



Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire

Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar

World Organisation for Early Childhood Education

Te rōpū a Ao mō te Mātauranga o ngā Kōhungahunga

Newsletter October 2020 No. 5

Kia ora koutou,

Welcome to our October 2020 newsletter!

President report:

OMEP Aotearoa AGM

Our national AGM will be held as a zoom event on Saturday 21 November. All are welcome. If you do not receive emails through our network, feel free to email omepaoateroa@gmail.com for the zoom link. It is suggested that regional chapter members gather to connect to the zoom meeting and make it a more social event with morning tea and lunch. Those who can't meet with others in their chapter can still link to the zoom meeting from their home. We are planning to run another zoom meeting in the afternoon to do some strategic planning. The agenda and further details will be sent out to all members closer to the day.

OMEP regional chapters recently had their AGM. I want to use this opportunity to thank all past and present OMEP committee members for their contribution to help run both regional and national network groups to educate us and support us in our collective goal of advocating for young children.

Ngā mihi nui kia koutou!

Lia de Vocht, President OMEP Aotearoa

CURRENT NEWS from OMEP AOTEAROA NZ CHAPTERS

OMEP Auckland Chapter:

- We held our very successful AGM by Zoom on September 22nd and are delighted to welcome new committee members: Pubitha Rayah, Cheryl Cheng and Kerri Iwaskow. Our 2020-21 committee is:

President: Charlotte Robertson

Vice-President: Mary-Liz Broadley

Secretary: Marianne Kayes

Treasurer: Kristy Austin

Committee: Nola Harvey (Immediate Past President), Pauline Bishop, Julie Dent, Diti Hill-Denee, Meg Moss, Linda Petrenko, Priya Subasinghe, Eve Stevenson and Pubi Rayah.

- Cheryl Cheng and Kerri Iwaskow were nominations from the floor and will be co-opted at our first committee meeting. At that meeting we'll also decide who will be our NE Liaison person for the coming year. Sadly, we farewelled Gemma Henrys who has been a stalwart of OMEP for many years, holding positions at both national and chapter level, including a key role as Treasurer for Auckland Chapter at a time when our finances were in considerable disarray and Gemma was instrumental in ensuring we were back on track. Nola has stepped down after 4 years as President, during which time she's been a strong and tireless advocate for children's rights. She will continue to provide support for Charlotte, our incoming President. We've not been able to meet in person since March because of Covid-19 restrictions, so we are planning for an 'in person' get-together for our October meeting.
- We are making an e-folder for new committee members outlining something about each committee member, about the organisations that we link with and mention in our meetings, and about OMEP itself.
- Our monthly webinar series, which commenced in April with a presentation on our OMEP ESD resource by Anita and Glynne, is going well. The goal of these is to showcase recent early childhood research being undertaken here in Aotearoa/NZ. Since the July newsletter, we have held a further two webinars:
 1. *August 6th Viviana Becker: Critical reflection on our understandings of democratic action in ECE Services, arising from Viviana's ongoing PhD research. "Don't let the wind blow me away!" Holding on to difference.* Viviana's presentation focused on the importance of seeing 'difference' as a value "cultivated through solidarity", rather than as an obstacle to be overcome. For difference to be seen as a value we need to examine how we live democracy within our organisations and settings. Viviana said that democracy is "an ongoing process of listening, welcoming and learning from the other". We are a "web of connections" where one thing is only that thing in comparison to other things. Viviana went on to talk about the importance of languaging and being aware of what we, as adults, say. Languaging is an ethical and political act which brings with it the responsibility and the freedom to do what is right. Viviana asked, "What if children's languaging became part of our collective languaging?" Might we, as adults, see 'difference' in a more moral and connected way, rather than in a 'regulated' way? The world needs a multiplicity of ideas; children need to be fully present in their lives and this includes adults listening to and appreciating their thoughts and words.
 2. *September 3rd. Dr. Jane Ewens: "The Struggle for status - EC teachers: Are we our own worst enemies?", reporting back from her PhD research and thesis, "You kind of have to be a bit superhuman" Early childhood teacher beliefs about what it takes to be a good teacher: A discourse analysis.* Jane's presentation focused on the dominant discourses engaged in by her early childhood teacher participants, the beliefs shaped by these discourses and the way in which these beliefs shaped practice. What power lies in varying discourses (defined as powerful sets of rules and behaviours that shape reality through language)? The dominant discourses in Jane's research were the maternal discourse/teacher as mother; the neo-liberal discourse/teacher as technician; the professional discourse/teacher as scholar and researcher. The maternal discourse (a discourse of "niceness" which leads to conforming) predominated over the other two types of discourse. Jane gave an example of a teacher "struggling for status" who said she was frustrated with herself for frequently belittling what she did/could do, knowing that she did very well! Another teacher said, "I just want to get along with the team". The latter attitude was valued over the provision of high-quality early childhood education. Jane said teachers are shaped by and shaping

discourses. Jane asked: "How can we reframe the language of "care", "love" and "niceness" as a democratic and enabling discourse?"

