

# Playcentre

Journal



**ISSUE 154**

Summer 2016

**The young child emerges curious about the wider world**

Action towards Amalgamation – Five stages of Teams – Playcentre Planning – Slice of Heaven – Encouraging social competency



**Hello, Kia ora, Talofa lava, Kai Orana, Malo e laumalie , Talofa, Fakatalofa atu, Ni sa bula vinaka, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Malo ni.**

Yeah the winter months are finally over, the sun is starting to shine longer during the day and the flowers are blossoming. Summer is so much fun as it is great fun to be outside. I was lucky to be sent an article from the Department of Conservation that shares the importance of getting out into nature and enjoying our amazing environment, our whenua. They also have some great activities to do with our children on their website. On the back page are some great outdoor games to play. What's the time Mr Wolf is such a huge hit with my children.

Federation are currently working really hard with the amalgamation. It is really exciting to see Playcentre using technology to reduce duplication and administration for centres. The new website is looking amazing with some great new tools coming. The new student management system will reduce a lot of administration time. There is also an education update from Cate and Char.

This Journal has so many interesting and useful articles in. Thank you to the Olivia and Carolyn from the Professional Development Team for sharing your knowledge. Playcentre planning is a great one page document and very useful for this time of year.

Sarah Amy Glensor Best has shared with us how important it is to support our children during those pre school years and beyond. Play is how we learn about life and play and learning can not be separated.

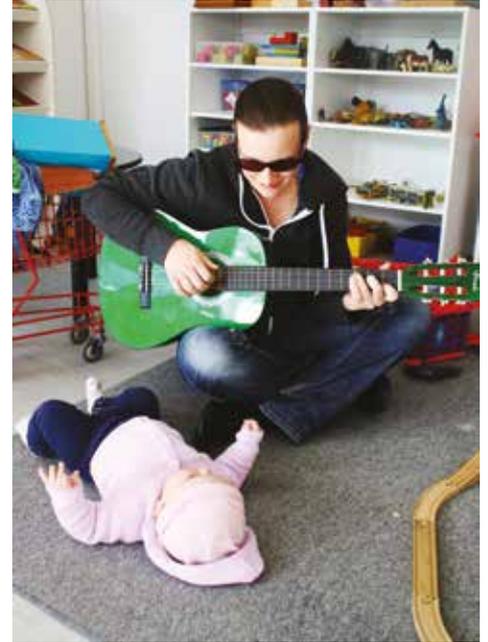
The next Journal is due out at the start of term one so please email me your stories and photographs.

**Stacey Balich  
Playcentre Journal Editor**

Playcentre Journal Cooperative:  
Stacey Balich (Tamaki Association),  
Clare Ferguson (Federation Trustee Board)  
and Anna Anstey (Tamaki Association).

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Finished with your latest copy of the Playcentre Journal? Spread the word by passing your copy onto a friend or taking to your local doctor's surgery, kindergarten, school reception, Plunket or music group.

## Editorial

Contributions of written pieces, illustrations and photographs are welcome either by post to 26/8 Eaglehurst Road, Ellerslie, Auckland 1060 or by email to [journal@Playcentre.org.nz](mailto:journal@Playcentre.org.nz); please enclose a self-addressed envelope with any material you would like returned. Digital images should be sent in the highest possible resolution: if the image files are too large to email, they can be burnt to a CD and posted to us. It is the photographer's responsibility to ensure people photographed have given permission, and to send the permission form with the pictures. You can download the permission form from <http://playcentre.org.nz/pressdocs/115.pdf>. The Journal was edited by Stacey Balich, who is supported by the Journal cooperative.

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## Playcentre

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**The Playcentre Journal is the official magazine of the New Zealand Playcentre Federation and is published three times a year.**

If you have an essay, feature story or research on Playcentre related topics that would be appropriate to publish in the Journal we would love to read them!

For future issues we are looking for submissions on:

- Documenting learning
- Emergent leadership
- Supporting learning

Guidelines for writing for the *Playcentre Journal* can be found at <http://www.playcentre.org.nz/journal.php>

Please email your contributions to [journal@Playcentre.org.nz](mailto:journal@Playcentre.org.nz) or post them to;

26/8 Eaglehurst Road, Ellerslie, Auckland 1060

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# Actions towards Amalgamation

Playcentre is moving forward on its journey to amalgamate into one strong, vibrant organisation! The 2016 Conference theme of a Melting Pot symbolised the importance of the diverse Playcentre cultures, ideas, and 'ways of doing' from around the country being brought together to ensure our future strength and growth.

A huge thank you to Playcentres, Associations and their delegates at Conference who worked very hard to make positive decisions to enable the amalgamation to progress. A constitution for Te Whānau Tupu Ngātahi o Aotearoa – Playcentre Aotearoa was agreed. This means the legal process can begin and we are working closely with our legal advisor to collate all the necessary documentation.

The practical side of the amalgamation will begin while the legal process is progressing. We are recruiting national roles and look forward to their energy and knowledge being applied to the huge task ahead. Consultation with current employees is a key part of the next steps and information will be circulated to all Associations to support you with this.

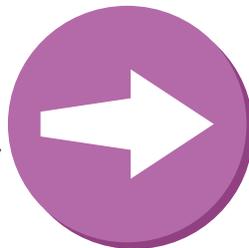
## Successes so far...

Our technology projects are also underway with the new website up and running (see page 22) and the Student Management System (SMS) being trialled. To support Centres with this new exciting technology a telecommunications package is being rolled out. Xero will also be available for Centres to use. All of the costs for this new technology will be covered by Federation.



## What next?

The next nine months will be a key turning phase for Playcentre. The transition may be challenging and as a Federation Team we want to assure you that we hold the Centre's interest at heart and we are all working towards the same goal. Federation personnel will be asking for a lot of information from Associations and Playcentres as we work through the various processes to make change happen, to ensure all of our Centres are supported into 2017.



At Conference a small group worked on refining the budget and developed guiding principles that provide a framework for us as we make this journey:

- Ensuring continuity and quality of Centre services
- Rōpū supported
- Establish infrastructure to allow us to support Centres and Rōpū into the future
- Treat our people well
- ELI is a non-negotiable element

Keeping these principles foremost will support us in making good decisions and ensuring that the focus is on maintaining and strengthening our people, Centres and rōpū throughout the amalgamation and beyond.

The next National Executive Meeting is 25th – 27th November.

If anyone has any questions please feel free to contact me.

Veronica Pitt  
Operations Manager



# 5,4,3,2,1 Blast Off!

A long time ago on a playground far, far away there was a group of children who were great friends and all wanted to travel into space.

Over a number of sessions I had noticed the continuing theme of Space in the children's play. To support their interest I used the project approach method of teaching, completing an anticipatory web (anticipatory web is a mind map). I used the items listed on the web to search for photographs to put together a catalogue of pictures for the children to look at, think about, discuss and explore. I laminated them and put them on a metal ring. There were photos of space stations, rockets, solar system, control panels, blast off, moon vehicles, NASA badges, astronaut suit, moon cycle, stars etc... I laid out the photographs and encouraged the children to look through them and asked what they could see. These pictures became the base for what we explored over the next few weeks. I laid them out on display in different areas of the Centre such as the collage table, block area and sandpit. My favourite sessions were the ones where the children constructed different rocket ships in the sandpit. We used nearly every piece of equipment in the shed!

We read books to the children about Matariki and talked about the stars. Matariki is the Māori name for the small cluster of stars also known as the Pleiades or the Seven Sisters, in the Taurus constellation. The Centre organised a whānau disco evening and the members cooked a fantastic boil up.

I shared the project with the rest of the Centre using photos on the wall. When we captured these sessions in a narrative we also left space for the parents to ask their child what they enjoyed and what they would like to do next time to keep it child focused.

Following this project approach supported the children to explore their interest in space, especially rocket ships. We provided encouragement, freedom, space, time and resources for the children to develop pretend play with each other. They applied new skills



and took on different roles such as the leader, the negotiator, the listener, the driver, the problem solver and the map reader. There was so much creativity, pretend play and fun.

The picture above was the children's first rocket ship. The children put the chairs into rows with the two front chairs for the drivers of the ship. We got out some clipboards for the children to draw maps for where we were going. This was fun as each child wanted to go somewhere different, all very magical, so watching them draw and listening to them describe the planets they wanted to visit was great. One of the girls spent a long time drawing the trees that were on the planet. One of the boys

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world"*  
Albert Einstein

designed a rocket ship and looked at ways to make it fly. He drew balloons attached to the top of the ship as he said this would make it fly. To try this out we tied some large plastic bags to the top of the bars and the wind blew them up into the air. The boy's face was a picture when he saw the bags flying like his design.

We put the photos on a metal ring as this allowed the children to flick through them easily, are laminated so they can be used outside.



Building rockets became very popular and were built several times and each time they were built differently, apart from the driver being at the front of the ship. The ship above had a bed in the back for the babies to sleep. We even had a doctor on board at one stage.

Each rocket was fuelled differently. For the rocket at the top of the next page the children constructed a pipe that went from front to back to transport the water/fuel to the back of the ship. Building this took a lot of





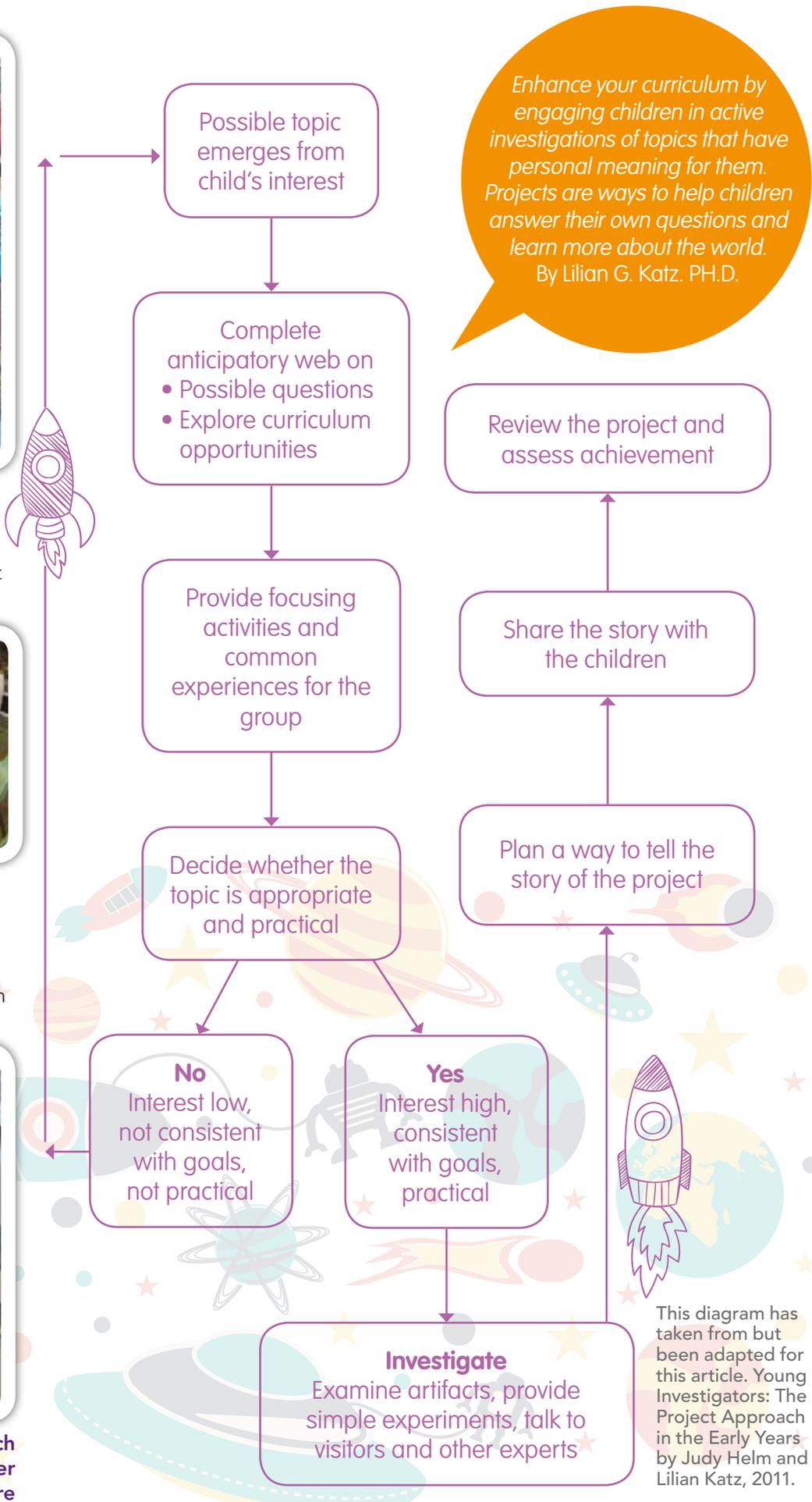
teamwork, listening and perseverance. I really enjoyed listening to the children's theories for how to get the water faster from the front to back as it was on flat ground.



