

### In this issue:

- Kei Tua o te Pae revisited: Valuing language, culture and identity
- Back up, back up it is too late to reverse
- I have been reading...The Philosophical Baby, by Alison Gopnik
- Upcoming Events
- Gifts of Kindness
- Shared reflections that grow everyone's understanding of what valued learning looks like with 2 Learning Stories
- Who is...Robyn Lawrence
- ELP Blogs
- Responding to the Unexpected

### Kei Tua o te Pae Revisited: Valuing Language, Culture and Identity

My copies of Kei Tua o te Pae (KTotP) are pretty battered and dog eared. I have written in the margins, underlined places and have numerous 'post its' on pages that I often refer teachers to. These documents are a living, breathing part of my work with teachers. One day my copies will wear out. I know other teachers also use these in a similar way.

I have also visited centres where we have had to search extensively to find KTotP and in the end found them tucked away in an administration office looking pristine and new (or covered in dust!). What a waste.

KTotP offers us a window into assessment practices from a diverse range of settings. There is 'added value' with the depth of analysis from the authors and from these exemplars we can deepen our assessment practices as well as finding pathways for tackling aspects of assessment that we might not feel confident about.

Today I was once again delving through KTotP, and as always I found something new and surprising even though I consider that I know the books well. I was looking for references for teachers and was specifically looking at the way language was used to convey the depth of learning, so teachers could see how others might write something, or view the way others might approach a learning situation.

As often happens, I got side-tracked and realised that there was a wealth of information here that I had not yet explored deeply enough.

The journey towards deepening bicultural assessment practices is often a difficult one to start - how do we document the ways we are valuing language, culture and identity authentically? Particularly if, like myself, you are someone who is not and will never be an expert in things Māori. It is easy to be paralysed into doing nothing, staying safe in a place where we will not offend, not make mistakes but also sadly where we will not learn and grow.

Jenny Ritchie (2003, p. 100) comments:

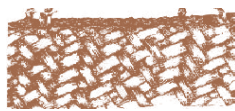
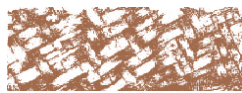
Teachers from the dominant Pākehā culture require humility and sensitivity if they are to avoid misrepresenting Māori cultural symbols and meanings, and be aware of their limitations in facilitating bicultural development.

My pathway, therefore is to document how, as a teacher, I am learning about and incorporating a whanaungatanga approach into my teaching practice. I can write that I am a learner and am beginning to explore these concepts. I can acknowledge that I will never be an expert, always a learner.

Jenny Ritchie (2001) discusses teacher education and the features of a whanaungatanga approach, one of which is teachers recognising that "they cannot be experts in another person's culture if they do not share that cultural background" and that "non-Māori cannot speak for Māori. Non-Māori teachers create opportunities for Māori to voice their perceptions and are committed to listening and responding to them. (as cited in Kei Tua o te Pae, Book 3, p. 4)







These books are available online at: <http://www.educate.ece.govt.nz>. Teachers can also purchase their own copies through the link on this site.

### References:

Ministry of Education. (2009). *Kei Tua o te Pae: Assessment For Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education (2011) *ECE Educate*. Retrieved from <http://www.educate.ece.govt.nz>

Ritchie, J. (2003) Te Whāriki as a Potential Lever for Bicultural Development. In J. Nuttall (Ed) *Weaving Te Whāriki. Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood curriculum document in theory and practice* (pp.79-109). NZCER: Wellington

Alison Brierley

### Back up, back up it is too late to reverse

What are the options for backing up your data? There are two really, one is in the Clouds or on an external hard drive: **Cloud computing** in itself is nothing new and I am sure quite a few of you are computing in the clouds and do not even realise this is what you are doing. If you are using a 'cloud' based service it means that your document, powerpoint, keynote, is not stored on your computer, rather it is stored on a server somewhere else. This means you can then access your data from any computer anywhere in the world, giving you peace of mind if your laptop, USB or other storage device is lost, damaged, stolen etc. After the Christchurch earthquake, businesses who had their data stored off-site were able to get up and running a lot quicker than those who did not as many computers were inaccessible due to the Red Zone cordon.

[Google Documents](#) is a really good example of this sort of storage system. When you upload a document to Google Documents it is stored on the Google server rather than your own (although you might keep the copy on your computer as well). The document can then be read and/or edited by people you invite.

Last week I got an invitation to join '[Dropbox](#)', an online data storage service where you can store up to 2 gigabyte of data for free. This sounded like a great idea and I installed it but have not used it yet. It would be really good if you use a different computer at work and at home as you could put your document into dropbox and then access it at home rather than emailing a document, particularly if it is large. If you do a Google search there are a number of places where you can store documents online for free or paying for storage space. Amazon also has a cloud based service

Apple recently announced their new iCloud service which comes with the next OS upgrade, and will give you 5 gigabyte of space to back up your data free. This will work with your iPhone, iPad, iPod touch, as well as your Mac, or PC. It will give you the ability to store your content as well as wirelessly updating all of your devices when anything changes. iCloud will be released here in the Spring of 2011 and I will be interested to see what it offers as far as backup goes.

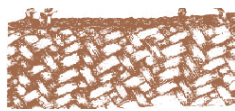
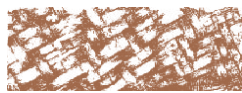
If you are using an **external hard drive**, keep it in a different location than your computer. If your computer is stolen and your backup is next to it, chances are your external hard drive will be taken too.

If you have a Mac, use the Time Machine application and back up regularly to your external hard drive. If you have a PC, look for a hard drive that works wirelessly and/or automatically when it is plugged in to your computer. [Clickfree](#) have a number of options which work on a PC or a Mac as does [Western Digital](#). I use an Apple Time Capsule which works wirelessly and automatically so I do not have to think about backing up, rather it works quietly in the background and gives me the peace of mind that all of my data is safe and secure.

One thing that is crucial regardless of what type of backup you use, is that you back up and back up regularly. There is nothing worse than deleting a crucial document and not having it backed up somewhere.

Jo Colbert





### I have been reading...The Philosophical Baby - What Children's Minds Tell Us About Truth, Love, and the Meaning of Life. By Alison Gopnik

In this book Alison Gopnik, a professor of psychology at the University of California at Berkeley, mother, and philosopher, shares with us the story of how we become the grown-ups we are. There has been amazing growth in our understanding of what is happening in babies and young children's minds.

Alison Gopnik tells us:

*We used to think that babies and young children were irrational, egocentric, immediate and limited. In fact, psychologists and neuroscientist have discovered that babies not only learn more, care more and experience more than we ever could have though possible. In some ways, young children are actually smarter, more imaginative, more caring and even more conscious than adults are. (p. 5)*

This book offers us, as parents, grandparents, early childhood teachers, and infant/child specialists, a deeper understanding and appreciation of our role in shaping the lives of children and our future as human beings. She reminds us that:

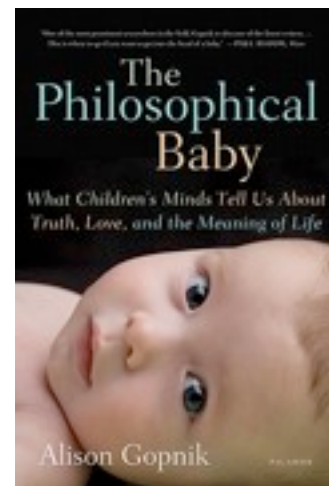
*... love itself depends on knowledge and imagination. For babies, who are so utterly helpless and dependent, no theory is as important as the theory of love. From the time they are very small babies are figuring out these theories of love, based on what they see the caregivers around them do and say. And these theories in turn shape the way these babies will care for their own children when they grow up. (p. 247)*

We are in a very powerful position as we engage with children and their families. This book has the power to enhance the image we hold of the child and influence what we do, how we teach, who we are around infants, toddlers and young children.

I liked this book, though at times it was quite heavy reading. However, there are many other readings available on the internet and "Your Baby Is Smarter Than You Think" (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/16/opinion/16gopnik.html>) is a very easy read and a good one to cut our Alison Gopnik teeth on. It is one that would be useful to share with friends, and parents and families at your Centre.

If you google Alison Gopnik there are also some small videos for viewing and sharing too.

Kathryn Delany



### Upcoming Events

### August - October 2011

**09.08.2011**

Lecture Series Auckland  
Prof Margaret Carr (Waikato University): Judicious teachers: What do they do and how do they do it?

**16.08.2011**

Lecture Series Hamilton  
Prof Margaret Carr (Waikato University): Judicious teachers: What do they do and how do they do it?

**13.09.2011**

Lecture Series Auckland  
Alison Brierley: "Remember You Have to Share" - How Do Teachers Grow Children's Social Competence?

**20.09.2011**

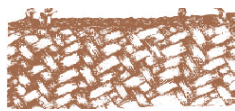
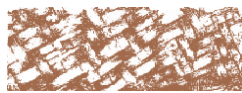
Lecture Series Auckland  
Alison Brierley: "Remember You Have to Share" - How Do Teachers Grow Children's Social Competence?

**11.10.2011**

Lecture Series Auckland  
Julie Killick (Stanmore Bay Kindergarten): Diary of a Crazy Woman

**18.10.2011**

Lecture Series Auckland  
Julie Killick (Stanmore Bay Kindergarten): Diary of a Crazy Woman



### Gifts of Kindness

With your help, we would like to support the Early Childhood Education communities in Christchurch. We hope to send parcels that will bring a little bit of joy, laughter and excitement to centres. Small items (no larger than a shoe-box) or monetary donations can be donated. Alternatively, you could organise your community to fill a small box.

Possible gifts to donate:

#### For adults:

- new hats, warm socks, beanies, scarves
- 'pamper' goodies, lovely toiletries
- eat treats - chocolate, biscuits
- magazines (new)

There are more than 40 Early Childhood Centres in Christchurch who have been badly affected by the earthquakes. Contributing to a gift-box of kindness is one of the ways to support our colleagues by showing them that we care and are thinking about them.

**For gifts:** When you have finished collecting and gathering gifts, please contact Marie: [marie.thom@elp.co.nz](mailto:marie.thom@elp.co.nz) or phone: 07 856 8708. **For monetary donations:** direct debit: Educational Leadership Project, Westpac, 03 1556 0141532 00 (please state 'Gifts of Kindness') or if you prefer cheque payment: please make your cheque out to Educational Leadership Project and send it to ELP: PO Box 24 100, Hamilton 3253.

### Shared reflections that grow everyone's understanding of what valued learning looks like

Earlier this week at our regular team planning meeting at Greerton Early Childhood Centre, it just so happened that the first few Learning Stories, read by teachers, were all from our infant whare. The rest of our team listened with great interest as these teachers read their thoughtful stories. I asked their permission to share these more widely in this newsletter as each of them had a different context, a different child, but it showed how much the teachers had been affected by a reading we have all been currently absorbing. We often have an article or book on the morning tea table that someone has found and wants to share). When teachers read their thoughtfully written Learning Stories at planning meetings, the whole team gets a chance to consider learning in context. These models of thoughtful practice give us all insight into the thinking behind teacher/learner engagement. They help us all to grow our writing styles and they indicate how families can be drawn into a teacher's growing knowledge and understanding and into the centre's vision for wise practice. We have found that when we wrap these into the context of their child's learning, families are drawn into conversations about learning in deep and meaningful ways. Over time, they really get to understand where we are coming from and so we never get asked at a later stage "How are you getting my child ready for school?" Families know how vital supporting a child's view of themselves as a strong competent learner is, right from the very beginning.

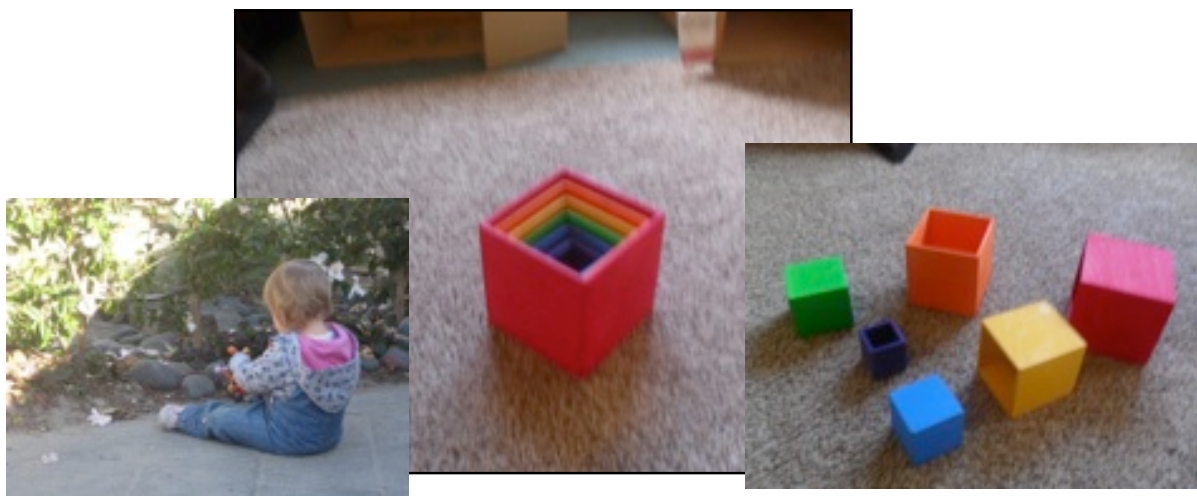
These stories are deeply reflective. Karen's is written in a way that once upon a time teachers would never have considered. Now that we see ourselves as life long learners too and are prepared to talk about our journeys openly, there is a very real opportunity to be introspective. In so doing we give families an insight into the ways teachers puzzle over what wise teaching means in the context of their own child's learning. As you read this, think about what the parent might feel reading it.

Learning Stories are powerful in a range of ways. Rachel has written her story in a way that enables families and other team members to see into the thinking about why and how an infant team works. It unpacks her thinking around the building of strong relationships with infants. Most importantly it reveals the importance of the strength of attachments between children and key teachers. It makes the team's image of infants as researchers, as explorers, very clear. It also lets everyone see, in the context of an individual child's learning, how the environment is an enabler when children's ability to move freely towards things of interest, is supported.

Alison Gopnik's article [Your Baby Is Smarter Than You Think](#) inspired the teachers to write these Learning Stories, The book that goes more deeply into these ideas is *The Philosophical Baby*, which Kathryn wrote about in her article above.

Lorraine Sands

# Harriet's plan foiled!



We have recently bought a range of new equipment. One of these items was a series of wooden stacking boxes, all brightly coloured. I spied Harriet holding the set, tightly packed inside each other. She was curious about the graduating sequence of ridges made by each box, and seemed to realise that by pulling on the ridged edge, it would reveal the box's surprise. It seemed the boxes had little movement when stacked in this way. It was my impression she was trying to pull out a box.

While Harriet was completely at ease and still focused, I in my enthusiasm for her to discover the six boxes hiding within in, helped her to retrieve a box. Harriet looked up and didn't seem to find my interference helpful or amazing.

Now that was my clue to stop, but with complete unawareness of the moment, I thought by revealing the other boxes, I would capture her attention.

**Up to this point Harriet had been intent on discovery, while I was intent on overloading her with my vision, and thus totally spoiling the 'unknown' for her.**

Harriet picked up the box, gave it a cursory glance, dropped it and moved off. She did however stop and looked back with a scornful expression, which said it all.... "yeah! good one Karen."

I certainly felt the weight of my interference, falling squarely on my shoulders and gained the knowledge that she wouldn't be inviting me to the movies in the future, in fear I would reveal the endings.

Now it seemed the universe came together to reinforce this learning moment, for as I sat at morning tea, staring back at me was an article by Alison Gopnik, a professor of psychology, titled 'Your baby is smarter than you think!'

I'm sure Harriet would agree. While she was captivated by the unexpected, I was focused on outcomes. Alison Gopnik in her article highlighted recent experiments where children left to spontaneously play with a toy, figure out how it works. By playing in this way, she suggests babies and infants are exploring cause and effect. Harriet so clearly illustrated Alison Gopnik's research to me, that when children are shown how a toy works, they are less interested in exploring it. **"Very young children, imagine and explore a vast array of possibilities."** (Alison Gopnik) It is very important for Harriet to be given the time and space to investigate for herself, to make her own discoveries. She is naturally drawn to the new and unexpected. Harriet doesn't rely on what she knows as I did, but interacts and investigates her world with the goal of being informed. By exploring her world in this way, Harriet will be shaping flexible and open mind habits. It's from these early childhood experiences where her future attitudes to learning will be shaped. We view our environment here as a provocateur which stimulates Harriet's interests, creates questions for her, encouraging mindful investigations. **"Babies explore; adults exploit."**

**Harriet reinforced to me, that she is capable and in control of her learning, and I should be mindful, intuitively aware of her exploration, as we interact together.**



# WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE A BABY?

Written By Rachel  
May 2011

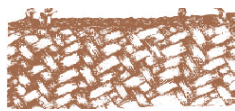
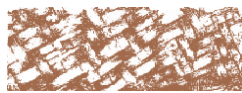


Zack I have been watching as you are learning about the world around you and finding your place here at Greerton. Your Key Teacher Karen has supported you with your transition into Greerton and helped you to feel safe and secure here. This is evident from the bright eyes and beaming smile as she walks into the room. Now the amazing part to watch and be involved in is how you are learning here. Outside on the deck observing the action has been a space where you have started your journey of discovery and possibilities. This morning I stood back and watched as you investigated a leaf you found on the ground. You touched it, smelt it, then carried it with you as you made your way back to the Infant Whare.

## **What learning is happening here:**

Zack, watching you research the leaf today reaffirmed my strong values and beliefs that babies and young children learn about the world around them through all sorts of real-world objects. Gone are the days when we would have table top activities for small children, the most important part of their world is relationships and the environment around them. My teaching is being inspired by Alison Gopnik at the moment and I am really interested in her views about how babies see the world and adults perceptions of how they are learning. I feel we have come a long way in our teaching here at Greerton and it is awesome to have it supported by relevant literature.

“What children observe most closely, explore most obsessively and imagine most vividly are the people around them. There are no perfect toys, there is no magic formula. Parents and other caregivers teach young children by paying attention and interacting with them naturally and, most of all, by just allowing them to play.”(Alison Gopnik p.46 ).



### Who is...Robyn Lawrence?

Robyn in Retrospect.

I have been with Educational Leadership Project for a while now, in fact, ELP sort of defines my last 10 years. I enjoy looking back on a life lived and in retrospect putting together the puzzle of - Who am I? Why do I do what I do?

The 1980es and 1990es were a lot about becoming an early childhood teacher at Pakuranga College Early Childhood Centre and there, in a small autonomous nonprofit community centre, I was in the position of finding out, trying out and strengthening new ideas. With the support of many people I was able to explore teaching and learning in a way I had never thought possible.

Looking back to the 14 years in the 1970es that I spent full time at home with our four children, I realise that here my passion for young children flourished and my belief in babies and children as being highly motivated, thoughtful, discerning learners developed. I delighted in their theories and explanations and supported their passions. I can see that my teacher training as a teenager and graduation as a primary teacher had minimal impact on my teaching life.

Now, as I look back on the freedom of my own childhood, I remember the trust my parents and wider family had in me and the real work I was involved in on the farm, taking responsibility for many tasks and becoming very skilled from a very young age. Milking cows by hand, delivering lambs and playing hockey were just some of the things I became expert at. The wisdoms acquired and the experiences lived in those early years were some of the treasures from which my teaching philosophy and practice emerged.

This last decade has been very much about my adult children and our eight mokopuna. I continue to learn from these wonderful people and the young children in my life. I rejoice in their understanding, their passion and their skill. As one of my daughters and her family settle into a new life, living in Phnom Penh, I think about resilience, responding to change and acquiring new wisdom. Two weeks ago, walking up to the skyline in the hills of Wellington we celebrated with my son's children as they overcame tiredness and a measure of uncertainty to climb to the very top and tackle the long downhill high on the exhilaration of success.

Through ELP my life has opened up to wider opportunities both here in New Zealand and overseas. I continue to pursue my passion for teaching and learning and in particular through developing my awareness and understanding of the bicultural nature of our curriculum. An ongoing connection over the past eleven years with Awhi Whanau Early Childhood Centre is a very special part of my life and contributes significantly to my life learning and developing understanding.

Teaching and learning are embedded in life, a life lived, a life living and a life to be lived. I celebrate my life lived and the opportunities I have now, and I thrive on the opportunities and possibilities that lie ahead.



### ELP blogs

Have you had a look at our blogs lately? There are now 4 blogs by ELP or ELP members you can check out:

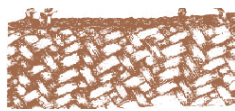
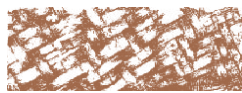
**ELP blog:** Our main blog, with news regarding ECE developments, thoughts on teaching and teaching practice, books or articles that might interest you, and news from our ECE friends all over the world. <http://educationalleadershipproject.blogspot.com>

**ELP's Kindness blog:** A blog dedicated to kindness, with quotes, thoughts, Learning Stories and maybe some of your Centre's stories soon? - <http://elp-kindness.blogspot.com>

**Wendy's blog:** If you always wanted to know what Wendy does on her travels or why she has a passion for mermaids... - <http://wendyelp.blogspot.com>

**Jo's blog:** Our ICT queen blogs mainly about...ICT of course! - <http://jocolbert.wordpress.com>





### Responding to the Unexpected: Coming Face to Face with the Realities of Earthquakes, Evacuations and Infants and Toddlers.

For two days in May, the ELP team were part of a MOE Hui. A short half hour presentation from three members of the CORE professional development team, who were in the Christchurch CBD on 22 February left my mind in turmoil. They are now actively involved in post quake support for the centres involved and at the end of the presentation asked us to consider the scenario faced by one centre as they evacuated that afternoon.



Gradually the room became quiet as the enormity of the task became obvious. Immediately we were faced with the thought that this centre has a reasonable baby/adult ratio and it was still exceptionally challenging. With horror we realised the reality of the evacuation of 25 babies and toddlers with the government standards of 1 teacher to 5 under two year olds. Surely as an outcome of the earthquake this regulation must change to the recommended maximum standards of 1 adult to 3 under two year olds.

Most of the babies were being prepared to sleep at that moment and so were not dressed for the outdoors and many had no shoes on. Some were still eating and having their bottles. The following hours of standing in the park as rain began to fall in gathering cold darkness, made it glaringly obvious that the recommended heavy unmanageable plastic container crammed to the top with general emergency supplies was not going to necessarily support the specifics of the need that afternoon.

Our team remembered the trolleys we saw in a community park-based kindergarten in Berlin which they use to transport their toddlers. Robust, safe and extremely practical. For city centres having these vehicles enables one adult to evacuate up to 7 very young children.

Another thought emerged for me during the week. Could parents, on enrolment, be supplied with a named, small backpack which they fill, and maintain, with the emergency supplies required to keep their little one fed, warm and dry, until they are able to collect them? If these backpacks along with contact details medical supplies etc. were in a wheelie bin near the exit then they too could be evacuated easily.



As we sat there we realised just how valuable the insight from this group in Christchurch will be. The urgency of the task at hand for all teachers is to re enter the evacuation scenarios we face and to identify the current risk we are accommodating simply by not taking responsibility and planning forward for the practicalities of ensuring the safety of the little ones we have in our care for many hours every day in unexpected emergencies.

Robyn Lawrence