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Hineana Dando is 14 years old and is a Year 10 student at Coastal Taranaki School (CTS), a rural area school with just over 300 students, situated on the coast side of Maunga Taranaki.

Hineana lives at the foot of the Maunga and loves music and hanging out with her friends. Her favourite subjects are social studies and art, and she would like to study psychology when she leaves school.

CTS is host school to an RTLB who supports the teachers in their passion to build positive relationships with students and their whanau, and to personalise learning to ensure that all students are motivated and experience success. Hineana loves attending CTS because it is small and the teachers take time out to work with, and be there for students, when they find things tough-going.
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Editorial

Welcome to the second edition of Kairaranga for 2010. From an educational perspective, the year has been an interesting one with the emergence of a number of important issues affecting schools and early childhood centres. As all those who work in education know, these developments and issues need to be interpreted with a key goal in mind – better educational outcomes for all students. As with all editions of Kairaranga, this edition is made up of articles that focus on this important objective with a spotlight on the promotion of effective practice and relevant research in special and inclusive education.

In the first article of this edition, Angus Macfarlane, Vivien Hendy and Sonja Macfarlane reflect on the historical events and perceptions associated with children and young people experiencing behaviour difficulties in their lives. They critique and discuss present-day perceptions of these people, and the provisions that are being designed for them. They believe that the discourse around children and young people who experience behaviour difficulties can take on a new and more promising meaning as long as that discourse is genuine about locating manaakitanga at the centre. Jill Bevan-Brown has a similar theme in her article. Here she reports on a study that sought the opinion of parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) about what content and messages should be included in a DVD about ASD. It is interesting to note that the key messages Jill received from these parents were associated with attitudes of respect and acceptance, and a caring for children and young people with ASD.

The standards debate is one that has been a topic of much discussion this year. In this regard, Keith Greaney and Bill Tunmer challenge readers to consider what they perceive to be gaps in the Standards and Progressions documents, arguing that there is a ‘wait-to-fail’ approach being promoted.

Listening to the voice of others and collaboration is a key message in other articles in this edition. Barbara Hannant, Eng Leong Lim and Ruth McAllum present Dynamic Ecological Analysis (DEA) as a model of practice that increases teams’ efficacy by enabling the development of more effective interventions through collaboration and collective reflection. Next, Valerie Margrain shares narratives, or learning-informed stories, of young gifted learners, and Annan, Dean, Henry, McGhie and Phillipson discuss three separate responses to crisis events in New Zealand and the place of cultural relevance and sensitivity in recovery. Candice Larson reports on a study that investigated the transition of a child with moderate special education needs to a primary school setting. Finally, Dianne Macdonald, in her article entitled Becoming Educultural: Collaborative projects in the arts, shares a project where students told their school’s story through the creation of a mural called Pumanawatanga.

We hope that readers enjoy this edition. Thank you to all our contributors, and thanks to our readers. We wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Noho ora mai, na,
The Editorial Team

Kairaranga

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I recently had the pleasure of discussing the new qualification programme for RTLB with Professor Garry Hornby, Dr Alison Kearney and Dr Mandia Mantis and was immediately excited by their passion and determination to make the new programme package responsive to the needs of every single person undertaking this study, as well as being responsive and relevant to the needs of New Zealand students and their families and schools. This programme has been designed to align its content with the changing role of RTLB which was announced by Anne Tolley, Minister of Education, at the RTLB Conference 2010. I was delighted to hear from these three people who are drawing on the strengths of two of our universities, Massey and Canterbury, that not only is the new programme going to enhance the skills and knowledge of all new RTLB from 2011, but it will also provide opportunities for people who have already trained, to be involved in online aspects of the community site of the programme and be able to attend some of the on-campus presentations and workshops.

Where does the new qualification programme come from?
The original RTLB training, which started about ten years ago, was delivered alongside the development of the RTLB role and provided knowledge and skills relevant to the increased emphasis on the rights of all students to inclusion in mainstream settings if that was the preferred choice of their parents. Since then we have learnt a lot about the RTLB service and its role, and RTLB and schools/clusters have made sense of the service to meet their local needs. We have seen the service better defined by reflection on its practice, and have more of a handle on what works well and where the challenges lie. The new programme is in response to a national survey undertaken earlier this year as well as consultation with national and international advisory groups and also from the Education Review Offices reviews of the service. These informal and formal reviews of RTLB have provided a vision for future needs and have been used to help determine the content of the new programme.

What does the new qualification programme look like?
There is a determined move by the Ministry of Education to have professionals working more collaboratively and this will impact on both the work of RTLB and other professionals, and is also reflected in the type and content of the programme that will be provided for RTLB from 2011. The Blended Community of Inquiry and Interprofessional Practice (BCIIP) model for Specialist Teaching Qualifications, is going to facilitate learning by participants from a variety of professions and/or disciplines, including RTLB. The programme will be for educators working in the specialist education areas of Vision, Deaf, Early Intervention, Learning and Behaviour, Autism Spectrum Disorders and Gifted. Each of the professions or disciplines will learn with, from and about each other.

How do RTLB who have already trained benefit from the new qualification programme?
There will be a very strong online community of practice in which all RTLB, present and new, trained or on the new programme, will be encouraged to participate. There will also be block courses for those starting their training from 2011 and these block courses will finish with opportunities for all RTLB to participate in on-campus courses held at either Massey University in Albany, Auckland, or at Canterbury University, Christchurch. Resources developed through course work will be available to all RTLB who choose to join the online community of practice.

Who can enrol in the programme?
Anyone who has a relevant professional qualification and experience, a New Zealand undergraduate degree or equivalent will be eligible for entry to the courses ie. a teacher can do this training prior to applying for an RTLB position. The Ministry of Education has made it clear that there will be no exemptions from training for any new RTLB and, in response to this, the new programme has been specifically designed to recognise prior training by ensuring that the programme will still be meaningful and useful to participants regardless of their backgrounds.
RTLB will be able to choose whether they wish to enrol in Canterbury University or Massey University.

To find out more detail about this qualification please check out either of the Universities’ websites:

Massey website:  

Canterbury website:  
http://www.education.canterbury.ac.nz/study/pgdipspectch.shtml

INTERVIEWER’S PROFILE

Paul Mitchell
Paul Mitchell works as an RTLB based at Insoll Avenue School in Hamilton’s Fairfield Cluster. He has been an RTLB since 1998 and trained in the “Green Group”. This has given him a particular interest in the new training that is being rolled out for future RTLB and led to his desire to interview the Massey and Canterbury Universities’ personnel involved in the design and implementation of this programme. Paul has been on the editorial board of Kairaranga since its inception.

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His published books include:

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• Counselling Pupils in Schools, and
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Young People Experiencing Behavioural Difficulties: Discourses Through the Decades

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ABSTRACT
History has informed the present, as surely as the present will inform the future. As an evolving society, we are continually reflecting on the events and experiences of the past, taking stock of the issues and realities of the present, and then adapting the parameters, definitions and constructs that serve to define acceptability and reason as we move forward into the future. Our society’s perceptions about children – their learning, their rights, their status, and the disciplinary imperatives associated with these perceptions – have evolved and changed markedly over time. What was considered fair, right and just 100 years ago is now no longer deemed principled, relevant or appropriate. How has the passage of time during the last 150 years in Aotearoa New Zealand influenced and shaped current perceptions about, and responses to, children and behaviour? What legal, ethical and educational milestones have contributed to these current perceptions and responses? This article journeys through a timeline of societal, legal and educational events that have impacted on today’s theoretical and practical notions.

INTRODUCTION
Our purpose in writing this paper has been twofold. First, we wanted to reflect on the historical events and perceptions associated with children and young people experiencing behaviour difficulties in their lives. Second, we wanted to critique and discuss present-day perceptions of this group of people and the provisions that are being designed for them.

Education provision has not always been grounded in a concern for equity of access for all children. Much of modern procurement has its roots in the special education rights movement and the subsequent passages of legislation that sought to provide legal protection for students with various disabilities. These laws and their revisions, coupled with the enthusiasm of many professionals within the field, have generated considerable research and advocacy focused on crucial topics such as human rights. Drawing attention to human rights has led to some positive sequences, including strategies that allow professionals not only to conduct non-discriminatory assessment practices but also to act as systems change agents for the benefit of these children and their whānau (families).

When considering the status (or position) of children in society, one should view this as being relational to other adults, and also occupying a less powerful position. It is also important to place children in an historical context when discussing their position and to consider the prevailing discourses and the respective influences that these discourses have had – and still have – on their position in society.

Life-course theory provides a useful framework to discuss the position of children in society as it takes into account the fact that the occurrences of various happenings at different stages of a child’s life leads to a range of outcomes. There is an historical dimension as well as a contextual issue that this theory addresses, and this draws attention to the child in a specific “time and place”. Life-course theory recognises that we live linked lives, where interdependency is a central focus, and lives are embedded in the family, friendships and the community. Elder (1995), an ecological contextual theorist who propounded these ideas, contends that we all make choices from a series of options as we construct our life course. According to Elder, (cited in Santrock, 1999) a developmental pathway or social trajectory is an important consideration because of particular emphases on the impacts of changes in adult perceptions on the one hand, and political decision-making on the other. These two imperatives are significant in terms of how the narratives for children’s educational and social outcomes unfold. This paper will explore the unfolding of narratives over
time with special attention given to the discourse around the rights of the child; and it will close by outlining that professionals can be more effective agents for bringing these rights to bear - when provision at a national level is structured with conviction and integrity.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONISM: ITS RELEVANCE FOR NOTIONS OF CHILDHOOD, CHILDREN AND THEIR RIGHTS

According to Bird and Drewery (2000), no matter how we view our own realities and those of others, that view ‘is determined by the rules of our culture, and discourses provide some of these rules’ (p. 69). Consider the definition of “childhood” as a structure that differs within each culture. In the western discourse of childhood, children are in the main seen as innocents, dependent on adults, free from adult responsibility, and needing the protection of society. This last point - protection - implies not only the provision of some attribute or support to the child but also unequal status.

We also see the child from a child-rearing perspective - the importance of which has changed over time. We speak of a psychological discourse in terms of what the child is able to do at certain ages and stages. Secondly, we are frequently guided by a medical discourse and ruminate about issues like maturity, obesity and particular illnesses that may ensue if attention is not paid to health and wellbeing. Thirdly, we may use a cultural discourse which leads to discussion that is specific to a cultural or ethnic group and is often very ethnocentric, as social factors of what affects choice are presented. Finally, we refer to different historical periods when the process of child-rearing is presented differently according to the economic, social and philosophical meaning of that era and time. To talk of child-rearing implies that society accepts childhood as a period of socialisation, of preparation for adulthood and a time to learn the values and normative behaviour of the community within which a child lives. As already stated, such an approach means unequal status and power being held by adults who may be parents, teachers, providers of professional services, or in later years, employers.

Over recent years the seminal work of Wright-Mills (1956) has become pertinent. He considered that in any society there are a few who determine the lives of many social members. He placed importance on the normative values of society and the coercive factors within societal structures. Those who form Wright-Mills’ elite have an involvement in more of these social structures and these may be the church, the governmental institutions, the educational forums, social welfare agencies and other arenas of organisation and control. Power resides with those who have communication between these structures with their collection of norms and values, and the technology to support and introduce further development. As the social structures continue to interlock, decisions in one of these areas become related to other areas, and those who make the decisions form the “power elite” of Wright-Mills’s theory. The outcome is a movement of private issues into the public domain as norms and values are not acceded to, and powerlessness overwhelms the individual or family group. This act frequently leads to addressing grievances in unacceptable ways because those involved recognise their inability to change economic deprivation, one’s status in life or the manner in which the individuals view themselves.

THE EMERGENCE OF A “RIGHTS” DISCOURSE

A genuine consideration for children means addressing their rights. Although childhood is a construct of modern times, the social construction of childhood has been around for almost two centuries (Happold, 1937). Before considering the historic journey children have made in New Zealand, a brief reference to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) (1989) which we as a country are signatory to, places the destination in context. The rights outlined in this statute refer to three main types of rights: those of participation, protection and provision (McLeay, 1999). These rights arose from the passionate beliefs of a Polish doctor by the name of Korczak, who considered there was a need to protect the young - and what he termed - ‘throw away’ children. These were the children who were being abused and exploited throughout the world. His remarkable and (until the 1930s and 1940s) un-thought-of ideas, strongly influenced the writing of the 1989 UNCROC legislation (Lifton, 2005).

The UNCROC articles which refer to the rights of participation incorporate civil and political rights, including the right to be consulted and taken into account, the right to information, to freedom of speech and opinion, and to the right to challenge decisions made on the children’s behalf. These rights also include that of having a name and an identity. The rights to protection espouse the right ‘to be safe from discrimination, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation, substance abuse, injustice and conflict’ (p.3). The rights of provision advocate ‘minimum standards of family life and access to parental care, health, education, social security, physical care, play, recreation, culture and leisure’ (McLeay, 1999, p.18). Implicit in these rights is the notion that there is a duty to provide
for the right of an individual, and that if the parents cannot provide for the child then the state should. The question must be asked “who is the state?” and this has been explored in the work of Wright Mills, where individual responsibility moves into the public domain and becomes a collective responsibility.

POLICY AND LEGISLATION

This section of the paper will present a chronology of events which relate to the formation of policy and legislation where this affects children and young people who live their lives in exceptional circumstances. Associated with these chronological events will be the prevailing discourses when the policies were written. This will place the children in an historical dimension so we can learn about how their position in the social order frequently does not sit comfortably with their experiences.

From a political viewpoint, children’s perspectives are important. They have had “socially ascribed” responsibilities over historical time and have generally fulfilled them. To this end we accept that they have been deeply embedded in the fabric of our society from an economic, political and leadership stance, and have a viewpoint depending on the social happenings of the time. How have these social constructions led to the formation of discourses that have become so powerful?

From an era where social determinants were largely ascribed, a groundswell of opinion to match what is happening in society arises. This opinion is often associated with leadership, power, economics or the needs of the country and the influence of nationalism or world events. This collective opinion is a discourse which arises from social constructions or ideas that have started to become entrenched in the environment. Relevant to this discussion is the parenting of adolescents and our idea that this may be a “problem period”. Once this discourse becomes strong enough and noted by those with leadership qualities or power, social policy is devised to support, encourage and even introduce these ideas to other societal members who may not have met these ideas before. Support or rewards may be provided to encourage the implementation of social policy. From this policy legislation is enacted to legitimise the ideals contained in the discourse. Over time as economic, political, cultural and social changes occur in society, these discourses are modified or changed. International stride, for example war, may cause a sudden and dramatic change in ideas contained in discourses and people are made to socially construct the reality of their lives differently. It is to some of these (New Zealand) realities that we now turn.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

The earlier years (1860-1900)

In 1863 Governor George Grey endowed two denominational Industrial Schools which accepted destitute European children. These schools formerly had Māori students, but with the New Zealand Land Wars, Māori children left these institutions. The new pupils were unceremoniously described as “city arabs” because of their life style. By 1866 a connection was made between the number of children roaming the streets and juvenile crime by Branigan, Commissioner for Police, who had experience in Victoria, Australia with dealing with neglected and abandoned children. The Industrial Schools would provide a “proper” education and training for these neglected and vagrant children. An important point made was the need to separate the children from “their profligate relatives and other adverse circumstances” (Whelan, 1956, cited in Mitchell & Mitchell, 1985, p. 3).

Because of the destitute situation of many children in the colony, a Neglected and Criminal Children’s Act was passed in 1867 linking poverty and neglect to crime. This enabled the establishment of Reformatory or Industrial Schools for children under the age of 15 years. The Act also marked the beginning of foster care placement in New Zealand as it authorised the schools to place inmates of these schools into the custody of a named person. The type of child who would be accorded this “care” included “those found to be begging, wandering about and without any home or visible means of subsistence, residing in a brothel, dwelling with a person known to be a thief, prostitute or habitual drunkard, or represented by their parents as being unable to be controlled’ (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1985, p. 4). In the history of children, gender must be considered and in 1873 an amendment to the Act allowed both sexes to be catered for in the Industrial Schools ‘provided that the sexes shall be strictly kept apart in separate dormitories’ (ibid., p. 6). Further inroads were made into the rights of parents as the Act provided the ability of resident magistrates to order parents who were of ‘immoral and dissolute habits to cease to have rights of parental guardianship’ (ibid., p. 7). This order could be overturned by the parents with a successful appeal application.

Ten years after the passing of the Neglected and Criminal Children’s Act 1867, a system of free, secular and compulsory education was passed into law for all children between the ages of 7 to 13 in the Education Act 1877. Over this time there was a consolidation of laws relating to the education and custody of children in Industrial
Schools. These policies became law in 1882 with the passing of the *Industrial Schools Act*. A binary system appeared to be developing in New Zealand and this became very clear when under this Act ‘a constable could take a boy or girl, even without a warrant, to a registered magistrate if the child had no means of subsistence; if the father were in indigent circumstances, if the child was found begging, wandering, frequenting hotels, sleeping in the open air, having no settled place of abode, residing in a brothel or associating with prostitutes or habitual drunkards’ (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1985, p.10). The fact that parents of an “uncontrollable child” could take him/her to the magistrate and the magistrate was empowered to place the child in an Industrial School and “be detained” until 15 years of age was surely a denial of child rights. One important change in the system of care occurred in 1880 when the responsibility for the Industrial Schools moved from the Justice Department to the Industrial Schools branch of the Department of Education.

The last third of the 19th century saw the development of professionals in the study of children. One of these professionals was the founder of American psychology, G. Stanley Hall who initiated scientific studies in child development and pursued active parental education. He stated that ‘the study of [children’s] development is at the heart of understanding man’ and he was regarded as an ‘entrepreneur and evangelist of child study’ (Kessen, 1965, p. 164). At the same time as the *Education Act* was passed in 1877, Darwin ‘gave us the child as a legitimate source of scientific information about the nature of man’ (ibid., p.117). He emphasised the use of baby journals to record behaviours and actions of children and the value of diaries and notebooks to record data. This was a considerable innovation in the study of children as he stressed observation, interpretation and commentary. The eugenics movement illustrated the commentary of the age.

In 1898 the Inspector of Hospitals and Charitable Institutions presented views on his area of concern to the Minister of Education. This concern was that the charitable aid and hospital system was using taxation not only as a revenue gathering exercise but as “an instrument of social reform” and he aired this in the House of Representatives. By the turn of the century the policies and legislation referred to the superiority of various types of people and to the degeneration and incompetence of others. During this time special permission was granted to principals to keep back children in classes to levels below their age mates. This was the period of the work of Galton and his so-called ability to assess individual variation and do it in a precise way. His motivation was purely eugenic.