The children enjoyed creating their own space badges as well as helmets. One of our mums borrowed some books from the library which were a huge hit with the children. The children also enjoyed this jigsaw puzzle.



**Stacey Balich**  
Big Kids Leader  
Pakuranga rahihi Playcentre



# Slice of Heaven



We wanted to hear water, birds, insects, the rustling of grass, laughter and chatter. We wanted to see children laughing, exploring, investigating, using their imagination, engaging in teamwork, problem solving and developing their fine and gross motor skills. We wanted to smell the outside, the smoke from a camp fire, the dampness of the surrounding stream and the earthy smell of mud.

In late 2014 I went to the amazing Natural Phenomenon Conference in Glenbervie, Whangarei. It was set in the bush with world renowned speakers and plenty of workshops with the common theme 'Nature Play'. The conference had a big effect on me and I immediately called a meeting at our Playcentre how we could utilise the 1000m<sup>2</sup> next to our Centre that was currently waste land.

## What we did

- We drew up a rough plan and worked out how we could get the resources needed to put this into place.
- We needed an undulating contour, stumps and logs. Locals came to our rescue by delivering a dozen big eucalyptus logs and one massive puriri stump. The logs were notched tighter by one of the dads to create quite high balancing beams.
- We managed to get eight loads of clean topsoil dropped off to form an undulating hill right in the middle of

the site which now also sports a mud slide. Sounds costly?

- We got a grant for the fence, donations, were not scared to ask for help and some dedicated families helping in the weekends.
- Keeping it simple and as natural as possible. We regularly mow tracks through the grass and the rest is left to go wild and is trimmed as required.

*The remaining eucalyptus logs were carved to make little seats and rocket ships or are they waka or trains? – these creations change each day!*

## Next came the construction

We constructed a mud kitchen, a wooden hut, a log for a bridge over a drain, we got a hand pump for children to use themselves along with a second push tap that again the children have control over. A series of stepping logs were dug into the ground and an all important fire pit and log stump seating

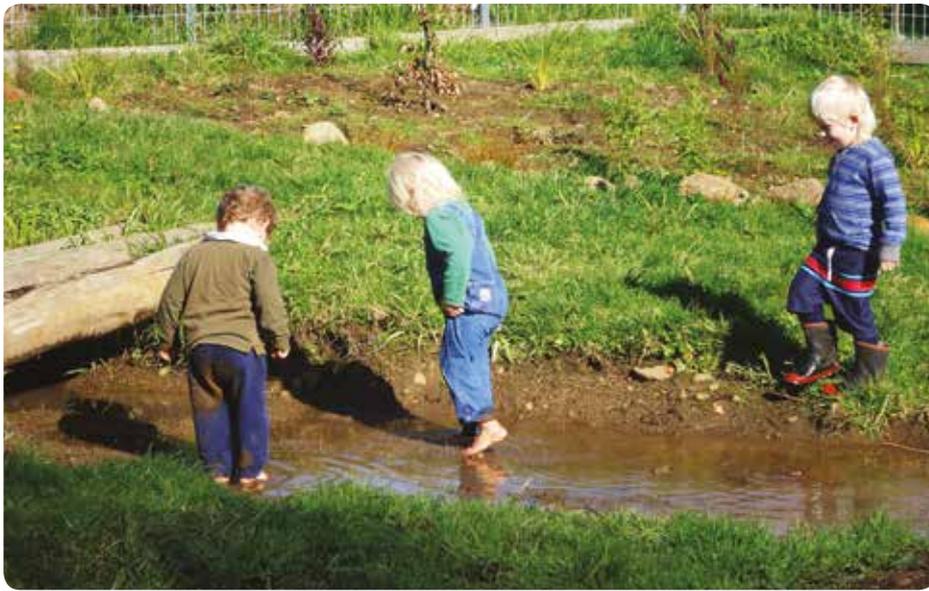
area. This was all then landscaped with big trees and sensory plantings along with a dozen fruit trees. Access from the Centre is via a safety gate to ensure any children entering have supervision.

## Flow on effect

We have seen many changes in the way our Centre is run.

From small things inside to how the kids play outside. We have changed our consumables inside to be predominately natural resources and removed all the coloured ice block sticks, pompoms, pipe cleaners etc and replaced with wool, stones, shells and various other plant materials. Not only do these resources change with the season, they are free! We have moved from providing playdough every session to clay instead. What we have noticed is that the children haven't missed the





relationships. It also allows the children to play with the illusion that they are playing unsupervised. We have had some amazing imaginative and team work play demonstrated. The increased socialisation or maybe the presence of fire has also drawn fathers out of the community and into our sessions along with an increase in grandmothers. All this provides for a more community environment.

Ursula Buckingham  
Parklands Playcentre

old resources with children only rarely asking for playdough. The introduction of natural blocks and the use of these outside and in the sandpit has given another dimension to nature play. We have seen a reduction in the amount of artwork being produced and less inside play, ironically more outside play is evident in winter when there is water and mud at the children's disposal.

Just as important as the children's change in play is the increased social interaction of the adults. Outside of the fire ban season we often light the camp fire and cook sausages, marshmallows or simply sit around and sing songs, have a jam with the

instruments or have a good natter. It seems fire is a great leveller and helps break down the social barriers. We even had an overnight camp before Christmas! With the adults all in the nature playground, socialising together, a new form of play is introduced to the children in watching their parents build



### Education Review Office Comments

The learning environments for children are spacious, exciting and well resourced. Features in the outdoors are the garden areas and large shady trees and a wide grassed space. A newly developed and evolving nature playground provides inviting challenges with large logs, a campfire setting, mounds, muddy pits and a water pump. Children are encouraged to test their physical abilities, take learning risks and persist with difficult tasks.

### "What is your favourite..."

The mud slide!

Monster trucks through the mud.

Puddles.

The marshmallows (they roast these on the fire pit).

Running up and down the hills.

Trucks in the mud.

Loads exploring through long grass, puddles, rocks etc with trucks really.

The water: puddles, pump and tap. And the mud kitchen and trucks.

Likes climbing on the log.

The house.

Big kids boys take the yellow trucks through tracks they have made, through the mud and puddles and up the hill to watch them race down again. Girls are more into making dinner and potions in the mud kitchen – observation from Big Kids Supervisor.

Stepping/jumping between the campfire seats and running through the riverbed when it is full of water the most.

The 'train' log & water pump.

Chasing through the puddles all of us after each other and into the muddy big one.

The mud, water, hill, logs. At first when I asked what she liked the best, all she said was being outside.

# Coming back to Playcentre extreme mixed age

I was a Playcentre child and returned with two children when my husband and I came home from Australia. Our family grew to five children and we snuggled happily under the nurturing arms of Playcentre. When my marriage fell apart, Playcentre people were there to support me. I met my new husband and we had a child together and I was back at Playcentre as soon as my little one was ready to take on the wider world. My sister-in-law had returned to Playcentre with a late baby too and we both enjoyed sharing the comparisons of now to a few years ago. So this was now my third round of Playcentre.

When my son left to go to school I stayed on and took on various roles such as child support, Centre support, SPACE facilitator and joined the Association Education Team. I have recently completed all my course work and have put in my application for Course 5.

My daughter joined our old Playcentre with her children although after a couple of years my daughter went to full-time university and left Playcentre. My grandchildren attended a very pleasant day-care in our area. I picked them up at times after day-care and they were always happy. They were just clean! I remembered collecting them from Playcentre sessions where they were covered in paint and sand and anything else that was available on session. At the same time, I was feeling the disconnection and was reading people's assignments and thought "I would love to do that on session".



So, here I am again, my fourth time at Playcentre. I have been attending with my two grandchildren although this week will be my first time with just one of them as the other will be over the fence at school.

I have great fun with little three year old Molly. I am playing, laughing and getting messy. My grandchildren love me being with them and I love sharing experiences with both of them. It is a privilege to have this time and to get to know and understand them.

It doesn't matter that this is my third time through Playcentre as an adult, or that I am older than other people, or that I am a grandparent, or that I am the Education Convenor. We are equal and we share the work and fun of sessions together. Just recently another grandmother joined our Playcentre, we went to primary school together as five year olds!

**Jackie Quinlan-Dorbeck**  
**North Shore Playcentre Association**

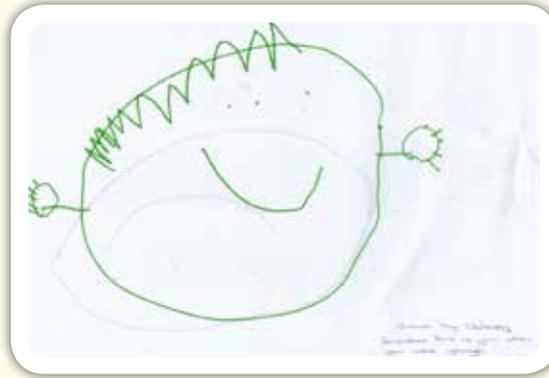
I joined Playcentre 29 years ago. I spent nine years with my three children on sessions as a parent before working as a paid Supervisor, Centre Advisor and NZPF Professional Development Facilitator over the next 10 years. In 2006 I reluctantly joined the "real workforce" taking with me an amazing kete of skills and values developed during my Playcentre years.

It's now 2016, and I'm back at Playcentre with my two grandchildren and loving it. In some ways it is easier as unlike most of the parents I have had a good night's sleep. I haven't had to face the morning rush of dressing children, deciding what healthy snacks to pack, or rummage through the mountain of clean washing to find enough changes of clothes to pack in their bags. I just turn up at their home to be met by two small children.

In other ways, it is more difficult. There's the extra guesswork trying to interpret toddler speech when you don't hear it all day, every day. There's the time involved in sharing stories back and forth about significant events or behavioral challenges. There's a sense of extra responsibility supervising a fearless two year old who wants to do everything the four year olds can do.

When I attended with my own children, most of the Centre parents were stay-at-home-Mums. Now, many of the Mums also work part time. I don't envy them. Back then I was one of the few Centre parents actively working on Playcentre education now most parents are attending workshops and completing courses. This is made easier by our daytime block courses, with childcare alongside. Our Association also runs combined outdoor sessions, swim sessions and family holiday camps. Such a great way to offer wider experiences and build friendships with other families.

