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More Kindergartens Should Amalgamate

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More could be done to amalgamate kindergartens, where this was geographically possible, the president of the New Zealand Kindergarten Union (Mrs H. Downer) said in her opening remarks to the union conference which opened in Westport today.

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"A former Director General of Education (Dr C. E. Beeby) suggested in 1957 that the union consider some form of amalgamation of association in order to gain stability in administration," she said. "One of the first tasks of the executive was to examine this proposal and I visited associations where amalgamation looked a possible development.

"Although some success was achieved I believe more could still be done with profit to the associations concerned. I have seen amalgamation work happily in my area (Rotorua) and I feel sure there is no regret in New Plymouth, South Taranaki, Franklin or Southland where links were made to form stronger groups.

"I would earnestly recommend further study of amalgamation proposals to associations in other areas."

Mrs Downer went on to outline other progress made since she had become president of the union in 1957. Since 1958, 74 new kindergartens had been established.

"In no other country is there such a clear-cut policy for those who work for kindergarten. We know from the outset that if we are prepared to help ourselves, help from Government will in time be given in double measure," she said.

"The union would continue to press the Minister of Education to resume full responsibility for kindergarten teacher training and that a regional educational authority should organise and administer all kindergarten activities.

"These submissions should continue to be the aims of the union and should not be lost sight of

"Some of the most important tasks ahead included the establishment of a permanent office, the integration of kindergarten teacher training with infant teacher training. work for the establishment of a New Zealand pre-school association, which would give the public a clear and accurate picture of all pre-school services." Mrs Downer said that people who worked for kindergarten associations should understand fully the aims of pre-school services.