

Extra Protection for New Zealand Kindergartens this summer!



Manager, Claire Teirney was thrilled as "NIVEA Sun is focused on delivering a product that provides care while delivering sun protection, it's great to have the opportunity to provide this support for kids throughout New Zealand". In addition, Medical Product Manager, Joanne Hall was 'proud to offer a quality brand such as

Beiersdorf New Zealand has given New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated some extra protection for their young charges this summer with a donation of Elastoplast Plasters and NIVEA Sun Lotion.

Kindergartens throughout the country have been provided with an allocation of both Elastoplast plasters and NIVEA Sun Lotion bottles to assist them in providing essential protection from minor cuts and grazes and also from the damaging effects of the Sun's UVA and UVB rays during the upcoming summer months.

Diane Daly, Teaching Services Manager for Northern Auckland Kindergarten Association said "It is heartening that a company such as Beiersdorf has chosen to make such a generous donation to the kindergartens and children of New Zealand."

The team at Beiersdorf are also pleased to be able to assist New Zealand Kindergartens. Marketing

Elastoplast to the Kindergartens to use."

Sun protection for kids is key, and ensuring that lotion is reapplied throughout the day is a necessity, especially for kids on the go!

So how long does your sun lotion protect you for?

Well, did you know, that sun protection is calculated by multiplying the SPF factor of your sunscreen by the burn time? For example, if the burn time is ten minutes and your sunscreen offers an SPF of 15, you will be protected for 150 minutes.

From research commissioned by NIVEA Sun we found that of the Kiwi's surveyed only 13% actually knew how to calculate sun protection time correctly as outlined above.

Even worse, only 46% of people surveyed stated that they reapply their sunscreen frequently. So make sure you and your family are sun smart this summer!

contents

Extra Protection for New Zealand Kindergartens this Summer	1
Melbourne Study Tour 2002	2
A Growing Focus on Early Childhood Education	7
Transition to School from Kindergarten	7



Melbourne study tour 2002

In September 2002 the Senior Teaching team from Tauranga Regional Free Kindergarten Association Inc. led a party of 40 educators to Melbourne to hear about the latest developments in early childhood education in Australia, and to visit some of the more progressive ECE centres in that country. Following are some reflections by various members of the touring party.

Tauranga Association is repeating this experience for anyone wishing to join them in September 2004. If you are interested and would like more information please e-mail trfka.tsm@xtra.co.nz.

Annette Sheehy, Senior Teacher

Tauranga Regional Free Kindergarten Association Inc.

David Spraggs ably led 39 women on this exciting and very rewarding study tour in September 2002. No mean feat I can assure you!

Arriving in Melbourne, early in the morning to temperatures of 25 degrees plus, put all thoughts of tiredness from the tour party behind them. The weather was to be enjoyed after a 'kiwi' winter. Lighter clothes were donned and it was out to the markets!! Before leaving, a mild word of caution from David, 'we have a busy week planned so pace yourselves, roll call at 7.15am sharp!'

Monday dawned fine but somewhat cooler than the previous day. And so at 7.15am sharp we began what turned out to be a gruelling and exciting week of lectures and visits to centres.

We were very privileged to have presentations from Margo Hobba and Kirsten Lilegren on implications of 'Reggio'. To be able to view their idea of this approach in action was a real delight.



The underlying Reggio principle that education is based on 'relationships' was evident in all that we saw within the centre. The ownership children had of their work, the documentation that told the ongoing story of the children's learning, reflected the notion that the child is incredibly rich, capable and powerful. The positive interactions between children and the opportunities the teachers took to be co researchers alongside the children reflected the notion of 'relationships' as the foundation to learning. There was great evidence in the documentation of meaningful relationships with families.

A visit to Melbourne Children's centre offered a different perspective on early childhood. As a research and demonstration facility for the Dept. of Learning and Educational Development, the primary functions of the centre are to serve as an active centre for research, curriculum innovation and teacher training, to demonstrate exemplary models for teaching and learning that meet the needs of children, families, pre-service teachers and academics and to demonstrate a developmentally appropriate and responsive curriculum that meets



the needs of individual children. What was striking here was the aesthetically pleasing environment, the responsive curriculum, the passion and the strong belief that the team had in their practise.