Many more children have food allergies, and the Centre works



hard to ensure they are included. Today's parents seem more aware of healthy food for their children, and I overheard two Mums complaining about the grandparents spoiling their children with chocolate at Easter. I confess, I'm guilty of that too.

I am happy and relieved to find that much of my knowledge is still as relevant today. Four year old boys are still loud and fast. Parents still worry about how to set limits and guide the behaviour of other people's children. New parents still like to make things at the collage. Babies and toddlers love to eat paint much to the dismay of their parents or grandparents. Activities and ideas that I picked up in workshops 20 years ago still work to extend children's play and I go back to the Playcentre Journal centrefolds from the 1980s and 1990s looking for ideas.

We used to Observe, Interpret, Plan and Act, now we Notice, Recognise and Respond. New labels, but the same process. I'm surprised and somewhat flattered to discover that the information sheets the parents fill out each term for their children are the same ones I provided to the Centre 15 years ago.

I often think that Playcentre's belief in empowering parents, treasuring children and recognising the value of whānau as first educators are ideas that were ahead of their time. The scientific evidence is now supporting what we have believed all along is best for young children. I am proud to be taking my grandchildren to Dinsdale Playcentre.

**Sharyn Kerr**  
**Dinsdale Playcentre, Life Member**  
**- Waikato Playcentre Association**



Tony and I are Grandparents to Olivia four and James 20 months, both of whom attend Tauriko Playcentre in Tauranga. We live in South Devon, England, but are fortunate enough to come to NZ most years and spend two months with our daughter and family.

Our introduction to Playcentre began in 2012 when Sarah started taking Olivia, following their time at the local SPACE group. It was clear from the outset that grandparents and visitors were welcome to accompany the children on session. We attended sessions whenever we stayed with Sarah and her family. We like the way the children can be industrious, imaginative, creative, playful or just take some time out to look at a book. There is always a theme to the session, be it nature, science, cooking, physical activity and the session leader and parents work hard to achieve and evaluate. Being sensitive to and respectful of others and their cultures is always encouraged and promoted.

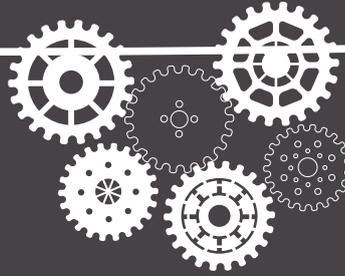
My working background was as a Health Visitor (the UK equivalent of a Plunket Nurse). So I have for many years been interested in every aspect of child development. The fact that a parent stays with the child at Playcentre and that children do not leave to start school until they are five years old is a bonus as far as I can see. Taking with them a set of play based skills which will serve as a good foundation for their future. Playcentre feels like an extended family and the opportunities for parents as well are apparent, in terms of friendship, education and participation. Finally the sight of very young children using real hammers, nails, drills and screws, with their ear defenders and goggles on, is one that will stay with us. Fantastic!

**Sarah Taylor**

## PHILOSOPHY / VISION & TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

### STRATEGIC PLAN

- Lasts 3-5 years
- Provides direction, purpose, goals



### SELF-REVIEW



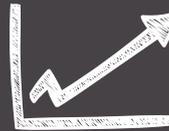
In depth self-review, involves research. Over extended period of time. Documented.

Regular annual reviews, planning evaluation and assessment meetings, policy meetings. Usually documented.

Spontaneous reviews, Centre meetings, evaluations, discussions on session, and beyond. May or not be documented.

### ANNUAL PLAN

- Actions from strategic plan
- May also incorporate compliance calendar – Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood and Care Services 2008 and Early Childhood Education Framework, GMA8



### EDUCATION PLANNING

- Planning, evaluation and assessment meetings
- Evaluation
- Assessment
- Adult education
- Discussion...



### COMPLIANCE PLANNING

- Adult roles
- Budgets
- Licensing
- Adult Education
- Property
- Resources
- Health and Safety
- Centre viability

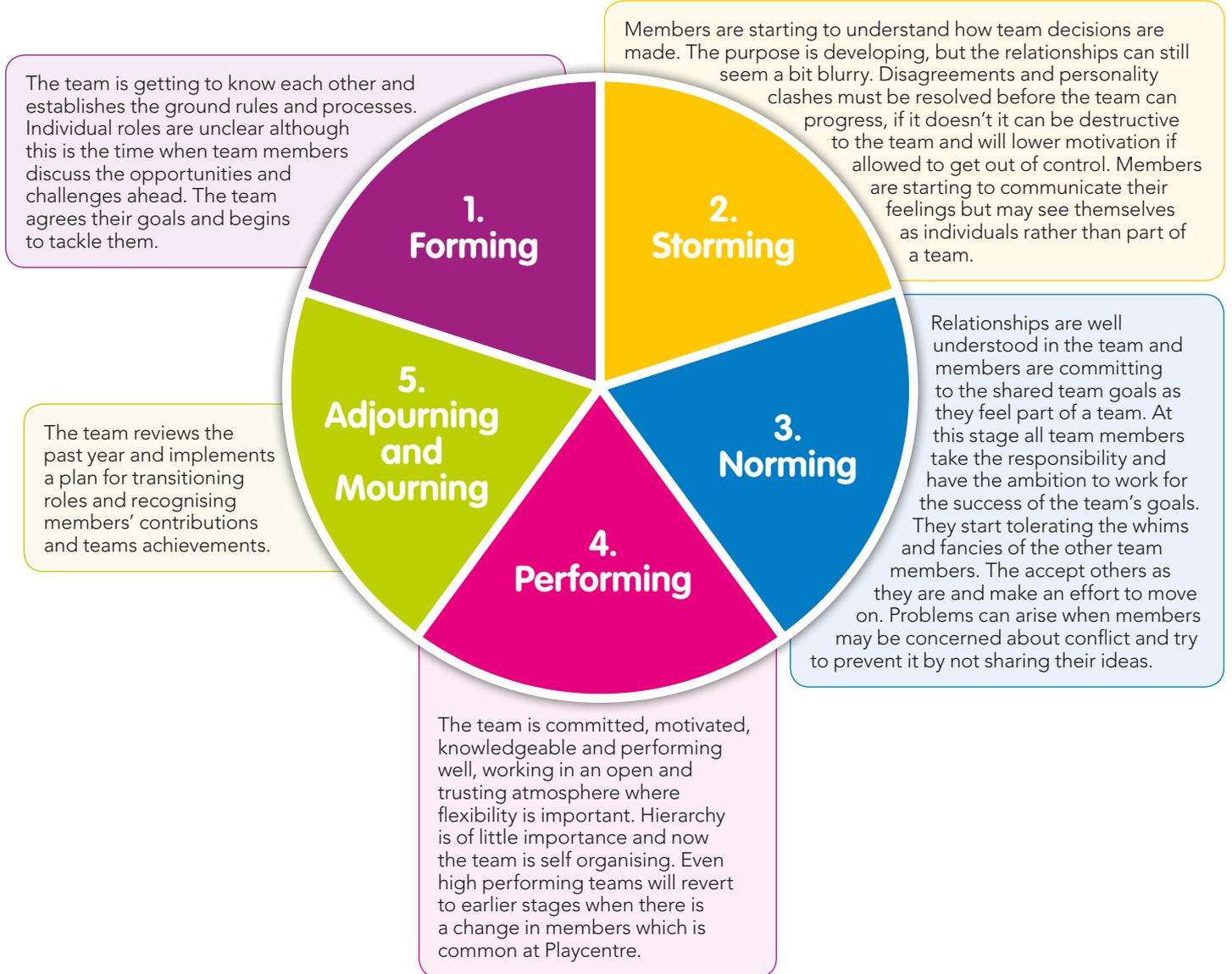


## QUALITY OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

Olivia Kelly  
Professional  
Development Team

# The five stages of teams

Teams have a shared vision, mutual support and assistance, active exchange of know-how, collective problem solving, co-operative work and trust. These characteristics cannot be taken for granted nor do they just happen overnight or at your Centres' AGM. They develop in the course of a process of phases that every group inevitably passes through. Bruce Tuckman put together this process that identified five stages.



## Characteristics of a high performing team:

- Positive atmosphere
- Participative leadership
- Engagement
- Effective decision making
- Open and clear communication
- Mutual Trust
- Managing conflict
- Clear goals
- Defined roles and responsibilities
- Humility

## Questions to think about and discuss as a team:

- What is the primary purpose of our team?
- Why is this so important?
- Where are we up to?
- What does 'excellent' look like?

**Useful reading –**  
**Bruce Tuckman – Stages Of Group Development**  
**Belbin Team Roles**

# Bring the zoo to you

## Play ideas:

- Animal themed games such as animal bingo, snakes and ladders, animal snap.
- Animal themed jigsaw puzzles.
- Set up a Pet Store or Vets.
- Set up small worlds for the children to explore; this can be set up in the sandpit, in a trough, with ice, with pumice, leaves, sticks etc. Support the children's interest and discuss with them what the animals eat, where would they live, the temperature of their habitat.
- Printing using animal figures feet. Using paint is always a favourite with the children or you could use clay. Discuss with the children the size and shapes of the prints, how big are the footprints on a real animal?
- Have fun with movement games. Ask the children to walk like a monkey, snap like a crocodile, climb like a cat, stand tall like a giraffe, walk side to side like a penguin, fly like a parrot.
- Everyone loves singing. What songs do you know about going to the zoo or about animals?
- Storytelling with puppets and finger puppets.
- Explore constructing your own zoo using the blocks.



**Five little monkeys swinging from a tree.  
Teasing Mr Alligator, "Can't catch me!"  
Along comes Mr Alligator, quiet as can be,  
And SNAPS that monkey  
Right form the tree!**



**Continue with.... Four little monkeys, three little monkeys, two little monkeys**

**One little monkey swinging from a tree.  
Teasing Mr Alligator, "Can't catch me!"  
Along comes Mr Alligator, quiet as can be,  
And SNAPS that monkey  
Right form the tree!**



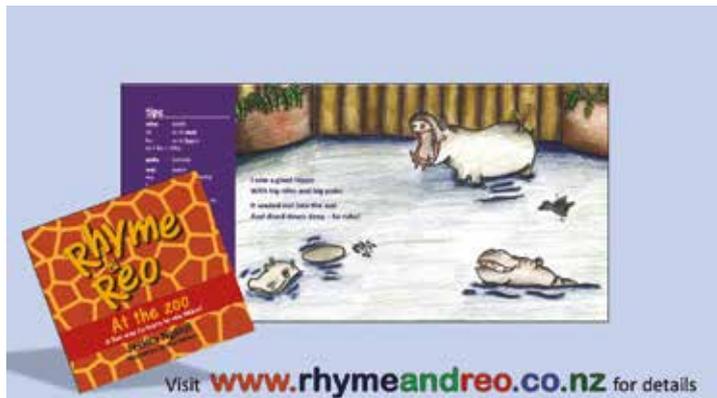
**(Missed me, missed me, now you've gotta kiss me)**

- There are lots of animal dress ups available. if you don't have dress ups on session make some mask or set up the face paint.
- Have animal books available for the children to look through.
- Set up some paper, pencils and the animal figures for them to draw. Next time you go to the zoo take some paper and pencils with you.



