INSTITUTE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDIES

ANNUAL REVIEW
2017
INTRODUCTION

2017 was a vibrant year of activities and achievements for the staff of the Institute. In line with the Institute’s goal of ‘Global Connectedness and Local Impact’, staff engaged in a range of research and public engagement events. We are pleased to share some highlights from these activities in this annual review.
We are delighted at the success that members of the Institute have had in attracting two significant international early childhood conferences to Victoria.

The first of these will be the Eighth International Art in Early Childhood Conference, scheduled for January 2019. Dr Lisa Terreni put together the bid for this conference, which is being advertised on a number of relevant Facebook sites. Further details can be found online:

www.victoria.ac.nz/education/about/events/8th-international-art-in-early-childhood-conference

The second successful bid was to host the Pacific Early Childhood Education Research Association (PECERA) Conference in July 2020. This bid was prepared and presented by Dr Sue Cherrington, Associate Professor Jenny Ritchie and Dr Mere Skerrett, and was supported by Tourism New Zealand:


Both conferences will attract top researchers from across the globe and specifically from the Pacific region, thus contributing to the University’s goals of global and local impact, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.
Te Whāriki 2017: New Realities and Possibilities was held on 14 October, focusing on the newly refreshed early childhood curriculum: Te Whāriki, released on 1 April 2017. An important goal of our research seminars is to disseminate staff research to the practitioner community. This year’s revision of Te Whāriki, twenty-one years after its initial release, provided a good opportunity for staff to analyse the implications of the revised curriculum document through the lens of their own research. Co-convened by Drs Anita Mortlock and Mere Skerrett, the seminar attracted a record number of attendees.

A joint keynote address by Dr Mere Skerrett and Associate Professor Jenny Ritchie, entitled A Fantastical Journey: Re-imagining Te Whāriki, provided the opening provocation. Dr Skerrett and Associate Professor Ritchie reflected on the need for a national language policy, pedagogical responses to the climate crisis, and the meaning of kotahitanga within the early childhood curriculum.

The concluding address was delivered by Associate Professor Sally Peters from Waikato University, who was part of the writing team of the refreshed early childhood curriculum. The enthusiastic feedback from attendees continues to reinforce the value of these seminars. For more information, please see the website.

In November, the Institute co-hosted the Fourth New Zealand Childhood Studies Colloquium. Entitled Growing up in our Democracy: Provision, participation and provocation, this colloquium was convened by Dr Bronwyn Wood, with a planning committee that included Institute members Professor Carmen Dalli, Dr Judith Loveridge, Maggie Haggerty, and Ann Pairman, with Jacqui Southey and Dr Sarah Te One representing UNICEF and ACYA (Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa) respectively.

An exciting range of presenters and panel speakers, including the Commissioner for Children, Judge Andrew Becroft—who launched the first public report from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Monitoring Group—made this a memorable occasion.

THE FOURTH NEW ZEALAND CHILDHOOD STUDIES COLLOQUIUM

GROWING UP IN OUR DEMOCRACY: PROVISION, PARTICIPATION AND PROVOCATION

13 November 2017, 8:30-4:30pm

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Early in 2017 we were delighted with the announcement that Professor Helen May had been appointed an adjunct professor at Victoria. Helen was the founding director of the Institute for Early Childhood Studies. As a graduate of Victoria, as well as past supervisor of the University crèche, her return marks a full circle of service to Victoria.

At her first public engagement on 12 April, Professor May gave an evening public lecture as part of the Road Ahead Seminar Series co-hosted by the Stout Research Centre and the Faculty of Education. Professor May’s lecture was entitled: The Power of the ‘Pen’ - Personal Journeys - Political Stories: Documenting the Politics of Early Childhood in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

During the second half of 2017, we were deeply grateful to Professor May for taking on the curation of the Institute’s historical library in preparation for its storage until it is re-housed in the planned renovated premises for the Faculty of Education at the Kelburn Campus. This was a big job, splendidly done. We are grateful also for the assistance provided by the Faculty Manager, Noeleen Williamson.

On 13 December 2017, Professor Carmen Dalli attended the launch of her new co-edited book Sage Handbook of Early Childhood Policy. The launch was linked with an early childhood seminar hosted by the Thomas Coram Research Unit at the Institute of Education in London. Comprising 36 chapters, with contributions from 65 international researchers, the book traverses themes such as: the relationship between research, policy and early childhood education and care practice; equitable early childhood services and interventions to improve children’s life chances; the role of early childhood services in family support; participation, rights and diversity; and future development in early childhood policy. The chapters deal with developments across all continents and include work by Victoria colleagues Professor Helen May and Dr Mere Skerrett, as well as three co-authored chapters by Professor Carmen Dalli.

