

Code of Ethics launch

While there is never a time when educators can ignore the ethics of their daily work, a chance to refresh our profession's ethical framework is rare. The ECA Code of Ethics has been part of our professional lives since 1990. It has been cited in our studies, tacked to the foyer and staff room walls, dwelled on at the occasional team meeting and, reassuringly, been there for our reference when a crisis arises. But back then childcare didn't make the stock market muster, there were 20% less overweight or obese four year olds, and the internet was in its infancy. So in 2006 a review of the code began to ensure that it better reflected our changing times.

The revised Code of Ethics was launched in South Australia in July, by the Minister Assisting in Early Childhood Development, Jennifer Rankine. Minister Rankine spoke personally and sincerely, drawing from her life as a parent. The audience included DECS Chief Executive Chris Robinson, Executive Director of the Office of Children's Services, Sherry Thompson, ECA Branch President Italia Parletta, and tertiary and early childhood educators from the range of services.



Catharine Hydon

Following the launch by the Minister, Catharine Hydon led our discussions about some of the challenges facing our profession today including: children as global citizens, and what this means for our work; the voice of families

and building on their strengths; debates about contemporary views of childhood; and images of children, gender, and advertising and marketing to children. If you have not heard Catharine speak, make it a personal goal to do so – she's an experienced practitioner, a natural raconteur and a stunning advocate for children and our sector.

Of particular resonance for me was the current regard for technical skills over the ethics of what we are actually doing; being good at routine or meeting standards and as a result having less time for children. Perhaps the reflective practice model is a testament to our need to us to look more closely at what is actually happening, lest we become too comfortable with habit and routine.

The Code has been recharged to better connect to the new contexts of our work and retain its power to inspire our thinking about our work. Don't forget it when you chat about those daily conundrums in the lunch room, just metres away from the ECA ethics poster (I guess there will be new version!) on the wall.

For more detail see http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/code_of_ethics/early_childhood_australias_code_of_ethics.html

PS Thanks to the Professional Development Committee for their fabulous catering.

John Buckell

Early Childhood Australia SA Branch

Annual General Meeting

6.30pm, Monday 12 November 2007

Education Development Centre
Milner Street, Hindmarsh

Guest speaker to be announced

*Please consider nominating for the executive.
There is a form attached to this newsletter.*

C.a.F.E Enfield Children's Centre Care and Education Turns 2!

C.a.F.E Enfield Children's Centre is celebrating its second birthday, and one of the ways chosen to celebrate was an exhibition of the children's paintings. We were fortunate and privileged to have Dr Margy Whalley, Director of the Pen Green Children's Centre in the UK, officially open the exhibition on Wednesday 19th September.

Together with the children, their families, staff from C.a.F.E Enfield, visitors from Tasmania, and representatives from DECS, Dr Whalley delighted in the wonderful art work the children had created. Many of the children were amazed when Dr Whalley told them she had ridden on "two planes for a really long time, just to come and see their beautiful paintings".

The exhibition was the culmination of a project that had lasted several weeks. It began over a couple of evenings when staff and parents worked together to prime the canvases ready for the children to use. The shared sense of purpose, and relaxed atmosphere, provided the perfect opportunity for informal conversations and relationship-building between parents and educators, one of the core principles that underpins our work.

Over the next few weeks, educators worked with individual children to support their artistic endeavours, and document the conversations, and artistic processes that they observed. This information served several purposes. Firstly it gave wonderful background information to each painting - including photos of the artist at work. This powerful documentation provided a window into the world of our children and deeply touched families and professionals as we viewed their work. Secondly, it provided rich information to educators about individual children. And finally, due to the large number of paintings, it gave educators a chance to have professional discussions about the stages of artistic development.



The opening of the Art Exhibition - children, families, professionals and invited guests gathered together to celebrate the joy of young children's creativity.



Anthony shows his artwork to Dr Sue Jenkins, Chair of the Early Years Foundation, Tasmania.

