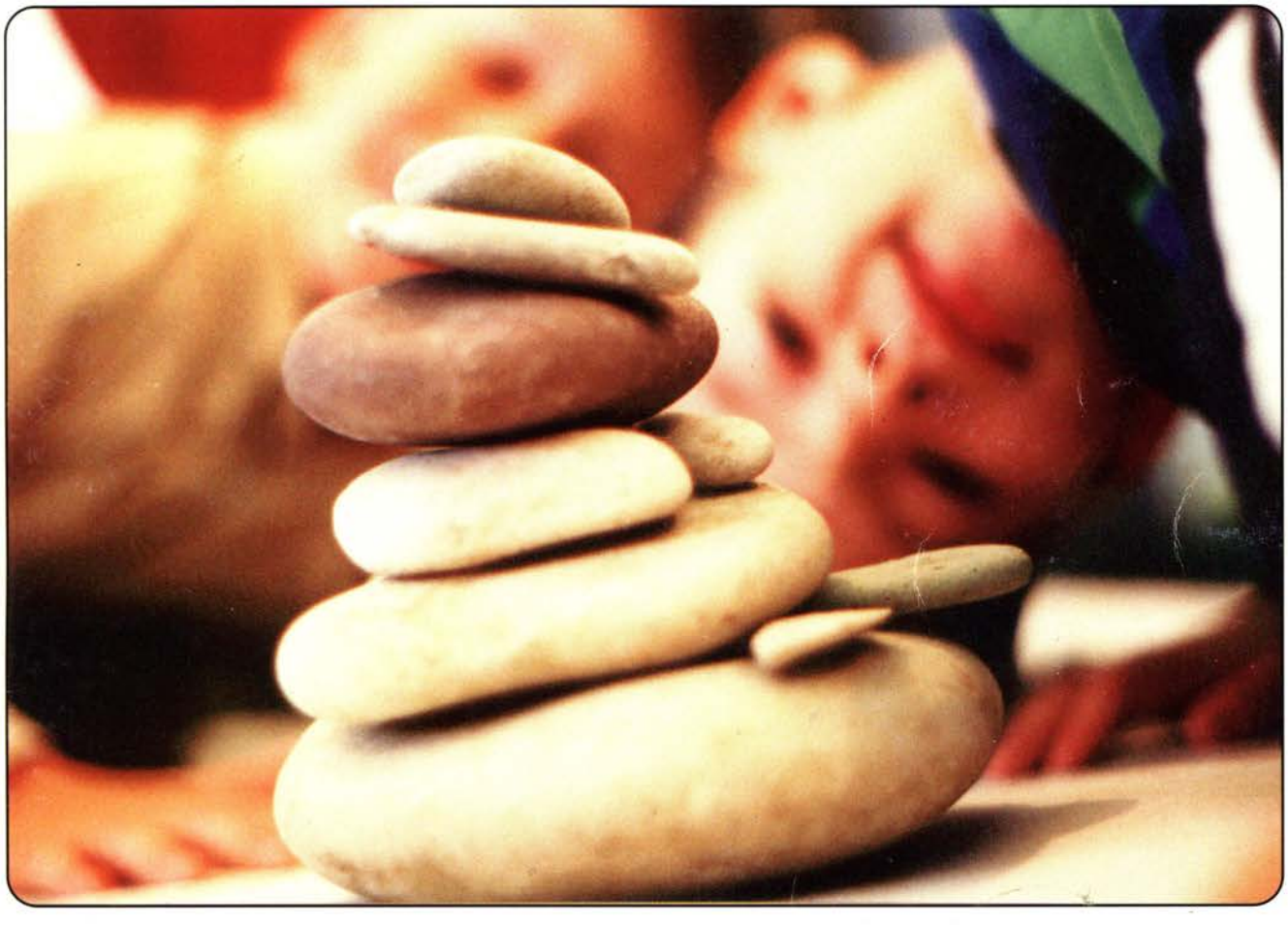
CANADIAN CHILDREN

JOURNAL OF THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

SPRING / PRINTEMPS 2001 VOL. 26 NO. 1



"The precariousness of a balanced column is like the fine edge between success and failure"

Goldsworthy, Andy (1996). Wood.

The Canadian Association for Young Children

L'Association Canadienne Pour Les Jeunes Enfants

2001

http://www.cayc.ca

THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

WHAT IS THE CAYC

The Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC) grew out of Council for Childhood Education and was officially recognized in 1974 by the granting of a Federal Charter. It is the only national association specifically concerned with the well-being of children, birth through age nine at home, in preschool settings and at school. Members of the multidisciplinary association include parents, teachers, caregivers ,administrators, students and all those wishing to share ideas and participate in activities related to the education and welfare of young children.

MISSION STATEMENT

CAYC exists to provide a Canadian voice on critical issues related to the quality of life of all young children and their families.

THE AIMS OF THE CAYC

1. To influence the direction and quality of policies and programs that affect the development and well-being of young children in Canada.
2. To provide a forum for the members of Canada's early childhood community to support one another in providing developmentally appropriate programs for young children.
3. To promote and provide opportunities for professional development for those charged with the care and education of young children.
4. To promote opportunities for effective liaison and collaboration with all those responsible for young children.
5. To recognize outstanding contributions to the well-being of young children.

IMPLEMENTING THE AIMS OF THE CAYC

1. **The National Conference:**
   The National Conference is a highlight of the CAYC. The program includes lectures by internationally renowned authorities on children, workshops, discussion groups, displays, demonstrations, school visits and tours.
2. **Provincial and Regional Events:**
   The organization of members at the local and provincial level is encouraged to plan events to deal with the issues and concerns pertaining to young children. These events may take the form of lectures, seminars or a local conference.
3. **The Journal:**
   An outstanding multidisciplinary journal is published twice yearly. Articles by nationally and internationally known experts in early childhood education and child rearing are presented in the Journal of the CAYC. Inside CAYC provides information on Association activities.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

Membership fees are payable on application and renewable annually on an evergreen basis. To be considered a voting member, fees must be paid no later than 60 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Members of the CAYC receive newsletters and special rates for national and regional conferences

Per annum: $40 General, $25 Student, $75 Associations.

Please direct all subscription and membership correspondance to:

CAYC
612 W, 23rd Street
North Vancouver, BC V7M 2C3
CANADA

ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE POUR LES JEUNES ENFANTS

QU'EST CE QUE L'ACJE

L'Association canadienne pour les jeunes enfants, issue du Council for Childhood Education, a reçu sa charte fédérale en 1974, C'est l'unique association nationale voulée exclusivement au bien-être des enfants depuis la naissance jusqu'à l'âge de neuf ans, dans leurs foyer, les garderies et a l'école primaire. Les membres de l'ACJE-des parents, des enseignants, des employés de garderie, des administrateurs, des étudiants sont toutes des personned intéressées à partager leurs idées en participant à des activités concernant le bien-être et l'education des jeunes enfants.

SA MISSION

L'ACJE existe pour faire entendre une voix canadienne sur les questions d'importance concernant la qualité de vie de tous les jeunes enfants et de leur familles.

SES BUTS

1. Jouer un rôle dans la direction et les qualités des décisions et des programmes relatifs au développement des jeunes enfants.
2. Créer un forum pour les membres de la communauté de la petite enfance afin de susciter une collaboration active dans l'élaboration de programmes appropriés au développment des jeunes enfants.
3. Encourager et offrir des possibilitiés de perfectionnement professionel aux personnes chargées du bien-être et de l'éducation des jeunes enfants.
4. Promouvoir des occasions pour une meilleur coordination et collaboration entre toutes les personnes responsables des jeunes enfants.
5. Reconnâitre les contributions de caractère exceptionnel faites au profit des jeunes enfants.

MISE EN OEUVRE DES BUTS DE L'ACJE

1. **Le congrès national:**
   Il constitue le grand événement de l'ACJE. On y entend des communications prononcées par des sommités internationales dans le domaine de l'enfance et on y participe à des ateliers et à des discussions ainsi qu'à diverses manifestations, des visites d'écoles et d'autres activités.
2. **Les événements provinciaux et locaux:**
   Nos membres sont invités à mettre sur pied des conférences, des séminaires ou des congrès à l'échelon local ou régional.
3. **Le journal:**
   Publications multidisciplinaire de premier ordre, le journal pâraitre deux fois l'an. Il regroupe des articles traitant de questions d'education et de formation des jeunes enfants et des écrits d'experts bien connus sur le plan national et international. La rubrique Inside CAYC vous tient au courant des activités de l'Association.

Les cotisations doivent être réglées au moment de l'adhésion et renouvelées chaque année. Pour vous prévaloir de botre droit de vote, vous devez régler votre cotisation au moins 60 jours avant l'Assemblée générale annuelle.

ABONNEMENT ET COTISATION DE MEMBRE

Les membres de l'ACJE reçoivent le bulletin de liaison et bénéficent de tarifs particuliers pour participer au congrès national et aux événements régionaux:

40$ par année, 25$ pour les etudiants, 75$ pour les associations

Addressez toute votre correspondance a:

ACJE
612 W 23rd Street
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Photo courtesy Migel Martin, Enka Schools, Istanbul, Turkey
Quote, Goldsworthy, Andy. (1996) WOOD.

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

Canadian Children is the journal of the Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC), the only national association specifically concerned with the well-being of children of preschool and elementary age in Canada. The journal is published twice yearly and contains articles, book reviews and announcements of professional conferences .

Canadian Children is a multidisciplinary journal concerned with child development and early childhood education. Authors from across Canada, and elsewhere, are invited to submit articles and book reviews which reflect the variety and extent of both research and practice in early childhood education and child rearing.

CONTENT:

Submissions should appeal to an audience that includes parents, professionals in the field of childhood education and child services, as well as teachers and researchers. Most issues are multi-theme in nature and the editor will attempt to balance articles that are research-related with articles of a practical nature relating to programming, curriculum, classroom practice or child rearing.

FORM, LENGTH AND STYLE:

ARTICLES may be of varying length, written in a readable style. Style should be consistent with an acceptable professional manual such as the **Publication Manual** (3rd Edition) of the American Psychological Association. Articles should be sent as an email attachment to the email address below or sent to the postal address, on a 3.5" IBM or IBM compatible diskette or a CD in Microsoft Word with three (3) printed copies on 21.5 x 28 cm. (standard 8 x 11") paper directly to the editor at the address listed below. Type should be double spaced. If appropriate, authors should send accompanying black and white glossy print photographs, tables, figures or illustrations with complete captions, each on separate pages. Authors are to obtain releases for use of photographs prior to mailing. Please include a brief biographical sketch including the author(s) full name, title, professional affiliation, and other relevant information, such as acknowledgements, grant support or funding agency . It is expected that authors will not submit articles to more than one publisher at a time.

ACCEPTANCE AND PUBLICATION:

The editor will acknowledge receipt of, and review all solicited and unsolicited manuscripts received. The final publication decision rests with the editor, and will be communicated within three months. Manuscripts not accepted for publication will be returned only if a stamped self-addressed envelope is included.

DEADLINES:

Submission Deadlines are as follows:
FALL Issue : August 1
SPRING Issue: February 1
Please send all publication correspondence for consideration to:

Mabel F. Higgins, Editor
CANANDIAN CHILDREN JOURNAL
ECE Lambton College,
1457 London Road, Sarnia, Ontario N7S 6K4
Preferably email as an attachment to: ece@mnsi.ne

GUIDE A L'INTENTION DES AUTEURS

Canadian Children est la revue de L'association pour les jeunes enfants (ACJE) la seule association vouée exclusivement au bien-être des enfants du préscolaire et de l'ecole primaire au Canada. Elle parâit deux fois l'an et regroupe des articles, comptes rendus de livres et annonces professionnelles.

Canadian Children est une publication multidisciplinaire traitant du dévelopment de l'enfant et de l'éducation de la petite enfance. Les auteurs du Canada et d'ailleurs sont invités à soumettre des articles et des comptes rendus de livres mettant en évidence la varieté et l'entendue de la recherche et des approches en education de la petite enfance et en formation de l'enfant.

CONTENU:

Les articles visent un public de parents, de professionsels dans le domaine de l'éducation, de l'enfant et des services a l'enfance, ainsi que les enseignants et les chercheurs. En général chaque numero comprend de multiples thèmes et le rédacteur en chef s'efforcera d'inclure à la fois des articles protant sur la recherche ainsi que d'autres de nature pratique traitant des programmes, des curriculums, des approches en salle de classe ou de la formation de l'enfant.

FORMAT, LONGEUR ET STYLE:

LES ARTICLES peuvent être de longeur variée et doivent etre rédigés dans un style accessible à tous les lecteurs. La présentation doit être conforme aux normes du **Publication Manual** (3e edition) de L'American Psychological Association. Les articles devront être en Microsoft Word ou Word Perfect, (format IBM PC) et attaché a un courier électronique au redacteur en chef à l'adresse indiquée ci-dessous. Les trois (3) copies doivent être dactilographiées à double expace. S'il y a lieu, les auteurs devront fournir toutes photographies accompagnant les articles tirées en noir et blanc sur papier glacé, tous les tableaux, figures ou illustrations avec leurs légendes, et nous les envoyer chacun sur une feuille séparée. Ils devront obtenir le permis de reproduction des photographies avant de les faire parvenir au rédacteur. Veuillez inclure une brève notice biographique incluant les noms au complet, titres, affilitions professionnelles et autres informations pertinentes telles que les noms des assistants, des supports financiers, des subventions. It est entendu que les auteurs ne soumettront leurs articles qu'a une seule revue à la fois.

REVISION, ACCEPTATION ET PUBLICATION:

Le rédacteur en chef accusera réception et considérara tous les manuscrits recus, qu'ils aient été solicités on non, et soumettra les textes qu'il aura retenus à au moins trois lecteurs externes au comité de rédaction. La decision finale quant a la publication est sous la responsabilité de rédacteur en chef et sera communiqué dans un délai de trois mois. Les manuscrit refusé seront retournés seulement si une enveloppe adressée et timbrée est encluse.
Faire parvenir les articles soit à l'adresse electronique soit à l'adress postale suivantes :

L'échéancier pour la soumission les articles se lit comme suit :
Publiction d'automne: 1er août
Publication du printemps : 1er février

Mabel F. Higgins,
CAYC Journal
Early Childhood Education Lambton College,
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MABEL. F. HIGGINS
EDITOR

The many strands of this journal weave a cloth of children's programs designed to give fullness to their lives… Childhood - the brief time of human development that gives or takes away from our entire life.

CAYC ACJE

FROM THE EDITOR

This issue of Canadian Children promises to tour you through programs that actively employ the idea of bringing children to their "full potential". Our last issue delivered the message of our own Governor General, Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, where she states of children that "we must agree to actively provide them with the love and resources that encourage their full potential". In that issue, Ovide Mercredi's verse, When You Heal a Child, suggests that through our support of a child, we support a family, a community and a country. In the pages that follow, you will see the many ways that our profession has found to bring children to their fullness, both nationally and internationally.

Fraser Mustard's voice was catalyst to the article authored by Leslie Allan in, *Brain Talk: Are We Losing Our Minds?* Along with her candid discussion on brain research, she introduces us to the story of a successful program in her own province, New Brunswick. Others tell the story of their work with children. Annie Potter shares the story of a grassroots effort in a Montreal [Downtown] children's centre.

Children, plagued by teasing because of a medical condition, are the focus of work conducted at the Alberta Children's Hospital. This community is attempting to offer these children tools needed to reach their full potential. Linda Farr Darling gets to the heart of children's moral matters through her sensitive description of their conversations. She prods us to listen to the children.

Later we look at some of the directions taken by classrooms in Alberta, Ontario and then to a classroom in Turkey. All three authors have worked with young children. Their classrooms appear to have removed the walls that exist in some of the more traditional curriculum. I think you will find these articles inspired and inspiring.

As my grandson approaches his first birthday, I am hopeful…and believe that the "village" is truly coming together to bring him to his fullest.

Our Editorial Review Team is changing… *Alyce Johnson, MA in Language Ed.* has joined our team. She is a Southern Tutchone First Nations graduate from UBC. She is currently, Director of Education for the Kwanlin Dun First Nation in Whitehorse, Yukon. *Dr. Pam Whitty,* is in the Faculty of Education department at UNB. Most of you have come to know her as our New Brunswick Director and contributor to the journal. *Dr. Patricia Dickinson* has rejoined our team after a brief hiatus. She is currently the Course Director at York University (Halton Site) Faculty of Education. A warm welcome!

We extend a fond farwell to *Dr. Mary Cronin,* University of Regina who has served both as Provincial director and Editorial Review Board member for CAYC for several years. It is the children who benefit from the dedication of these professionals.

NEXT ISSUE: Watch for our fall 2001 issue…where you will read how a Canadian kindergarten teacher moves her class through Emergency/Crisis preparation with the help of children, their parents,staff and the development of Comfort Kits. Authors send your manuscript submissions to me at ece@mnsi.net by August 1st, 2001.

Downtown Montreal: An Experiment in Collaboration focused on the CHILD

Annie Potter

Annie Potter is a long-time family worker from London, England, and has worked in a variety of settings including a UK Save the Children development project. Currently she is pursuing a Ph.D. at Concordia University in Montreal where she also works as an instructor in ECE. Annie resources, practitioners, and early childhood settings on equality issues and children's rights.

Introduction

I am a white woman, raised in a working-class family, a bilingual Anglophone from London, England. Since the 1970's my work, my training, my research and my philosophy in relation to very young children have developed as a reflection of the increasing struggles children face. These struggles are both worldwide, as social and economic infrastructures collapse *and* local, as increasing numbers of children fail to meet adult expectations. I am committed to finding ways to better the conditions of children's lives and that of their families. I am resistant to labeling children's behaviours. Rather, I am interested in how children *show* their difficulties and ultimately, finding solutions that work for everyone. Another way of saying this more topically is to state that I seek ways to make inclusion work. I have a let's see what we can discover - some would say a somewhat idiosyncratic approach (based on my many experiences and learnings). The references provided with this article, reflect this approach.

The telephone call: In March 2000, at the Education Department where I study and work in Montreal's Concordia University, I received a telephone call from Celine (a pseudonym), Early Childhood Centre (known as Centres de la Petite Enfance in Quebec) coordinator, after a number of unsuccessful attempts to contact other departments in other Universities in the region. She was looking for someone with experience in evaluating children's needs and supporting educators to find solutions when a misfit occurs between the child's behaviour, educator expectations and the classroom setting. As someone who was known in the department to be interested in such things, I responded to her call.

The Early Childhood Centre

This, in essence, could be the story of any early years setting in any town in Canada or, indeed, the world; the differentiating features are those of the individuals in the story, their world views and the cultures they represent and live in. This particular Montreal setting is bilingual and caters to children from 6 months to 5 years. The educators work in pairs, in four distinct same-age groups; 54 children in total attend. The characteristics of the families are mixed; Anglo-, Franco- and Allo-phone, working and middle-class, and predominantly white. The educators, all female and under 35, reflect similar cultural and socio-economic backgrounds; they are all bilingual and in some cases trilingual. The work we have done together has focused on children in the three to five years age range.

Procedure

Over a short space of time we evolved the following way of working:

Step 1 The educators identified a child in their classroom who showed signs of development or behaviour that they considered atypical; e.g. the child was interacting with her or his peers more aggressively or not at all, was showing signs of fearfulness, was less able to undertake learning activities than her or peers, or was apparently unable to follow the routines or directions from the educators with any ease. The coordinator then gained parental permission for me to observe the selected children.

Step 2 I spent, as a general rule, a one hour period observing in the classroom, during free play time and transition periods. I took notes in the form of running records.

Step 3 The two educators, Celine (the coordinator) and I met for a one hour period. In the first instance, the educators spent some time discussing the difficulties they noticed the child was having and any difficulties they were having with the child's behaviour themselves. They were honest about how they felt when they could not 'see' the child clearly. They might argue hotly with each other, give each other help with getting a more accurate picture and find common ground. They had many stories to tell of the child's life in the centre. Following this discussion I would share what I had observed and how I interpreted what I had observed. The rest of the time was taken up with developing strategies that the educators might implement to improve the situation for the child, her or his peers, and themselves.

Step 4 In all cases the educators and coordinator gave me feedback on the success of these strategies, and in most cases, I went back again to observe and to think about other means of enabling the child to move forward.

Step 5 In every case, except one, we (the four of us) subsequently met with the parents, and in each case the parents also had some concerns. These meetings generally took an hour or more. At first, the parents voiced their concerns and in some case their fear that the child was not developing 'normally'. In all cases, we were able largely to allay those fears. Having already started new strategies and interventions with the child concerned, the educators were particularly adept at offering suggestions and discussing ideas with the parents for activities and interventions at home that would be consistent with what they were discovering and doing in the day care setting. At one such meeting the family's social worker was also present. She provided information about available parenting resources and her version of the family history.

Step 6 Parents gave intermittent feedback to Celine, and she transmitted that relevant information to us.

Some patterns were observed in the children's struggles that emerged time and time again. These were issues relating primarily to self-esteem and peer relationships. One case was related to understimulation. Overall, when a child felt more closely connected with the educators, the group or with one or two other children - when a child could perceive her or himself as valued, the issue of co-operation got easier.

