

Reconceptualising Active Adult Participation in ECE: Enhancing child learning and community wellness

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RESEARCHING WITH TEACHERS IN PARTNERSHIP

Ma tini ma mano ka rapa te whai

By many, by thousands, the work (project) will be accomplished; Many hands make light work; Unity is strength



Teaching and Learning Research Initiative

New Zealand government funding scheme aims to:

- build a cumulative body of knowledge linking teaching and learning
- enhance the links between educational research and teaching practices—and researchers and teachers—across early childhood, school, and tertiary sectors
- grow research capability and capacity in the areas of teaching and learning




See projects at www.tlri.org.nz




Whanganui Central Baptist Kindergarten and Preschool







Population: 42,639 (2006)

- 22 percent of the population identify as Māori
- Lower post-school and school qualifications than rest of NZ (with higher % of Māori in this category than rest of NZ)
- Higher number of single parent families than national average
- Lower incomes than national average

 The Prime Minister's Office
New Zealand Government

 New Zealand

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(<http://www.stats.govt.nz/Census/2006CensusHomePages/QuickStats/About>)

303 & CBK



- Actively & intentionally involving ourselves in the community
- Active, intentional and ongoing relationship building with whānau
- Facilitating active and intentional linking: whānau to whānau; whānau with services

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Whanganui Central Baptist Kindergarten and Early Learning Centres

The diagram illustrates the Whanganui Central Baptist Kindergarten and Early Learning Centres as a central hub, connected to several key community and support networks. The central image shows a building with the number '303' and a group of people standing in front of it. Arrows point from this central hub to the following elements:

- Parent Education Strength based
- Social supports & Informal networks
- Parent Support
- Participation & Engagement
- Parent Partnerships
- Recently identified gaps in our community

Below the central image is a logo for the Whanganui Central Baptist Kindergarten and Early Learning Centres, featuring stylized figures in blue, yellow, and red.

At the bottom left, there is a green banner with the text: "The Whanganui Central Baptist Kindergarten and Early Learning Centres".

At the bottom right, there is a logo for the University of Canterbury, with the text: "UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY" and "Te Kōwhirihi Matiri".

Emerging Parent Support & Development

for a community of learning

Parent Education Strengths Based

- Attachment
- Brain development
- Budgeting
- Social Boundaries
- Tools
- Early years
- Middle years
- Teen
- Informal connections
- Parent to parent, Teacher
- Home visits
- SPACE

Parent Support

- Choices in Early Childhood Education, TDR, Playgroups, Kindergarten, Schools
- Parent Support Group – Learning, Working, Create n Take
- Career
- Allergy Support
- Mums N Bubs
- Baby Basics
- Home Visits

Events

- SGP events
- Community events

Social Supports & Informal Networks

- Advocates for Children who witness violence
- Antismell
- Barterlog
- Bernadette
- Awareness Child Care
- Baptist Anglican
- Belonging Partners
- Central Baptist Church
- Community Mental Health
- CIVF
- Early Childhood Centres
- Family Start – Te Puiaua
- Family Support Services
- Family Works
- Jipipi
- Kaitiaki School
- Kids At Kindergarten
- Link In Toile
- Open Home Foundation
- Mumma Mental Health
- Mothers
- Plunket
- Post Natal Depression
- Public Health
- School
- SKIP
- Te Oranga
- Violence Intervention Network
- Wairangi Learning Centre
- WINZ

The diagram features a central cluster of six overlapping circles, each containing an icon and a title. The titles are: "Parent Education Strengths Based" (top left), "Parent Support" (bottom left), "Events" (left), "Participation & Engagement" (center left), "Recently identified gaps in community" (center), and "Parent Partnerships" (center right). Each circle is connected by double-headed arrows to its neighbors, forming a network. A larger circle at the top contains the main title "Emerging Parent Support & Development for a community of learning". Below the central cluster is a photograph of a building with the text "Link In Toile" overlaid.


Source: Adapted from the National Parent Support Framework, 2019. Reproduced under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license.

Research Aim:


Develop innovative, appropriate and responsive ways to work with the community in ways that are sustainable in everyday ECE pedagogical practices

Propose a new discourse


- Reconceptualising ECE centres as places for
 - adult participation
 - active teacher-whānau partnerships
 - positive holistic outcomes for children
 - Enhancing community wellness.
- ECE centres and services building community connectedness



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Methods and tools

- Interviews
- Cameras
- Pedagogical documentation
- Mapping
- Event recording
- Journals
- LEARN site
- Teachers and researchers collaborative action
- Jointly decided approaches trialled
- Cyclical approach across all four centres



Research question

How does active adult participation in early childhood education enhance positive outcomes for children and their whānau?

