



# 2009

## Early Childhood Education

# Conference

29-30 May 2009  
Caulfield Racecourse  
Melbourne, Victoria

## Welcome

A conference for early childhood teachers, early years professionals and staff, volunteer committees, employers and parents.

Kindergarten Parents Victoria (KPV) in partnership with Gowrie Victoria is proud to bring you the 2009 Early Childhood Education Conference from 29 - 30 May at Caulfield Racecourse in Melbourne.

The conference promises to inspire, engage and bring together the early childhood sector that collectively provides quality early childhood education for children.

High calibre speakers from Australia and overseas who will share their views and expertise with our audience – early childhood and early years teachers and staff, volunteer committees, employers and parents.

KPV urges all committees and employers to consider closing their centres on Friday 29 May and contribute financially to the registration as part of staffs' professional development for 2009.

We thank our sponsors and exhibitors for their support and contribution towards the conference. We also acknowledge members of the 2009 Conference Reference Committee for their support.

We look forward to seeing you in May.

Regards

Meredith Carter  
CEO, Kindergarten Parents Victoria

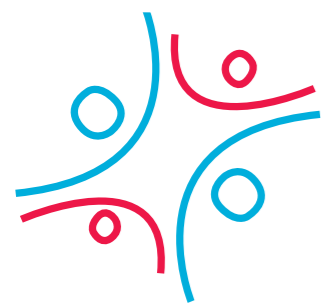
Gilda Howard  
CEO, Gowrie Victoria



Presented by KPV in partnership with Gowrie Victoria

Together we grow –  
facing the future

## Friday 29 May 2009 – Program A to C



TIME	DETAILS
8.00 – 9.00am	REGISTRATION
9.00 – 9.30am	CONFERENCE OPENING The Hon Maxine McKew MP Parliamentary Secretary for Early Childhood Education and Child Care
9.30 – 10.45am	<b>Plenary session – our sector</b> Pam Schiller Peter Dawkins Alison Elliott
10.45 – 11.15am	MORNING TEA
11.15am – 12.30pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
	A1 Pam Schiller Turning research into practice
	A2 Robert Griew The Victorian early childhood sector – the agenda for reform
	A3 Alison Elliott Strengthening connectedness with families
12.30 – 1.30pm	LUNCH BREAK
1.30 – 3.00pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
	B1 Lou Ambrosy Through the maze: Understanding the support service system for professionals working in the early childhood sector
	B2 Pat Jewell Conversation starters – support for early childhood professionals in engaging with families
	B3 Sarah Young Story through drama
	B4 Helen Skouteris / Jennifer Small Transition pilot project: Community alliance and relationships in education
	B5 Noah's Ark Learning Space Leadership for inclusion
	B6 Anne Kennedy / Anne Stonehouse The <i>Early Years Learning Framework</i> : Practice matters
3.00 – 3.30pm	AFTERNOON TEA
3.30 – 5.00pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
	C1 Paul Prichard Collaboration and partnership in engaging communities
	C2 Joce Nuttall Same theory, different day? Revisiting theories of teaching and learning in ECE
	C3 Sarah Young Story through drama
	C4 Sandra Cheeseman Nourishing our leaders – feeding the mind and the spirit
	C5 Sue Elliott Education for sustainability: Beyond rocks and logs in outdoor playspaces
	C6 Louise Dorrat Staying fresh and inspired whilst juggling a multitude of tasks
5.00 – 6.00pm	COCKTAIL PARTY

## Saturday 30 May 2009 – Program D to F



TIME	DETAILS
9.00 – 9.15am	OPENING
9.30 – 10.45am	<b>Plenary session – our world</b> Jacqueline Hayden Rhonda Galbally Karen Martin
10.45 – 11.15am	MORNING TEA
11.15am – 12.30pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
	D1 Jacqueline Hayden Social inclusion and early childhood education: What does this mean for early childhood programs and practitioners?
	D2 Rhonda Galbally Establishing links and strengthening communities
	D3 Karen Martin Knowing and belonging: Aboriginal worldview, relatedness and inclusivity
12.30 – 1.30pm	LUNCH BREAK
1.30 – 2.30pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
	E1 Tracy Young / Catharine Hydon The pursuit of fun and the global child – part 1
	E2 Paul Prichard Engaging dads
	E3 Noah's Ark Learning Space Inclusive environments
	E4 Pam Schiller Turning research into practice
	E5 Kathy Walker Reducing the pressure to have children prepped up for prep!
	E6 Anthony Semann This silence is deafening – making curriculum transformative: A critical analysis of social justice and equity
2.30 – 3.00pm	AFTERNOON TEA
3.00 – 4.00pm	<b>Concurrent sessions</b>
	F1 Tracy Young / Catharine Hydon The pursuit of fun and the global child – part 2
	F2 Lou Ambrosy Through the maze: Understanding the support service system for professionals working in the early childhood sector
	F3 Anthony Semann / Denise Proud Decolonising relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous: A dialogue of hope
	F4 Michelle Bartlett / Kirsten Slifirski Digital technology in early childhood: Involving the community
	F5 Kathy Kent Peace at last – your place in peace education
	F6 Judith Gray Community hubs – getting it together for Broadmeadows children
4.00 – 4.30pm	- MAJOR DOOR PRIZE DRAW - DRUM CLUB PRESENTATION AND CONFERENCE CLOSE

