

## Meet the committee;

### President



Russell Ballantyne graduated as a kindergarten teacher in 1982 from Dunedin College of Education and has taught as a Teacher, Head Teacher, Senior Teacher and General Manager of Dunedin Kindergarten Association. After a philosophical readjustment Russell co opened Early Childhood on Stafford in 2003 and have been teaching there ever since. Russell am a passionate believer in the need for children to have both a male and female perspective in early childhood education and have been a pasty president of EC-MENZ.

### Vice President



Robin Christie is an early



# Dunedin

Friday 13th and Saturday 14th March.

A report compiled and written by James Hamilton, with contribution from Cyrus Taraporvala

With grateful acknowledgement of the sponsors for this Summit.



**Dunedin  
Kindergartens**

Mana Manaaki Puawai O Otepoti



**Roslyn Wakari AFC**

*Since 1888*

**Loan Market** 

childhood teacher who designs and builds indoor and outdoor learning spaces for young children. His teaching passions include storytelling, puppetry, wacky science experiments, and sharing the joy of the humble ukulele. He can be reached anytime on [robin@childspace.co.nz](mailto:robin@childspace.co.nz), or through the Childspace Workshop Facebook page.



## Treasurer



Stuart J Miller has an interest in education from many years in industry training witnessing the modern education system (the meat grinder) produce a number of semi-literate dis-engaged trainees (primarily male). As Dr Rangimarie Rose Peres reflected how the 'thirst for knowledge of tamariki' is taken from them as the progress through the compulsory sector. Stuart graduated in 1992 with a BCA (accounting major) and the Dip of Education in 2012 both from Victoria University in Wellington. Stuart has had a varied career in the paid workforce from fruitpicker, milkman, construction worker, accountant then into the unpaid workforce raising his 2 sons then back into the paid workforce as an Industry Training Organisation administrator and currently he is dividing

The deep south sure put of the weather for the out-of-towners (not even one sighting of snow), for the ninth year of EC Menz summits. The event, was a collaboration of a number of Dunedin men and their centres ranging from the Dunedin Kindergarten Association, the Dunedin Community Childcare Association, Early Childhood on Stafford and a student studying with the Otago University, College of Education.

"Striking Educational Gold" looked at the early childhood field from a 'southern man' perspective, embracing aspects such as risk, resilience and self control, and introducing new research / ideas, as we are certainly moving into age that revolves around new and innovative technologies. This summit was no exception from those held in the past, as it had representatives from a number of regions (both new and long term members) and of course key networking took place.

## Friday 13th of March, 2015 - Day One

The summit began with a gathering at the recently developed Dunedin Kindergarten Association head offices and adjacent centre, where the EC Menz members were welcomed by the Kings and Queens High schools Kapa Haka group. Following some networking and wonderful kai (some sourced from local waters), the annual AGM began.

Michael Inch started this meeting off with some words from the president at the time, Robin Christie, who deserves a special thanks for stepping in as acting president after the very sudden and unfortunate passing of Adam Buckingham.

Acting President- Robin Christie wrote;

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa  
Nga mihi nui ki a koutou katoa  
Ki a papa-tua-nuku - tēnā koe

his time between his sons  
mental illness called being  
teenagers and happily having  
fun as an ECE  
teacher (womens work as  
one of my sons iller friends  
calls it) for Kidicorp.

## Secretary



James Hamilton is currently enrolled in his final year of a Bachelor of Teaching endorsed in Early Childhood Education. Even since he was a kid, James wanted to be a chef and gained his qualification in 2012. However discovered this was not the career for him and began pursuing an exciting career in early childhood. He still has a passion for food and loves to bring cooking into centres, whether it is baking bread or cooking crabs after dissecting them. Other interests that James brings with him to centres include; the arts, sciences and has started picking up some basic magic skills. Currently he has his final year placement at Early Childhood on Stafford, working alongside fellow EC-MENZ committee members Russell and Lyle. He cannot wait to graduate at the end of the year and finally become a teacher (the student loans aren't

Ki te whare - tēnā koe  
Ki te hunga mate  
Ki te hunga ora  
Tēnā koutou katoa

Kia ora kaupapa whānau,

Welcome to the Annual General Meeting of EC-Menz, a unique community of people like yourselves who believe in the importance of the many roles of men in early childhood in Aotearoa. We can never underestimate the impact a positive man can have in the life of a young child, and together we support each other as pioneers in the field.

