



KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

An official
publication of the
New Zealand Free
Kindergarten Union

July 1977



Editorial

'A man who is master of patience is master of everything else'—so wrote Lord Halifax (1633-1695).

After reading two articles in the 'Around and About' section I have been prompted to discard an editorial on publicity and make comment on Margaret Estcourt and Vicki Perris's contributions.

It has become apparent that more and more establishment committee members have become so frustrated at the time taken to achieve their goal that they are putting pen to paper. Not everyone has written to, or for inclusion in, the journal, but rather letters have found their way to Ministers of the Crown, Members of Parliament, the Department of Education, and the News Media.

No one can predict how long it will take to finally open a new kindergarten when the establishment committee is first set up. A period of three to five years can be expected to elapse, but some projects have taken up to 10 years to reach finality.

There are a great many factors which govern the establishment of a new kindergarten. Before a project may be entered on the Union Building List (the official list from which a building programme is approved by Government every year) the following three conditions must be guaranteed:

1. Sufficient children to maintain a roll of 80 (Grade 1) or 50 (Grade 0) for as long as the building is in existence.
2. An approved site (all legal details finalized).
3. Sufficient money for a 1/5 share of the building and equipment (approx \$10,000).

It could take anything from one to 10 years to become eligible to be placed on the Union's list. Once on the list there is still no guarantee how soon a project will proceed. The economic situation determines the number of kindergartens which are approved in any one year. The builders situation when a tender is finally accepted is a relevant factor on the time scale. The slow approval of a tender has often meant that a builder has accepted other

work and cannot proceed for a lengthy period. The availability of building materials for certain projects was caused considerable delay on many occasions. Land deals have also contributed to long delays in some instances. Changes in personnel dealing with land acquisition and approval, has caused chaos in Associations when 'someone' decides that an approved site previously very desirable has overnight become totally unsuitable.

If those changes are due to human error then faith in human competence must surely be questioned. If changes are due to 'the system' then it must be questioned.

A past President of the Union made it known on one occasion when she visited a certain Department to obtain answers about building projects, that she was prepared to stay as long as it took to find out who was currently in possession of the "buck" (the thing people keep passing on when they don't wish to give answers).

Building kindergartens is a complex, costly, and frustrating business. Every project be it in a large city or small town is of equal priority. If there are sufficient children to justify a kindergarten then a need and priority have already been established.

Under present policy if the movement is to progress as we all wish it to, then we must have new buildings.

I am only too well aware of the disappointment committees and communities feel when they are subjected to long delays. There are no easy answers to your numerous queries. Approval is given to proceed when your name reaches a position high enough on the list to be included in a particular year's approved programme. There are no 'quick' ways of establishing kindergartens so could I commend Lord Halifax's quote to you, and suggest that the Lockhart equivalent might be:

Patience is the fourth guaranteed condition when placing a project on the Union building list.

PATRICIA M. LOCKHART,
Editor.

The New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union

is a body which consists of and co-ordinates kindergarten associations throughout New Zealand working in the interests of kindergarten.

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Deadline for articles for the October Journal is 15 September 1977.

All cheques and orders should be addressed to:

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6 Norfolk Street,
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Please address articles to:

THE EDITOR,
"The Mooring"
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WANTED

A copy of the blue history—"Seventy-five years of free kindergartens in New Zealand". 1889-1964. The Editor would appreciate a copy if anyone has a spare one.

Articles—Histories of older Kindergartens.

- Ideas for the 'New Ideas' page.
- Entries for our latest Competition 'For want of a Nail'???
- Contributions for 'Around and About'.
- Larger orders!!!

You can help make the Journal the kind of book you like to read. Determine to send in your contribution now.

The Jubilee Competition has been won by Mrs Joan Gillies, of the Oamaru Association. Mrs Gillies' essay about the late Edna McCulloch is printed in this Journal. At the Official opening of the Edna McCulloch Kindergarten on 28 May the opportunity was taken to present the Armstrong and Springhall award—a cheque for \$50.00 to Mrs Gillies by Mr K. D. Lockhart, Assistant General Manager.