This was illustrated in a speech in the House by the aforementioned mentioned Inspector where he claimed that ‘any community that attempts to concede the right of the degenerate to procreate without restraint is merely subsidising the survival of the unfit’ (AJHR, 1898, H.22, p.1-7).

**Into the twentieth century (1900-1950)**

At this time the study of intelligence and gathering of information on the child’s ideas on everyday occurrences was in vogue. A pre-eminent psychologist, Watson, over a period spanning 1913 to 1920, “invented a new kind of child” and there was a change from the science of the mind to a science of behaviour. Watson’s contribution to behaviourism was the emphasis he placed on specific environmental experiences being important in a child’s development as opposed to considering heredity as the determining factor (Kessen, 1965).

While the psychological world wrestled with the development of children’s minds and the relationship between the environment and the child’s activities, Hogben, the Inspector-General of schools, continued to work out how best to deal with destitute children. He recommended a review of the *1882 Industrial Schools Act*. He felt there was a need to understand the causes of juvenile crime before one could adequately treat the problems delinquent children presented. The neglect and bad example of parents was still on the list of issues that were responsible. These parents were weak and needed to control themselves as genetically they were passing on to their children a low physical and moral nature. The parents he referred to lived in bad hygienic surroundings where there was overcrowding which led to poor physique. There was stress associated with the struggle to live and this lowered the ability to fight temptation and the lure of petty crime.

By the 1900s attendance at school had become an issue and with the *School Attendance Act* of 1901 the Education Boards were empowered to establish truant schools where irregularly attending students could be enrolled or to which they could be sent by a magistrate. In 1906 the *Juvenile Offenders Act* was passed, an act with implications for all offenders under the age of 16. There was a restriction placed on access for those attending court and not directly concerned, and the magistrate was given powers to discipline the offenders (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1985).

By 1907 Dr Truby King was commencing his ascendancy in organising the lives of New Zealand families and in particular the lives of the children. He had an eccentric personality and skilful propaganda spread his message, but he also “tapped the humanitarian and political concerns of
the age and harnessed them to infant care” (Milne, cited in Kedgeley, 1996, p.48). In his speeches he claimed the need for an informed motherhood because the “national bodily fitness” depended on it and if there was a decline in the health of the family, a breakdown of society and social order would follow. By following his regime the main supplies of the population for ‘our asylums….. gaols and slums would be cut off at the sources’ (Truby King, 1913, p.152). The historical context of this discourse may be illustrated by the following quote from an address given in 1909 to a meeting of the Society for the Prevention of Health of Women and Children:

We hear now days about national defence, but we must not put our whole trust in the ‘reeking tube and iron shard’. The safety of the nation is not the question of the gun alone, but also the man behind the gun, and he is mainly the resultant of the grit and self-sacrifice of his mother. If we lack noble mothers, we lack the first element of racial success and national greatness (Snowden, 1951, p.40).

The result was that Truby King persuaded the government that child-rearing was too important for individual mothers to be responsible for and the state stepped into the homes to see that mothering was done “properly”. The concern over this time was with the “moulding” of the character of the future generations of children. This was mirrored in The Education Amendment Act 1909 when authorisation was gained to detain inmates of the Industrial Schools beyond the age of 21 years in situations ‘where the inmate of a school is morally degenerate or is otherwise not [in the public interest] a fit person to be free of control’ (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1985, p. 15). The following year saw the passage of the Education Amendment Act which gave the Minister of Education the power to direct children to certain institutions when certain deficits were noted and they could remain there by the states order. By this time the emphasis was on providing a “proper education” for children with all manner of physical and intellectual deficits. Regarding behaviour, the First World War had some positive outcomes as Hanna, Minister for Education, reported to parliament. The impact of the loss of life in the war effort led to this statement:

In view of the fact that so many of our finest men have been killed or disabled during the war we should make every effort possible to save this small army of children, most of whom, if the state stood aside, would not only be lost to the state as citizens, but would become a hindrance or menace to the public well-being” (AJHR, 1917, E-1A, p. 5).

For the neglected and delinquent children under the care of the State there was the recommendation that these youngsters be kept in as natural home conditions as possible and that admission to an institution be done as a last resort. He also recommended trying to influence the parental role as well as addressing the needs of the children (AJHR, 1917, cited in Mitchell & Mitchell, 1985, p. 20).

The Child Welfare Act of 1925 saw the “care of neglected, indigent and delinquent children” placed in the Child Welfare Branch of the Department of Education with emphasis placed on the fact that ‘children [were] not to be permanently maintained in institutions, save in “exceptional” circumstances’ (p. 23). Separate Children’s Courts were to be established with jurisdiction over persons age 17 by 1927, and juvenile probation officers and boarding out officers became child welfare officers. The idea that the state had some responsibility for support and the well-being of families with dependent children was accepted with the passing of the Family Allowance Act, 1926. This placed New Zealand amongst the first countries in the world to accept this principle.

Through the next two decades there was a growing recognition of the concept of individual differences, and surveys and policies reflected this ideal. By 1944 Mason, Minister of Education, was reporting on this theme, the Thomas report spoke of catering for children’s “widely differing abilities”, of discovering talent and providing these children with the best possible conditions for development. At this time the first psychologist, Dr Ralph Winterbourn, was appointed, the psychological services were developed and a visiting teacher service was started in primary schools for teachers who were having difficulties ‘in coping with problems which had their source outside the school itself’ (AJHR, 1959, E-1, p. 9).

The post-World War Two years (1950s-1960s)

Support services, policy and legislation became overwhelmingly involved with development for physical, intellectual as well as hearing and sight issues through into the 1950s. “Homes” or institutions were set up to provide specialist education and social services, with the emphasis on professional care. This rise in specialist care was possibly exacerbated by the polio epidemic of 1947 but it was also associated with the Second World War and returning servicemen who required skilled rehabilitation.

By this time a committee was set up by the New Zealand Educational Institute to look into the emotional maladjustment of New Zealand school children. The recommendations included
the setting up of Child Guidance Centres in the main urban areas as well as looking at teacher’s work and their training. Health camps were recognised as being valuable facilities for emotionally maladjusted children as well as for those who traditionally used them to aid “under-nourishment”.

The 1950s witnessed an interest in the activities of adolescents world-wide. The media brought music, literature and films that caused concern. This was reacted to by the appointment of a special committee set up to study moral delinquency in children and adolescents and the results were presented in the Mazengarb Report (1954). While primarily being interested in the sexual morality of children and adolescents in New Zealand, it also made interesting recommendations regarding parents. Firstly, if children were summoned to court their parents should be required to attend with them. Secondly, the courts should have the power to require the parent or guardian of an attending or delinquent child to be responsible for the child’s future good behaviour. Furthermore, the children’s courts were “empowered” to compel the parents of persons having custody if any child was charged with an offence, to appear before the court to be examined in respect of the child’s upbringing and control (Mazengarb Report, 1954, pp. 64-66). At this time more visiting teachers were appointed. By the 1960s developmental centres were set up to review children with social, emotional and/or developmental deviations who could be assessed and treated by staff trained in psychiatric skills. At the same time as there was a growth in assessment and treatment of children with mental health issues, the universities were developing specialist courses and post-graduate training in educational psychology to meet the needs of these centres. In 1959, when the focus was on children labelled as “delinquent” the government approved the establishment of a Juvenile Crime Prevention Section by the Police Department in areas other than Christchurch where the idea had been on trial. The definition for a juvenile offender to be referred to this section was clearly outlined. In 1968 the crime prevention section changed its name to the Youth Aid Section but there were no significant changes in the aims and responsibilities of the assistance they offered (Mitchell & Mitchell, 1985, p. 64).

**Hard Acts to follow (1960s–1989)**

*The Education Act 1964* brought all the previous Education Acts and their amendments into one document. It defined special education as including children for whom there was difficulty in education in a number of areas of “handicap” and included the phrase ‘or of some educational difficulty, [which] require[ed] educational treatment beyond that normally obtained in an ordinary class in a school providing primary or secondary education’ (p. 5).

The decade of the 1970s witnessed considerable attention to the legislation and policy associated with children and young persons. These included the *Education Amendment Act 1974*. The main thrust of this Act was the placing of obligation on the principals of schools to provide guidance and counselling to pupils, to communicate with parents over any concerns the school has with the progress of their children and any situation which is affecting the relationship the pupil and peers or the pupil and teachers. *The Children and Young Persons Act 1974* considered the previous child welfare legislation and revised and consolidated the contents of this legislation. It reviewed the prevention and social work services available for children and young persons whose parents or families were not meeting their needs. It also referred to those young people who were “at risk” of becoming ‘deprived, neglected, disturbed, ill treated or offenders’ (p. 3) in law. At this stage a Children and Young Persons Court was set up to ‘deal with complaints that a child or young person was in need of care, protection or control or with allegations that a young person was offending’ (ibid., p. 8). An informal, non-judicial group named a Children’s Board would listen to the problems before going to the court. This Act was amended in 1977 and provided a definition of what it meant to be a child in need of care, protection and control. Also in 1977, the Report of the New Zealand Council of Social Service Working Party on Facilities and Services for Emotionally Disturbed Children addressed the fragmentation of services and recommended that there be improved coordination between the Department of Health, Social Welfare, Education, Māori Affairs, local bodies and voluntary agencies. Emphasis was placed on encouraging the dissemination of information on how parents and agencies could be helped to deal with emotionally disturbed children (ibid., pp. 69-70).

By the 1980s attention to children’s environments was starting to elicit some new aspects to the storying of behavioural issues. In 1983 a national symposium on child abuse for the first time openly addressed the issue of abuse in New Zealand. One of the principles discussed included what constituted the interests of children and young persons, especially their rights to live as normal a life as possible, taking into consideration their age and cultural background. It included various aspects of their right to representation in court and their rights in their living conditions. For example, issues concerning their confinement, discipline and punishment in Social Welfare homes. Various
aspects of regulations and orders, authority and power were defined relative to specific circumstances in the lives of these children.

Another report published in the same year was presented by the Advisory Committee on Youth and Law. In this report there was a consideration of the life experiences of youth in a multicultural society. For the first time the United Nations Rights of the Child was addressed and this included an emphasis on esteem-building and individuality when in institutional care. Parental training for parenthood was also recommended (ibid., p. 88). One interesting aspect of the report was the suggestion that the support provided for children with physical disabilities may be a guide as to how "social casualties" were handled. The result was the linking of young people with behavioural issues and maybe criminal tendencies together with those with a disability. There were also widespread changes recommended in how the Children and Young Persons Courts were operated.

The Children and Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 is regarded as innovative legislation both in New Zealand and overseas. Child Protection and Youth Justice operate within a system which encourages and strengthens the ties of kinship (CYF, 2001). This system works on the principle that the parents, families and whānau know their children and should be the people who are able to find the best outcomes for them. In 1995 more than 40 changes were made to the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act and this resulted in an amendment being passed. One of the main alterations was the mandatory reporting of child abuse being changed after much debate over the effectiveness or otherwise of voluntary reporting. Extensive consultation led to the laying of foundations for education or principles of protocol, ethics, definitions and reporting of abusive situations. An emphasis was placed on the importance of inter-agency communication to break the cycle of child abuse. The Education Act 1989 (Ministry of Education, 1989a) provided the rights of enrolment and education at state schools for all children.

Spotlight on parents

It is not unusual practice prior to general elections in this country for political statements to be issued reaffirming in our minds that the family is still a valuable institution in our nation and requires its own portfolio. The present day discourses cover all these topics and more. As the journey of children's behaviour continues, some of the spotlight has been directed toward the role of parents. In New Zealand an amendment to the prevailing Education Act has increased the fine for abusing, insulting or intimidating school staff in front of students, within or without the school grounds from $40 to $1000 (Gray, 2006). This was a way of signalling to parents that there was a correct way to deal with issues they had with teachers. We hear on the television and read in the newspapers of bullying and truancy, suggestions of 'behaviour schools for parents' (Eames, 2005) and penalties where families pay for the children's offending (Berry, 2005). It has been suggested time and time again, in pre-election party policy, that if parents do not take the steps specified by the youth courts to change their children's behaviour they will be fined if they ignore the order. Still other policies suggest that parents should also be "forced" into drug and alcohol programmes. The disadvantages faced by children brought up in families who survive on a welfare benefit have been further topics of discussion. A noted longitudinal study has recorded that the behaviour of young children is the best indicator we have of problems in adulthood (Fergusson et al., 2005). The children in this study were considered a "high risk" population. While it was considered that home visits and parenting programmes were able to reduce many childhood problem behaviours, the researchers conceded that this level of assistance may not reach many of the parents most in need.

So, how different are our "street kids" of 2010 from the "city arabs" of 1863? What is the difference between Branigan’s 1866 report on the relationship of the numbers of children roaming the streets of colonial Auckland and the juvenile crime reported on in today’s media? Some of these present day headlines include ones such as ‘truancy strikes me as an apprenticeship for crime, anti-social behaviour and a life on benefits ... [and] our social fabric is encouraging more potential applicants for this road’ (Vincent, 2003, p.6). Perhaps the 1901 School Attendance Act is of as much use today as it was last century. How different is the idea behind the headline to remove violent pupils from school to be “educated separately” - as suggested by a principal of a secondary school in a large metropolitan newspaper (Trevett, 2006a) - from the 1882 Industrial Schools Act? A century and a half ago the power a magistrate had to direct a child to an Industrial School and to be detained there until the age of 15 years, seems to relate comfortably to ideas that are sometimes now being propounded, namely that schools are becoming welfare agencies and that stronger government interventions are necessary. The suggestion made in a recent newspaper report that “We aren’t writing them off – they can still get an education but in a context that works for them” (Trevett, 2006b) has a ring of déjà vu. This looking forward into the past was further illustrated by another newspaper article concerning children from transient homes and the impact this lack of stability
has on school achievement. The article held the statement ‘if a kid has no stable home life and has had no chance to put down roots it’s better to provide special education for him (sic) outside of school’ (Hamilton This Week, 2006, p.4).

The issue in this (punitive) discourse is that “we” as a society are calling for harsher measures and in doing so are denying the young people so affected their basic human right to educational opportunity. This creates a double-edged sword because ‘we’ are creating a pool of young people who are outside the education system and are at risk of moving into the criminal justice system, with all the associated costs to the community. A new (agentic) discourse is necessary, to take us out of the shadows, in to the present, and on to the future.

ON INTO THE PRESENT

The emphasis from the 1960s onwards has been on the rights of the child, particularly as outlined in the United Nations Convention of the Child Report of 1989. It is one of the most powerful discourses in the world today and grew out of the social movements involved with discrimination against ethnicity and culture, women, minority and disability groups. Its influence relates directly to power and economics politically, and to progress of young people, educationally. An ‘agentic’ discourse, it is argued, is the way forward.

While many of the regulations within the legislation passed more recently in the New Zealand parliament have been designed to meet the educational needs of students with specific health problems and disabilities, children with behavioural issues are included in all aspects of the legislation and the guidelines which were eventually developed. In like fashion, the National Education Goals (Ministry of Education, 1989b) and the National Administration Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1989c), affectionately called the NEGs and the NAGs, have clauses that are applicable to all students, including of course those who are experiencing behavioural difficulties. In more direct fashion, the Special Education Guidelines (revised in 1999) contain principles which have implications for professionals when dealing with behavioural issues on more regular bases. Policy components include the discerning roles of the RTLB (Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour), the BST (Behaviour Support Teacher), and the allocation to schools of a Special Education Grant (SEG). With the introduction of these and allied resources to schools come the expectations for better outcomes as a consequence of interventions that are gained through access to professional development courses and opportunities for specialised qualifications. Higher up the chain – in terms of severity - is the government’s Severe Behaviour Initiative (SBI), an advocacy directed at assisting schools to respond to crises and includes the Behaviour Support Teams that are part of the Ministry of Education’s Special Education (SE) service (Macfarlane, 2007).

In 2009, the Ministry of Education released details of the rollout of a Positive Behaviour for Learning Action Plan in response to priorities agreed by a Taumata Whanonga - a behaviour summit attended by leading educationalists in the field. The Plan includes programmes and initiatives for parents and teachers, school-wide programmes, improved behaviour crisis support for schools and improved intensive behaviour programmes for individual students with severe behaviour problems. Also in 2009 the Advisory Group on Conduct Problems (AGCP) was commissioned by the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) to provide cross-departmental advice to government officials on the identification, treatment and management of childhood conduct problems. The group recently completed a report, Conduct Problems: Best Practice Report (Ministry of Social Development, 2009). This report sets the background for the development of policy relating to childhood conduct problems, goes on to look at programmes and interventions to manage these problems and then examines issues that arise in the translation of evidence into policy. Although published by MSD, the report has the authority to make recommendations which cross government departments.

At almost a corresponding time the Ministry of Education launched Ka Hikitia - Managing for Success: The Māori Education Strategy 2008-2012 (Ministry of Education, 2008). The Ministry is committed to realising Ka Hikitia’s strategic intent of ‘Māori enjoying education success’ (Ministry of Education, 2008, p.18) and the four broad Māori learner outcomes articulated in Ka Hikitia. The Strategy sets out the Ministry of Education’s strategic approach to achieving education success for and with Māori. Ka Hikitia focuses on areas of evidence that will be most effective to bring about change. Ka Hikitia concentrates on areas of evidence that will achieve a transformational shift in the performance of the education system and identifies five key levers that are demonstrated to bring about change. The Ka Hikitia document is both timely and well-meaning, but must consider that the thinkers and the actors in the education realm will be the ones charged with complementing the Ka Hikitia philosophies by offering a range of strategies that will enhance the likelihood of positive change for Māori learners and whānau.
How will this be done? Such questions are fair questions too – persist. What is it about diversity that makes the education mix more challenging? How can a national strategy such as Ka Hikitia inform practice? What are existing theories and discourses that might expand on current practices? How can these be implemented culturally responsibly?

In 2010 a group of academics and practitioners from four New Zealand universities and a leading Australian educator (Angus Macfarlane, Valerie Margrain and Margaret Thorsborne) commenced working on the authorship of a book, along with other contributors, for restorative practices in schools. This group considers restorative practices are responses to behaviour, within the philosophy of restorative justice, which are based upon social reciprocity and the universal human ethic of respect (Brantlinger, 2003). Although key elements of restorative practices include acknowledgement that misconduct violates people and relationships, and violations create obligations, this philosophy is discrete from retribution and punishment seeking rather to heal, put things right and restore harmony (Thorsborne & Vinegard, 2004; Zehr, 2004).

