



E-Updates from CECEAA



November 2008

Dear Members

Greetings

This has been an eventful week for Early Childhood with the outcome of the elections and the news that ABC Australia has gone into receivership. The impacts of both we are yet to see.

National's Plans for ECE

After 9 years of a Labour led government we are heading to some significant changes. These are listed below to remind us all of what will be coming up:

As part of their election campaign National's policies included;

1. Keeping of the 20 hours free scheme but the dropping of the word 'free' to call it 20 Hours ECE.
2. 20 hours ECE keeping all existing subsidies and fee controls, removing the 6 hour a day limit and include Playcentre, Kohanga Reo and 5 year olds in the scheme. Also investigate more frequent pay periods.
3. Allow qualified English-speaking foreign teachers to qualify after an intensive six-week programme and final assessment (followed by a possible probation period).
4. Promote working while training.
5. After 2012, under-twos in teacher led services to be staffed by 50% rather than the current 100% target for qualified teachers. Funding to encourage 100% teacher-led services will remain in place.
6. Montessori, Steiner and Playcentre qualifications to count towards the degree.
7. Staff ratios will be reduced for children under two from 1:5 to 1:4 EVENTUALLY.
8. Regulations that are seen as unnecessary will be reduced over time. The requirement for early childhood centres with more than 50 children to have more than one licence will be dropped.
9. They are opposed to sleep rooms criterion PF37 and believe that parents and ECE centres should choose best sleep arrangements.
10. FREEZE upcoming licensing criteria for new and existing services until the completion of further consultation with the sector.

As more information comes to hand we will get this out to members as soon as possible.

ABC Services

The New Zealand operation is part of a separate company from the Australian parent company and the newly appointed CEO has issued a press release saying that they are trading profitably and not affected by ABC Australia going into receivership....The Ministry of education is watching the situation closely

Report back to members from the Early Childhood Advisory council and the Early Childhood Federation November meeting that we attend on your behalf.

The Ministry of Social Development reported that

- From the 1st December 2008 the Childcare subsidy will be available to parents attending limited attendance centres. A minimum of 3 hours per week applies.
- 100 gym crèches are all ready licensed and another 72 expected to apply for licensing.
- The plan for services to receive the weekly statement of childcare subsidies paid online has been delayed due to the cost of the system. It is hoped to be implemented by the end of 2009. The printed statement is posted out on Monday each week. MSD will follow up with NZ Post why it is taking so many days for some services to receive them.
- Complete Subsidy applications are taking around 24 hours to grant with letters continuing to go to both the client and the service provider. (**Unless information missing** or it is February - a peak time of year for subsidy applications). These means as a service provider if you have not heard whether the subsidy has been granted after a few days it would be advisable to follow it up with the family as it will be because of missing information which needs to be supplied promptly to MSD to ensure date granted from not delayed.

B4 School Checks

The Ministry of Health reported that the District Health Boards are now slowly implementing these checks. Canterbury DHB is behind the others in their implementation. Officials provided an update on the thinking behind the checks as follows:

- Significant numbers of children were being picked up at the previous school entry checks having hearing/vision problems and/ or behavioural/ developmental difficulties.
- International evidence shows that the earlier the intervention occurs the better the long term outcomes for the child and family which is why the Minister directed the Ministry of Health to implement this initiative.
- The checks brings together the well child strategy (Plunket 0-3 yrs) and ECE.

- The 45-60 minute conversation parents have with the nurse as part of the check allows health data to be collected and conversations to be begun with parents regarding concerns that parents have.
- The design of the check to have a parent component / questionnaire with the health professional AND the ECE questionnaire/ conversation/ input is seen as important by the Ministry to support the decision to refer the child further or not. Having data from two sources enables a better understanding of the child so that the right children were referred. They cited examples where if they only relied on the parent data- parents may not recognise developmental difficulties that the ECE teacher would or see as major concerns issues which are not so.
- The Ministry acknowledged ECAC members issues about the difficulties of ECE teachers being able to participate in the checks due to the time off the floor this involved, that the data from the checks was of no use for the present special education referral system. They are looking for a solution for these issues.
- They are also acknowledged ECAC concerns that the Strength and Difficulties questionnaire was a deficit model (the questionnaire comes from England) but that is what we have to use at present.
- In the interests of the child we can only do the best we can to support the roll out of this strategy.

2008 Regulations and Criteria Update

The ECAC meeting occurred in the week leading up to the election so that information around the Criteria rollout may be about to change. Hard copies of the criteria for your service type will be arriving in services shortly. More available from Bennetts/ Whitcoulls

- Download 2008 regulations at www.legislation.govt.nz. Criteria from www.lead.ece.govt.nz
- The Ministry is busy training its staff for the implementation roll out from 1st December 2008.
- Services are *strongly recommended* to refer to the guidance information on the lead.ece website that supports the criteria. This provides different ways to meet the criteria.
- If services have issues with Ministry relicensing personnel as they work through relicensing around interpretation of the criteria or guidance the Ministry asks that issues/complaints be raised at the local office in the first instance.

- There is a Statutory declaration to be made on behalf of the service provider as part of relicensing regarding people being fit and proper to be service providers and a check list to help services prepare which will be sent to services and available online.
- For providers with more than one service to be relicensed they can photocopy one completed declaration to attach to each application.