EDNA C. McCULLOCH, OAMARU FREE KINDERGARTEN ASS'N

Edna McCulloch passed peacefully away on 23 September 1976—no public funeral and no announcement until after the private service was held—that was Edna's wish. Edna's husband graciously allowed us to publish in the Daily Paper an eulogy from the Association the only way we could pay tribute to her memory. She has left to posterity, McCulloch Free Kindergarten, and when rebuilt, the "Edna McCulloch Free Kindergarten".

Like many other towns, 30 years ago, Oamaru felt the need for pre-school education—many citizens realised the value of this for those children with no place to play, no chance for companionship, and in some instances, roadways for a playground. Yes, well meaning citizens called public meetings—yes, the public wanted "pre-school education,"—but where? Those who lived at the north end had to have their kindergarten first, but those who lived at the south end felt the same. But what about the central area? Nothing resulted from these self-centred meetings, just lots of talk, until Edna came along.

She called a public meeting in a small meeting room in the main street one Saturday afternoon, when Valerie Laney our first secretary, moved "That every person in the Hall become a member of the Oamaru Free Kindergarten Association". Valerie's husband, soon to become Mayor of Oamaru for eighteen years, gave his blessing and practical help. Encouraging letters from doctors, social workers, women's organisations were read. With Edna's enthusiasm, fund raising became a consuming pastime, fund raising became fun. Life-long friendships were made. Those were the days when wool was twenty shillings per pound. Farmers gave meat for raffles and then Edna's brainchild, catering, became the catch word. She appointed a well-known enthusiast, Mrs Margaret Meikle, as organiser, and when Ram Fairs were held Edna's band fed those attending well from the kitchens and gardens of the newly formed Association. Balls were the order of the day and the Kindergarten Association became caterers "par excellence". And all the time the project grew 7,500 pounds were collected during those years. As usual raffles were continually being held. Edna pioneered a post at the Railway Station and every day when the steam train stopped for 23 minutes for refreshments, every passenger bought a ticket from Edna and her enthusiasts. I can still see that shining red pedal car, the lure for buying a sixpenny ticket. Nobody worried where the kindergarten was to be built—money came in at record speed. Sections

were bought at each end of the town and strangely enough neither was built on, but both were sold at a profit. The Movement was gaining friends—the Methodist Hall at the north end was offered rent free for five years—the Arundel Street Kindergarten was opened in May 1952, and served the North End children until Casa Nova was built. Although a section had been bought at the South End, Edna's friend Mr Harris offered his substantial old home on a delightful sunny section—so flat, something difficult to find on the South Hill. Through Edna's leadership and tenacity, that building was bought with the blessing of the Department—one thousand letters and deputations later. For 25 years 2000 children spent their kindergarten days in this delightful old home modified for children's requirements by many "working bees". The building became more quickly occupied than the time it would have taken to build a new kindergarten when shortages were the order of the day.

Edna could see into the future and her help and tenacity were an answer for that group of infant teachers who fought the kindergarten movement so bitterly. Young parents of today who have the full co-operation of the primary schools cannot grasp how Edna and her enthusiasts fought this adversity. Through the offices of Mr James Gerrie, a Member of the Education Board, Oamaru was one of the first towns in New Zealand to acquire land from a Primary School which bears the exotic name of Casa Nova. What a choice that has proved to be.

I can remember only once Edna attending a National Conference. Oamaru was her town and this she served so well. Before her marriage she was a primary school teacher and education at all stages was dear to her heart.

On her retirement from active kindergarten work Mrs McCulloch was appointed a Patron. Excerpt from her last typewritten letter accepting her appointment, "My friends have frequently said that they loved my letters because they lasted so long i.e. in the deciphering". Edna was noted for her artistry and she regularly "did" the bowls at the Brydone Hotel—her salary silently slipped into kindergarten funds—odd slivers of soap found their way to Kindergarten basins.

We look forward soon to attending the opening of the brand new "Edna McCulloch Free Kindergarten" a fitting tribute to her memory.

