



This is the third newsletter of 2008 for the Early Childhood Education Council of NSW. Please refer any comments to the Editor, c/- PO Box 418 Leichhardt NSW 2040 [editor@ecec.asn.au](mailto:editor@ecec.asn.au)

## Our Vision

The Early Childhood Education Council of NSW Inc. is a professional association promoting child centred practices through advocacy and professional development, informing on current trends in early childhood education and ensuring a high profile for early childhood issues.



This newsletter includes reviews of the most recent workshop run by ECEC which had a focus on language in the classroom. It is so easy to forget the importance and complexity of language when so many educational issues press in on us. Yet, it is language which drives the learning of our young students and it should always be our priority to seek new and better ways of developing language skills, as well as an appreciation of the many ways people communicate with each other.

It is no less important to teach students the specific literacies of the key learning areas. Scientific literacy is particularly challenging as it often requires subject specific vocabulary and a high level of accuracy and detail. In the early years many students demonstrate their understanding using annotated drawings. The presenters at the workshops shared many ways student outcomes are improved in content-rich key learning areas like Science and Technology.

At this time the Board of Studies is mid way through the development of the new Science and Technology K– 6 syllabus. The draft writing brief was released for comment and maintained two learning process outcomes but renamed them as *Investigating Scientifically* and *Designing and Producing*. The six content outcomes were retained K– 6 however the *Products and Services* outcome has been shortened to *Products*.

The new syllabus provides an opportunity to reduce the number of outcomes for Early Stage 1 (which is only one year of schooling). By comparison, the Human Society and Its Environment syllabus has half the number of outcomes in Early Stage 1, with only four outcomes. The current draft maintains six content outcomes for Early Stage 1 and is a matter for discussion.

The layout is teacher friendly and provides a description of each outcome by stage giving a list of what students learn about and as well as what they learn to demonstrate.

I would encourage you to visit the K– 6 section of the BOS website for updates on this important process.

*Diana Eqbal (Editor)*

## Talking, Listening and Learning in K-2 classrooms

On 17<sup>th</sup> June last term over 45 teachers from DET, Catholic and Independent schools met at the Professional Teachers' Council NSW Conference Centre, Leichhardt, for ECEC's Term 2 afternoon professional development session: *Talking, Listening and Learning in K– 2 Classrooms*. They listened as Jodie Austine, Nicole Tekampe and Robyn Wild shared their experiences.

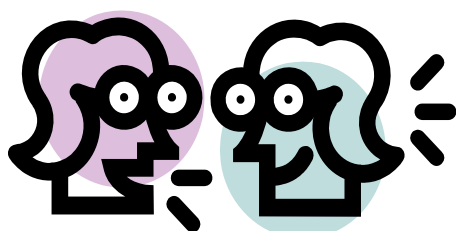
**Jodie Austine** and **Nicole Tekampe** teach Kindergarten at Wheeler Heights Primary School. They shared information about the *Talking to Learn* program, which was implemented at their school in 2007. It was designed to build solid foundations in language, as an oral exercise prior to writing and to be integrated into existing literacy programs within the school.

They explained that in 2007 their school conducted a literacy action learning project that aimed to extend students' understanding of the structure and the grammatical features of factual texts, and to develop appropriate planning and editing skills for writing factual texts for all students. The *Talking to Learn* program was designed to build solid foundations in language, as an oral exercise prior to writing.

The program succeeded in enhancing the skills of classroom teachers to support student outcomes in expressive, receptive and pragmatic language. The Kindergarten teachers worked with a speech therapist and regional support partner to develop and implement the program.

During the session, Jodie and Nicole described games and activities they played with their Kindergarten students, including barrier games, vocabulary football, bowling (using descriptive words), feely bags and a feeling bean bag race. They explained that these and many more games could be found in Mary Harris Clarke's books, *Language Games for Classrooms Kindergarten to Year Two* and *More Language Games for Classrooms Kindergarten to Year Six*.

**Robyn Wild** is a literacy consultant who has taught K– 2 students for many years. In the second session she invited participants to share their effective talking and listening activities with each other. While we came up with lots of ideas, no one could recall names of interesting or engaging resources that listed these activities.



She then proceeded to reacquaint us with resources that are commonly available in schools, and which are jam-packed with engaging, interactive and communicative talking and listening activities.

These included:

### **Steps Professional Development (2005)**

*First Steps: Speaking and Listening Resource Book*, and *First Steps: Speaking and Listening Map of Development*  
Second Edition

Jones P, (Ed) (1996). *Talking to Learn*, Newtown, PETA (Ch 2)

*Choosing Literacy Strategies that Work*, (1997) NSW DET

Hardy M. Literacy Circles, in *Literacy Ideas for the K– 2 Classroom*, Current Topics, (2005), ECEC

Jackson, Blakemore & Weston Ramirez (1999). *Literacy Centres for the Early Years Classroom*, Sydney, Pearson/Longman, ISBN 0 7339-1275-3

She shared engaging ideas from *First Steps* which included:

### **First Steps: Speaking and Listening Map of Development 2nd Edition**

#### **Personality phones –**

Telephone Terry...tell your troubles to Terry

Liz the listener...Liz loves to hear your ideas

#### **Act it out scenario cards –**

oops...you've knocked over the paint box!  
Your friend did a handstand for the very first time...

