

# Christian Early Childhood Education Association of Aotearoa Inc

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NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2008



## NEWS IN BRIEF:

- CECEAA National Conference **2009** dates 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May 2009 Waikanae
- Welcome to our new members
  - *Chapel Hill Christian Kindergarten,*
  - *Mataliki Tokelou Akoga Kamata,*
  - *Ashburton Baptist Community Preschool,*
  - *Awhi Whanau Centre.*
- Kiddy Winks Kindergarten have celebrated their 20<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 31<sup>st</sup>.  
Congratulations!!!!
- CECEAA Regionals
  - *Christchurch 6th September Closing date 29<sup>th</sup> August*
  - *Manawatu 15<sup>th</sup> November Closing date 7<sup>th</sup> of November*

## From Executive

Greetings. Thank you for voting me on to your national executive at Conference – I think (The jury is still out on that one!) I've been asked to write a bit about myself. I don't know why we always find this such a daunting task, especially when God keeps telling us how great we are and how much He loves us.

I am the mother of four adult children and am looking forward to the arrival of my first grandchild in September. Well, my second really, as I have an 'honorary' grand-daughter who I get to spend most weekends with.

I trained as a Primary teacher and taught in Auckland and Christchurch before leaving to raise my family. Then I saw the light and trained as an early childhood teacher. I am the Manager of The Ashburton Baptist Church Community Trust Board which has two centres – Ashburton Baptist Early Learning Centre (0-3.5 years) and Ashburton Baptist Community Preschool (3.5 – 5 years). The first centre started 25 years ago and I was the first Supervisor. I left in 1991 to supervise Merton Childcare Centre in Waikouaiti, then Elm Row Childcare Centre in Dunedin. I managed Dunedin Community Childcare Association for a number of years before leaving to get back to grassroots, supervising Hurunui Childcare Centre in Amberley. I have been back at Ashburton for 8 years now. In my 'spare time' I go to the gym, watch old movies on DVD, and mark assignments for Canterbury University (occasionally they call me in as a visiting lecturer to talk about another of my interests – making resources for using with children.) Our Centre is part of the 3 year ECE ICT Professional Learning Programme and this year that has meant my attending conferences as part of the dissemination requirements, so less spare time than usual!

I am passionate about early childhood education and advocating for staff and children. At present, as well as taking on this role in CECEAA, for the last four years I have been the Early Childhood Representative and Annual Meeting Delegate for our Mid-Canterbury branch of NZEI.

It is great to be back working in a Christian Early Childhood setting. Isn't prayer with staff and children at the beginning of each working day an absolute blessing?

I am looking forward to serving God and all of you on the Executive.

**Lorriane Bennet**

Executive Member

## Update from the National Coordinator

As an Executive we were delighted to catch up with over 300 of you at our National Conference at Waikanae. A highlight for me was seeing the beautiful rainbow that appeared over the main meeting building while everyone was at workshops....as if God was saying he was pleased will all of those who had taken the time to gather together as Christian Early Childhood...

We are pleased to welcome Lorraine Bennet (Manager of Ashburton Baptist' two early childhood services to the National Executive. The executive met in Palmerston North late July to begin planning for next year, looking at continued development of the website and strategic planning for the future of the association. At the National Conference AGM the members voted to offer a first year ½ price membership to new centre members to continue to build membership ( membership has increased significantly over the last three years).

As an executive we have been pleased to see the significant funding increases for teacher lead services in the May Government Budget. Along with other organisations within the early childhood sector we have a keenly interest in early childhood education policies of the different political parties. We are committed to lobbying for continued implementation of the Early Childhood Strategic Plan, which includes appropriately trained and registered teachers in teacher lead services. We are concerned by any policies that would undermine the Strategic Plan and the importance of trained registered teachers for our children.

We are delighted to see the recent release of the new criteria for early childhood services. It is a very clear document that tidies up much of the confusion around some requirements which have been inconsistently applied previously. We want to congratulate the Ministry of Education on this work. The criteria are available on [www.lead.ece.govt.nz](http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz) along with very helpful information for churches wanting to begin the process of building a ECE service.