The direction and subsequent success of education delivery for youngsters experiencing behaviour difficulties in New Zealand will continue to be fully dependent upon the smooth and efficient transition from previously accepted to currently preferred practices (Moore et al., 1999). In practical terms this has required a clear shift of focus, from the traditional emphasis on exclusion and segregation (the functional limitations paradigm) to that of inclusion and participation (the ecological paradigm). In philosophical terms the process of “constructing inclusion” (Thomas & Loxley, 2001) has been contingent on a paradigm shift which has required educators to challenge previously-held beliefs and assumptions about how and where students’ learning and behaviour needs are best able to be addressed (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1995; Kauffman, 1993; Moore et al., 1999). The critical nature of this required paradigm shift must not be underestimated as prior beliefs are challenged.

THE “LAST RIGHTS”

Rights are closely related to citizenship, which in turn is related to who is included and who is excluded from decision-making. Rights are about freedom, self-esteem, respect, opportunities in life and the ability to take part in decisions which influence one’s own path through life. Rights include being able to access legal support and protection within the laws of our country. There are however, “moral rights” and “legal rights” and the distribution of these are in the hands of the community or society in the form of interactions and decisions made by those in power. The journey taken by young people experiencing behavioural difficulties in New Zealand has been traced (in this paper) through the colonial period and the first half of the 20th century with two World Wars impacting on family life and political ideals, through to a modern era. While our policies and legislation speak of the “rights” of young people and the discourses and actual reality of many lived lives do not sit comfortably together, progress is happening. The journey has taken us to the present, to now, where the discourse for many previously under-served groups is poised to take on a new and more promising meaning – provided that it is a discourse that is genuine about locating manaakitanga (an ethos of care) at the centre.

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**AUTHORS’ PROFILES**

**Professor Angus Macfarlane**

[Photo of Angus Macfarlane]

**Professor Angus Hikairo Macfarlane** is of the Te Arawa waka and its confederate tribes in the central north island of New Zealand. Internationally and locally he has presented papers on culturally responsive educational approaches for improving motivation and learning in diverse settings. In 2003 Dr Macfarlane was awarded the inaugural Research Fellowship by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research and in 2004 his landmark book, *Kia hiwa ra! Listen to culture – Māori students’ plea to educators*, was published. Dr Macfarlane is Professor of Māori Research at the University of Canterbury.

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**Dr Vivien Hendy**

[Photo of Vivien Hendy]

**Dr Vivien Hendy** [B.A. (VUW), M.Soc.Sci., D.Phil, (Waikato)] A NZ Registered Nurse and sociologist who has spent a lifetime working with, researching and teaching on issues related to health issues and disability. Educational and family sociology has provided interest areas in children’s rights, diverse cultures, inclusion in school and human development issues. Research interests have concentrated on various aspects of dependency of persons with disabilities within the family and community,
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Sonja Macfarlane is an experienced educationalist, whose passion for improving the social and educational outcomes for at-risk students has seen her move from a classroom teacher, to Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), to Special Education Advisor, through to her present position of Practice Leader: Services to Māori - a national position within the Ministry of Education, Special Education.

Sonja’s work primarily focuses on strengthening professional practice and service delivery to tamariki (children) and their whānau (family). This includes drawing from the best evidence available, so that educational practitioners are able to develop their own cultural competence and thereby enhance the social and educational outcomes that are achieved by learners who are Māori. She is also currently studying for her PhD in the area of culturally responsive pedagogy, and has a publications record focused on educational enhancement for Māori students.

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Messages from Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

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ABSTRACT
This article presents the results of an on-line questionnaire answered by 137 parents of children with ASD. The questionnaire sought parental opinion about what content and messages should be included in a DVD about ASD. Parents’ predominant messages were that: ASD is not an illness that can be cured; children with ASD think and act differently; people need to accept and accommodate these differences; include children with ASD and their families, and treat them with dignity and respect. Parents emphasised the importance of their children having friends, being included in everyday and special activities; being shown acceptance and kindness, and being safe in the school and community environment. They also described a variety of strategies that had proved successful with their children both at school and in the wider community. These strategies and parental concerns are strongly supported in the research literature.

Research

Keywords: ASD, Asperger syndrome, autism, parents, safety, teaching strategies

INTRODUCTION
In 2004 the author was commissioned by the New Zealand Ministry of Education to conduct a small research into Māori perspectives of ASD. Māori parents who were interviewed in this study mentioned the frustration they felt in repeatedly having to explain their child’s autism to others. One mother commented that it would be really helpful if there was a DVD explaining ASD, that she could share with family members, friends, community members, teachers and the child’s peers. Responding to this need, the author and two parents from the original research approached the Ministry of Education to suggest that such a DVD be produced. Ministry personnel supported the idea and agreed to provide scoping money if the parents were willing to take on the task of producing the DVD. They were asked to submit a detailed proposal for consideration which was subsequently accepted. In order to receive the scoping grant, this small group was required to register as a charitable trust – hence the PAI 4 ASD Trust (Promotion of Acceptance and Inclusion 4 ASD) was formed.

METHODOLOGY
The on-line questionnaire contained ten questions:

School Section
1. What information or activities would help teachers and peers to understand and appreciate children and young people with ASD in their schools?

2. Describe any experiences with your own child that have contributed to him/her feeling valued and accepted by school staff and/or their peers.

3. What three key messages about your child would you like school staff and peers to know.

Māori Section
4. Describe any Māori-specific situations that have been particularly difficult for you and your child with ASD. How have/could these situations be made easier?

5. In what ways would you like whānau members to support you and your child?
**Community Section**

6. Describe any everyday situations that have been particularly difficult for you and your child with ASD (eg getting a hair cut, going to the dentist, new neighbours etc) How have/could these situations been made easier?

7. What strategies have you found helpful when interacting with neighbours, community members, service personnel, medical and other professionals?

8. Do you have any other “handy hints” in respect to raising a child with ASD that you would like to pass on to other parents of children with ASD?

**General Section**

9. What three key messages about parenting a child with ASD would you like everyone to know?

10. What are your three top content priorities for educational material to promote awareness, acceptance and inclusion of children with ASD?

Letters explaining the questionnaire and requesting that it be advertised in newsletters and on websites were sent to 300 schools and to a variety of ASD specific and general disability organisations. One hundred and thirty seven people completed the on-line questionnaire and it was analysed by the author to ascertain what parents considered priority content for the DVD.

**RESULTS**

**Key messages and experiences**

Data was analysed and the predominant messages parents wanted others to know were that:

- ASD is not an illness that can be cured;
- children with ASD think and act differently;
- people need to accept and accommodate these differences;
- include and treat children with ASD and their families with dignity and respect.

Parents described many different positive experiences that contributed to their children feeling valued and accepted. Generally these centred around children being accepted as friends by their peers, having accommodations made to enable inclusion in everyday and special activities and being shown acceptance and kindness. They stressed the importance of positive relationships between their child and teacher, their child and peers and between home and school. A positive home-school partnership was seen as invaluable and professionals who took time to listen, support and affirm parents were greatly appreciated. As one parent noted:

> Autism is a disorder which affects the child’s and the family’s whole life. If the child has autism the whole family is affected hugely, right from the early days. It is a lifelong disorder and so it does not go away or get cured! So, support for the child and family is critical, and ongoing.

**Messages to teachers and other educational professionals**

Parents noted that professionals should take time to get to know their students with ASD. By talking to parents and watching and listening to children’s verbal and nonverbal communication, professionals can learn about their students’ different behaviours, strengths, likes and dislikes. This information can then be used to create an ongoing profile and contribute to individualised teaching programmes and appropriate services. Parents also noted that, generally, professionals need better training to gain an understanding of ASD and to learn effective identification, teaching and behaviour management strategies.

Teaching strategies that parents reported as being particularly effective with their children were:

- whole class strategies; academic support; seating and breaks; using strengths and interests; advance warnings; home-school communication; playtime strategies; rewarding effort; safety strategies; and teaching modelling.

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**Whole class strategies**

Whole class strategies included programmes, lessons, rules and routines applicable to all class members but especially helpful for children with ASD:

In my son’s school they have values education which includes information about values such as being a friend, respect, resilience, and basic playing nicely guidelines. This has been great for him as everyone is learning the information he needs to understand - the social stuff. The teacher uses role play, comic strips in words or pictures and stories. We have discussed using learning stories as a class activity also.

These [routines] make the whole class run more efficiently and more organised.

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1. This article reports on information arising from the school, community and general sections of the questionnaire. Because of word limit restrictions, Maori specific data will be reported in a separate article.

2. Professionals refer to a range of occupations including teachers, teacher aides, psychologists, special education advisers, education support workers, speech language therapists and so forth.
Academic support
This involved providing extra help and making accommodations where needed, for example, being able to use a keyboard if writing was difficult and providing reader/writers for tests where the intention was to measure the child’s content knowledge rather than their test-taking ability. Many parents believed that the teacher needed to give more one-to-one assistance to their child and not to rely on the teacher-aide to provide this:

The teacher-aide is to help the school or main teacher. They are not the main teacher.

Seating and breaks
Often the strategies parents described were simple but effective:

A teacher let my child have one desk situated within a group, and another put to one side - so that when he was overloaded he could remove himself from other children in a noisy classroom. This is vital for any child who has problems with sensory integration.

Giving jobs like messages to the office where the staff are lovely to my boy! Using these messages as a movement break or to act as an emotional break just by sending a yellow card or his message so that the office knows he’s having a break.

Using strengths and interests
Parents noted that teachers should identify student’s strengths and interests and draw on these to capture their attention and facilitate learning. Children’s strengths could also be used in other ways as the following examples demonstrate:

My child is really clever at dates - the teacher is always asking when things happened or whose birthday it is - showing off his talents.

My son (now an adult) has an excellent memory. The school identified his strength and used it to good advantage. If my son when aged 16-20 suffered any teasing by peers, these peers had to be challenged to a card game of memory with my son in front of his peers. Needless to say my son won every time. Consequently, my son suffered very little bullying and felt affirmed, valued, liked and accepted by school staff and peers. The school principal said to me that my son was very welcome in the school community and that his honesty was an asset to everyone.

Her teacher got children to write down one thing my daughter was good at and had this presented to her.

Advance warnings
These are important for children who find changes in routine or personnel particularly upsetting:

At my son’s school the class for the following year got to meet their new class and teacher and did some activities in the new room. This was great for removing some of the anxiety for the following year.

If possible Jason is introduced to relievers before they are needed so he knows them before they turn up.

Home-school communication - the diary
Parents expressed a wish to be kept fully and honestly informed about their children’s schoolwork, behaviour and socialisation. The home-school diary was frequently mentioned as an effective means of communication:

We have a set-up where our son carries a diary with him (preparing him for the future) and in this diary are messages from me, giving some insight to how he has been, what he has been doing (story writing prompts etc) and in return the school lets me know how his day has gone - the good and the bad and then I can give suggestions. Also in this diary is upcoming events so I can pre-warn him, this also includes known teacher absences. This reduces anxiety.

Playtime strategies
Playtime was reported as a particularly difficult time for children with ASD and parents emphasised the need for proactive strategies.

When Bernard is in a conflict situation he can’t use words but becomes physical. He needs peer support set up in the playground so that other children can help to talk for him.

Understanding the child’s personal needs e.g. don’t touch the child from behind. Have a profile of the child drawn up with the teacher’s/parent’s input plus a brief outline with photo for teachers on playground duty.

Rewarding effort
The power of positive reinforcement was acknowledged by parents. Some also noted that because of the challenges their children face, they had fewer opportunities to be rewarded for achievement than their classmates. Consequently, rewarding effort was mentioned as being particularly important:

My son really struggles to finish the cross-country race every year and always comes in last for his age group. This year he received a Principal’s Award for his “perseverance in the cross-country” - that made him feel really good, because his effort was rewarded.
Everything my 8 year-old does in school is several times harder than it is for most of the others. He overcomes huge obstacles (sensory, fine- and gross-motor and social) to achieve what they achieve easily. Please note in his “keep in touch” daily book that he “tried hard today” so that he feels appreciated for his efforts even though it is way off the normal standard of children.

**Safety strategies**

Many parents expressed a concern about their children being bullied at school. As one mother reported:

> Supervision tends to be minimal at breaks due to lack of funding. Bullying can be a huge issue and a person with a communication disorder isn’t going to come home and say they’re being bullied. Our son fell at school and broke his arm at 10 years old and it took five days to gradually get out the facts which were that he was chased by a group of boys with a praying mantis (he has an insect phobia).

Another parent confirmed this situation and added her suggestions to counteract bullying:

> Other kids will tease and be hurtful as your kid is different. Please let parents know and be aware this will happen. Give them a place to go if feeling scared or left out. And also have a support person to talk to.

A further parental concern was of their children leaving school and wandering into unsafe situations. One parent whose son was “a runner” purposely chose a school that was situated away from busy streets to lessen the opportunity of him being involved in a road accident. Some schools require children with ASD to wear brightly coloured, high visibility vests to enable teachers on duty to easily identify them. One parent commented on this practice. She was not happy that the vest singled her child out as being different from his peers but, because his safety was paramount, she accepted this situation. (The exact response was given by another parent in a study by Bevan-Brown et al., 2010.)

**Teacher modelling**

Parents believed that all adults who work with and care for children with ASD have important roles to play in modelling appropriate behaviours. As one parent explained:

> Be aware that your student with ASD needs high status in the classroom. If the teachers do not value the ASD student, the students will not either...Teachers model respect and allowances for differences.

**Messages to peers**

As mentioned previously, friendships were an area of major concern for parents. They desperately wanted their children to be accepted by peers, to have friends home to play, to be invited to birthday parties and so forth. However, they were well aware that their child’s behaviour often frightened potential friends away rather than attracting them. They believed that if classmates and their families had a greater understanding of ASD in general and their child in particular, there would be a greater likelihood of friendships developing:

> He has a ‘different not deficient’ way of thinking and acting.
> If you’re different - doesn’t mean you don’t deserve to have friends. Everyone needs friends.
> If he pinches/pulls hair he doesn’t understand that he is hurting people and doesn’t realise that he shouldn’t do it.
> She can be a very good, loyal friend to anyone who can look past the quirkiness (and that the quirkiness will be much less when she feels welcome and wanted).
> Don’t tell him to do dangerous, rude things because he will as he thinks that you said it and you are his friend.

Parents believed that teachers and teacher-aides should spread these messages and also encourage and nurture friendships between children with ASD and their peers.

Three mothers reported visiting their child’s class at the beginning of each year to tell new classmates about their child and about ASD. In each instance it was considered a very worthwhile exercise for everyone concerned. 3 4

**Messages to community members and other parents**

Parents reported a range of challenges they faced in community settings. As many children with ASD find new situations difficult to handle and are sensitive to being touched, visits to the dentist, doctor and hairdresser can be particularly stressful. Parents emphasised that careful “preparatory work” is essential. They suggested strategies such as visiting or phoning the service provider beforehand to explain their child’s particular behaviours.5 Asking for the first appointment of the day or afternoon was also recommended to avoid

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4 The “In my shoes” DVD has sections that can be used to explain ASD to both primary and secondary school students.
5 Now the “In my shoes” DVD is available it can be shared with the service provider prior to the child’s visit.
long waits in hot, crowded waiting rooms. Other preparatory strategies included role-playing the situation, looking at photos of the doctor, dentist or hairdresser and their premises, and writing social stories about the upcoming event.

Palmerston North Hospital provides a good model for others to follow. A parent panel is regularly invited to speak to groups of hospital staff to explain their children’s behaviours and make suggestions about how they can be accommodated. Over the years some excellent practices and relationships have evolved. For example, one mother explained that her son needs to be given a general anaesthetic for dental work. On such occasions she is invited to bring along her hairclippers and give her son a haircut while he is still anaesthetised.

Another activity that parents reported being particularly stressful is taking their children shopping. As one mother commented:

Don’t judge, but offer to help. Often you have a child packing a tantrum in a shop because they really want something and you have said no. Even though the child has been adequately prepared for what you are going to buy etc. mine currently gets angry and runs out of the shop telling me that I am every obscenity under the sun (behaviour that comes from Spongebob ... arghhh!!) Don’t ridicule me as I try to ignore this behaviour or tell me all he needs is a good smack etc, as I’m trying to keep it all together and not burst into tears. Offer to help or keep your thoughts to yourself.

It was suggested that, if possible, parents should choose less busy shopping times and go to the same cashier so that the child and cashier get to know each other. Other recommended strategies were the promise of a reward for appropriate behaviour, and toys and books to divert children’s attention when they become anxious. One mother explained how her son has “a bum bag that contains a selection of little cars and figurines that are the current favourite. When I notice him getting worked up I tell him to unzip his bag and that usually works really well.”

Safety in the community was a further parental concern, especially as many children with ASD are inclined to wander away from home. Government funding is available to fence properties but this is not always a viable option for parents. One mother explained how she had developed a profile of her son which included his photo and her contact details. This was distributed to selected neighbours who were asked to contact her if they ever noticed her son wandering alone in the neighbourhood.

Some final messages
While the interview questions were focused on positive experiences and successful strategies, unfortunately parents also reported a considerable number of negative attitudes and experiences they have had to contend with. The final messages reflect some of these frustrations:

It’s not contagious!!!! Parents need support, they need a break, they need not to have to battle agencies for funding etc.

Not having a ‘social’ sense is as much of a deficit as not having one of your other five senses.

“If you are low functioning they tend to underestimate your strengths and if you are high functioning they underestimate your weaknesses.” Can’t remember whose quote this is but I thought it summed it up well…Never underestimate their ability no matter what anyone else says.

See them for who they are rather than how you think they should be.

Teachers need to understand that they cannot “cure” … they wouldn’t think that a blind child would get their sight after being in their class a few weeks! Instead they have a wonderful opportunity to enhance the child’s skills.

When liaising with parents just remember if it’s hard for you to manage at school, imagine how challenging it is 24/7!

DISCUSSION
Teachers and other professionals readily accept that parents know their children best but often they are not as willing to admit that many parents are also very knowledgeable about their child’s particular disability and associated teaching approaches and strategies. As a result, parents’ opinions and suggestions are sometimes not given the credence they deserve and may even be discounted altogether. Having a child with a disability is a powerful motivator to find out as much as possible about the child’s condition and about ways they can be helped. Messages from the 137 parents who participated in this on-line questionnaire are well-aligned with ASD research findings. In fact, their key messages and experiences reported above are all supported in The New Zealand Autism Spectrum Disorder Guideline (Ministries of Health and Education, 2008) which is recognised as New Zealand’s most authoritative, comprehensive publication on ASD.