My Observations

Every child in this Montreal setting, including those I was not specifically observing, demonstrated at some time, difficulty adapting to the routines and requirements of the setting, inability to join in happily or sustain interest in activities and explorations. Some lacked confidence in their interactions with the environment and with peers. When this was frequently observed, these children also showed signs of lower self-esteem and difficulties with peer relationships. They showed for instance, a propensity to 'give up' easily either on the activity or on efforts to join in the play, playing on their own while glancing continually at others playing together. They only sought ways to attract the educators' negative attention, looking unhappy, sitting slumped and unoccupied, wandering aimlessly, never asking for help, or asked for it at moments when it was unlikely to be forthcoming.

The Educators' Strategies

The educators employed a variety of strategies that aimed to 'popularize' the child, or to bring the child in from the periphery, In order to enable the child to participate and co-operate more fully, they :

- changed the order in which children prepared for transitions or changed the order of events in the day.
- found ways to be closer to isolated children and actively demonstrated actively how much they liked the child.
- sought moments and ways to reinforce that they had noticed the child was 'on track'.
- found moments to move closer to and gently touch (e.g. a warm hand on the shoulder of) an isolated child.
- joined the child's play with a view to forming a 'bridge' between the child and her or his peers.
- set up activities that the child enjoyed so that the child would readily join in.
- discussed with the child... a place where the child could go when their own 'upsets' interrupted other children's play...a place to find calmness.
- most importantly, kept up the dialogue together, with parents, with Celine and with me.
- gave the child jobs, providing them with a role to play during periods where they had difficulty in following the routines or activities.

The Team Approach

What emerged, in effect, was a team of adults thinking and acting for the good of a particular child in a context where all the children were still being thought about. Because we were working as a team, a great deal of the isolation, the, "I am supposed to be able to figure this out on my own"- attitudes, were broken down for educators and parents alike. Everyone in the meetings had different feelings (worries, fears, frustrations, confusions, impatience and upsets) and concerns that needed expressing. Once these were aired (the role I played at this point was mainly to listen), and everyone was very thoughtful about letting them be aired, some very creative and lively exchanges and thinking followed.

These meetings provided us with rich exchanges and time to think out loud, always orientated towards practical solutions, which is rare in the busy running of a full-time child care facility.

My Role

In our initial meetings I often suggested the kinds of interventions that might work. But as time went on, the educators more frequently came up with the ideas and their own solutions to the *when, where, how and who* discussions. My role at that point was to to provide any additions - but mostly to listen and to hold out the optimism that things could change.

I gave my time freely because I could, and because I strongly adhere to the notion of co-operative efforts in raising young children. I felt privileged to have the opportunity offered me by the center. When *evaluating my observations*, I worked from the following basic assumptions:

- *All children are doing their best to co-operate with the setting, and when they cannot, something got in their way.*
- *Observing, often, to ascertain patterns in their interactions with children,*

adults and the environment, I asked: What did I have to take into account?

- *I documented the strengths I saw in the child, in order that we might build on them*
- *I documented the strengths I saw in the educators in order that we might build on them.*
- *I considered the limitations of a setting of 12-16 children, attending full-time with two educators.*

The Staff

Nothing could have been achieved without the active participation of the educators and coordinator played. Celine listened actively to parents throughout this period and gave suggestions to them. She regularly discussed the situation with the educators and me. She also listened and responded to any on-going concerns raised by the educators, relaying relevant information to me and discussing other ideas when appropriate. Thus, she did most of the follow-up work. When she, the educators or the parents considered it useful, she called another meeting with me. There existed an enormous amount of goodwill on the part of the centre to figure things out without 'problematising' the child. Educators gave freely and eagerly of their time to this project. They relinquished their break times, their lunch hours, and worked extra hours to accommodate the extra scheduled meetings. In some cases, they documented the child's progress. There was an ethos of child-centredness and parent-centredness that the coordinator and all the educators supported. Another characteristic was their willingness to openly discuss differences and difficulties and then, to move on. I experienced this kind of team-spiritedness at every meeting I attended.

This experiment highlighted for all of us how little time for reflection, relationship building, discussion, creative preparation and further training is built in to an educator's working life. It is a rare early childhood centre that has the funds to provide these opportunities. Educators work long hours, are poorly paid and go largely unrecognized for the versatility and quality of service that they provide.

The Parents

The parents, too, were an invaluable part of the process. They are often blamed for their children's difficulties and rarely given much credit for the ways in which their children flourish. In all cases the parents who attended the meetings were pleased that the centre was attempting to work with them and their children to find solutions that suited everyone. In talking about their lives together they, without exception, demonstrated how committed they were to their children while providing valuable information about the 'bigger picture' of their children's lives. In every case parents voiced doubts about their ability to parent (were they good parents, were they bad parents?), particularly in view of their children's difficulties in performing 'typically'. Every parent had a story to tell. One white family had adopted a black child in heart-wrenching circumstances from another country; two parents were single parents determinedly rebuilding their lives in the wake of a co-parent's departure. There were many factors that impacted on family life: difficulties with older siblings, over-involved extended families (too much advice and interference), new relationships for the parents, financial struggles, inflexible work schedules, family illness, family deaths. These are not untypical situations faced by families at one time or another. Every parent spoke of or demonstrated the amount of isolation they experienced as parents.

There was an ethos of child-centredness and parent-centredness that the coordinator and all the educators supported.

It became clear in our discussions, that very little of long-term value could be accomplished without the parents' knowledge and understanding of their children that was brought to these meetings. It was also clear that they did not regard themselves as the experts that they truly are. Eager as they were to be part of a collaborative process, their doubts tended to raise questions like: *Could there be something wrong with my child? Could it be chemically controlled? Do you think I should get him/her assessed/evaluated? Is there a real problem (a word we never used)?* During these exchanges it also became apparent that there is a great need for resources such as more support groups and networks for parents in general. These are not needed just for 'parents of children with ADHD' or on subjects like 'how to live with your ... (fill in the blank) child'. There appears to be a general need to break down the isolation of parents, and for communities to function as some did, as the village that raises the child.

The Children

There has never been anything *wrong* with any child ever. As a doctoral student who has attended innumerable conferences and seminar groups, who has read hundreds of publications on young children, and as someone who has spent hundreds of hours as a child care and family worker and counsellor, I sometimes still have to use this (there has never been anything *wrong* with any child eve r) as a kind of mantra to remind myself. Too much documentation

There appears to be a general need to break down the isolation of parents, and for communities to function as some did, as the village that raises the child.

(media, journals, books) still focuses on the problem child (or the problem family). Happily, whenever I am in the presence of young children they remind me themselves.

Observing the children at play in this setting illustrated to me, once again, that children learn differently, play differently, interact differently, at different speeds, with different amounts of repetition and interest, and with different levels of self-confidence. Sometimes, a lot of what goes on appears, at least at first glance, as 'typical' to a specific age group or within a particular cultural context.

What I have observed as 'typical' to every child that I have ever met is... *their desire to know and be close to other children, their desire to play, explore and learn, and their desire to co-operate with what is going on around them as much as they can.*

Concluding Thoughts

The way we approached this work *together* has gone far to banish the notion of problem children and problem families. I am not saying that all adults make safe and nurturing parents - some do not. Nor am I saying that no child has ever sustained brain or neurological damage or been traumatized, fallen sick or hurt in ways that make it difficult to adapt to and flourish in 'typical' children's programs. However, when we locate the 'problem' as a collective one, some very interesting things happen. When Celine picked up the telephone last year, she was taking a very clear position: 'we have a problem - we need more resources'.

In the western world, we tend towards standardized curriculum approaches in our centres of learning and play for young children, and at the same time we beat the drum of individualism and cooperation, competition and inclusion. We are a society that seeks 'quick fixes'. In early childhood settings, we seek programs that will fix things for every child (we want full inclusion, we say), and often for their families too. We want children to be able to learn fast and well, to be able to compete in the job market when older, and be well-adjusted (well-behaved) and independent; children who can perform well. But we also want (we say) interdependent children; who can make solid friendships, who will stand up against injustice, who are not prejudiced, who are kind and inclusive. These are some of the 'desirable outcomes' listed in early education programs.

They are, however, a tall set of orders for any young child, and co-operation and competition are not always compatible goals. One of our solutions when the child does not reach what we consider a reasonable proficiency in the desired outcomes (and this is open to interpretation) is to call in experts to evaluate the child. Yet children, too, need to air their feelings (worries, fears, frustrations, confusions, impatience, upsets and concerns) as they learn how to live their lives among diverse groups of people and often conflicting sets of adult values and expectations. I believe that what we are learning in Montreal is how to 'unpick' some of these contradictions, and better accommodate the child's need. The centre achieved this by calling on more resources to support the entire setting.

Our early childhood centres and families exist and live in communities that are increasingly complex. Our society is increasingly unstable politically, economically and, hence, socially. These realities directly affect the lives and developmental potential of each child. If we are serious about creating centres that can individually and collectively support children in their learning and play, then adult-children ratios must decrease and more flexible forms of on-going training and resources must be made available to the centres. Educators today are important and cherished components of most young children's lives. They deserve to be recognized, trained and compensated accordingly *and* we need more of them.

Here are some of the educator responses to questions concerning the outcomes of our project thus far:

1. What do you think you/we achieved ?

- a partnership between the centre and home that helped create positive change a "light at the end of the tunnel"
- support for the educators in difficult times
- a sense of relief knowing someone from the exterior was there to provide suggestions and help find solutions for challenging behaviours
- knowing that all the support and work directed at one child will lead to a better way of life for her, her family and the centre

2. What do you think were the limits of what you/we did?

- the observations were limited to only a few. We would have preferred a few more (ongoing)
- it was difficult to find the time to write the observations
- many of the child's frustrations were expressed in front of the other children, which stressed everyone. Another room would have been useful where s/he could calm down
- a third person would have been useful at such times so that the other two could continue with the rest of the group
- resources of specialists that can provide help to families when needed

3. What do you/ would you like to see as the next steps?

- more observations made on an ongoing schedule
- parents getting more of the support they need at home
- having something in place in advance for the next time we are faced with a challenge (to help with behaviour and for respite)

The work continues, and it is hoped that our story has demonstrated what can happen on a small scale in one early years setting when extra support is called in. Has having me as a resource in their setting been enough to address all the above issues and turn the place around so that all the participants flourish all of the time? No, but it has helped. It has provided higher expectations of what is possible, and it has rekindled some hope. It is hoped that these reflections will be useful to other centres and practitioners as a starting place to consider the needs of the communities they serve, for gaining recognition for their important work, and for seeking the additional funds and human resources to support it.

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Brain Talk: Are We Losing Our Minds?

Leslie Allan

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Introduction

Our country is fortunate to have Dr. Fraser Mustard speaking for very young children and the need for active political and community support for parents with children of the early years. His research and advocacy add dialogue to the many other voices, predominately women, all across Canada who similarly have devoted considerable energies to the same task, sometimes during very challenging eras. As the field of early childhood has evolved, an increasing chorus of voices has risen calling for public awareness and support for parents and children and importantly, for the pecuniary commitment of a real and practical value to do the job well.

I welcome Dr. Mustard's perspective in partnership with the many people who have worked in the field of early childhood. Only through a union of multiple voices and disciplines that work in the early years, can integrated networks working in true collaboration, effectively assist the parent(s) in the awesome task of bring-up-baby. It is within this tenor that I add a counterpoint to his invitational article in the CAYC *Canadian Children Fall* 2000 issue and to the 1999 *Early Years Study : Reversing the Brain Drain*, co-authored by the Honorable Margaret Norrie McCain.

In this article I suggest there are t*hree implications* for consideration by community, parents, education and policy makers if guided by the recommendations of this report. I also express a regret that the *Early Years Study* omitted to include for discussion an integrated and collaborative initiative for the early years, which has been in place since 1994 in my own province of New Brunswick. This is offered as another voice in dialogue regarding best practices and policies for those in the field of early childhood and family support services.

The Brain Drone

Over thirty years ago a physician remarked to me that the brain was still a frontier of human research in the understanding of its complexity and capabilities. Today, that frontier is not the same hinterland because of advances in technology applied to neuroscience. This "neuro-knowledge" has given us images that are persuasive. We are now encouraged to be diligent about what we, sometimes intuitively, have always held to be true and good for children. It has also given us a recognizable language of metaphors: pruning, sculpting, hard wiring, nutrition, and plasticity, which are now applied to descriptions of the infant brain potential. Indeed, this information has been deemed so formidable in its import that the *Newsweek* 2000 special edition entitled, *Your Child*, leads off the discussion of "baby" with the purported implications for this new brain information. It announces in the introduction, "At the dawn of the 21st century, we no longer have to guess about the best way to raise a child"(p 4). Brain talk apparently, will finally give us all the answers to the questions we ever needed to know about the parenting practices and the education of the young child.

In-home support involves the whole family
Photo Courtesy: St. John Early Intervention Program

Like most early childhood professionals, I welcome the current discourse given to the early years. However, there is a persistent whirr in the foreground of all of this; the very buzz of this brain talk; that is, the brain as the focal point for discussions about the child. One early childhood professor suggests this buzz has escalated to white noise, effectively overwhelming by its insistent drone, the *other voices* working in the field of early childhood.

Brains and Minds

Jerome Kagan, eminent Harvard psychologist and prodigious contributor to the fields of psychology and education concur. In an article entitled *The Brain May Not Be The Answer* (2000), he raises a similar concern. Addressing the problem in formal school of unevenness of achievement, he suggests that neuroscience may not, in fact, have as much to inform education regarding implications for practices as the current hype suggests. He opines that any real connections for education and community response for student underachievement may reside in the difference between the brain and the mind and those factors, which impinge upon motivation. This, he says, is about psychology and not biology: a provocative line of thinking when applied to the current brain drone.

The rush toward early academic readiness and achievement during the early years embedded solely in brain talk diminishes the role of other investigating disciplines and their practices. Siegel (2001) maintains that we know how the brain creates a "neuronal map" but as yet, science doesn't know how this brain map creates images or representations characteristic of the mind. In fact, there is more to the child than the brain; there is also the wonderful entity of the mind. It will only be through a transactional discourse of the *whole child* that the implications for parent interactions, education and community support will emerge as a diverse and rich script for child development.

The editors of Newsweek *Your Child* managed to present, the brain talk notwithstanding, a holistic snapshot of the young child. Indeed, tucked toward the end of the magazine is a small column with a cautionary theme: the over scheduled baby. This echoes Dr. David Elkind (1988) and his warnings regarding the phenomena of the hurried child. Specters of the same problem, the exaggerated response by parents, educators and social policy makers are appearing on the horizon in the wake of the recent brain talk. It is vital that we as the responsive community who partner with parents do not fall into the frenzy for raising the perfect brainy kid. In my futuristic dreams I see new parents equipped with diapers, crib mobiles and other traditional paraphernalia, but, with the addition of flash cards and a tape measure for monitoring the developing brain through measures of the head circumference (which have doubtless been added to the height and weight charts). One mother recently remarked," I nurse my baby, not just my baby's brain".

Children as Capital

Robert Putman, author of Bowling Alone (2000), a provocative commentary on the dissolution of American community, gives an historical overview of the term social capital. The distinction is made between the concept of physical capital or the tools for training to enhance the productivity of the individual; human capital, which references the attributes of an individual and social capital itself, which refers to critical community connections or reciprocal networks which, in essence, is the "grease" allowing people to get together and get things done. All of these concepts are inherently positive and interrelated.

We should be vigilant, however, when notions of brain talk translate singularly into children as capital. Moreover, we should be wary that we do not give eminence to support some small portion of the population, which may appear to be the best bang for the social policy maker's bucks; that in fact, the child with the potential highest IQ may become overly valued as the best future capital investment. How then, would we measure the contributions for the future wealth of our nation if we let the brain talk guide our support for children with debilitating syndromes? Children with limited natural aptitudes? Children with parents who have serious and ongoing mental health issues? Children who are geographically or socially isolated? Children in continuous foster care arrangements? Children who have suffered maltreatment? It would seem a logical step if we consider the next generation of children as our insurance policy for future wealth and if we consider brain talk to be our guide in accruing human capital, then these young children may not be considered worthwhile investments. It could be enough to pay lip service for universal support, but the real funds, the physical capital, might go to supporting the potential brainiest child.

It is sobering then, to read in the preamble of the *Early Years Study* an admonition to the people of Ontario. They are warned that should the implications for the new brain research be ignored, the quality of life for the next generation will be diminished. Ominously, one's very own future will be seriously compromised. To make a finer point, the fact is reported that the future workforce for the year 2025 was born last year. The readership is informed that these babies are the, "generation [who] will become a key factor in determining the wealth of Ontario in 25 years"(p2). In other words, get cracking; *tempus fugit* as my mother used to say. But if time flies, it does so not only for the potential little Eiensteins in nappies or the future Donald Trumps but also, and maybe especially so, for those other people's children whose parents are not always part of the mainstream dialogue and who could be lost in the white noise of brain talk.

Investments in the upbringing of *all* children enhance us as humans. It should be a moral imperative to support *all* parents. Investing in the tools to assist in bringing-up baby and investing in baby through the early years and upward as a potential person in whatever contributing way, would surely give us a wealth beyond our dreams and a social capital beyond the drone.

Community Landscapes of All Designs
home visiting

Thirdly, it is important to remark on the role of in-home visiting as considered in the *Early Years Study*. In both Dr. Mustard's article as well as the report, the effects of home visiting programs are relegated to a parenthetical reference in the former and in the latter marginalized to a few hundred words. Home visiting programs are referred to as "isolated strategies" in early childhood development outcomes (p5) and in the report as showing..."no improvements in children's IQ at age four" (p50).

Critics of home visiting usually point to a less than robust bank of literature when the modality has been evaluated. However, the most comprehensive and recent scientific evaluations of home visiting, *Future of Children* (1999) have suggested that while the reviews remain mixed there was sufficient evidence which, "....concluded that results were promising enough to suggest that the expansion of home visiting was warranted" (Gomby et.al p4).

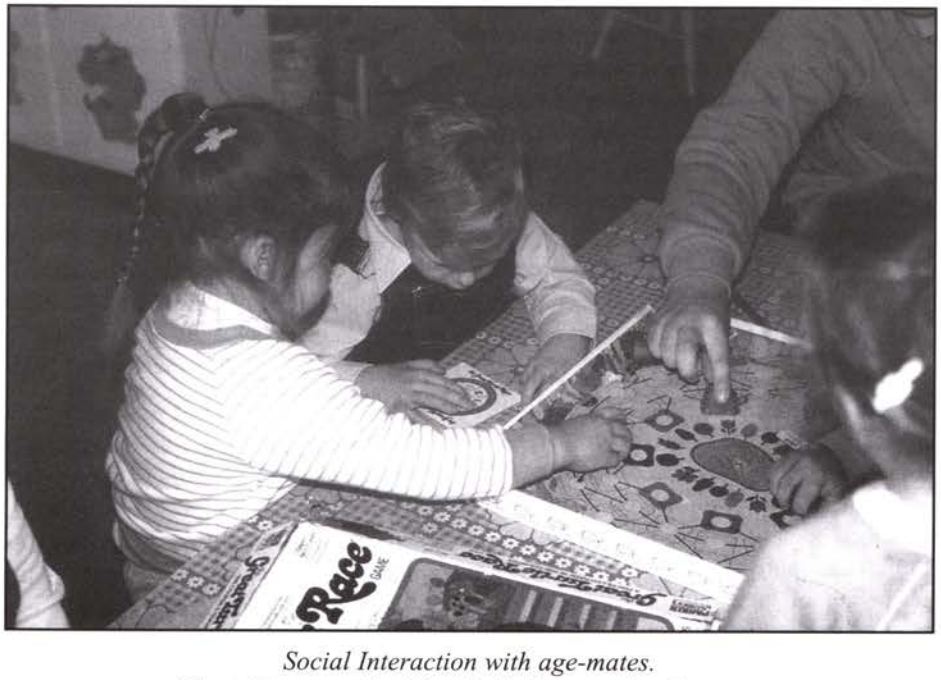
Lisbeth Schorr (1997) argues that current evaluations of social programs are guided by research designs which narrow and simplify the interventions to fit the design. She cites Martha Minow, a Harvard law professor who questioned the lack of scientific evidence to support her own reviews of home visiting that led her to believe they were highly successful. "She concluded that, 'the very cautiousness of social science undermines its usefulness in policymaking' by limiting what counts as reliable knowledge and rejecting as trustworthy studies that fail to use randomized assignment" (p146).

I believe that the *Early Years Study* presents a reactionary notion that assumes that studies which report "no effect on IQ" translates into rendering minimal the efficacy of home visiting programs. It is a curious position to take since just a few lines above in the report it was briefly noted, "...showed home visits by trained nurses to support high-risk families reduced the incidence of child maltreatment by parents" (p50). Is this not as important as, or even more critical, than IQ scores? I believe such an extraordinary stance as this can only be taken when the "whole child", a bedrock principle in early childhood, has been fragmented by brain talk.

"....concluded that results were promising enough to suggest that the expansion of home visiting was warranted" (Gomby et.al p4).

Home visiting could be an integral piece of a community design for early childhood development programs when consideration is given to the locale, the goals for the program and the families best served. To be fair to the study, this service modality is included as a component for the vision of future optimal support programs for parents. However, the contribution, one feels from the tone of the study, is more of a second or limited choice option for parents not able to access the recommended parent and child development centres.

