

## Ann Langis – Farewell Message

Tēnā koutou katoa

Here begins the final (?) chapter in my Playcentre story...

I was at an event the other day and met a woman from Wellington. In the course of our introductions, I mentioned my involvement with Playcentre and her face lit up, blurting out, “Oh I was a Playcentre mum!” We relaxed into deep conversation with an easy familiarity unusual between two strangers who had met only minutes before (it emerged that we both had children who had decided to give themselves an unsanctioned haircut on session!).

These moments are so precious to me, the spark of recognition between kindred spirits... a shared passion for play, learning, and community. The feeling of being part of a powerful movement over 80 years old, an idea whose importance has never lessened, even while our organisational challenges mounted and threatened to overwhelm.

A sense of great concern spurred me to stand for the co-Presidency Role in 2021 and since then we’ve made some big changes as an organisation to ensure our relevance and sustainability. I feel absolutely thrilled about what has been accomplished and so proud of our Centres, Rōpū and Representatives who worked incredibly hard to understand the situation and make an informed decision.

Now that our new Trust Deed has been validated by the High Court it’s time for emergent leadership on the board. It is a great feeling to continue this tradition, making space for new energy and enthusiasm, stepping back knowing that the organisation is well placed to not just survive but truly thrive like the incredible powerhouse we really are!! #playcentrerocks

I would like to say a special thank you to David Moger, our diligent and thoughtful Chief Executive, who started his journey with Playcentre in the same month that I started on the board. David, you have been an invaluable source of calm support and expertise for us as a board, and particularly for myself in the Co-Presidency role. Thank you for everything, and there have been SO MANY things!!

Thank you as well to my fellow board members. Together we have navigated this wild ride over the past few years, consistently looking for ways to support each other and protect our philosophy into the future. It’s been a privilege to walk (run? sprint?) this journey alongside you.

Thanks to all the Reps across the motu, current and past, who take on this extra responsibility above and beyond everything else, because they understand the importance of leadership. Your mahi has made a huge difference.

Thank you to YOU out there at Centre level, for doing the daily work of running a Centre and building community, usually sleep-deprived and/or fighting off another round of tummy bugs!!

Thanks to my Playcentre besties who have always both cheered me on and challenged me behind the scenes... you and your families have continually reminded me why I do this mahi.

And finally, thank you to my own family. To my children for sharing their Mum’s lap with other Playcentre kids and then continual meetings for years after that. To my husband Jason for recognizing the importance of Playcentre for me as an individual, for our whānau and for Aotearoa as a whole. I could not have done this without you and can’t wait to attend Playcentre sessions with our grandkids.

Lots of love everyone,

Ann