

# NKA CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS 2019

## 2 HOUR SEMINAR

### TRAUMA ATTACHMENT

**Presenter: VERONICA GEORGE** – Soul Psychology

There are many children in Aotearoa who have not had an optimal start in life due to experiencing some form of trauma and/or disrupted attachments and the effect of this on their development is far reaching, often manifesting in challenging behaviour, which can lead to a negative life trajectory. In order to minimize further adverse experiences for these children, it is of vital importance that the complexities beneath such behaviour are understood so that they have the opportunity to thrive, instead of merely survive. This requires better understanding the inner world of tamariki who have experienced developmental trauma/attachment issues, so that they can be supported to heal and grow in a way that will help them stay connected with the core essence of who they are, as opposed to becoming defined by their behaviour. The earlier we can identify and help these children, the better chance they will have of developing a positive life path whereby their Wairua and Mana is protected and nurtured. As a registered psychologist based in Te Tai Tokerau, I am passionate about bringing trauma-informed practice into the education sector and have recently completed the Level Two Training of Dyadic Developmental Practice, a framework which provides an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach to support these children, based on empathy, understanding, connection, and relationships. I will be sharing this approach, within the framework of Te Whare Tapa Wha, in order to discuss how this can be incorporated into early childhood education. Alongside this, I have trained extensively in mindfulness based practices and I find this an integral part of being able to implement these strategies. I also explore how spending time in nature can help children to recover from adverse childhood experiences, further strengthening their overall sense of wellbeing.

## **OUR ANIMAL YOUNG: HOW UNDERSTANDING ANIMAL BEHAVIOR HELPS US UNDERSTAND OUR YOUNG CHILDREN**

**Presenter: FRANCES CARLSON** Acclaimed Author, ECE lecturer

Young children are animal young and, as such, share many of the same developmental characteristics and needs as their other animal counterparts. We'll discuss these needs – to be touched, to mouth/bite, to roughhouse, and to communicate non-verbally – to understand why all animals share these same developmental needs. You'll learn how to replace what may be a classroom practice (for example, saying, "Hands to yourself" or "use your words" to children) with responses and practices that better support development. You'll also learn why and how to support these developmental needs instead of trying to eliminate them.

## 2 Hour Seminar

### **MATARIKI: THE MĀORI NEW YEAR**

**Presenter: HARKO BROWN** – KaiMatariki Trust; Author

Te Iwa o Matariki, in mid-winter the nine stars of the Matariki (Pleiades) constellation, are associated with cultivation, food sources, and the forces of nature & the human condition. For example, the star Waiti relates to freshwater foods, Waita with the oceans, Ururangi with the winds, Hiwa with peace and aspirations (and so on).

Each star is also inextricably connected to several spiritual Māori games and aroarotākaro (implements of play - including hupara). These games mirror the Mauri (life forces) of each star. In times of old when a star was shining brightly in the Matariki constellation, it foretold a bountiful food supply or pleasant weather, for the coming year. However a dim star meant, for example if that star was Tupuānuku, that crops might be poor that year.

Therefore games and activities associated with any of the dim stars would be ramped-up by tribespeople during Matariki to compensate for those with negative predictions. Each game also had further associations with rituals and legends which were joyfully retold, reimagined and redramatised by tamariki and adults alike.

Our session will explore some of these ancient guided Matariki play mediums through several of the Māori legends such as Rona and the Moon, the flights of Hape, the peace-making of Rahi & the shenanigans of Maui.

## **EXPLORING ERO'S DRAFT EVALUATION INDICATORS IN THE CONTEXT OF NGĀ ARA WHAI HUA: QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES.**

**Presenter: SANDRA COLLINS - ERO**

In this workshop Sandra will share ERO's newly developed quality framework Ngā Ara Whai Hua and ERO's recently updated draft evaluation indicators. There will be an opportunity for participants to explore the implications of these indicators for their internal evaluation practices and reasoning processes.

### **SOME BIO INFORMATION**

Sandra has extensive experience in education and evaluation. Sandra has worked for the last 12 years as a senior education evaluator in the Evaluation Services team in ERO's National Office. Much of her work is focused on system-level evaluations and on methodology and indicator development. Sandra has recently been appointed to a new role in ERO as Manager Methodology in the Methodology and Professional Practice team in ERO.

## 2 Hour Seminar

### **CROSS GENERATIONAL & INTEGRATED MINDFULNESS... INNOVATIVE CULTURE CHANGE!**

**Presenter: ANTONIA FITENI** – The Mindful Coach

*Innovation* – Changing culture to enhance and benefit the whole environment – including staff, children and wider community.