## Session Details

### A1 + E4 Pam Schiller

#### Turning research into practice

Medical research is providing us with important findings related to brain function and processes that make it possible to optimize learning for all children. When we match classroom experiences and adult/child interactions to these findings it allows us to be more purposeful and intentional in our instruction and it creates an environment where all children are able to perform to their highest capability. This session reviews scientific research findings in layman's terms.

### A2 Robert Griew

#### The Victorian early childhood sector – the agenda to reform

The Office for Children and Early Childhood Development is working in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, councils and other organisations to reform early childhood education and care in Victoria. Underpinned by a review of the regulatory framework, this reform will align Government commitments including integration of early years services, co-located where possible with schools, universal access to kindergarten for all children and consistent approaches to transition of children from kindergarten to school. Sector and workforce development are key platforms of this reform, including the increased take up of cluster management and the development of a workforce reform strategy. Robert will share his thoughts on the challenges that lie ahead and the role that conference participants can play in achieving improved outcomes for Victorian children.

### A3 Alison Elliott

#### Strengthening connectedness with families

Strong family-education-community partnerships are central to successful developmental and learning outcomes for children. Evidence indicates that partnerships are essential to engaging families in their children's early learning and later schooling. But true partnerships don't happen spontaneously. They are underpinned by competent and committed educators and educational leaders who actively nurture warm, supportive and meaningful relations with each family. This presentation highlights *what works* in connecting with families. It reports on initiatives and strategies that build positive relations and impact positively on children's engagement and achievement. Key focus are on improving learning, especially for children in families with limited economic resources, developing strategies to better connect with children's worlds, and strengthening family social capital to help connect individuals and communities with learning.

### B1 + F2 Lou Ambrosy

#### Through the maze: Understanding the support service system for professionals working in the early childhood sector

As inclusion of all children into mainstream services has become the norm, there is a maze of service providers available to support the early childhood professional. Who are these people and what is their role? Who is entitled to their support, and how do you access this help? Funding? Is there additional funding available for inclusion support? This interactive panel will present an overview of the varying roles of workers who can support the early childhood professional in their mainstream setting. There will be an opportunity for a panel discussion to examine the types of support available to mainstream services, what workers can expect from this support system, and how to access it. The presentation attempts to unravel the various support systems, and the eligibility of services to access support.

### B2 Pat Jewell

#### Conversation starters – support for early childhood professionals in engaging with families.

This workshop will explore:

- What is going on for preschool children – the complexity of family issues.
- Recognising our marginalized and vulnerable children. (not always obvious)

- Understanding what life could be like for these children and how they present in early childhood services.
- The role of the early childhood professional with these children: Knowing their situation, setting realistic objectives, appreciating their strengths, providing a nurturing and safe environment.

### B3 + C3 Sarah Young

#### Story through drama (Limited places available)

Dramatic play is something that children do naturally, they are constantly creating worlds to play within whether it is pirates on the wild seas or astronauts in space. Drama uses the same elements of dramatic play: role, setting and tension, to create stories with children. Drama develops: physical and oral language, problem solving skills, creative thinking and much more. This drama workshop will be interactive non-threatening and informative for all people working with 3-5 year olds. We will be looking at ways to build stories with the children where their idea and suggestions help develop the story, their voices are at the core of the drama. We will be creating stories together and you will leave with ways to include story in your own program. This workshop aims to break down some of the barriers of working with drama in early childhood, and build confidence to use this wonderful art form in the curriculum.

### B4 Helen Skouteris / Jennifer Small

#### Transition pilot project: Community alliance and relationships in education

The CARE Preparatory Transition Program was developed to achieve three objectives: to establish a *Glen Eira Community Alliance For Early Childhood Education* that will develop shared norms and values in relation to school transition and develop strategies for improving transitions for all Glen Eira children; to develop individual transition and learning plans for prospective prep students that are based on a 3-way interactive relationship between parents (guardians), kindergarten teachers and prep teachers; and to develop effective communication/information kits for parents that facilitate the transition from kindergarten to prep. This session will present the findings of the CARE pilot project.

### B5 Noah's Ark Learning Space

#### Leadership for inclusion (Limited places available)

What is the role of a leader in supporting inclusion of children with disabilities? If inclusion is the responsibility of all stakeholders what actions should a leader take? This session will aim to engage participants in activities that will assist leaders to identify opportunities to support and encourage the development of inclusive philosophy and policy in their work:

- Examining common understandings of inclusion
- Examining legal responsibilities & ethical considerations
- Examining current research findings linked to leadership for inclusion
- Exploring a range of approaches a leader can implement to support the development of a shared vision and values in relation to inclusion.