In-home programs have the ability to begin trusting partnerships with the parent on the familiar and comfortable terrain of the home. They are relationship-based with guiding principles for developing and maintaining positive relationships (Bertacchi, J.1996). These positive relationships are often the key to mediating and supporting a vulnerable family and should always be included as an option for families in comprehensive community designs for early support services.



Social Interaction with age-mates.
Photo Courtesy: St. John Early Intervention Program

parent and child development centres for brains

In chapter 6 of the *Early Years Study,* where this vision is articulated for optimum parent support, the opening paragraph asks, "Given the evidence we have reviewed, what could and should society do to ensure all children have equal opportunity for good brain development in the critical years?" (p147). Early childhood development and parenting centres are recommended as an important community asset and as the first "tier" before the child enters the public school system. These proposed centres have an articulated integrity in and of themselves: parent and child focused; accessible to all parents; play based and problem-solving activities as central content; knowledgeable staff sensitive to positive relationship building; awareness to cultural diversity; toy and book lending libraries, all named as core components. However, they, nor any other program, should be considered as the singular cure-all that might, in the end, attenuate precious financial resources.

raising a child: anywhere

There is no magic wand or silver bullet when the complexities of human growth and development are considered. Some say there is nothing new under the sun except that currently a status profession, neuroscience, has generated excitement in the research field. There is no mystery in the ubiquitous "it takes a village to raise a child" maxim. We are social creatures, born social and in need of help along the way.

However, sometimes, the village direction becomes co-opted by the dominant class. It is conceivable that the touted parent centres could become the gathering place for middle class parents, educated and informed because of the brain talk; motivated to devote energies on behalf of their child to become the next generation's important human capital. We need only to look back to the evolution of Maria Montessori's work. This physician was devoted to the children of the poor in Italy at the beginning of the 20th century. Her work has been a major informant to the field of early childhood. Today, however, Montessori schools primarily serve the middle and upper socioeconomic parents who want their children to be academically proficient and who can pay for the luxury of a private system of preschool education.

Dr. Dan Offred in an address given in Saint John, New Brunswick to the national conference of the Boys and Girls Club (June, 2000) remarked that children of low socioeconomic status need to be with middle class children. This is the heart of the inclusive philosophy and there should be no real argument against this stance. However, those who work with vulnerable families know that in order to accomplish this inclusive goal there are many hurdles: transportation, motivation and comfort level, to name the most salient. Middle class families have better resources and can sometimes be more focused in motivation for their child's well being. It is not a large leap to imagine the vulnerable being marginalized from parent centres. A broad spectrum of services that are truly inclusive for all families must be the guiding principle for social policy.

"Given the evidence we have reviewed, what could and should society do to ensure all children have equal opportunity for good brain development in the critical years?"

Down East: The Early Childhood Initiative

Finally, a word about my own province of New Brunswick and the Early Childhood Initiative (ECI). The ECI is a provincial program, which has been in place since 1994 as a direct result of a comprehensive review of the New Brunswick educational system accomplished between 1990-1992. This review received a mandate to identify weaknesses and opportunities for strengthening the links between all levels of society and the educational system. The report, *Schools for a New Century* (1992) acknowledged the importance of the early years and the need for community support for parents and children long before the young child reaches the public school doors.

The ECI is committed to integrated services with a prevention focus, as well as intervention services when needed, and is dedicated to supporting parents with young children of the early years. The community partnerships involve the Department of Health and Wellness (public health nurses) and the Department of Family Community Services. The former is the gateway through which most referrals are made and the latter is the primary funding source.

The ECI presently serves families with children who have a medical condition or syndrome that disrupts typical development. Further, the program also focuses on children who may be developing typically but who live in very vulnerable environments.

Given this comprehensive mandate, it seems unfortunate that the ECI, a very forward thinking and pro-active program, was omitted by the *Early Years Study Final Report*. Early childhood programs outside of Ontario, namely Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and Manitoba were discussed. Although the ECI has experienced growing pains and continues to evolve, its seminal years and growth could have informed the report and, I am bold to say, could have affirmed a small, relatively poorer province as leaders on a world stage now seriously concerned about the next generation's health and well-being. To quote a professor from OISE at University of Toronto, " New Brunswick is the gutsiest province in Canada because of this initiative".

The 7 Components of the New Brunswick Early Childhood Initiative, in brief:

1. **Enhanced prenatal screening and intervention**... provided by the Department of Health and Wellness. Such enhancements could include nutritional supplements for pregnant women, nutritional counseling, prenatal classes and general support in identified areas.

2. **Enhanced postnatal screening and intervention...** these services could include nutritional supplements for baby, weight checks, especially if the baby is early gestation, diaper and formula supplements and other general supports as identified by the public health nurse. Referrals for the in-home visiting component of the ECI are often initiated at this time.

3. **A 3.5 clinic for all children in order to support healthy growth and development of the child and to connect with other services if deemed appropriate**... Parents with children in this age group may bring their children to a clinic for a developmental screening. In our province this screening was previously conducted for 5 year-olds just prior to grade one entrance. In 1991 our province finally implemented universal kindergarten and as a further response to the *Schools for a New Century* report, the previous screening clinic was pushed back by 1.5 years. This 3.5 clinic could be regarded as a kind of mid-point check-in. Like all the services in the ECI they are offered on a voluntary basis for participation by the parent. Referrals for the in-home visiting component of the ECI often result from this screening, as well as referrals for therapeutic interventions such as physiotherapy or speech therapy if needed.

4. **Home visiting services for child development support and parent support** These programs provide developmental assessments and support for children as well as parent support. The philosophy is a family-centred model. We speak of partnering with parents in assisting them in achieving their goals for the child and the family. Supports and resources may include parent education programs, toy and book lending libraries, goal incorporation with therapeutic programs and providing emotional and physical support to other community programs.

5. **Day care support for children with additional needs-that is, adapted environment or human resource needs** .... This is funding, over and above tuition fees, granted to licensed day care centres or other preschool settings in order to provide any extra identified supports for children in group settings.

6 **A community early childhood social worker to build community capacity for supporting families**..In order to encourage full participation in community settings, each regional social worker encourages the building up and sustaining of programs and events, which could encourage family involvement within the community.

7. **Home economics services for resource management...**This service may include budgeting support, cooking and/or nutritional information and is provided by a home economist from the Department of Family Community Services.

Whatever we do in directing funds, it must be for *all* children in *all* circumstances. I sincerely believe the authors of this report believe the same. But too often those in the trenches have seen their work dismissed when ideas with political appeal, led by potent voices with a new language become so vociferous that good ideas and good practices are forsaken for new terrains for study and support. Surely, existing programs have something to inform our civic landscapes in this current climate for developing early childhood programs.

Surely, existing programs have something to inform our civic landscapes in this current climate for developing early childhood programs.

Schorr (1997) counsels us that the time has past for us to think that one common intervention or prevention is the answer; there is no inoculation which guarantees the best outcomes, braininess included. What the times suggest is that if many voices were brought into the discourse concerning the early years; we could bring the drone into a harmony, and in doing so, we could truly be that exemplar village.

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Getting to the Heart of it: Children's Conversations About Moral Matters

Linda Farr Darling

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Introduction

This article is about moral conversations with and among young children. These are conversations that go to the heart of human experience because they focus on difficult choices, struggles, losses and achievements. They also focus on virtues, which I define as dispositions we admire in others and hope to find in ourselves, among them courage, kindness, compassion, generosity and integrity. Words that come close to virtue, like quality or character trait fail to capture the powerful place the term virtue already has in moral and intellectual traditions around the world. Virtues are everywhere in children's play and in children's literature; the latter provides the inspiration for the conversation presented in detail here.

The paper is intended to be a reminder that moral discussions matter to who we are and to who we might become. They matter especially to children who are sorting out a lot of questions about identity, attachment and action in a world that seems increasingly troubled. I believe that schools are one of the most important public spheres where moral conversations can be nurtured. The philosopher, Hilary Putnam (1987) once said that all of morality comes down to two questions: the first is, "How shall I live?" and the second, "How shall we live together?"(p. 41). Answering these is a lifelong task, but one that calls less for lonely contemplation than social deliberation, deliberation

The importance of listening to children

We seem to be faced with some obstacles when it comes to taking conversation seriously. At least one philosopher thinks that because conversation is all around us, it escapes philosophical notice (MacIntyre, 1984). I think it escapes pedagogical notice too and that we have missed rare teaching moments by passing it by in favor of more formal interaction like debates. It has also been said that no one knows how to converse anymore, that the art of conversation has been lost in the modern age, and with it the ability and inclination to pass that art to our children. Conversations that explore questions of meaning, value, and belief seem to be more endangered than other kinds. People speculate that this is so partly because we lack the disposition to really listen to others, and partly because we lack the time to exchange important ideas patiently. We prefer to tolerate free expression rather than take on the more difficult and delicate obligation of taking other views seriously. Instead, we assert our own opinions, take refuge in like-minded thought, and seek comfort in familiar slogans.

These claims are not unwarranted, but my experience in classrooms tells a different story. I have found the art of conversation to be practiced enthusiastically by children. Whenever I have taken the time to sit with young students, ages five, six, and seven, I have been engaged in genuine and artful conversations. Once in a while I just sit and listen to what children say; other times I ask for explanations, reasons, and examples to clarify what they're telling me. But I rarely need to turn the conversation to a subject of significance. These are not idle chats. Conversation about what really matters to their lives can be found when children are given the opportunity and the support to speak (and listen) from the heart. This already happens in many spheres where children engage with each other and with adults, and it could happen in a many more, especially in schools. Why school? Because from kindergarten on, school is the official start of participation in the public sphere. It is also the time when both consciousness and conscience are taking form for a lifetime. That is why it is so important that we nurture the kinds of conversations in which children ask themselves and each other as well adults: What kind of person do I want to be? And how do I get there?

Many teachers know intuitively that this is so. One is retired kindergarten teacher and author, Vivian Paley. In her extraordinary thirty- seven year career in the classroom Paley (1992) considered her teaching "every bit a moral act." The one rule that underpinned classroom order there reflects her commitment to fairness as well as her understanding that one of the deepest hurts a child can experience is being left out. Her rule was simply this, "You can't say, you can't play." Mrs. Paleys' kindergarten was a place where children imagined a world with abundant compassion and fairness. Her kindergarten was also a stage, where tales of courage and kindness could be acted and reenacted and where children wove their own stories of brave acts and good deeds. Paley took to heart the importance of stories and storytelling as entry points to character building and she would approve, I think, of MacIntyre's view (1984):

> It is through hearing stories about wicked stepmothers, lost children, good but misguided kings, ... youngest sons that receive no inheritance but must make their own way in the world and eldest sons who waste theirs, that children learn or mislearn what a parent and what a child is, what the cast of characters may be in the drama in which they have been born and what the ways of the world are....Without stories, you leave children anxious and stuttering in their actions and words. (p.216)

Paley spent more time than anyone I know, listening to her students tell stories as they worked and played. She recorded thousands of hours of children in conversation, using a single tape over and over so she would be forced to transcribe the recordings each day. Her lesson to adults? Take very seriously the things that children say and take equally seriously the things you say to children. My own observations of children's moral understandings are importantly connected to Paley's beliefs about the abilities of young students to discern shades of meaning within concepts such as courage, kindness, cruelty, fairness, selfishness and greed. They are both capable and inclined to explore hard cases where values conflict and choices are ambiguous. Though we don't often present dilemmas and troubling cases to young students, I am convinced of the potential value of doing just this, and then helping them work through possibilities for answers based on good reasons. The examples presented in this paper illustrate the depth and the complexity of children's moral thinking when they are grappling with a moral concept or when they encounter a situation or question that's deeply perplexing. If children know we recognize them as moral beings and if they know we believe in their aspirations to autonomy as well as their capacity to care for others, they will surprise us with their moral insights about these things, even at a young age.

Children's literature is full of examples in which a child's growing sense of autonomy is tested, and either acknowledged or flatly denied by their parents or their teachers. Novelist Kathleen (Kit) Pearson has illustrated this well. Her books are peopled with at least two types of adults, those who have faith in a child's ability to make decisions and be accountable for living with them, and those who try to protect children from growing up and taking responsibility for their actions. In *The Lights go on Again,* ten- year old Gavin realizes it is the Grandfather he barely knows who understands what Gavin needs, the chance to stand on his own two feet and "own up" when he's made a mistake. In this instance he has been coerced into stealing money:

"It seems to me that the question is whether or not you deserved to be punished. Do you think you did?"

Gavin gulped at how stern Granddad's eyes looked under their bushy brows.

"Yes, sir."

"He didn't deserve it!" cried Aunt Florence. *"That boy made you go along with him, didn't he?"*

Gavin started to agree. Then he looked back at Granddad. *"No, Aunt Florence. I didn't have to do it."*

"But you'd never do such a thing of your own free will!"

"I did though," said Gavin, wincing at the shocked expression that came into her eyes. (p. 155).

The importance of being heard and understood, as well as recognized as a moral agent, cannot be overestimated (Strawson, 1962). When I was twenty, barely out of adolescence myself, I took a job as a full time caregiver in a house full of girls who were emotionally disturbed at a residential treatment centre. Behaviorist thinking was very much in fashion in this time and place; "problem" children were viewed as bundles of behaviors to be manipulated toward acceptable standards. Nine -year old Lauren was heavy and often disagreeable. She sullenly endured countless behavior modification schemes to help her (unsuccessfully) lose weight. "You'd be so pretty if you lost twenty pounds!" the counselors would say. "If only you'd control your eating... things would be so much better!" "Can't you just try?" One evening I heard loud sobs coming from the pantry that was supposed to be locked after supper. Opening the door, I saw Lauren in the dim light, both fists deep into an industrial sized jar of grape jelly. Her face was a mess of purple streaks and tears. *"I don't want to be pretty later,"* she sobbed *"I want to be pretty now."*

The only comfort that seemed right to me at that moment was to sit down on the wooden floor and eat grape jelly too. Poor Lauren, we'd never seen *her* at all. It was clear to me that something essential about this child, something of dignity, had been passed over by well-intentioned treatments. My acknowledgement of Lauren's moral agency began when I sat down with her in that pantry and genuinely listened to what she had to say.

Lauren, like many children must have felt powerless in an adult world filled with people who wanted only to change her. Part of recognizing children as moral agents is letting them know that they are not without choices or autonomy. They can take responsibility for shaping their own character. We can and should provide exemplars and role models and opportunities for dialogue, but it is up to all of us, children and adults, to act on these, or, as Aristotle (Nussbaum, 1978) told us, to practice being good. In doing so, children start to see they may not be helpless against brute forces of the world after all. In Fugitive Pieces, by Anne Michaels (1996), the young Jakob Beer comes to see that amid chaos, human virtues, like compassion and generosity can bring a certain sense of order

and harmony to a life. Virtues can bring coherence to disorganized experience:

> *It's a mistake to think it's the small things we control and not the large, it's the other way around! We can't stop the small accident, the tiny detail that conspires into fate: the extra moment you run back for something forgotten, a moment that saves you from an accident or causes one. But we can assert the largest order, the large human values daily, the only order large enough to see (p. 22).*

When I have spent time talking to children about heroes and villains and right and wrong, their grasp of what Jakob called "human values" seems surprisingly secure, though I know there are many times when they will question these very things and when the large human order may not be at all clear. But as any parent of a toddler can attest young children know about fairness almost as soon as they learn to speak, and they are especially knowledgeable about being treated unfairly. They also know when apologies are called for (they have hurt someone) and when praise is warranted (they have shown patience or helped someone). In fact, by the time they enter school children speak a language that is already rich with moral concepts that can and should be refined, challenged and extended by their classmates, their teachers, and their families. Teaching children to be conversant in our moral language is one important aim for education. It is part of an initiation into a lifetime of moral decision-making. Through dialogue and deliberation about moral matters, we learn the range of applications for particular moral concepts and we learn to appreciate the guidance these concepts can give us when we need to decide what to believe or do.

Virtues in conversations

The idea of virtue is important to children's conversations, although it is not always easy to introduce the term to students. On one occasion when I asked elementary students to use virtue in a sentence, a boy told me, *"When he got back to the cabin, the cowboy cooked up a mess of virtues."* It took me a moment to realize he had seen a Western movie or two and was thinking about *"vittles."* Yet if I had asked him about good characters, or wrong actions, he would have understood exactly what I meant. Children can demonstrate virtues long before they know what to call them. Naming these virtues and acknowledging their significance can be an important part of encouraging the place virtues have in our everyday lives. Some people have a way of doing this without sounding didactic, an instinct for finding teachable moments without turning them into sermons. A friend of mine directs a small middle school with a curriculum that offers off-campus experiences, including outdoor trips. On one three-day hike, my friend turned to the students as they sat around a campfire after a long climb. *"That was hard for me,"* he said. *"I got tired and I wasn't sure I could get all the way up even though I knew when I got here, it would be beautiful. Was it hard for any of you?"* A number of students groaned their assent. One girl volunteered that she was sure she couldn't get to the top, but she didn't want to let everybody down by stopping in the middle.

"That's perseverance," said my friend, "when you have to reach inside and find some strength to keep going, and you wonder if you even have it. And you know what? Next time you need to try that hard, you'll know for sure that perseverance is inside you." Then he got up to make some cocoa. That was all , a few phrases containing something to think about, something that might be remembered at a later junction. It was a single, well-timed gesture toward acknowledging that virtues matter.

Although children first learn about virtues and values because they learn the meanings these things have in our language, children need multiple opportunities to see where these concepts fit, that is, to examine cases in which certain moral concepts might or might not apply. They need opportunities to see and try out multiple interpretations. They need to sort out distinctions too. Literature provides lots of entry points. I remember reading T*he Lion, the witch and the wardrobe* by CS Lewis (1950) to a kindergarten class. One child observed that the ruler of Narnia was a good lion but not a nice one. "What do you mean?" I asked. "Well, he always does the right thing and he would save you if you needed saving. But he doesn't say please or anything." Another child added, "Yeah, Aslan hurts people's feelings because he's thinking about other things." These children were trying to sort out a distinction between good and nice, a distinction that may or may not prove to be an important one in the long run, but one that demanded attention at the time. Interpreting meanings, forming distinctions, and applying moral concepts in particular cases is a lifelong endeavor. But it starts in classrooms like that kindergarten and like the Grade One classroom described here:

It is nine-fifteen and twenty- three children are sitting (more or less quietly) waiting for me to start. I'm in the rocking chair reserved for story telling and for visitors. Today I am both. I briefly introduce the book I've brought: *Great Cat* by David McPhail (1982). McPhail has painted a portrait of an extraordinary fantasy creature, a lion sized house cat who laps up gallons of milk daily. Neighborhood parents fear that she will unwittingly step on a child so she is banished to an island with her loyal owner, Toby. The climax comes on the day Great Cat throws herself into a stormy sea to rescue a boatload of children from a summer camp.

Before we start I ask what they think 'great' might mean in the story. Great Cat is on the cover, sweet faced, a mass of butter yellow fur. She's as big as a house. Several children guess that the word great refers to her size. One girl

suggests it's because she's important, *"like the queen."* As I read, the semi circle quiets. The children are attentive and watchful. When the story is over, we begin to talk about what happened to Great Cat and what she did. Though there are several elements in the story I want to focus on: Toby's loyalty to his cat, the imprudence of sailing in a storm, the children bring up the nature of heroes. At first there are standard examples based on brave actions in dire circumstances: saving a city, rescuing a child, finding treasure. Batman, Xena, Flipper, a firefighter and a doctor (a student's mother) are mentioned. *"Is Great Cat like any of those?" I ask. "They do that stuff all the time,"* comes one answer. *"Not just once."*

"They're not heroes if its their job," says a student. Then more tentatively, "Are they?"

"Are lifeguards heroes when they rescue someone?" I ask, because I'm curious about the job distinction that's being offered.

"Yeah, but they like to swim," says a boy who has not yet spoken. I'm not clear where he'll go with this but it seems to trigger something for a girl near the front.

"My cat comes and sits on top of the bathtub when I'm taking a bath. She gets her paws wet and licks them. But..." the voice lowers to little more than a whisper, *"if I splash her a lot she runs away. That's because cats hate to swim."*

"The book doesn't say the Great Cat didn't like to swim. Maybe she loves to swim," says another girl, drawling the word "loves" dramatically.

"No." says the first girl with great authority. *"They all hate it."*

"Do animals think they are being heroes? Or do they just save people?" I turn toward the direction of the voice. Its owner is lying down with his head under the bookshelf. Before I can respond, the questions and comments start to come faster.

"Are these the same kids from before where Great Cat used to live? "

"Will the parents let her come back now and play with them?"

"Nah. They won't know about it because it's not going on the news. It's probably not the same kids anyway."

"If they were the same ones and I knew it I'd leave them there and not go save them."

"You can't just leave them there." (This from a girl who having said it puts her hands over eyes and reels backward dramatically as if to faint at the suggestion.)

The discussion continues. Occasionally I interject, probe, or ask for clarification. Once in a while the children ask it of each other. I remind them to wait for a turn, listen to others' ideas, and let everyone have a chance to speak. The children engage each other and earnestly listen to other views. For the most part I am amazed and delighted at the scope of the questions, the concerns, and the observations. I am reminded how frequently we underestimate what six year olds can and do think about, the depth and breadth of their moral lives. Children are both wonderful and complicated, writes Herbert Kohl (1995) and I believe he is right.