**JOAN GILLIES,
25 January 1977.**

Older Kindergartens in New Zealand

Rachael Reynolds Kindergarten

In October 1975 it was reported by the Dunedin Association in *Around and About* that the continued use of this building was in jeopardy. Tenders have now been called for its replacement following a two year period of grace imposed in December 1975. This building, the oldest in New Zealand built and still in use as a kindergarten, was officially opened in October 1914. From its beginnings in 1889 the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association had conducted kindergarten sessions in Church halls. It is interesting to read in 1977 that as far back as 1912 the Association was planning to erect a building for sole use as a kindergarten for two main reasons:

1. The time involved in setting up in a hall after evening meeting was excessive, and the smoky, stale atmosphere was bad for the children.
2. The desirability of conducting classes in a specially designed building.

An added condition when building was that the land must be freehold.

The section was purchased at a cost of £230 (\$460). The total cost of £1,150—(\$2,300) was raised by parents, £300 subsidised by government, a Dunedin Savings Bank donation of £300 and a further government subsidy to purchase the land.

A feature of the design of the building was a wide verandah extending the full length. Built of red brick, its height was that of a double storey building a problem to heat even with modern heating systems. The main building (known as the hall) could accommodate 80 children and featured fireplaces at both ends of it. A classroom which could accommodate 40 children, teachers rooms, cloakrooms and a large kitchen completed this very modern and well appointed building.

The decision to name the building after Mrs Rachael Reynolds, the first President of the first Association was well received not only in Dunedin, but by kindergarten people throughout the country.

In 1974 a large area of the playground was taken under the Public Works Act for road widening. With the co-operation of the City Council and Department of Education an adjoining site was pur-



Rachael Reynolds Kindergarten, Dunedin. The oldest Kindergarten in New Zealand built as such and still in use which is shortly to be replaced. The history of this kindergarten can be read in this Journal.

chased for a play area. It will be on this piece of land that the new building will be erected. The Dunedin Association are sad to know that the historic building is to be demolished, but the safety of the children is their major concern. Buildings such as this become earthquake risks and considerable damage has already been sustained following two earthquakes and further damage during hurricane force winds.

Although the Rachel Reynolds Kindergarten sessions will shortly be held in a new building there is nothing new in the dedication of the parents and the Association in raising the necessary money a second time, to continue to provide kindergarten experience for numerous pre-schoolers.

Richard Hudson Memorial Kindergarten

Some years ago a small gold key was handed to the headteacher of this kindergarten. No explanation was given, but research spelled out an almost forgotten story of exceptional generosity. In 1868 when Richard Hudson and his young wife arrived in Dunedin they found a growing prosperous town following the gold rushes. They decided to settle and in 1869 established a biscuit and pie-making business. Hard work, an outstanding business sense, coupled with humane respect for his employees made Hudson a very successful man. The firm of Cadbury Fry Hudson Ltd was to become a household name in this country.

Richard Hudson died at the age of 61 in 1903. On many occasions he had expressed the desire to build a kindergarten for the benefit of all children for whom he had always shown a great love. As a memorial to their late father the six sons of the late Richard Hudson had the kindergarten built—the entire cost being borne by them. The building was opened on 3 November 1926 and the gold key had been presented to Mrs Hudson on that occasion by the builders.

Built in red brick along Georgian lines, the building features a very large verandah across the width. Huge wooden beams supporting the roof and beautiful open fireplaces add an air of elegance.

On Arbor Day, 5 August 1933, a group of people interested in the kindergarten movement in Dunedin gathered in the spacious grounds surrounding the kindergarten and planted 20 English trees. Two were planted in memory of past pupils who had lost their lives and one was planted to honour Miss Nellie Dutton, a past principal of the Kindergarten Teachers' College.

Situated in a beautiful setting of lawns and the now fully grown trees, the Richard Hudson Memorial Kindergarten reflects to one and all the true meaning of the word kindergarten—a garden for children.

The little gold key, a replica of the original door key is now the treasured possession of the kindergarten. It will serve as another reminder of the generosity of a family who honoured the lifelong desire of their father and provided for several generations of children a delightful place to spend their very important kindergarten years.

QUIZ WINNERS

Only four of the entries received were all correct. Congratulations are extended to the following who each receive a \$2 book token for themselves and one for the kindergarten of their choice.