This session will provide children's services staff with the opportunity to discuss and explore inclusive practice. A flexible inclusive environment will be set up for participants to visit, engage with and reflect upon throughout the sessions.

### B6 Anne Kennedy / Anne Stonehouse

#### The Early Years Learning Framework: Practice matters

This session will provide an interactive forum for participants and presenters to discuss the ways in which the *Early Years Learning Framework* can challenge, inform and guide practice in early childhood settings including family day care, child care and preschool or kindergarten. The presenters will draw upon their own learning from being actively involved in the development and trialing of the NEYLF as a catalyst for the discussion with participants.

### C1 Paul Prichard

#### Collaboration and partnership in engaging communities

We often wonder how best to respond to the needs of families or how to make our services relevant to what it is the community wants or needs. The easy trap for us to fall into here is to prescribe solutions and convince ourselves that we always know what is best. The harder but more sustainable road to travel is ensuring that whatever we do in local services is in direct response to what it is that children, parents and the broader community are saying they need and want. The obvious challenge for services is how far we still need to move to recognise a truly *joined up* and seamless menu of choices for families ensuring they are supported to give their children the best start possible.

### C2 Joce Nuttall

#### Same theory, different day? Revisiting theories of teaching and learning in early childhood education

This session offers early childhood educators who qualified some years ago an update on the wide range of recent research and theory currently informing early childhood practice around the world. Participants will be supported to begin thinking about how research and theory can relate to practice in new ways, and to the national and Victorian early learning frameworks.

### C3 Sarah Young

#### See B3 for description

### C4 Sandra Cheeseman

#### Nourishing our leaders – feeding the mind and the spirit

Working with young children can often be very isolating and leave us feeling professionally unsupported. While we are very considerate of the needs of children and families we often overlook the need to nurture our early childhood leaders. In order to be successful, leaders need opportunities for rich and meaningful professional development to feed the brain and access to networks and other professionals to nurture the spirit. This workshop considers cost effective ways for early childhood services to support the professional growth and development of their leaders and reap the benefits for families, children and the program.

### C5 Sue Elliott

#### Education for sustainability: Beyond rocks and logs in outdoor playspaces

Natural play spaces are frequently identified as a key element in promoting education for sustainability. However, education for sustainability is more than rocks and logs in outdoor playspaces, it is about opportunities for engagement and empowerment at many levels and provides a framework for thinking about outdoor playspaces. This workshop will explore meanings of education for sustainability and how these can inform design and pedagogy in early childhood outdoor playspaces. Current action research involving two case study centres will provide a basis for exploring this topic.

### C6 Louise Dorrat

#### Staying fresh and inspired whilst juggling a multitude of tasks

Working with children, families, committees and staff is a challenging role and there are increasing demands placed on the sector. There is an endless cycle of regulations, accreditation, documentation, meetings, planning and then trying to balance it all. We can waste time, lose time, pass the time away and even march along with time but we will never be able to manage time. We can't stop the clock or save some time from today for tomorrow. Once spent we can't retrieve it. All we can do is manage our selves to utilise it more effectively. We must learn strategies to reduce the amount of time we spend on an activity learn to delegate and be assertive. There is only one you, so you have to look after yourself or no-one else will!

### D1 Jacqueline Hayden

#### Social inclusion and early childhood education: What does this mean for early childhood programs and practitioners?

Cultural, ethnic and racial diversity is now a key aspect of the context for early childhood education – and the role of early childhood programmes is increasingly recognised as a crucial entry point for addressing these issues. Early childhood programmes can make significant contributions towards a more socially inclusive society – or they can replicate and sometimes promote exclusion, bias and discrimination. This presentation describes the most recent literature on the topic, presents arguments for the critical importance of addressing social inclusion in early childhood programs and offers examples of effective programs. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect upon needs and processes which may be useful to their own situations and contexts.

### D2 Ronda Galbally

#### Establishing links and strengthening communities

Rhonda Galbally has focussed her life's work on making a difference for a more equitable society. She is the founding CEO of [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) – a world-leading social enterprise that provides advice and tools for Australia's 700,000 community groups and schools and creates practical linkages between the community sector and the general public, business and government. Rhonda's session will demonstrate the importance of early childhood services establishing close links with their communities and will offer examples of organisations that have successfully engaged these strategies.

### D3 Karen Martin

#### Knowing and belonging: Aboriginal worldview, relatedness and inclusivity

This presentation explores the concept of *inclusivity* using the elements of Aboriginal worldview and the concept of relatedness as another way to think about and act in socially inclusive ways. This session discusses relatedness and belonging from an Aboriginal reality and how this definition can be applied to us as early childhood educators. It will be an interactive, lively and engaging session, exploring the processes of social inclusion in our world.