## At the zoo

Rhyme & Reo: At the zoo weaves te reo through a fun tale of a day out at the zoo. Learn the Māori names of animals and kupu Māori to describe them. Translations with tips on pronunciation are provided on each page. Further information and a full glossary is at the back of the book. The Rhyme & Reo series is about building skills and confidence, and supporting children, parents and teachers to learn and enjoy te reo together.



The zoo is great! Ka rawe!  
So much to see and do  
You'll see all kinds of kararehe  
When you go to the zoo!



I saw a massive elephant  
A great big arewhana  
Its body was enourmose  
Tino nui te tinana!  
With its long trunk, it picked up food  
Some apple and banana



# Get out into nature



Department of  
Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

Conservation Week is the Department of Conservation's (DOC) annual campaign and this year's theme is 'Healthy Nature Healthy People – Join the team!' This movement encourages us to use New Zealand's natural spaces to maintain and improve our health and wellbeing. It draws on the results of studies from around the globe showing what many of us already know (especially our little ones) –that we feel better when we spend time in the great outdoors.

## What's in it for our kids?

Connecting with and protecting nature both preserves our rich natural heritage for future generations and improves our wellbeing today. For children, green spaces foster active play, which is associated with physical, cognitive and social benefits. Research shows that running, jumping, climbing, swimming and exploring our nature helps our kids become more creative, imaginative, relaxed and healthier than those who are stuck indoors.

## Ways to get involved

Getting outside is an opportunity to swap your family's screen time for time spent unwinding in the elements. To go wild, discover, create and relax with your children.

- Join the team by getting involved in some sort of Conservation related activity. Show us what you've been up to on **social media** by posting your update to the Department of Conservation's Facebook Page, [www.facebook.com/wildsidenz](http://www.facebook.com/wildsidenz)
- DOC's Toyota **Kiwi Guardians programme** provides for accessible fun family adventures across the country. Take a look online to check out sites close to you or activities you could try at Playcentre. ([www.kiwiguardians.org.nz](http://www.kiwiguardians.org.nz))
- **Conservation educational resources** for Playcentres to use.

*Whether it's a trip to our local park, the beach or a forest, building our connection with nature is shown to provide significant benefits on numerous levels.*

- From arts and crafts activities like facemasks for cutting, role-playing to scavenger hunts, learning about the species in your own backyard and sensory games, download activity ideas from [www.doc.govt.nz/activities](http://www.doc.govt.nz/activities)
- Check out a huge range of **fun conservation related activities** for children at DOC's Pinterest pages [nz.pinterest.com/docgovtnz](http://nz.pinterest.com/docgovtnz)

## What's in it for our nature?

DOC plays a significant role in conserving, protecting and enhancing our nature, but it's a big job and involves all of us. Studies show children connected to nature will want to enjoy it and save it, now and in the future.

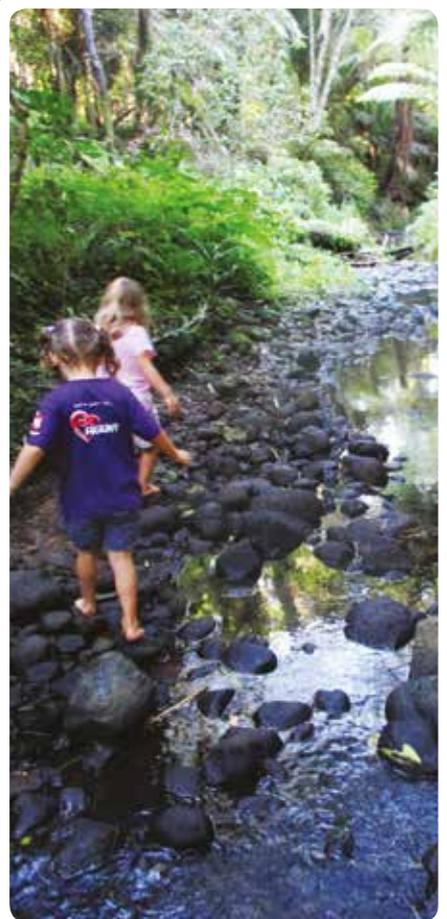
We are not separate to nature – when it thrives, we thrive. It's a reciprocal cycle. DOC is working to support our young people to protect, promote, enjoy and reap the rewards of their natural world and to start this journey from an early age.

In this way, nature is cherished and conserved – for its own sake and ours.





- **'Name that bird'** to start the day! Can the children recognise the sound of common birds like tui, morepork or fantails? How about listening to the unusual haunting sound of the kōkako or the boom sound that a kākāpō makes? [www.doc.govt.nz/birdsong](http://www.doc.govt.nz/birdsong)



## Build a backyard detective



Explore your garden or Centre and work out some different spots to put your tracking tunnel. Think about what might be there and what sort of places they might live, use for food or walk around in.

Building a tunnel can be as easy or as fancy as you like. Use your imagination to build something spectacular! Put your tracking tunnel out overnight. Maybe even try a few different spots on different nights, or try using different food to see what is popular. Experiment by putting a few tunnels around your backyard. You can disguise your tunnel in the roots of a tree or even cover it with sticks. Be as sneaky as a stoat!

Look at your results and try to work out who is visiting your garden. Is it who you thought you would find?

### Make your tunnel

- Cut off both ends of the large milk bottles.
- Slide one bottle into the other.
- Slide in a piece of wood for a base.
- Darken the tunnel by wrapping it in polythene.
- Soak a sponge in red food colouring and place it on the plastic tray.
- Put some bait on a leaf and place it in the middle of the sponge. Use peanut butter for rats and mice and raw meat for mustelids like stoats.
- Place the tray in the middle of the tunnel and put sheets of paper at both ends.

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/toyota-kiwi-guardians/take-action/become-a-pest-detective/>

### Collect the items you'll need

- 2 large plastic milk bottles
- A craft knife or scissors
- A piece of wood
- Polythene wrap
- Red food colouring
- A sponge
- A small plastic tray
- Peanut butter or raw meat
- Sheets of white paper
- A piece of wire



# Encouraging Social Skills

Just as children learn to use playdough, clay, hammers and hoses at Playcentre, they also learn to use a drill, we don't assume they are naughty – we teach them the right way. The same goes for push in attempts to get what they want.

## In any situation, there are many possible options an adult can take to resolve conflict.

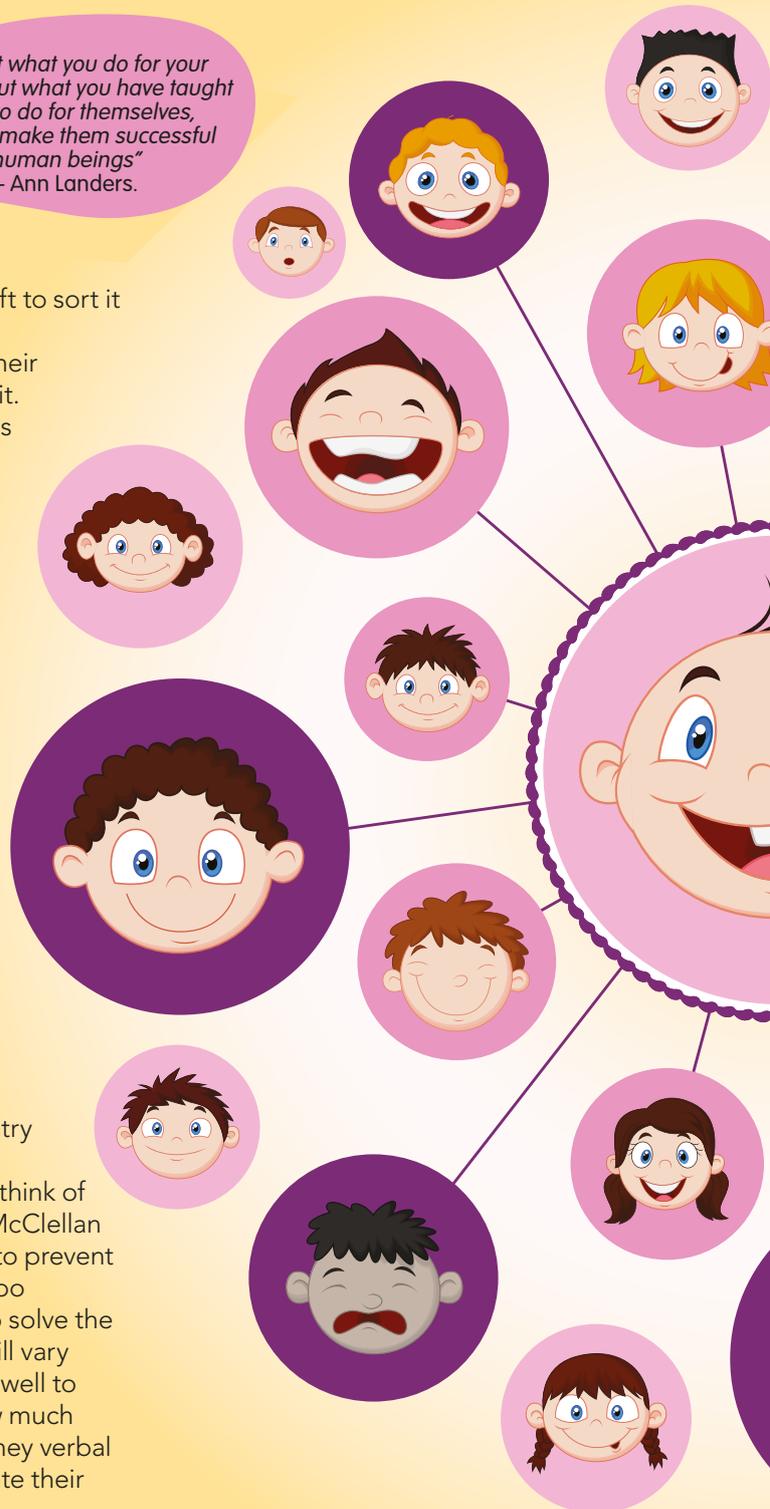
Imagine there are two children in conflict over a single piece of equipment.

The continuum of some of the possible adult interventions might look like this from low intervention to high intervention.

- Adult ignores and may leave the area – the children are left to sort it out themselves.
- Adult stands near and watches children – children know their problem has been noticed, and there is help if they need it.
- Adult empathises with children and supports their feelings 'you both want the toy, you feel sad you can't both have the toy.'
- Adult draws attention to the situation – 'looks like we have a problem.'
- Adult verbalises the problem – 'there are two children and only one toy'
- Adult asks the children for ideas to solve the problem. 'What can we do?'
- Adult coaches one or both of the children – 'ask her to let you have a turn.'
- Adult suggests a solution – 'how about we get another toy?' or 'how about we take turns?'
- Adult solves the problem by telling the children what to do – 'we share toys, you are going to take turns.'
- Adult quietly gets out another toy and places it nearby for the children to notice.
- Adult gets out another toy and gives it to a child.
- Adult takes the toy away – 'if you can't play nicely the toy will have to go away.'
- Adult takes one of the children away – 'if you can't play nicely you can't play in this area.'
- Adult distracts the children 'oh look over here, the carpentry looks fun today. Let's go.'

