



Organisation Mondiale pour L'Éducation Préscolaire
World Organization for Early Childhood Education
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar
Te Rūnanga ā-ao mō te Mātauranga Kōhungahunga

Newsletter No 1, February 2022

Kia ora koutou,

President note

Naturally it has been a time for relaxation over the festive season so now we are gearing up for 2022. Since our last letter in November members of National Exec have been immersed in sorting out membership form tweaks as we try to streamline the process.

A special thanks to National Exec members Anita Croft (immediate past Treasurer, Canterbury), Kristy Austin (current Treasurer, Auckland), Amanda Higgins (our technology whizz, Wellington) and Marianne Kayes (Secretary, Auckland) who have worked together to iron out any gremlins. Amanda is also working to create a user-friendly website. We recommend that you also view the OMEP World website.

We are in the process of posting personal copies of *For Each and Every Child He Taonga Tonu te Tamariki* with each new membership. The digital resource to support kaiako using *For Each and Every Child* is progressing slowly ... your contributions with photos and resource ideas such as articles, books, Podcasts are welcomed.

There are many opportunities and ways to advocate for and with children. Recently, after attending consultative meetings, OMEP was a signatory to a combined submission organised by Children's Rights Alliance Aotearoa NZ (CRAANZ) on the Oversight of Oranga Tamariki System and Children and Young People's Commission Bill. The main concerns were: having a named Commissioner, and Māori Commissioner, independent monitoring of Oranga Tamariki, strengthening the purpose, structure and resourcing of the Office of the Children's Commissioner, delaying the progressing of the bill in order to strengthen it and including young people's voices and the ability to report with or without a request, to the Prime Minister. Look on CRAANZ <https://www.childrensrightsalliance.org.nz>.

If in future you would like to be involved in advocacy and/or writing submissions or just want to hear what is happening please let us know. Sometimes the time frames are quite tight or as with this one over a holiday period however you are also able to make individual submissions. The Parliamentary channel on TV has a list of current consultations.

Marianne and I attended an ARNEC (Asia Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood) Zoom on Putting Young Children at the Centre of Environmental and Climate Change Actions: the role of Early Childhood Development. It can be viewed on the ARNEC website <https://arnec.net> Early childhood policies, procedures and practices are seen as being fundamental in building a future pathway by increasing awareness and commitment, building capacity as environmental and climate change stakeholders, building and sharing knowledge and strengthening partnerships across sectors. A child rights and environmental approach create real and practical solutions. 'Giving young children their future back.'

Glynne Mackay (International Co-ordinator) and Diti Hill (Tamaki Makaurau rep) on behalf of OMEP have applied to ARNEC for funding to disseminate the Early Childhood Matters 2021: The Climate Issue together with OMEP Fiji, and possibly OMEP Tuvalu as well. They are awaiting confirmation that they have been successful.

Marianne, Diti and I met on Zoom on 28 Feb with Sandie Wong from Australia discussing possibilities around hosting future OMEP conferences.

As rōpū become established we would love to hear what is happening. Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome. We welcome any suggestions.

*Keep well
Titiro ki a koutou ano
Charlotte*

IMPORTANT: Membership renewals are now OVERDUE - we don't want to lose you!

**2022 membership renewals were due at the end of January.
If you've overlooked renewing, please complete the online membership form at
<https://forms.gle/VZ21fnofNdZV8gJc8>
Subscriptions should be paid to OMEP Aotearoa 02-0312-0043392-00
Reference SUBS22, Code: your surname or Group name**

You need to renew now to ensure you continue to receive information about OMEP.

Betty Armstrong, MNZM. OMEP Life Member and Honorary Member of OMEP World

We note with great sadness the recent passing of Betty Armstrong, pictured below with fellow OMEP Life Member, Doreen Launder. (Photo courtesy of the [stuff.co.nz](https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/education/127724445/a-bold-but-gentle-visionary-from-new-zealand-to-china-an-unlikely-education-hero) tribute to Betty, see link below:

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/education/127724445/a-bold-but-gentle-visionary-from-new-zealand-to-china-an-unlikely-education-hero>

There is another obituary for Betty in *Hawkes Bay Today*, see below:

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/hawkes-bay-today/news/education-advocate-had-fond-memories-of-dannevirke/NGH6QBWYJYRQIIFP56FMGILERI/>



Betty Armstrong - a memory

In 2009 I was invited by Dors Launder to be part of an early childhood group travelling to China at the invitation of the China Department of Education in Beijing, and, specifically, invited by Wan Hua Min, then the chairperson of the National Assoc of Early Childhood. Nine of us, including Dors were in China for nearly 3 weeks - see photo. We gave lectures and visited ECE centres, travelling from place to place by air, bus/car and train. Wan Hua Min accompanied us throughout.

Dors had informed us that Wan Hua Min's interest in Aotearoa NZ began when Betty and her husband went to Guiyang, capital of the Guizhou province and birthplace of Wan Hua Min, to teach English in the early 1990's. Betty introduced local early childhood educators to OMEP and ECE/NZ-style. Wan Hua Min worked her way up through the 'ranks' to become an ECE leader of national renown. OMEP Aotearoa's and NZ's relationship with Wan Hua Min and China continued from there, with many teacher exchanges, the creation of the NZ-China Trust (Wellington-based) and PLD opportunities for a number of us over the ensuing years. I never met Betty in person but have been very aware, since then, of Betty's legacy in both China and Aotearoa NZ.

