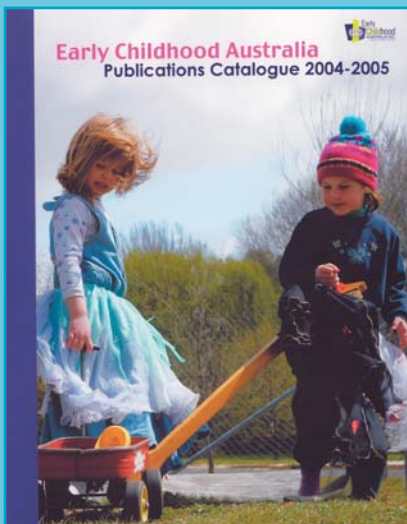


Early Childhood Australia Values

Rights of children ...
Leadership, excellence, respect ...
Courage, honesty & openness ...
Collaboration, diversity ...
Justice ...

Look out for the **NEW**
Early Childhood Australia
publications catalogue to be
released in February!



If you are not already a member
**Become an
Early Childhood Australia
Member
TODAY!**

If you are an early childhood professional, a parent, a carer, studying in the field, or simply interested in the well being of children, become a member of Early Childhood Australia

Contact our Membership Officer
on 1800 356 900 or Email:
membership@earlychildhood.org.au

When things go wrong: Managing critical incidents in children's services



Many of you would be aware of the terrible accident that happened last year just before Christmas, which severely injured two small children at a Sydney child care service. We send our thoughts and best wishes to the centre, the children and their families.

What this incident serves to remind us of is that critical incidents are a fact of life in children's services and that it is crucial that we plan and have in place strategies to deal with them.

The following is an excerpt from *When things go wrong: Managing critical incidents in children's services...*

Why have a critical incident management plan?

As with other policies or procedures developed by staff in children's services, the purpose of a critical incident management plan is to heighten awareness of the issues, and to provide staff with a framework for action at a time when they are likely to be affected by their own strong emotional responses. Although each critical incident is likely to be unique, it is also likely that there will be sufficient common elements to make planning possible and worthwhile.

Management strategies: The importance of pre-planning

There is an obvious need for appropriate action to be taken by staff in children's services following any critical incident.

This action may be the provision of counselling for individual children, staff or families, and at other times there may be the need for a wider approach, which includes a larger number of groups from within the community.

Advance planning can help them to manage the situation in the best possible way, and can quickly provide resources to help in the situation. Often there is little time to make important decisions, and it is much more effective to refer to a policy which has been considered and constructed in periods of less stress or time pressure.

Designing a critical incident management plan

It is useful when designing the plan to think through the various scenarios that could involve a critical incident. In each of the various scenarios, it is useful to divide the responses chronologically.

The following plan is designed to assist staff with the management of a critical incident that has occurred in a centre while the service is operating with children, and is divided into the following sections:

- Immediate actions
- Subsequent actions (later in the same day, or over the next few days)
- Further follow-up actions

Within each of these time frames there is further division, with suggestions to assist:

- Children
- Staff
- Parents
- Others

Immediate actions

Centre staff needs to be able to obtain advice and support during critical incident situations. Immediate support should be made available from the service's management committee, the owner of the service, or the organisation. Management needs to identify individuals who will be available to assist staff. Staff need to keep these names and emergency contact numbers in an easily accessible place.

Incidents such as the one at the Sydney centre are a terrible reminder that serious incidents can and will happen and that we need to plan how to deal with them.

Early Childhood Australia has two books that staff and parents may find useful.

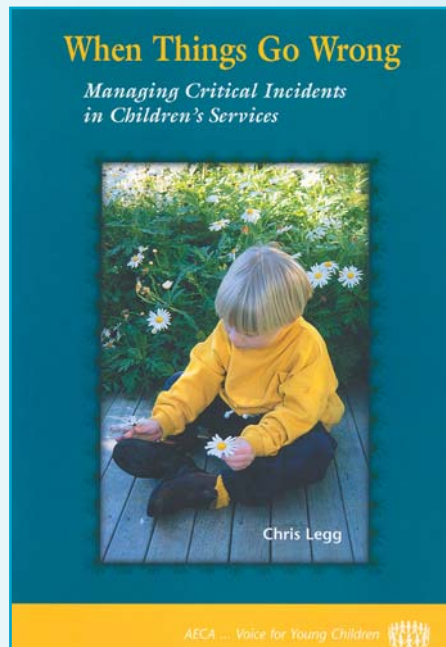
When things go wrong: Managing critical incidents in children's services, is written by Chris Legg, President of Early Childhood Australia's NSW Branch and senior member of staff in KU Children's Services. This book outlines the causes of critical incidents and provides a useful guide for staff, parents and director's on how to deal with the implications of such an event.