In the course of the conversation, children sort out instances of bravery and test the boundaries of the concept of hero. For Aristotle, such an exercise is part of determining the appropriate mean between two extremes. For him virtue is exactly this; courage lies between foolhardiness on the one hand and cowardice on the other. Different circumstances call for different judgments and actions. If Great Cat didn't know how to swim, diving into the water would have been a futile gesture, though we might say he was brave for trying to save the children. However, if he had simply decided to dive into frigid water on a stormy day even though he couldn't swim, we would say he was rash.

Our understandings of virtues like courage change over time. They are tested by circumstance. Finding situations where others test them is one valuable way to imagine their limits and their applications. *Looking at the Moon* is one book in Kit Pearson's trilogy about two British children living in Canada during WW II. At the start, Norah is sure she knows what courage is all about. It means fighting the Nazis. Refusing to fight would be cowardly. Then she is confronted by her older cousin Andrew's doubts about joining up and suddenly the world is far less simple than she thought. Andrew has acted bravely in the past; Nora knows he is capable of heroism. Why is he talking this way? If Andrew, whom she adores, thinks war is wrong and killing is evil, what should she believe? What does courage mean now?

The examples given here represent a small introduction to the wealth of children's literature that can support the growth of children's moral understandings. Here, I offer additional examples that I believe are especially appropriate for very young children. They have all stimulated rich conversations in primary classrooms.

A Sampling of Books to Spark Moral Conversations

Happy Birthday to You, You Belong in a Zoo by Diane de Groat

Letter to Amy
by Ezra Jack Keats

Serefina Under the Circumstances by Phyllis Theroux

A Promise is a Promise
by Robert Munsch

William's Doll
by Charlotte Zolotow

No Fighting, No Biting
by Else Minarik

Spinky Sulks
by William Steig

Christina Katerina and the Time She Quit the Family
by Patricia Lee Gauch

The Most Beautiful Place in the World
by Ann Cameron

Granddaddy's Place
by Helen Griffiths

Frog and Toad
by Arnold Lobel

Miss Rumphius
by Barbara Cooney

Moral conversations as moral education

Creating the place for moral conversations to happen and providing examples of virtues and exemplars of virtuous behavior is only part of the story. The challenge of learning to be moral is learning what to do in particular cases you might find yourself in. It is also learning how to be a member of a moral community where deliberation about what to believe and do, takes place. Moral conversations are really dialogue about the two questions I quoted at the beginning the paper: "How Shall I live?" and, "How shall we live together?" To me, this dialogue is at the heart of moral education, education I believe is essential for young children. My argument for moral education, in other words nurturing and extending moral conversations in schools, rests on three beliefs:

1. Children come to school with moral sensibilities and sensitivities that they already understand are important and worthy of attention.

2. Literature and other forms of human expression contain virtues and values that are essential for children to explore as they take part in the human conversation that will go on for the whole of their lives.

3. Learning to become a member of the human community means knowing how to converse and deliberate about the very matters that enrich or impoverish our humanity, our dignity, and our capacity to live with others.

There are three concerns about moral education I would like to briefly address, all the while acknowledging that a fuller and very important discussion needs to continue beyond this and other writing on the same topic. The *first* is the concern that moral education should happen in the home and not the school or, in other words, that moral education is essentially a private matter and not a public one. My answer is that moral education is an inescapable part of people coming together for the purpose of, among other things, learning to live together. Moral education takes place implicitly or explicitly in every classroom, every time a teacher makes a judgment about a child's conduct, every time a fight is stopped on the playground, and every time a curricular choice is made. So we may as well own up to its inevitability and do our best to make it responsible and responsive moral education. Certainly there are matters for private instruction, religious practices being one of them, and schools should not and need not tread on those. However, all of us have an interest in seeing that schools promote public virtues, such as respect for others' rights and property, a sense of justice, concern for others' welfare, and appreciation of democratic ideals. We are justified, too, in thinking that schools should promote certain intellectual virtues as well and these have an obvious moral dimension. These virtues include curiosity, respect for knowledge and learning, commitment to excellence, integrity, and thinking things through. All of these seem appropriate, even essential to becoming educated, and most of us have little difficulty in seeing these addressed in schools.

The *second* concern is that moral education of any kind imposes values on children and is by its very nature manipulative. My answer is that if we believe in the moral values we profess to, coercing children into beliefs of any kind is not a viable option. It is not ethically justified. Such indoctrination would be a violation of autonomy, even developing autonomy. In the public sphere we ask people to support their views with reasons and evidence. We ask for explanation and we make spaces for deliberation. There is general agreement in a liberal democratic society that holding to beliefs based on prejudice and custom is potentially dangerous (Mill, 1975). Therefore, we are obligated to show children our best reasons for believing anything we tell them and to help them arrive at their own beliefs with adequate warrant and justification. Even before they can understand the full weight of such justification, they will know we value reasons.

The *third* concern is that moral education of the sort I am advocating is culturally bound and therefore could be construed as cultural imposition. This is a difficult objection to address, but I think this notion of presumption underestimates the amount of actual commonality between human beings. Martha Nussbaum (1997) believes all human beings share spheres of experience and this bonds us in ways we might not recognize at first: we all try to make sense of experience, we all want love and acceptance, we all want a measure of security and safety and we all have to deal with mortality. If this is true, then other moral traditions can strengthen our own. Multiple perspectives on common problems may provide answers we never imagined. Opening up the dialogue to diverse voices enriches our moral horizons. Moral conversations extend our sensibilities; they do not shut them down.

A young friend once asked me where "virtues come from." I don't know the answer but I know that talking about them is part of social and linguistic practice everywhere, in ancient worlds and modern ones. We see virtues carved on Chinese stones and Islamic tablets, and woven into Greek myths and Norse fairy tales, Australian Dream time stories, and Indonesian puppet plays. These virtues are fundamental to legal systems and foundational to religious doctrines. Do they arise from a human need for others, a desire to become part of a community? Or do they come out of a spiritual desire to reflect godlike qualities? These questions have been asked for thousands of years.

Even translated over time and place we recognize the expression of certain virtues across cultures and generations. Compassion, especially, seems almost universally present. Maybe compassion is the first virtue. At a very early age, people recognize in themselves and others, vulnerability to suffering. The recognition of shared vulnerability may lead to empathy and perhaps compassion. A few years ago there was a commercial on a Spanish network that I only saw once. A toddler (seen from the back wearing diapers) sits in front of a TV watching a newsreel of refugees fleeing a war torn landscape. Among the refugees is a young woman with a baby in her arms. The baby is crying uncontrollably. The toddler who is watching reaches up and places her own soother on to the screen. That gesture may be the very beginning of compassion, and if it is it may well be the start of moral education. I would like to think so.

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Coping with Teasing: A program for children teased due to their medical condition

Ruanna MacDougall Jones, Loretta Young, Maragret Williams, Abigail Bagley-Young

Abstract

Harmful teasing is a factor in the lives of many children with a medical condition, and it diminishes self-esteem. A one-day group program for children attending clinics at the Alberta Children's Hospital is described. The program aims to give the children the necessary skills to deal with teasing, and to increase their self-confidence in using these strategies. A preliminary program evaluation is reported, consisting of a questionnaire completed by nine children immediately following the program session. Follow-up interviews and questionnaires were also conducted 12-16 weeks later with eight of the children and one of their parents. Most children had retained the knowledge skills acquired in the program, and appeared to be using these effectively in coping with teasing. Parental reports of their child's progress and use of acquired skills were positive.

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Introduction

Teasing occurs frequently in the lives of young children in Canada and North America (Langevin, Bortnick, Hammer & Wiebe, 1998). Teasing can be both harmful and playful, however: "Teasing differs from joking in that it involves a perpetrator and a victim and often occurs at the latter's expense by relating specifically to one of the victim's characteristics." (Pawluk, 1989) This differentiates "having fun with" from "making fun of" (Ross, 1996).

While teasing can involve a benign, joking relationship, it can take the form of destructive, vicious and cruel teasing. This type of harmful teasing may occur in conjunction with bullying. Teasing differs from bullying in that, in most cases, bullying involves physical harassment. However, Ross (1996) argues, "Teasing is as severe a problem as bullying."

Children with special medical needs may be particularly vulnerable to being teased in ways which may be harmful to their long-term adjustment (Charlton, Pearson, & Morris-Jones, 1986; Gerrard, 1991; Hagedorn, 1993, 1995). Such teasing may take the form of unpleasant remarks about a child's physical appearance or handicap, or other verbal attacks such as taunts or name-calling.

The Coping with Teasing Program arose from an identified need from patients and parents who found that teasing is a very significant problem for children who have differences due to a medical condition. Children who report that they are teased have few skills to cope with the teasing and, in turn, display characteristics of low self-esteem and low self-confidence (Starkweather & Givens-Ackermann, 1997).

The program described below was designed by two workers at the Alberta Children's Hospital (Jones and Young) in order to increase children's knowledge of strategies to respond to teasing incidents, to increase their ability to cope with feeling different, and to increase their assertiveness in a teasing situation.

Program Description

The Coping with Teasing Program is a program for children aged 8-12 years who are experiencing teasing due to their medical condition. The children who attend the Coping with Teasing Program must be registered with a clinic at the Alberta Children's Hospital, a pediatric tertiary care hospital. The program was designed and is implemented by Jones and Young with the assistance of a student volunteer. No fees are charged for this program. Costs are covered by the hospital and Social Work Department. It operates in a large child-friendly room at the Alberta Children's Hospital.

The Coping with Teasing Program is a one-day workshop that is offered approximately three times per year. The program begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m., and is psycho educational in focus and format. It is intended to be a fun-filled day of activities, videos, role-plays and general hands-on information.

There is no screening process for the program. However, all children must meet the age criterion and be able to perform cognitively within the 8 to 12-year age range parameters, and need to be

cognitively and physically able to participate in the group activities. The group size is limited to 15 children, and those who are not able to attend because of space limitations are put on a waiting list. Referrals to the program are made by the child's clinic, therapists or parents. Parents are sent a program brochure prior to the date outlining program guidelines. Consent is obtained from parents for their child's participation. On the day of the program, parents are advised, in writing that they will be contacted several weeks after the workshop for program evaluation purposes.

There have been 14 sessions of the Coping with Teasing Program between 1993 and 2000 and each time, the program was developed more fully. During this time, questionnaires were mailed out to the program participants, but response was poor, limiting the ability to evaluate the program. The formative evaluation discussed in this paper focuses on a single group that met on May 6, 2000. This group included seven boys and two girls, aged 8 to 11. Given this small sample size, the results will be reported in table format and discussed in the form of case studies.

These nine children had medical problems, which included mental health, developmental disorders, craniofacial anomalies, burn scars and amputation. Although the strategies of this particular Coping with Teasing Program are geared towards children with a medical condition, the strategies are not linked to the child's specific condition. However, the individual child's specific difficulties with respect to teasing are identified during the 'Teasing Program Discussion' (see page 6). The strategies taught are then linked to each child's specific needs.

Goal and Objectives

The goal of the Coping with Teasing Program is to improve children's abilities to cope with teasing situations. The objectives of the Coping with Teasing Program are:

1. to provide the child with strategies to respond to teasing incidents;
2. to increase their understanding of feelings associated with "being different," and
3. to increase the child's confidence in his/her ability to assert his/herself in a teasing situation.

Several activities were designed in order to meet these objectives. The following is a description of the activities, and the specific objectives to which they are linked:

Name Taking: Children identify themselves on their nametag and write activities that they are "good at." These are to be used later in an icebreaker activity. (Objective #3)

Picture Taking: An instant photograph of each child is taken at the time of registration. This photograph is subsequently attached to the child's individual poster board containing all of his or her teasing strategies. (Objective #3)

Clapping Game: Children gather on the floor in a circle and identify themselves and what they are good at, as specified on their nametag. This icebreaker gives each child an opportunity to recognize a personal strength. (Objective #3)

Potato Exercise: Using a potato as a medium to identify similarities and differences, a discussion with the children reveals physical unique nesses and feelings associated with differences. (Objective #2)

Mr. Potato Head™ Exercise: Using the Mr. Potato Head™ toys, children divide into groups and create a Potato Head. No two heads look the same. The ensuing discussion focuses on their unique nesses and differences. (Objective #2)

Teasing Program Discussion: The children participate in a discussion about why they are at the Coping with Teasing Program, with an investigation into the teasing that they experience. The focus is on what each child has specifically been teased about in the past, how they are teased, types of teasing, how it felt to be teased, and what kinds of behaviours they chose to respond to the teasing. (Objective #2)

Knot Game/Musical Chairs: This is an exercise to stretch and release energy. The music chosen is "I Like Me" by RONNO, a catchy tune with lyrics that highlight the uniqueness of the individual. (Objectives #2 and #3)

Doughman Exercise: A six-inch folded cutout doll is handed to each child. On the inside of the doll they write or draw what it feels like "inside" when they are teased. Later in the program, the children will be passed the same doll and will be able to write or draw what it feels like when they have some specific strategies to deal with the teasing. This doughman is later glued to a large poster board. (Objective #2)

'Sneetches' Video by Dr. Seuss: This is an entertaining 10-minute animated video. This video focuses on how it is fun to be different. Following the video, a facilitator leads a discussion to highlight the important points. (Objective #2)

"Teasing And How To Stop It" Video, developed by the B.C. Children's Hospital: The first half of the video features children describing their teasing experiences and offers many suggestions and "tips when teased." A facilitator leads a discussion about the video "tips". Each "tip" is written on a separate piece of paper, and these are later passed out to each child to glue on his or her poster board. (Objective #1)

The second half of the video features a child very clearly modeling four specific verbal strategies that can be used in a teasing situation. The Teasing Strategies are as follows:

1. *Agree with the teaser: the child being teased assertively agrees with the teaser in an unconcerned way, for example: "Yes, I am smaller than most of the kids my age."*
2. *Play the boss – Be in charge: The child assumes a position of authority. Examples of this strategy are: giving orders to the teaser, giving "permis-*

sion" to the teaser, or calling the teaser by his or her full name. For example, the child being teased about his or her disability may reply: "So, Miranda, you've noticed that I don't move that fast. Miranda, come back tomorrow after school so that we can talk some more about why I can't move faster."

3. *Trap the teaser into playing your game: The child makes the teaser repeat the taunt, then asks: "What did you say? Pardon me? Well done, Jennifer Walker, you said that three times. Come back after school and I'll let you say it three more times."*

4. *Embarrass the teaser: If the teaser repeats the taunt, the child may say something to the effect of: "You know, Alvin, I hear you say the same thing every day. I want you to sing it today. It's boring to hear the same thing every day. Come on, Alvin, I want you to sing it today. Can't you sing?" This strategy is most effective if onlookers are present.*

After watching the video, the children Coping with Teasing Program participants engage in a role-playing activity in which they are encouraged to practice the specific skills taught in the video. This role-playing is done with a partner in front of the group, which allows each child to gain confidence in using these skills in front of their peers. A sheet of paper, outlining the video strategies and additional coping with teasing tips, ("Tips when Teased"), is passed to each child. These will later be attached to the poster board for take-home purposes. (Objectives #1 and #3)

WITS Exercise (source unknown): The children are taught four easy strategy steps in cheerleader fashion: W=Walk Away, I=Ignore, T=Talk to Teaser, S=Supervisor (tell someone). (Objective #1)

World's Greatest: A game is included at a time when energy release and stretching is necessary. Children form a circle and each child has the opportunity to "become the world's greatest" and demonstrate (charade) their skill in front of the others. Often they choose the activity originally identified on their nametag, "I am good at..." (Objective #3)

Telephone Number Exchange: Children are encouraged to exchange telephone numbers in order that they have a friend for future support. (Objective #3)

Closing Ceremonies: The facilitators lead a ceremony where each child is awarded a certificate of completion of the workshop, and is complimented on his or her efforts to learn and continue to practice their coping with teasing strategies. (Objective #3)

Parents are provided with an information package and encouraged to help their child with the strategies learned in the program. The above activities together comprise the program delivered at the Alberta Children's Hospital. However, these activities might be included individually into other similar programs and evaluated as part of the overall program evaluation.

Program Evaluation

In order to determine whether the program objectives were achieved, a nine-item, multiple choice questionnaire was developed. Expertise was sought from the University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work for development of the program evaluation questionnaire. The development process included attention to the links between objectives, activities and outcomes: each objective was achieved through a specific activity and a related question was included on the evaluation instrument. Thus far, no work has been done on establishing the validity and reliability of the instrument.

The questionnaire was group administered by one facilitator immediately following the Coping with Teasing Program. For follow-up, the same questionnaire was re-administered to each child individually; only the tense of the statements and questions were changed (see Table 1). A research assistant performed this follow-up 12-16 weeks after the group. In addition, parents were invited to answer the following questions:

1. What do you think your child learned from the Coping with Teasing Program?

2. Hove you noticed any change in your child's behavior since the group? If yes, what specific changes can you identify?

The purpose of re-administering the questionnaire and inviting parent comments was to determine if the program's objectives had been met in the relatively long term. Children had attended school for approximately two months following completion of the program, which gave them the opportunity to employ the skills they had learned. Eight of the nine questionnaires were completed at follow-up; one child was unavailable.

One child continued to have problems with teasing, and was referred to the appropriate clinic for further follow-up.

Results

The results of the questionnaire completed after the program and at follow-up are presented in Table 1. Expertise was sought from the University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work for development of the program evaluation questionnaire. Had the sample been larger, a T-test would have been appropriate for comparing the responses directly after the program with those obtained at follow-up. Because only eight children participated in the follow-up, the results derived from quantitative assessment using SPSS were not as meaningful as those derived by qualitative methods. Three of the eight cases are presented as vignettes indicating, where relevant, changes in response to the questionnaire following the program and 12-16 weeks later. General conclusions are then drawn from all of the questionnaires and interviews. All names have been changed.

Table 1
Questionnaire Responses of Eight Children Following the Coping with Teasing Program

How do children feel when they are teased?

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
angry	87.5	75.0
mad	75.0	87.5
sad	87.5	87.5
happy	0	0
hurt	100	87.5
scared	12.5	37.5
joyful	0	0
silly	0	12.5
disappointed	50.0	50.0

Now that you have finished the Coping with Teasing Program, how did/will[1] you feel when you get teased?

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
brave	75.0	37.5
confident	75.0	37.5
wimpy	0	0
scared	12.5	12.5
helpless	12.5	12.5
courageous	62.5	25.0
silly	0	0
frustrated	0	37.5
angry	12.5	25.0

Which of the following are "Teasing Tips"?

* Look the teaser in the eye [2]
* Stand up straight and tall
Pretend you are tired
* Use your whole body

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
all correct	100	62.5
one or more incorrect	0	37.5

How might/do you act now that you have finished the Coping with Teasing Program?

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
Do you look the teaser in the eye?		
never	0	25.0
most of the time	37.5	25.0
always	62.5	50.0
Do you stand up straight and tall?		
never	0	12.5
most of the time	37.5	37.5
always	62.5	50.0
Do you use your whole body?		
never	0	37.5
most of the time	37.5	12.5
always	62.5	50.0

Which of the following are Teasing Strategies?

* Agree with the teaser
* Play the boss
* Embarrass the teaser
Poke fun at the teaser

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
all correct	100	62.5
one or more incorrect	0	37.5

The Potato Head Game and the video 'Sneetches' taught an important message. Which of these answers BEST tells the message?

Children who are different should try and look the same as everyone else.

* *All children have differences and they can learn to feel O.K. about their differences.*

Children who have differences are always the ones who get teased.

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
all correct	75.0	100
one or more incorrect	25.0	0

During the teasing program, you learned how to use your WITS in a teasing situation. Circle the correct SET below that shows what you do to use your WITS?

Walk away	Walk away
Ignore	Ignore
Talk to Teaser	Tattletale
Supervisor (tell)	Snarly Voice

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
correct	100	100
incorrect	0	0

Since the Coping with Teasing Program, will you be/have you been more confident when somebody teases you?

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
No	0	0
Maybe	0	37.5
Yes	100	62.5

Did you have fun participating in the Coping with Teasing Program?

	at end of program (%)	at follow-up (%)
No	0	
Maybe	12.5	
Yes	87.5	

[1] This indicates the tense change in the follow-up questionnaire.

[2] An asterisk (*) indicates a correct response.

Case Studies

Tom is 8 years old, and attends the Cleft Palate/Craniofacial Clinic. Tom is small for his age, and he has a cleft lip and palate, which results in hypernasal speech. He was teased because of what his peers regarded as a "crooked lip", high-pitched voice and speech differences. Despite his young age, Tom had achieved maximum results on the knowledge achievement profiles at the end of the group. He had enjoyed the group and felt "brave and confident." At follow-up, he reported using the correct tactics in coping with teasing – "look the teaser in the eye", "stand up straight and tall" and "use your whole body." He "always" employed these tactics in teasing situations. He said that he had become more confident in coping with teasing. His mother reported positively on Tom's strategies, saying he had gained some self-confidence, and was "more willing to do homework"!

Adam is ten, and attends the Mental Health Clinic. He was teased because of his antisocial behaviour in the classroom. When schoolwork became difficult or when the teacher reprimanded him, Adam tended to throw tantrums. He also felt that he did not seem to "fit in" with his peers. His initial responses to the Coping with Teasing Program were enthusiastic, and he had acquired appropriate knowledge skills, despite being both "hurt" and "disappointed" by teasing. At follow-up he remained "angry, mad, sad, hurt, scared and disappointed," but nevertheless employed the appropriate 'Teasing Tips' learned in the group "most of the time." Adam had pinned his 'skills poster' from the group on the wall of his room. His mother reported that he had made a "marginal change" in coping with teasing.