*Opportunities* – For each teacher & staff member to gain Mindfulness skills both formal and informal, for personal gain, inter-personal gain and has a ‘trickle-down effect’ to benefit the children.

*Vision* – Enhanced focus and attention, improved decision-making ability, increased self-awareness and awareness of others, higher levels of resilience and emotional intelligence, strengthened cognitive effectiveness, improved performance, heightened ability to manage and prevent stress, greater creativity, overall improved wellbeing, heightened levels of empathy and compassion – for self and others.

This vision is to enhance all the above and benefit teachers and children.

## **UNPACKING THE HIKAIRO SCHEMA**

**Presenters: DR's ANGUS & SONJA MACFARLANE – University of Canterbury: (supported by RIKA CURRIE, DONNA BIRD, KATRINA BOWMAN HIKURANGI KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS, and ROIMATA MACFARLANE Pouwhakarewa Tikanga Māori Advisor NKA)**

This adaptable guide invites kaiako to rethink approaches to engaging tamariki, re-envisage the teacher/learner dynamic, revise old habits, and reconfigure learning environments to acknowledge and embrace cultural differences. Kaiako can use the Hikairo Schema several times over, drawing on their previous experiences to inform and to develop new and innovative ways of facilitating culturally sensitive and inclusive learning settings. This self-paced guide allows kaiako, whānau, and tamariki to collaboratively co-construct goals and outcomes that are relevant to their learning contexts. Kaiako can adapt the Hikairo Schema to fit not only their own needs, but their own pace and level of comfort.

This workshop will be about going through this guide explaining what it is and sharing examples of how it could be used to strengthen your culturally responsive practice.

## **THE EXPLORATION OF NATURE THROUGH ART**

**Presenters: ZAIR TAYLOR** Mairtown Kindergarten **AND CHRISTINE ALFORD** Tauraroa Area School

As a teaching team, we highly value arts education, it is an integral part of our programme at Mairtown Kindergarten. We believe art is a language for learning and communication. Our work is underpinned by the New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum, Te Whāriki, which promotes creativity and expression through the visual arts as a means for children to explore materials, to convey their feelings, to communicate their thinking about people, places and things, to discover new working theories and to connect their thinking, imagination and senses in the creation of their work.

At Mairtown we also follow a model for inquiry-based learning. Through the use and creation of visual art, questions for inquiry and rich language, children are supported to create, to think, and to problem solve which stimulates their feelings and imaginations, and feeds their thinking.

Through providing strong, rich art experiences we have observed how children use art as a language and a form of communication in three ways; as a means for communicating cognitive development, as a means for communicating emotional development and as a means for developing visual language.

Zair Taylor and Christine Alford, will go over these three aspects, concentrating on telling the story of one of our longer-term inquiry projects, 'Nurturing a sense of wonder about spiders'. This project utilised the arts and drew on communicating and enhancing children's cognitive development and visual language.

We are strong advocates of a programme rich in the visual arts at Mairtown Kindergarten. Through such a strong exposure to the arts we believe children develop meaningful ways to explore in depth, the world around them. With careful and considered teaching practices children instinctively begin to use the arts as a form of communication and language in which to express their ideas, knowledge and wonderings, to enhance their cognitive development and to explore their own creative thinking.

Throughout this workshop participants will be able to explore and discover the materials frequently offered to children engaging in art-based inquiries. Participants will also be able to discuss any of the ideas presented to them and to ask questions throughout the workshop.

## **SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION- THROUGH AN ENVIROSCHOOL LENSE**

**Presenters: ANNA ALEXANDER, KAREN CARR & HEIDI HARRISON** - Comrie Park Kindergarten

Comrie Park Kindergarten is leading the way with Sustainable Education Early Childhood in Northland. They have become the first Green Gold Enviroschool Kindergarten, North of Auckland and were recognised as Supreme winners at the Northland Regional Council Environmental awards this year.

They have been recognised through the Enviroschools Programme as a kindergarten that is motivated and committed to working towards becoming a sustainable Kindergarten, everything they plan and do has a sustainable focus.

This workshop will inspire you to think and act sustainably through an Enviroschool lens. It will give you practical application to take back to your ECE to inspire your teaching team, tamariki, whanau and wider community.

We are a three teacher team who understands the power of knowledge and that knowledge is there to be shared. This workshop will be captivating, visual and have a practical element.