Parental feedback did not focus on theoretical approaches, models or programmes for children with ASD. Rather they reported on particular
strategies that had proved effective with their children and on broad underpinning philosophies and practices. Most of their suggestions are simply good teaching practice regardless of whether or not the child has ASD. While being good general teaching practices, these strategies also have particular relevance to children with ASD. This is supported in the ASD Guideline where, for example, there are recommendations and good practice points specifically focused on using strengths (3.2.4.2, 5.2.3); incorporating interests (3.1.11, 3.2.4.3, 5.2.3); providing academic supports to enhance learning (3.2.4.5); providing breaks and withdrawal to avert overload situations (3.3.3, 4.6.4); informing peers and supporting, encouraging and fostering social relationships (3.4.2, 5.2.8); preparing children for transitions (3.4.5); proactive crisis support planning (4.7.2) and the importance of safety strategies (5.3.3, 5.3.10, 5.3.11). Furthermore, recommendation 3.1.10 states that “Families should be part of the team involved in the development of priority goals and intervention plans” (p. 87).

The predominant concerns mentioned by parents in this study i.e. wanting their children to be happy, have friends and be safe in the school and community are concerns typical of all parents. However, because of the nature of ASD, they have added urgency for these parents. This contention is supported by research that shows children with ASD:

• are less likely to have friends (Carter, 2009; Myles & Simpson, 1998);
• are more likely to be bullied at school (Little, 2002; Montes & Halterman, 2007);
• are at high risk of internalising problems (Ghazuiddin, Weidmer-Mikhail & Ghazuiddin, 1998);
• have above-average mortality rates compared to their peers especially concerning death from ‘unnatural causes’, such as suicide and accidents (Mouridsen, Bronnum-Hansen, Rich & Isager, 2005);
• have a higher prevalence of anxiety and mood problems than children without ASD (Kim, Szatmari, Bryson, Streiner & Wilson, 2000);
• have comparatively high rates of depression (Ghazuiddin, Ghazuiddin & Greden, 2002);
• as adolescents and adults, are disproportionately represented amongst crime victims (Petersilia, 2001).

In conclusion, research shows that the concerns expressed by parents in this study are definitely warranted and the strategies suggested for helping their children are strongly evidence-based. Everyone will benefit from heeding these parents’ messages – it is a win-win situation.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE

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The Literacy Learning Progressions and the Reading and Writing Standards: Some Critical Issues

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ABSTRACT
The new Reading and Writing Standards for years 1-8 (2009) and the Literacy Learning Progressions (2010) are the two documents that have been published to inform the New Zealand national standards in literacy. An earlier draft Literacy Learning Progressions document was circulated nationwide in 2007 to allow for submissions from interested parties. While most of the original content from the draft Progressions was retained in the final version, there was one major change. The draft document included two earlier benchmark assessment checkpoints; one at school entry and one after six months. However, both these earlier checkpoints have been deleted from the final Progressions document. We discuss some of the likely reasons why these earlier benchmark checkpoints may have been deleted and the implications of these deletions.

Position paper

Keywords: Assessment, literacy, standards

INTRODUCTION
The two major documents underpinning the recent National Standards (in literacy) are the Reading and Writing Standards for Years 1-8 (Ministry of Education, 2009) and the Literacy Learning Progressions: Meeting the Reading and Writing Demands of the Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2010). Both these documents have many overlapping aspects including the use of end-of-year benchmark descriptor points for the first 10 years of school. The Reading and Writing Standards (Ministry of Education, 2009) “provide reference points or signposts that describe the achievement in reading, writing and mathematics” (p.4), and the Literacy Learning Progressions (Ministry of Education, 2010) “describes and illustrates the literacy-related knowledge, skills and attitudes that students need to draw on in order to meet the reading and writing demands of the New Zealand Curriculum from Year 1 to Year 10” (p.3). Furthermore the Progressions are designed to “alert teachers to what students need to know and be able to do, at specific points in their schooling, if they are to engage with the texts and tasks of the curriculum and make the expected progress” (p. 3).

With the thrust towards national standards, the implementation of these two documents has been promoted as a way to raise the literacy achievement levels of students who are struggling to learn to read. Any interventions and policies that help these particular students are laudable but we contend that the Standards and Progressions documents will likely have minimal impact on addressing the literacy achievement gap, particularly in the first years of school.

While the Standards appear to be nothing more than sets of descriptions of selected reading behaviours or exemplars of tasks that children at various ages may perform to illustrate general understanding of the text after having read particular passages, there is also an issue with the lack of focus on specific and relevant assessments in the first year of school. In this paper we discuss these issues further to elaborate our concerns.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF THE LITERACY LEARNING PROGRESIONS
A Draft Literacy Learning Progressions document was circulated throughout New Zealand in 2007 to allow for interested parties to make submissions on the contents. Following the submissions period (Borderfields Consulting, no date) the final Progressions document was published in 2010. The key difference between the draft and the final Progressions documents was that in the draft version, there were two benchmarks set within the first year, one at school entry and one after six months. The third benchmark was set at one year and then yearly thereafter. However, the final document has the first benchmark set at after one year at school and the two earlier benchmark assessment points have been deleted.

In the draft Progressions document, there was a fold-out page outlining some of the literacy knowledge that teachers might expect children to have on school entry. Such benchmark knowledge included: developing a memory for spoken and written text; being able to read both their name and some signs and logos from their environment, and being curious about aspects of rhythm, rhyme and alliteration (p. 8). Similarly, a set of
benchmarks at the six months stage included: knowing that sounds combine to form words; being able to identify all letters by name and being able to match some letters to sounds, and decode simple regular words by using word-solving strategies such as letter-sound relationships (p.9). In the final Progressions document published in 2010 there is no mention of either the school entry or the six months benchmark points.

While the omission of these two earlier benchmarks in the final document do not appear to be particularly significant, we argue that such an omission suggests that the Ministry of Education’s current policy in existence on early literacy teaching and assessment (prior to the Literacy Progressions and Standards) appears not to be negotiable and therefore, not in need of change. The inclusion of the earlier benchmarks would have gone some way to alerting teachers to some of the early literacy learning problems affecting very young children at the outset of their schooling. We discuss some of the possible reasons why the earlier benchmarks in the draft Progressions may have been taken out of the final document. We also discuss some of the likely impacts of these omissions.

SOME POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE OMISSION OF THE EARLIER SCHOOL ENTRY AND SIX MONTH BENCHMARKS FROM THE FINAL PROGRESSIONS DOCUMENT

There appear to be two possible reasons why the Ministry of Education has withdrawn the school entry and six month benchmarks from the final Literacy Progressions document. The first relates to what may be perceived to be the most opportune time to assess early literacy progress. The second possibility relates to what is perceived to be the relative importance of ‘constrained’ and ‘unconstrained’ skills within the development of early reading. Each of these will be discussed further.

THE OPPORTUNE TIME TO ASSESS EARLY LITERACY SKILLS

While most schools would use some form of ‘in-house’ literacy-related assessment practices for students on school entry, these assessments are likely to include only basic letter knowledge and perhaps some measure of oral language ability. Furthermore, the first formal (and in-depth) assessment of literacy-related skills for nearly all primary schools only appears at the end of the first year with the Observation Survey (Clay, 2002). This end-of-first-year assessment has long been regarded as the acceptable benchmark point for measuring literacy progress after one year at school. In support of having the first assessment point at the end of Year One Clay (2005) also recommends that this check (i.e., Observation Survey) be done at the end of the child’s first year of formal instruction because “the child should be given sufficient time to adjust to the school situation and a variety of opportunities to pay attention to literacy activities” (p. 12). In further support of this claim Clay also suggests that “a check around the child’s sixth birthday maximises the opportunities, minimises the pressure on the child, and does not leave the child for too long creating habits of responding that might handicap him and be hard to unlearn” (p. 12).

It is clear from these statements that Clay is concerned that the young child should be given a full year to acclimatise to the school setting before any literacy assessments should be administered. The final Progressions’ document with its absence of the two earlier benchmark checkpoints is reflective of Clay’s view on not advocating for assessments before 12 months of schooling.

The Draft Progressions document however, with its earlier benchmark alert points at both school entry and again at six months, was not reflective of Clay’s view and so these benchmark checkpoints appear to have been discarded in the final document. We suggest that this ‘wait-to-fail’ approach of not including earlier assessments before age 6 is likely to have detrimental effects on later learning, especially for those children who exhibit early literacy learning difficulties.

THE ISSUE OF ‘CONSTRAINED’ VERSUS ‘UNCONSTRAINED’ LITERACY SKILLS

Paris (2005) correctly argues that learning to read involves the development of both ‘constrained’ and ‘unconstrained’ skills and that the learning of ‘constrained’ skills usually takes less time than learning ‘unconstrained’ ones. According to Paris ‘constrained’ skills include letter knowledge and phonological awareness. These skills are classed as ‘constrained’ because they include a relatively small number of concepts and (according to Paris), are mastered by everyone. Vocabulary and comprehension skills on the other hand are less ‘constrained’ and continue to develop over a lifetime. In support of his claims Paris (2005) also argues that “constrained skills are distributed at different mastery levels between people only during the brief period of acquisition. They are mastered 100% by everyone eventually, whereas unconstrained skills are distributed between people on a norm-referenced continuum over a life-span” (p. 190).

A problem with this view is that Paris appears to downplay the importance or significance of the
'constrained' skills (e.g. alphabet knowledge, the sounds of written English and phonemic awareness) in relation to the foundational effects they have on the process of learning to read. Paris (2005) also states for example that “most children learn the alphabet between 4-7 years of age (or during the first year of formal schooling), and the time for an individual child to master the alphabet is usually less than two years” (p. 194). If this were true then why is it that nearly all adult dyslexics have very poor phonological awareness and awareness of many of the sounds of the alphabet? This statement suggests that Paris views the learning of the alphabet as, at most, a peripheral literacy skill that has little importance or relevance to the process of learning to read. He seems to ignore the overwhelming evidence in studies that demonstrate very strong correlations between early letter knowledge and phonological awareness knowledge and later reading progress.

The second criticism that Paris has with the early emphasis on ‘constrained’ skills is the issue of excessive assessment that may occur if too much importance is placed on them. In support of this issue Paris (2005) argues, for example, that “one danger is that excessive testing of constrained skills may lead to an over-emphasis on these skills to the exclusion of unconstrained skills such as vocabulary and comprehension” (p. 200). This concern was also expressed in a submission made about the draft Literacy Learning Progressions by a Reading Recovery teacher. This teacher stated that “there is a potential that the progressions, if viewed as benchmarks, will then be used as assessments in themselves and act as a prescription for teaching discrete sets of knowledge, for example high frequency words” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 15).

Paris (2005) also cautions “that policy makers and the public may equate success on constrained skills with reading proficiency. This would create a minimum competency approach to reading assessment that does not adequately assess children’s emerging use and control of literacy” (p. 200). These views seem to be echoed by several respondents whose submissions are included in the Feedback Report on the Draft Progressions (Borderfields Consulting, no date). In a subsection in this report titled “The risks with itemising knowledge and skills” (p. 14) there were also several other respondents who commented on the likely negative implications that would arise from placing a heavy focus on the assessment of early literacy skills out of context.

In summary, the overly cautious and ill founded views about the lack of importance of constrained skills held by Paris (and others) suggest the following: constrained skills have only limited importance over a limited timeframe; have a limited range of influence on reading achievement; will be learnt by everyone in a relatively short timeframe, and, will create a minimum competency approach to literacy assessment. Such views represent a misguided set of assumptions that are in opposition to the very large body of international research implicating a lack of basic (constrained) component skills as being the major cause of later literacy difficulties.

We mention Paris (2005) at length here because he has been referenced in both the final Progressions and Standards documents and we suggest that his views have had a strong influence on the final Progressions and Standards documents. We argue that the inclusion of the Paris (2005) reference has been used to support the Ministry of Education’s decision to discard the earlier benchmarks which, by definition, had included reference to ‘constrained’ skills such as the importance of alphabet and phonological knowledge.

CONCLUSIONS
We began with a brief discussion on the evolution of the Reading and Writing Standards and the Literacy Learning Progressions documents. We have then attempted to explain why we think that the final versions of these documents do not include the earlier school entry and six month benchmarks, but rather, have retained the status quo of what has been in operation in schools even prior to the introduction of these two documents with regard to literacy assessments within the first year of school. We suspect that the current Ministry of Education policies relating to early literacy development and assessment have been retained in the documents on the basis of two key influences. The first relates to the incorrect assumptions and claims made about the relative importance of ‘constrained’ skills put forward by Paris (2005). These include the claim that learning such skills as alphabetic knowledge are not particularly significant because these skills are likely to be learnt by everyone in a relatively short time-frame. A second false claim made by Paris is that an over-emphasis on the teaching of these ‘constrained’ skills is likely to also lead to an over-emphasis on their assessment.

The second influence that we suspect has encouraged the Ministry to abandon the two earlier assessment benchmarks that appeared in the Draft Progressions but deleted from the final document, is based on the claim made by Clay (2005) that the first literacy assessment point should not be made before the child has attended school for one year. Because the Progressions and
Standards documents do not advocate any literacy assessment benchmarks before the end of one year, and furthermore, because no phonological-based assessments are emphasised in the benchmarks, also suggests that the Ministry is satisfied with promoting the status quo that currently advocates for the Observation Survey (six year net) as being the most relevant assessment at this stage.

We do not therefore see that the Progressions or Standards documents will encourage teachers to work towards addressing the widening literacy achievement gap. The documents describe sets of comprehension-enhancing strategies that students should be able to do at a particular stage but there is little emphasis on the development of the important underpinning component skills that (if not present) will prevent these later ‘end-product’ skills, such as comprehension and vocabulary, from developing. But most importantly, these documents do not encourage teachers to undertake early assessments within the first year of school. Furthermore, even the Observation Survey (Clay, 2002) administered when children turn six, has no phonological awareness components. Because teachers have no tools to assess these important ‘constrained’ skills in the first year and because the Ministry of Education appears not to accept their importance, they (i.e. teachers) are likely to be unaware of the learning needs of their at-risk students.

While we were hopeful that the 2007 Draft Progressions with its additional emphasis on literacy benchmarks at school entry, and again at six months, would have gone some way in alerting teachers to the development of (or lack of) ‘constrained’ skills including early phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge and sight words, we were disappointed to note that these two earlier benchmarks had been deleted from the final document. We argue that the current ‘wait-to-fail’ approach as evidenced in the first benchmark being after one year of school (as promoted by Clay, 2005) combined with the incorrect claims about the unimportance of ‘constrained’ skills and their role in literacy development, (as evidenced by the lack of mention of early literacy assessment tools) appear to have influenced the Ministry’s decision to retain the status quo with regards to the early assessment and teaching of literacy in the first year of school. If we are serious about closing the literacy achievement gap it makes sense to focus on both the early assessment and teaching of these skills at the outset. The Progressions and Standards documents seem to overlook this fundamental point.

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A Model of Practice in Special Education: Dynamic Ecological Analysis

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ABSTRACT
Dynamic Ecological Analysis (DEA) is a model of practice which increases a teams’ efficacy by enabling the development of more effective interventions through collaboration and collective reflection. This process has proved to be useful in: a) clarifying thinking and problem-solving, b) transferring knowledge and thinking to significant parties, and c) encouraging critical self-reflective practice and growth within a team of practitioners in the field of special education. Key factors influencing the viability of this process in a team are the diversity of the team, group dynamics and the role of the facilitator/presenter. Through transformative learning, DEA enables practitioners to continually enhance the standard of practice which in turn leads to improved outcomes for learners.

Practice paper
Keywords: Collaboration, dynamic, ecological assessment, special education, transformative learning

INTRODUCTION
Practitioners of special education in New Zealand work with children, their teachers and the school communities in an ever-increasingly complex environment. Many students are affected by conditions which are multi-dimensional, interwoven with multiple issues, and influenced by different persons, all of which creates a tangled, multi-layered web. Taking an ecological approach, it can be very difficult to unpack the relevant dimensions and develop an intervention which addresses the underlying issue. In addition to this, introduce the diverse agencies and professionals, all approaching the situation with different sets of service criteria, practices, philosophies of working and professional standards, and it is no wonder we sometimes reach a situation marked by confusion, frustration and despair.

As part of ongoing professional development and training, the Kelston Intervention Team uses a model of practice, which we call Dynamic Ecological Analysis (DEA) to enhance our practice and increase our effectiveness in working with the referrals we receive. The team has found that by using this model, we are able to develop more effective interventions by a) clarifying thinking and problem solving b) transferring knowledge and thinking to all significant parties and collaboratively construct an inclusive plan and c) encourage critical reflective practice within the team which in turn allows for professional reflection and growth. Diagram 1 illustrates this process.

Diagram 1: Dynamic Ecological Analysis

The DEA Model
The term Dynamic Ecological Analysis may sound esoteric but it is actually quite simple. The process is ‘dynamic’ because the analysis is not a permanent construct. New information may surface at a later date. Hypothesis testing may identify inaccurate thinking. New, relevant data will obviously impact on the thinking and analysis. Furthermore, the process is dynamic because the analysis itself is generative, leading to possibilities for deeper understandings and fresh perspectives as the complexities are untangled. More importantly, this process does not end upon completion of the team session.

It is ‘ecological’ because through identifying and unravelling the components of the case, the discussion expands to cover ever-increasing circles of influence (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), until the team
is satisfied that all the bases have been covered. If more information is required to achieve this, this is then added to the data-gathering established at the beginning of each referral. Similarly, new hypotheses may be formed in the discussion, possibly requiring further testing through data collection and analysis.

THE ANALYSIS

Problem Solving
At a scheduled meeting, one team member presents a case referral which is currently active. Their role is that of ‘presenter’ or person with the most information regarding the situation. Another team member facilitates the meeting. Their role is to write notes and plot a visual analysis of the various dimensions of the case as it is being presented. The facilitator and other team members ask relevant questions in order to identify the different components of the referral as well as how these components relate to each other.

The purpose of this process is to break down the complexities of a situation in order to understand and identify key issues individually and in relation to each other. Discussion is centred around identifying underlying issues and hypothesis testing. Team members are encouraged to give a rationale for their contributions or to ask questions which help clarify thinking. It is important that the discussion is focused on understanding the nature and interactions of the components of the situation (Annan, 2005) rather than coming up with a solution, especially at the initial stage. This is to avoid the session becoming a brainstorm of ‘what else could be tried’. Possible interventions will emerge once there is clarity about the situation and acknowledgement of what is within our realm of influence.

