Comment

All the articles in this edition have implications for inclusive teaching and learning practice. Each suggests some ways to make visible and understand the knowledge residing in families and communities and the use of resources to support inclusive pedagogy. Lesley Rameka's article discusses the relevance and application of Māori whakataukī (proverbs, sayings) and then focuses on the applicability of a well-known whakataukī, "E tipu e rea", composed by Apirana Ngata. This article has potential to inform educational practitioners and student teachers about important cultural messages carried by whakataukī and encourage them to think about the significance of these messages for pedagogical practice with Māori learners in Māori and non-Māori educational settings. The article will be a valuable resource for practitioners wanting to understand and utilise whakataukī within their practice.

Nicola Daly analyses the ways in which New Zealand families are represented in text and illustration in a selection of 15 books from the New Zealand Picture Book Collection. She makes the important point that "children are known to engage more fully when they feel a connection with books, and so ensuring diversity in family configurations reflecting the family reality of children in ECE settings is an important aspect of early literacy." In her words, picture books are a powerful and often underestimated tool for children to learn about themselves and the world around them. Her analysis shows much of the diversity of New Zealand families is represented in the books chosen, but with some noticeable absences of same-sex families and Asian characters in this particular collection. The article offers useful ideas about how practitioners might analyse the books offered and enter into critical discussions with children around the images and text within them.

The application of a critical discourse analysis approach in self review is explained with examples from early childhood practice in the article by Angela Chan and Maureen Perkins, "Self-review Processes: Using Critical Discourse Analysis to Improve Practices in Early Childhood Education Settings". These authors highlight misalignment between discourses regarding taken-for-granted assumptions such as "learning through play", "free play", "formative and summative assessment" and "observation", and aspirations and understandings of families with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They argue that teachers need to be able to ask "why?" and "who says this is so?" in order to be able to fully articulate the rationale behind their practices, as well as to implement an inclusive and equitable pedagogy. These authors pose valuable reflective questions to teachers wanting to undertake review; as well they encourage practitioners to develop their own questions. They suggest that "a critical reflection and examination of discourses using [critical discourse analysis] is likely to bring about an inclusive and transformative curriculum that embraces a range of social, cultural, and educational discourses".

Judi Randall's article discusses findings from a first-ever New Zealand study of the impacts on families who are affected by the new ECE social obligations that require beneficiaries to ensure their children are enrolled in and attending an approved early

childhood education programme from the age of 3, until they start school. She highlights that "the policy appears to give insufficient consideration to children's well-being with the threat of financial penalties for those who fail to comply" and the disempowering impact of undermining family values about whether they educate their children at home or in formal early childhood education. The threat of sanctions raises considerable anxiety amongst families. Her case studies of beneficiary families' experiences in encountering both WINZ staff and early childhood centres are sobering. They indicate that some families are not given sufficient information and support by WINZ staff to find suitable early childhood services, and some feel themselves bullied and judged. When families do access ECE, a welcoming and responsive environment is crucial to their willingness to participate.

An innovative concept (Initiating Parent Voice) intended to support communication and continuity between children, families, and early childhood educators about children's learning is examined in the article by Marjolein Whyte. The practice involves engaging parents in discussions with their children through the use of photographic images and providing comment before the educator writes an interpretation of the child's learning (learning story). This practice shifts the balance of power, positioning children and families as experts capable of contributing rather than commenting on something that had already been written by the educator. Marjolein's research shows positive changes in parent perspectives and involvement in their child's learning through using this approach with their child.

Kathryn Hawkes' article is about the experiences of children, parents, and teachers in a changing early childhood service. Her use of the "mosaic approach" of mixed methods was particularly suited to finding out about and listening to the perspectives and views of children. Her methods included children's photographs of "what you see at preschool"; a semistructured interview with each child around their photographic booklet; and a "walking interview" with the child leading the researcher to places within the centre and talking through questions about these places. The article highlights differences between perspectives of the participants and the value of taking the time and using methods to find out the child's views. Kathryn makes useful suggestions "to assist [teachers] in their everyday practice as they endeavour to better hear the perspectives of the child".

Three authors in this issue undertook their research as part of their master's study—an indication of the high standards and value of master's level study for early childhood practitioners.

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