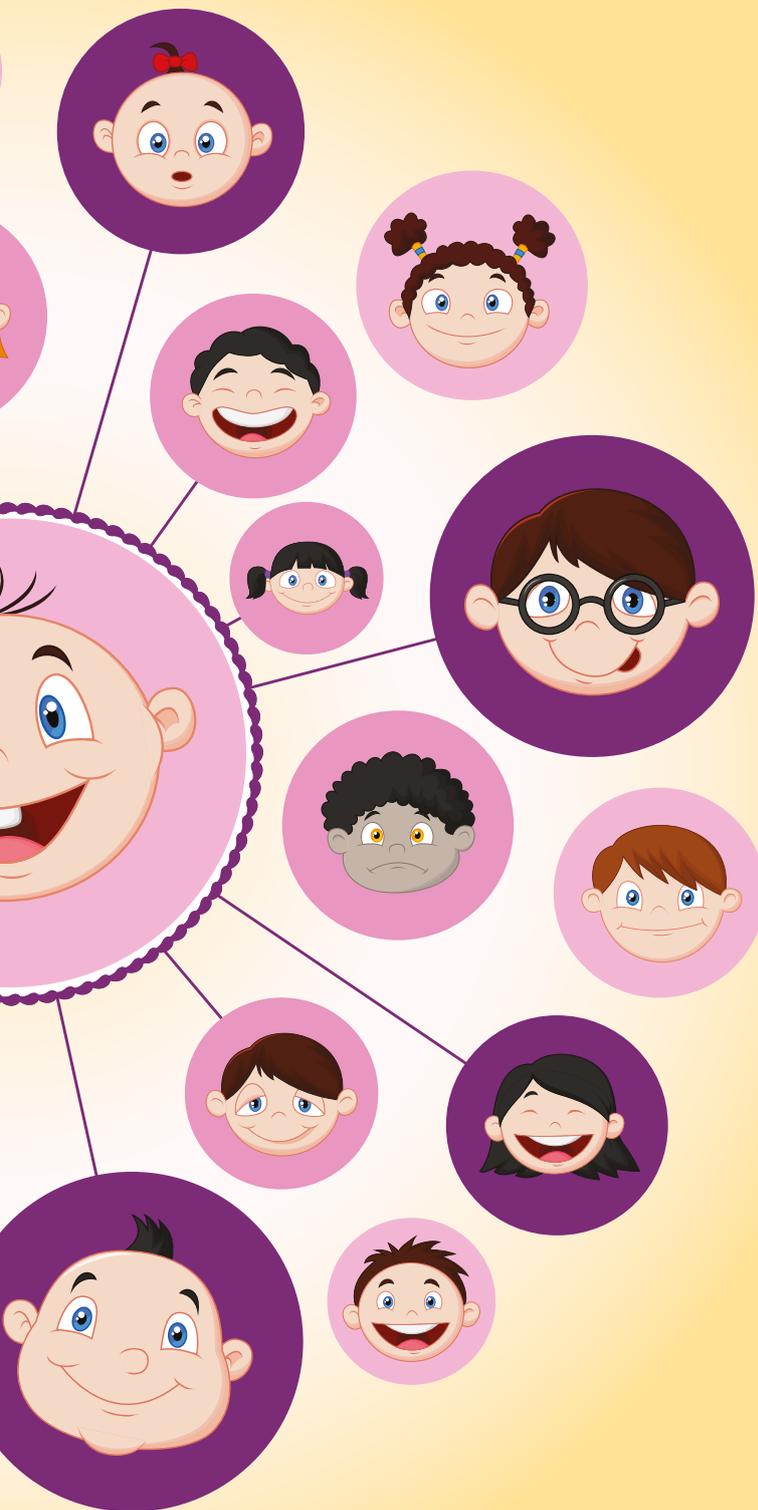
There are other possible options that you may be able to think of too. Somewhere on this continuum there is what Katz and McClellan call the 'optimum' intervention point – you act just enough to prevent the children being too frustrated and becoming rough, or too emotional to think, without taking away their opportunity to solve the problem for themselves. The optimum intervention point will vary depending on the situation. You need to know the children well to get this balance right. How quickly will they get rough? How much experience solving their own problems do they have? Are they verbal enough to explain what they want or do you need to translate their body language?

*"It is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves, that will make them successful human beings"*  
– Ann Landers.



# Social Competency

learn to use manners, and relationship and social competence skills. If a child doesn't know how to apply when they don't know how to join a game, or take turns, and hit, snatch, yell, bite or say what they want. Our job is to teach them.



## Questions to consider when choosing an action to take.

- What is this child trying to learn? How can I redirect them so they can still achieve this?
- What is the child learning from my intervention? Would they learn more if I chose a different strategy?
- How can the child be part of the solution?
- How can my intervention build relationships and support a positive learning environment?
- Sometimes you will get it wrong, and intervene too fast or too slow. That is ok – you are learning too.

## You can create a pro-social environment by building strong and caring relationships with all of the children in your Centre

- Role modelling – use your manners with children and other adults.
- Reading books about manners and behaviour and talking about them – who is being a meanie? What could they do instead? How do you think the characters are feeling?
- Talking about ways to calm down when you feel frustrated.
- Making and talking about the rules with children. 'gentle hands', 'everyone can play together'.
- Acknowledging pro-social behaviour 'thank you for letting her have a turn.' 'Thanks for your help.'
- Creating opportunities for children to be supportive – 'can you older children help the littlies wash their hands?'
- Setting up activities that encourage group work-equipment that needs several children to move it.

*Social competence is not something we only teach when things have turned to custard. Talk about it and promote it daily. Children will absorb the messages better when they are not in the middle of conflict.*

### Useful books on Social Competence

- Lilian Katz and Dianne E. McClennan: *Fostering Children's Social Competence: The Teacher's Role*, NAEYC
- Vivian Gussin Paley, *You Can't Say you Can't Play*. Harvard University press 1993
- Lise Fox and Rochelle Harper Lentini [http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/do/resources/documents/yc\\_article\\_11\\_2006.pdf](http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/do/resources/documents/yc_article_11_2006.pdf)
- *Early Childhood Toolkit* [www.eyesonbullying.org](http://www.eyesonbullying.org) Don't be put off by the word 'bullying'. This is a brilliant resource, about teaching social skills, not about labelling small children as bullies.

Carolyn Hogg, Federation Professional Development Team

# PlaycentreConnect is Here!

In May we launched our new website. PlaycentreConnect is an important part of the new Playcentre website for all of our Centre members as this will strengthen how we will connect and share information in the future!

**What Do Children Do At Playcentre**

At Playcentre children do what they do best - PLAY! Playcentres offer endless opportunities for children to explore, create, jump, run, get messy and grow. A focus on child-led learning means that each day Playcentres offer a variety of learning and play experiences for the child to choose from.

A typical day at Playcentre would include activities like painting, playdough, playing in the sand pit or on swings, collage, baking, carpentry, dressing up and more!

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

## Centre Pages

What is the Centre Page?

**Levin Playcentre**

[Profile](#)

**GET TO KNOW US**

- [Arrange a visit](#)
- [Our ERU report](#)

**CONTACT US**

06 388 2000  
Send us an email

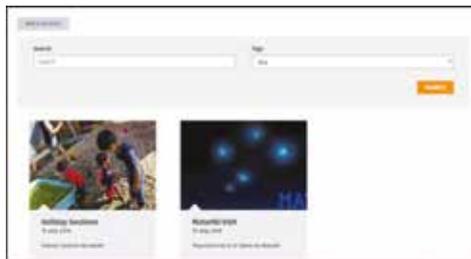
**FIND US**

15A Paddy Street, Levin,  
5710, New Zealand

This includes both the public "Centre Profile" page, and other pages only accessible by members of that Centre. This area has Noticeboard, Learning Stories, Resources and Contact List sections for your Centre to use to communicate and connect with your members. Share information, plan the curriculum and have a central place for policies, minutes, etc.

**How to use it:** When you are logged in, and connected to a Centre you will have access to their pages. This is a place where all members of that Centre can share and access key information and share learning stories across sessions.

Only a Centres 'key person' will be able to update the public profile page and contact list, but any member can load notices, stories or resources to the other pages to share with your members. These are designed as "Blog



Posts" and in each section there is a button for "New Blog Post" with all the current posts displayed on right.

## Member Resources

**What is the Members Resources Page?** For all members of Playcentre this section also has national resources and information. It includes national policies, minutes of meetings and things like the Equipment for Playcentres booklet. It will also have forums for topic areas like Promotions, Property, Teaching and Learning, etc. that you can subscribe to and use to connect with other members around the country.

These sections are available to members of Playcentre nationwide. The Knowledgebase is live now, with more sections coming on board during the year. The Knowledgebase provides a central storage area where members can access key documents



and information. If you need to know a national policy, or check on minutes of a previous national meeting – this is the place to go!

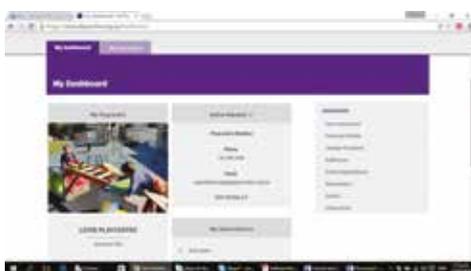
**Coming soon:** Soon there will also be forums to enable people to connect with others around the country doing similar jobs – from property to fundraising, to promotions or treasurers.

## Personal Dashboard

### What is the Personal Dashboard?

This is your own personal member dashboard within the website. If you are connected to a Playcentre there will be a link to this Centre here. This is your personal 'home' on the website, with links to any Playcentres you have been added to, as well as any newsletters you are subscribed to. It allows you to keep your personal contact details up to date and check on any upcoming events you have registered for.

**Coming soon:** You will be able to



register for events (such as training workshops, professional development, or conferences) and track your progress through the Adult Education programme.

It is very exciting to have this new resource up and running for Playcentres and our members to access and start to connect with. We will be in touch with detailed information that will enable all Playcentres to make the best use of their space. If you need more information please contact the Federation Secretary. Recently all Playcentres were sent an email with their log in details for PlaycentreConnect. This login will give your Centre access to your new Centre email address as well as your Centre page. To get your own personal access please email our Federation Secretary. Meagan, at [secretary@Playcentre.org.nz](mailto:secretary@Playcentre.org.nz).

**Veronica Pitt**  
Operations Manager



# Playcentre Shops

**Quality Early Childhood  
Play Equipment**

**Educational Toys**

**Fantastic Prices**

**Personalised Expert  
Service**

**Catering for all Areas  
of Play**

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Christchurch  
Ph 03-377 4354 Fax 03-377 9516  
Mon/Tue/Thu/Fri  
9am-2pm Wed 9am-4pm  
Sat 9am-2pm  
[www.playcentreshop.co.nz](http://www.playcentreshop.co.nz)

### TAIRĀWHITI

78 Ormond Rd, Whataupoko,  
Gisborne  
Ph/Fax 06-867 0010  
Mon-Fri 9am-1pm  
[taiply@xtra.co.nz](mailto:taiply@xtra.co.nz)

### TARANAKI

46 Matai Street, Inglewood  
Ph/Fax 06-756 7570  
Mon 1pm-5pm Wed 10am-2pm  
Fri 10am-2pm  
[tpashop@orcon.net.nz](mailto:tpashop@orcon.net.nz)

**WHY SHOP ANYWHERE ELSE!**

# Language Week

## SAMOAN LANGUAGE

Talofa is the informal way to say hello or Talofa lava if you would like to be a bit more formal.

Fa'a-soifua ia is goodbye

Please Faamolemole

thank you Malo faafetai

To count is Tasi, Lua, Tolu, Fa, Lima, Ono, Fitu, Valu, Iva, Sefulu, 'ua moe ta'agulu!



## COOK ISLANDS LANGUAGE

Kia Orana is the greeting for the Cook Islands and is used across all 15 of its islands.

Aere ra (to person going)

E noo ake ra (to person staying)

Aere atu ra (when both leaving)

Kia manuia – good luck (because good luck never hurt anyone!)