As we head towards spring may you enjoy and find encouragement from its beauty and the awesomeness of God's creation.

**Alison Ford**

National Coordinator

## Helen Mets Tiare



In the second week of the holidays Te Aroha Noa Community Services hosted a visit by Prime Minister Helen Clark. We knew it was going to be a wonderful community event and an excellent opportunity to celebrate our kaupapa of intergenerational learning with parents as involved educators. As at the CECEAA National Conference this year, our parents presented their amazing stories and totally impressed Helen. The following is a learning story that accompanied the photo shown.....

*Prime Minister Helen Clark had the pleasure of meeting the amazing and world famous (in Highbury) Tiare. Helen was visiting Te Aroha Noa and Tiare introduced herself to her with her mihi all in te reo Māori. I'm sure that Helen was very impressed. I know we were all very proud of Tiare, and her Mum, Katie, for representing Te Aroha Noa so well. There are not too many 4 years olds who can say that Helen Clark has met them.....*

Election year or not, we know it was a God inspired moment for the Highbury community to feel important and noticed, and that officials now come to them for the answers. Tau ana!



## Through the eyes of children....

We were talking about Easter. My 7 year old grandson asked me "Grandma, why did Jesus have to die on the Cross in the first place?" I thought for a while and gave him what I thought was a satisfactory answer, finishing with "He died for our sins". My grandson then responded with "Well actually Grandma, I wasn't born then, or even alive, so I didn't have any sins!!" This is the same grandson that asked "Is Jesus a Saint?" Before I could respond he said "Well if he is it would be spelt with a capital "S"!! (He was learning about lower and upper case at the time)

*Fay Clarke*

'Frozen Coke is really yummy, I dranked it lots and it done freezed ma head and ma brain went all wobbly'.....  
'Mum and Dad and me goed for a BIG HUGE time in the trees (bush) only trouble is my feet rounded out of walk.'

*Brayden 3yrs*

## The Funky Monkeys

The Funky Monkeys believe that letting "Kids be Kids" is the essence of their shows.

Since 2003 energetic performers Joe, Chris, Neil and their dog Dizzie have been dedicated to bringing a whale of a time to children everywhere.

Located in a little patch of hidden jungle just south of Auckland, (i.e. Hamilton!), the three Funky Monkeys perform to tens of thousands of children every year. They have made appearances on TV One Breakfast and Good Morning Show's and has had coverage on all major TV networks. They recently performed before 200,000 people at Coca Cola Christmas in the Park. After years of community youth work,

primary school teaching, composing, lecturing and touring the world with other bands, Joe, Chris and Neil have found that making The Funky Monkey's into a mega super-group for kids has been their most exciting work yet.

Visit [www.thefunkymonkeys.co.nz](http://www.thefunkymonkeys.co.nz)



## A resignation letter with a difference.....

Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.  
James M Barrie (1860-1937)

As the bible says laughter is the medicine that encourages us through the ups and downs of life. We thought we would share with you the resignation letter of a staff member who we will miss very much.....

To the Director,

I would like to tender my resignation from my teaching position at Spreydon Baptist Community Early Learning Centre.

I know that this will be a huge loss to the centre. I realize I have challenged you and your teaching practices over the ten L O N G years. I have grown personally and have willingly shared with you all these growth points.

I bequeath my sick leave to those in need and harbour no real grudges that I have not been able to use it all myself.

I surrender my early morning shifts and hand over my late night duties with complete confidence that no-one will be able to fulfil these as well as me.

I cordially apologise for the fire brigade call out. I know that I am single but this was over the top as far as finding a date goes. I feel that I should also apologise for the lack of respect I showed the laminator, seven and a half years ago when I feed grated crayon through it on high.

I shall bring in, before my last day of service, 3 packets of biscuits (plain) as I confess that over the past ten years I have on occasion taken one from the pantry.

I also confess that on one occasion I left the hot water running in the laundry and nearly flooded the entire preschool.

However it is with GREAT regret that I hand this resignation in. I have enjoyed my time at preschool. I have a lot of wonderful memories and, joking aside, I will miss this part of my life.