Elsbeth Ireland—Glenshea Kindergarten—Putaruru
Elizabeth A. Duggan—Alexandra Kindergarten
G. F. Rolfe—Roscommon Kindergarten
Mrs M. J. McGrath—Temuka Kindergarten

Thanks to all those who sent in entries and for your enthusiastic comments about the competitions. Question 20 answer was—430.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

During the May holidays a working party set up by the Department of Education studied in detail selection procedures of Division A and Division E teacher trainees. The Union was represented by Mrs Eileen Bethell of Auckland.

Selection of the best and right students is a complex and very important part of our movement. Any improvements in the system of selection will be of benefit to the applicant and to the teaching service as a whole. The outcome of the Working Party's deliberations is awaited with interest.

Guide for observing and participating in Kindergartens

A revised version of this widely used booklet is again available through the Journal Manager. Prepared by E.M. Just, Head teacher Helen Deem Centre, P. M. Varcoe, Senior Lecturer Early Childhood Division, Dunedin Teachers College and L. Nind, Head teacher, Wakari Kindergarten. It contains helpful guidance for parents and College teachers participating in a programme.

It sets out clearly the values of each activity e.g. painting.

Values —Provides opportunity for a child to work alone.
Provides opportunity for experiment etc.

Guidance—Do not paint or draw for the children, criticise their efforts or advise them what to paint.
Do not hover, but watch from a safe distance.

Group experiments such as music are dealt with under the following headings: Values, Guidance, Participation, Observations.

Outdoor Equipment is covered under such headings as: Junk materials, sand, water play, jungle gym.

The Values and Guidance of Excursions are discussed and finally routines i.e. milk, toilet, hand-washing and cloakroom.

All in all a clearly compiled booklet. The easily handled size of this edition 6½in x 8½in will be available at 20 cents a copy from: The Manager, Kindergarten Education, at this year's Annual Conference or from her address, 6 Norfolk Street, Dunedin. Please include 7c postage.

International Year Of the Child 1979 I.Y.C.

A recent visitor to New Zealand was Dr Victor Beerman, a senior Unicef official and special assistant to the executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund. Dr Beerman attended a meeting in Wellington called to discuss New Zealand's part in I.Y.C. The original idea of I.Y.C. was to put emphasis on the plight of children in developing countries and to seek worldwide assistance for these children. It had however, been noted by the United Nations that children in affluent countries also had problems. About thirty different organizations were represented at the initial meeting to hear several speakers including Dr Beerman, and the Hon Mr H. Templeton representing the Government. Government support for the project has already been pledged and representatives at the meeting will now be asking their organizations for a declaration of support prior to the committee being set up to determine New Zealand's part in I.Y.C.

We have been pleased to publish on two occasions articles by Anne Meade, who has just completed a Study of organizational features of the Kindergarten and Playcentre movements in New Zealand. The Union has been pleased to assist Mrs Meade in her work, which promises to provide many topics for discussion and possible action. It will be some months before it is known if the work is accepted as a doctoral thesis. Mrs Meade plans to have a precis version of the completed study printed. This will be available to all those who are interested in her work.

This entry for the Jubilee Competition arrived too late for judging, but it is a pleasure to include it in this journal. Thank you Laura Ingram for writing about the vast majority of those who have made a valuable contribution to the Kindergarten movement in New Zealand.

HER NAME?

She had walked a long way—the dust on her sturdy shoes bore ample evidence. The two little ones were tired for they had tripled her steps to keep up with the pram.

Yes, this is my little girl, and this is Mary, she belongs to my neighbour. I look after her—I don't mind—she is good company for Susan. Tommy comes to Kindergarten and the girls love to come to see where he plays and makes all the fascinating things he brings home. And I like coming too, I have learned that children can be so different.

I have a little group of friends who call me 'Flower'—rather sweet isn't it? You see I have always brought a flower from my garden to the Kindergarten, and I tell my small friends its special name—marigold, petunia, pincushion—and we discuss the parts which make it, petals, stemens,—they like to say these unusual words. Sometimes we are bees and have a wee taste of honey. I often see a child wearing a dress or shirt I have made for the Gala or a tea packet I have brought going home as a fire engine. It's good to feel useful.

I wish my neighbour would bring Mary herself to Kindergarten, but she prefers to work and is sometimes boastful about the extras she can buy. She says she is bored with being at home. If working for money when your children are little cures boredom, then I don't think boredom is her complaint. Is there any job which cannot and does not become boring at times? I want to share these fleeting years with my children. I want to know them, faults and all. My priorities, and their security are intricately bound together.