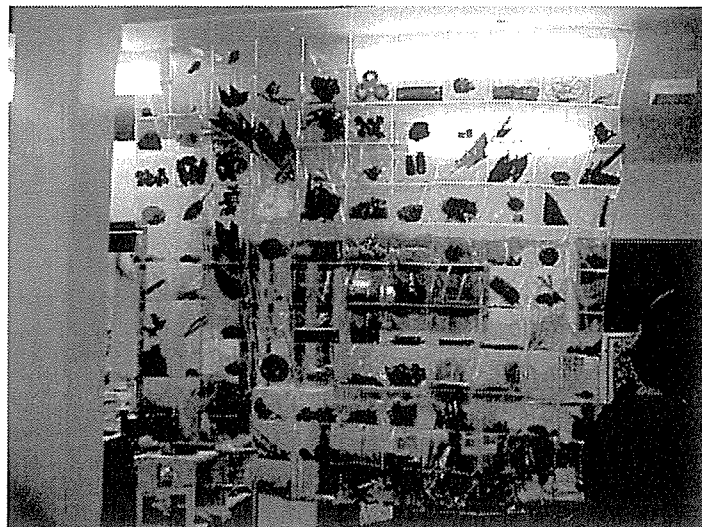
Melbourne teachers are lucky enough to have the support of the FKA Multicultural resource Centre. The centre is designed to support teachers ongoing development in this area and offers centre visits for team and centre development, as well as a vast range of books and multicultural resources for purchase or hire. We were privileged to hear the director Dr Priscilla Clarke give a presentation on the 'silent period' in second language acquisition. What a passionate and thought provoking presenter she is, with a very wicked sense of humour I might add. A true woman of the world she got her priorities right by beginning the session mapping the best factory shops for us to visit should we get a spare moment! This slight deviation from the topic in hand, was very much appreciated by many of the group!

The week was broken with a trip to Monash University's Frankston Campus where we had lectures with Jill Robbins and Marilyn Fleer. Jill spoke on Children's understanding and reasoning through socio-cultural theory and Marilyn spun our world with a different bend on technology – DESIGNERLY THINKING - "the focus should not be on the child's ability to think, but their capacity to think and rethink over the duration of their early childhood education".

Sharne Rolfe, Kylie Smith and Glenda McNaughton, from Melbourne university enlightened us with some insights to their current research projects.

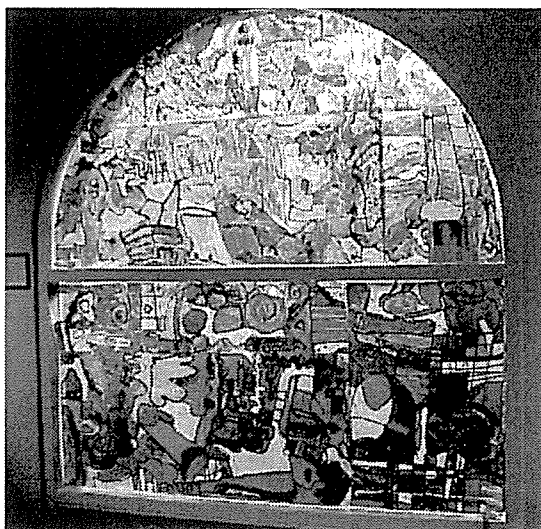
As you may be aware Glenda's passion is Anti bias. Using dolls that reflect race, gender and class, she creatively works with children addressing these barriers.

Sharne brought us up to date on her 'Attachment Theory' research and Kylie reflected on her research in to observations asking the key questions 'in who's best interest am I doing this for' and 'do I



need masses of observation or just one that I and the community work with and continually revisit'. An interesting thought to ponder on!

The Lady Gowrie resource room, which has an amazing array of books on anything to do with children their world and education, saw a frenzy of buying from us all. Buying over, we were into another lecture from another passionate teacher on theory and practice. As a model centre we were able to view their beliefs in practice through viewing rooms and had the luxury of visiting their very creative playground with all it's little intimate, but observable spaces while the children were at lunch.



Along with all the presentations we visited numerous centres, some striking us with absolute awe and some leaving us cold and wondering how with all this passion and knowledge at their doorsteps could they be so off the mark – in our perceptions of course. Every day was exciting and revealed some thing new not only about education but about ourselves as well. The general feeling was us kiwis do a pretty good job as well and why aren't we entertaining more overseas visitors and enlightening them to our strengths in early childhood education and research. What will stay with me for many years to come was the passion that the people we visited have for their chosen careers and the true

grit it took from us to get through a physically and mentally demanding week.

Oh and by the way we all found time to shop, to eat in some very interesting eateries, enjoy each others company, forge new friendships, do a bit of sight seeing and catch a bit of sleep occasionally!!