### E1 Tracy Young / Catharine Hydon

#### The pursuit of fun and the global child – part 1

If the role of early childhood educators is to provide opportunities where children can build the foundation of their future lives, how does play and childhood fit into this scenario? How does the global child experience the pulse of their future lives? If we are truly aware of a changing world, what questions do we need to ask ourselves as early childhood educators and what are the implications for practice?

*Be warned – this theoretical session and follow up workshop may raise more questions than answers, nevertheless these are the questions that shape the global child and our ethical response to their lives, here, now and the future.*

A globalised world raises the possibilities that young children could be active participants in the wider arena. Two dominant, opposing arguments are prevalent with beliefs that children should be shielded from distressing information or they should be immersed in the community. What happens when you enter a third space of ethical reflection and consider how the global child can participate in, and contribute to public life, whilst still being a child and enjoying the pursuit of fun. *Session one explores the key ideas and thinking behind global citizenship and young children.*

### E2 Paul Prichard

#### Engaging dads

Given the rapidly changing definition of *family* in Australia, and the resulting change in fathers' parenting roles, there arises a challenge to our services as to how prepared we are to truly engage with an ever changing queue of primary carers presenting with babies and young children.

Sadly, most Australian services continue to perform poorly in relation to the quality of parenting support they provide to men for a variety of simple reasons. Drawn from national experience, this workshop will explore the essential characteristics of a service, and its workers, if they are to encourage effective engagement with dads.

### E3 Noah's Ark Learning Space

#### Inclusive environments (Limited places available)

What does inclusion of a child with a disability mean for children's services? What are the expectations of staff? How do you promote inclusion within the environment? This session will focus on practical ways of setting up the environment and the benefits of inclusion for children with or without disabilities, childcare staff and families:

- Examining common understandings of inclusion
- Examining legal responsibilities and ethical considerations related to inclusion
- Exploring environments that provide opportunities for participation of all children including those with a disability. This professional development session will provide children's services staff with the opportunity to discuss and explore inclusive practice. A flexible inclusive environment will be set up for participants to visit, engage with and reflect upon throughout the sessions.

### E4 Pam Schiller

#### See A1 for description

### E5 Kathy Walker

#### Reducing the pressure to have children prepped up for prep!

Wouldn't it be a relief if all primary teachers and preschool teachers gave the same message to parents about starting prep? Wouldn't it be great if preschool teachers were asked less to *get children reading and ready for school* and more about allowing children a childhood?

This session tells you how to make this happen. This session will consider the significant changes at the early years of school level for teaching and learning where the play based curriculum is being implemented in hundreds of schools. Implications for preschool and early childhood teachers will be presented as the session revisits the purpose of a preschool year and the importance of building bridges between preschool and school. The session will also discuss the new early years framework alongside preschool and early years of education.

### E6 Anthony Semann

#### The silence is deafening – making curriculum transformative: A critical analysis of social justice and equity

Curriculum is what we do everyday with children. However the impact of curriculum has widespread effects on the development of citizenship for children. There are many ways to approach curriculum development in early childhood programs. National and international theories both influence these approaches as well as serve as a means of benchmarking *best practice*. It is timely that educators take charge in critically analyzing pedagogical approaches in order to audit teaching from a social justice and equity perspective. The right to belong and have a deep sense of inclusion is fundamental for all people including children and families. Whilst many policies and position statements echo such testaments, silence remains in particular areas of equity and diversity. This paper will explore a range of questions include:

- How can educators attempt to move practice and pedagogy to next stage of social justice?
- What risks does this entail?
- How can a culture of social justice become spirited within an early childhood program?

### F1 Tracey Young / Catharine Hydon

#### The pursuit of fun and the global child – part 2

If the role of early childhood educators is to provide opportunities where children can build the foundation of their future lives, how does play and childhood fit into this scenario? How does the global child experience the pulse of their future lives? If we are truly aware of a changing world, what questions do we need to ask ourselves as early childhood educators and what are the implications for practice? *Session two explores case studies of children's active community participation, ideas and examples that can be utilised in early childhood practice. Follow-up workshop to E1.*

### F2 Lou Ambrosy

#### See B1 for description

### F3 Anthony Semann / Denise Proud

#### Decolonising relationships between indigenous and non-indigenous: A dialogue of hope.

A commitment to Aboriginal issues is imperative if educators and children's services providers are to espouse a commitment to social justice and equity. However, navigating the terrain of history, community protocols and family diversity can at times be daunting and a road less travelled. This presentation will address a range of issues including the role of pedagogy in creating sustained reconciliation across cultures, the sharing of narratives from our experiences working within Aboriginal communities and using protocols in working successfully with community.