Ine is please

Meitaki is thank you

To count is ta'i, rua, toru, 'ā, rima, ono, 'itu, varu, iva, ta'i nga'uru!

## TONGAN LANGUAGE

Mālō e lelei is the most common greeting in the Tongan language and many other specific phrases to speaking to those of status, in the morning or evening and for large groups of people. There is a distinct difference when speaking in formal situations than informal, this is common with many Pacific Island languages.

Me'a a is farewell or Mou o aa (more than 2 people)

Fakamolemole is please Malo 'aupito is thank you

Fakatalofa atu is hello

Tofa la is goodbye

Fakamolemole is please

Fakefetai is thank you

To count is Taha, ua, tolu, fā, lima, ono, fitu, valu, hiva, hogofulu!

**Tuvalu is Sunday 25  
September – Saturday  
1 October 2016**

Tālofa! Is hello  
Tōfā! Goodbye  
Fakamolemole please  
Fāfetai – thank you  
To count is tasi, lua, tolu,  
faa, lima, ono, fitu, valu, iva,  
sefulu

**Fiji is Monday  
3 October – Sunday  
9 October 2016**

The Fujian language has  
both formal and informal  
ways to speak. These are the  
informal words

Bula is hello  
Moce Mada is goodbye  
Yalovinaka is please  
Vianka is thank you  
To count is Dua, rua, tolu,  
va, lima, ono, vitu, walu,  
ciwa, tini.

**Nuie is Sunday 16 October – Saturday 22  
October 2016**

Again uses a formal or informal depending who is being  
spoken to.

Fakaalofa atu  
Fakaalofa atu ki a mua (to 2 people)  
Fakaalofa atu ki a mutolu (to small group)  
Fakaalofa atu ki a mutolu oti (to large group)  
Koe kia goodbye  
To feleveia (we will meet again)  
Fakamolemole – please  
Fakaaue lahi – thank you  
To count is taha, ua, tolu, fā, lima, ono, fitu, valu, hiva, hogofulu



**And lastly Tokelau  
language week is  
Sunday 23 October  
– Saturday  
29 October 2016**

Malo ni – hello  
Tofa ni – goodbye  
Fakamolemole – please  
Fakafetai – thank you  
To count is Tahi, lua, tolu, fā,  
lima, ono, fitu, valu, iva, hefulu

**Karen Moetu Thomas  
Professional Development Team**

# The young child emerges curious about the wider world

**Nine months in production. One year until walking. Two years until talking. More than three years of laying down critical brain foundations. Another two to three years of serious doing, feeling and thinking before most children in Aotearoa fly off to school. To be taught. To learn stuff. To enable them to take their place in the world. Hmmm, yes and no. Scientific research now clearly shows that the pre-school years are a time of unparalleled learning and growth, particularly in the parts of our brain that support our movement, sensory learning, emotional intelligence and our ability to interact positively with others. Essentially the basis for how we will view and treat ourselves, others and the world is the main focus of the early years' brain growth.**

Five to six years of our lives is spent in this unique period of life. More if we have the pleasure of sharing this journey with those who come after us. And, interestingly, evidence is now in abundance demonstrating the huge positive impact the main caregiver can have on a child's early learning. We are our children's greatest protective factor – increasing the chances of them having positive outcomes in their lives. It turns out it's all about the relationship! And it's all about you!

So, if this is you, the main caregiver for a young child, everything you're doing with, for and around them is influencing the way their brains are being connected up – physically laying down flesh in your child's brain with every interaction. Their brains are also much more sensitive to being influenced by us as the main caregiver, than anyone else. The mammalian trait of forming an all-encompassing attachment relationship with the main caregiver is a strong survival mechanism. We are entrusted to impart all our experience of life in our communities – how to care for ourselves physically and emotionally, how to interact with others interdependently, how to learn through experiences in the world. Our children watch us and learn, have a go and learn, interact with us as they learn...



And so we find ourselves in the unique position of being our children's first and best educator, as well as the main influence on the outcomes for our children in later life. By middle childhood and early adolescence other adults and peers are entering that sacred realm of the influential, as brains move past their early bedding down. The early sensitivity fades as part of

the normal process of children moving out into the world, of parents letting their children go. However, the learning associated with those early years does not fade, rather it remains, strong and influential, throughout our children's lives.

## **What can we do?**

What can we do during this essential early learning period? How can we help our children to lay strong and positive brain foundations for their lives? Our first and most important job is to recognise that our children's brains are linked to us and our relationship as the

*"As an immigrant with no family close by its taking a village to raise my family (by that I mean learning how to be a parent to my children). Playcentre makes a great village but it's expertise in my case is lacking for older children." Justine.*

*"We had our children's school parent interviews tonight and they were both great. Both teachers shared how delightful they both are, how they listen in the class, how caring they are to others, how curious they are and obviously first my husband and I were so proud – but I knew all of this as I have seen it for five years at Playcentre. I am so thankful to Playcentre for giving me tools for how to parent, the time so we could learn by our mistakes together and build awesome family relationships. My daughter only finished Playcentre last term and it already feels longer. It's only really now that I am really aware of how great that time in our lives was and I miss it. As when you're at Centre there can feel like there is so much to do, but for me it was all worth it as having that time with my children was priceless."* Stacey.

main caregiver. Whether we think we are fit to educate our children or not, they are being educated by our very presence nonetheless. Whether we are conscious of our influence or not, our children's sensitivity to us is not replicated anywhere else. We are our children's first and strongest support for learning.

### Recognise

Next step is to recognise that there is method in the madness. "Oh, children just want to play all the time! They're



not interested in learning." Wonderfully, science has now shown unequivocally what children (and many adults) know instinctively: the sacred urge to play (to borrow a Pennie Brownlee phrase) is part of us for a very good reason. We learn best through play – yes, you adults also! Play is the way we make sense of the world. Play is how we learn about life. Playing is learning. Learning is play. They cannot be separated out.

### Our role

It is becoming clear that teaching is



wildly over-rated. With teaching there is an end goal, a purpose to the lesson, a point at which the learning will be complete. This can be extraordinarily limiting for children's exploration of themselves, others and the world. Well, that's fine, but what about the stuff they NEED to know? Surely I have to teach them some things about how to get on in the world? Yes, and no. Perhaps. When was the last time you tried to teach a child something you felt they needed to know. How did it go? Did your methods include constraints on what, where, how, why and who? What were the outcomes? Were there other, unintended, side effects generated, such as the child feeling inferior to your superior knowledge and power? Maybe we don't consciously notice these elements of teaching but they're usually present. So let's use the word "teacher" sparingly. Remembering also how we ourselves are constantly learning through our experiences with children, whether we label ourselves as teacher or not.

*"Having recently moved back to New Zealand, and to a new city, Playcentre provided a space for us to meet people, develop friendships and connections with a community. Although my eldest seemed more suited to the kindergarten environment, primarily because of the consistent adults on session, he does still have fond memories of his time at Playcentre. However, Playcentre offered the ideal learning environment for my youngest, from when he was little, right up until he started school. As a learner who requires lengthy periods of time to dedicate to his investigations, and the flexibility and freedom to explore these paths of thinking, Playcentre provided the ideal environment for him to pursue his self-determined learning. I think that this is partly because of the higher ratios of child:adult which means that there are more adults able to respond to the children's interests, but also because of the nature of Playcentre where children's interests and passions are embraced so wholeheartedly. The fact that the Playcentre parents all have different backgrounds, strengths and knowledge also contributes to the rich learning opportunities as each parent is able to share their knowledge and skills with the children in different ways as their interests evolve. Also, the opportunity to learn alongside our children is something that I feel is an added advantage to Playcentre."* Yasmine.



of their parents' love and devotion to their play. The young child emerges curious about the wider world. They've experienced many people and learned much about themselves and the world through their normal everyday interactions. They've observed and tried and negotiated. They're experts at learning. What's more they have a will to learn, a desire to discover, because they've been free to follow their instinctive drive to learn through play. No-one can be forced to want to learn, to like learning, even to know how to learn. It must emerge freely during those critical early years when their main caregiver models this love of learning and engagement in life. The child has learned about caring for others without having had it lectured to them – they've experienced it and observed human interactions on millions of occasions. They know how to make friends because they've seen it in action and know what makes a good friend to them. They've made sense of the basics of human interaction and self-care.

Interestingly, this is often the time when fear sets in: "What if our child isn't ready for school? They'll need friends and knowledge of numbers and colours and be able to write their own name!" Ah, yes, we're told that parents as the main caregivers can't be enough to give our children the foundations of what they'll need at school. We're told stories of teachers being horrified that children don't know how to hold a book

"But if I don't teach them who will?" First we need to do away with the concept that teaching is an essential ingredient to learning. If we can let that go then the world of learning opens up to infinite possibility. And don't worry, those things that children really need to learn, they'll be picking up through normal everyday interactions with their

main caregivers and others they spend time with; through their self-generated play that's accommodated by a tuned-in caregiver who honours the child's innate desire to play, trusting that this is enough.

### The young child emerges

All continues well, the infant becomes a toddler, bathed in the luminous glow

*"As a parent I know my children better than anyone. I know what they like to learn, how they learn well and what they need to learn for today (ie, focusing on that because nobody knows what the future will bring). I know their individual strengths and can encourage them to develop these on a day to day basis at their specific level. I am so appreciative that I get to spend that time with them, strengthening the bonds between us, learning alongside them. The challenge is having enough time in the day to meet everyone's needs! The inevitable parenting self doubt creeps in from time to time, but you just need to remember that what makes children thrive is being with people who make them feel special and who encourage them to achieve their desires. Who better than their parent?"*

Diane (home educator for her four children aged four to 13 years).

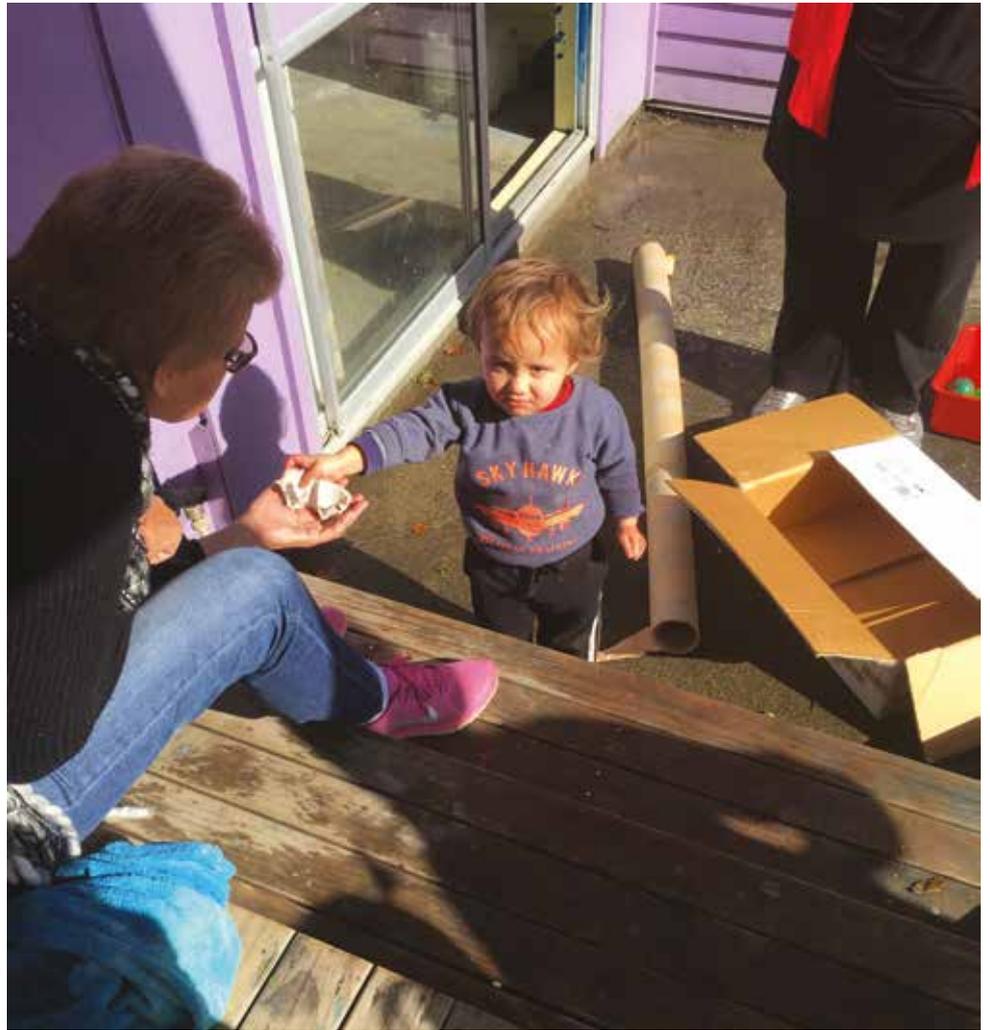


the right way, or that they'll be lonely if they don't have a group of friends surrounding them. None of us wants our child to not come up to scratch in the school system, to be left behind.

