Like most of you in early education services, schools and allied professions, I look back and cannot understand why each year seems to be passing by faster than the last.

We have endured a long Federal Election process, with some people happier than others with the outcome. But whatever the result, what it means for everyone who cares for and educates young children is that early childhood education and care (ECEC) has to remain on all governments’ agendas, and we all have a part in speaking up for children’s right to have a fair and equitable system that provides them the best start in life.

This issue of Every Child will hopefully inspire you to do just that. As ECEC professionals, it’s vital that we articulate what it is we do, why we do it, and why it matters so much.

Our guest statement from this year’s Senior Australian of the Year, Dr Suzanne Packer, reinforces why all children matter. Her words will make you feel proud. Let’s all take action to ensure Dr Packer’s aspiration ‘that Australia becomes the best place in the world to raise a child’ is achieved.

We profile Aunty Denise Proud and thank her for her continuing reconciliation work with Early Childhood Australia (ECA). She will be joining the ECA Publications Advisory Committee, and as a member myself, I look forward to her sitting at our table to plan future editions of ECA publications.

Melissa Johnston shares her team’s work in harnessing energy from negative feedback and turning it into positivity that leads to stronger connections with families. It is a great lesson for all.

Karen Turner from Monash Vale Early Learning Centre describes the centre’s sustainability and zero waste project, which won the inaugural Little Scientists Early STEM Award. Congratulations. It’s an inspiration—as are the STEM activities that Dr Chrystal Whiteford details in her article What’s the ‘big ideas’?

Dr Red Ruby Scarlet’s article about children naming their own gender identity may confront some readers, but will, I believe, support us all in thinking more deeply about how we react to, and support, gender-diverse children in our services.

An increasing number of services and schools are thinking about, and acting towards, reconciliation. Anna Carriage from Milton Ulladulla Preschool shares the centre’s journey towards reconciliation, and an article from the Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Aboriginal Child and Family Centre provides an Aboriginal perspective to Elliot and Davis’s (2018) re-theorising of Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems model that was presented in the previous edition of Every Child.

Anne Stonehouse’s reflections on the curious world of two-year-olds will cause all of us to stop and think about how we react to, and support, young children and their families.

With winter upon us, it can be a time to stop, keep warm and read those endless books, magazines and articles we accumulate. I trust this issue of Every Child, with its interesting features and stories, will inspire you to not add it to the pile, but read it, discuss it and reflect on how it may impact your professional learning and work with young children and their families.

Happy reading.

Judy Radich
Co-Editor

References