The other book is, *Helping children in times of need: Grief, loss, separation and divorce* by Judith Parker. This book has received an outstanding response.

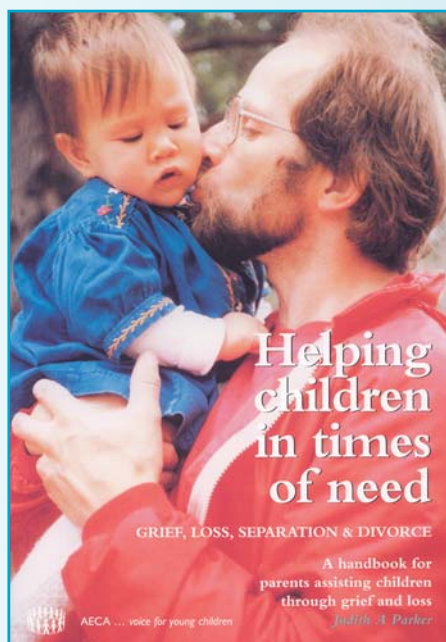
It is not possible for Early Childhood Australia to give these books away but we have discounted them by up to 30 per cent until March 31 to make them affordable for all services.



Judy Radich National President



When things go wrong: Managing critical incidents in children's services which is normally \$14.95, will be \$9.95 until March 31.



Helping children in times of need: Grief loss, separation and divorce is normally \$19.95, will be \$14.95 until March 31.

ERIC clearinghouse closed

On December 31 2003 the U.S. Department of Education closed the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education after 36 years of operation. Included in this termination are the elimination of the provision of Web sites (including the National Parent Information Network-NPIN), question answering, and Listserv lists.

The Early Childhood and Parenting (ECAP) Collaborative in the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has been the organisational 'home' for ERIC/EECE. After January 1, 2004, public domain materials, including ERIC Digests and other publications, Frequently Requested Information listings (FRIs), and Web Guides will be available for your browsing or for downloading at the ECAP Web site:

<http://ecap.crc.uiuc.edu/info>. In addition, the *Early Childhood Research & Practice Journal*, a peer-reviewed Internet-only journal will continue in 2004, expanding to become a completely bilingual (English and Spanish) journal, with funding from the Bernard van Leer Foundation in the Netherlands.

For more information about ECAP, ECAP projects, and ECRP, visit: <http://ecap.crc.uiuc.edu/projects.html>

From little things, big things grow: Environmental education

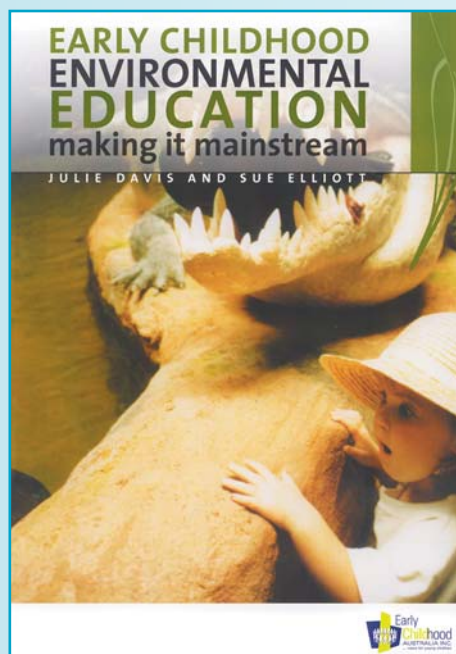
Early Childhood Australia has proudly released its latest special title, *Early childhood environmental education: Making it mainstream*. Written by Julie Davis and Sue Elliott, this inspirational book aims to make environmental education an integral part of early childhood. The book explores how to

implement environmental education in a holistic, empowering and integrated way.