I use the word pioneers intentionally, for even as we stand on the shoulders of the first groundbreaking male ECE teachers of the 1960s and 70s, we are still striving for true parity, still dreaming of a time when an early childhood setting without a man is the exception rather than the rule. We must never give up, must never waver from this vision. Huge aroha and respect is due to the women here today, your support is so vital to this cause, kia ora.

The year since we last met together in Wellington has been one tinged with sorrow with the passing of our past president, Adam Buckingham, after a short battle with cancer. Our thoughts are with Joanne, Clay, Ellie and the Buckingham whānau.

Adam came to ECE from a career in trucking, and brought with him the classic kiwi 'tinkering' approach to learning about the technological world. This has been a real breath of fresh air for the sector, and has inspired educators both here and overseas. From dismantling lawnmowers with children to creating his famous 'activity centres' (created from recycled taps, light switches, chains, door handles, indicator lights, steering wheels and so on), Adam brought an honest and natural approach to encouraging children's curiosity. With the support of his family, Adam wrote and published 'Turning Trash into Treasure', a resource book filled with practical ways to engage the scientists and engineers of the future using free everyday materials. Adam became the face of men in ECE in the New Zealand media in the new millennium, and was always ready to grant interviews and mentor new men in the field. Adam's pioneering work will be carried on by us all. Rest easy, brother.

The last decade has seen some fantastic progress for men in ECE, with a real recognition across the sector for the many strengths that men can bring to teaching teams. In that time, the national average ratio of male teachers has doubled, even as the total number of teachers has risen. Although the official Ministry of Education statistics for the past year have yet to be released, my experience with the training providers in Wellington with whom I work has shown a startling rise in the number of male students enrolling in degree and diploma courses. In my secret double life as a playground designer I have met many more men in the past year than ever before, and not just men, but **good** men. While we should be judged on our qualities as a teacher first and foremost, we cannot escape the fact that we attract attention for being different, and are therefore under more scrutiny. We each must be an advocate for both the profession and the role of men within it.

A real strength of the way we support each other is the success of our regional EC-Menz contact groups, and I would like to extend the thanks of the national committee to those members who have organised these groups. From mentoring new students to reciprocal centre visits, from teaching experience placements to group meetings down at the pub for a quiet jar or two, these networks really are the first point of support for teachers out in the field. To those contact groups I say kia ora, kia ora, kia ora e hoa ma. In particular, the Dunedin chapter and the amazing Summit Committee are owed a huge round of applause for organising such a great hui. I know how much mahi has gone into this event, and it is only

paying themselves off).

## Committee



Lyle Champness is a teacher at Early Childhood on Stafford in Dunedin and has been a member of ECmenz since it was created in 2008, and a committee member since 2011. His passions range from gardening with the children to creating cool outdoor equipment that is challenging to master but still fun to use. Lyle also value the benefits of fresh air and getting children out into the natural environment where they can learn first hand some deeper understandings about the big wide world around us.



Toni Christie is the co-founder and director of the Childspace Early Childhood Institute in Wellington. She is passionate about early childhood education, environments, infants, teamwork, communication, male involvement in early childhood and advocacy for children, families and early childhood educators. Toni holds a Master of Education with merit from Victoria University in Wellington. She has been awarded a Fulbright scholarship to

that we're running a conference 18 months in the planning that is preventing us from being there to share with you all today.

In closing (as I know the bar must be open by now, surely), I extend my deepest respect to you all for choosing the most rewarding of all vocations. Please, never undervalue your skills or your contribution to society, and remember that the relationships we form now with children and their families will benefit them for a lifetime.

Me mahi tahi tatou mo te oranga o te Tamariki!

Nga mihi mahana,

Robin Christie

The AGM allowed for the attending members to contribute new ideas towards creating greater awareness of early childhood education as a prospective career option from men, young and old. This included approaches that could be made to both entice males to start training, but also ways of encouraging those males already in the industry to preserve through their studies and on into the work force. A key aspect that was agreed on was the need to introduce scholarship and grants to better support and encourage participate in ECE of males, thus hopefully creating a much more gender neutral environment.