Susan Salamonsen, Head Teacher

Gwen Rogers Kindergarten (Tauranga)

The Melbourne study tour was a great opportunity for us as part of a group of colleagues, many of whom we knew well and were able to share, discuss and debate our differing perspectives of what we experienced. We also had a lot of fun.

Of particular interest were the centres using a Reggio Emilio focus in their programmes. It was valuable to be able to actually view the layout, the furniture and equipment in use and the attention paid to providing an aesthetically pleasing and stimulating environment including displays showing the value placed on children's art work. We were interested to see the way different centres share documentation and the learning of children with their communities and the organised systems available for parent and wider adult community education.

One aspect of the Victorian pre-school system which strongly appealed was the stability of children because of a single intake of children into the first year of primary school. The value of having this stable group at pre-school level was evident in the level of ongoing project work and the social responsibility and classroom order achieved in the rooms we observed.

We came back with ideas of differing equipment we can use but also thinking about the way we do things. For example about the amount of equipment and choices we offer in our programmes and whether we should be concentrating on increasing children's skills in a smaller number of areas. We saw lots of examples of differing methods of assessments, planning and evaluation which assisted us with the ongoing improvement of our own systems. We also came back grateful that we have Te Whāriki as our curriculum and thinking that, considering the very different conditions that we work under, we are achieving our purpose very well.



Kathryn Clout, President

Tauranga Regional Free Kindergarten Association Inc.

Wow – what a wonderful experience! Sometimes we get locked into our own community and forget that there is a much wider community to 'explore'. I felt the trip to Melbourne was in some ways a journey of enlightenment!

Professionally to be challenged by wonderful lecturers of international standing and some of the research they are conducting – Sharne Rolfe - Attachment Theory - was particularly thought provoking – something I would like to pursue in my own work. Priscilla Clarke with her passion for English as a second language and the issues of not only a bi-cultural society but a multi-cultural society and the challenges that are presented in making children and their families feel welcome in their new communities.

I thoroughly enjoyed visiting centres of different 'flavours' – some I felt quite sad about for no other reason than the children were simply 'institutionalized'. Some centres were beautiful with calm aesthetic environments of soothing music and fragrant oils, the effort educators put into to create these environments was inspiring. The respect of children's creations and how they were displayed, the materials provided to resource children's projects, and creativity was quite outstanding.

My camera was hot snapping ideas of resources, presentation of children's work, the presentation of resources that inspire children in their work. I was intrigued with some of the centres not having 'all of the equipment' available, but having a rotational system

of providing some equipment. Sometimes I wonder if we have too much equipment available, and if our environments are visually over-stimulating. – Food for thought!

On a personal note – going to Melbourne, seeing and being at the markets, (including food markets) shops, and restaurants –was fantastic! It was great to network

with other associations and our own teaching staff from Tauranga. We had a lot of laughs, and built great memories. I personally want to thank David Spraggs and Annette Sheehy for their outstanding organisation – every detail was covered train tickets, tram tickets, timetables, taxis, coffee stops, shop stops. Well- done team a very successful and memory filled trip.

David Spraggs, Teaching Services Manager

Tauranga Regional Free Kindergarten Association Inc.

In 2000 TRFKA embarked on planning and then executing a Professional Development opportunity for it's teachers. It involved taking one teacher from each teaching team to Melbourne for a week long study tour.

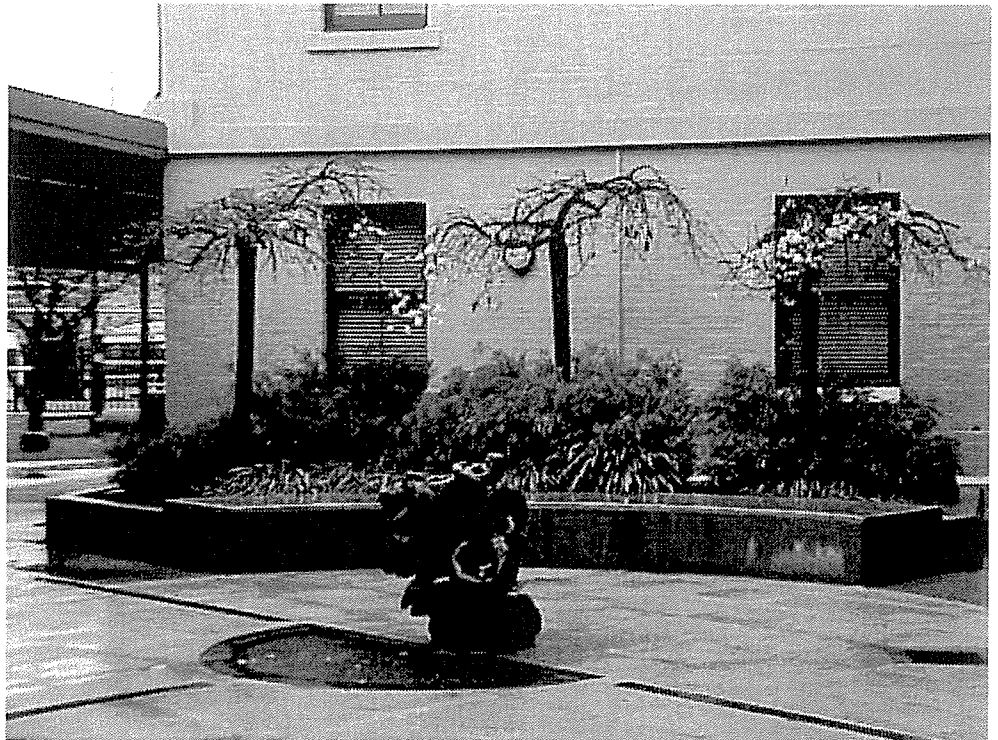
The purpose for the journey was to open people's thinking to other ways of doing what we have always done.