Abe, like Adam, is ten, and attends the Amputee Clinic. Abe wears prosthesis, and at school he was teased about having a "peg leg." In addition, he was unable to take part in certain athletic activities and felt isolated. His responses to teasing were less marked than those of most of the group, and he was "hurt" by teasing, but was not angry, sad or scared. His knowledge gains were appropriate, but at follow-up his reactions to teasing were more pessimistic than at the end of the group. His responses included being "angry, mad, sad, hurt and disappointed." However, he reported that he is hardly teased at all now and he explains that this is the reason why he "never" needed to use the 'Teasing Tips.' His mother was very positive about his progress: "He knows how to stick up for himself and deal with teasing ... After the group he was happy, and talked a lot about it." It is possible that Abe's more extreme reaction to teasing three months after the group is implicated in his successful strategies to cope with, and largely end teasing.

David is ten years old, and attends the Developmental Clinic. He seemed to have had much difficult fitting in with his peers, and he was teased because of his short temper and explosive behaviour. After the Coping with Teasing Program, he stated that he would likely feel "confident" if he got teased. However, at follow-up, he asserted that none of the listed words – brave, confident, wimpy, scared, helpless, courageous, silly, frustrated, angry – accurately described his feelings when he was teased; instead, he said that he simply ignored the teasing. David remembered all of the Teasing Tips and Teasing Strategies, but "never" used them in practice. He answered the question "Have you been more confident when someone teases you?" with a "maybe." His mother acknowledges that he has poor social skills; during the Coping with Teasing Group, he was the only child who was not willing to participate in the activities. She reported that "initially he tried some of the coping skills and he quickly stopped trying because they didn't work right away." Following the program, David was referred to therapists in the Developmental Clinic.

James, age 9, and Joshua, age 11, are brothers who attend the Developmental Clinic. Both boys have a genetic condition that resulted in delayed cognitive development. Although their condition was not outwardly visible, they were teased because they were not always able to follow directions as well as their peers. Joshua was particularly shy and withdrawn, and his poor motor skills were apparent in physical education classes. James behaved somewhat more immaturely than his peers, and he was teased because of his juvenile behaviour. Directly following the group, both boys were able to identify all of the teasing strategies and tips, and seem to have retained this information four months later. At follow-up, both James and Joshua stated that they "always" looked the teaser in the eye, stood up straight and tall "most of the time" and "always" used their whole body when faced with a teasing situation. The follow-up interview also revealed that James felt "scared" and "helpless" when he was teased, whereas Joshua felt "brave, confident and courageous." Their mother felt that both boys had learned valuable skills in the group. James "enjoyed the 'I like me' song and sang it often afterwards." She also reports "James has started to remove himself from people who are not nice to him whereas [in the past] he would allow himself to be picked on to fit in." His brother Joshua came away from the group with "the knowledge to carry himself more confidently and the ability to confront the teaser."

Karen, who is 11 years old, comes from an ethnic minority background, and attends the Plastic Surgery Clinic. Karen comes from a large family, and her parents and older siblings seemed to overindulge her. When she went to school and did not receive the attention she was accustomed to at home, she became very dependent. For this reason, Karen's peers isolated her and focused their teasing on the residual twitch that she had following the repair of a facial

birth defect. Karen is consistent in her reaction to teasing at both points in the follow-up, registering her feelings as "angry, mad, sad and hurt." After three months she no longer feels "brave and confident" in coping with teasing. However, she no longer feels frustrated, and expresses feelings of being courageous in facing teasing. Interestingly, although at the end of the group she thought she would "look the teaser in the eye, stand up straight and tall, use your whole body," these are strategies, which she "never" used three months later. In both test periods she would "agree with the teaser", but would no longer "play the boss" at follow-up. Again she has moved to the more pessimistic response "children who have differences are always the ones who get teased." Finally, she has moved from a "yes" to a "maybe" in response to the question "...have you been more confident when someone teases you?" Despite Karen's apparent decline in confidence, her mother commented at follow-up: "Karen has gained a sense of confidence about herself. She knows that people are different and that is O.K. Karen has become more sociable, and will interact with other children more often than before."

Rachel is eleven, and attends the Behavioural Services Clinic. She was teased because of her small stature and obvious body changes that were the result of medication side effects. Following the Coping with Teasing Group she said she would feel "brave, confident" when teased, and acknowledged appropriate teasing strategies. At follow-up she expressed somewhat less confidence in dealing with teasers, but retained knowledge of appropriate strategies. Her father commented: "She seemed to cope with teasing at school ... the teasing has become less, or at least she ceased to talk about it."

Discussion

Despite the fact that this is a preliminary study, the results have demonstrated that the group model is potentially very effective in teaching children how to cope with teasing. Results of the case studies indicate generally positive gains in the lives of most children.

An explanation can be made for some of the pessimistic responses at follow-up – for example, the case of one child who, after the program, said that he would feel "brave, confident and courageous" when faced with a teasing situation, and then at follow-up said that he felt "scared and helpless" when he was teased. Although the skills and strategies aim to give the child appropriate strategies and confidence to confront the teaser, the child may still feel scared, helpless or frustrated when faced with a teasing situation. The hope is that the specific skills that the child has learned, and their display of confidence in standing up to the teaser will reduce and eventually stop teasing incidents.

Informally, group facilitators observed that children with a more obvious disability responded more eagerly to group activities. They seemed willing to recognize that they were being teased because of their disability. Conversely, children with less obvious disabilities (for example, asthma, seizure disorder or mental health disorder) were less able to acknowledge the link between their condition and being teased. More formal evaluation of this observation is indicated.

The quantitative results seem to indicate that, on the whole, most of the children retained the information that was presented at the Coping with Teasing Program. Some parts of the questionnaire demonstrated a slight decline at follow-up. For example, while all of the children were able to correctly identify the Teasing Strategies directly after the group, 3 out of the 8 children got one or more incorrect at follow-up. The implication of these results is difficult to assess given the small sample size; however, this may indicate that the child has chosen one or two of these strategies that best fit their teasing situation, and has disregarded the others.

At follow-up, the parents' reports are particularly instructive. In fact, seven of the eight parents interviewed said that child had made at least some progress in coping with teasing.

Given these generally positive findings, we are encouraged not only to continue with this group work but also to continue with systematic program evaluation which may include before and after methods and long-term follow-up.

Recommendations

The evidence obtained from this initial study will form the basis for a more systematic evaluation using a controlled design as outlined by Shadish, Cook & Leviton (1991). There is, as the standard textbooks advise us, no perfect form of program evaluation and it is virtually impossible to control for the effects of all key variables. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods (e.g. systematic measures combined with open-ended interviews) is likely to give the fullest picture (Worthen, Sanders & Fitzpatrick, 1996.) A fuller evaluation would also have a control group (such as a 'wait list' group) with pre- and post-testing using relevant measures. A more systematic program evaluation will be conducted in the future, and these evaluations would address some of the limitations faced by the initial study. Subsequent evaluations may benefit from changes to the questionnaire, the evaluation procedure, or modifications to the format of the program as a whole.

For example, it has already been noted that, informally, group facilitators observed that children with a more obvious disability responded more eagerly to group activities. More structured data collection regarding the link between the child's disability and eagerness to participate in the group is necessary in order to determine whether there is a connection between disability and outcome. A child with an obvious disability might be more aware of the need to learn teasing strategies, thus affecting participation and outcome.

The validity of the questionnaire used in the initial study has not been established. The questions may need to be modified in order to collect more information about specific aspects of the program. For example, by posing the question "Have you phoned any of the other kids from the Coping with Teasing Program?" the follow-up questionnaire would seek to determine whether or not the child had made use of the support network established during the telephone number exchange. Another valuable question that could be posed at follow-up is: "What have you done with the skills poster board?" The answers to this question would likely reveal whether or not a prominently displayed poster board that the child could refer to when needed is an effective way of reminding the child about the skills he or she learned in the program.

Reliability requires that the same instrument be administered in the same way on every occasion. In this study, the questionnaire was administered by a group facilitator on program completion and by the researcher during follow-up. In future work, consistency in administration of the questionnaire will be observed.

Future evaluations may also make use of a pre- and post-test design in administering the questionnaire in order to assess the child's knowledge base before program intervention. The idea that a behaviour change is the result of an attitude change derived from increased knowledge could be more meaningfully determined using a self-esteem test or an emotional disorder scale. Although these methods would allow us to obtain some face validation of the methods used, they would both require a larger sample group and more extensive follow-up procedures. Subsequent evaluations would not be limited to one group; using the basic design of this initial study and incorporating recommendations for improvement, it would be possible to evaluate several groups so as to increase the scope of the collected data. Indeed, the program continues to be offered and the questionnaire administered to participants upon completion. Data analysis continues on an ongoing basis and facilitates program modification where necessary.

Follow-up is necessary for effective program evaluation. It is important to determine whether or not the information presented in the program is retained in the short- and long-term, and a follow-up interview also gives the participants an opportunity to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the program. It is therefore important for programs such as the Coping with Teasing Program to request funding and assistance in conducting a follow-up.

The positive results that we have obtained from the initial study seem to show that the objectives and activities of the Coping with Teasing Program are effective in achieving its goal: to improve children's abilities to cope with teasing situations. For this reason, it is unlikely that the format of the program will be changed significantly; instead the focus may be on the expansion of the program. One recommendation for enhancement is to add a parent component to the program, whereby the facilitators would go over the teasing tips and strategies with the parents following the Coping with Teasing Program. This would allow the parents to become familiar with the program's concepts so that they may help better their child cope with teasing.

A 'refresher group' has also been suggested, where children who have participated in the Coping with Teasing Program are reunited in order to review the skills that they have already learned, and to assess the need to further practice these skills. This 'refresher group' would also give the opportunity to conduct a follow-up, and to enhance friendships that were made during the first program.

Further research possibilities include a follow-up conducted in the child's school, which may include teacher's observations of how other children interact with the children who attended the Coping with Teasing Program. These observations could also be used to show whether the children who are teased are also physically harassed or bullied. If this is the case, then the Coping with Teasing Program could be expanded to include strategies to cope with bullying.

At this point, the objectives and activities seem to be adequately meeting the goal of the Coping with Teasing Program. The results of this preliminary study are encouraging, and point to the program's potential success in helping children deal with teasing.

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"I Like Me" as sung by Children's Recording Artist RONNO from *"Positively Singable Songs"* © Song Support, Kitchener, Ont.

'The Sneetches' from the videotape *Dr. Seuss on the Loose,* used by permission of *Dr. Seuss Enterprises, L.P.* International Creative Management, Inc. New York, N.Y.

'Strategies when Teased/Use Your W.I.T.S.' - source unknown

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Practicing the Ideas of Reggio Emilia: A Growing Experience

Karen MacKay Young

Karen MacKay Young celebrates 29 years as an early childhood educator. She recently moved to the Georgian Triangle from Lambton College where she was a professor in The Early Childhood Education Program. She was the Early Years Program Developer at Pretty River Academy in Collingwood and now has a consulting business and continues to teach ECE courses with Georgian College.

Introduction

Reggio Emilia represents a considerable departure from traditional ECE practice. If not an entirely new direction, the Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education is at least an opportunity to rethink what we have been practicing and teaching in the last 20 years. As early childhood educators we have placed the greatest emphasis on learning through play with little emphasis on the interactional and relationship components of play. In the spring 1999 edition of Canadian Children, Carol Anne Wein reminded us that the central role of learning through play has been challenged by Susan Fraser in her book the Authentic Child. Susan implies that we have "missed the boat" with this way of thinking and that relationships should be the central core of our programs.

While I had read about, and discussed the Reggio Approach with colleagues, I was not entirely convinced that this was so much different from what we were already doing. Such terms as "respect for the child", "the environment as the third teacher", and "the importance of family" are not new to us. However, my own experience as described below, compelled me not only to rethink the manner in which learning occurs through play but also to re-examine the meaning and importance of these concepts. I began to understand Vygotsky's formulation that while children actively construct their own thinking, learning takes place through interactive assistance and support from peers, older children and adults in the child's environment. I hope that this article might inspire others to explore this approach to educating young children.

A New Beginning

In 1997, I left my friends, colleagues and teaching position at an Ontario Community College Early Childhood Education program to join my new husband to Collingwood, Ontario. It is located on beautiful Georgian Bay in the picturesque Blue Mountains. When I arrived, I began teaching part time for the college here. I was fortunate to have adult students in the program who kept me informed as to what was happening in education in this community. They told me that there was a new private school about to open in the area and that the founder, Roberta Murray Hirst, had views on education similar to mine. We both held the view that the child is an active participant in constructing his/her own learning and that children need to be actively involved in order to learn. A few weeks later, Roberta came to the college to seek me out and we scheduled a meeting together. I gave her my newly acquired book, *First Steps Toward Teaching The Reggio Way* by Joanne Hendrick and our relationship began. She approached me a short time later and asked me to be the kindergarten teacher in her new school. It appeared to be a "grass roots" beginning so I accepted the position. I had been familiar with the writings of Rousseau, Dewey and Piaget and had seen the influence of these theorists on traditional ECE practice. Having now read of Vygotsky's influence on the schools of Reggio Emilia, I saw it as an exciting opportunity to explore his ideas. The school, Pretty River Academy, is located at the Easter Seals camp, five kilometers from Collingwood on the shores of Georgian Bay with an awe inspiring view of the Blue Mountains. What a perfect place to immerse myself in a new educational experience.

The First Year

From the very beginning, importance was placed on aspects such as respect for the child, the understanding that children come to us with knowledge already acquired, and that children learn through experiences within the context of their culture and environment. Many field trips were organized to explore our surroundings. Since we are located on the Niagara Escarpment, we became involved in exploring caves, forests, and wetlands. Parents joined us and became quite influential in the learning process. For example, some parents shared their expertise on topics such as rock formations, fossils, vegetation, and other environmental aspects of the area. We had family style lunches in an environment in which we all ate together. Art, music, and drama were very important components of the program and the older children began to represent their experiences through art. Music for the young children became part of an emerging curriculum. The entire student body consisted of only twenty-five to thirty children and, even though they were spread over several grades, everyone played together during free times and participated together in field trips and various learning activities. In this environment, relationships between children, teachers and parents flourished.

The Early Years program: Symbolic Representation

Within my own small group of kindergarten children, I began to take the risk of encouraging the children to represent things of interest through drawings and plasticine. Coming from a "process vs. product" background, this was very difficult for me. My previous experience was that it was not appropriate to direct the child to draw a specific thing. The child was only to initiate this him or herself. *Process* in the Reggio approach is very important but we can also see in the *One Hundred Languages of Children*, beautiful pieces of art that children have *produced* with support and direction from adults. Our first experience in symbolic representation occurred during a walk on the grounds of the school. The children discovered a couple of totem poles. We went back to the classroom to collect our drawing pads and pencils, returned to the totem poles and began to draw. What a pleasant surprise! The children were very serious, and took time to study the totem poles by looking, feeling and trying to imitate the faces they saw. A discussion took place as to how to draw the poles. They were able to represent them very well! Even though the ages were 3 to 6, they did not compare their drawings and it was easy to point out to them the vertical lines as well as the horizontal lines dividing the faces on the totem poles. We then went back to our classroom and represented the poles using plasticine. As the year went by, they made it a habit on their own, to initiate their own representations using markers, crayons, pencils and plastecine. It was a wonderful surprise to observe the development of the children's ability to draw. They created intricate pictures of birds and flowers. I witnessed the sense of accomplishment that they experienced.

My struggle with documentation

I became so involved with the children during the excitement of 'emerging curriculum' that I could not quite get around to the documentation. Also, most times I was alone and did not have enough confidence myself to begin the process of documentation. I began by taking photos but then left out the children's conversations. Operating in a learning environment which emphasizes lesson planning and scheduling, the team teaching concept was difficult to incorporate. However, we did "tell our stories" using photographs. Documentation during the second year began to flourish with children's conversations being recorded and processes being documented with photos. The children spent a great deal of time looking at the documentation and telling their versions of the stories to each other. Parents were drawn to the panels and enjoyed the displays.

The Environment

Being a new school, materials were very scarce. One of the parents donated five thousand dollars so I bought mainly good art materials and basic math, science and small manipulative materials such as puzzles and a good set of unit blocks. I set up a communication center and the children spent much time writing letters and drawing pictures for each other. I also managed to gather together various materials for dramatic play such as puppets, dolls and dress up clothes. We spent a great deal of time outdoors since we were in such beautiful surroundings. Consequently, many of our projects were based on children's interests related to what we were observing in nature. Many things that we found outdoors were brought indoors only if it was environmentally wise. We all developed a great love for fairy tales and spent a great deal of time reading. A fellow colleague at Lambton College, Jane Danic had given me some home made file board games. These became favorites and the children learned many skills playing these games. I soon abandoned the belief that a stimulating learning environment, required expensive educational toys and purchased materials. Without an abundance of materials, we became very resourceful and creative. The children's imaginations flourished and on a daily basis I was entertained with the most intricate, imaginative play I had ever observed.

A Surprise Addition

Towards the end of the school year, Roberta and I were supervising children on the beach one day when a slight, dark haired woman approached us. In her Italian accent, she told us that she was moving to the area from British Columbia with her husband and two children. She had gone into our classrooms herself and had noticed that the kindergarten classroom appeared to be using a Reggio Approach. Our mouths dropped with astonishment to think that someone would be able to recognize this. As it turned out, Marina had actually grown up in Milan, Italy and in her early school years, had been immersed in a program she thought to be similar to Reggio Emilia. She eventually graduated from an Italian University as an architect. She came to British Columbia with her Canadian husband and after her first child was born, decided to take Early Childhood Education at Capilano College with the conviction that it was important to develop good parenting skills as well as to learn about development. I saw Marina's arrival as either an opportunity to feel intimidated or as a unique opportunity to learn from someone who had more knowledge than I did about the approach. I chose the latter. I always had many questions for her and learned that there was much more to the Reggio approach than emerging curriculum and documentation. I had to open myself up to examining my own practices and what instruction I had prescribed over the years. As a result, I truly began to listen to the children and the parents. Marina became my coach. She would come to pick up the boys and I would give her my observations and reflections of the day. She would proceed to tell me what she felt was consistent with the approach and what wasn't.

I could hardly believe my good fortune of having Marina in my life at this time. Close ties developed between parents and teachers as well as among the parents. Parents became active participants in their children's learning. It became clear to me that these relationships had a profound influence on the children's learning and on the overall success of the program. However, what was most intriguing were the close relationships that developed among the children as they engaged in cooperative problem solving with the support of the adults.

As part of my own learning I asked Marina if I could interview her. I have included my questions and her recorded responses.

Practicing the Ideas of Reggio

Interview with Marina Puggelli-Farrow

Is there anything that you remember about your childhood in school in Italy?

"I didn't think about the school I went to, but then when Capilano College had Lela come and speak, it made sense with what I knew. I went to school in Milan, which is in Northern Italy. Schools here grew from Reggio because teachers move and programs come with them. I learned more about Reggio at Capilano College."

How is Reggio different than elementary or public school in Italy?

"It was all public education. Elementary school went to grade six and they used the same approach and philosophy as in the early childhood programs, especially pertaining to the image of the child. There the child was viewed as powerful, competent and resourceful. Reggio is a way to deal with the kids. It has to do with hands-on experience and how you allow the kids to be."

Do you think that this childhood experience prepared you for later schooling, for life? Were there any resulting conflicts or problems?

"That is a hard question. I was more responsible. How can I say that I'm who I am because of that and that? The basic belief helps kids to be independent, more confident in themselves. They can express themselves, have great self-control. Control is not put upon them."

How do you see the Reggio Approach fitting into Canadian Culture?

"The biggest thing is respect for the child. Malaguzzui says the goal in education is to raise the child's possibility to discover the world. It is not how to do it but how to discover how to do it. In my experience, documentation is more for the kids. Pictures are to remind children of the process. Here (Canada) it appears to be more for the parents to know what the kids have done. In Italy it is so much more, such things as Pavorotti's music and nice paintbrushes. It is more open and creative because it is less about control. In Canada there does not seem to be the same respect for the child. Canadian people are too freaked out about safety. Here it is too much about control, IQ testing. There is too much testing. In Reggio it is more about reflection. Testing is private and only offered as a suggestion. Testing is done for suggestion for a career in later grades."

How do you view the differences between the teachers of Reggio Emilia and the experiences you have had with teachers here in Canada?

"Teachers here are more controlling. They don't allow the kids to just 'be'. They have a weird way to talk to the child that is not natural. They say not to use words such as "don't" and "stop". There is not enough respect for the child. It is too artificial."

What is your vision for your children's education at Pretty River Academy?

"I want my children to grow into healthy individuals, to be happy and enjoy life, to be able to express their emotions...but don't create emotion when it is not there, don't exaggerate". "I want them to stay away from stereotypes and to enjoy what they are doing."

Practicing the Ideas of Reggio

The Great Castle Rescue....