If you are passionate about sustainable education and want to enhance your ECE environment and programme, this workshop is perfect for you.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”. (Margaret Mead)

## **MANAGING TEAMS**

**Presenter: JAMIE ROSEMERGY** – The ADECCO Group

Looking at how we can effectively manage teams of people. A fast paced interactive workshop that will get you thinking about your team and the tasks they complete that help you to achieve your goals. Conversations we have and the support we can offer as a manager or colleague. Understanding that it is ok to be different and that cultural or generational differences actually make our teams stronger. What are the key conversation that we should be having and what are things we need as a leader to allow our teams to feel successful.

## **TE KANIKANI: THE DANCE OF RELATIONSHIP. DANCE MOVEMENT THERAPY AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT.**

**Presenter: JAN McCONNELL** – Dance Movement Therapist

Jan McConnell DTAA, NZRP, PGDip (Expressive Therapies) is the director of LifeMoves Creative Therapy. She is an experienced dance therapist, arts therapist and physiotherapist based in Northland, New Zealand.

Dance Movement Therapy is a form of movement psychotherapy. It is an emerging profession in New Zealand, supported by a professional body, the DTAA (Dance Therapy Association of Australasia).

Dance therapy does not require the ability to 'dance' in the traditional sense. Rather it uses movement as the therapeutic tool. Art making, storytelling, drawing, poetry and talking can all be part of the therapeutic creative process within a dance therapy session.

In the early childhood setting dance movement therapy can address issues such as impulse control, sensory overload, anxiety, gross and fine motor control and body/sensory awareness in a fun and playful way. The child's ability to notice, expand and regulate her/his moving body is at the heart of the brain's capacity for creating new neuro-connections and pathways. Dance therapy supports the creation of these new connections. Movement, touch, sound, rhythm and texture can all be used as a bridge for learning, connection and communication.

The intention of dance therapy is to build a safe environment that creates opportunities to explore innovative ways to communicate, connect and express. This can then support the development of social and emotional skills which can be taken back into the child's wider environment. It is essentially about the 'dance of relating' – to self, to the environment and to other people

This one hour experiential movement workshop will introduce dance movement therapy fundamentals for early childhood settings. By the end of the session you will have practical innovative tools to support young children:

- To develop body awareness and assist self-regulation.
- To manage transitions and self-soothe in moments of anxiety and change.
- To address functional, emotional and expressive aspects of self through a developing of joy of movement, movement expression and movement relationship.
- To develop non-verbal social skills and support emotional literacy
- To explore cooperation and individual expression through play, music, movement, and dance.
- To support the skills learned to be transferred into the child's larger world.

## **SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH**

**Presenter: SUANNA SMITH** - Registered Speech-language Therapist with the New Zealand Speech-language Therapists' Association

### *Background*

This workshop is based on Suanna Smith's Master's thesis, 'Early Childhood Educators' Perspectives on Children's Communication Development'. This qualitative research study involved semi-structured interviews with 10 early childhood educators working with children aged 3-5 years, in Aotearoa New Zealand during 2017-2018.

### *Vision*

The vision was to engage with educators in a way that would empower them to share their beliefs, ideas, and perceptions about their everyday communication interactions with young children. The hope is to strengthen opportunities for collaboration between educators and speech-language therapists, enhancing teamwork so we can enrich every child's communication development.

### *Research*

This innovative study adds to a very small, but growing body of international evidence regarding educators' perspectives on children's communication development. The thematic network analysis of participants' responses revealed four global themes they believed influenced their communication interactions with children: the communicative environment, coming to know processes, alignment of individual and team values, and educator enactment. When these factors converge, educators believed children's communication outcomes are positively enhanced; when there is misalignment, children's communication outcomes are not optimised.

### *Opportunity*

There will be opportunities during the workshop to learn about the findings of this research project, before considering the factors influencing your own work supporting children's communication development.

## **TRANSITION TO SCHOOL NO SURPRISES!**

**Presenters: NICKI WHITE & SHARON HALL** - Kamo Primary School

Stakeholders involved all aim for 'a seamless transition'. So, what contributes to this? What are some of the myths? What are some of the challenges? What are some of the successful ingredients?

Sharon Hall has 20 years primary school teaching experience and has worked intensively with children with special needs. Now Sharon thoroughly enjoys Learning Through Play at Kamo Primary.

Nicki White is an experienced Kindergarten Teacher and last year, after 12 years teaching in ECE transitioned to become a New Entrants Teachers at Kamo Primary to support their Learning through Play journey.