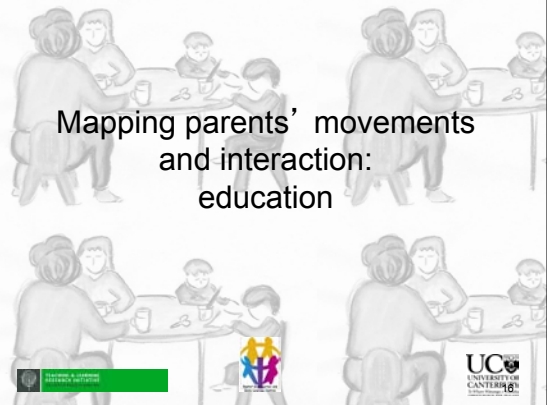


Research

- Teacher – Parent interactions, Parent to Parent interactions: Mapping
- Building connections: Seeing and Being Seen
- Children's learning: Golden Thread, Teachers conferencing
- Community wellness: CBK as a 'platform'



Mapping parents' movements and interaction: education



Mapping Movements and Interactions

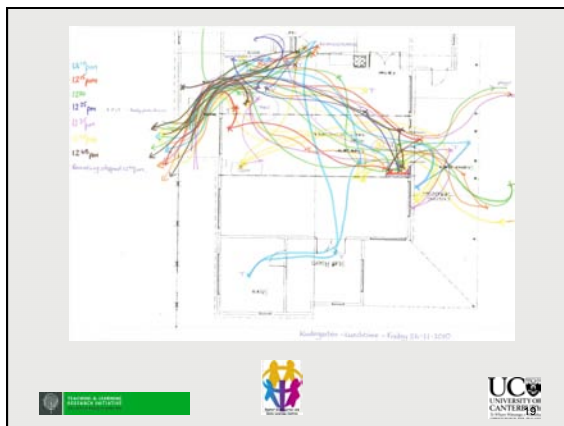
Interaction patterns depend very much on seeing and being seen. Often the need and motivation for informal and unplanned encounter arises only in the very moment of seeing someone. The more someone sees – and is seen – the larger the possibilities for interaction. (Sailer & Penn, 2007, p.10)



So – Active Adult Participation

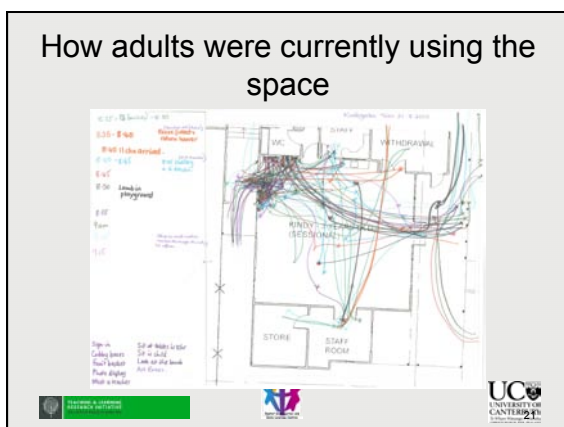
- Consider how the spaces were occupied and their uses
- How "space" and "place" may promote or inhibit social interaction between adults
- Identify patterns of interactions within each space/place





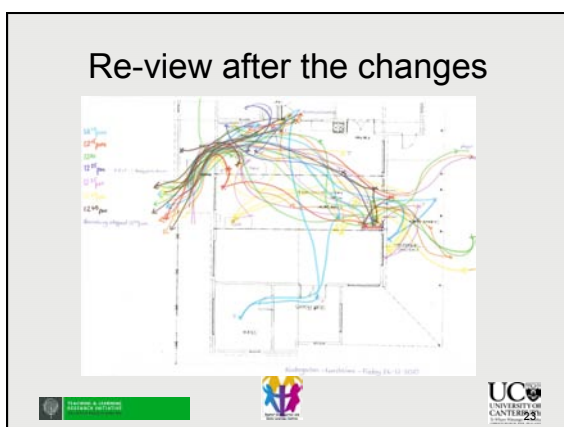
They tell us:

- Patterns of adult movement
- Ways of interaction with the environment
- Where interactions were taking place
- Where adults linger



Teacher Team Discussion

- How does our centre set-up support and encourage (or not) adult involvement
- Is our centre 'family friendly'?
- What are our patterns of interaction with adults as they arrive in our centre?



What changes have resulted from our review of the data?

- Team sharing of the data
- Awareness of adult movements
- Centre layout and environment
- Awareness raised of teacher positioning in environment

Active Adult Participation

- Welcome
- Belonging
- Engagement with teachers, engagement with other adults
- Teachers: Seeing other adults and being seen by other adults
- Parents: Seeing other parents and being seen






Focus – Parent to Parent connections






Connections – Seeing and Being Seen





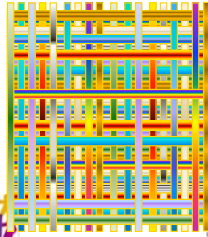








Parent Participation and Children's Learning Outcomes

THE GOLDEN THREAD

Robyn Lawrence
(Adelaide September 2002)

THE GOLDEN THREAD: Active parent participation

How does active parent participation enhance children's learning outcomes?

Looked for this THREAD through all the children's learning stories





I took two children who are almost 2 years old, for a visit to the circle (2-3 year old area) in order to familiarise them with the environment and the teachers before they move here.

Several of the children at circle recognized me from the time they had spent at KIDDZ.

One of them got their portfolio book and brought it over to show me, pointing to the different photos and talking about what was happening. As I sat on the floor and showed an interest in this, I was very quickly surrounded by about 4 more children all wanting to show me their books.

One young man (who I know well) even took pictures off the wall to show me.

- The children are recognizing someone who is interested in them and are welcoming me to their space.
- They know that this is a place where they belong and feel comfortable and secure enough to share this with me.
- Communication is developing- the reciprocal interactions that occur between several people.




Adult Participation

- I showed the children I was interested in them by being at their level, listening to them, looking at their pictures and talking to them. This was all it took to engage them.

Positive Child Outcomes

- They know they are valued and important.

Robyne Huthnance






Teacher conferencing


- Case study children (19 children)

Learning stories and wider knowledge of the children and their whānau with “Out and About Photos”:


1. Golden thread of learning (dispositional, schema)
2. Participation of whānau – in and out
3. Interactions from the ‘out and about’ photos



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Out and About



A young child with blonde hair, seen from behind, looking out from a car into a parking lot. A dark car is parked in the distance.

Understandings of Adult Participation and Children's Learning Outcomes

- The more confident the parents and whānau were in the centres with the teachers and other parents, the more settled and socially confident their children were.
- Children shared the interests and topic/activity passions of the parents and whānau, and when parents shared these with the teachers this engaged other children's interests and learning.



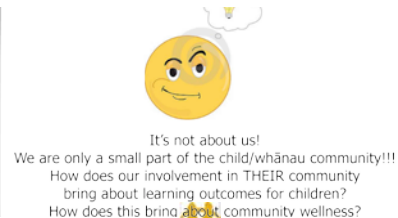
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- Connecting parents with other parents within the centres enabled new friendships to be developed, both between the parents and between their children. These friendships built confidence for the children and their parents to participate more in the centres and the centres' activities.
- As the parents became aware of their child's learning progress and friendships within the centres they became more interested in attending and participating in the centre and the wider activities and support opportunities CBK afforded.

- The children's dispositional learning, tracked over time (2-3 years), demonstrated consistency and increasing competence in favoured areas of learning, and a range of strategies in less favoured areas of learning. Connections between the children's less favoured areas of learning at CBK and their interests at home and community improved their confidence and skills over all areas of their learning at CBK.



Rethinking community



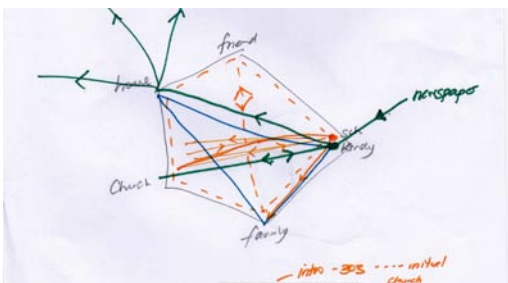
- Becoming connected with the 'people, places and things' in the community within which CBK is positioned;
- Seeing 'advocacy work' as a part of the teaching and learning programme – for the children, whānau, CBK, and the community;



- Being 'alongside' families – not the 'experts', not the 'helpers', not the 'saviours', but building, maintaining and promoting responsive and respectful relationships with families, connecting, networking, and supportive. The new positioning 'alongside' and 'with' families meant focusing on their goals and aspirations for their children and their families and whānau;
- Being embedded in the community not just physically present in the community – shifting the gaze from 'inside CBK' to 'outside CBK'. Different connections and positions became part of the everyday work of teaching and learning



CBK as a "platform" for community wellness



Duncan, J., & Te One, S. (Eds.) (2012). *Comparative early childhood education services: International perspectives (Critical Cultural Studies of Childhood)*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