With Marina as my coach, we began a project on dinosaurs, starting with a trip to the Royal Ontario Museum. While the children enjoyed the life-size dinosaur displays, their interest was really captured by the artifacts from medieval times. In fact, this serendipitous discovery sparked the creation of another project, the Great Castle Rescue. Marina's two children, Kyle and Jake arrived at school the next day with helmets and swords. The children enjoyed playing with these and as a result the seeds were planted for the making of a unique drama when I asked, "why don't we make up a play?" The children who were with me from the previous year had already participated in the school Christmas play, "The Snow Queen" and responded immediately. Shortly after I posed this question, Madame Fleming, the drama teacher came into the classroom. Knowing that Madame Fleming taught drama, the children asked for her help. Thus, the making of the play began.

Princess Emily

Mary: *"Madame Fleming, you've got to see our play!"*

Kyle: *"Were just beginning".*

Madame Fleming: *"Who are the characters?"*

Sam: *"I'm knight Sam Sam."*

Kyle: *"I don't know who I am."*

Mary: *"Stop! Stop! It's my play!'*

Sam: *"Mary, it's not your play."*

Mary: *"I'm a Princess."*

Mary Beth: *"I'm a princess too."*

Madame Fleming: *"Two princesses!"*

Mary: *"Sam's my husband."*

Mary Beth: *"Jake's my husband."*

Sam: *"The boys want to sword fight."*

Mary: *"Well, I have a baby."*

Mary Beth: *"Well, I have a baby too. I want it to be my birthday."*

Madame Fleming: *"What do you want for your birthday?"*

Mary Beth: *"A baby."*

Mary: *"Mary Beth, you can't have a baby."*

Madame Fleming: *"Why don't you steal the baby from Mary."*

Jeffrey: *"I want to be a good guy with Sam."*

Kyle: *"I'll be a bad guy with Jake."*

Mary: *"I know, I'll turn into a witch to get the baby back."*

Madame Fleming: *"How is the play going to end?"*

Jeffrey: *"I have an idea. The bad guys will ask for forgiveness. Then they can be friends."*

We then decided what props we needed for the play. Marina arrived the next day with cardboard for the castles, dryer ducting, tin foil and fine mesh screen. The princesses brought costumes from home and miniature pairs of high heels. The baby was found in the dramatic play center. Madame Fleming typed up the script. Mrs. Beatty, our music teacher found some medieval music and we all began the process of creating an off Broadway hit. The kindergarten children created, produced and performed The Great Castle Rescue to an audience of students, parents and staff. Their drama of cunning, intrigue and reconciliation centered on neighboring princesses, embroiled in a battle over the abduction of one princess's baby. Their gallant knights attempted to resolve the conflict with some cunning moves and paper swords, but to no avail. Princess Mary turned into a witch so she could fly over the castle wall to rescue her baby. In the end, the bad guys asked forgiveness, the good guys did the right thing, and they are all living happily ever after. The entire process was documented using photos and videotape. It was displayed using panels and was then transformed into book format for each child to take home for their own personal archives.

Concluding Reflections

The Great Castle Rescue occurred spontaneously during a planned activity, (visiting the dinosaurs) and yet had nothing to do with that activity.

We have no idea what they may have learned or created had they remained focused on the dinosaurs. We do know that during the process of creating and staging the play they had many meaningful learning experiences. The children were able to reach consensus about lines, understand story character, flow, setting and that the story had a beginning, middle and end. They interacted and collaborated with adults in producing a result. They were able to work cooperatively and could recognize how each person contributed uniquely to the play. However, there was an essential difference in how this all occurred in comparison to traditional educational practice. The children instigated the context of the play through their use of props. Then, by the mere suggestion of a play, they developed and elaborated the plot, decided on what props were to be used, helped to build the staging, and participated in advertising and promoting the play. This was all done with the cooperation of the teachers, parents, and older students. In all of this, the children were the "driving force". No one had any doubt that this was their play. The teachers, parents, and older students not only participated in this endeavor; they were irresistibly drawn into the process and were energized by the children's enthusiasm and industriousness. And yet, at no time did they ever take over.

My whole experience with the Reggio approach was magical. It left me thinking of Susan Fraser's concept of "children teaching teachers". This small group of children taught me more in a short period of time than I ever would have anticipated. In truth, a paradigm shift occurred in my thinking. Whereas, before I would not have intervened in the children's play activities (suggesting as I did, that they put on a play), and it is very unlikely that "The Great Castle Rescue" ever would have transpired. As important as this intervention was, it was merely a nudge in the context of the entire process. Nevertheless, this nudge allowed the children to jump to a new level. Similarly, as the children began to develop the dialog, the hint from Madame Fleming allowed them to proceed to yet another level of sophistication in plot development. At the point where the play was about to become a reality, the power of the children was clearly manifested. Typically, (particularly considering the ages of the children), one would be tempted at this point to actively intervene by directly contacting the parents and asking for their help and engaging their support. However, this was unnecessary. The parents' active participation occurred spontaneously. They were drawn in as a result of listening to the children talk about the play; they were captivated by the enthusiasm. Similarly, other teachers and older students fell victims to the children's excitement and assisted them in making fliers, selecting music, building props, designing costumes, putting on their make-up, and by being an audience. The whole process was a vivid demonstration of scaffolding, co-construction, true collaboration and the fostering of relationships. I had never witnessed children at these ages demonstrate such resourcefulness, competency and power. Probably the best illustration of empowerment was seen in the transformation of an extremely shy child, who astounded everyone, particularly his parents by performing on stage without any apprehension whatsoever.

This experience was a different "image of the child", and it seems clear to me that one of the great challenges in introducing Reggio ideas into our work is in changing Canadian teachers' image of the child. One cannot accept children as equal partners in the co-construction of curriculum unless we see them as powerful, competent and resourceful.

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Beyond the Curriculum: Creating Connections Through Art

Jennifer Batycky

"Art teaches nothing, except the significance of life." *Henry Miller*

Jennifer Batycky is the Assistant Principal at a fine arts/technology elementary school in Calgary, Alberta. She is a generalist who has taught children from kindergarten to grade four, as well as special education. She recently completed her Master of Educational Research at the University of Calgary with a specialization in curriculum and instruction. Exploring representational work and generative curriculum through art experiences are of particular interest to Jennifer.

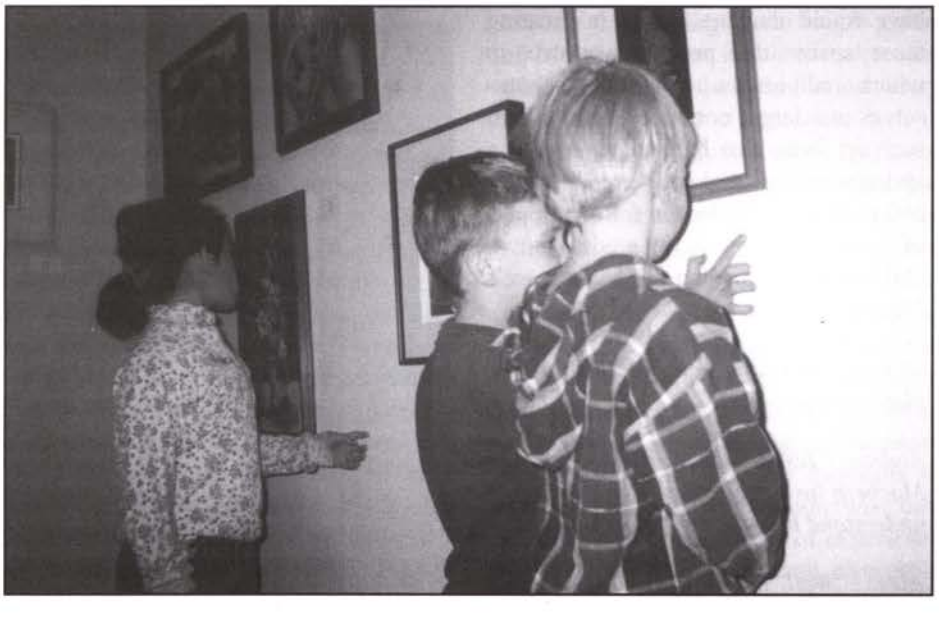
Abstract

Art is often perceived as an unimportant component of public education programs. This article endeavors to reveal some of the reasons why art should exist as a valuable component of our classrooms because of its potential to enrich the human experience. Through theory and practical classroom experience, the author explores ways in which art experience in the classroom supports the creation of a generative curriculum and assists in deepening the individual learner's understandings of both themselves and specific aspects of curriculum.

Sitting in the dark watching the illuminated stage, I felt encompassed. In their pale blue and flowing costumes, the dancers moved like the wind. The music filled the room beckoning me to join the dance. For two full hours I was transfixed by the dancers that portrayed the elements of earth, air, fire and water. More than memory was evoked from within me. Enmeshed in music and the movement of the dancers, I experienced a knowing that words cannot describe. Although I was not a performer, I was part of this performance. Something in me had been stirred.

Days later I was trying to sort out the significance of this experience and how I could relate it back to the value of arts integration. I pondered for several days, and engaged in conversations with others who had also seen the performance. I tried to figure out what I had learned by viewing this dance. Did I understand the earth's elements differently? Had this dance allowed me to *be* in the world differently? I eventually discovered that trying to encapsulate this experience in a single word, was trite and did not honour the aesthetic experience. Gadamer (1975) describes the aesthetic experience as "the power of the work of art suddenly tears the person experiencing it out of the context of his life, and yet relates him back to the whole of his existence" (p.70). That is what had happened to me; I was torn from my reality of deadlines and structure into the larger understanding of the transience of human life and of the permanence of the earth's elements. That evening I had learned more about myself and my place in this world.

Today, I find myself at the end of another school year, that was full of rich art experiences and opportunities for aesthetic encounters. Again I hear the quiet murmurs of discontent in the halls that too much art was done this year in school. The whispers are small in number, but can be heard from both parents and colleagues. I am left to wonder. I wonder how it is that we support the aesthetic experience in our classrooms. I wonder what value do these experiences bring into our daily lives. I am also left to wonder about art and its place in our classrooms. It is my hope that this article will help to illuminate some of the reasons why art does make a difference in our lives and in particularly in the lives of our children.



Beyond the Curriculum

Using art to support meaningful dialogue

In the Cartesian-modernist legacy we exist separately from each other. Each child is viewed as sitting nicely in their own tidy space. Each student has her own desk, his own pencil crayons, his own books, her own report cards and his own individual needs. I am the teacher and the students are the learners who are learning about distinct subjects and gathering distinct skills. Jardine (1994) suggests that "The logic of Cartesianism may also be heard as a deep lament for a sense of connectedness that has been lost, a lament for a relation to the Earth, to our lives, to the lives of children. It is, in a rather perverse form, a desire to get back in touch" (p.32). I do not disregard the importance of individuality, however sometimes we focus so much on our distinctness that we never create the spaces in the curriculum for us to fall into together. In my opinion, such spaces in the curriculum create openings for everyone to engage in dialogue, therefore participating in the co-construction of knowledge. As Doll (1993) writes, "the assumption is that meanings are made through dialogue. Dialogue is the sine qua non of the whole process. Without dialogue there is no transformation..." (p.169). In my personal practice I have found that art assists in creating those spaces that provide a matrix in which individuals may situate themselves in a larger common context. Two such art forms that I frequently use as a springboard to dialogue are literature and poetry. Consider the following part of a conversation with my grade one/two children after a reading of Shakespeare's Macbeth:

Steven: "You said there was love in this play, but there isn't."

Andrea: "Yes, there is. Lady Macbeth and Macbeth love each other. They just don't understand how to respect each other."

Alex: "Well aren't love and respect something that goes together. Lady Macbeth only loves herself."

Stephanie: "Lady Macbeth doesn't understand love."

Richard: "Yeah, but love is different for everyone. Maybe she grew up in a house where no one loved her and now this is what she thinks love looks like?"

Jane: "Yeah, for someone who was hit by their parents, what they think is love would be different than for someone who's parents took care of them."

Andrea: "But there is also other kinds of love in the story because at the end there is peace and peace is love."

This conversation continued for well over forty-five minutes. The only reason we stopped discussing these notions of love was because the lunch bell rang. From Shakespeare's piece of dramatic art we were able to find ourselves together in a rich conversation about a fundamental element of the human experience - love. Perhaps this conversation may have come up in another way, but Macbeth provided a place for this topic to emerge in its true complexity. As Fowler (1994) writes, "The arts introduce us to human perceptions and understandings we could not acquire any other way.... We see ourselves reenacted. By experiencing human situations and their consequences, students better understand themselves and others."(p.8). Further, in the conversation with these children there were no distinctions between teacher and learners, but rather an opportunity to rethink our personal ideas and to create negotiated understandings.

In my classroom I have a box containing approximately one hundred postcard size laminated art reproductions. I encourage all my students, particularly reluctant beginning writers, to frequently go through the box and find a reproduction that speaks to them.

Using art to enhance reading and writing

Presently, in many elementary settings, there is a push for early literacy initiatives. The goal of such initiatives is to increase the ability of children to read and write at an earlier age and to support those children encountering difficulties. The support often exist in as a "pull-out" program that focuses on directed one-on-one reading and writing instruction. I have noticed that such support generally helps children in the technical areas of reading and writing, however it has been my experience that most children require inspiration to engage in writing experiences. In efforts to bring children into literacy, there appears to be a greater emphasis placed upon a technical understanding. In my opinion, in such a narrow emphasis we diminish the value of becoming a literate person in society, which is so much more and involves a much deeper level of engagement to one's culture and environment. However, as Oliver (1990) points out, "The written word, its decoding and transmission, is understood as full knowledge, although most of what we at least value or worry about is inarticulable at least in the precisely defined terms of written language"(p.65). In my classroom I have a box containing approximately one hundred postcard size laminated art reproductions. I encourage all my students, particularly reluctant beginning writers, to frequently go through the box and find a reproduction that speaks to them. In my opinion, the visual arts invites the viewer "to be moved to make new interpretations of the paintings, the world, and of ourselves" (Greene, 1991, p.121). I invite the children to write about what they see visually in the art and what emotions are evoked.

I leave the writing structure open and the result, generally speaking, is that the children tend to employ a great deal of metaphoric language and write often in a free style poetic format. It seems that in finding a picture that "speaks" to them, the students are able to make an emotional connection and find their own voice in writing. Egan(1997) writes, "We remember things best when we can locate them emotionally and associate them with some vivid image."(p.343). I believe that by using art reproductions, children are able to remember their creative abilities and this brings forth descriptive writing, which is richer than writing which focused simply on their technical skills. I have also noticed that the children's ability to write rich descriptive passages serves them well when they later learn to write in other genres. Working with the visual arts "cultivates sensitive perception, develops insights, fosters imagination, and places a premium on well crafted form" (Eisner, 1981, p.51), all very important traits that increase a student's ability to write in compelling ways. The children love and use this art resource so much that anytime a child, or their parents, takes a trip to a museum in another city our collection of art reproductions becomes larger.

The following poem is an example of the depth of children's writing once they have forged an emotional nexus with either an artist or a particular visual image. Using Van Gogh's painting *"Van Gogh's Chair"* (1932) as the springboard for his writing, John wrote this poem when he was seven:

"The sad and lonely chair sits alone in a cold and empty room.

The only warmth is a little smokeless pipe.

So as the chair sits alone with still only a little warmth, the chair waits for something. But what is it?

It still waits for the moment... that moment that the chair thinks will never come.

The brick floor gives a chill in the air. The chair still sits by the door, waiting for the moment.

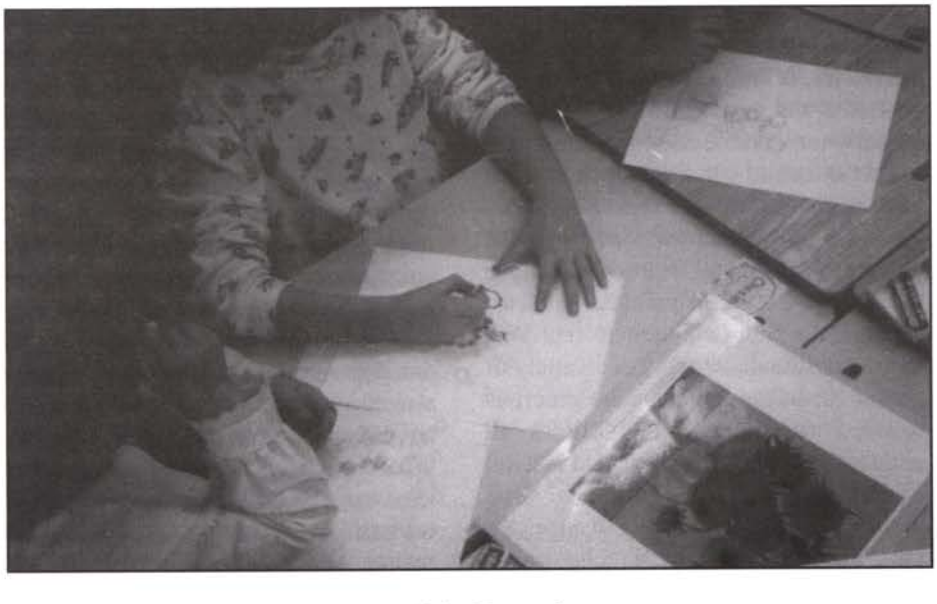
But the door doesn't budge. Days pass, but everything is still.

Still as a rock.

So everything goes like this day, day after day.

This goes on and nobody sits on the chair.

Nobody even notices the chair and that is how it will stay."



Beyond the Curriculum

When John read this poem to me, he read in a quiet and muffled voice. At the end of his reading he quietly tells me that this poem was about Van Gogh's death. The chair would wait forever. John found his inspiration in Van Gogh's life and his work. Gadamer (1975) writes, "Since we meet the artwork in the world and encounter a world in the individual artwork, the work of art is not some alien universe. Rather, we learn to understand ourselves in and through it" (p.97). While others simply loved the beauty of Van Gogh's sunflowers and vibrant colours in his paintings, John could feel Van Gogh's loneliness and knew that the bright colours only served as a way to cover up his true feelings of despair. John's emotional connection to Van Gogh was evident in his writing. I believe that because John was supported in the context of our classroom to live with Van Gogh's ghost and to feel a strong affinity for Van Gogh, that his writing was richer and his observations more profound.

Art as a link to the human experience

In providing children with an exposure to a variety of artistic media, we allow them to fall in love with the beauty in our world. By looking at a simple still life by Matisse or listening to the single guitar of Oscar Lopez, one is able to realize that there is beauty to be found in our daily lives and we need to appreciate it. It is important to stop, just as many artists do, and to notice beauty with all of our senses. One must allow oneself to notice the colour of the leaves when they first come out in spring, to notice the delicate scent of sage in the field, to notice the bursting taste of the raspberries eaten from the bush, to notice the biting winter wind on one's cheeks or to notice the rhythmic sound of the rain falling. Alexander (1998) writes, "These are moments in which we indeed live; the otherwise dim or submerged potentiality of experience to be deeply meaningful and expressive is consciously realized" (p.7). In a society that is currently so focused on mate-

rial possessions and is directly linked to income, I believe it to be of extreme importance that children learn to appreciate the "aesthetic qualities or art and life in the worlds in which we live" (Eisner, 1998, p.14) and come to view aesthetic experience as a way to forge a deeper connection with the human experience.

Art connects us with our past and other cultures and helps us to locate ourselves within the greater narrative of the human experience. Because a piece of art work is never finished, because it is always in the process of becoming, we are invited into its story to feel the time and place where the work was created and to understand the emotions of the artist. As Alexander (1998) writes, "Through their images of beauty we may be able briefly to enter the aesthetics of other cultures' worlds. We may become open at least to the possibilities of their experiences, of their way of meaning"(p.18).

This year I was talking with my grade one/two children about what is common in our human experience. What was it to them that transcended time, language and age? Richard, a child in grade one, quickly replied that it was art that tied us together. He said, "When you look at a piece of art you are able to become part of the artwork's spirit." Richard then pointed to an example of art work from the wall by Monet and said, "You see those water-lilies by Monet. I have never been to his garden but I can feel how quiet and calm it would be and I understand why Monet spent so much time painting in his garden. That picture lets me be somewhere else and others can go there too." I find it interesting that in reading Matisse (1908), he too supports Richard's comments from the perspective of the artist by writing, "I must interpret nature and submit it to the spirit of the picture." One only need enter into the Palace of Knossos on the Island of Crete, and to look at the architecture and colourful frescos to be instantly connected with the Minoan culture and their intimate connection with nature. Or in looking at Guernica (1937) by Picasso, one can enter into the chaos, destruction and confusion of war without ever having personally been involved in a war. As Fowler (1994) points out, "Inevitably, the arts convey a sense of time and place that transports students, helping them to go beyond mere facts to experience the past in a more personal way" (p.7). I believe that a sense of connection with the past and other cultures is important, because it places us in a larger context enabling us to understand the deeper issues of humanity. This connection expands our self-knowledge. David Booth (1995), a prominent Canadian writer and anthologist, echoed these feelings towards the capacity of art to influence writing, when in his introduction to, *Images of Nature: Canadian Poets and the Group of Seven*, he states, "Each time I read the poems and look at the pictures, I understand more deeply my country and my identity" (unnumbered).