Teacher Supply Update

This was provided to 30th June 2008 as follows. The Ministry is keeping a close eye on teacher supply as we move towards the next registration target in teacher lead services. Of significant interest is that:

- The number of funded child hours (\$) continues to increase as numbers of children participating and length of time they participate continues to increase.
- For the year ended June 2008 nationally 179 new services opened, 42 closed (net 137 increase) - largely all day services.
- The year ended 30.6.08 recorded 64,145 live births, an increase of 4.1% up on 2007. Last high was in 1972 (64,508) and highest ever recorded in 1962 (66,110). Since 2002 live births have increased every year putting significant and unexpected pressure on ECE.
- Current projections show that between 2008 and 2011 more than a 15% percentage increase in 3 and 4 year olds is expected in Queenstown-Lakes, Papakura, Buller, Waitakere, Manukau, New Plymouth and Waimate. You can check the full report (2008 Birth Report) and % for your region at www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications
- Each bulk funding period the number of teacher led services at greater than 50% funding band continues to increase. The Ministry is pleased to note that Auckland is catching up to the national average quickly. No region of New Zealand is yet showing higher than 80% which is the next target.

Behaviour Summit 16/17th March 2009

The Ministry of Education is planning to co-host an across the education sector summit. The purpose of this is to develop an agreed cross sector plan going forward to lead to a reduction in disruptive behaviour, improved educational achievement and better outcomes for children/young people presenting with behavioural difficulties. National early childhood organisations including CECEAA will be asked to nominate representatives along with other education sector groups.

Te Mana (2001) and Team Up (2005)

- Representatives reported that the latest TV campaign is now encouraging more action from parents to support children's learning. Game packs

accompanying the campaign can be ordered from the team up 0800 number.

- Services are encouraged to continue supporting parents to access the 600+ pages of material for parents on the team up website to support learning.
- Stats show 133,238 hits of the website in Sept 2008 (27,400 new browsers and 15,000 parents signed up for the e newsletter).
- There is still plenty of team up material for services to order and provide to parents.
- The focus for Te Mana is encouraging families to support 13-17 year olds to stay at school through TV adverts, magazines, study guides and the relaunched website www.temana.co.nz
- Stats indicate 81% of Māori youth have taken some action as a result of the campaign, with 60% reporting it made them think about the importance of getting a good education and 42% trying harder at school.

Discretionary Grant Scheme Review

Significant to this are two strategies:

1. Ka Hikitia which has a target of increasing the % of Māori children who participate in ECE from 90% (2006) to 95% by 2012. Actions include establishing new ECE services in areas of low participation.
2. The Pasifika Education Plan with a target that at 1.7.2010 the number of Pasifika children between 2-4 years enrolled in ECE will be increased by 1000. Actions include increasing the number of services in locations where access is a barrier.

In the year to July 2008 Discretionary Grant Funding allowed for 20 new services at 1 million each (out of the 179 that opened nationally). With limited funding available those wanting to apply for funding are advised to consider how well they align with these strategies before doing all the work and consult their local Ministry. Other factors such as low socio economic, large growth areas, low participation are also included.

It is at present a fundamental government setting that their role in ECE is around quality, teacher education, participation and leadership rather than ownership or provision. With Kindergartens included in the statistics ECE provision continues diverse and the majority community based at this stage with large corporates playing an insignificant role to date says Richard Wally from the Ministry.

The Ministry of Education is interested in responses to the following questions:

- 1. What do you think is the main problem with DGS?**
- 2. What could be the solutions?**
- 3. How could the Ministry meet its commitment under Ka Hikitia and the Pasifika Education Plan?**
- 4. If you had 16 million to improve participation how would you spend it?**

We would be interested in receiving email responses from services to feed back to the Ministry collectively from CECEAA. Please email to ceceaa@slingshot.co.nz

Evaluation of the ECE Strategic Plan

Evaluation is underway of intermediate outcomes for the plan. In general there have been positive gains:

- More registered teachers in ECE
- Quality teaching and learning practices evident
- Te Whāriki effectively implemented
- Collaborative relationships between ECE, families and whanau improving

Issues that have been identified are:

- Services where over 20% of children are under 2 show less quality than services catering only for over 2's
- Services catering for children from non English speaking backgrounds needed more support in working with families
- Services in minor urban localities at a distance from teacher education providers have limited pools of qualified teachers and difficulty accessing professional development
- Parent/whanau led services have less take up of Ministry of Education resources and professional development. They are more likely to have fluctuating rolls, fluctuating staffing and issues of financial sustainability
- Teacher/ educator turnover is an issue in education and care services and Playcentre due to the competition for teachers and differing salary and employment conditions being offered

Police Vetting

There is a bill in progress to require anyone who has unsupervised access to children to be vetted. This bill has yet to get to select committee stage where submissions will be sought.

The bill will remove the \$10 cost in place at present. Playcentre raised the question that does this mean all parents need to be vetted as they form part of the supervision roster. Rose indicated that anyone part of the ratio staff needs to be vetted and all those who have unsupervised access...

Health Checks for licensing

The issue of discrepancies between different District Health Boards when it comes to the requirements for licensing was raised. The Ministry of Education officials are aware of this and are working with the Boards but because the DHB's are their own entities their power is limited. Services need to fit the requirements of their local DHB's.

National Conference 2009 Friday 22nd-24th May "Are you listening"

Planning for conference is well underway. Conference brochures will be sent to services late February 2009. For those keen one's among you who are already thinking about booking flights to Wellington in order to get the cheap ones.... please note....

- The sessions for Managers/Trustees/ Supervisors begin 2pm Friday. Flights arriving BY 12pm work well for shuttles to Waikanae.
- For main delegates arriving Friday don't forget it is 1 ½ hr to Waikanae from Wellington so on behalf of your teachers please book flights early so you don't end up on late ones on Friday.
- **CONFERENCE WILL FINISH EARLIER NEXT YEAR** with shuttles leaving 1.30pm so book outward flights around 3.30-4pm.

Regards

Alison Ford
National Coordinator

Regards

Alison Ford

National Coordinator