) presented by its founder Maria Aarts. The name *Marte Meo* is derived from the Latin language to express "On One's own Strength", aptly named as the program focuses on empowering people to use "their own strength" to enhance development. The Program originated in The Netherlands when Maria identified a lack of a common language when explaining to parents the nature of a child's difficulties. The *Marte Meo* program does not use pedagogical jargon, instead using what Maria calls "normal language"

What impressed me the most is that *Marte Meo* is not just another "new idea", and does not necessarily need to replace existing systems, but can be used to enhance them. Maria spoke often in the five days of first building a connection with parents and children, which fits in well with current research into brain development and attachment theory. *Marte Meo* can be successfully integrated into services in a variety of ways, from running a full *Marte Meo* program, to using the video analysis aspect for one child/family in a child care centre. Programs have been developed using *Marte Meo* for children with ADHD and Autism, for use in child care centres, aged care and in the area of child protection. It is also in use for mothers with postnatal depression, and addiction after care to name a few.

Marte Meo could be used in a child care setting to highlight the ability of parents or caregivers to support children in developing social skills. For example, helping children to engage with other children in social situations or showing parents how they can follow their child's lead to strengthen the child's sense of self and autonomy. The use of video review can highlight for parents and early childhood

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National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEiTA)

ECA South Australia would like to congratulate all recipients of the 2007 National Excellence in Teaching Awards.

The aim of these annual awards established in 1994, is to focus public attention on the high standards of our teachers and to encourage our brightest students to enter the teaching profession. The program calls on parents, school councils, committees of management, student councils and local community organisations to identify teachers who are an inspiration to their students, to their peers and to their community.

In 2000, the NEiTA foundation introduced an early childhood category to these awards to promote the importance of early childhood education.

Recipients of state awards for South Australia in 2007 were:

Preschool

Anne-Marie Reeks, Monash Kindergarten
Rebecca Conrick-Smith, Saddleworth Early Learning Centre

Primary

Penny James, Elizabeth Special School
Jean Marks, Loveday Primary school
Liz Rayner, Keithcott Farm Primary school

Secondary

Len Altman, Marden Senior College
Kirralee Baldock, Glossop High School
Kylie Booker, Immanuel College

Penny James and Kirralee Baldock also received national awards in their categories.

This year NEiTA will celebrate the role inspirational teachers play within the education and wider community. In addition, three special categories will be added to recognise the special needs within the community. These awards will be granted for Innovation, Community Engagement and Developing Student Resiliency alongside the Inspirational Teaching Award.

Nominations for NEiTA 2008 awards are now open. These may be made by a parent, member of the School or Student Council, Parent Organisation, or Committee of Management. A member of a

community organisation or association may also nominate a teacher who they feel makes a significant contribution to education and the wider community.

Nomination forms may be found at the website <http://www.neita.com.au/>

Sue Emmett



Health Care for Kids

17 - 18 November 2008
Manly Pacific Hotel, SYDNEY

Co-convened by Children's Hospitals Australasia (CHA) and the Association for the Wellbeing of Children in Healthcare (AWCH). These two organisations are joining forces to highlight the importance of advocating strongly for the healthcare needs of children and young people in Australasia.

Call for abstracts now open - submissions due by the 30th of April 2008

<http://www.kidsconference.org.au/>

Marte Meo continued from P1

educators the skills that children have and those which have not yet been learnt and which may require special support.

It is difficult to summarise the potential uses of *Marte Meo* as it can be applied in such a wide variety of services. I can say however, that I believe that as the program works from a strength based approach and focuses on building connections, it can easily be integrated into current early childhood services.

To put it simply, when a skill needs to be developed, use *Marte Meo*.

Information on future training opportunities can be found on the *Marte Meo* website:

<http://www.martemeo.com>

Kerry Moretti
il nido Paradise Community Child Care Centre

Report from the National ECA Board meeting December 7-8, 2007 in Canberra

The following items were discussed:

Teaching Standards *Teaching Australia* is working with the teaching profession to develop national professional standards for advanced teaching and principals. Twenty five experienced teachers and principals, including a representative from ECA, Lennie Barblett (Western Australia) contributed to the drafting of capabilities for advanced teaching standards and principal standards at a national standards drafting workshop in November 2007. At this stage the standards cover teaching from pre-school onwards. ECA is lobbying for standards to be developed for those teaching children aged birth to three years.

Every Child Members are encouraged to write letters to the editor of *Every Child* when issues are raised in the publication and to consider including solution focused comments.