Early childhood environmental education: Making it mainstream is part of our special title range. You cannot subscribe to it, so even if you are a subscriber or a member, you need to buy this book separately!

To give you an idea of the importance of this title we have included some of the inspirational words from the book...

The key purpose of this publication is to encourage readers to consider environmental education as an integral element of quality in early childhood programs. In doing so we hope to encourage broad participation—through collective action for change—in an inspiring, challenging and transformative journey to secure a central position for environmental education in the pedagogy of early childhood.



Early childhood environmental education: Making it mainstream

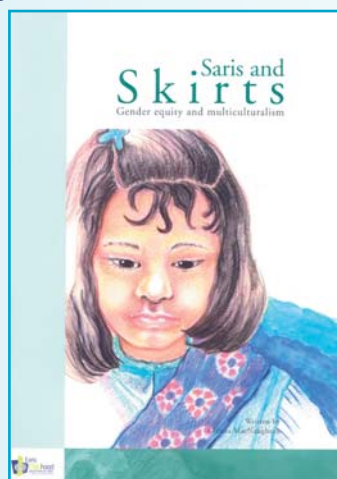
\$25.95

Transforming education

It is obvious that current educational practices need tremendous change, precisely because they do not take a holistic, integrated, empowering approach to education. A paradigmatic break with 'industrial' education models is urgently needed because these educational structures, theories and practices are no longer adequate—indeed if they ever were—in light of the current challenges. The crisis of sustainability cannot be solved by the same kind of education that has helped create the problems. Fundamental reforms that challenge existing goals, structures and roles of mainstream education, regardless of setting, are required (Fien, 1999).

Transformational educators

These are people with the courage to guide and promote processes of change, clearly a complex task. A central characteristic of such educators is that they have shifted the locus of learning from educator to learner, and that educators come together as co-learners. Giving primacy to children and learning leads to a suite of associated changes in educator decision-making and pedagogy. This includes, for example, educators striving for enhanced learner motivation and satisfaction; expanded choices and autonomy in learning; the promotion of intellectual quality; pedagogical practice that promotes supportive social environments and recognise difference; and better links between educational settings and their communities (McMeniman, 1999).



Celebrations of the world: Help us complete the list

Each Christmas there is much debate about the role of celebrations in early childhood settings. It is clear that it is important to recognise celebrations and to have an understanding of, and respect for, cultural diversity. So, on the back page of this edition of *Voice* we have started to compile a list of various celebrations.

Please take this list and hang it up on a wall in your centre.

It is not a complete list however, and we warmly invite readers to email us at publishing@earlychildhood.org.au with celebrations that they enjoy. We will continue to update this list and put it up on our website

www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

A fresh look at Saris and skirts: Gender equity and multiculturalism

One of our favourite books at Early Childhood Australia has a fresh new look! *Saris and skirts: Gender equity and multiculturalism* was first published as part of the Research in Practice Series in 1999 and has been so popular that we have reprinted it. At the same time, we decided to give the book a fresh new look.

It is a beautiful book and a must-have for all those in early childhood settings. It

recognises that achieving gender equity and multicultural inclusiveness can be difficult. This book is about how early childhood staff can work through challenges, with young children and their parents, in a productive way. It invites staff to reflect on how they are currently managing gender equity and multiculturalism and offers practical advice about furthering such positive work.

CELEBRATIONS OF THE WORLD 2004 CALENDAR

World Religion Day

18 January 2004

Observed on the Third Sunday of January each year in over 80 countries, World Religion Day helps foster interfaith understanding and harmony.

Chinese New Year

22 January 2004

Idul Adha (Islam)

02 February 2004

Duration: 4-5 days

This is the festival of sacrifice, on the 10th day of Dhul-Hijja (12th month) and lasting for 3-4 days afterwards. Also marks the end of the Haj (pilgrimage) season. Muslim families who can afford it sacrifice a sheep or goat for a feast, and distribute some of the meat to the poor.

Nirvana Day (Buddhism)

07 February 2004

Hijrah or Muharram (Islamic New Year)

22 February 2004

New Year - 1st day of Muharram (1st month).

Commemorates the flight of the Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina.

Orthodox Easter preparations begin

23 February 2004

Ashura - Islam

02 March 2004

A day of fasting on the 10th day of Muharram (1st month - Islamic New Year).