- Our other key project, a reprint of "For Each and Every Child - He Taonga Tonu te Tamariki" is making progress, driven by Charlotte Robertson, Diti Hill-Denee and Nola Harvey. This bilingual te reo Māori and English children's picture book explaining the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was first printed in 2011. It was distributed by UNICEF and their sponsors, free of charge via Learning Media, to primary schools and some early childhood education and care services. UNICEF held the copyright for the text and the artwork. The goal for the reprint is to have it distributed free to every early childhood centre, together with guidelines on how it can be used with young children. Diti has negotiated access to the original transcripts and permission to reprint. She has also obtained agreement from the Office of the Commissioner for Children that the current Commissioner, Andrew Becroft, will write a foreword for the reprint. Charlotte has organised quotes for printing, which is likely to cost \$12,000 minimum. We are currently scoping the project, canvassing support from OMEP Aotearoa members, and considering sponsorship possibilities.

OMEP Wellington Chapter:

- The AGM in Wellington was held on 21 September and the following committee positions were filled:

President: Bronwen Olds

Treasurer: Amanda Higgins

Secretary: Gwen Davitt

Minute secretary: Michelle Maisuria

Liaison: Kerrie Duncan

Committee Members: Catherine Vaughan

Naomi McGimpsey

Feiloaiga Malaga

Norma Roberts

We closed the evening with a pizza dinner and a short committee meeting.

- Our professional learning programme continues to attract interest from both members and non-members. In August we welcomed Ali Glasgow Pacific Early Childhood Education: Cultural practices, language, beliefs, and values. The Pacific Community contribute significantly to the rich fabric of Aotearoa society. Nevertheless, Pacific ways of life, cultural and linguistic practice and identity formation are less evident in mainstream Early Childhood Education. Consequently, this gap has come at a cost for Pacific communities where some are at extreme risk of language and cultural loss. Ali's presentation draws on her research and her work with Pacific language nest communities, around cultural practices, language, beliefs, and values. The presentation outlines key practices such as core values outlined in the Pacific Education Plan (2013), caring practices for Pepe and Tamariki, as well as principles and practices that underpin culturally embedded programmes for Pacific learners. Furthermore, implications for teachers are provided which may support and allow enhanced understandings of Pacific pedagogical practice.
- In October we hosted Anita Croft, Growing Kiwi Gardeners by an online link. Foster Kaitiakitanga through gardening: Spring in the Garden Gardening is a great way to connect children with nature and teach them to be kaitiaki of their environment. Through full involvement in garden planning and processes children learn to respect the garden and the plants they are growing. Spring is a time of new growth. This gardening webinar will explore kaitiakitanga in relation to caring for Papatūānuku by ensuring the soil is healthy so that our plants grow healthy and strong. It will cover what sow and plant in Spring, seed sowing and tips for caring for seeds and seedlings. It will also include practical ideas and garden-related activities that keep tamariki interested and involved in gardening and caring for the environment.

- Anita Croft runs her own business that supports early childhood educators develop gardening programmes for under 5's. After seven years teaching in early childhood and eight years in tertiary, I've seen the positive impact that gardening programmes have on our youngest children, not just around environmental awareness but as gardening is a social process, developing respect for each other too. I am a registered and qualified early childhood teacher, with a Master of Education degree, for which I researched pre-service early childhood teachers' preparedness to teach education for sustainability when they begin their teaching career.
- In November we welcome Sarah Knipping to present on bringing nature and the forest into our learning programme.

OMEP Canterbury Chapter:

- The Canterbury Chapter held their AGM on September 15th, 11 members present and 5 sent apologies. After the AGM members enjoyed a meal at a local restaurant.

2020/2021 elected committee leaders:

President: Penny Neilson

Minutes Secretary: Annie Gordon

Treasurer: Anita Croft

Liaison National Executive Representative: Annie Gordon

Early Childhood News and Items of Interest:

Check out the latest news from OMEP World at <https://worldomep.org>

Awareness Days/Weeks:

Reference: <https://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/teaching-and-learning/learning-tools-and-resources/awareness-days/>

Key Dates:

- **OMEP Aotearoa New Zealand Annual General Meeting** - Saturday 21 November 2020 Via Zokm starting at 10.30am Zoom link will be sent to Chapter Liasons In November.
- **WORLD OMEP ART PROJECT** Due now 30th November 2020

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