NEW RESEARCH

WAR AND PEACE IN THE NURSERY: HOW DO CHILDREN NEGOTIATE CONFLICT TO ESTABLISH BELONGING AND WELL-BEING IN A MULTI-ETHNIC NEW ZEALAND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE?

Lead investigator: Professor Carmen Dalli

Work on this three-year Marsden-funded project started mid-year with Professor Carmen Dalli as lead investigator, Dr Anna Strycharz-Banas as field researcher and Professor Miriam Meyerhoff as co-researcher.

The project investigates how language and embodied actions are used to manage conflict and establish a sense of belonging and well-being – two key strands of the NZ early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki.

With 62% of all two-years-olds now interacting with peers in group-based early childhood settings that are increasingly ethnically diverse, the research seeks to understand how conflict is negotiated between peers who may not have a common language. By exploring the impact that conflict, conflict negotiations, and peace-making have on relationships within the early learning community, the project aims to build up understandings of belonging and well-being that are grounded in empirical and contextual observations.

AWARUA AND THE DRAGON

Dr Judith Loveridge, Dr Lisa Terreni, Rachel Denee, Dr Jing Zhou

Dr Judith Loveridge attending an exhibition, which was part of the Awarua and the Dragon research project

Using funding from Victoria’s Joint Research Committee this research project investigated a curriculum innovation that was recently carried out between two kindergartens—one in Wellington, New Zealand and one in Beijing, China. It involved a specific story, Awarua and the Dragon, which was used as a stimulus within the regular early childhood programmes of the two kindergartens. The research explored how this storytelling project enhanced young children’s sense of place and cultural identity (their own as well as that of others), through learning opportunities generated by shared storytelling across the two early childhood centres in New Zealand and China.

EXPLORING EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Lead investigators: Associate Professors Jenny Ritchie and Sandy Morrison

Funded by a grant from the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO, this project investigates how Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa and Enviroschools (kindergarten and school) are implementing principles and practices of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) utilising Te Ao Māori constructs. This project is linked to a larger international project: Reorienting Education and Training Systems to Improve the Lives of Indigenous and Marginalised Youth, led by Professor Charles Hopkins of York University, Toronto.
MEDIA COMMENTARIES

In the lead-up to Budget 2017 and in the context of Election year, members of the Institute wrote media commentaries as part of the University’s goal to be a critic and conscience of society. These include the following:

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE NEW MINISTER OF EDUCATION by Sue Cherrington

BUDGET 2017: TIME TO RECOGNISE CHILDREN AS CITIZENS by David Crabbe and Carmen Dalli
www.newsroom.co.nz/@future-learning/2017/05/23/29744/budget-3-tuesday

ELECTION 2017: SPOTLIGHT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION POLICY by Jenny Ritchie

ARE KIWIS EDUCATED ENOUGH ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE? by Jenny Ritchie and Andrea Milligan
www.newsroom.co.nz/@future-learning/2017/08/17/43016/is-nz-doing-enough-to-teach-climate-change

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE SHOULD BE AN ELECTION PRIORITY by Jenny Ritchie
www.newsroom.co.nz/@future-learning/2017/05/02/23588/why-early-childhood-care-should-be-an-election-priority

VISITORS

We continue to receive requests from international colleagues who would like to visit and, where appropriate, we seek to involve them in our research seminars.

In March we hosted visitors from Concordia University, Oregon, who wanted to learn about the New Zealand approach to early childhood policy and pedagogy. The Institute organised visits for the delegation to early childhood centres and Professor Carmen Dalli and Assoc Professor Jenny Ritchie presented a session that oriented the members of the delegation to the local early childhood context.

On 20 April we hosted Professor Dr Helen Knauf, from the Department of Social Work, University of Applied Sciences Fulda, Germany, who presented a research seminar on Pedagogical Documentation: For, With or About the child? Recent findings in German Early Childhood Education. Professor Knauf spoke about her recent research on the professional work of teachers in ECE centres and specifically on current developments in digital media as a part of early childhood education within families.

In August and September, Dr Mere Skerrett hosted Dr Jennifer Rennie, Senior Lecturer in Literacy Education and Director Student Experience in the Faculty of Education, Monash University, during a visit to the Faculty of Education in which Dr Rennie provided two research seminars.

In December, we welcomed Line Skov Hansen, a Teaching Assistant Professor and PhD Fellow at Department of Learning and Philosophy, Aalborg University, Denmark. Assistant Professor Hansen presented a seminar on Data and Research-Informed Improvements in ECE.
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Staff contributed to a number of community initiatives:

APRIL: Professor Helen May spoke at the Stout Research Centre, Victoria University of Wellington’s Education Series, ‘The Road Ahead’, Power of the Pen, Personal Journeys, Political Stories

Also in April, Professor May gave an invited presentation at Kidsfirst Kindergarten Teachers Conference, What is kindergarten in the culture and politics of Aotearoa-NZ in the 21st century? Christchurch.