The use of art to support multiple literacies

In addition to learning from art, art provides a valuable vehicle for students to express their understandings in ways that extend beyond the conventional numerical or print systems. Very often what is valued in our North American educational systems, is limited to what can be easily tested and measured. However, what is easily measurable does not consistently reveal a child's true intellectual capabilities. In fact, many children are marginalized by our narrow views of what defines a successful learner. I believe that when we open up our classroom curriculums to allow children to represent their understandings through a variety of artistic media we create a more generous learning environment that allows all children to express the width and breadth of their insights. This is particularly true in the cases of children from diverse ethnic backgrounds in a classroom. Traditionally, their success has been measured by their ability to express their understandings either verbally or through print, in a language that they are still learning. I have noticed that many students, for whom English is a second language, the expression of their ideas is more confidently undertaken when they can represent their understandings artistically.

> *One particular child in my class recently reconstructed each day of his holiday in China by creating the most amazing illustrations, that had unique perspectives and a sense of movement within them. His visions of landscape and portraits of people expressed more to our class than he was able to accomplish through oral English communication. Further, it allowed him the opportunity to converse with and be valued by his classmates as an intellectual member of our class.*

In working with representational forms, I have noticed that students are much more willing to go into greater depth when exploring a topic. Allowing opportunities for students to re-visit a specific topic in different artistic media illuminates different aspects of the work, thus generating more questions and possibilities for exploration. When children are given a variety of artistic ways in which to work, it allows them to put on a multitude of lenses to perceive the world differently. Last year, when we were studying architecture, I found that children were eager to switch back and forth several times between charcoal drawings, photography and mixed-media 3-D work. It was interesting how each medium supported and helped the children realize different aspects of the architectural pieces they were working on. As we did the visual work the children were also encouraged to write poetry or reflect upon their work at the end of each day. What I could observe in their learning logs was that the children never tired of exploring the same concept and that their writing also became more detailed and imaginative as they worked in the different media. Through this experience with

the children I realized that representational work had allowed these learners to de-construct personal knowledge and reconstruct it in another language, and in doing so develop a greater mastery of concepts. Further, using alternate forms of data representation acknowledged the variety of ways in which we code our individual experiences and ways in which the transformation of our personal experiences can be shared in the public domain (Eisner, p.7, 1997b).

Recently, in a scientific study of evolution about the link between reptiles and amphibians, I decided to ask children to do their research on an animal, then to create a final project in a representational form of their choosing. In conversation with the children we talked about the variety of forms they could use and the possibilities of the different forms. Eisner (1993) writes, "Which art forms are selected and what tasks are set in the curriculum have consequences for that aspect of our being to which the form speaks" (p.43). It was an interesting conversation for me, because I was able to hear children speak about how they could convey different concepts better with certain representational forms. There was certainly a common understanding about the limitations or possibilities of certain materials. As the children worked through creating their representational understandings, I was able to see how they actively engaged in problem solving and applied their learnings in creative ways. I noticed that, at one point, Ryan even decided to switch his medium. He was originally trying to write a song to describe the chameleons habitat, but he eventually switched to creating a water-colour because he felt he could better show the other children the particulars of the habitat. Eisner (1997a) writes, "The choice of a form of representation and the selection of the material to be used both impose constraints and offer possibilities. When the material is employed skillfully, meanings are made that become candidate for interpretation by the 'reader' " (p.350).

Conclusion

Sometimes in life we are witness to something that impacts us so deeply that expression through the arts is the only way we are able to reflect upon these powerful experiences. Through reflection we are also allowed the space to remember the feelings evoked from that moment. There are times when you witness something so beautiful, perhaps an autumn sunset, or times when you feel an emotion so intensely, that there are no words to accurately communicate your deep thoughts and feelings. By providing children with various languages to communicate, we provide them with greater opportunities to relive and share some of the most important moments in their lives. We also need to give children ample experience with different media, so that they are able to understand the possibilities of expression. As May (1993) writes,

"It requires more space and time in the curriculum to linger so that students experience various ways of knowing and are better able to distinguish and choose for themselves between the memorable and the mundane, the meaningful and the mindless" (p.141).

Now when I reflect upon the importance of art in the school curriculum, what I realize is that the arts need to be present in everybody's life so that we can better participate in the human experience. I also realize that many of the reasons I outlined to support arts in our lives, are not quantifiable or measurable by a written test. But, what I do know is that in denying our children different ways in which to see the world and to express their understandings, we run the risk of creating a generation of children who have no capacity to "imagine possibilities that are not now, but which might become" (Eisner, 1998, p.14).

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Rocks, River Stones, and Ancient Cave Children

Miguel Martin

Miguel Martin, native to Winston-Salem, NC, is currently living and working in Istanbul, Turkey at Enka Schools . He is Head of the Pre-School/Kindergarten Art program and member of the English as a Second Language team. Documentation of children's work from his pre-school studio has become his recent passion.

In the middle of a small Turkish preschool, in a long, green atrium, lives a group of foreigners and their many, many young friends. I am head the art program for the Pre-School/Kindergarten at Enka Schools in Istanbul, and have just this year been joined by another artist/teacher. This has greatly extended our ability to reach out to large groups of children each day.

Last summer, while in the United States, I bought a book that I had long wanted: *Andy Goldsworthy – Stones*, a collection of photos taken by the artist of his site-specific works in nature. I know his art well – and have long felt that children would feel an immediate connection with his timeless constructions. Andy's way of working closely reflects a child's way of working with materials. Each has a similar obsessive fascination, an acceptance, and appreciation – (even a reverence and awe) of natural things.

Not necessarily thinking about Goldsworthy at the time, my partner and I had both collected several bags of river stones during our trips around Turkey. One afternoon, compelled by the book, we pulled the stones out and began playing. We placed the rocks on our often poorly lit studio floor. . .pulled up a lamp, turned it on, and let the children begin to see for themselves.

Before playtime, class – one important rule:

It is important to note that there was no hidden motive for offering the stones to the children. We are not in a "measuring unit" – or a "counting unit" – or an "earth day unit". We believe that the most honest and considerate approach is to work without limitations (i.e. limitations that fail to foresee the million, billion possibilities that the group may discover, invent, or become more interested in on their own terms and with us as partners during the work/play.)

We believe that by defining our goals and intentions before the experience, we are limiting our students' voices – their goals, their intentions, and (just as importantly), our own limit of flexibility and curiosity. If we believe that the focus is Balancing – our eyes and hearts will be closed and guarded to all the other beauty and wonder which is waiting in each child's hands.

We choose to discover the meaning behind the work and the reason for working – together – with the children. We choose to approach each *thing* as if for the first time ever. For example: next year, if we brought out more stones with new children – we would not assume that any definitive amount of research existed. There would be no model to look back on. We would not be interested in either actively or covertly pursuing similar paths simply because last year's group sought out certain ideas. Instead, we would bring out the stones again because we would like to relive a beautiful experience (perhaps) – to share the fun with our friends (certainly) – but not to direct the fun or quantify the beauty experienced.

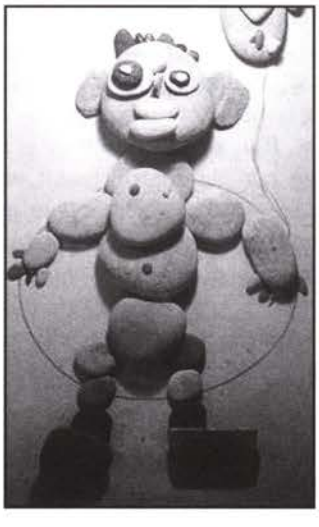

Photo Courtesy M.Martin

No teacher-defined goals exist which might govern or restrict the pace, action, thoughts, directions, inventiveness, etc. In order to be honest, genuine participants – on the same level of obsessive, passionate discovery – we must approach the work without rules or legislation – without undermining the absolute simplicity and genius of just getting together – having a little fun – and seeing what living and growing up is all about.

What happened: Notes taken from my daily journal

The atmosphere was alive, electric, and maddeningly popular. Everyone wanted to play with us. As more children joined, we looked deeper into the cabinets for the rest of our rocks. Smooth stones – rough stones – pebbles – all colors – all shapes. Work continues. The stones are spread out on an old window shade (a faded pinkish color) – some stones drift across the green floor into the shadows. Everyone wants the giant river stones but there are not enough. Groups form; ideas are tossed out; each group puts in

their bid for the majority of large stones; each has a different idea – a different strategy for work and for rock-accumulation. I'm playing also; building, arranging, trying to share, and offering stones to others. I don't intervene in the "large stone struggle" – eventually the conflict is resolved and everyone is happy again, working like mad. I begin taking photos . We have developed a website to share our work.

I see unbelievable, unexpected delicacy and carefulness in each child's eyes, hands and movements. Some children balance stones. High towers are constructed with total concentration and absolute breathless silence. Some build tough, rugged little cityscapes and landscapes that spread across the arc of light on the floor. For the most part, the development of the individual structures remains considerate of the whole – no real estate battles occur, that I can see.

Ideas wax and wane almost too rapidly for me to keep up. I have to struggle to keep an eye on everything – to see each of my friend's masterpieces. The only sound we hear, other than the occasional falling rocks, are the children's pleas for me to see their work - now! They realize, more than I the delicate balance and short life span their constructions have. I look quickly, focus the camera, and take the shot. Everyone turns in awe of each new object – no matter how small, simple, easy, large, wild, broken, or masterful – each invention evokes happiness from the children.

I ask very little – instead preferring to listen. At times, the children talk to themselves while working. They talk about the work – some talk more than work – but the talkers TELL the stories of unfolding works in progress. Two girls chat quietly with each other and the group. As small stones pass in and out of their hands a tale of true depth and imagination emerges.

Jon – Hey, look Miguel! This is my egg.
Leyla – Yeah, here's my egg.
Koray – Hey, look! Mine just broke this out. (He holds up a tiny puffy sticker of a fish. Everyone gasps in amazement.)
Beril – Look at my hamburger. (She pretends to eat three flat rocks that she piled together.) Chomp! Chomp! Chomp!
Jem – Hey Miguel? What are you writing? Is there enough light for you? (He turns the lamp so that almost all the light is on my paper. Considering that I do not normally write while I am with the children – this was obviously a point of interest for Jem.)
Serra - Hey, look at this rock. Inside is a water fish. No, wait; it's an ice fish because it has some writing on the rock. See. (She shows it to everyone.)
Zeynep – Oooh. Little princess. Skunk. Hey, there's a stinky skunk egg here. (laughs) Look, it's stinky!

I take one small stone from a pile, not having understood the mission.

Serra – Hey, don't take those. I'm still researching those and I already sorted and studied these. (I apologize and replace the rock carefully, and decide not to let note taking distract me in the future.)

Natural Transitions

Eventually interest in the stones begins to wane and the children began to focus elsewhere in our studio. The shift was natural. True, our curiosities led us to many other things Many things occurred in the two months that separated our work with the stones. We returned to weaving, to building a Haunted House for Halloween, to making masks, to creating space ships, aliens, and astronauts, to working with clay, to printing, to creating a theater and costumes, to... and eventually , back to working with stones- this time in the context of cave dwellers, spelunkers, anthropologists and dinosaur hunters.

Photo Courtesy M.Martin

Ancient Cave Children

I can't say why, was something was pulling us back to nature; back to being ancient cave people; back to being something that we hear surprisingly little of in science and history – back to being CAVE BOYS and GIRLS. (That thought alone is enough to keep us going for a semester…)

Anyway, due to an interest in Dinosaurs being aroused by the new digital animation film (which began showing in Istanbul around mid January) we pulled the stones out again – this time dramatically changing our interaction simply *by altering the location and mood of the play*. We have a large black box (approximately 5'x5'x5') at one end of our studio. To accommodate the dinosaur play, we refitted the theater by laying brown burlap on the floor, adding one lamp with an orange bulb, pulling the curtains, and piling up all of our remaining stones in the center. It was an immediate attraction.

Atmosphere

Light. Darkness. Cave children. The children are so happy in their new cave. The lamp on the floor is no longer an expendable gimmick or a luxury item – its role is vital. Without the lamp, we would exist in darkness. In darkness, we would be cold and unable to find our way through our cave home. We might step on stones, books, or other people. Without light, our society would disintegrate. The orange light is not a representation of fire… it is fire. The fire warms

Ancient Cave Children - Photo Courtesy M. Martin

us – reveals things slowly in the faint glow and pulls us towards the center and towards each other.

The theater walls are black. We go inside and enter a giant, dark cave. The pretend expanse is not hindered by the fact that we have to hunch in and move over to accommodate all the friends that want to join. Unlike the first time, the children do not often use the stones for creating sculptures or scenes. Instead, they now rely on the presence of these ancient chunks of earth for dramatic effect. Everyone still enjoys arranging the stones, rubbing them, knocking them together as if creating fire from flint – but the atmosphere is considerably different. We gaze into the fire and the pile of illuminated rocks. At times, we turn the lamp on a book and read. (We made several trips to the library to find dinosaur and rock books.) I read a story about a girl who finds a rock and we trace its history back through the dimly lit, yellow, glowing pages – all faces crowding closely to the book and to the lamp/fire - every child dying to see what will happen next.

"Here! I found it. This is that rock. Look, they match."
"I found this one."
"That dinosaur ate my rock."
"I'm sitting on my rock so it stays warm... but it hurts."

Now, instead of reacting so much to this or that individual rock, the children react to each other in our fantasy cave world.

"I'm going to do something with this rock... or maybe just look at this book."
"Hey, Miguel? What dinosaur can eat this one?"
"Yeah, can my dinosaur eat his?"
"Can mine eat his?"
"Mine can eat that one because it's bigger, right? Hey, is my dinosaur bigger than his?"

Final Reflections

Maybe if I share a few last reflections I can put this work into a more global perspective and add weight to our endeavors.

I have seen explorers and spelunkers assume the lead in unimaginably complex journeys and pilot our troops courageously towards new ideas.

I have seen archeologists and anthropologists redefine their world view and their theories about life, themselves, and each other while doing the most demanding, complicated, intricate work.

I have seen geologists and physicists undertake the most patient study of their surroundings while empowering their peers to assist and contribute new theories and hypothesis to the whole.

I have seen psychologists and psychotherapists console, offer advice, and support to friends in need or to those temporarily lost along the journey.

I have seen mathematicians figure it all out for us.

I have seen engineers who have said they got it wrong – and who have offered better alternatives.

I have seen a microcosm of people and friends with small stones in their hands – doing everything imaginable - doing everything better and to greater degree than I ever could have imagined.

The warmth of our time shared, the bonding, the friendship, the community, the fantasy, the learning and the fun are all integral pieces. In fact, these experiences, like so many I've had here in Turkey, have helped confirm for me that this sense of community and shared living are the most important (and rare) things in education – and in this particular environment, STONES were our medium. I have no idea what adventures are ahead or how we will get there. Yet, I like to think that at times, our children are planning the weeks ahead – perhaps in their conversations, perhaps in their dreams.

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Cackleberries – Eggbee's Dream

Joh Nichols and Ken Rolston

Reviewed by: Susan Fraser

Susan Fraser, is the former Editor o f Canadian Children. She was a preschool teacher and instructor in Early Childhood Education for many years, is now retired but still works as a mentor and friend to many childcare centres in Western Canada and a presenter at conferences across Canada. She is the author of Authentic Childhood, Experiencing Reggio Emilia in the Classroom.

The authors, Joh Nichols and Ken Rolston have created an imaginary science fiction world that has all the elements of a classic fairy tale inhabited by cartoon characters. It must be a challenge to make believable characters who are chickens and eggs, but the author and illustrator have managed to create a thoroughly wicked chicken queen with an army of squawkers and a brave young eggbee and his superegg friend Pouleteer.

Children will readily identify with the hero and his friend as they trick the squawkers into letting them enter the palace, push the wicked chicken queen into her spilled hot chocolate and rescue the beautiful turquoise tortoise before she is made into a necklace. Both adults and children will enjoy the play on language. "Eeeggg' shouts Eggbee as he bumps into the chimney and later puts on his shellmet before flying off on his rescue mission.

Action packed, brightly coloured illustrations support the fast pace of the tale, but the illustrator also has taken time to capture expressions such as the gentleness of Mumbee's goodnight kiss and the evil in the eyes of the squawker guards. My favourite illustration is of the expression on Eggbee's face as he proudly sky-surfs the tortoise to safety. It is quite a feat to depict so much movement and emotion in an egg character.

I have read this book to a few of my preschool friends and watched them become totally absorbed in the exciting rescue of the beautiful turquoise tortoise. I have watched their enjoyment of the language "Yum, sticky fingers make for licky fingers" says Eggbee after he pushed the queen into the hot chocolate. I found this book a very enjoyable read aloud to young children.

Published by: Cackleberry Press, 2491 McGregor Drive, Penticton, B.C Canada V2A 6J2

Re Thinking Early Childhood Theory and Practice

E. Beverley Lambert & Margaret Clyde

Reviewed by Susan Fraser

Beverley Lambert and Margaret Clyde the authors of "Re Thinking Early Childhood Theory and Practice" state that their purpose in writing the book is to challenge readers to reexamine their 'certainties' about early childhood curriculum and theory. In the last few years information from the social constructivist perspective has caused much disequilibrium for educators in the field of early childhood. Many of us have felt the need for a reconceptualization of early childhood curriculum: one that is less dependent upon traditional child development theories and more informed by contemporary ideas. As a result we have turned, in particular to the work of Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner to help us in our teaching of young children and ECE students *to move beyond old theories*, especially the cognitive constructivist theory of Piaget. The above authors, however, caution us not to do this without first thinking critically about social constructivist theory, especially the work of Vygotsky, to determine whether it is philosophically compatible with what we believe is best for young children. To help us undertake this task, the authors, in the first section of the book, have carried out an extensive critical analysis of the work of Vygotsky and a review of contemporary research from

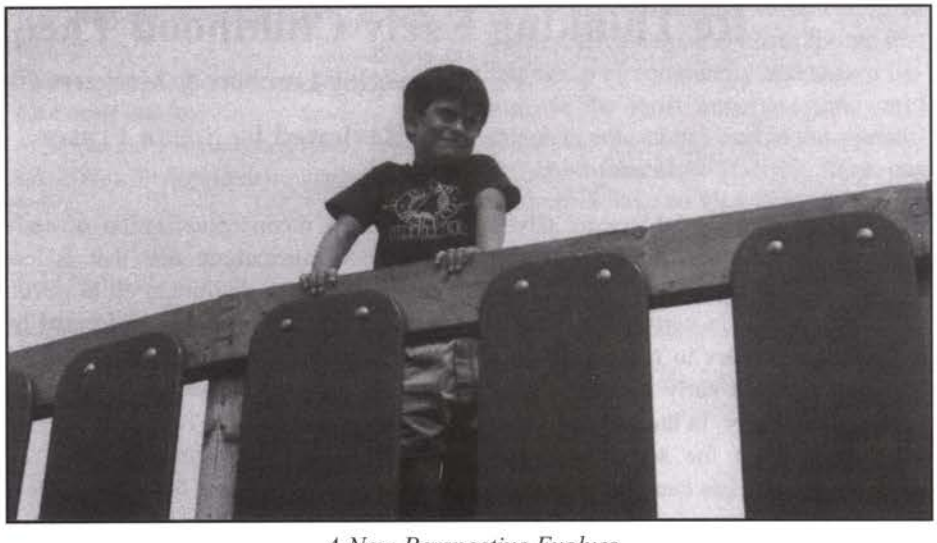
the field of social constructivist theory. In the second half of the book, the authors describe a method of program planning they have devised that gets away from the more linear approach of goals and objectives and reflects more accurately the "recursive, cyclical and learner centered" planning that, they state, is what actually happens in early childhood programs.

Lambert and Clyde state in the first section of the book that they are concerned that Vygotsky "(is) being heralded as the new guru of early childhood curriculum" because his work is "taken out of context and embellish(ed) with our own contemporary understandings and professional leanings." They urge us to consider the cultural context within which Vygotsky was living and working i.e. the Marxist communist state of the USSR in the 1920's and 1930's. The authors note that much of Vygotsky's focus was on special needs children and children in elementary school, therefore they wonder whether his theory is an appropriate one philosophically for early childhood education. For instance, they point out that "his notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) was quite a structured, rigid and controlled one, more typical of interventionist approaches" than for child centered, play based early childhood programs. They are concerned that our contemporary interpretation of the ZPD, in fact, "bends Vygotsky's concepts into modern educational theory." With the help of interpreters they have examined the texts in Russian to try and understand the original meaning of Vygotsykian concepts. They conclude that free social interaction, play and open dialogue were not a part of Vygotsky's notion of the ZPD, although they do concede that the idea of real and possible levels of understanding is very a helpful concept for a teacher working with young children.

Lambert and Clyde note that the notion of scaffolding is often believed to have originated with Vygotsky whereas in fact it wasfirst thought of by Wood, Bruner and Ross in 1976 in an article titled *The role of tutoring in problem solving*. The authors state that scaffolding as it was originally conceived was a very limited concept more appropriate for a structured tutoring situation than for a preschool setting. They suggest that scaffolding would be better defined as 'reciprocal scaffolding' because this term would by definition include a sense of the attachment relationship between the child and adult (emotional support) as well as taking into consideration the important physical and social supports necessary for a successful learning experience. The authors conclude their analysis of Vygotsky's theories by stating that instead of "accepting a work in its original skin (in this case a 1930's skin) we should think about how it relates to current theoretical contexts and then we can acknowledge it for being a very important starting point from which our thinking can progress futuristically..."