### F4 Michelle Bartlett / Kirsten Slifirski

#### Digital technology in early childhood: Involving the community

Using digital technology with young children can be daunting and is often informed by a fear driven narrative that frames it as the antithesis of good practice. This session reports on how two Melbourne based centres are integrating digital technologies in their practice. At Boroodara Kindergarten in North Richmond, the learning community has developed *Kinderblog®*, a digital learning story project aiming to increase social connections and cohesiveness within and between a range of community groups, particularly those from CALD backgrounds. At Greythorn Early Childhood Centre in North Balwyn, digital technology is used extensively for everything from consultative planning with families, notification of events and the documentation of the children's experiences at the centre.

### F5 Kathy Kent

#### Peace at last – your place in peace education

This interactive session will explore peace education and its role in early childhood programs. In our changing world climate it has become increasingly important for staff to support children's understanding of fairness, equity and social justice while providing an environment which nurtures each child's self image and promotes respect for difference. In this session we will explore practical strategies and activities that support staff to engage with children in conversations about fairness in relation to ethnicity, colour, sex, religion and ability. Time will also be allocated for participants to share their learning and understanding of the concept of peace.

### F6 Judith Gray

#### Community hubs – getting it together for Broadmeadows children

This presentation offers a case study of the project: *Breaking the Cycles by Building Neighbourhood Hubs in the Broadmeadows Communities for Children*. Three school-based community hubs, coordinating with local preschools, were developed within the areas of Campbellfield, Coolaroo and Meadow Fair North, all significantly economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods yet culturally rich and diverse, with strong community partnerships. This presentation will foster an understanding of collaborative practice and provide an outline of community hubs and the services context in which they operate alongside a description of the practice elements that have contributed to positive outcomes for parents and children in Broadmeadows.

## Speaker Biographies

### **Peter Dawkins**

Professor Peter Dawkins is Secretary of the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Prior to joining the public service Peter was an academic economist.

From 1996-2005 he was the Director of the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne. Peter has written and published extensively on economic and social issues.

### **A1+ E4 Pam Schiller**

Dr. Schiller is a freelance Early Childhood Consultant and Author. She was a childcare administrator for several years and also taught in American public schools as a kindergarten teacher. She served as Head of the Early Childhood Department at the University of Houston where she also directed the Lab School. Dr Schiller is the author a number of full curriculum programs for early childhood as well as several children's books, music CD's, DVD's and teacher resource books.

### **A2 Robert Griew**

Robert Griew took up his current role on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2008, as Deputy Secretary, Office for Children and Early Childhood Development.

In the two years prior to this, Robert ran his own social policy consulting business focusing on Aboriginal health, child development and organisational change. Previous positions have included: Secretary of the Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services; Head of the Commonwealth's Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and of its Aged and Community Care Division; and CEO of the AIDS Council of NSW. Robert has been a Board member of the Legal Aid Commission of NSW and Australian Hearing, chaired ministerial advisory committees in public, child and Aboriginal health; and served on expert committees for the NHMRC and the ABS. Robert is currently a conjoint Associate Professor at the School of Public Health and Community Medicine at the University of NSW.

### **A3 Alison Elliott**

Professor Alison Elliott is widely recognised for her leadership, research, development and policy work in early childhood education and teacher development. She is currently Head of the School of Education at Charles Darwin University and has held significant professional roles in the education and university sectors. Alison has undertaken extensive research, evaluation and consultancy work for a range of government, non government and community authorities and agencies and has provided policy and research advice to numerous educational bodies and to various national enquiries, boards and reviews. Most recently, she has undertaken projects on practitioner capacity building, strengthening educational connectedness, and early literacy and numeracy development. Alison has authored numerous publications on aspects of early childhood education and care and is the long standing editor of *Every Child*.

### **B1 + F2 Lou Ambrosy**

Lou trained as an occupational therapist in the 1970's. Her first interest developed in toy libraries and paediatrics when she was sent to Noah's Ark as a student on placement in 1980. Since the early 80's Lou has worked as a paediatric occupational therapist with a focus on children with disabilities. Much of this time was spent working for Noah's Ark, which was the first toy library for children with disabilities in Australia. Lou also worked for the Australian Toy Library Association in the early 90's and for Yooralla early childhood intervention programs through the early 2000's. Today Lou is a regional manager for Noah's Arks in Victoria, Australia. Her responsibilities include overseeing early childhood intervention programs and the federally funded inclusion support into child care programs. She has presented papers at Early Childhood Intervention Conferences in Australia, and was a keynote speaker for the second Early Childhood Intervention Conference in Malaysia 2008. Lou remains passionate about pursuing the best outcomes for the families of all children including those with a disability.

### **B2 Pat Jewell**

Pat has a background in teaching in the area of early childhood development specialising in working with families where the children had experienced trauma and disability. For the past twenty years Pat has worked in the field of parenting, focusing her work on preventing child abuse in families at risk. Pat is the author of three publications *Getting Good Speech Going* a resource to assist young children with their speech development and two group work manuals for professionals *Out of the Mainstream* focusing on working with parents with an intellectual disability in a group situation and *From Strength to Strength* for professionals facilitating diverse parenting groups. Pat presently teaches at Swinburne University in the Child and Family Services Division in both undergraduate and post graduate courses, is the Victorian Director on the board of NAPCAN, National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. Pat works part time as a project worker with Jesuit Social Services, does freelance training, projects and group work and is currently working on her Masters of Education focusing on relationships between families and professionals in the early childhood sector.