By the time we were ready to go (third term break 2002) 28 Tauranga staff and 12 educators from other associations had joined our group. We took the trip in the third term break but changed our term dates to accommodate for the fact that Melbourne also has term breaks at the same time as New Zealand.

People quickly gained skills in managing their time, trams, trains and energy levels.

The week was planned to have more intensive items and lecturers etc in the mornings and centre visits etc in the afternoons. Evenings were each person's to do with as they wished.

The accommodation was shared (on purpose to build relationships) and adequate but not luxurious. The places we went to shared willingly and freely their thoughts on early childhood and their perception of best practice.



The spin offs for our teaching teams have been

- more collegial links between staff in differing kindergartens
- ideas that have transformed into action in environments with the Association
- ideas of documentation and planning being used as springboards
- thinking that involves some of the lecturers' thinking as well as the centre innovations we had the privilege of viewing.

The journey was a huge success with very little in the way of problems encountered along the way.

Elizabeth Lane, Senior Teacher

Heretaunga Kindergarten Association

How do you explain in a few words an action packed week in Melbourne, here goes. The group of kindergarteners set out under the expert guidance of our co leaders David Spraggs and Annette Sheehy from Tauranga. Our destination "The Quest of Lygon".

The week was full on. We sampled all means of transport, remembered tram numbers, and how to get back to the impressive Flinders building. I recall the faces of those left on the escalator as our train sped out of the station, 40 of us waiting for a taxi, filing into a venue etc.

The cafes were cheap and the food a delight, the company and collegial spirit of the group was supportive and fun. The speakers we heard and met were informative and shared their expertise. The venues and the early childhood settings opened our eyes regarding the conditions and facilities. It gave me a lot of food for thought, I came away with several new ideas but I also appreciated things at home.

This educational study tour was fantastic, the best professional development I have participated in. Yes we did fit in some shopping etc. This is a must for all



and do enroll for the next tour. You will have the time of your lives.

RECIPE FOR MELBOURNE STUDY TOUR 2002

Take a group of kindergarteners, get them to travel and share apartments, to cope with a variety of transport and mix well. Add new experiences, people skills and expertise: throw in some children at work, and leave to set. Combine all ingredients, let them feed on the challenges laid down, separate into small manageable amounts and disperse to a variety of compounds and ice with the toppings gathered. Enjoy the fruits of the mixture and savour the new knowledge.

Kathryn Hart, Regional Lecturer for the Diploma in ECE

Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

Inspiring, action packed, empowering, motivating, challenging, highly organised, thought provoking and lots of fun are all words that come to mind when reflecting on the recent Study Tour to Melbourne that I attended with the Tauranga Regional Free Kindergarten Association. The week abroad with colleagues in the early childhood profession from

throughout Aotearoa, was a wonderful opportunity to develop relationships within the wider early childhood community, listen to lecturers whose research and writing I highly respect, view pedagogies, philosophies and beliefs in a range of early childhood settings.

The careful planning of this study tour ensured that every moment was filled with a learning experience, whether this was listening to a lecture, an observation of the children's learning, negotiating the tram system or a quiet evening in a café to reflect on and discuss the day's experiences.

The opportunity to visit the Melbourne early childhood community was a unique experience that will continue to inspire me. Thank you very much to the Tauranga Kindergarten Association

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A Growing Focus on Early Childhood Education

From 1 October government agency Early Childhood Development (ECD) and its functions were integrated with the Ministry of Education. The integration is one of the many strategies for achieving the goals of *Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki*, the Government's 10-year strategic plan for early childhood education.