Sharon and Nicki will share their individual, as well as collaborative journey of practice as they continue to work towards achieving 'a seamless transition'. What has been successful? How this has been achieved? Who is involved? What doesn't and what isn't working? How do we continue this journey?

Sharon and Nicki invite you to attend to share your observations and experiences alongside their own

## **2 Hour Seminar**

### **SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE.**

**Presenters: DR KARYN ASPDEN & TARA McLAUGHLIN** – Massey University

Promoting social-emotional competence in early childhood is critical for young children's engagement in early learning experiences, success at school and later-in-life well-being. In this session we will examine different frameworks to support children's social-emotional competence and key teaching practices to support friendship skills, emotional literacy and conflict resolution.

The teaching practices discussed will provide teachers with specific ideas about how to support children's social-emotional competence but are also intended to be adaptable and flexible in their use. This interactive session will encourage active sharing about strategies that teachers are currently using and critical discussion about how practices presented might work in the context of each teacher's unique setting. The session is most relevant for teachers looking for ideas about how to support children's social-emotional competence in early childhood education settings. Strategies discussed are also relevant for parents and administrators who want to know more about promoting children's social-emotional competence.

## 2 Hour Seminar

### HOW TO HELP CHILDREN TO DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET?

**Presenter: TANYA VALENTIN** – Professional Early Childhood Education Services

"Children who understand that the brain gets smarter – have a growth mindset – do better at school, because they have an empowering perspective of learning. They focus on improvement and see effort as a way to develop their abilities. They see failure as a natural part of the learning process." Dr Carol Dweck.

In order for our children to succeed in life they need to be able to apply critical thinking to a problem, overcome adversity and to know that if they fail, they can try something different in order to experience success. A growth mindset builds resilience and grit which is vital for our children to be able to have the persistence to be successful especially with regards to long-term goals.

In this workshop we will be unpacking what a growth mindset is, why it is important and discussing strategies that we can use to support children to develop grit, resilience and a mindset for success.

## **UNDERSTANDING MY WHY**

**Presenter: JAMIE ROSEMERGY** The ADECCO Group

Why is it important to understand why we do what we do? WHY have we chosen this career and what makes us continue to strive to deliver at the highest level. This workshop will get you thinking about your WHY and allow you to reflect on what it is that motivates you to be best version of you. At times we get too busy with life to focus on the reasons why we do what we do so let's spend a fun interactive session together to explore your WHY.

## **TOUCH MATTERS**

**Presenter: P-J McCREA** – International Association of Infant Massage

I have been an IAIM trained Infant Massage Instructor since 2000.

Come in and have a sneak peek on what an infant massage class looks like and find out how and why it plays a vital role in maternal mental wellbeing for both parent and baby and what this may look like within an ECE setting.

**Numbers limited to 14**

## WHY ARE YOU LIKE THAT? – VALUING UNIQUENESS

**Strength lies in differences, not similarities.” – Steven Covey**

**Presenters: GRANT HARRISON AND ROBYN RICHARDS**

The importance of understanding and respecting each other’s differences is a key ingredient in developing yourself.

This workshop intends to deepen your understanding of why you are the way you are and why the people you work with are the way they are.

It will raise your self-awareness and your understanding of the behaviour of others. By better understanding and embracing people’s natural difference it is possible to trigger the combined power of different personal styles so that internal silos are overcome. Your leadership will be enhanced through improved communication.

You will be introduced to the concept of TetraMap. TetraMap was developed in Aotearoa New Zealand by Yoshimi and Jon Brett who looked to nature to create a learning model that increases personal well-being and team cohesion.

TetraMap stresses that everyone has *all four Elements* (Earth, Air, Water, Fire) which they are able to access and strengthen for improved communication skills and performance.

TetraMap is not a detailed individual psychometric assessment and does not predict that a person will always maintain the same Element preference(s).

Integration of adult learning principles in all TetraMap workshops is a key differentiator. The learning process is experiential, creative, and discovery-based.

- is simple, memorable and easily applied
- will be used daily and across different types of challenges
- uses safe, positive, and inclusive language
- enables people to recognise themselves in *all components* of the model and not be pigeon-holed
- is effective, affordable and engaging for *all*, then consider – rather than compare,

## **BIG BODY PLAY: WHY SOMETHING SO SCARY IS SO GOOD FOR CHILDREN**

**Presenters: FRANCES CARLSON** Acclaimed Author, ECE lecturer & **MATT SEYMOUR** - Manaia View Kindergarten

Come learn how rough play positively impacts every area of a child's development. In this session, you'll learn how to plan for and incorporate rough play throughout the day, how to supervise and support it, how to document its benefits, and how to share these benefits with families. You'll also access the research supporting rough play for young children, and will get to move your own body around in some big (but not scary) ways, too.