There is no soap in the bathroom...

Sam is throwing blocks...

### **First Steps: Reading Map of Development 2nd Edition**

#### **Story Prop Box –**

Provide equipment to encourage re telling

#### **Picture Book Activities –**

Randomly select and discuss illustrations from texts

### **Wall stories –**

Students retell stories, identify and illustrate main events, for later revisiting

### **Dramatisations –**

With puppets or props, telephone conversations between characters

### **Text Less –**

Create text for textless picture books

### **Who Am I? –**

Create riddles, after shared reading

## **Stories from Preschools**

On Tuesday, May 20th ECEC hosted *Stories from Preschools*. Approximately 50 teachers came for the afternoon from both prior to school settings as well as K-2 class teachers. We were treated to three stories, from three very different settings; including a preschool, a long day care centre and a transition class.

Each teacher shared a different story, or collection of stories from their practise. Subhadra Chapman from Mia Mia shared a story of the Big Blue Whale, a full sized whale and her baby that a group of children created using recycled milk bottles. Subhadra described the children's work and the creative and problem solving processes they engaged in as they created the whale. The engagement of the wider community in the process, and the children's attention and focused engagement, was remarkable.

Gabrielle Oly, from Carlingford Kindergarten shared stories of her children's engagement in cooking. As a centre they actively engage children in the cooking process and each year they create a cookbook, including the children's favourite recipes. The children's interest in cooking is seen in play and in structured activities. Gabrielle highlighted the important mathematical, literacy and communication skills the children develop as they cook and play.

Judi LeVine, from Mosman Preparatory School is another experienced teacher. Judi works with the transition class at Mosman Prep and has a passion for language. She described many ways that she engages her children in talking and

listening activities. From these activities she described emergent literacy and early reading activities. Her passion for language clearly creates a great learning environment for her class.

This professional development afternoon highlighted great things happening in prior to school settings. If you're doing something great we'd love to hear your story too!

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Term 3**

#### ***Making Science Sizzle***

This workshop is on Thursday 4th September and a flyer will be sent out shortly. Vicki McHenry-Bredin will share exciting, interactive and hands-on science activities for K- 2.

### **Term 4**

#### ***Active and Healthy***

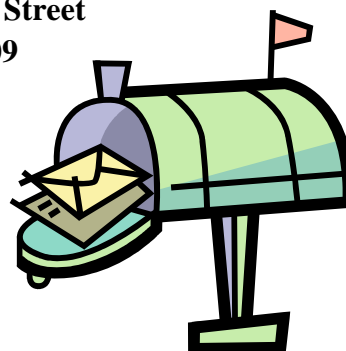
Kim Archer from Macquarie Uni will be sharing ideas which will help keep kids active and healthy. This workshop will be combined with the Annual General Meeting. Mark Thursday 30th October in your diary now.

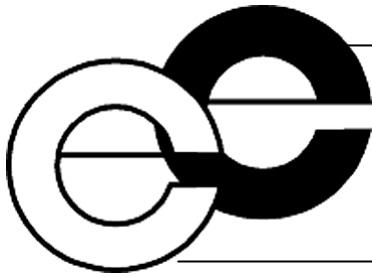
Both workshops will be held at the Professional Teachers' Council NSW Conference Centre in the grounds of Leichhardt Public School.

### **\*\*\*Special Reminder\*\*\***

When sending in booking forms and payment it is important to check the address as forms sent to the incorrect address may delay acceptance of your application. We work on the basis of accepting applications when your cheque is received. Please advise your school of the change of address:

**ECEC Inservice**  
**c/- 22/1 Murray Street**  
**PYRMONT 2009**





# early childhood education council of nsw inc

ABN: 40-452-650-361 – Not Registered for GST  
**CURRENT PUBLICATIONS**

Number	Title		Cost
	A Balanced Approach to Literacy	\$10.00	
	Creating an Effective K-2 Learning Environment	\$10.00	
	Developmental Play	\$10.00	
	Fine Motor – Where to now?	\$10.00	
	Higher Order Thinking Skills	\$10.00	
	Kindergarten Orientation Programs – revised edition	\$10.00	
	Patterns and Algebra	\$10.00	
	Transition to School	\$10.00	
	Working Mathematically	\$10.00	
	Literacy ideas for K-2	\$10.00	
	Special needs students in K-2 classrooms	\$10.00	
	Challenging students in K-3 classrooms	\$10.00	
	Secrets of success in K-3 Classrooms	\$10.00	
	K-2 beginning teachers share their stories	\$10.00	
	Postage and Handling 1 - 2 booklet	\$ 6.00	
	Postage and Handling 3 - 5 booklets	\$12.00	
	Postage and Handling 6 + booklets	\$15.00	
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To purchase these publications please forward payment with order to:

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