Clyde and Lambert, in fact attempt to do just this in the second part of their book. They suggest that we create a more authentic curriculum for young children one which acknowledges the most recent brain research, considers family and community contexts, encourages co planning with parents and fosters life long dispositions such as the development of confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self control, relatedness, engagement, communicability and co cooperativeness. They believe that the key indicators of a quality early childhood program are "responsive and reciprocal relationships." The book includes a method of program planning which the authors term a 'triadic framework" for infant, toddler and preschool programs. For infants and toddlers the triadic framework has three spheres: communicating, exploring and coping, whereas for the three to five year olds the spheres are: exploring, creating and communicating. Lambert and Clyde believe that by using these spheres we will focus on children as the starting point in our early childhood programs and not the curriculum as we have done in the past. They state that if you use a method of planning which is more responsive to the children's reality, like the one they have developed, "we will not be locked into thinking of curriculum in terms of separate subject areas, developmental areas, or even activities."

I could not help seeing similarities to the way the educators in Reggio Emilia believe that relationship should be at the heart of an early childhood program. Loris Malaguzzi said, for instance, "Relationship is the primary connecting dimension of our system, however,



A New Perspective Evolves

understood not merely as a warm, protective envelope, but rather as a dynamic conjunction of forces and elements interacting toward a common purpose." (p.66) He also believed, as do Lambert and Clyde, that "teachers (should) follow the children not plans" (p.88). The big difference between them, however, lies in their perception of children, or as the educators in Reggio Emilia would say, the image of the child. Lambert and Clyde view the children as individuals who have needs that must be met by the teachers whereas in Reggio Emilia, the child is perceived as a competent, inventive, resourceful member of the social group. As a result, in Reggio Emilia the teachers follow the children's lead in developing the curriculum. This has an impact on program planning. Both see the planning process as a recursive one, but the way they do the planning differs greatly. In Reggio Emilia documentation is the vehicle that drives the curriculum. It begins with the teachers making predictions about possible learning pathways, they and the children might follow. The documentation then serves as a visible means for keeping the experience or project moving forward. It enables there to be input from all participants, children, teachers, parents and community. Both the educators in Reggio Emilia and Clyde and Lambert have tried to develop a more authentic way of program planning: one that rejects the old linear method that relied on written goals and objectives that never really reflected the reality of what actually happened in the classroom. However, it is in the way they view the relationship between children, teachers and the curriculum where the greatest difference lies. The work of Vygotsky and Bruner has had a fundamental influence on the philosophy of Reggio Emilia. It is evident in the emphasis on collaboration at all levels of the program, especially in the way children and teachers collaborate in developing the curriculum. Lambert and Clyde, because of their different perception of children and maybe because of their rejection of Vygotsky's work, have not invited children to be part of the planning process. This has resulted in a very different method of developing curriculum.

Re Thinking Early Childhood Theory and Practice is an important book for early childhood educators because it forces us to think critically about our theory and practice in a time of great change in our field. The authors caution us against adopting the theory of Vygotsky and the notion of scaffolding before we have really understood the origins and meaning of each one. This is good advice, because all of us in early childhood programs must be clear about our theory and philosophy or how can we gain credibility or be truly accountable for providing children with the best quality early childhood education we can provide.

Published by: Social Science Press, P.O. Box 624, Katoomba, NSW 2780, Australia

Reference: Edwards, Carolyn, Gandini, Lella and Forman George, (eds) (1998), *The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia approach-advanced reflections 2nd edition,* Ablex Publishing Co., Greenwich, U.S.A.

The Art of Awareness: How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching

Deb Curtis and Margie Carter

Reviewed by Ms. Sydney Gurewitz Clemens

Sydney Gurewitz Clemens, M.A., travels widely, presenting to early childhood groups on subjects connected with thinking that comes from Reggio Emilia, Italy, children's creativity, their sense of safety and self-worth and language development, to mention a few. Clemens is the author of books and numerous articles.

Designed as a text for a child observation course, Curtis and Carter, who have been giving us consistently useful books and videos for a decade now, have gathered together in one volume the things that matter about documenting children's growth, thinking and work.

Adults bring a lot of baggage with us from our childhoods, and need to unpack that baggage if we're to be of use to the children we parent and teach. Curtis and Carter help a lot with this unpacking process.

Adults like products, and often forget about the importance of the experience that leads to the product, and how it may be more key to the child's growth than having the thing at the end. How many, many stories we've heard about the child preferring the packing materials to the expensive toy inside them. These authors help us think alongside of children, not looking down from adult expectations.

But let me let them speak for themselves: Children's "readiness to learn" comes from their natural curiosity about the world and the urge to make sense of it through creative, investigative representations. We must counter the pressures to narrowly define learning to read and write and give children significant

recognition for their explorations in all modes of representation. To help them enrich and grow confident in these basics of literacy development, we must first notice and respect the various forms of "stories" children bring to us.

And, Our challenge in observing children's conflicts is to identify our own tension and discomfort that often comes from past experiences or preconceptions about conflict situations. To see these moments clearly, we need to become aware of the personal baggage that could be clouding our view.

If you've picked up the impression that observing children is about checklists, this fine, thoughtful book will help you correct that impression. Observing children is about becoming an authentic teacher who knows clearly who s/he is, and can really see children as they are, and help them with the problems they encounter. Observing children, seeing and listening, is at the heart of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, and people trying to understand this approach would be well advised to read this book early in their journey.

Redleaf Press, 450 N.Syndicate,
Suite 5, St. Paul, MN 55104-4125

Listen to Children's Stories : Gianni Rodari

A Conference Review

By Baji Rankin

Baji Rankin is an Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Multicultural Education at the College of Education, University of New Mexico. Baji was an intern in the Reggio Emilia municipal infant-toddler centers and preschools during the 1989-90 school year. She has visited Reggio many times since, as an interpreter and a member of study tour delegations.

Do you want to help children bring out their *own* stories? Do you want to bring out your own stories? Would you like easy and fun ways to tap your creative storytelling abilities? If your response to any of these questions is "Yes!" the techniques of Gianni Rodari might be exciting and useful for you.

Gianni Rodari (1920-1980) was a world-famous Italian children's author who won the Hans Christian Andersen Prize, the "Nobel Prize of Children's Literature." Rodari's work is important for early childhood educators because he wrote stories that encouraged children to make up *their own* stories. His ideas also influenced by the Reggio Emilia schools.

Rodari, a progressive educator as well as a popular storyteller, was a contemporary of Loris Malaguzzi, the first Director of the Schools of Young Children in Reggio Emilia, Italy. Malaguzzi had been working as Director of the new and growing schools of young children in Reggio Emilia since 1963 when he invited Gianni Rodari to Reggio for a series of workshops in 1972. These conversations and workshops with teachers in the schools of Reggio Emilia were well received, stimulating the teachers and giving them tools to draw out stories and the creative thinking of children. The connection was also powerful for Gianni Rodari as he saw his ideas come to life in new ways. This experience, now translated into English by Jack Zipes in the book, *Grammar of Fantasy: An Introduction to the Art of Inventing Stories* (1996) lives on now in the schools of young children in Reggio Emilia. Through this book, we in the English speaking world, have access to some of the techniques and the spirit of Rodari's work.

In January 2001, the Reggio Emilia / New Mexico project hosted in Albuquerque the first U.S. conference on Gianni Rodari's life and work and on ways to use his ideas with young children. The conference entitled, *"Listen to Children's Stories; An encounter with the Reggio Emilia Schools and Gianni Rodari"* had two keynote presenters. Adopting a concept Rodari used, they were a "fantastic binomial": Jack Zipes, a leading worldwide authority on fairy tales and translator of Rodari's work; and Lella Gandini, liaison for the Reggio Emilia schools in the U.S. These two people have experiences that are "sufficiently strange or different from the other" (Rodari, 1996, p. 12) yet both have a wealth of experience to offer.

Jack Zipes began the conference by demonstrating Rodari's techniques, including the fantastic binomial, in an afternoon workshop with 3rd Graders in one Albuquerque Public School classroom. In only two hours, the children made up their own stories, told them, wrote them, revised them, told them from different points of view, and acted them out in groups – all with enthusiasm and gusto. They did all of this in the presence of 80 people watching, two people videotaping, and a set of bright lights. The engagement of the children was palpable even in the presence of these potential distractions. The variety of meaningful and fun activities offered by Jack Zipes was delightful for the children – and the attending audience.

The next day he presented and exchanged information with conference participants about Rodari's work and life through lecture, video, and demonstration. Zipes pointed to a reoccurring theme: how banal life is if we follow a story that is already narrated for us or that we have planned for ourselves; and

on the other hand, how amazing life is if we keep open to the unexpected that enriches our lives and "compels us to alter our narratives and expand our horizons. There is serendipity in mystery, light in darkness" (Zipes, 2001).

Zipes pointed out that Rodari's work centered around animation, creativity, and research; motivating children and teachers to express themselves in imaginative ways was central to Rodari's work. Zipes demonstrated this same trio – animation, creativity, and research – to the New Mexico audience in his compelling work with Albuquerque children, in his lectures, and in his presentation of work with school-age children in Minneapolis. Lella Gandini shared her deep knowledge of the Reggio experience through lecture, videos, and slides. She pointed out ways that teachers in Reggio encourage storytelling with toddlers and pre-primary children. She demonstrated how teachers interact with toddlers and help them build a sequence of ideas. She also showed how teachers help pre-primary children develop their language and literacy as the children share ideas through meaningful projects. Using examples from *Tutta Reggio* (Reggio Children, 2000), she demonstrated children's dialogue, critical thinking, and construction of narrative. The creative thinking in children is high when they speak about and do noteworthy and significant things: explore and make meaning of the places they live.

Altogether, this was a stimulating and provocative week-end for conference participants, a first-time opportunity for English-speaking educators to learn about Gianni Rodari's work, inspired by the "fantastic binomial:" Jack Zipes and Lella Gandini. I extend my gratitude to Jack Zipes and Lella Gandini; to the educators, children and families of Reggio Emilia; and to Gianni Rodari whose spirit lives on. For more information about this topic, contact:bajirank@unm.edu. Jack Zipes and Lella Gandini

CAROL JONAS, V.P.
PULICATIONS CHAIR

FROM THE PUBLICATIONS CHAIR

Spring has brought many thoughts to mind.

First of all we need to hear from you our readers - what do you like and what would you like to see changed or added to the journal? Are we meeting your needs as teachers, parents, early childhood educators? What would you like to read about and who would you like to hear from? You may email our editor, Mabel Higgins or myself with your input.

Since I have mentioned her name, it seems a good time to thank our editor for all the effort and hours put into this journal. Thank you, MFH!

Looking to the future ,we, especially our NB Director, Pam Whitty, are in the process of putting articles on our website (www.cayc.ca), the focus being 'then and now' in the form of a history page. We are striving for viewing on the net by the end of the year.

Once again we are requesting articles on infants and fathers. Articles on children solving problems and awareness of language delays are also required. Writing on children forming concepts would be welcomed.

Children forming concepts was the topic of discussion at the University of Massachusetts during a workshop on documentation. With this in mind, I observed children painting with cotton balls and coloured glue. One little girl put one on top of the other and said "look I have a sandwich!" That it was; two similar articles with something different in the middle. A concept formed and observed.

Our cover carries a quote from Andy Goldsworthy, internationally renowned British artist, who creates sculptures from nature. As professionals in the early childhood education field, I can't help but see the relatedness in our work with children. We sculpt children in our interactions with them. We try to 'balance' their day with guidance, direction and the empowerment of choice and problem solving.

The 'precariousness' is knowing when to 'hesitate' 'step in' 'step out' allowing for the "column" to successfully grow tall in a respectful environment with dignity intact at all times.

CAYC MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

Sandra Muir

Sandra is the new Nova Scotia Director for the Canadian Association for Young Children. Sandra works at The Institute for Early Childhood Education and Developmental Services in Truro, Nova Scotia, where she is the Language Curriculum Coordinator. Sandra also teaches Human Development and Critical Issues in Education to the Early Childhood Education and Youth Worker students. Sandra was born in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, in 1957. She moved to Nova Scotia as a child and was educated in Truro schools. Sandra attended Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Education in Early Elementary. She also obtained a Masters of Education degree with a concentration in Curriculum from St. Mary's University in Halifax.

Sandra is married to Gordon Muir and they have three children, Andrew 17, Colleen 15 and Bruce 11 years. In her spare time, Sandra enjoys rug hooking, running and swimming. She likes to participate in her community and she serves as secretary of the Colchester Community Day Care Center and secretary of the Victims of Family Violence Association Board. She is also co-chair of the Anti-Poverty steering committee for Colchester County. Sandra is a trained facilitator of the Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program and has offered this program for parents in the Truro area.

This is Sandra's first year as provincial director for the C.A.Y.C. In the fall of 2000, she attended Board meetings in Toronto where she was warmly welcomed as the new representative from Nova Scotia. It is her wish to expand C.A.Y.C. membership and she would be happy to travel anywhere in the province to speak to any group interested in learning more about the Association. Anyone who has any ideas or suggestions on how to make the C.A.Y.C. a more active organization should contact Sandra. She welcomes any and all suggestions.

FRIENDS OF CHILDREN AWARD

The CAYC "Friends of Children Award" was established to give CAYC a way of recognizing outstanding contributions, by individuals or groups, to the well-being of young children. If you know someone you would like to nominate for this award, please use the procedure and criteria below:

PROCEDURE

- The submission for nomination(s) must come through a member of the board and be seconded by a member of the board. Board members can receive recommendations for nominations from other persons or groups.
- The nominator will be responsible to obtain approval from the nominee before submitting the name of the nominee with relative background or biographical information.
- The nomination(s) will come forward at a board or executive meeting from the board member assigned responsibility for the award.
- This board member or an executive member will present the nomination and speak to it.
- The nomination will be passed by the board and / or executive with a consensus decision.
- The award will be presented promptly and in person when possible.
- Publicity of the award and the recipient(s) will appear in the journal, Canadian Children, and other publications where possible.
- Number of awards per year will vary.

CRITERIA

This may be:

- An individual or group, regardless of age.
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- Has shown an outstanding scholarly, advocate innovative and / or practical contribution to the well-being of young children.
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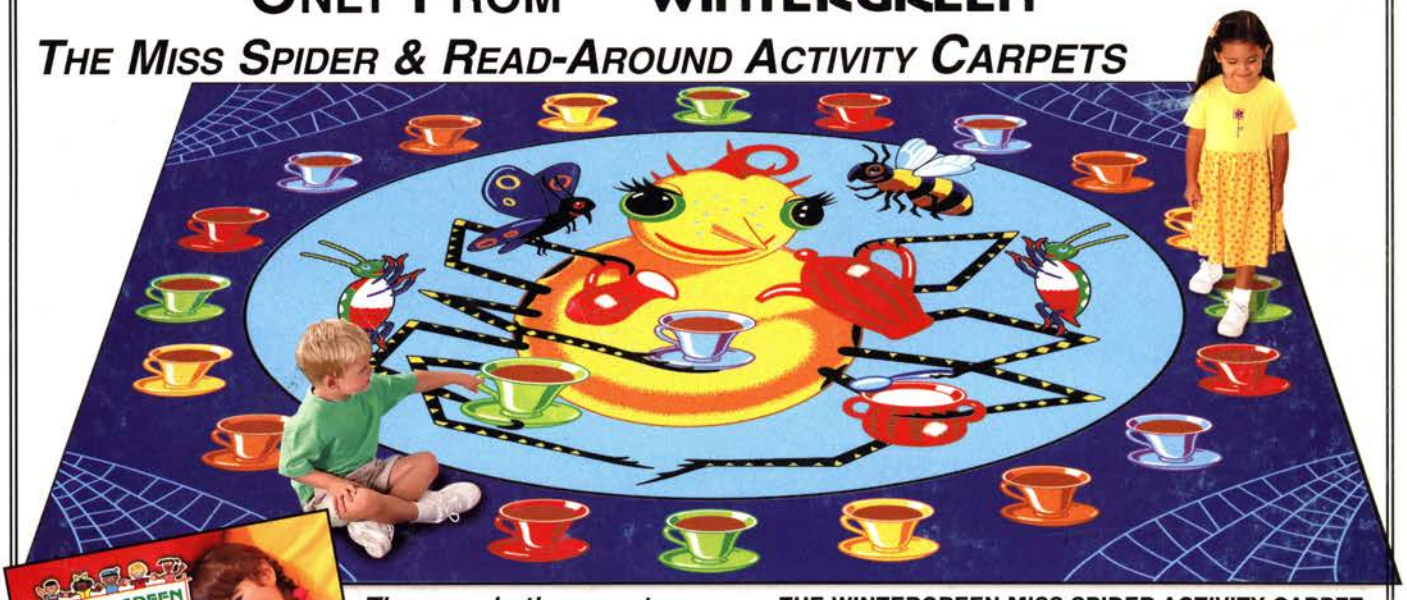
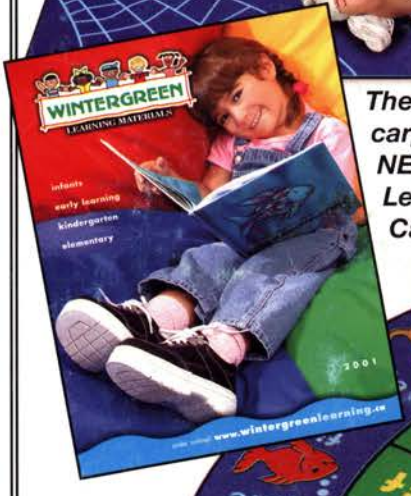
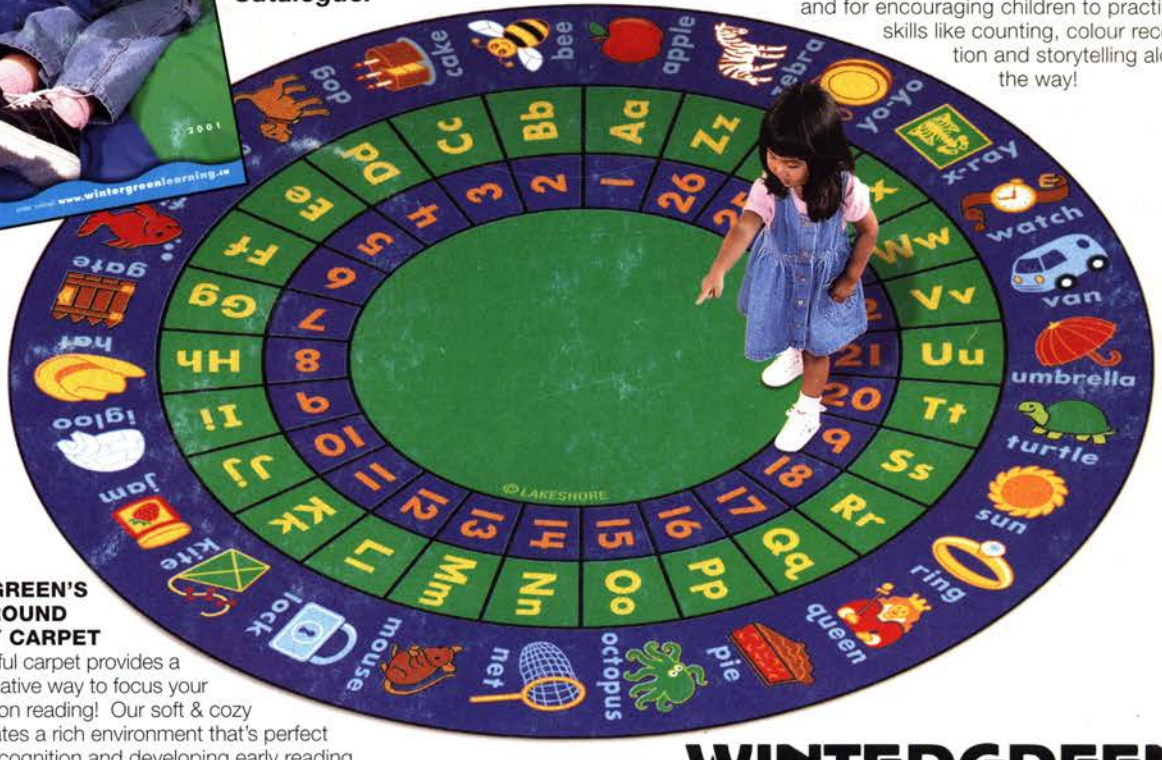




These and other great carpets are available in the NEW 2001 WINTERGREEN Learning Materials Catalogue.

THE WINTERGREEN MISS SPIDER ACTIVITY CARPET
Beautifully designed and perfectly coordinated to one of children's favourite stories, the carpet features a giant Miss Spider and 20 colourful teacups that provide a super-appealing place for storytime and group activities. Plus, the carpet is an ideal setting for games and dramatic play—and for encouraging children to practice skills like counting, colour recognition and storytelling along the way!



WINTERGREEN'S READ-AROUND ACTIVITY CARPET
This colourful carpet provides a fun and creative way to focus your classroom on reading! Our soft & cozy carpet creates a rich environment that's perfect for letter recognition and developing early reading skills and more. Kids can walk from A to Z, hop from 1-26, then read their way around the edges—with cute pictures and easy-to-read words for every letter!

WINTERGREEN

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The Canadian Association for Young Children

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