Yours sincerely

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PS. I am leaving to take up a position as a missionary in Lesotho, working in an orphanage and early childhood setting. Can I have a reference regarding my competence and reliability?

## Blast from the past.... Te Karere – The Early Childhood Messenger, Issue 4, 1994

### OH DEAR, ANOTHER ASSOCIATION!

*Alan Vink, Deputy Chairperson, of the Christian Early Childhood Education Association of Aotearoa sent us the following information about the Association.*

In May 1992 a group of 40 early childhood workers from around New Zealand met in Hamilton to discuss common interests and concerns. In March of 1993 at our Inaugural Conference a new Association was formed called The Christian Early Childhood Education Association of Aotearoa or "CECEAA".

In the minds of the founding group there was a need for an organisation that not only gave support to all the Christian based early childhood centres, particularly in the area of our distinctive philosophy, but also represented the Christian perspective in this particular sector in education.

The first two years have been most encouraging. We have:

- Established a National Office in Hamilton.
- Employed an Administrator, Llyn Gammin with secretarial assistance.
- Conducted two National Conferences.

- Run seminars around New Zealand.
- Developed a resource unit that both helps new centres get started and encourages and resources existing centres.
- Published three/four newsletters each year.
- Developed a mailing list of 140 centres from which we are drawing an increasing membership base.

Our major agenda item at present is the development of a professional training package.

So that tells you in brief who we are and what we have been doing. Let me now share with you why we exist.

In short it is because we are Christian. In saying this I am very aware of the negative images that statement creates in the minds of many. However, that is our position. We believe that the basis of all life is found in a personal relationship with God, made possible through His Son, Jesus Christ of

Nazareth. It is He who invites us to participate with Him in all of life's activities.

Therefore, as Christian based early childhood centres we seek to promote an environment where children and their families may discover something about this dimension of reality. We seek to do this sensitively, respecting the various beliefs and world views that people have, yet at the same time being quite intentional about our desire to say to people that the biblical message is in fact still relevant for today.

To that end our first objective as an Association is to serve and support Christian early childhood education centres, management and staff in fulfilling their role as Christian educators and caregivers.

If you would like further information please get in touch with Llyn Gammin, Private Bag 3120, Hamilton, Ph (07) 838-0375 or Fax (07) 838-0065.

## Reflections from WCBK team – Pen Green visit April 2008

“Education is not to fill a bucket but to light a fire” – Yeats

The Pen Green journey began twenty five years ago with the closure of the prominent and significant industry of the steel works in small town Corby, UK. The community was caught in feelings of apathy, despair and little hope.

From these ashes, Pen Green, an educational training facility world renowned, passionately committed to children and families emerged. “In every small community there should be a service for children under 5 and their families. This service should honour the needs of young children and celebrate their existence. It should also support families, however, they are constituted within the community” - Pen Green 1983.

The core business at Pen Green is parents and children. The philosophy that partnership with parents is crucial is reflected in many levels: the daily practice; parent development and the ongoing professional development.

Pen Green offers education with care for children at a range of levels: Baby Nest; Nursery and Crèche all cater for the under 5's and this is teamed with the After School Club and Holiday programme for children aged from 4 – 11 years.

To compliment these programmes all families are regularly visited in their homes. Health services, small group learning opportunities and community education are all offered on site. The centre is open in the weekends so Fathers have opportunities to be involved. There are 50 groups that meet weekly, including a breakfast club and a fitness group. Yearly trips are planned for a group of families to the country, coast or France.

Pen Green's research unit was established in 1995, set up to be dedicated for research and training in early years, and was initially housed in a small building on site with just a few staff. Thirteen years on, around twenty staff work in a stunning, purpose built conference and professional development centre. The research centre consistently seeks to improve outcomes for children and families and to meet the changing needs of the local community. “By developing practitioner research within a children's centre setting, and through training offered to both practitioners and parents we are able to help Pen Green and other children's centres to constantly reflect on and review their practice. In doing so we are improving services for children and families and making a difference”. It is exciting to note that nearly 60% of the staff at Pen Green began their connections with the centre as parents.



