



Over recent editions of *Every Child*, several articles have created debate. Even amongst ECA's National Publications Committee, there have occasionally been differences of opinion.

However, debate can be positive.

As stated on the contents page, *Every Child* hopes to provide a forum which promotes professional growth, creativity and debate in the early childhood sector, through publication of a diversity of opinions. Importantly, the Editorial Policy is to publish material which promotes the wellbeing, rights and equality of all children and those who work with them. *Every Child* always aims to reflect an inclusive approach for all children.

So what do we make of the power of reading to create debate? Reading is not a passive activity. It has the power to make us think and reflect.

The *Early Years Learning Framework* (EYLF) outlines the critical nature of reflective practice for early childhood educators. To transform our practice, we need to be exposed to other ways of 'thinking', 'doing' and 'being'. Often I will find that an article in *Every Child* makes me think about my own experiences and how I feel about them. Then I may go on to explore the new ideas or knowledge presented and perhaps synthesise it with my earlier understandings.

Reflecting on environments

Later, I may conceptualise my thoughts in a different way or incorporate new understandings and attitudes in my practice. Reading thus has the power to transform ... hopefully my attitudes and values will be challenged to better uphold the rights of young children and my practice with both children and adults may improve for the benefit of all.

'To transform our practice, we need to be exposed to other ways of "thinking", "doing" and "being".'

We have a strong oral culture in the early childhood sector, possibly due to our well-developed understanding of the importance of oral language development for young children. However, professional reading is vital—not only does it provoke our thinking and expose us to new ideas and ways of working, it has an important role to play in increasing our knowledge and understanding of both evidence-based practice and practice learning. Professional reading also supports us in continuing our development as early childhood professionals.

In this edition, a range of articles outline experiences, service provision models and environments in a diversity of settings.

We can read about the partnerships involved in a work-based early childhood service at the Australian Institute of Sport, sustainability and connection to the environment at Berry Springs Preschool near Darwin, outdoor play environments at Lady Gowrie Acton Education and Care Service in Tasmania and the benefits of mixed-age grouping at Cooloon Children's Centre. These articles may provide us with different ways of thinking, being and doing, affirming or challenging our existing thoughts. Also possibly creating debate about environments for children is an article by Tracy Young, challenging us to think about the experiences of chicken-hatching in our services. Our focus on environments includes Cartmel and Bell's article regarding school-aged children's views on play opportunities in natural environments and a description of the transformation of the outdoor environment at Allambie Heights School. Make sure you also take a look at our book reviews ...

At this time in Australia, we are exploring the recommendations of the Productivity Commission and what they may mean for young children, families and educators. Although the importance of the early years is acknowledged, framing of recommendations is very much linked with increasing workplace productivity of parents. Professional reading in this context also has power. It is vital for us to be knowledgeable about broader policy directions, as it will enable us to be informed advocates for the rights and wellbeing of all children in our country.

Please enjoy reading and reflecting on this edition of *Every Child*!

Jackie Brien
Deputy Editor

Subscribe today!
www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/shop/product/every-child