## **READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN: PICTURE BOOKS AND FUN TIMES ON THE MAT!**

**Presenter: GLENN DAVIDSON** – Whangarei Library

Glenn Davidson is a Librarian who loves reading picture books to children. You can find Glenn reading aloud every week at Whangarei Libraries *Funtime* sessions or on the Mobile Library bus when visiting preschools. In this workshop Glenn will talk about what he thinks makes a great picture book for reading aloud to a group of children and how he builds fun and interactive books into mat-time sessions. He will share his perspective as a Librarian visiting preschools along with some of his all-time favourite picture books and mat-time activities.

## **CHILDREN IN TREES**

**Presenter: SUE STOVER** – Senior Lecture ECE (AUT) supported by Mairtown Kindergarten

The focus of this session is to explore the challenges and benefits to early childhood teachers of enabling and encouraging children to climb trees. It will draw on a small survey of Auckland-area early childhood services where trees are seen as part of their curriculum. As well as considering how health and safety issues are understood and managed, we will also consider the role/s that early childhood teachers take during children's tree climbing, alongside the relevance of folk wisdom about tree climbing offered by historic leaders of the early childhood sector.

The capacity to offer very young children access to trees for climbing reflects a matrix of decisions—starting with access to a mature tree. However, centre philosophy plus teacher confidence are also key to children's day-to-day experiences in trees. An ongoing challenge for centre management is the intentional care and management of playground trees. The focus of this session is to explore the challenges and benefits to early childhood teachers of enabling and encouraging children to climb trees. It will draw on a small survey of Auckland-area early childhood services where trees are seen as part of their curriculum.

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## **MORE ON BIG BODY PLAY**

**Presenter: MATT SEYMOUR** – Manaia View Kindergarten

Following on from the session with Frances, Matt will be discussing what tākaro a tinana is and can look like in teacher's everyday practice. Participants can expect a little bit of movement and a bit more of a look into this useful teaching tool/ strategy/ style.

Matt was the recipient of an NKA Kauri Scholarship in 2017 where he looked at Big Body Play and presented with Frances Colson at an international conference in America. Matt currently teaches at Manaia View Kindergarten, in Whangarei

## **ENVIROSCHOOLS KAUPAPA: FOSTERING A GENERATION OF PEOPLE WHO INSTINCTIVELY THINK AND ACT SUSTAINABLY.**

**Presenter: KATIE HIGGINS** – TOIMATA Foundation

Sustainability has many different interpretations. To us (in the Enviroschools network) it means living in a country where people work with positive energy to connect with each other, their cultural identity and their land, to create a healthier, peaceful, more equitable society. It means the regeneration of resilient, connected communities in which people care for each other and the environment. It means valuing indigenous knowledge and celebrating diversity so that everyone thrives. We believe this can be achieved if we learn together in empowering and action oriented ways.

Katie will share with the group the ways in which the ECE Enviroschools are keeping this vision alive. She will also create opportunities for teachers to explore ways where they can weave sustainability through their own practice and environments.

Katie Higgins is in the National ECE Enviroschools Coordinator working for Toimata Foundation (who hold the vision for the Enviroschools and Te Aho Tu Roa programmes). She has spent the past 9 years facilitating and supporting Enviroschools within Auckland Kindergarten Association, Auckland Council and now nationally.

## **WHAT STUDENT TEACHERS WANT – TALKING ABOUT THE AT ROLE IN SUPPORTING STUDENT TEACHERS ON PRACTICUM.**

**Presenter: DR KARYN ASPEN** – Massey University

Practicum is often reported by student teachers to be the most influential component of their initial teacher education programme, yet being assessed on practicum is also typically described as stressful and anxiety producing. The assessment of practicum is a high stakes event, with significant implications for the student's further study and entry into the teaching profession. Drawing on the voices of the student teachers who participated in an online survey and case studies, this presentation will share stories of both positive practicum assessment experiences and those that were challenging, and will highlight what students are hoping for in a practicum experience. The importance of developing positive, inclusive relationships within the practicum triad will be considered and tips and pointers to support associate teachers in challenging moments will also be explored. This session will be relevant for those who support student teachers on practicum.

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