### **B3 + C3 Sarah Young**

Over the past 20 years Sarah has worked with dance and drama for 3 year olds to adults, and holds a Masters in education. One of her main focuses is working as a specialist drama and dance teacher with 3, 4 and 5 year olds at a Melbourne kindergarten. One of her interests is process drama with young children, where the children create their own stories together. Sarah's aim is to break down the barriers of dance and drama and encourage teachers to use these in their day-to-day programs.

### **B4 Helen Skouteris**

Dr Helen Skouteris is an expert in developmental psychology, who is currently working as a Research Fellow, Deakin University. Helen is the Vice President of Bentleigh West Primary School Council and has been Chair of the Education and Policy subcommittee since 2003. Helen is a critical friend to Principal Jennifer Small and has taken an active role in the development of a mindful school and in School Council's commitment to build social capital and community capacity as a means of fostering the children's development and wellbeing in both our immediate school community and our local community, the city of Glen Eira.

### **B4 Jennifer Small**

Jennifer Small took over as the principal of Bentleigh West Primary School in July 2004. Since this time the school has undergone a pedagogical transformation to team teaching and personalised learning supported by new open-plan classroom spaces and high-end technology resources. The school is well known for its innovative programs including leading practice in environmental and sustainability education. The school was not only one of the first schools in Victoria to be accredited as a Performance and Development Culture School, it became a State reference school where Jennifer supported other principals and leadership teams to achieve accreditation for their schools.

### **B5 + E3 Noah's Ark Inc.**

Noah's Ark Inc. is Victoria's largest provider of Early Childhood Intervention Services for children with disabilities and developmental delays and inclusion support services. The professional support sessions offered by Noah's Ark learning and development team are informed by involvement in research activities and presented by a team with experience and knowledge in children's service provision, quality, inclusive practice and disability support services. The sessions respect the expertise and needs of service providers, reflect awareness of current and evidenced based knowledge and respond by promoting best practice that incorporates the latest thinking.

### **B6 Anne Kennedy**

Dr Anne Kennedy has worked in early childhood education as a teacher, educator, researcher, writer, child care director, preschool and primary school teacher. Anne is Chairperson of Community Child Care Association, Victoria and is also on the Board of FKA

Children's Services. Anne is actively involved in current national and state based reform initiatives in early childhood including being a member of the Charles Sturt University-led consortium which is developing the National Early Years Learning Framework.

### **B6 Anne Stonehouse**

Anne Stonehouse AM works as a consultant, editor and author in the field of early childhood. She has published widely in both Australia and the United States, has undertaken several significant consultancies and is a member of the Charles Sturt University - led consortium that is developing the *Early Years Learning Framework*.

### **C1+ E2 Paul Prichard**

Paul is the National Training and Development Manager of Good Beginnings Australia which provides a variety of preventative and early intervention parenting programs in over sixty sites around Australia. Paul's work has focused on implementing innovative programs in universal services for parents of babies and young children and with children who are victims of severe abuse and neglect. In recent years he has played a role in the development of Good Beginnings across Australia.

Paul has a special interest in promoting the important role fathers play in the lives of Australian children and has been instrumental in developing innovative service strategies to support new and expectant dads. In 2003, Paul was awarded a Centenary Medal by the Commonwealth of Australia for his work in developing innovative early childhood intervention programs. Paul lives in Tasmania with his 3 wonderful sons Joshua (12), Daniel (9) and Isaiah (6) and their amazing mother Leanne.

### **C2 Joce Nuttall**

Joce Nuttall is Senior Lecturer and Course Director in early childhood education in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. Joce has published widely in the area of early childhood curriculum, and in pre-service and in-service teacher education. Joce's research interests are mainly in the way teachers think about and enact their practice, with a special emphasis on collaborative practice and continuing professional learning in early childhood settings.

### **C4 Sandra Cheeseman**

Sandra is a lecturer at the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University. She has worked in the early childhood field as a teacher and director in long day care settings and in senior management roles supporting the professional development of children's services staff. She is enrolled in doctoral studies focusing on pedagogical leadership, in particular the ways in which teachers enact leadership in curriculum decision making. Sandra is a member of the core writing team currently developing the National Early Years Learning Framework on behalf of the Australian Government.

### **C5 Sue Elliott**

Sue has worked in a variety of early childhood settings and lectured at tertiary level in early childhood courses. She is committed to promoting education for sustainability in the early childhood sector. Sue is co-author of several books including *Just Discover: Connecting Young Children with the Natural World* and last year edited *The Outdoor Playspace Naturally*. Currently, she is convener of the Australian Association for Environmental Education Early Childhood – Special Interest Group, lectures at RMIT University and is undertaking doctoral studies at the University of New England.