Election 2007 Pam Cahir, CEO of ECA and Margaret Young, President of ECA are arranging meetings with the Secretary of Cabinet for appointments with a round of new ministers early in 2008. They will pursue discussions about the implications of the promised 15 hrs of preschool, particularly in the child care context, and about the Accreditation System.

Organisational memberships. There was discussion about whether each organisational member nominates a contact person who takes responsibility for disseminating the information to other staff. Branches were asked to consider following this up with organisational members.

ECA Position Statements The working party on the ECA position statements, which includes South Australian Branch member Andrea McGuffog, presented a proposal for the process of developing position statements and recommended that ECA commission content papers that reflect current research, practice and dilemmas.

ECA Board Retreat A Board Retreat was planned for February to discuss the following:

- Governance and policy
- Strategic directions for future planning and KPIs
- Succession planning

As part of information gathering for the retreat Branches were asked to address the question: What

would you wish for in early childhood? In responding Branches were encouraged to think about the political context and to think in more proactive, rather than reactive, way.

Review of National Training Package for Community Services. Feedback is currently being sought for the Review of the National Training Package for Community Services. Branches are encouraged to respond to this review and to send members to the scheduled public meetings.

ECA Code of Ethics Discussion was held about how Branches could develop awareness of the code, make the code accessible and support members to translate the code into practice. The notion of ethical practice includes the everyday choices we make, not necessarily just when there's a 'problem'. Consider how to help people to know and feel good about ethical decisions. A range of strategies are needed.

ECA Conference, Canberra, October 2008 An update was provided on the conference preparations.

Christy Ward
SA Board Member



A NATION'S CAPITAL: 'INVESTING IN OUR CHILDREN'

Canberra Convention Centre,
Canberra ACT
3-6 October 2008

**ECA (SA Branch) are offering a scholarship
to attend the Canberra conference.**

The scholarship will provide:

- Airfare
- Accommodation
- Registration
- One year's ECA membership
for the recipient's worksite

For more details see the attached flyer

Registration of Interest

2008 conference

Australian Association for Infant Mental Health & Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Perinatal & Infant Mental Health

Angels in the Nursery

Supporting Parent-Child Relationships
Supporting benevolent parental influences

Keynote Speakers

Dr Julie Larrieu, USA & Dr Anthony Bateman, UK

**5 - 8 November 2008
Adelaide Hilton Hotel**

Themes:

- Parent Infant Therapy
- Mentalisation
- Supporting Families/
Communities/Carers/Cultures
- Healing/Reparation: *Ghost busting in the Nursery*

Register your interest at:

<http://www.sapmea.asn.au/aaimh08>

Email for queries: aaimh08@sapmea.asn.au

Children's Wellbeing: *Are we doing enough?*

SPEAKERS

Ms Leigh Burrows

Learner Wellbeing in DECS - connecting policy with practice

Department of Education & Children's Services

Dr Natalie Sinn

Nutritional influences on children's learning and behaviour

Nutritional Physiology Research Centre, University of SA

Dr Sarah Blunden

Sleep: the under recognised impact of poor sleep on children's wellbeing

Centre for Sleep Research, University of SA

Dr Rebecca Golley

Children's diet and lifestyle patterns - influence of parental attitudes

CSIRO Human Nutrition

CHAIR

A/Professor Claire Roberts

Discipline of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, University of Adelaide

Date: Thursday 10 April 2008

Time: 4.30 - 7.00pm

Venue: State Library of South Australia
Institute Building Lecture Theatre
(Corner of Kintore Ave & North Terrace)

*Arrivals at 4.15pm for a 4.30pm start
Food & drink provided after conclusion of talks
All welcome - Free admission*

RSVP by Monday 7 April

anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au

Winner of Jean Denton Scholarship for 2008

Tracy Young (Monash University) has been awarded the Jean Denton Scholarship for 2008. Tracy's project, 'First Footprints – The Sustainable Early Childhood Project (SECP)' is part of her Masters of Education (Research) and 'aims to articulate the vision of working in partnership with the project stakeholders to develop a program for an environmental sustainability 6 star rating for early childhood services' in Victoria.

Tracy authored a recent article in *Every Child* (vol. 13, no.4, 2007, p. 34-35) entitled, "Why do young children need to know about climate change?" A complete version of this article is available as part of Early Childhood Australia's Sustainability, global warming and climate change' resource theme, along with links and useful resources, at www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/sustainability