Diti Hill-Denee



News from OMEP World & OMEP Aotearoa New Zealand

OMEP World statement on the Russian invasion of Ukraine

The war in Ukraine is unacceptable and must be stopped immediately!

The OMEP community strongly requests that all those involved in the conflict engage in dialogue and reach a peaceful resolution.

Since 1948 our founding values are based on peace among human beings, to ensure a fair and good world for children.

We vindicate and reaffirm the action of the first World President of OMEP, Alva Myrdal, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1982, for her work in favour of disarmament and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

OMEP appeals to the responsibility of all governments and communities in the world, to ensure the protection of families and young children Human Rights.



“30 years of children’s rights in Aotearoa New Zealand”

Glynne Mackey & Diti Hill-Denee wrote a chapter for OMEP to be included in this recently published book. From writing to publication, the time has been a little drawn out, but here it is.

Mackey, G. & Hill-Denee, D. (2021). Taking care of our children. 30 years of children’s rights in Aotearoa New Zealand. In Visnjic Jevtic, A., Engdahl, I., & Sadownik, A. (Eds.). *Young Children in the World and their Rights*. Springer.

A blog about the book on the OMEP website [Blog OMEP – OMEP \(omepworld.org\)](https://omepworld.org/blog/omep-omep) At the end of the blog, you will find links to:

- 1) the video with the filmed presentation of the book
- 2) a video with an introduction of the book by the editors.

Ngā mihi
Glynne

More on children’s rights internationally - the following (also from the OMEP World blog), paints a fairly grim picture:

<https://omepworld.org/difficult-times-for-childrens-rights-michele-olivain-%ef%bf%bc/>

OMEP Aotearoa Rōpū

Waitaha Rōpū (Canterbury) – Meeting notes

On February 17, we had our first informal meeting over dinner at Tuk Tuk (Bush Inn Centre). We booked the side room, which was great for having discussion over kai.

We now have enough members to form a Rōpū, and we have members who will be the signatory for the MOU with the National Executive.

We have decided that this year Waitaha will focus on advocating for teacher well-being, as teacher’s need to feel well within themselves so they can better advocate for the tamariki in their care. With this in mind we are planning a trip to the Christchurch Art Gallery for teachers to visit the Te Puna Waiora: The Distinguished Weavers of Te Kāhui Whiritoi exhibition at the end of March (the exhibition closes on the 3rd of April). (<https://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/exhibitions/te-puna-waiora-the-distinguished-weavers-of-te-kah>)

We have booked the side room again at Tuk Tuk for Thursday 17th March at 6pm for our next meeting where we will discuss what we want the outcome of the visit to the exhibition to be.

Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) Rōpū - Meeting Notes

The rōpū met for the first time in 2022 on February 22nd via Zoom. We discussed our Memorandum of Understanding with the national body; also, the membership challenges that the shift from chapters to rōpū has created for now. Everyone felt positive about membership into the future. We had a brief discussion about Covid and its impact on teachers. Marianne mentioned the importance of joining the various national and international OMEP subcommittees.

As a rōpū, we will follow the national professional development and learning focus on Children's Rights for this year, promote *For Each and Every Child; He Taonga Tonu te Tamaiti* and support the teachers' resource when it is launched.

Fiona mentioned that our Facebook page has 400 followers but far fewer hits and wondered if our social media sites are meeting the needs of early childhood teachers working daily with children. This started a passionate and lengthy discussion on the current situation of the 'everyday' early childhood teacher. Meg raised the issue of the 'lens' with which teachers see children, their work and themselves. Her example was 'changing nappies' and how this can be a rich curriculum experience or a time-consuming task. We agreed that seeing everything as a task is very tiring, and discussed the place of leadership, passion and commitment to tamariki. This led on to 'targeted' professional development and learning. Meg shared the book *From Teaching to Thinking* by Ann Pelo and Margie Carter, especially chapter 11 (The planning lens). It was agreed to trial an hour long Zoom session focused on this 'planning' reading with links to teacher well-being and children's rights and responsibilities. This will happen on March 15th for Auckland rōpū members. If successful, these Zoom evenings could be continued nationally.

Diti Hill-Denee

OMEP Te Whanganui-a-Tara Rōpū

Kia ora koutou,

E hara taku toa I te toa takitahi,

He toa takitini.

My strength is not as an individual, but as a collective (Alsop & Kupenga, 2014, p.117).

The Te Whanganui-a-Tara rōpū members enjoyed a great get together over shared kai earlier this year. We took the time to formalise our group as a rōpū as part of OMEP Aotearoa as well as plan for the year ahead. We want to encourage you to join OMEP Aotearoa and be part of the wider collective. We also invite you to be a part of the ongoing professional development sessions that we will be delivering locally.

February's session focused on Te Whatu Pōkeka and how to embed our learning in centre documentation. Commencing with the tauparapara and learning more about the creation story was a wonderful way to encourage us to reflect on ways of knowing, being and doing; how learning is valued; and the relationship between teaching and learning.

We have a very interesting year of professional learning opportunities planned to bring together passionate early childhood folk as we advocate for quality early childhood education and teaching. Our next session (March 21st) is called Thinking: Play and Strengths: Motivating and Shaping Dispositions.

Ngā mihi

OMEP Te Whanganui-a-Tara

VISIT OMEP's New Webpage: <https://omepworld.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/omepaotearoanewzealand>

Website: <http://omepaotearoa.org.nz>

Email: omepaotearoa@gmail.com