Last Saturday morning at Kindergarten, was "Father's session". My husband did not really want

to go but Tommy gave him the age-old nudge. "Everybody else's father will be coming!" While they were away I wondered what Tom (Senior) would feel about what Kindergarten has to offer our son. Over lunch I got a full account of who was there, which horse would be winning the cup, how Bill Jamieson's new house was coming along, "and there's a new girl at the corner store!" I began to wonder if he had been at the same place where Tommy was receiving his pre-school education, but I felt it better not to comment. We had nearly finished our meal when I was assured that he really had been to "father's day".

"No wonder it costs a lot to run a Kindergarten. Bill Jamieson's kid was at the wood-work bench trying to join two pieces of wood together and all he was doing was belting endless nails in. Should have watched Tommy, he drove in two nails, turned the wood over and hammered the points over—I couldn't have done it better myself." (You see Tom is a carpenter). There was silence for a while then, "You'll have to teach Tommy to tie up his shoe laces, his came undone while he was playing and he poked his shoe up to Bill Jamieson's kid to tie it up."

I smiled to myself—pride and embarrassment both need very little stimulus when father and son find themselves together on these all-too-few occasions. It is true, a Kindergarten is a place of learning for all who attend there.

"HER NAME?" Sorry it eludes me for the moment—you see I met so many hundreds like her in my travels over the years.

**LAURA INGRAM,
18 Bennett Street, Motueka.**

"Creative Exploration"

During the A.P.A. Conference in Melbourne last year I attended a Workshop at the Institute of Early Childhood Development at Kew. This was conducted by Professor Mary Moffit, of the City University of New York.

I had some years earlier had the privilege of hearing her address a kindergarten parents' club group in Rotorua. On that occasion she spoke on "Science in the Kindergarten" relating all sorts of (to the uninitiated or uneducated) simple things to the concept of science. For instance a block gives a concept of space, size, dimension—all stepping

stones to the understanding of physics. During the whole of her talk one could have literally heard a pin drop. It was an experience I for one will never forget.

I was eagerly looking forward to participating in a creative workshop with her. I was not disappointed. As well as dabbling in the paint pots and

experimenting with the wonderful array of bits and pieces (which included some, to a New Zealander, almost bizarre specimens—snake skins) we spent time listening to ideas about creativity and the need for humanising education today to offset standardisation coming from technological aspects of society. Creativity means independent thinking. How can we help children to think on their own? Creativity helps a person to become an integrated whole. We think too much about getting them to write, to read, etc. "When can he do something?" The creative act comes from within and is not imposed from without. Standards imposed by others may affect individuals in unsatisfactory ways. The creative process is ongoing and takes time to develop. The creative act cannot be taught, but can be encouraged and stimulated. How can we help creativity? By providing good materials. "Do I like these paints?" Because if you don't the children won't. Let a child from time to time have a good big piece of paper, of chalk, or crayon, and plenty of choice of colours. The environment? Each day

go into your classroom as if you are going into it for the first time. What effect does it have on you? Sensitise the child to his world. Show him a drop of water on a branch or running down a window, watch a bird fly. How is a cobweb formed? Look at a piece of granite—show him the crystal and share with him the wonder of how long it has taken to form. Introduce good music. Over time expand his ideas. A child must feel that what he does is acceptable. A child needs a positive, enthusiastic teacher. Citing from an American publication she said we would all agree that:

"Kindergarten teachers must have four hands, four feet, a bachelor's degree, be a trained furniture remover, expert carpenter, trained pianist, needs to be able to type, an expert housekeeper, trained psychiatrist and an artist. She must be able to see around corners, run as fast as a slow gazelle and move slowly and calmly, sing and dance, and see each child as an individual and children as a group."

W. N. PAYNE.

Dr P. M. Buckfield's address to the Dunedin Free Kindergarten Association's Annual meeting March 1977. Dr Buckfield is Senior Lecturer in Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Otago.

DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

First let us attempt to clarify what advantages all children should, ideally, enjoy. These could be considered in two broad categories each of which is conceived as having three dimensions.