Secretary for Education Howard Fancy says that in preparing for integration it was clear that both organisations shared a strong commitment to quality early childhood education and *Pathways to the Future*.

"Though our work has often been in different areas or has concentrated on different aspects we have also worked successfully together on a number of initiatives. Now, through integration, we have a significant opportunity to further combine our strengths for the benefit of all children, their whānau and families."

The critical role early childhood education plays in children's success, not only while at school but throughout their lives, was top of mind for the Secretary in deciding the new Ministry organisational design following integration.

"To me, early childhood education is simply too important to be seen as the responsibility of only one part of the Ministry."

The new arrangements now in place provide a strongly connected network of positions and responsibilities in key Ministry areas. Generally, these arrangements

build on the existing early childhood education focus in the Ministry. This extends from work on licensing and chartering, and teaching and curriculum, to support for parents and families generally, and Māori and Pasifika communities especially. There is a strong focus on making sure resources are where they are most needed – at the regional and local level.

"Looking ahead, we also see opportunities to build a stronger early childhood education focus in areas such as school area reviews, the use of ICT, property, and the development of new forms of learning support for educators, families and whānau."

The integration is one of a number of initiatives focused on the goals of *Pathways to the Future*. Currently the Ministry is reviewing the existing network of services to identify opportunities where community-based services could further support participation. The Ministry is also undertaking research that seeks to better understand quality in kōhanga, playcentres and licence-exempt playgroups.

As well, the government has established six Centres of Innovation – selected early childhood education services that are to receive additional support to research and develop their innovative work with children and share this with the wider early childhood community.

"With such recognition of and focus on the sector, it is an exciting time for everyone working in early childhood education."

Transition to School from Kindergarten

Children who attend any of the 14 Kindergartens in the Nelson District Kindergarten Association are provided with planned experiences to ease the transition to Primary School. Research indicates that if this is a positive, stress free transition then it increases the child's success at school.

It is no longer valid for Kindergarten Teachers to say we are preparing children for life but not preparing children for school. Transition to school is another step along the learning journey and having children who are confident learners is an important aim to strive for. Therefore steps have been taken to ensure that children's learning experiences include contacts with the local Primary Schools. Collaboration with the local schools means children are meeting Principals and

New Entrant Teachers long before they are enrolled at school.

Activities such as shared lunches, joining the Junior assembly and attending special events, give the Kindergarten children an opportunity to see the school and to be a part of these routines before starting school. Children also meet up with their peers and get to know the Teachers. Using the school's facilities means children have expanded curriculum opportunities and are familiar with Primary School grounds.

Parents and whanau members are encouraged to participate in these events so they understand the local school's programme and meet the Teachers more informally.

Te Manu Hou

Kindergarten and Primary School Teachers are sharing curriculum goals and understanding the philosophical basis unique for each sector. Also Kindergarten Teachers are sharing knowledge of children's learning progress with Primary Teachers, which facilitates a more 'seamless' transition.

Kindergarten teachers provide parents/whanau with up to date information on the local schools. They also spend time discussing with parents the options available to begin the transition process. This allows for plenty of time to visit and make informed choices. Through effective communication between the parents and the teachers both at Kindergarten and the schools, the 'magical date' the child turns 5 does not necessarily mean it is the day the child goes off to school. This can be negotiated and flexible depending on the child and whanau's needs.

It has been identified through research that some boys in particular can have more difficulties around transition to school, these can include readiness to be involved in longer teacher-directed lessons, socialisation skills, and readiness for reading.

Kindergarten teachers are aware of these implications and plan for teacher-directed small and large group

times within a balance of child-initiated activities. There is a lack of male role models and teaching approaches that meet boys' specific needs in Early Education. This has prompted the Principal at Tahunanui School to attend Tahunanui Kindergarten each week. On his weekly visits he interacts with the children and brings Year 5/6 boys along to establish a buddy system. This has made a positive impact on the boys who are working towards transition to school.

Overall Kindergarten teachers have noticed how much easier it is for the children to have an understanding of what happens at school. This has resulted in them being familiar with the Primary School and the teachers. This sense of belonging has eased the anxiety often noticed in those children who were off to school.

Parents are more confident about their choices and seeing their child look forward to the process has made life at home less stressful during the time of transition.

*Megan Norquay
Helen Durbridge
Senior Advisory Teachers
Nelson District Kindergarten Association*



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