### Good news

So, here's the good news. If we've had books at home and read them regularly together, our children will know which way up the book is to be held. They will have an inkling about words from watching us read and write. They'll learn the rest at school and throughout life with support from us and many others. If we've spent time with a range of other people during our child's early years our child will appreciate how to interact with other people and be able to connect with their peers and teachers. They'll learn more subtle ways of working with others throughout their childhood, adolescence and on into adulthood. The foundation we've influenced will provide a strong base on which to build all future learning. This is all very good news – that these foundations for learning are learned best through experiences with us as their main caregivers during the early years.

Of course, to provide this support for our children's learning we need to be caring for ourselves, we may need help and inspiration to carry on this role that can be very taxing at times. This is where family and community come into the picture, organisations such as Playcentre. Others interacting with our children also expands their sense of what's normal and



imparts wonderful variety, layering to complement our usual rhythms and experiences. Provided the main caregiver relationship is consistent, positive and effective (most of the time) there is a harmony present in the

learning of both the child and in us. The foundations are being laid just as they need to be. The brain and body developing symbiotically with the relationship, nurturing another great human being. What a first partnership. What a great start to the future. Here's to the seemingly magical influence we parents have during the early years of our children's lives!

**Sarah Amy Glensor Best**



Sarah Amy Glensor Best is the author of one of New Zealand's newest and most Playcentre affirming parenting books: "Changing the World is Child's Play" published 2015 by Ako Books. Sarah is a passionate believer in Playcentre and also combines her knowledge and experience as a Brainwave Trust Aotearoa Educator with on the job learning as a Mum of three children to affirm parents in their role and inspire them to enjoy the precious times, the everyday moments, they spend with their children. Sarah has a blogsite and runs a range of workshops around the country [www.childrenchange.co.nz](http://www.childrenchange.co.nz)

# Playcentre Leadership

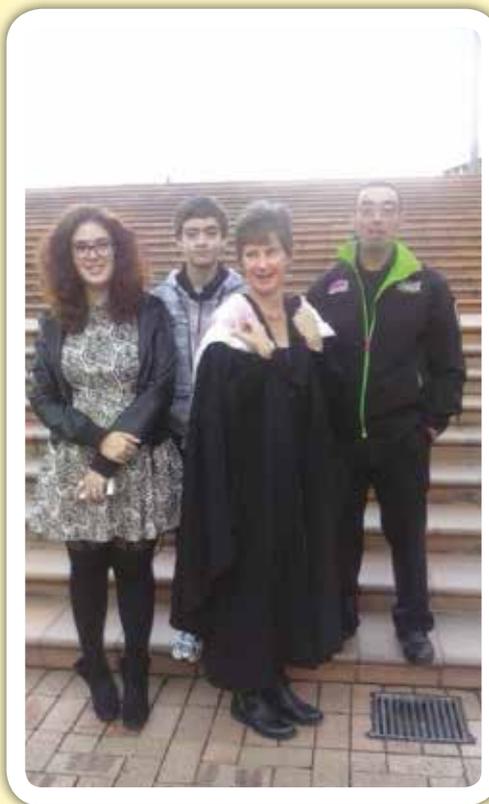
**At 2016 Conference we welcomed some new faces to our Trustee Board. Congratulations to Susan Bailey, our new Federation Co-President and congratulations to Clare Ferguson and Cynthia Murray. Thank you to Viv Butcher and Marama Mateparae for your passion and we wish you all the best in your next journey.**

**Look out for the more stories from our other Trustee Board Members in the next Journal.**

## Ko wai au? Who am I? Ko Susan Bailey ahau

I am, and always have been, a Playcentre kid. Growing up in Northland, my mother and I belonged to the Paihia/Waitangi Playcentre in the 1970's, where she was the Treasurer and gained her 'Supervisors Certificate'. In the 90's, while I followed my then career path, my stay-at-home-husband took our daughter to Playcentre in Tamaki Association and following our move to Wellington and the birth of our second child, I joined Naenae Playcentre in the Hutt Association in 2001.

In my years on session I held most office-holder roles and completed Course Four. I joined the Hutt Association Exec in 2003 and attended my first Nat Exec in March 2004. As a big-picture thinker, I really enjoyed being involved at the national level so in 2007 I joined the NZPF National Promotions Team and in 2009 I became the Promotions Convenor. In 2010 when I returned to Hutt Association I became Co-President with Faith Tupou. Together, we began a restructure process for our Association that soon became superseded by the national



restructure. However, the frustrations and delays of the early part of the process 'encouraged' me to stand for the Trustee Board and this year for Co-President.

Through my immersion in

Playcentre, I have developed many skills, from being empowered as a parent, to developing an active engagement in our children's education, working in Consensus and Partnership and more recently, Brave Conversations, Behaviour Management while continually striving to enhance my 'Sandpit Skills'.

I believe that developing and sustaining the future of our nation's Social, Cultural and Community capacity, can only be maintained through Playcentre meeting the needs of our diverse and ever changing communities.

My heart song continues to be for Playcentre, NZ families, our whānau, and our future.

# Emergent leadership is important to me

Ko Mauao te Maunga  
Ko Tauranga te Moana  
Ko Ngai Terangi te iwi  
Ko Ngai Tuwhiwhia me te Ngati Tauaiti te Hapu  
Ko Mataatua te Waka  
Ko Opureora te Marae  
Ko Cynthia Murray ahau.



I was young mum having my first son before my 17th birthday, I started Playcentre in Opotiki when he was one and a half. All my five children went through Playcentre their ages are 19 to 12 years old, I have four boys and one girl. Playcentre was my saviour, I had no family around me and didn't know many people.

I have made so many long lifelong friendships and created so many memories through Opotiki and still to date creating new friends. Opotiki Playcentre members never judged me on my age they accepted me as a mum, person and made me feel

so welcomed and nurtured me till I was settled. I left school very young, so my academic levels weren't great. The skills I have today is what I have gained from being 100% committed to Playcentre through emergent leadership into various Playcentre roles within Centre and Association level over these 17½ years.

I am currently back being president of our Association, I have been President at both levels a few times, Property, Bicultural, Centre support worker, currently life member of Opotiki Playcentre. I am still 100% connected to Centre level where I

volunteer on session at Opotiki and facilitate space session. The skills I have gained through these roles have helped me in my everyday life, dealing with the medical world and agencies with my youngest son and schools and their systems (which I became a board of trustee member, PTA member) and other parts of my life.

Emergent leadership is important to me as I am a prime example of having no skills to gaining skills across the board. I look forward to a new challenge, being on trustee board still early days getting to learn new systems. Playcentre is an amazing place to be, I love our families and children and so grateful to my Centre for still making feel a part of our Centre Whānau.

**Cynthia Murray**  
Trustee Board

# Playcentre Education

## Cate's journey – (Cate Mawby, Federation Education Convenor)

It took me until my third child to find Playcentre, but I had always wanted to be more involved in the learning at my boys kindergarten. Once our Tessa arrived a friend invited me down to Playcentre.

Mess and freedom seemed to be everywhere and that was just fine by me, reminding me of my 70s upbringing in the Waikato and confirming for me that the freedom to be herself was a treasure that I could gift to Tessa. Then someone spoke to me about "Courses" and explained that I would understand a lot more about how Playcentre works once I had completed some of these. So I signed up to the Introducing Playcentre discussions (Course 1).

### **Lesson 1: Playcentre puts the curriculum directly into the hands of parents – what an empowering thing to do!**

The best way to contribute more to my new community was to complete my Course 2. I found this one a bit annoying learning the dry stuff about the regulations and policies, but clearly there were reasons and I functioned much better as a team member because I understood WHY things happened.

### **Lesson 2: Get through Course 2 as quickly as you can – everything gets better once this is ticked off. Seriously, you really don't want to drag this one out because C3 is soooo much better!**

Becoming Centre President coincided with starting Course 3 which was just as well because I was also attending Co-Operative Playcentre, Play and Positive Guidance workshops, and I was learning skills on the job.

My personal journey at Playcentre has been completely intertwined with my journey in the Adult Education program, which is why I feel the need to shout from the rooftops that this seems to me to be a great way to get the most out of Playcentre for you and your whānau and to put the most in to support strong self supporting Centres full of powerful and active parents.

Now I am delighted to be working in partnership with Char Martin to make sure our Education Program continues to meet the needs of Playcentre members and enriches your Centres and your lives.



### **If you are a new Playcentre Member**

- Get involved and start, you will be amazed at what you can learn!

### **If you are an Association Education Convenor –**

- Keep in touch with us so we can keep you up to date on the specifics as the process continues.
- Read the Hononga and distribute it widely, including to your Executive or Board.

### **If you are an Association Education Administrator –**

- Keep in touch with your tutors and keep the education database and paperwork up to date so that you are continuing to prepare for the regional amalgamations.
- Make sure you are offering enough opportunities for current students to get to the workshops they need.

### **If you are a Tutor –**

- Contact your students and see how they are doing. Offer support and comment on

## How to embrace partnership?

We talk – lots and about anything and everything that comes up to do with Playcentre education. Everything is so much easier when you employ respectful, caring communication with others, and really even if there IS an issue, the best way to solve it is to look at it from multiple perspectives as we both bring different strengths to our partnership.

We work to our individual strengths – neither of us is good at every aspect of this job, but because we bring different things to it and recognise that fact, we do what we are good at. Partnership is not about duplication of effort, it is about getting the job done effectively and respectfully.

### **What do we want to achieve together?**

- We want to model partnership.
- We want to support students and tutors and the coming new Playcentre infrastructure.
- We want to see Centres thrive because members are learning and growing skills through our education program.

*Imagine a place where you can go with your pre-school child, train for FREE and achieve an NZQA approved national qualification.*

### **What's happening in Playcentre Education right now?**

NZQA has spent the past 18 months reviewing all the non degree level ECE qualifications and new ones that meet the diverse needs of all NZ ECE providers. Cate Mawby, Rochelle Hautapu and Gillian Croad represented Playcentre throughout this process.