### **C6 Louise Dorrat**

Louise is an energetic and enthusiastic presenter with over 20 years experience in early childhood in a variety of roles. Louise has trained in drama, singing and dance and is soon to release a music DVD called *You can do Music*, which shows teachers and early childhood educators how to incorporate music into early childhood programs using every day props. She currently teaches music at Victoria University and coordinates children's services in local government. Louise facilitates workshops across all industry sectors throughout Victoria and interstate. Her sessions are fun and action packed.

### **D1 Jacqueline Hayden**

Jacqueline Hayden has a long history of involvement with programs for young children in diverse and conflict ridden environments. Some of her recent work involves program development for vulnerable and displaced children in Mauritius and in Rwandan refugee camps; researching young children who have been affected and infected by HIV/AIDS in Namibia; and consulting on early year school programs for indigenous children in Australia. Dr Hayden has published widely. Titles include *Landscapes in Early Childhood Education: Cross National Perspectives - A Guide for the New Millennium (Peter Lang)*, *HIV/AIDS and the Young Child (University of Namibia Press)* and *From Conflict to Peace Building: the Power of Early Childhood Initiatives (with Paul Connolly and Diane Levin) (NAEYC)*. She has held several posts in Australia and internationally. Most recently she was the founding Program Manager for Social Inclusion and Respect for Diversity at the Bernard van Leer Foundation in the Netherlands. Currently she is Professor of Early Childhood Education and Social Inclusion at Macquarie University, Sydney.

### **D2 Rhonda Galbally**

Dr Rhonda Galbally AO has focused her life's work on making a difference for a more equitable society. In 1990 Rhonda was awarded an Order of Australia, and received the Centenary Medal in recognition of her service to the community in 2001. Rhonda's years of social justice work led to the establishment of [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au) in 2000. Our Community is the Australia-wide resource and training hub – improving the operational and governance capacity of Australia's 700,000 community organisations. In the late 1980s Rhonda established the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) as foundation CEO for ten years. VicHealth was recognised by the World Health Organisation in 1996 with the WHO medal for being the first body in the world to use a dedicated tax on tobacco for innovative health promotion. Rhonda is currently the Chair of the Victorian Disability Advisory Council, the National People with Disability and Carers Council and the Royal Women's Hospital, and she is Patron of Compassionate Friends.

### **D3 Karen Martin**

Karen is a Noonucal woman from Minjerripah (North Stradbroke Island, Qld) who also has Bidjara ancestry (Canarvon Gorge, Qld). She has taught in Aboriginal community education services, and has published and lectured widely in Aboriginal early childhood education. The outstanding analytical depth of Karen's research has seen her awarded the 2005 Barbara Creaser Memorial Award by Early Childhood Australia, the 2006 James Cook University Medal, the joint 2007 Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE), Doctoral Research in Education Award and the 2008 NAIDOC Scholar of the Year Award. Karen is a member of the Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children and the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) Research Network, and is currently Associate Professor Early Childhood at Southern Cross University.

### **E1 Tracy Young**

Tracy Young teaches at Swinburne University of Technology in Melbourne, is a committee member of Environmental Education in Early Childhood (EEEC Vic inc) and has established a Victorian Early Childhood Australia (ECA) sub group with a focus on advocating for sustainability. She completed the Diploma of Sustainability at the National Centre for Sustainability at Swinburne and now lectures in this course in addition to childcare courses. She has been instrumental in the development of a dual option for childcare students whereby they can complete a childcare and a sustainability diploma concurrently. Tracy has been a long-term advocate for inclusion of a sustainability competency in the National Community Services Training Package and this is now about to be implemented

Tracy has co-authored numerous publications including: *Just Discover: Connecting children with the Natural World* and *Just Investigate: Science and Technology Experiences for Young Children*, In addition to writing two chapters in *The Outdoor Playspace*

*Naturally*. Tracy is the proud recipient of the Jean Denton Memorial Scholarship for 2008 and will be using the funds to continue her masters of education research with the thesis focusing on the First Footprints: Sustainable early childhood programs.

### **E1 Catharine Hydon**

Catharine Hydon began as a teacher in a sessional kindergarten program and has gone on to manage a range of services for children and their families from childcare in the Northern suburbs of Melbourne to school based programs in Papua New Guinea.

Following her work in children service's Catharine moved to a support and training role for early childhood professionals at the FKA Multicultural Resource Center, where she coordinated the training program. Catharine then moved to the Brotherhood of St Laurence where she led several early years projects that contributed to a strategic advocacy agenda for young children living in disadvantage. A major feature of her work was a collaborative project to progress the establishment of an integrated service on a public housing estate in inner Melbourne. Catharine is now working as an independent early childhood consultant.