The exhibition was a great celebration enjoyed by the children, their families, our professional community and visitors. The children were clearly delighted at the interest and the value given to their art as many 'tours' were conducted by the children proudly showing their combined efforts.

Joan Gilbert and Lee Jones

C.a.F.E. Enfield Children's Centre



Early Childhood Australia Biennial Conference

3–6 October 2008

Canberra, ACT

The Early Childhood Australia Biennial Conference is a celebration of those who work with and advocate for young children and Early Childhood Australia as an organisation. The Early Childhood Australia Biennial Conference is a significant part of Early Childhood Australia's history and advocacy work.

For up-to-date information about the conference go to the ECA website at

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

Death of Magda Gerber

Many early childhood professionals will be saddened to hear of the death of Magda Gerber. The following is part of a tribute which appears on the Child Care Information Exchange website:

Pioneering infant specialist and educator, Magda Gerber died on Friday, April 27, 2007. She retired in 1998 after a long career teaching her respectful approach to infant care and development to generations of parents and professionals in the infant/family field. As a popular and charismatic speaker at early childhood education conferences, she was one of the first in the United States to focus attention on infants as competent self-initiators of their own development within the context of at least one secure and authentic relationship as a base. In addition to her direct teaching of parents of infants, her work had a profound influence on the growing infant development field in the United States, which became especially important as more and more mothers placed their infants in childcare as they entered or re-entered the work force.....

.....Gerber was known as an intuitive genius in relating to people. As a thoughtful parent and therapist, she knew how to relate empathetically to a concerned parent. Modeling what she wanted to teach, she demonstrated how to respect infants and parents as she waited, watched and affirmed each parent who acted in a way that was in tune with his or her baby's need for free exploration on the one hand, and a safe haven for rest and comfort on the other. Parents were reminded to "Do less; observe more; enjoy most."

To read the full tribute go to: <http://www.ccie.com/eed/issue.php?id=1736>

Awards for SA Early Childhood Professionals

Anne Pappas who is currently studying for the Diploma of Children's Services at Gilles Plains TAFE was named as runner up Business SA Vocational Student of the Year at the 2007 South Australian Training Awards held at the Convention Centre on 31 August. The winner was an Apprenticeships Manager of a Training Organisation so Anne's achievement is quite significant.

In her final round of interviews for the Award Anne had to say how she would convince the sector of the importance of training and education for Children's Services workers. Anne spoke of her passionate belief in quality education and training, of how her knowledge of child development and theory gives her the foundation for understanding children's behaviour and of the importance of understanding and forming positive, authentic relationships with children. She also talked of the opportunities she was given to stay abreast of current research in areas such as early brain development as well as understanding the importance of children's well-being and involvement.

We have also just heard of an award given to Pam Linke by the World Association for Infant Mental Health. Pam was awarded the Sonya Bemporad Award for significant contributions to the advancement of social and public policies that contribute to the mental health and overall benefit of infants, toddlers and families. Pam feels that this was partly due to her work with ECA and therefore also a recognition of what ECA does.

Greening Services: Practical sustainability

In the latest book in the *Research in Practice* series, Rachel Kinsella provides practical advice for early childhood professionals who want to reflect their concern for the health of our planet in their work with children and families.

The author is an early childhood educator who works in long day care and is passionate about education for sustainable development. In her book she gives advice on

- developing a sustainability management plan
- making your service water-wise and energy efficient
- working with children and communities to develop waste management and recycling systems
- introducing green cleaning at your service
- creating outdoor spaces that both nurture and teach



The book gives many ideas for activities that involve and inspire children, including paper-making, worm farms, vegetable gardens, exploring pollution and a mini landfill. It also includes a comprehensive list of references and resources. This is a 'must-have' book for all services with a concern for the environment and a recognition of the importance of their role in educating the leaders and policymakers of the future.

The book can be ordered from the ECA website.