## Reflections from WCBK team – Pen Green visit April 2008 continue..

What a privilege it was to be welcomed so readily into this community for a few days. Some of the key things that stood out for us were:

- Vision, Passion and Energy: Margie Whalley is a dynamic, passionate and motivated woman who drives and shares in the shaping and holding the vision for the Pen Green community.
- The importance of gathering the 'right personnel' e.g. Jimmy (local politician to champion the cause)
- Timing needs to be right and is critical to the outcomes
- Children and families are the central focus in all levels of operation at Pen Green
- the buggy/pram shelter nestled at the entrance ~ a wonderful welcome and indication that the local community is served
- Intentional focus on maintaining and strengthening parent/teacher partnerships.
- Parents actively involved in their children's learning
- Workers, a term given to all staff (qualified teachers, social workers, health professionals and parents work side by side), ~ limits the hierarchy
- High proportion of parents on the governance team
- Opportunity for staff to work in their areas of passion
- Home visiting is undertaken by the most appropriate multi-disciplinary person
- Drop In room, a 'matronly' woman models cooking skills, while still being engaged in the many and varied conversations of parents. Most days a meal can be purchased by parents who are booked in
- Parent Education – multi leveled and layered
- Parents are actively recruited as volunteers
- Many varied opportunities for parents to be involved with learning through a wide range of activities e.g. antenatal and post natal support, infant massage, growing together, communication skills, dad's weekends etc
- Professional Development is integral, planned and ongoing
- Team building is intentional and provides a solid platform for robust debates
- To secure ongoing funding and to future proof, excellent results are maintained, credibility is worked on and political moves are made as appropriate

Pen green is an integrated and encompassing approach to supporting and serving children and families in the local community. It provides a "one stop shop.

"Education is not to fill a bucket but to light a fire" ~ Yeats.

There are many fires being ignited and lit in the Pen Green community. This model gives us a place to visit, share ideas, discuss, debate and effect change appropriately in our own contexts and settings.



## Executive Contacts

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## ADVERTISEMENTS /NOTICES

# Te Tiriti o Waitangi

"What does this mean to me as a  
Christian...as a teacher...."

### Facilitator: Vicki Elgar-Roberts

Vicki is an experienced facilitator with particular skills in the respectful and informative delivery of Treaty of Waitangi workshops. She has worked in this area of understanding with various groups from church communities, schools, tertiary organisations and public work places. She is passionate about supporting others to deepening their understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. She has presented at the 2007 and 2008 CECEAA National Conferences with participants praising the **informative** and **unique** way that Vicki delivers the information and how they have not only learnt about the Treaty but also about who they are as New Zealanders.

This workshop will focus on how developing a relationship with tangata whenua can be difficult to know where to start, but it is made easier when we understand our own relationship to Aotearoa New Zealand whether we are Maori or Pakeha. Who am I, where am I from, what does the Te Tiriti o Waitangi have to do with my being here? You have to start with you before you start with them.



Region	Venue	Date & Times	Registrations Close	Contact Person
Christchurch	Spreydon Baptist Church	6 <sup>th</sup> September 9:30am to 3pm	29 <sup>th</sup> August	Alison Ford <a href="mailto:ceceaa@slingshot.co.nz">ceceaa@slingshot.co.nz</a>
Palmerston North	Te Aroha Noa Early Childhood Centre	15 <sup>th</sup> November 9:30am to 3pm	7 <sup>th</sup> November	Cindy Hammond <a href="mailto:learningdestinations@xtra.co.nz">learningdestinations@xtra.co.nz</a>

*On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2008 from 4.45 pm to 6 pm come and hear the spokespeople from each of the political parties discuss their party's early childhood education policies.*

*This public forum is at Rutherford House, city campus Victoria University of Wellington (opposite the Railway Station).*

*This Wellington Forum is organised by the Early Education Federation, a national group of community based ECE organisations.*

*Staff and parents at your centres are invited to come to this meeting to hear each party's early childhood policies directly and ask questions of the spokespeople.*

*Put this date in your diary now!*

*If you require further information you can phone me Rachel Brown on 04 473 0482 or email [rsb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:rsb@xtra.co.nz).*