Catharine has been a long time member of the Executive of Victorian Branch of Early Childhood Australia, and significantly, was a co-founder of Real Rights for Refugee Children, an advocacy group for the promotion of refugee children's place in early childhood services. In 2003 Catharine was awarded the Barbara Creaser Memorial Award for outstanding contribution to early childhood education. Catharine is a Director on the National Board of Early Childhood Australia representing Victoria and contributed to the review of the ECA code of ethics.

### **E5 Kathy Walker**

Kathy Walker is a renowned Melbourne – based Educational Consultant who conducts a range of professional development sessions through-out Australia for staff working across all sectors of early childhood and primary education, as well as a range of government organisations. She also works with parent groups on a range of topics. Kathy is formerly a university lecturer in education and author of the best selling book for parents, *What's the Hurry?* as well as her latest book for teachers *Play Matters* on the Australian Developmental Curriculum.

### **E6 + F3 Anthony Semann**

For the past 15 years Anthony has worked as an educator, innovator and advocate with a broad range of government, non-government and private organisations. His skills and expertise have seen him work with organisations across Australia and overseas including Columbia University, New York. What began as a young teachers desire to help individuals transform the quality of their lives, relationships and values, led to Anthony combining his skills and knowledge with Colin Slattery and in 1999 they founded Semann and Slattery. This is a company truly committed to transformative practices and philosophies.

Anthony is one of the most dynamic young professionals in Australia today. He is in demand as a presenter, facilitator and public speaker which has seen him deliver over 45 opening addresses and over 75 conference papers at national and international conferences. Anthony is an innovative and inspirational trainer and educator and he has delivered over 350 professional development programs. Participants of these programs acknowledge his outstanding ability to empower, transform and assist organisations and people, leading them to excel and be more responsive to their clients. He has an exceptional capacity to challenge organisations and people and have them reflect on how their approaches to communication, leadership, diversity, values, relationships and workplace culture affect their services, businesses and ultimately the community. Anthony's achievements have been publicly recognised by his peers and the broader community and he has been awarded the Young Manager of the Year Award and the Inaugural Advocate of the Year Award.

### **F3 Denise Proud**

Denise Proud is a Murri woman born in Wakka-Wakka. She was born in an Aboriginal settlement known as Cherbourg. After her secondary schooling she left her family to take up study in Brisbane where she completed her qualifications in early childhood. She has worked in range of early childhood settings in Queensland and has been an advisor for many years. Denise has also worked in correctional centres, youth detention centres, women's centres and universities. She is the author of *Fall from Grace? Reflecting on Early Childhood Education while Decolonizing Intercultural Friendships from Kindergarten to University and Prison*.

### **F4 Michelle Bartlett**

Michelle has been the Centre Director of Greythorn ECC since it first opened in 1996, and together with her dedicated staff, has worked to build a warm and nurturing environment for children to grow and learn. Greythorn ECC is a community run centre providing long day care to 40 children per day and strives to provide innovative and flexible programs that meet the needs of its community.

As Centre Director, Michelle is responsible for the development and maintenance of budgets, recruitment, training and management of staff, policy development, continuous improvement and liaison with relevant Early Childhood Professionals. In addition to the overall management of Greythorn ECC, Michelle also undertakes direct contact with the children in each room and ensures she maintains open and trusting relationships with all children, parents and staff.

### **F4 Kirsten Slifirski**

A creative thinker, Kirsten Slifirski is happiest when she is drawing on her diverse work experience and bringing seemingly disparate ideas together to solve problems. For the last six years Kirsten has worked in community development, focusing on the early years. She is strongly committed to working in the gaps and, within the social inclusion agenda, investing in children now and in their own right. Lecturing in cinema studies in a previous life informs her interest in capturing children's voices, multiliteracies and cultural competencies. She has worked delivering the early years strategy at the Brotherhood of St Laurence and is currently the Internal Consultant for the Early Years at Berry Street. Kirsten joined the KPV board in 2008.

### **F5 Kathy Kent**

Kathy has worked in children's services for nearly 20 years and has extensive experience working across all sectors of the early childhood field. Kathy has also worked as a Community Development Officer with the City of Greater Dandenong including working with the local Aboriginal Community and the Child Care Links Pilot Project. Child Care Links aimed at linking early childhood services with the local community and supporting staff in developing positive partnerships with families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Kathy has been with the FKA Children's Services since July 2006.

### **F6 Judith Gray**

Judith is an experienced project manager, specialising in cross-sectoral projects in the health, education and welfare fields, with a background in working with parent partnerships, child and family health services, early childhood and primary schools. She was awarded a Creswick Foundation Grant in 2006 to study school readiness and Head Start programs in the US in 2006 and disseminate learnings from the study to the Early Years Partnership in Hume. Her current interests are in early years service integration and community hub models in disadvantaged communities.

Judith is currently working as Partnership Facilitator, *Hume* Early Years Partnership Broadmeadows Uniting Care, has been involved with Best Start and Communities for Children Programs at Broadmeadows Uniting Care for five years. Her role includes facilitation of the Partnership, cross-sectoral working groups, neighbourhood groups, and a parent advisory group.



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