The actual qualifications have been approved by NZQA and we have a Program Development Working Group, led by Gillian Croad our NZPF Training Coordinator, who are creating the new Playcentre program of study that our students can undertake to achieve one of the two new qualifications that Playcentre will be offering. These will be The NZ Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care Level 4 or The NZ Certificate in Early Childhood Education and Care Level 5.

Both of these qualifications will be relevant and transferrable across the entire ECE sector at the subdegree



their work in a timely and helpful way. The QMS says you should be aiming for a two week turnaround

- Remember to access professional development for yourself – it is a requirement of your tutoring agreement and essential if you plan to continue being a Playcentre Education Tutor. We need you to keep our program running
- Be open to new ways of doing things. Let students submit work in ways that work for them, there are no rules that says it has to come a certain way. Be open to new ways of delivering too. Ask us for advice if you are considering trialing something online. There are a couple of C4 and 5 modules running on basecamp at present that seem to be working for those involved. Yes, change is coming, good, exciting change and the best thing you can do right now is to Keep Calm and Keep Training.

## Char's journey – (Char Martin, Federation Education Convenor)

I started my Playcentre journey in 2006 with my moko (grandson). My daughter took him and I to the local Playcentre and that was where it began. On our first day my moko got messy, something I wasn't use to. My first reaction to this was O.M.G. he couldn't get into my car looking like that, so I washed and changed him before we went home. The next session day we had spare clothes for him and I started to accept that he was going to get messy.

A couple of weeks later at our Centre business meeting (not sure how) I was nominated and ratified as the Centre Education officer. I had to quickly learn what the job entailed and how it impacted on our babies, their parents and session. As the Education person I role modelled by completing Course 1 and then completing Course 2 in one term. I was inspired by this Adult Education Programme, it showed me what my moko and other children were learning, it also showed me what policies and procedures were, what Te Whaariki (Curriculum) was for, and many other aspects that explained the running of a Playcentre session. The following term I seriously considered completing Course 3 in two terms and just did it. My moko and I travelled to most Centres over the two terms. It is a fun way to learn and see how other Centres are setup and my moko also learnt how to interact with other children and educators.

I remained the Centre Education person for two years, then became the Centre President for another two, this was where I quickly learnt about Education Review Office (ERO). I also became a member on the Association Education Team and held the Tutor and Workshop Co-ordinator portfolio. When my moko headed off to school I went onto the Federation Education Team for two years and now I am in my second year as the Federation Co-Convenor for Mātauranga Māori in partnership with Cate.

Cate and I work really well together and she is correct in saying that we make sure our Adult Education Programme continues to meet the needs of Playcentre members and enriches your Centre and your lives.

level and also helpful in other education sector support roles and as a springboard to further study too.

### SO

Imagine a place where you can go WITH your pre-school child, train for FREE, and by doing this training, ACHIEVE an NZQA approved national qualification that you could ALSO use outside Playcentre for employment after your tamariki finish there. In the meantime, your training is supporting your Playcentre to be a strong, well run ECE option for your community – ask yourself – why wouldn't I?

That's what the future holds for Playcentre Education.

### What is your part in the changes?

#### If you are a current student –

- Keep going with your current training. There will be a plan put in place to transition current students into the new program. Focus on completing a module at a time of whatever course you are on because you can't ever transition part of a module or set of credits.
- Plan your attack! Keep it manageable and make sure that you choose to start modules that fit with what you can

reasonably achieve in a term. This might depend on what is happening in your family or your Centre.

- Submit work to your tutor regularly using whatever works for you. If you submit tasks a couple at a time you can receive helpful feedback as you go.
- Contact your tutor if you are stuck on anything, it might just be a conversation that will clarify things. Your tutors want you to succeed!

#### If you are a Centre Education Officer –

- Keep getting the message out to students that continuous training makes for a strong and independent Centre. If your Centre members are spending more time fundraising than completing courses, maybe it is a good time to look at what your Centre needs to be strong in – is it the "stuff" or the upskilled parents?
- Make sure you are communicating with the students in your Centre and supporting them – they are your future leaders. This might involve organising study nights or encouraging them to check in with their tutor or providing/arrange some child minding so the can write up work.



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- We limit class sizes to 10 children - smaller class sizes means it's more stimulating, FUN, and focussed on building skills
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# Specialist baby swim school operating in Greenlane



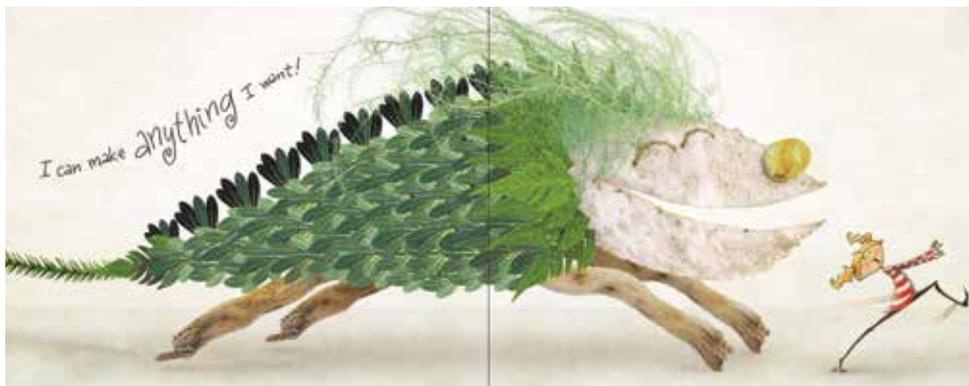
- Lessons from 3 months to 3 years.
- Warm pool at 33°C.
- Monday, Thursday, and Sunday mornings.



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## I am an artist

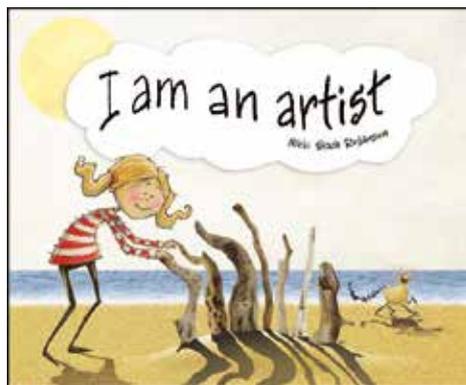


My Playcentre-mum days may have finished now, but I haven't totally left them behind. I'm still a mum of course, but I also write and illustrate childrens books, including 'The little Kiwi's Matariki', awarded Best Picture Book in the recent NZ Book Awards for Children and Young Adults.

Many of my books have Playcentre memories built into them. One featured the main character wearing my daughter's favourite Playcentre dress-up dress. Another was partly based around our daily treks to and from Playcentre with the inevitable full baby backpack and mountain buggy.

My latest book, 'I am an artist' represents a lifetime of making art anywhere, and with anything, and seeing my own children do the same, both in and out of Playcentre.

'I am an artist' follows a little girl through familiar outdoor environments. In each, she finds inspiring natural objects such as lichen, driftwood and gloriously gloopy mud! She uses these to create fabulous artworks, left for others to find. If you were a Grown-Up



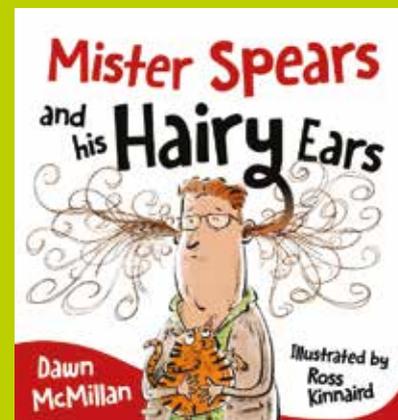
you may refer to this as part of the 'Land Art Movement'. I call it good outdoor fun. Reconnecting kids and their families to the outdoors, via art, without spending a cent! The text is simple, the illustrations a mixture of illustration and real natural objects carefully collaged together.

When you and your little ones are next out and about, what art will you create, to surprise the next passer-by?

Happy Creating!

**Nikki Slade Robinson**

## Mister Spears and his Hairy Ears



This is a very entertaining book, my boys found it very funny and loved listening to me read it to them. The illustrations are colourful and fun.

Kees, "my favourite bit was when the hair got longer and longer" "it was very funny."

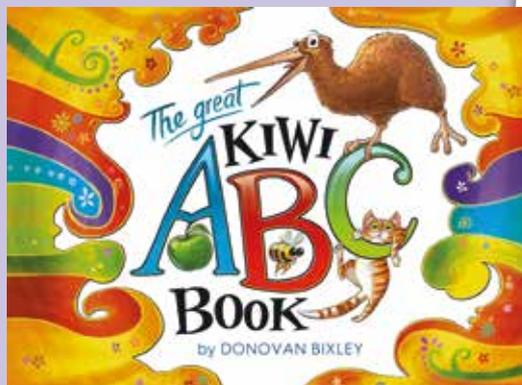
Ben, "I liked the hair growing out of the mans' ears."

**Cynthia Smith  
Pukekohe East  
Counties Association**

## Great Kiwi ABC Book

Great for expanding the children's vocabulary and early literacy. I love the fact that the words are typical for New Zealand, like Gumboot, Fish and Chips, Marae, Matariki, Poi and Pōhutukawa. The pictures are engaging for preschoolers with heaps to look at and they prompt conversation and communication. "I like the penguins..."

**Carrie Harman  
Pakuranga-rahihi Playcentre  
Tamaki Association**



# Let's play a game...

**What's the time Mr Wolf?** – one player is Mr Wolf who stands a fair distance in front with his/her facing the other children. Children ask 'what's the time Mr Wolf'. Mr Wolf replies e.g. one o'clock, and the children move forward one step and so on. If Mr Wolf replies dinner time the children have to run back to the start.

**The Beans Game** – adult calls out; 'runner beans' = run around the space, 'jumping beans' = jump around the space, 'jelly beans' = wobble shake whole body, 'frozen beans' = freeze.

**Colour chase** – use different coloured material/paper. Place four buckets around the space. Throw the material in the air and the children have to pick it up and put it in the right coloured bucket.

**River Jump** – two ropes in a triangle formation having children starting at the shortest point jumping over the river and progressing to a wider distance.

**Mirror Game** – pair the children together and stand in front of each other. One person does a leg or an arm action and the other copies the action.

**Climb Aboard** – set up the equipment so the children climb up ladders, climbing walls, through tunnels. Encourage children to develop their confidence.

**Beanbag balance** – each child balances beanbag on their head, they have to move around with out it falling off.

**Follow the Leader** – adult will begin by being the leader, doing different actions/movements for the children to follow e.g. twisting, lifting knees. Change leaders so that everyone has a turn.



**Traffic Lights** – children are spread out, when the adults calls 'green' the children move around, when the adult calls 'orange' the children walk on the spot, when the adults calls 'red' the children stand still.

**Dress Up Relay** – divide children into teams. Set up different pieces of clothing for children to wear e.g. hats, t-shirts etc. Ask them to run to the pile put an item on and run back again, next child goes.

**Scarf touch** – tie a scarf onto a climbing frame so that it encourages the children to climb and touch the scarf.

**Rescue** – set up a course where children have to crawl and at the end of the course a toy doll for the children to rescue.

**Water Drop** – place a drop of coloured water on top of a child's hand and ask them to walk around a string/rope trail without a spilling a drop.

**Water Relay** – split children into teams. Place an empty bucket in front of the teams and place another bucket, full of water, a few metres away. Give each team a cup to collect and transport water.

**Beanbag challenge course** – set up a circuit of different equipment so that children can explore underarm by throwing a bean bag into; a bucket, hoops, cones etc...

For more ideas please see the **Fundamentals Movement Skills Resource Handbook, Sports NZ.**