The first advantage category has to do with being born organically sound. The first two dimensions of this category are physical and intellectual normality at birth. However, there is a third dimension which is not always given the attention it deserves. This is termed the behavioural dimension, and has to do with the potential of the child to be able to develop happy, caring and mutually satisfying interactions with those about them.

The second advantage category is an optimal environment which will allow the above three inherent potentials for physical, intellectual and behavioural development to flourish. The three dimensions of the environmental category are nutrition, education and love. These terms require further elaboration. The nutritional environment embraces such things as the proper food, clothing, housing and medical care necessary for healthy physical growth. Protection from accidental injury and harmful or addictive habits would be included.

The educational environment does not just refer to adequate opportunities for a formal education. It alludes also to a home environment which allows every opportunity for sound intellectual and behavioural development. The provision of discipline to allow the child to develop morally and socially, to know right from wrong in his

dealings with individuals as well as with society as a whole.

The third dimension, the loving environment, allows a child to know the joy and security of being cared for and loved continuously. In turn, this loving environment teaches the more mature joy of caring for and loving others. It allows the acquisition of such attributes as understanding, tolerance and empathy towards others.

You will have recognised my two broad categories of organic soundness and optimal environment as our old friends nature and nurture. Before proceeding, I should like to emphasize that nature and nurture, or our inherent abilities and our environment, are not opposites. Problems can seldom be defined as limited to one or the other. There is a constant two-way interaction between them. There seems no difficulty in people accepting the fact that an adverse environment can have an ill effect on a child's development, i.e. that nurturing practices influence the nature of the child. There is, however, reluctance to consider the reverse interaction, namely that the child can have an influence on his environment. Yet it is self-evident that happy, compliant youngsters will elicit more pleasant and more positive responses from people than the surly, moody and rebellious child.

Whilst it is simpler to discuss the problems related to a child's abilities and to a child's environment separately, they are in life inseparable and each exerts an effect on the other.

Using the framework just described, let us consider how a child may be disadvantaged, and what measures may help alleviate the disadvantage. Starting with the three dimensions of organic soundness.

A physical defect can be congenital or acquired. It can be confined to one system or involve many systems of the body. Examples of single system congenital defects would be cleft lip and palate, congenital heart defect, club feet and dislocated hip. Multiple system defects present at birth may arise from an intra-uterine infection e.g. rubella syndrome, or be the result of abnormalities of the chromosomes. Physical defects can be acquired by injury during birth, or they can be acquired later as the result of infections or accidents.

Intellectual defects can arise in the same sort of way as physical defects, and the two not infrequently occur together e.g. hypoxic brain damage producing cerebral palsy and intellectual handicap; Down's syndrome.

I sometimes wonder if the children with obvious physical and/or intellectual defects are not the lucky ones. Their disability by its obviousness elicits positive helping responses and there is not usually any attempt to censure the parents as being in part responsible for their child's problem. Criticism of parents, to my mind, is only really justified if it is constructive in the sense that it produces practical help.

It is not possible here to discuss in detail the ways in which help can be offered to physically and/or intellectually handicapped children, but a few guiding principles for preschool age children will be presented.

First, early diagnosis is important. Therapy must be directed at the whole child and involve the whole family. The parents need to be shown how to help their own children. Help needs to be readily available, continuous and ongoing. The objective being a develop to the full whatever potentials the child may possess and to ensure for him a satisfying place in our society.

Now let us turn to the third dimension of organic soundness, that of behaviour. I believe that behaviour must also be considered in the same terms as the physical and intellectual dimension i.e. that children at birth demonstrate inherent behavioural traits and at times these behavioural traits may be distinctly disadvantageous. For too long, the cause of behavioural difficulties in children has been completely ascribed to some defect in their parents management, i.e. to environmental factors alone. We have assumed that all babies begin their lives with an equal potential

to mould readily into whatever behavioural patterns their culture demands, and that if their behaviour deviates from this norm then it is a result of their environment or their parents.

The importance of the environmental influence on all aspects of a child's development is not denied but nature can also influence nurture. To express it another way: "The functioning of the child, both normal and aberrant, at any age is the outcome of the continuing interaction between the child and his environment." (Rutter, Birch, