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## iPlay, iPad... Conference

### Put this in your diary now!

Do you or your centre own an iPad? We welcome you to attend our iPlay, iPad... conference, where you will have the opportunity to attend several different workshop focussed on the iPad - from setting it up, tips, tricks & essential apps, and revisiting learning and cybersafety.

**When:** 20-23 January 2014

**Where:** The beautiful, peaceful, Tauhara Retreat and Conference Centre in Acacia Bay, Taupo.

Keep an eye out on our website for further details!

## *Les Aventuriers*

I'd like to introduce you to Ju, Béné; Kiara & Maël.

We were heading home in a horrendous downpour and saw them by the side of the road. Two cyclists towing children's buggies. My husband said "Jump out and ask where they are staying tonight". People who cycle do that, especially if you have toured on bicycles before - we know what it's like! This couple had no plans except they hoped to stay in the village. I pointed out the pub was closed and there was nothing else around and suggested they come and stay with us. It's another thing that cycle tourers do - they expect that other cyclists are trustworthy! The family - Ju, Béné, Maël (2) and Kiara (5) came and stayed.



Ju and Béné had already spent a month in Tasmania and were planning two months in New Zealand. I use the word 'planning' loosely (which is also why I loved them!) They were heading north. That was the plan. No place to stay, no deadlines, nothing booked. Just going north.



Maël and Kiara settled into our wilderness well. Our child free home did offer lots of possibilities, if you knew what to look for. Our sloping floors were great ramps for the couple of plastic cars that were their toy quota. Cupboards and drawers opened and revealed useful additions and we soon had a reasonable play space sprawling around the house. Our lack of French was no problem. Kiara and Maël have expertise in making themselves understood.

After spending a few days with us we convinced them to go south. We met up with them again in Rotorua. Old friends by now.

What intrigued us about Ju, Béné and their children was that they really did take things day by day. Being on holiday allows that luxury. They could have organised everything but chose not to. They enjoyed surprise; it was part of the adventure.

Meeting this family has changed our lives. I am richer for having met them and each member has reminded me and reconnected me with something important:

- Maël taught me that there is something of interest to be found everywhere - you only have to look.
- Kiara reminded me that friends don't have to speak your language. That joy, love laughter are a universal language able to be understood by anyone prepared to listen.
- Béné taught me that you can have amazing adventures with 2 young children.
- Ju reminded me about slowing down and enjoying the moments.



We said our goodbyes; they are off to Indonesia - not surprisingly with few plans. They are unsure whether the cycling will be safe or enjoyable so are prepared to ship everything back to France and instead back-pack around Indonesia! Intrepid travelers indeed.

Sir Edmund Hillary said "It's not the mountain we conquer but ourselves". I find this to be true. We are not all up for climbing mountains but I think we all have the capacity to go beyond what we think we can do. Never forgetting that for the average adventurer there will always be another 'mountain to climb'. This family are adventurers. Cycle touring is an adventure in itself. Cycle touring with two young children is truly adventurous.

Maybe the middle of winter, as Matariki approaches is a great time to plan an adventure. Big or small. There is a 'mountain' out there waiting. I am sure the view from the top will be worth the effort.

For more information and photos of Ju, Béné, Maël and Kiara, see their blog <http://www.lespedalesdouces.fr>



## *An Educated Nudge*



Last year I heard Guy Claxton speaking in Rotorua. During his seminar one of the teachers present suggested that they could stand aside to allow the environment to teach the children. Guy Claxton replied that while the environment is certainly a teacher it is the teachers job to give the children an 'educated nudge'. That is, to take the learning a little deeper. This has stuck with me over the year as I have thought about the part teachers play in the emergent curriculum.

The term emergent curriculum has been used for quite some time now and still there is confusion around what this might look like for teachers. Or some teachers are still unsure where to

start planning using an emergent curriculum approach. I have been reading the book 'The Play's the Thing' by Jones & Reynolds (2011) and in there they define the emergent curriculum as:

"a seeming paradox: an intentional course is implied by the use of the word curriculum, derived from the Latin *currere*, meaning to run a course or make one's way around a known route. But paradoxically, the course of this curriculum is not known at the outset. It is emergent - that is, its trajectory develops as a consequence of the logic of the problem, the particular connections that develop as participants bring their own genuine responses to the topic and collaboratively create the course to follow out of these multiple connections." (Wein, 2008, pp.5-6)

When I read this definition of emergent curriculum I can see quite quickly how this could be a very confusing term. On one hand it talks of knowing the path that will be taken however, the emergent part of the phrase means that there is no definite path to be taken. There are a couple of words that really stand out for me in this definition these are - own genuine responses, collaboratively and multiple connections.

Firstly let us think about the two words, *curriculum* - the known part, and *emerging* - the unknown part. As teachers often we know the path educationally and developmentally that we want children to take. We know the stages of development, social learning, mathematical concepts and literacy and skill acquisition that need to be part of the curriculum therefore we already have a determined pathway to follow. I think this is where the environment sits. It is up to the teacher to plan for an environment rich with possible lines of inquiry and research. An environment that will assist children's developing understanding in all curriculum areas. This is the knowledge we bring with us in our kete.



Lynn Rupe



However, what we do not know are the energies, passions and spirit that children bring with them everyday into our settings. Sir Ken Robinson's closing words in one of his TED talks are, "everyday children lay their dreams at our feet, and therefore we should tread softly". This is the unknown part of the path. This is the area that 'own genuine responses' sits. As teachers it is part of our professional practice to set up an environment that invites children into experiences based upon the knowledge that we have in our kete and the kete of the children. It is the genuine responses from the children that allows these experiences to grow and for new learning pathways to flourish. Also this is when we are listening to what children are saying with their words and actions and considering possibilities and opportunities for further learning based on the energies, passions and spirit that the child brings with them, in their kete.

Children's and teacher's kete are filled with past knowledge and experiences, passions, dream and interests all of which when put together create a path that has yet to be walked as combinations each day will be different. The emerging interest can come from what each person within your centre brings by way of passion, knowledge or interest. Wendy Lee once said in an article about leadership in early childhood that "People are drawn to the enthusiasm, passion and energy of others."

Sharing our interests and passions with children can inspire them make a genuine response of interest. There are other areas as teachers that we draw on, Jones & Reynolds (2011) write that "Curriculum also emerges from the things, people, and events in the environment, and from all the issues that arises in the course of living together day by day."



Having heard the 'genuine response', dream or passion that children have shared then together teachers and children will consider ways in which this can be grown. Collaboratively children, teachers and families will find multiple ways of deepening the learning for children. This collaboration can be kanohi ki te kanohi or through assessment of the learning, as Fleet, Patterson & Robinson wrote in their book Insights:

"Teachers, children and families are able to interpret, reflect and contribute to the happenings of the kindergarten because documentation (learning stories) invites a dialogue among them. This dialogue creates multiple perspectives and interpretations."

This is where the 'multiple connections' sit. It is a space that teachers create which allows everyone to talk about what learning is happening, what passion is being investigated and how this can be shared across differing areas of a child's life.

Thinking back to Guy Claxton and the educated nudge - adding this to the environment and the passions, energies and spirit that children and teachers bring to their day, you have a wonderful recipe for the emergent curriculum. An example of how using an emergent curriculum approach works was given by Sir Ken Robinson in an article when he wrote about Hans Zimmer an Oscar-winning composer who loved to play the piano but was not interested in rote learning. Many schools tried to educate Zimmer through their education model of curriculum area defined learning - and he was thrown out of eight of them.



The move to an emergent curriculum means taking the environment, the passion, energies, spirit and interests of the children, teachers and whānau and giving it that 'educated nudge' from the teacher (or the child) so there is a deepening

Lynn Rupe



## Jo's Latest I.T Recommendations

Where does the year go? I sat down to write this in January and now it is June! Is this a sign that I am getting older, or is life just so busy that time flies by? One thing is for sure that since I contemplated this article for the Newsletter, there has been changes to my list of what is 'hot' for me in the I.T world. When I look back to my first newsletter article for 2012 most of the things I identify, Facebook Messenger, Twitter, Skype, Kindle Reader are still things I use on a regular basis, so much so that they have become integrated into my daily use of I.T.



**Book Readers** - with full access to the iBook store New Zealanders can buy books from here, it does pay to shop around though as some books are still cheaper through the Amazon owned Kindle. If you have a Kobo reader this supports the smaller independent bookstores and can also be downloaded as a book reader on your iPad, phone or computer.

**Star Wars Angry Birds** - this has taken up more of my time than I care to admit to over the last year, I love this game, particularly the Star Wars version. Recently when I complained to my nephew about one particular level I was having trouble with, he very quickly showed me ways to fire off the birds to kill the pigs that I had not discovered! Fantastic!



**iPad Mini** - I don't own one of these, but I do like the look and feel of it and it has added portability. It is a device suited for accessibility on the go and I have found myself hankering for one. Consequently I am looking forward to the next generation and am hoping it is part of the September product release.  
<http://www.apple.com/nz/ipad-mini/overview/>

**Mac Book Air** - an update in June has seen the release of the new Mac Book Air. This is a beautiful laptop - light, 12 hour battery life, faster processor and bigger hard drives. This is the ideal computer for those of you on the go.

<http://www.apple.com/nz/macbook-air/>





**Mac Book Pro with retina display** - with flash storage this is the lightest notebook yet and has an amazing retina display which gives added clarity and detail. The processor delivers high performance allowing for smooth transitions between multiple apps as well as speed.

<http://www.apple.com/nz/macbook-pro/>

**Fitbit** - This is most definitely one of my best presents ever (thanks to my lovely son, Sam). There is nothing like a bit of healthy competition and who better to compete against but myself! The Fitbit tracks your steps, distance walked, stairs climbed as well as calories burned and then sends this information to your online profile. From the online programme you can monitor how much you have exercised over the day, week, month year or lifetime. You can also add your friends and compete against each other to see who has the most steps over a week etc. <http://www.fitbit.com/nz>



**Kindle** - the Kindle use eInk so it is as close to a real book as you can get. The latest Kindle, Paperwhite, has an eight-week battery life, built in light, faster page turning, higher contrast and screen resolution. It is difficult to get in New Zealand currently, there are websites where you can order these.

<http://www.geekzone.co.nz/kindle.asp>

**Panasonic Lumix** - the DMC-GH3 integrates a built-in Wi-Fi® module for wireless connectivity. A Smartphone or a tablet can be used as a remote controller and a remote monitor. What the camera sees is displayed on the screen of your tablet or Smartphone. It is possible to use your Smartphone or tablet to take the photo and then share your images to Facebook, Twitter, etc, using the Lumix Link app available for Smartphones and tablets. <http://www.panasonic.co.nz/products/cameras/lumix-digital-cameras/dmc-gh3/>



Jo Colbert



## Irrestibly Engaging!

When I last chatted to Loretta Lepa from Samoa Taumafai A'oga Amata (Tokoroa, New Zealand) she was bursting with excitement and by the time she finished telling me her news we were both laughing and crying together. The reason: For the last two and a half years the teachers at Samoa Taumafai have been writing Learning Stories telling their children and their families what they think about the learning progress they see happening in their setting; their A'oga.

This has been a celebration of what children can do and the more the teachers have written about the learning they see, the more connected their culture of learning and teaching has become to the children's passions, energies and spirits. They have discovered that tapping into what really matters to learners activates a thirst for learning, that takes learners to the edge, where they stretch their skills and knowledge. This happens because they are intrinsically motivated through habits of learning that have been nurtured inside learning communities, intentionally designed to enable these dispositions to flourish. Habits like curiosity, persistence, empathy, kindness and determination. It is never the other way round.



Skill teaching alone goes no where near children's passions, energies and spirits. If you want proof of this, read Stratosphere<sup>1</sup> or check out Ken Robinson's TED Talk "Bring On the Revolution".<sup>2</sup> These fabulous teachers have been deeply immersed in the learning revolution that Ken Robinson, Michael Fullan and an ever growing number of people refer to as education fit for the twenty-first century.

The vehicle the Samoa Taumafai teachers have been using to spread this meaningful learning, enabling partnership with their children and families, is the children's folders, full to the brim with stories of achievement, struggle, fairness, kindness, collaboration and heaps of effort and practice to achieve the goals children set themselves. They've done this, all the while valuing their language, culture and identity and made this happen in ways that connect with their families. How do we know this? The news Loretta and I were crying about because it was so fabulous, was their Learning Story Portfolio night when 60 parents and their children came to share their stories together and celebrate learning!



The new Pasifika Strategy's 2013-2017 goal is five out of five success! The A'oga is licensed for 30 children, 60 families at an evening like this hits the stratosphere for successfulness. They had never had this many people attend before, so the word is out! Irresistibly engaging is what these photos sing to me. Congratulations Samoa Taumafai learning community.



Lorraine Sands

**References for Lorraine's Article**

<sup>1</sup> Fullan, Michael. (2013) *Stratosphere, integrating, technology, pedagogy and change knowledge*: Pearson: Canada

I recommend this book. It brought a lot of aspects of 21st century learning together, made the case for the learning revolution and was practical to boot! AND only 99 pages long, so good I read it on the beach at Rarotonga. Mmmmm, swimming with tropical fish or reading this book? The book won quite a bit of the time!

<sup>2</sup> Ken Robinson TED video, [http://www.ted.com/talks/sir\\_ken\\_robinson\\_bring\\_on\\_the\\_revolution.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_bring_on_the_revolution.html)  
*Bring on the Learning Revolution*

So worth watching this video. I've added about a dozen uploads to the four million and counting hits. I don't think you can be the same teacher afterwards.



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**Upcoming Events****09.07.2013**

Lecture Series Hamilton  
Gillian Fitzgerald: "Dispositions" Isn't  
A Dirty Word - Strengthening  
Learning Partnerships

**16.07.2013**

Lecture Series Auckland  
Gillian Fitzgerald: "Dispositions" Isn't  
A Dirty Word - Strengthening  
Learning Partnerships

**13.08.2013**

Lecture Series Hamilton  
Alison Brierley: "What Colour Is Your  
Lunchbox?" - Moving Past the Inane  
Into Genuine, Respectful  
Interactions with Children

**20.08.2013**

Lecture Series Auckland  
Alison Brierley: "What Colour Is Your  
Lunchbox?" - Moving Past the Inane  
Into Genuine, Respectful  
Interactions with Children

**10.09.2013**

Lecture Series Hamilton  
Prof. Margaret Carr: Young People  
Learning From Visits to Museums:  
Combining the Informational with  
the Transformational

**16.09.2013**

Lecture Series Auckland  
Prof. Margaret Carr: Young People  
Learning From Visits to Museums:  
Combining the Informational with  
the Transformational

Educational Leadership Project (Ltd) PO Box 24 100 Hamilton 3253

Phone: 07 856 8708 website: [www.elp.co.nz](http://www.elp.co.nz)

ELP blog: <http://educationalleadershipproject.blogspot.co.nz> Kindness blog: <http://elp-kindness.blogspot.co.nz>

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