As the clarification process continues, information is collated and organised into components such as family background, social issues, emotional wellbeing, learning issues and behaviour etc. But it is not necessarily limited to nor confined by these components. It is a flexible process and no one case will be the same as another. These categories are determined by the nature of the information shared and discussed.

At an unpredictable point in the process, clarity emerges with deeper understanding of the complex interrelationships between the component categories. Recognition of incomplete information and need for further investigation may lead to seeking expertise and support in a particular area. These emerging understandings and the processes of DEA can be better understood through a concept called ‘transformative learning theory’ (Kitchenham, 2008; Mezirow, 1991, 2000). This will be discussed in more depth later.

The end result of this process is a visual diagram which is able to link the various components of the case referral. The links do not imply a causal relationship but it does suggest influence and inter-dependence (Annan, 2005). To determine the strength and quality of the links, access to research and theoretical knowledge of the components are essential. To develop this visual diagram, each component is supported by relevant data collected and collated from several sources to “triangulate” its reliability. The links are then evaluated to consider whether the visual representation, taken as a whole, is able to help clarify and explain why the presenting issues are of concern.

Transformative Learning Theory
Within transformative learning theory, a framework of describe, inform, confront, and reconstruct breaks the learning process into component phases and creates a moment for learning. During the ‘describe phase’ the presenter outlines what is currently known. As the ‘presenter’ describes the situation, they subtly reveal the beliefs, values and pedagogies which inform their practice. The ‘inform phase’ of transformative learning theory suggests that these are identified and acknowledged. The ‘confront’ phase is when the presenter identifies their own unconscious assumptions and unspoken voice. Within DEA this phase is most powerful as the diversity of the team brings different perspectives to the process. These different perspectives combine with a wealth of experience and understanding of research and theoretical literature. During this phase, deeper understanding emerges and new directions unfold as team members confront their own thinking using the perspectives and insights of others. The ‘reconstruction phase’ involves the rebuilding of understanding, including new insights and prepares the presenter for the process of collaborative problem-solving and transfer of understanding to the school and family environments and interagency groups.

Within DEA this transformative learning process is not sequential but dynamic, with each phase merging while thinking evolves. Team members within a DEA cycle feel empowered in terms of their understanding of the case being reviewed and in terms of their own practice. Through the DEA process and reflective practices, team members refine or elaborate on their current understandings, learn new ways of viewing a situation, and open up possibilities for assimilating different ways of approaching a situation and transformation of current practices (Kitchenham, 2008; Mezirow, 1991, 2000). The process is transformative.
Transfer

The second arm of the DEA model is a process of transference. The thinking is now transferred to significant others involved in the referral. This model of practice needs to be fluid, collaborative and open (Thomson, 2004). By including professionals from other agencies in our team sessions, we aim to be transparent and inclusive.

The need to transfer this thinking into the field is a critical part of the DEA model because in many ways this is where thinking is validated (or not). Presenting the thinking to significant others involved with a student makes the process more robust and empowering. This process is very much collaborative and the practitioner presents the analysis and thinking with the aim to increase understanding. In order to achieve this, critical input and dialogue is encouraged around the presenting framework. This is not the case of an “expert” presenting their “findings” but rather a summary of a collective process of information gathering, which has been collated and sorted for clarity and cohesiveness. During this collaborative process, there is an agreement on what the vital issues are and then the next step is to address these with the range of available agencies and their services.

Centering the discussion with significant others around the analytical framework does two things. Firstly, it focuses everyone’s thinking around the vital, underlying issues and facilitates problem-solving. This prevents a particular agency from unnecessarily dominating (or withdrawing from) the intervention plan. Secondly, as in the original team session, discussions are not personal and blame is not attributed. This eliminates defensive, destructive dialogue and encourages participation.

Professional Growth

The third arm of the DEA model is that of professional growth. Professional growth is a process which necessitates the critical examination and reflection of one’s practice. It is generally agreed that someone needs to be willing and prepared to change in order to channel this growth but the difficulty is in how to facilitate this. We often do not know what we do not know.

Reflective, professional growth comes from critically analysing one’s own practice and justifying our professional knowledge. The constructive process of identifying where improvement is needed, and learning about what skills are required, is the first step in improving performance.

The DEA model provides a setting whereby professional decisions and actions (pedagogy) are critically examined in a supportive and constructive environment. Because the process is not personalised, it removes the feeling that one is being scrutinised. When we feel professionally safe, it enables us to expose and render ourselves vulnerable. Only in this state of vulnerability can we be truly reflective.

The collaborative nature of DEA allows for the development of distributed and individual knowledge through interaction between members of varying levels of expertise and experience. If the team is to understand each others’ perspectives and develop shared goals, it is important that constructive and focused dialogue takes place, through exploring the assumptions participants bring to the table and by clarifying and critically examining the views of others. Annan, Bowler, Mentis & Phillipson, (2008) call this creating a balance between commonality and diversity.

DEA allows for a comprehensive understanding of professional action to take place. This develops informed practice and lays the groundwork for reflection which in turn results in self-understanding. Decisions are made with deliberation rather than because ‘that’s how we’ve always done it before’ or a ‘quick fix’ reaction. Constructive dialogue (Annan et al., 2008) allows for participants to listen to each other, understand their viewpoints, justify, defend and validate concerns, clarify their own view of the dimensions of the case, discover meanings that might otherwise be missed and develop a new frame of reference. This brings clarity to the situation and provides a framework to enable an integration of newfound information with existing knowledge which promotes an evaluation of different choices and alternatives.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

The viability and effectiveness of DEA is dependent on a) the team of persons involved, b) the role of facilitator and team member presenting the case referral and c) the group dynamics of the meetings, e.g. group size, frequency of meetings.

The aim of DEA in a team discussion is to develop clarity and problem solve through dialogue among participants with diverse points of view, knowledge and expertise. This requires careful facilitation. Diversity adds value to the process in providing a range of experiences, professional practice, philosophical background, personalities, and cultural perspectives.
DEA works best within a Community of Practice model (Wenger, 1998). The DEA model works as a transformative learning process because of the nature of the team. Four key characteristics contribute to the community of practice environment. Firstly, a disposition of openness has been carefully nurtured within the team so that all members feel safe in contributing ideas, sharing successes and seeking support for difficulties and confusions. Secondly, each team member feels valued and secure in their model of practice. Because members feel respected they are willing to share their unique perspectives and experiences knowing that diverse opinions are encouraged and welcome. Thirdly, the team has purposefully fostered the diverse strengths of the members and an inclusiveness of different cultures, philosophies and approaches to practice. Fourthly, the team shares similar goals for effective practices. There are common values for special education and a shared desire for partnership in professional practice. These four characteristics of the team enable individuals participating in DEA to engage in critical reflective practice to identify and examine their hidden assumptions and reshape their professional practice.

The process of examining each component of the framework necessitates colleagues to question, in order to obtain and clarify the information required. However, it is important to note here that whilst a colleague may question why a decision was made or action taken, once an answer is given, and clarified, it is accepted. The process is not an interrogation or an appraisal of professional practice, it is about understanding. Therefore, it is important that in this particular forum there is no criticism or personal opinion regarding professional practice. This would undermine the constructive process. When things become personal we feel threatened and we either withdraw or become defensive. Either way, we stop listening.

The facilitator takes responsibility to guide the effective use of DEA. The success of the thinking and analysis is determined by the skill and application of the facilitator. This emphasis takes the ‘pressure’ off the key team member presenting the details of the case and allows them to focus on describing the details and providing information without worrying about sequence, order or priority. Several frameworks are available to unpack the relevant layers e.g. ecological approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), Te Wheke (Pere, 2010, cited in New Zealand Government, 2010), Te Whare Tapa Wha (Drurie, 2010, cited in New Zealand Government, 2010). Whatever approach is taken, the framework and analysis must relate to the original presenting issues.

Each component has to be validated by relevant multi-source data. The process continues until a visual diagram covering all the main components is developed by the team. This collaborative effort brings participants together to a common understanding and thinking.

For any team to collaborate effectively there needs to be a clear understanding of what the group is trying to achieve and commonly-understood norms/rules of conduct. Members need to feel they are respected, have a voice and that their input is valued. Acknowledgement of the group dynamics (commonalities and diversity) needs to underpin the framework so that this is possible (Annan et al., 2008).

Another factor for a successful DEA is the number of people in the discussion. Too many people, and members lose their voice; too few and you lose the diversity which is key to the strength. Members need to be chosen for their vested interest in the case or for the knowledge, experience and expertise which they can contribute. There is not really an ideal number of participants as this will vary depending on the complexity of the case and the number of agencies involved. In our team, meetings are regularly held with between five and 11 team members.

The dynamic nature of DEA means that changes in the group can occur at any time in the case and also acknowledges the constantly changing dimensions. It is a living process which changes as new information comes to light. Also, group participants may come and go. New participants bring fresh knowledge and viewpoints, and challenge established practices while established core members of the team protect the integrity of the practice and the most fundamental sets of knowledge (Annan et al, 2008). Inexperienced team members contribute at the periphery and are scaffolded until they are familiar with the process.

With practice, teams will improve in their use of the DEA and this will lead to better outcomes for students, families, teachers and schools.

CONCLUSION

The Dynamic Ecological Analysis, as outlined in this report, is one model of practice which the Kelston Intervention Team uses to clarify thinking and enhance our effectiveness as practitioners in special education. The benefit of this exercise for practitioners of special education ultimately lies in the identification of more effective interventions through a thorough analysis and understanding of the presenting situation. Intervention plans are designed not only collaboratively with those
working with the student concerned, but are underpinned by dynamic, rigorous, ecological analysis.

Subsequent, but no less valuable, benefits come in the form of the professional growth which ensues as a result of the critical thinking, knowledge transfer and reflection that the process encourages. This allows us as the Kelston Intervention Team to continually improve on the standard and quality of our practice and ultimately effect changed learning outcomes for students with learning and behavioural needs in our schools.

REFERENCES

AUTHORS’ PROFILES

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Barbara Hannant works as a Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour for the Kelston Intervention Team. Her extensive teaching background includes both mainstream and special education and ranges across primary, intermediate and secondary sectors. Barbara is currently completing her Masters in Education and utilises Dynamic Ecological Analysis as a framework for her practice.

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Dr Eng Leong Lim is an RTLB and psychologist in the Kelston cluster, Auckland. He has been in the field of education for over twenty years as a teacher and has been with the RTLB service since the beginning of the programme. He has since completed a PhD with research on numeracy. Other areas of interests include systemic work, supervision and culture.

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Narratives of Young Gifted Children

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ABSTRACT
This article shares narratives, or learning-informed stories, of young gifted learners. The purpose of the article is to document exceptionalities of the youngest gifted learners, supporting advocacy, and to demonstrate the merit of narrative approaches to assessment. Narrative assessment, including learning stories, is particularly useful for supporting a multi-categorical concept of giftedness, and can be linked to other assessment and curriculum initiatives. Narrative assessment provides a practical approach for teachers, allowing them to be visible and engaged in assessment across the curriculum. This article begins with background to giftedness and description of learning stories. The methodology of the study is reported, followed by examples of narratives of young gifted children. The article then concludes with a discussion of curriculum connections.

Practice paper

Keywords: Gifted, learning stories, narrative assessment

BACKGROUND
Francoys Gagne (1995) affirms that giftedness can be displayed at a young age, and that in time, through volition and environment, talent may develop. Government and Ministry of Education initiatives in New Zealand for gifted and talented education have continued to marginalise the early childhood education sector. The most recent government-funded professional development contract (Roy, 2010) continues this trend by explicitly excluding provision to teachers in the early childhood education sector, although there most certainly are gifted children under the age of five years.

LEARNING STORIES

Learning stories vary enormously in presentation, tone, style and format. Some key elements include: the narrative and photographs; analysis of the significance of the narrative; consideration of ‘where to next’ or possible pathways for learning. Learning stories may bring to the fore curriculum achievement areas and goals, dispositions or key competencies, and aspects of effective pedagogy. Learning stories are most effective when they are connected to previous learning experiences and inform future teaching and learning, rather than being static snapshots.

Learning stories:
- make learning visible
- support teachers to notice, recognise and respond to learning and learners
- value and foster the learner’s progress and achievement
- include multiple voices (parent, child and peer)
- recognise that learning is socially mediated and co-constructed
- do not compare students to others, or to standards (Ministry of Education, 2004).

A key difference between learning stories as an ipsative assessment approach, and norm-referenced approaches, is that learning stories are learner-centred rather than standards-centred; and comparisons are focused on the individual learner across time and context rather than between individuals. Another key point is that the teacher is part of the narrative, embedded in the assessment through interaction with the learner, rather than merely administering a formal assessment. Learning stories can be written by
parents, teachers, teacher-aides, RTLB, students themselves, and a range of support personnel. The teacher, however, plays a key role in connecting the learning stories to curriculum planning.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study is to collect and share formal or informal stories of exceptionality, and the learning of exceptional young learners. The narratives shared in this article are authentic, from teachers or parents of children enrolled in either of two early childhood services, drawn from research with four early childhood services during 2009 and 2010. These early childhood services were recruited because of interest amongst staff in young gifted children, and because the staff had expertise in writing learning stories. The researcher worked with teachers to gather learning stories suggested by staff as exemplifying characteristics of giftedness, particular learning dispositions, or ‘wow’ moments. In some centres, on request, the researcher provided some professional development around concepts of giftedness or the writing of learning story narratives.

The study has full ethics approval through the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. Consent for the use of the narratives, including images, has been provided from both parents and teachers. All of the names used in this article are pseudonyms.

NARRATIVES

Narratives are stories; people have always told stories amongst each other. Narratives about learning share information about the learner, the learning experience, social values and expectations. Narratives do not claim to be impartial or statistically reliable, and subjectivity should not be seen as a limitation. Narrative assessment allows teachers to be active within assessment; their voice, values and context of the story-teller are important parts of understanding the learner and learning.

Documenting gifted behaviour

Several characteristics of young gifted children were identified within the learning stories as a result of reflective analysis of narratives and learning stories, and discussion with the teachers who wrote them. The characteristics were identified either because they occurred frequently, were powerful, or connected to gifted education literature. The characteristics include: questioning; having advanced knowledge; expressing creativity; having particular skills, for example early literacy; memorisation; inquiry; intense observation, and naturalistic intelligence (Gardner, 1993).

Questioning

Sam’s mother documented several narratives about the questioning of Sam, aged 3:09. Of course young children are notorious for their questioning nature (Why? Why?), however Sam’s questions were focussed on a specific area of interest: “How do trees get water?” “Why are trees bushy?” “Why are some trees deciduous?” “Why is ‘photosynthesis’ such a long word?”

His mother reports: “I asked Sam: ‘Why did you ask me about trees?’ and he said, ‘Because I didn’t know about that, and I wanted to know.’” Sam’s mother found the book I Wonder Why Trees Have Leaves at his early childhood education service, and showed it to Sam. As he read (without help) “his eyes lit up as he realised this book would give him some answers.”

Demonstrating knowledge

Children at an early childhood education session were given toothpicks and marshmallows, and a small demonstration on how to create multi-sided 3-dimensional shapes. Children created pyramids, prisms, cubes, pentagons and octagons, then attempted dodecahedrons and other shapes. On the way home in the car, Xavier (4:08) dismantled his shapes and produced a replica of the solar system with his toothpicks and marshmallows, including (correctly) the major moons for each planet. A few weeks later he announced that he was going to build the solar system again, but with the space probes/man-made satellites that belonged to the planets, as he’d already done the moons before. Figure 1 provides a picture of Xavier’s second solar system construction; his explanation is below.

This is a picture of the planets with man-made satellites and some moons. If you start on the right hand side and work your way over to the left, we start with the sun, then Mercury, then Venus – the marshmallow out of those represents Mariner 10, the first space probe to do flybys of the planets. Next the one with heaps out of it is earth, but there wasn’t room to put any more although there are heaps of satellites flying around the earth, but the white one on its own is the moon. Next is Mars and Phobos and Demios and Space Probe Pathfinder, then Jupiter with its four main moons and Voyager, then Saturn with the Saturn Cassini and Voyager 2, then Uranus and Neptune with Voyager 2, and Pluto with Charon. When the model was made Voyager 2 hadn’t reached Pluto yet, but it has now.
Creativity

One generic view of creativity is application of knowledge in new and novel ways. Xavier (4:08) applied his knowledge about space in creative ways through drama. In one early childhood education service other children did not want to join in with a game he created about planets, but he was able to involve others in a specific childrens’ drama group. The following commentary describes his play:

There are 10 people in the play, one for each planet, and I’m including Pluto, even though it’s a dwarf planet. One person has to be the sun, but they don’t get to move, because the other people will be orbiting around them. Everybody in the play will be wearing hula hoops of different colours, the same as the planets, so the people not in the play will know which planet is which and we will sing my planet’s song.

This narrative also shows Xavier’s awareness of others: both the participants in the play and the audience.

Skill: Precocious reading

Many young gifted children are early readers, and others master a range of different skills precociously. Significant aspects of precocity are early onset of competency and mastery without having been explicitly taught. In a doctoral study (Margrain, 2005), 11 precocious readers were studied, aged between 4:01 to 4:10, who had begun to read around the age of three years. Reading fluency was up to 12/13 years, accuracy was 7-10 years, and comprehension was consistently several years ahead of chronological age. None of these early readers had been explicitly taught to read by parents or teachers (Margrain, 2005). While reading is an individual skill achievement, narratives can show social interaction and application of the skill. Hannah’s mother wrote:

Hannah loves her books and reading to others; sometimes she will read to the babies while they are playing. She [also] likes to spend quiet time by herself reading a book and sometimes she asks her teachers if she can read their special books.

Memorisation

The following narrative, written to Jeremy (2:07) by his mother, and included as documentation of learning in his early childhood education assessment portfolio, illustrates an example of his recall and memorisation:

One night at bedtime you correctly recalled a series of nine objects from your Gymbaroo classes: car, aeroplane, bus, rocket, train, boat, helicopter, scooter, toes. We were amazed you could do this, because there had been one new word each week for nine weeks; we had missed some classes and no-one had told you the words in order.

Inquiry

Exploration is a specific strand of the early childhood curriculum Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996). However, young gifted learners appear to engage in more systematic inquiry, with more intense observation and insightful discovery. While ‘transformers’ may, for many children and adults, represent a recent movie or popular toy, to other children in the study it represented electrical transformers, for example on power lines. For these children, the opportunity to explore and investigate with electrical construction kits supported this particular interest.