Fast of Esther

04 March 2004, sunrise to sunset

Purim

07 March 2004

Purim celebrates the story from the Book of Esther in which the Jews of Persia were saved by Queen Esther from destruction at the hands of the evil Haman.

Fast of the First Born

05 April 2004, sunrise to sunset

The Fast of the Firstborn (Ta'anit B'Chorim) commemorates the horrific tenth plague, death of the first born sons. The sons of the Israelites were spared and in thanksgiving for their survival, the first-born son in a Jewish family fasts from dawn on Erev Pesach until the Pesach Seder.

Pesach (Passover)

06 April 2004

Passover or Pesach, as the festival is called in Hebrew, historically commemorates the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and recalls the mass Exodus from Egypt about 3,500 years ago.

The Omer Period

07 April 2004

Duration: Seven weeks

Easter

09 April 2004

Duration: 9 - 13 April

Internet page:

<http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/page1433.html>

Orthodox Easter

09 April 2004

Duration: 9-12 April

<http://www.goarch.org/>

African Liberation Day

25 April 2004

The Organization of African Unity was established on May 25, 1963, at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and the Charter of the Organization was signed on that occasion by Heads of State and Government of 32 independent African States.

Maulud un-Nabi (Birth of the Prophet Muhammad)

02 May 2004

12th of Rabi ul-Awal (3rd month). Because this day marks both the birth AND the death of the Prophet it is not a major outward celebration.

Lag B'Omer

09 May 2004

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

Vesak/Wesak Buddha Day

16 May 2004

Traditionally, Buddha's Birthday is known as Vesak or Visakah Puja (Buddha's Birthday Celebrations). Vesak is the major Buddhist festival of the year as it celebrates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha on the one day, the first full moon day in May, except in a leap year when the festival is held in June.

<http://www.cmd.act.gov.au/community/calendar.htm>

<http://www.buddhanet.net/festival.htm>

Yom Yerushalayim - Jerusalem Day

19 May 2004

It commemorates the liberation of the Old City of Jerusalem and the reunification of all Jerusalem, during the Six Day War, on the 28 Iyar 5727 (June 5, 1967).

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

Shavuot

26 May 2004

Duration: 2 days

Shavuot is second of the three Pilgrim Festivals (Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot) and is celebrated for 2 days outside Israel (and in Israel for 1 day).

Shavuot also marks the day that the Torah was given to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai.

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

Star Festival (Japan)

07 July 2004

<http://www.geocities.com/shunkomuroya/nihongo-memo/nenchugyoji/tanabata.htm>

Obon (Japan)

15 August 2004

<http://www.geocities.com/shunkomuroya/nihongo-memo/nenchugyoji/obon.htm>

Miraj (Islam)

12 September 2004

27th of Rajab (7th month). The Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad to Heaven.

Rosh Hashana (Jewish New Year)

16 September 2004

Duration: 10 days

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

Yom Kippur (Jewish day of Atonement)

25 September 2004

Yom Kippur literally means the Day of Atonement. It is a day of fasting which commences at sunset on the evening of the 10th of Tishrei and finishes at nightfall on the 11th Tishrei.

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

Sukkot

30 September 2004

Duration: 7 days

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

Shemini Atzeret

07 October 2004

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

Beginning of Ramadan

15 October 2004

Duration: 1 month

Ramadan is the name of the 9th month in the Islamic calendar. This month is special because it was the time when God revealed the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad.

<http://www.holidays.net/ramadan/>

Diwali (Hindu Festival of Lights)

12 November 2004

It is traditionally known as the "festival of lights", for the common practice is to light small oil lamps (called diyas) and place them around the home, in courtyards, gardens, verandahs, on the walls built around the home and also on the roof tops.

<http://www.ruchiskitchen.com/festivals/deepavali.htm>

<http://www.diwalimela.com/festivaloflights/index.html>

Chanukah (Hanukkah)

08 December 2004

Duration: 8-15 December

The name 'Chanukah' means 'dedication'.

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

Christmas Day

25 December 2004

Kwanzaa

26 December 2004

Duration: 26 Dec - Jan 1

<http://www.annieshomepage.com/kwanzaa.html>

Early Childhood Australia acknowledges and thanks Edna Online for this information.
For more information visit: www.edna.edu.au