As this is a new year, there is also a new EC Menz committee to announce;

President - Russell Ballantyne

Vice President - Robin Christie

Treasurer - Stuart Millar

Secretary - James Hamilton

Committee Members - Albert Samuel, Nigel Benn, Michael Inch, Toni Christie and Lyle Champness.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those previous members, Michael Inch (Treasurer), James Lohead (Secretary), and as mentioned previously Robin Christie (President), for their dedication and service to the EC Menz organisation. Now as a new team step in, led once again by Russell Ballantyne, a new direction can be explored as we aim to take the organisation to the next step.

**For a full breakdown of the AGM, please see the minutes below.**

## AGM, Dunedin 2015

Present committee members;

Michael Inch (Treasurer)

James Hamilton (Committee)

AGM starting time; 7:00pm

further her research and dissemination around respectful relationships with infants and toddlers. Toni loves to sing, dance and play every day with her colleagues and her family.

President's speech, accepted and read by Michael Inch, seconded by James Hamilton.

Break down of expenses by current Treasurer; Michael Inch, reported another year in the 'green'. Where finances has been spent, updating EC Menz website including maintenance costs, and development and publishing of new brochures to bring attention to EC Menz.

Current Treasurer Michael Inch announced stepping down for the Treasurer role, nominating Stuart Millar for the role, seconded by James Hamilton.

### **Committee changes**

Russell Ballantyne expressed his interest in taking over as new president. Nominated: Cyrus Taraporvala, seconded Nigel Benn.

Vice-president Robin Christie. Nominated: Stuart Millar, seconded James Hamilton.

Treasurer, Stuart Millar. Nominated: Michael Inch, seconded James Hamilton.

Secretary, James Hamilton. Nominated: Stuart Millar, seconded Dione Rowe.

### **New committee members;**

Albert Samuel, nominated: Nigel Benn, seconded Stuart Millar

Nigel Benn, nominated: Dione Rowe, seconded Jeff Pringle

Michael Inch, nominated: Stuart Millar, seconded John Cleland

Toni Christie, nominated: Cyrus Taraporvala, seconded James Hamilton

Lyle Champness, nominated: Nigel Benn, seconded James Hamilton

Discussed next Summit, 2016. To confirm either Auckland or Wellington (Robin and Toni).

### **General Business;**

Cyrus questioned why so much money was spent the website, explained by Michael that the website was started 'from scratch' however was significantly cheaper than what it could have been. Cyrus volunteered to assist in the website management as he has the resources to do so, thus keeping costs down further.

James Hamilton to become page admin of the EC Menz Facebook.

Jeff Pringle brought forward the idea of fundraising as local groups in order to raise funds for the organisation, covering grants etc. Question was raised by Stuart Millar, Why are we here? Fundraising would be a good starting place to get everyone together each year other than the annual summit. Building funds to assist new students.

Building relationships with the Universities - at a regional level.

James Hamilton mentioned a folder to be handed out to each of the first year male students with a list of contacts for them to get in touch with as support (other male teachers in the region).

Meeting concluded; 8:30pm.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank 'Needle and Nail' for their kind donation for a 'spot prize' of a homemade chainsaw and fishing rod. We have two very happy centres receiving these toy (not sure who will be more excited, the children or the teachers). The banner below will link you to

**Saturday 14th of March, 2015 - Day Two**

Needle and Nails website so you can see for yourself their awesome array of toys.



**Website:**

<http://www.needleandnail.co.nz>

**Facebook:**

<https://www.facebook.com/needleandnail?fref=ts>

The Adam Buckingham Memorial Award was developed to commemorate the life and service to EC MENz and the early childhood sector, of Adam Buckingham. With great sorrow Adam passed away late last year, and has been, and will continue to be an inspiration.

We are however, please to announce the first recipient of this award, Russell Ballantyne, for his dedication to ECE and strong influence / input towards EC MENz. It seems fitting that Russell has received this award now as he has once again undertaken the presidents role of our organisation.

**Kerri Maclennan - Sports Otago Active Movement Advisor**

Kerri's presentation covered the core programmes and workshops that Sports Otago have to offer for teachers and parents to attend and gather information and resources to support children's healthy growth and development.