Jeremy’s mother narrated an incident illustrating his close observation and reflective thinking:

One morning Jeremy came to us with great excitement and announced. “Hey, my clock has a dot missing. Last night it said ‘dot-seven-dot-dot-zero-zero’, and now the dot has gone to someone else’s clock where it’s night-time.” He knew there was a dot on his digital display to depict “pm” and that this vanished in the morning. He was relating the missing dot’s whereabouts to his knowledge that when it is daytime in our country it is night-time in other countries on the other side of the world.

In this narrative the parent not only told Jeremy’s story, there was also interpretation and analysis.

Continuity and connectedness

Searching across narratives for connectedness and continuity of interest (Carr, 2004), learning schema, dispositions (Carr, 2001) or key competencies (Ministry of Education, 2007) enables teachers
to ensure that narrative assessment is more than anecdotal scrapbooking. Documenting evidence across time can assist teachers to consider the depth and breadth of children’s strengths and interests.

The images below record a narrative of Daniel’s intense close observation; the images illustrate continuity over time of his use of tools and artefacts to enrich his scrutiny of his world. The images include him having crawled inside a barrel in order to take a photograph through a small hole in the barrel, intently examining a print-out of his own photos, using a magnifying glass and a viewfinder.

Jamie’s portfolio records continuity in his dramatic play. In his drama he was a horse called Henry. He maintained play-acting of this role for many months, then wrote a book titled A Horse Called Henry, shared it with the class, and with relatives overseas via email. Is this necessarily giftedness? Perhaps most children have moments where they share things with confidence. However, for Jamie, the point is his intensity of enacting his drama, and sustaining it for a significant period of time.

Narrative assessment ensured this was documented and dated, giving evidence of continuity.

Anyone who was to look at Charlotte’s portfolio would see narrative after narrative recording her passion for flowers and other plants. Stories of growing, watering, rescuing and naming plants abound. Clothing and art are adorned with flowers across years. There is even a narrative describing how when she was a baby she gestured to be held out over flowers. The frequency, intensity and continuity over several years indicate that Charlotte has a strong passion and naturalistic intelligence.

Photos reproduced with parent and teacher permission.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

The early childhood curriculum, Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 2006) has always woven principles (empowerment, holistic development, family and community, and relationships) and strands (belonging, well-being, communication, exploration, and contribution) rather than skills and achievement levels. The recently revised New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007)
demonstrates a shift in the school curriculum, away from a singular focus on essential learning areas (such as English, Maths and Science), and toward more holistic approaches (including values, and key competencies such as relating to others and belonging). Teachers in the school sector increasingly consider socio-cultural interactions, student self-reflection, making learning visible through portfolios and explicit learning intentions, and re-visiting learning. Learning stories provide a useful approach within which dispositions for learning (Carr, 2001) and key competencies (Ministry of Education, 2007) can be documented. Although learning stories are most well-known in early childhood education, narrative assessment is also evident in schools in a range of ways, such as interviews, portfolios, self- and peer-assessment (Margrain & Clements, 2007).

Both Te Whāriki and The New Zealand Curriculum have broad, holistic visions, and aim to ensure confident, connected, lifelong learners. Using learning stories across both sectors can enhance connectedness across sectors, benefitting students and teachers. Connections have been acknowledged with research on transition across early childhood and school settings using learning stories as a common assessment tool, in both New Zealand (Carr, 2001; Ministry of Education, 2004/2005/2007), and internationally (EASE Group, 2010).

In 2009, the Ministry of Education released the Narrative Assessment: A guide for teachers and exemplars of learning stories for learners with special education needs (Ministry of Education, 2009 - see www.inclusive.org.nz/throughdifferenteyes). The guide to narrative assessment outlines how to: use learning stories in classroom settings; begin to write learning stories, and analyse learning stories to illustrate learning over time. The learning story exemplars were written by teachers in primary and secondary schools, including regular classroom teachers who wrote learning stories for all children in their classrooms as a regular assessment practice. This special education initiative has the potential to be equally powerful for gifted learners. For example, in special education a learner may work within Level One of the curriculum for up to 16 years; learning stories can enable the teacher to document progress within a level rather than only between levels. A learning story may equally enable a teacher to document depth and breadth within a level for a gifted learner. Finding synergies between special education, gifted education, and education for all learners, rather than competing for resources, has the most likely potential for success. Nevertheless, gifted learners are particularly vulnerable as teachers have limited experience of noticing, recognising and responding to their specific learning abilities (Porter, 2005). These learners are, however, as deserving of all children in having their competencies documented and informing planning.

The Ministry of Education advocates that a teacher considers a range of assessment information when making overall teacher judgements about learners (Harwood, 2010). Learning stories can usefully contribute to that professional reflection on student learning. This is particularly important for aspects of the curriculum for which few other assessment methods are available. How else might Charlotte’s naturalistic intelligence, Daniel’s observational skills or Xavier’s creativity be documented? A multi-categorical approach to giftedness values a range of gifts, including musical, artistic, leadership and cultural. Therefore, it is important that we challenge ourselves to look beyond traditional academic assessment approaches such as pen and paper tests.

CONCLUSION

The narratives shared in this presentation affirm that children under the age of five years can certainly be gifted, and we need to find ways to record their competencies. Narrative assessment, including learning stories, is especially useful for documenting non-traditional areas of the curriculum, and can effectively show continuity and progress over time. Learning stories can be as applicable and useful for the school sector as for early childhood education. However, given the increasing alignment between teacher practice, professionalism and curricula across sectors, it is disappointing that government initiatives for gifted education currently exclude early childhood education.

The range of characteristics described in this article is not presented as a list from which identification of giftedness can occur. It could be the breadth of many characteristics or the intensity and depth of a few particular characteristics that suggests giftedness. Any single narrative is unlikely to confirm giftedness; however parents and teachers can review documentation for evidence of intensity, continuity and connectedness across time for evidence that support potential identification or the need for additional assessment. Strength of narrative assessment also includes the opportunity to include meaning-making and context within the story-telling. Diverse communities can more easily bring aspects that are valued to the fore, such as cultural, artistic and naturalistic gifts.

Czikszentmihalyi (1996) wrote that “practically every individual who has made a novel
contribution to a domain remembers feeling awe about the mysteries of life and has rich anecdotes to tell about efforts to solve them” (p. 156). Teachers and parents have a critical role in ensuring that young children sustain their awe – from Sam’s questioning to Charlotte’s passion for nature. We need to ensure we can document young children’s competencies in broad, multi-categorical domains, including interpersonal interactions and non-academic areas. Learning stories, as a method of narrative assessment, provides a credible approach to both document and advocate for young gifted learners. Further, learning stories allow teachers, parents and whānau to contribute to assessment, and support curriculum connections between early childhood and the school sector.

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Dr Valerie Margrain has been a lecturer in early years education at Massey University since 2008. She has formerly taught in primary school classrooms, as a Reading Recovery teacher, as an itinerant special education teacher, in playcentres, and at a range of tertiary education providers. Valerie’s research interests include assessment, early literacy, gifted and inclusive education and parents. She is keen to hear from any readers who would like to share further narratives of young gifted learners.

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Culture and Crisis Response in New Zealand

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ABSTRACT
New Zealand is a bicultural nation, founded on the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi by the native Māori and the British Crown. It is also home to people from many countries, cultures and ethnicities. Therefore, culturally-relevant response to crisis events has become a significant aspect of the Ministry of Education’s interdisciplinary Traumatic Incident Teams’ work. The Traumatic Incident Teams, which aim to support school communities and early childhood centres in the aftermath of crisis events, are mindful that people and communities recover best when supporters work within the cultural, religious and philosophical beliefs of those affected. In New Zealand, particular attention is paid when working with Māori to support processes of tangihanga (traditional mourning ceremonies), and cultural practices according to the protocols of Māori groups. This paper discusses three separate responses to crisis events in New Zealand and the place of cultural relevance and sensitivity in recovery.

Practice paper

Keywords: Bicultural, crisis response, traumatic incidents

INTRODUCTION
This paper concerns the place of culture and context in crisis intervention and makes reference, by way of illustration, to the practice of three educational psychologists who were involved in responses to separate traumatic events in schools. Each of the practitioners considered culture in ways that reflected the specific cultural contexts resulting in three different types of support.

Traumatic incident response teams take a key role in supporting school communities to restore stability following traumatic events and to come to terms with unexpected change. The current recognition and acceptance of the diversity inherent in educational communities has meant that cultural sensitivity has risen, and come to the foreground of crisis response. Response team members are now encouraged to observe familiar local cultural practice in crisis situations and to consider the diversity represented within the response teams that develop in relation to events (Jimerson, Brock & Fletcher, 2005). In short, they identify, respect and align their actions with the cultural practice in the local community, largely as a matter of course. They approach crisis response with the intention of building on strong foundations, utilising the natural supports of the individuals and communities experiencing unexpected events.

In recent reviews of crisis response, culture has been shown to be a significant factor in constructing acceptable recovery and growth. For example, Moscardino, Axia, Scrimin and Capello (2007) conducted a study to determine the extent to which indigenous cultural values and religious belief systems contributed to caregivers’ reactions to the school siege in Beslan, Russia. The study found that cultural values and social support emerged as powerful forces in shaping caregivers’ reaction to events.

Following crisis events, children, and others around them, can have difficulty accessing solutions and may be immobilised and overwhelmed. They seek clarity, security, hope and connection in the process of making sense of their position. However, as Abel and Friedman (2009) observed, children are not always able to rely on familiar adult support as adults themselves may be in a crisis state. Supplementary, but culturally-relevant support may be required in order to help children construct new meanings and to access and build on their resilient foundations. While many children may search for such meaning, they do this in specific and sometimes tacit ways that fit with their cultural practice. As each crisis event and each response is unique, crisis supporters are challenged with the task of ensuring culturally-relevant support on every occasion. Abel and Friedman (2009) reviewed the contextual and cultural aspects of several studies in Israel. They highlighted the importance of understanding cultural discourses about matters such as what constitutes strength and the specific values placed by groups of Israeli people on certain responses to trauma. In their review the authors illustrated the role that knowledge of social history, reflected in individual and distributed knowledge and practice,
played in discerning appropriate response. Without insight into the local perspective, authentic interpretation of crisis events and responses would not be possible.

Crisis response support is a collaborative process that, in most cases, involves bringing together groups of people who have experienced an event in different ways and whose notions of appropriate action may vary (Heath, Nickerson, Annandale, Kemple & Dean, 2009). In order to accommodate and align the diverse perspectives of those involved in incidents, response team members must come to the site well-prepared and strongly familiar with principles of crisis response so that the facilitation of intervention can be flexible. They need to work collaboratively from the outset to quickly learn about the expectations, beliefs, values and patterns of interaction in the community. Agency response teams must search

with local people connected to those involved in the crisis, to access information about cultural practice in relation to trauma, and knowledge of the beliefs implicit in these practices. Culturally-sensitive crisis response requires communication in familiar languages and recognition of dimensions, for example spiritual aspects, that may be beyond the understanding or perception of crisis workers.

Specific responses are constructed in collaboration with members familiar with systems similar to those involved in order to support healthy recovery and to avoid the imposition of processes that are not relevant, not helpful or even harmful. In New Zealand, crisis response in schools and early childhood settings is largely facilitated through the Ministry of Education in collaboration with school communities. We explain how traumatic incident response is placed within the New Zealand education system.

Figure 1. Diagram showing the relationships between the New Zealand Government and the School Community.
Crisis response in New Zealand schools and early childhood settings

New Zealand schools are self-governing with an elected Board of Trustees (BOT) who are responsible for the governance of the school. The board is the employer of all staff in the school and is responsible for setting the school’s strategic direction in consultation with parents, staff and students, ensuring that its school provides a safe environment and quality education for all students. Boards are also responsible for overseeing the management of personnel, curriculum, property, finance and administration. In Early Childhood Education (ECE) management groups in the centres are expected to fulfil this role. Principals and school/ECE management groups provide day-to-day leadership of the school or ECE service. The Ministry of Education develops and provides policy advice, supports initiatives, develops curriculum, allocates resources and monitors effectiveness across the whole of the education sector.

New Zealand Law (New Zealand Education Act, 1989) requires every Board to prepare, maintain and report on their School Charter to the Ministry of Education. The purpose of a School Charter is to establish the mission, aims, objectives, directions, and targets of the Board in relation to the Government’s National Education Guidelines (NEGS), National Administration Guidelines (NAGS), (The New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009a) and the Board’s local priorities. National Administration Guideline 5 (NAG 5), requires each Board to: (a) provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students; (b) promote healthy food and nutrition for all students, and (c) comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009b).

In New Zealand, legislation relevant to health and safety are contained in the Health and Safety in Employment (HSE) Act, 1992 and the Crimes Act, 1961. These Acts state that boards have a duty to:

- make all (reasonable) practicable steps to ensure the safety of employees and other people
- identify hazards and take steps to eliminate
- isolate, and/or minimise hazards; develop emergency procedures and provide employee training
- keep a register of incidents that have seriously harmed or might have seriously harmed staff or students
- take all practicable steps to ensure that no employee’s action or inaction at work harms any other person
- provide the necessities of life, including food, clothing, and medical treatment
- use reasonable care to avoid danger to human life when working with dangerous goods/things.

Other relevant legislation regarding accidents, employment, food safety, transport and privacy also apply. It is also a requirement under the HSE Act that every employer ensure that all employees have the opportunity to be fully involved in the development of procedures developed for the purpose of dealing with or reacting to emergencies or imminent dangers.

In New Zealand, Specialist Education Services (now a division of the New Zealand Ministry of Education) first started providing support to schools and ECE settings after a series of emergencies or crises had disrupted education communities in which the organisation was already working. Prior to 1996, the Specialist Education Service helped schools on an ad hoc basis, mainly by offering individual counselling to people affected by crises. This approach changed in the late 1990s from an individual focus to BOT and school management committee support. The support service created, called the Traumatic Incident Service, worked alongside Boards of Trustees, school ECE management groups and teachers to restore stability in learning environments and to provide support for their liaison with the local communities. In 2002 this support service became part of the Ministry of Education, Special Education. Special Education (SE), together with schools and early childhood education services, provide services to children and young people in New Zealand with special education needs. Today, the Traumatic Incident Service assists schools and ECE management to plan and prepare for unexpected events before crises occur and work alongside school management teams to restore and stabilise the learning environment during and following such events.

The approach taken by the Special Education Traumatic Incident Service recognises the importance of prior planning and local leadership to restore familiar routines. It also acknowledges the need to provide support to those affected, especially children and young people, by those they know and trust in order to increase a sense of comfort and safety in the community. The development of the service has been guided by professional knowledge and the lessons learned in both local events (Coggan, Dickson, Peters & Brewin, 2001) and those abroad (La Greca & Prinstein, 2002; Vernberg, 2002). Comments such as the one below from Littleton, USA, after a school shooting (Doll, in Brock, Sandoval & Lewis, 2001) have provided powerful insights that have...
underscored the need to involve familiar people in crisis response.

While our thanks go out to national leaders and experts who came to Littleton to help, it was the local “insiders” who led the community’s response who were most valued by the Columbine students and staff and their families. They were inside experts, familiar and trusted faces, who knew the history of the school and the community, were part of a shared culture and shared the loss (p. 66).

In New Zealand, the Traumatic Incident Service recognises that crisis events also represent complex encounters between those experiencing crises, the external responders and emergent and temporary ‘crisis’ cultures especially when contrasting worldviews, cultures, and lifestyles are confronted. The emergent support that arises during these encounters has the potential to become a resource and support for those affected, or conversely, a source of stress that undermines efforts provided by outside providers (Marsella & Christopher, 2004). When a crisis occurs, the formation of an external Ministry of Education team considers the nature of the crisis being experienced, the culture of the setting and community with the recognition that local leadership and external support teams working together can represent a complex cultural encounter. The complexity of this encounter is particularly influenced by concepts of health, illness and death (ibid., 2004). For Māori, illness, dying, death and grieving are considered a central part of life. They are imbued with tapu and kawa with the formal rituals and practices determined by the customs and traditions of the local iwi or hapu (Ngata, 2005). When crises involve Māori, or Pasifika children, young people, or staff, the Ministry ensures and Pasifika staff lead the external response within the education setting recognising that the beliefs, values and traditions of the local culture are sustainable, effective tools for supporting and providing meaning about events for local communities.

Crisis Event 1. School adventure trip tragedy

Six students and a teacher died in a river tragedy while on a school adventure trip in 2008 in a bush-clad, mountainous area of New Zealand. This story illustrates how recognition of the school community’s Christian faith supported the group who took responsibility for comforting those affected and for the recovery of the school in the aftermath of the tragedy. The impact on the school community was profound, extensive and ongoing. Confounding the recovery was intense media attention.

An educational psychologist’s story

I was telephoned at home at 8:30pm on a Tuesday in April 2008. The call was from a Board of Trustees’ member of a private Year 7-13 School who informed me that several children were missing on an annual school trip. The Board member asked if I would come to the school and support them as they waited for news. When I arrived, at approximately 9:00pm, a group of people had gathered outside the school. I made my way to the Principal’s office, where I found a number of people, including the Principal, two Deputy Principals and the Board of Trustees’ Chairperson. I was welcomed and the group seemed pleased that I was there.

During the next two hours the tragedy unfolded as news came in of one death after another. Everyone in the room was clearly traumatised. At about midnight, the principal realised that no more could be done and that he needed to prepare the school. He turned to the group and asked, “How should we proceed?” I reflected for a moment and thought, “How can I support this group, in this situation?”

At this point I was pleased of my training in the New Zealand version of Psychological First Aid (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2009c), a stepped guide that would provide me with a basic framework and principles of response to take things forward. I was able to recommend a place we might start; to make a suggestion to which the group could respond. I was aware that everyone, apart from myself, knew all the deceased personally. Decisions about response had to come from this group with my support. The Principal started the proceedings with a prayer; this seemed to provide synergy among the people in the group and enabled all of us to focus on what needed to be done. At this point it was clear that working within the community’s familiar and shared faith enabled those involved to unite in their sense of purpose. Calmness came over us as I outlined the process and we set about planning for the next day. Communication within the community was given high priority and we planned to inform everyone of what had happened and what the expectations for the day would be. We were also aware that there would be extensive media coverage and that the nation would be watching to see how things were being done.

I reminded myself that working within the belief system and familiar practices of a community was paramount. The Principal and the group were in agreement that, once they had briefed the staff, they wanted to have a school assembly and to pray. I was unsure, at the time, that this was the most helpful way to proceed. I wondered if an
assembly might escalate expressions of grief in some of the children; a situation I had experienced many times. However, the Principal and his Board were determined that this was the right thing to do in this situation. The effect of that decision strengthened my resolve to recognise and value routines that are familiar and meaningful to a specific community. The planning for the first day of the traumatic event went according to the plan the school had devised, and it was the prayer time before meetings that seemed to give the teaching staff the strength to get through an ordeal that was truly traumatic in every sense for everyone involved.

Similarly, the events of the school assembly illustrated the value of working closely with those who know and understood the cultural practice of the community in crisis. By the time the children gathered in the school hall many were aware of what had happened, but there were also others who did not know that the tragedy had occurred. Many children were crying. As the Principal began to speak, a sense of calmness spread and the children and staff were observed to be wholly attentive and reflecting on what had happened and what the Principal was saying. It was clear that there was a shared sense of grief and loss but there was something more. By drawing on the community’s religious knowledge and beliefs the group had assigned meaning to the event. They located the event in a greater plan and were comforted by the belief that those who had been taken were not lost forever but had moved to a higher place. There was a communion, a sense of religious fellowship and a sharing of thoughts and emotions. This familiar and meaningful activity undoubtedly helped members of the school community to manage the feelings of loss and devastation generated by this tragedy.

Crisis Event 2. Death of a newly enrolled student
The Traumatic Incident Response Team of the Ministry of Education was alerted by a call from an intermediate school that a 12 year old Māori girl, recently enrolled in the school, had died by suicide. The young girl had been a member of the school’s one whanau class in which children’s schooling was immersed in Māori language and culture in order to nurture their cultural identity. She had not yet had the opportunity to establish any friendships at the school and was not known by other students as she had recently moved into the area.

An educational psychologist’s story
My first response was to call in the District Māori Advisor and local Kaikakawaenga (Liaison Officer with knowledge of Māori cultural practice), who were also employees of the Ministry of Education, to meet with the Traumatic Incident Management Team. Before travelling to the school, we came together to discuss initial actions. The District Māori Advisor opened the hui (meeting) with a karakia (prayer; recognition of a spiritual presence) that acknowledged the loss that people were experiencing and that set the pathway for the team to support the recovery process. This hui provided the opportunity for Traumatic Incident Team members and the Management Team to ask questions and to discuss freely how cultural support could be ensured in this particular circumstance. The team view was that working together with sensitivity to culture and team professionalism would support a pathway of recovery.

By the time the team entered the school the team was confident that the foundations of support to the school were available. We identified key participants as a first step to, whakawhanaungatanga (relationship building). This involved the inclusion of the kaumatua (respected Māori elder), school staff, mātua (parents), community networks, agencies and marae (central meeting place) and whānau (family) contacts. The Board of Trustees’ Chairperson, Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour Māori, and the tutor of the school kapa haka (Māori performing Aarts) group became the immediate network.

We facilitated an opportunity for all staff to become aware of the death of the student and to work with us to plan and prepare for the school response. The plan for the response was developed on solid foundations of cultural understanding and professional guidance. All of the agencies involved in the response worked together to align the response plan with the school community’s principles of tika (what is right), pono (accountability) and aroha (love).

The recommendation by the District Māori Advisor that the school, whānau class and staff attend the tangihanga (Māori funeral) reflected the knowledge of cultural practice in relation to death. As a team, we were aware that, with the support of the District Māori Advisor, we would need to carefully and respectfully raise school community awareness of the range of possible responses of other students and staff, and to ensure that culturally-sensitive plans were in place to support student and staff safety (tapu and noa). This involved extensive discussion concerning the protocols and Māori cultural practices of tangihanga.

In most circumstances, Traumatic Incident Team members would not be directly involved in
Crisis Event 3. Loss of a young life in the local community

In the far north of New Zealand a young male Māori student died. The educational psychologist’s story below explains the team’s initial response, their entry to the school, the collaborative planning with the school community and the implementation of a culturally responsive plan.

An educational psychologist’s story

At 7:30am, a Ministry of Education staff member received a telephone call from the principal of a Kura Kaupapa Māori (Māori school). The principal advised the staff member that a student had died in the night. This information was then passed to the District Manager of the local Ministry of Education office. Immediately, an initial Traumatic Incident Response Team was organised to support the school. Each of the team members was Māori and on site at the Kura Kaupapa Māori by 9:30am.

On arrival, the Ministry of Education Traumatic Incident Team was formally welcomed by the kaumatua (respected Māori elder), school staff and students. Together we participated in the morning karakia that acknowledged the loss that had occurred and set the scene for everyone to move forward and plan together. The Kura Kaupapa Māori was also supported by other key agencies, kuia (respected female Māori elder), kaumatua and a school social worker from the closest town to the school. My colleague, and I gave our mihi (Māori formal speaking structure) to the staff and the kaumatua and kuia. This provided a level of connectedness among the group as the iwi (Māori tribe) of the community involved in the tragedy was the same as that of my colleague and me. The marae, hapu, moana and maunga were all places these people knew and to which they were able to whakapapa (link to genealogy). It was our whakawhanaungatanga (connection) with the other people that allowed us to make a contribution. It made sense to all of us in this situation.

The first task was to set up a group of people who would work to manage the response to the traumatic incident. This process would include the principal, kaumatua, kuia and senior staff, as well as my colleague and me. The group worked together to put a plan in place which aligned with the school and community’s principles of tika, pono and aroha. All discussion about ways to move forward in response to the student’s death reflected these principles as did the plan that emerged from the collaborative interaction.

The principal played a key role in leading, supporting and implementing the process through her knowledge and determination to make the plan right for staff, school and the community. Of most urgent concern was communicating with staff, students and parents. Many students were already upset and talking about the event. We knew that we had to ensure that a clear and accurate message was given to the community and we worked with the school to organise this communication. We also talked with staff about whether the students should travel out to the marae and to be there when the student’s body arrived. My colleague and I affirmed the decision of the team to be at the marae and agreed that this was a customary and familiar process for Māori in relation to death. The staff members had already got other students involved in preparing food that could also be taken to the marae. The familiar routine of food preparation had an easing effect, providing some interim relief for students while they came to terms with what had happened.

There was a point where there emerged a difference of opinion between school community members. We had suggested that the school establish a risk register which could include students and staff who may have been adversely affected by the student’s death in ways that may require additional care. The kuia stated quite strongly that all students should be included on that register, not one or two. We explained the rationale for the risk register was that we needed to be conscious that some students and staff may be more affected by this incident than others and that we needed to limit numbers, although we recognised that others would naturally be affected. This matter was resolved through dialogue among team members with the continued development of the risk register but in a way that was satisfactory to the school principal, the kuia and response team members.

In discussion, some time after the death of this young person, we reflected with the principal about the response process. The staff of the Kura Kaupapa Māori recognised the value of the Traumatic Incident Response Team and considered that the school had been supported by the process built around the familiar and valued concepts of tika, pono, aroha and whakawhanaungatanga.
DIVERSE PRACTICE BASED ON COMMON PRINCIPLES

In each of the three examples discussed in this paper, the Traumatic Incident Team members were clear about the purpose and parameters of their work. They offered support for the adults who were themselves in crisis and who were faced with the task of supporting the children for whom they cared. The psychologists worked with their fellow team members to help the school staff and community to continue in their roles and to establish a secure environment for the school community.

Each of the practitioners responded in ways that recognised and built on the cultural values of the community and the social support available. Through their collaborative processes they were able to establish relationships with those who knew the culture well, those who were part of the everyday lives of the children and those who held a particular position in relation to the passing of the young people. In each of the events, key local community members, knowledgeable of the beliefs and practices of the people affected by the deaths of the children, came together with the Traumatic Incident Team to form a unified but diverse team. These were powerful connections in every case. The formation of teams that included local community members allowed the processes to proceed in ways that recognised critical dimensions of the experience of affected people. In one situation, the connections among the wider team members and the diversity of perspective allowed for dialogue and resolution of differences in team members’ views of appropriate process. In all cases, the events of the crises were interpreted by those who had applicable cultural knowledge. For example, the karakia and the prayers at the school assembly provided important connections with the spiritual world. In addition, the engagement in familiar practices, such as food preparation and assemblies, seemed to provide periods of reprieve and opportunity to build strength.

In New Zealand, as in many other parts of the world, (see examples in Abel & Friedman, 2009; Krumm, 2007) communities are supported to create their own solutions within their existing structures. In all cases, the school principals continued to lead the responses to the traumatic events and coordinated the diverse teams. It was the school principals who continued to manage the interface with the communities, a task that was part of their regular practice. The school had an obligation to provide a safe environment for their children. Through the school maintaining their regular structure of leadership, they were well-positioned to offer the children and the wider school community the support required at the time. The role of the Traumatic Incident Team members was clearly to support the principal in each school to carry out this difficult and unexpected task.

The Traumatic Incident Team members actively supported the school community to respond to the events and to restore stability to the school communities. They contributed their particular knowledge of traumatic event response, gained through training and experience, but did not impose a particular process. They were able to offer their knowledge but did so in ways that allowed it to be considered alongside local knowledge of tradition and practice. At times, the decisions made by the school community challenged the educational psychologists as their considered or planned actions could have been counterproductive. In such cases, the Traumatic Incident Team members considered the rationale for the planned actions and supported the decisions of the school principals. Such decision-making requires that Traumatic Incident Team members be knowledgeable, flexible and able to consider planned actions in relation to the contexts of the events.

In the events reported in this paper, the Traumatic Incident Team members were supported by various types of knowledge. They all came to the situations with a clear notion of the roles they would assume and the types of actions they might take in the response. The Traumatic Incident Team members were supported by prior knowledge and principles for initial practice, e.g. Psychological First Aid. The working relationships formed would not have been possible had Traumatic Incident Team members not been thoroughly familiar with their own team processes, able to successfully communicate and negotiate their role with those in crisis, be ready to value and welcome diversity, and be skilled in working in partnership. Some of the Traumatic Incident Team members were supported by familiarity of and identification with the local community, contributing further depth through their knowledge of history and cultural practice.

CONCLUSION

The Ministry of Education provides support to schools and early childhood centres to help educational facilities meet their obligation to provide a safe environment. They do this through provision of the services of the Traumatic Incident Team that provides support for local leadership in their efforts to restore stability in culturally appropriate ways. Throughout the three traumatic incident responses reported in this paper, common principles of practice were evident. All three responses implied the view that effective
response involved collaboration with the local community. However, there was wide diversity in the expression of these principles in the three specific contexts as local communities contributed cultural knowledge that shaped the responses.

Particular care was taken to ensure that responses to traumatic events involving Māori children and communities were culturally-sensitive and, from the outset, involved those with cultural knowledge. The three responses were supported by the flexible practice of the Traumatic Incident Team members who contributed extensive knowledge of crisis response theory and practice. Familiar with their practice, team members were able to work openly with local communities to plan and implement culturally-appropriate response plans.

REFERENCES


AUTHORS’ PROFILES

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Dr Jean Annan is a senior lecturer at Massey University and is coordinator of the PGDipEdPsych programme. She is a registered psychologist who previously worked for the Ministry of Education, her work in that organisation including response to traumatic events and the coordination of response teams. Her current research interests are in educational psychology consultation and professional development.

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the transition of a child with moderate special education needs to a primary school setting. It was generated out of the professional interest of the author and a prevailing concern over the apparent delay in providing support for children with moderate special education needs within the primary school system. A case study approach was used to examine the varying perspectives of the parents and teaching staff in a transition process from early childhood to school. The study highlighted the fact that a decrease in support at school during the transition phase placed increased reliance on communication between agencies as well as the importance of aligning early childhood and primary school expectations in terms of learning and behaviour of students with special needs. Implications of this case study identified a number of ways in which to improve transition of children with moderate special educational needs that can continue to build on the specific progress made by these children in their pre-schools.

Research

Keywords: Early childhood education, Individual Education Plan (IEP), interagency communication, kindergarten, resourcing, school, sending and receiving agencies, moderate SEN, Special Education Needs (SEN), transition

BACKGROUND
In New Zealand, support for children with moderate and high needs becomes available when children begin primary school (Ministry of Education, 2007). Prior to starting school, Early Intervention (EI) services are provided for children with special education needs (SEN), from the time their needs are identified until they are five years old or ‘settled in school’ (Ministry of Education, 2009a). In order to receive EI support, a child suspected of having special education needs can be referred to the local Ministry of Education, Special Education (MOE:SE) service. The child will be assessed by a member of the EI service and if they qualify for support, referred on to an EI team. These teams can include specialists such as early intervention teachers, speech language therapists, psychologists and occupational therapists, as well as other health professionals at times, who work collaboratively with the family/whānau to assess, plan and provide an intervention to meet the child’s SEN (Ministry of Education, 2009a).

The process to access any SEN support in primary school should begin approximately three months prior to the child starting school (Ministry of Education, 2005). This may involve the preparation of an Ongoing Reviewable Resourcing Scheme (ORRS) application which documents the child’s skills in relation to their peers. This application is analysed to determine whether the child should receive support for very high, high, or moderate needs at primary school. If a child does not meet the criteria for high needs support under ORRS, schools can use their Special Education Grant (SEG)1 to provide the required level of support. Support is also available through the Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) service, a school-based specialist teacher resource, which is available to support children with moderate special education needs.

Research continues to highlight that effective transition to school has the potential to positively influence a child’s social, emotional and academic development (Entwisle & Alexander, 1998; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000; Rous & Hallum, 2006c; Schulting, Malone & Dodge, 2005). Moreover, Dockett and Perry (2001) have demonstrated that transition is a time when children begin to develop a positive conceptualisation of school. They also observed that the way in which a transition to school is managed can set the stage not only for children’s success at school but also their response to future transitions (Dockett & Perry, 1999). These findings indicate that a well-supported, planned and executed transition can maintain the gains made through an early childhood education

1 This funding is allocated to schools and is based on a funding formula that takes into account the decile ranking of the school and the total number of students (Ministry of Education, 2008).
programme and help children adjust socially and academically to the new expectations and culture of the school.

When viewed from an ecological perspective, it is evident that a transition to primary school involves changes to multiple layers of a child’s ecological system. As a result, it is quite evident that the transition to school can be considerably more difficult for children with special needs and their families (Fowler, Schwartz & Atwater, 1991; Janus, Lafort, Cameron & Kopenchanski, 2007; McIntyre, Blacher & Baker, 2006; Rous & Hallum, 2006c; Wolery & Odom, 2003). While most would not question these findings, concerns appear to centre on the potential barriers to implement effective transitions for children with moderate SEN within the current systems of support. This may be exacerbated by the complications in the transfer of responsibility from the MOE:SE to the primary school, in the current system of support for children with moderate SEN. Research within New Zealand has also highlighted a number of concerns within the current system. These pertain to: the coordination and continuity of support for children with SEN (Ministry of Education, 2009b; Mitchell, 2001), availability and allocation of the SEG and the effective communication of children’s unique special education needs (Salter & Redman, 2006), assessment of SEN within the new school environment (Faloon & Redman, in press), and the need to improve continuity between Te Whāriki and The New Zealand Curriculum (Peters, 2000). These concerns indicate potential for improvements in “doing better with what we have.” (Ministry of Education, 2009c, p. 1).

CASE STUDY

This case study is about Tom (pseudonym), who transitioned to school in 2009. The study focused on the steps that were taken following the declining of ORRS and the participants’ perceptions of this process.

Prior to school entry, Tom received Early Intervention support, provided by a team of specialists and led by the Early Intervention Teacher (EIT). The EIT took responsibility for submitting the ORRS application, which was declined. Subsequently, the EIT applied for an additional 20 hours of Education Support Worker (ESW) support at school, which was approved. As a result the EIT and the teacher-aide worked with Tom for an additional 20 hours within the school environment to help him settle into school. Once the transition was complete, the Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and class teacher took on the responsibility to support the child’s educational needs.

Participants

At the time of the study, Tom was five years old, an only child and living with his mother in a single parent home. He was diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum with specific difficulties in the areas of communication, social and emotional development. The participants mentioned in this study include Tom’s mother, kindergarten teacher, primary school teacher, ESW, and the EIT who acted as the lead worker for the 20 hours of extra transition time. It is important to note that due to the family’s location at the time, Tom did not transition to the primary school closely associated with his kindergarten.

Procedure

Data about the transition process were collected using Rous and Hallum’s (2006c) Assessing Status of Transition Activities Questionnaire. The first section of the questionnaire considered the communication and relationships between participants, and in the second section the participants rated if particular aspects of the transition process, such as providing one contact person and scheduling regular meetings, were in place, partially in place or not in place. Semi structured interviews were used to obtain further detail regarding these areas and to provide descriptive information on the ecological variables, in terms of the child, their family and their community, specific to this transition.

In addition, Ministry of Education documentation regarding the transition to school for children with moderate SEN was reviewed. Te Whāriki and The New Zealand Curriculum documents were also accessed to describe community factors within the ecological model, and also to determine the alignment and continuity of pedagogy in the two sectors. Data obtained in the questionnaire was triangulated with the interview data and the review of documents, and analysed using Rous and Hallum’s (2006b) conceptual model.

Analysis

Rous and Hallum’s (2006a, 2006b) conceptual framework, shown overleaf in Figures 1 and 2, provided the theoretical base and served as the analytical tool for this research. The two frameworks supported the systematic analysis of the ecological contextual factors which could affect Tom’s transition and the transition process itself.

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The first model (Figure 1) supports the description of ecological contextual factors in terms of the child, their family, and their community. This model also specifies four further areas within community factors which can affect transition – the teachers involved in the child’s learning, their teaching programme, the overall regulations on service provision in the area and the current national policy regarding education.

Figure 1: Theoretical ecological model of transition (Rous & Hallum, 2006b).

The second model (Figure 2) by Rous and Hallum (2006a) describes the interaction among the interagency variables where communication, structures to support the continuity of transition, and alignment of teaching philosophies and content of the programmes interact in a reciprocal manner with the transitional practices and activities.

Key findings
Triangulating the questionnaire and interview data using Rous and Hallum’s (2006a;2006b) conceptual framework, identified the key strengths and weaknesses of Tom’s transition process. Some key findings of this study are discussed in this article in relation to existing literature, which identified areas for improvement in the transition process for children with moderate special educational needs.

TRANSITIONAL PRACTICES AND ACTIVITIES
Transition support
In considering the process followed in Tom’s transition it became clear that the EIT’s (who had taken on the lead worker’s role) practice was aligned with the current Ministry of Education guidelines. Following the allocation of 20 hours ESW support, the EIT facilitated a transition meeting at the kindergarten, attended by the ESW, Tom’s mother, his kindergarten teacher and the SENCO from the primary school. In preparation for school entry, there were three school visits by Tom with his mother.

Tom began school in Term 2, 2009, and for the first term attended school until lunchtime each day. He was supported by the ESW whose role in settling the child into school was guided by a checklist of routine-based skills. Approximately five weeks into the term, the EIT facilitated an IEP meeting attended by the classroom teacher, ESW and parent. At the beginning of Term 3, Tom began attending school fulltime and received teacher-aide support for his learning. His teacher’s request for support from RTLB was accepted and the RTLB began working with him in Term Four, 2009.

CRITICAL INTERAGENCY VARIABLES
Communication and relationships
Comparing the participants’ perceptions of the communication and relationships between

Figure 2: Specific program and community factors of transition model (Rous & Hallum, 2006a).
the two educational settings involved in Tom’s transition, revealed a number of concerns. The parent and primary teacher expressed through their questionnaires that they did not have a clear understanding of the transitional process and would have appreciated further clarification of the roles and responsibilities of all concerned. Comments from the kindergarten teacher that she did not feel her involvement was necessary due to the number of participants involved, seemed to further substantiate this point. Participants’ comments also indicated that the two settings held different understandings of Tom’s special education needs. This was illustrated by comments that the effective approach of supporting Tom’s sensory and emotional needs in the early childhood setting was not followed through within the school.

In reviewing participants’ perceptions it was apparent that there were differences in the conceptualisation of Tom’s special education needs, which also seemed to be hindering effective communication. Reports from his mother and ESW indicated that the people involved in his pre-school education had developed a clearer understanding of Tom’s social and emotional needs. Though the early childhood services staff had many helpful ideas to share, it seemed that there were insufficient opportunities to share their knowledge with the school staff. This was illustrated by comments from the primary teacher that she was not familiar with the approach the ESW was using to support Tom while Tom’s mother felt she had to take the responsibility herself to disseminate such information. Tom’s ESW perceived that the way the child’s ‘melt downs’ were handled was very different in the school environment.

A weakness in communication was also evident when the primary school teacher indicated that she did not utilise the IEP document until a new one was developed in the third term. In analysing all the various comments by the participants, it appeared that professional development to familiarise the teachers with both early childhood and primary school philosophies of learning could have been helpful in better communicating Tom’s social and emotional needs. Though the early childhood services staff had many helpful ideas to share, it seemed that there were insufficient opportunities to share their knowledge with the school staff. This was illustrated by comments from the primary teacher that she was not familiar with the approach the ESW was using to support Tom while Tom’s mother felt she had to take the responsibility herself to disseminate such information. Tom’s ESW perceived that the way the child’s ‘melt downs’ were handled was very different in the school environment.

In addition, as with the parents, it is important for teachers to have a solid understanding of the transitional process and their role in it (Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta, & Cox, 2000). The kindergarten teacher’s perception that she did not feel her participation was important in the transition process due to the number of other participants involved, revealed that she may benefit from support in better understanding her role in the transition process. Also, the primary school teacher’s comment that she would like to have a better understanding of the Special Education Policy and the tasks she is responsible for in a transition further substantiated this concern. A better awareness of the Starting School booklet (2006) may have provided support in this area.

**Interagency structure**

Participants also suggested areas for improvement to the structures currently in place to support the process of transition to school. The parent expressed her preference for a single contact person at school which could have better supported effective communication. The parent and primary teacher perceived that the organisation of meetings, clarification of roles, provision of up-to-date assessment information and extent of IEP goals achieved prior to transition could have resulted in better coordination of support. The primary teacher’s report that she did not implement the IEP until it was reviewed in Term 3 could have been a possible reason for this concern.

It was also noted that teacher-aide time and RTLB support were not organised prior to Tom’s school entry. This was because the teacher felt that it was important to wait to see how Tom would cope at school before applying for additional support, which could have been the existing practice in the school. The resultant decrease in ongoing additional support in the school seemed to have placed an unrealistic reliance on the EIT acting as...
lead worker, who was not expected to have a large role in the transition after the IEP meeting.

The EI team's role has been described in Ministry of Education documentation as a service that continues until a child is 'settled into school'. Results from the questionnaire and interviews indicated that participants held different expectations of when that may be and the role of the EI team. For example, the ESW who provided the 20 hours of transitional support felt that completion of the checklist she was provided by the EIT, which specified basic routine-based skills such as hanging up a school bag, was indicative of the child being settled into school. In comparison, the mother commented that Tom might have been better settled if the IEP formulated prior to transition was used to settle Tom in the school setting, as it had specified support specific to his social and emotional needs i.e., social stories or preventative regulatory supports such as rubbing Tom's back.

Alignment and continuity
Participants' responses indicated that there were considerable differences in expectations, particularly in terms of Tom's behaviour when he entered primary school, which reflects the literature on the alignment of Te Whāriki and The New Zealand Curriculum (Peters, 2000).

It also became apparent that the term 'settled into school' was operationalised in this case as a checklist completed by the ESW which did not seem sufficient to ensure the continuity of support. Moreover, the use of a checklist seemed to detract the use of the IEP which would have provided better guidance for supporting Tom to settle into school routines. In addition, participants' reports indicated that Tom needed support in the area of social and emotional development. The analysis of ecological variables showed that Tom had no siblings and would not be starting school with any of his friends from kindergarten. These factors also contributed to the fact that Tom required more planned support in these areas. As social-emotional competence is critical to maximise students potential to succeed in school and life (Zins & Elias, 2006), and research on the transition to school demonstrates that developing friendships can be a significant strengthening factor in helping a child settle into the new school environment (Dockett & Perry, 1999; Peters, 2003), it seemed that a greater emphasis on setting up support in this area, could have been beneficial in terms of helping Tom to settle into school.

Although there is a common concern over not organising support for a child's SEN prior to school entry, as a child's needs may change in the new school environment, it is proposed that this 'wait and see' approach could result in the need for support only being realised once a need has escalated and has potentially become more difficult to address (Salter & Redman, 2006). Research indicates that effectively preparing the primary school to support a child's special education needs can maintain the gains made through the early childhood education programme and help the child adjust socially and academically to the new expectations and culture of the school (Entwisle & Alexander, 1998; Pianta & Cox, 1999; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000; Rous & Hallum, 2006c). In analysing participant perspectives of Tom's transition, it appeared that involving an RTLB at school entry might have assisted with the communication of Tom's special educational needs, specifically his social and emotional needs, and continued the provision of effective preventative interventions.

CONCLUSION
This study has underscored some areas that could be improved for transitioning children with moderate special education needs in New Zealand in order ‘to do better with what we have’. Specific areas highlighted in Tom's transition are consistent with current literature and included development, use and monitoring of the IEP and better communication and sharing of existing information on facilitating the transition process with families, early childhood and primary teachers, as well as those within the early intervention team responsible in initiating the referral for school-based support. Amongst other factors, this case study has shown that assigning a key professional familiar with both early childhood and the primary sectors who has sound awareness of, and ability to utilise current available resources, and identify evidence-based supports necessary to support the transition process, is vital for effective transition within the current system of support.

In addition, it is pertinent to say that effective and well-supported transition to school for a child, especially those with moderate needs, could be a prudent use of funding, as research indicates that sound transitional support can have a positive effect on the trajectory of a child's social, emotional and academic development as well as their response to future transitions.

IMPLICATIONS
In analysing the participants' perceptions of Tom's transition to school, it seemed that some of the difficulties in the transition process for children with moderate special educational needs could be a result of the structure of current support systems.
This is conceptualised in Rous and Hallum’s (2006b) ecological model of transition (Figure 1) as the State System. The decrease in support at the receiving end of the transition process appeared to have placed increased reliance on the way the EI team and school staff communicated, the quality of this communication, the structures in place to support the continuity of the transition, and the extent of alignment of the teaching philosophies and content of the programmes in the two settings. The analysis of this particular transition seemed to indicate that either modifying the support systems or strengthening the interagency variables could potentially bring about positive changes to this challenging phase, especially for those children who require additional support to access their learning environment. Outcomes following the transition are not included in this article, but longitudinal research in this area could provide interesting results.

Finally, this case study also showed that Rous and Hallum’s (2006a; 2006b) conceptual models, although originally developed to suit the American context, lends itself to be adapted to monitor the efficacy of the transitional process in New Zealand.

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**AUTHOR’S PROFILE**

**Candice Larson**

Candice Larson is currently working as an RTLB in Christchurch. She conducted this research in completion of her Masters in Educational Psychology. She has worked in both early childhood and primary school sectors, and is looking to complete her educational psychology internship next year.

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ABSTRACT
Manurewa Intermediate students were given an experience only the arts can provide as they collaboratively researched, responded to and celebrated a school mural project. The mural project was initiated by Shane Hansen through the Principal Iain Taylor and coordinated by Dianne Macdonald, a Professional Learning Leader at Manurewa Intermediate School. The thrust of the project: To paint an artwork environment that told the school’s story ‘Listen to Culture’. The mural, titled Pumanawatanga, which is 2.4 metres high and 20 metres long, was designed and painted by thirty Year 7 and Year 8 students in Terms 3 and 4 in 2009, in collaboration with local New Zealand artist Shane Hansen. The underpinning aim of this project was to support students' learning in arts education through a focus on ‘culture’. Shane’s influences include his Maori, Chinese and European heritage, the environment, his family and other New Zealand artists such as Gordon Walters and Dick Frizzell. Shane draws from a world of bold colours and what has been described as an optimistic post-modern playfulness.

Storied experience

Keywords: Arts, collaboration, culture

Shane grew up and went to school in Manurewa. He wanted to work with and give back to this community that had contributed to his own development as a contemporary New Zealand artist. Across two terms Shane worked with the students of Manurewa Intermediate School to develop the ideas for the mural. Initially he brought in his own works and shared the stories behind them. This provided opportunities for deeper contemplation by the students. From Shane the students learned about artistic style, the use of a strong clean line and text, digital imaging, compositional methods and the printing and painting techniques involved when using large sheets of plywood.

The narrative for the mural came from Professor Angus Macfarlane’s conceptualisations of culturally-responsive strategies that are explained and demonstrated by what he refers to as the Educultural Wheel (Macfarlane, 2004). Professor Macfarlane is based at the University of Canterbury, and is the University’s first Professor of Maori Research. Affiliating to the Te Arawa waka and its confederate tribes, he has a keen interest in making classrooms and schools happier and more productive environments for Maori learners and their teachers. Four key cultural concepts drive the directions of the Educultural Wheel (see figure 1). Pumanawatanga is at the hub and represents the morale, tone and pulse of the school – around which the four key inter-related and overlapping concepts are woven.

On the mural itself the word ‘Manaakitanga’ is included subtly in the black, white, green and red curves in one section of Pumanawatanga. Manaakitanga exemplifies an ethic of caring that runs through Manurewa Intermediate School’s Moving On Up (MOU) Magic and the three keys to success - we look after each other; we look after property and our environment; we look after ourselves.

Peeling back the layers prompts reflection on the intricate nature of the local history of Manurewa, the Rimu school house and Whaia te iti Kahurangi, representing the educational journey of the Year 7 and Year 8 children of Manurewa Intermediate School, and the vision we have that when they leave us they will soar like the kite of Tamapahore, from which Manurewa is named. Whaia te iti Kahurangi, has come to symbolise how Manurewa Intermediate School is ‘Motoring and Moving On Up’.

The students in the mural project were selected by classroom teachers from across the school and did not necessarily know each other at the start of the project. The criteria was for the students to be interested in drawing and making art. As Natalie (a Year 7 student) explains:

“I liked how people said they were shy at first but then when they knew everybody well they could all work together… I know now we all could communicate properly with each other.”

These words sum up another spoke in the Educultural Wheel - the ethic of bonding signified in Kotahitanga. The collaboration forged between the artist, the teacher and the students was particularly evident in the voluntary school holiday
painting workshops when the group took over the school hall for a few days. The visits from Kirsty, his wife, and the days Shane’s young son Nikau would join the students signify the ways relationships are built. Whanaungatanga also symbolises Shane’s connections with the students, not only as an artist but as a former pupil of the area with whanau living in Manurewa. He gave and continues to give Manurewa students rich experiences.

The 5:00am morning blessing for Pumanawatanga was magical. Led by local kaumatua Wally Thompson, the blessing was attended by the principal, students, Shane, whanau, board trustees, staff, local principals and community partners from Council and the University of Auckland. A surreal atmosphere was created by the moonlight, the people present and by Pumanawatanga cloaked in tarpaulins against the golden glow from the outdoor lights. Among the guests was Professor Angus Macfarlane whose work inspired the educational values that sit behind this work. The kaumatua invited Professor Macfarlane to join him in leading the recital of ancient karakia (incantations) and contemporary inoinga (prayers).

Pumanawatanga represented a beginning step in the journey of students and staff at Manurewa Intermediate School becoming educultural. The school explored the principles of the Educultural Wheel in 2009 through the mural-making process and, in 2010, the staff experienced professional development with Professor Macfarlane. He described and demonstrated the concepts and explained their alignment to the craft of classroom management and student motivation. The intention of the professional development day was for teachers to grasp a firm understanding of the concepts in order for them to become manifest in the school and wider community.

The thrust of his teaching and research activities is concerned with the exploration of culturally-responsive concepts and strategies that positively affect professional teaching practice and student outcomes. It is through these four key Maori principles of Angus Macfarlane’s Educultural Wheel - ‘Kotahitanga’ (Ethic of Bonding), ‘Whanaungatanga’ (Building Relationships), ‘Manaakitanga’ (Ethic of Caring) and ‘Rangatiratanga’ (Teacher Effectiveness) that Manurewa Intermediate School hopes to inspire future students and teachers to participate in bringing alive our school vision: Adventurous Risk Takers: Persistent Focused Achievement!
**Kairaranga Book Reviews**

**MIND MAPPING IN PRIMARY CLASSROOMS**  
Eva Hoffman and Yvonne Handford

**INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO MIND MAPPING**  
Eva Hoffman

As a teacher who has used ‘tinkered’ with mind mapping in my class, I found *Mind Mapping In Primary Classrooms* a user-friendly resource for teachers, parents and children.

One of the most useful features was the simple, no-nonsense language and the substantive use of examples, making this book suitable for those who have used mind mapping before and those who perhaps would like to use it but didn’t know where to start.

In the first activity, the principle of Association, which underpins mind mapping, is simply explained and to help build upon that understanding a photocopiable activity sheet is provided so that the skill can be practised and hopefully embedded as understanding. This is another feature of the book; that each new facet of how to build a mind map is first explained, and then a partially constructed photocopiable master is provided for the child to complete.

The book details the ‘elements’ of a mind map, such as the use of colour, pictures and writing on each branch, and provides examples of how these can be constructed independently. However, as a teacher, the most useful part of the book is how it provides other contexts where this knowledge can be applied. Again these examples follow the format of an explanation of the skill to be taught, some prompts or even a reading, and then a blank ‘Star Map’ for the children to respond. Examples include planning a story, read and respond, taking notes, verbs and adverbs, descriptive writing, comprehension, developing creative thinking, problem-solving, book reviews, a big picture overview, and use as an assessment tool.

The second book *Introducing Children To Mind Mapping* by Eva Hoffman is an introduction to mind mapping for very young learners. It comprises 12 steps to build knowledge and understanding of mind mapping suitable for younger primary school-aged children. Each step is framed as a game to make it enjoyable, so that the children associate mind mapping with fun. Again, each step is simply explained and the children then have the opportunity to work independently on an activity sheet that frames their thinking.

In summary, for anyone who wants to learn or extend their understanding of how to use and apply mind mapping techniques, these books are worth a look. A no-nonsense, step-by-step approach that suits a busy teacher in a busy classroom.

**REVIEWER’S PROFILE**  
Tracey Hopkins  
B.A., Grad.Dip.Tchg

Tracey Hopkins is a teacher of a Year 5 and 6 class with a Gifted and Talented cluster. She has presented at the Rising Tides Conference in 2006 on integrated and authentic contexts for classroom practice and at the Students of Promise Conference in 2009.

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*Author:* Eva Hoffman, Yvonne Handford  
*Publication Dates:* 2004, reprinted in 2009  
*Publisher:* Learn to Learn  
*Price:* unknown  
*ISBN:* 0953538796

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA**  
*Title:* Introducing Children to Mind Mapping  
*Author:* Eva Hoffman  
*Publisher:* Learn to Learn  
*Price:* unknown  
*ISBN:* 0953538745
INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO THEIR INTELLIGENCES

and

INTRODUCING CHILDREN TO THEIR AMAZING BRAINS

Eva Hoffman

These two workbooks form a great platform for children and teachers to explore the fascinating area of learning intelligences and brain function. Introducing Children to their Intelligences allows children (and their teachers) to identify their strengths and uniqueness through a series of graphic organisers, in particular Tony Buzan’s mind mapping technique.

For each intelligence or ‘smarts’ there is a photocopiable identification chart, a home link activity and lists of ways children could learn using that particular intelligence. Using this resource will allow children not only to identify their own learning strengths but to develop, use and strengthen the areas they perceive as weaker. Research has proven that children will learn more effectively and efficiently if they can be diverse, unrestricted thinkers.

Introducing Children to their Amazing Brains is a practical, easy-to-use resource to help children investigate the brain and its function. As an introduction to this unit ‘The Brain Story’ narrative is an original way for children to explore the functions of the brain through story-telling and drama.

The next section of the book is a collection of questions and answers about the brain, designed to be photocopied back-to-back. It is suggested that these be explored in small groups and then information discovered fed back to others. This type of collaborative group work is an effective way for children of different abilities to work together.

In the third section of the resource children explore how to help their brain function to its potential. This includes some fun ‘brain gym’ activities.

These two resources combined would make a great unit at the beginning of a school year, allowing children to understand how they learn and what they can do to become better learners as well as providing teachers with valuable information about their new class. They are very practical, spiral-bound for easy use, and eminently readable.

REVIEWER’S PROFILE

Erin Walcroft
Dip.Tchg, B.A.

I have been teaching for 19 years. During the last ten years I have taught classes with clusters of identified gifted and talented students. It has been a particular interest and focus of mine to explore and find ways for these children, and others in my care, to extend themselves and become effective learners.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Title: Introducing Children to their Intelligences
Author: Eva Hoffman
Publisher: Learn to Learn
Price: unknown
ISBN: 0953538729

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Title: Introducing Children to their Amazing Brains
Author: Eva Hoffman
Publisher: Learn to Learn
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Submission Guidelines

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