JULY: Dr Sue Cherrington spoke on Becoming a High-Performing, Sustainable Professional Learning Community at the He Whanau Manaaki Kindergartens Professional Development Programme, Porirua.

AUGUST: Professor Carmen Dalli and Assoc Professor Jenny Ritchie addressed an NZEI pre-election community forum on the topic of how to ensure high quality early childhood provision. The forum included electoral candidates from three political parties, two of whom are now part of the coalition government.

Professor Helen May spoke at the University of Otago College of Education, Early Childhood Research Hui, Considering Curriculum Matters.

SEPTEMBER: Dr Sue Cherrington gave a presentation on Advocacy in ECE at the Annual General Meeting of the OMEP Wellington chapter. She also presented two workshops at the Hutt City Kindergartens’ Re-weaving Te Whāriki conference, entitled The Refreshed Te Whāriki: What does it Mean for our Practice?

OCTOBER: Professor Helen May spoke at the University of Otago College of Education, Early Childhood Research Hui, Considering Curriculum Matters.

Dr Sue Cherrington spoke at three Early Learning Forums organised by the Ministry of Education Regional Office for Taranaki-Whanganui-Manawatu regarding her research on Professional Learning Communities in ECE.


Jann Marshall and Dr Sue Cherrington at the Ministry of Education’s ECE Forum

NOVEMBER: Lisa Terreni and Rachel Denee addressed the New Zealand China Friendship Society on their research project Awarua and the Dragon, which involved a kindergarten in Beijing, China, and one in Wellington, New Zealand.

Dr Sue Cherrington presented a research seminar at the University of Auckland Early Childhood Seminar Series. Dr Cherrington’s seminar was entitled Building Professional Learning Communities in ECE: Challenges and Opportunities within the Aotearoa New Zealand context.
INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC ENGAGEMENTS

■ In March Associate Professor Jenny Ritchie gave a keynote presentation at the 2017 China International Early Childhood Education Annual Conference and Expo, in Shanghai.

■ In May, Professor Helen May spoke at the Early Childhood Research Centre at the University of Roehampton, London, on the subject of: "Documenting the Politics of Early Childhood Policy in Aotearoa-New Zealand."

■ Professor Carmen Dalli was a keynote speaker at the Nursery World Conference in June 2017, in London with a speech entitled: "Children’s Learning Journey in NZ." While in London, Carmen Dalli also hosted a Victoria Alumni event in central London, organised by the Victoria Engagement Office.

■ In September 2017, Professor Dalli was also an expert speaker at the Taskforce on Teaching Forum, sponsored by UNESCO, held in Lomé, Togo, in West Africa.

■ In November, Professor Carmen Dalli also spoke at a SEAMEO-sponsored International Seminar on Early Childhood Care and Education and Parenting: Children’s Well-being and Effective Parenting in the Digital Age in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

■ Dr Sue Cherrington was a keynote speaker on Sustainability Education and Learning Stories at the Hyogo University of Teacher Education International Symposium in Japan where she also addressed the OMEP Japan national meeting.

■ On 20 December Professor Dalli was an invited speaker at a meeting of the Early Childhood Development Association of Malta (ECDAM) on the topic of A Pedagogy of Care in Practice.
CONFERENCES ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE INSTITUTE

European Early Childhood Education Research Association Conference, August 2017, Bologna Italy: Attended by Dr Sophie Alcock


7th International Art In EC conference: April 2017, Paro Bhutan: Lisa Terreni presented and won the bid to host the 8th conference in Wellington in 2019

Pacific Early Childhood Education Research Association (PECERA) Conference, July 2017, Cebu, Philippines: Papers were presented by Drs Sue Cherrington and Mere Skerrett and Associate Professor Jenny Ritchie. The trio presented the successful Institute bid to host the PECERA annual conference in 2020.

UNESCO Policy Forum: Teaching as a Profession, September 2017, Lomé, Togo: Two papers presented by Professor Carmen Dalli

International Reconceptualising Early Childhood Education Conference, October, Toronto: Paper presented by Associate Professor Jenny Ritchie

Childhood Studies Colloquium, Victoria University. Papers presented by Professor Carmen Dalli, Dr Mary Jane Shuker, and Dr Judith Loveridge.

NZARE 2017, held at Waikato University: Papers presented by Drs Mere Skerrett, Dr Cherrington, and Associate Professor Jenny Ritchie.

STAFF PUBLICATIONS

RESEARCH REPORT


PHD COMPLETED


CONFERENCE PAPERS


BOOKS


EDITED BOOKS


**JOURNAL ARTICLES**


Terreni, L. (2017). Beyond the gates: Examining the issues facing early childhood teachers when they visit art museums and galleries with young children in New Zealand. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 42(3), 14-21. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.23965/AJEC.42.3.02
Capital thinking. Globally minded.