"Active Movement is about engaging children in quality movement experiences in a fun, positive environment. By allowing children to have the opportunity to move and play positively will attribute to the complete development of their overall social, physical, and mental wellbeing. It is all about having fun, being active, enjoying the outdoors, and developing healthy, happy well-rounded children."

Kerri spoke about the benefits of movement and how it enhances a child's development elaborating on recent brain research around the value of movement and how it reinforces learning. Movement is a child's first language and positive early experiences pave the way for lifelong learning.

Movement helps to build brain pathways and the nervous system. She talked about school readiness in preschool children and how the development of gross and fine motor skills prepare children to focus, sit still, and follow letters systematically from left to right.

The speaker spoke about 'On your Marks' which is a skills programme in Dunedin on fundamental movement skills (FMS) of which the benefits are resilience, problem solving, stimulating brain growth, memory, and increased motivation.

**Nicola Atwool - Associate Professor for the department Sociology, Gender and Social Work - University of Otago**

The presentation from Nicola Atwool covered the topics of early intervention and resilience and what teachers have to offer in regard to these areas of a child's development. Nicola previously has been employed in a variety of roles by what is now Child Youth and Family for nearly twenty years giving her plenty of experience in the field of early intervention. This presentation covered key a key aspect of childhood; attachment, and the aspects that a strong attachment can have significant positive impacts on. These included;

- Self regulation
- Risk taking / analysis
- Resilience

Nicola also highlighted the importance towards teachers in the ECE sector are required to establish strong attachments with those children labeled as 'vulnerable'. This lead onto discussions on a new proposal, 'The White Paper', which is a new approach to reducing abuse and neglect, which was a community based approach of early intervention to reduce the flow to Child Youth and Family. The proposal was to change the contact system and have one phone line to take any level of concern. They will have the capacity to refer the issue to any specific service.



As this newsletter is a new direction that we are looking at pursuing, we as a committee would like to hear for you. A survey is currently being developed to gain insight on what you want to see happening in the EC MENz organisation, including; feedback, new ideas, aspirations and answer any questions we have. This should be sent out within the month of April so keep your eyes on your inbox - any feedback is appreciated.

We have also come to the point in the year that our annual membership subscription fees are due. An invoice for these fees will be sent out with the information to be able to pay these much needed subs so we can continue to have our annual summits,

The implications on the ECE sector are quite significant. They include:

- Increasing Maori and Pasifika enrolment.
- Beneficiaries are required to ensure that children attend.
- ECE identified as part of the 'Workforce for Children'.
- Critical role in identification of vulnerable children.
- Development of education providers as community hub.

The challenge is knowing what to do when we are concerned about children. A few factors that make children vulnerable are:

- Compromised parenting
- Poor parental mental health
- Inter-generational patterns – where parents were brought up in broken family structures
- Lack of secure attachment
- Exposure to violence
- Living in hardship

Not all children have low outcomes. Research shows that children are resilient as resilience develops in the face of hardship. The speaker went on to talk about resilience, stress, attachment, and brain development. What came to the fore for me was the emphasis on self regulation which the speaker described as the single most important factor that is built through early attachment.

The speaker suggested that attachment patterns become entrenched when the internal working models formed in the early years are reinforced by experiences beyond home. She suggested benefits for children as:

- Positive role models
- Access to the other gender
- Men bring a different outlook for children through their interactions
- Important that children raised in the context of family violence have access to positive male role models
- Relationships are the key to change.

**For more information, read “Attachment and resilience: Implications for children in care”, which can be found at: [http://www.researchgate.net/publication/228375717\\_Attachment\\_and\\_resilience\\_implications\\_for\\_children\\_in\\_care](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/228375717_Attachment_and_resilience_implications_for_children_in_care)**

**Helen Colins** - Teacher at Play and Learn Dunedin

Helen is an ECE teacher here in Dunedin. Helen has a passion for the outdoors and would love to see every child have access to a natural outdoor learning environment. Helen’s presentation ran through some of the risk analysis that her centre undertakes on their outdoor excursions and the process they have gone through to establish their program which highlights the benefits that risk taking has. She also shared with us some findings from her research she has undertaken about outdoor education and the benefits it has on a young child’s learning and development. With this was personal

maintain contact with fellow members, and hopefully move forward onto developing scholarships / grants to support new males make the next step into the early childhood sector.

experiences from her time at Play and Learn, including photos and videos of how their children have grown and developed through utilising the outdoor environment.

Helen spoke about the outdoors offering a rich sensory stimulation as well as benefits for motor skills and brain development. Children also develop a sense of responsibility to care for the environment through collecting their own rubbish, planting and gardening, and looking after the bush.

Research has shown us that only 54% of preschoolers are sufficiently active. Higher levels of physical activity leads to less body fat later on in adolescence and there is a clear link between physical activity, health, and behaviour. Frequent outdoor play greatly influences outdoor activity as a recreation in later life.

## Images from the 9th annual EC MENz Summit:

**Helen May** - Otago University, College of Education

A local and international prominent speaker from the University of Otago, Helen made a presentation on "Insights from Images concerning ECE: its politics, its past and its pedagogy." This presentation covered a selection of political issues, gender, curriculum matters, historical curiosity and early years schooling. All of which was framed to provoke some discussion and sharing of ideas / experiences. Helen's presentation also encompassed many of her own experiences and knowledge of the early childhood, being an important figure she shared important changes that she has witnessed first hand, including the historical transformation of Dunedin Kindergartens and the national / labour political debate.

She showed an image of a boy at a carpentry table titled, and referred to exploration and following children's interests through a story of a Belgian person looking to put his child in a day care in New Zealand. Helen said that the Belgian was amazed at what children were allowed to do in terms of risk taking and that they would never be allowed to play with risky tools in Belgium. There was also an image of a child using risky tools and one of Futuba Kindergarten in Japan where a child had climbed very high up a tree and no one seemed concerned at all, and one in Germany where children are allowed to build a house.

Images from the 1920's and 30's hardly had an outdoor area at all. Apparently the first jungle gym was built in 1939. In the 1950's it got a little more interesting with sandpits and bicycles. The 1970's archive images were in colour and showed children on a roof, climbing trees, and painting windows. Images from 2010 were a lot more sterile in general but some did show children with opportunities for challenging play.

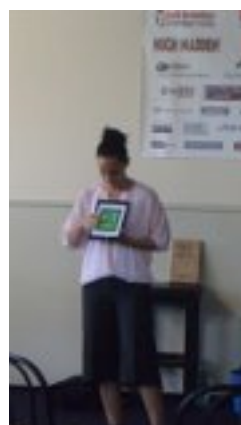
In essence, Helen made us reflect on:

- Where are we heading on these issues in New Zealand?
- How do we avoid plastic playground standardisation?
- How can we encourage taking risks, exuberant play, and 'real' environments?

**Dr Sandhya Ramrahka** - Research Manager with the Longitudinal Study

Childhood self control: Impact on health and crime-

The speaker spoke about the Longitudinal Study conducted at the University of Otago on self control and a US program called 'Head Start'. The Dunedin Study involved children born in 1972/3 and self







control was measured in the early years. This was done through direct observation from parents, teachers, and self reports. This predicted adult outcomes and showed that those in the lowest self control in early years had the highest health problems in later years. This was also evident with wealth and crime measures with the same result based on low self control in early years.

The implications of increasing self control will have long term cost benefits and the best time to benefit self control is in ECE and schools. Self control is a skill that you need to learn.

#### **Donna Smith - St Hilda's College**

Donna spoke about approaches and apps to use with pre-schoolers and the benefits of embracing technology within education. She mentioned that not much research has been done on technology in ECE.

The speakers offered tips on using technology with children and suggested some apps that would be beneficial in an early childhood context. She gave us an insight on the applications of technology through the use of iPads / computers including; flash cards for literacy learning, a story book creator, mathematical based games, and a garage band for creating music.

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#### **Tom Campbell - Ceroc Dance Otago**

Tom is a trained primary school teacher who runs his own dance studio in Dunedin and has been involved with dance for several years not only for pure enjoyment, but is involved in competitions. He is passionate about dance and movement and has recently used his skills to run a preschool class at the Taieri Parents Centre in Mosgiel. During Tom's workshop, he ran through some strategies, music choice and movements that teachers can use to encourage a love of dance with our young children. He also managed to get 25 grown men and women off their seats and ran through these strategies so we could see how it was done first hand. As a group we moved to the music as lions, jellyfish, monsters and much more, giving us some new ideas and enthusiasm towards dance and music.

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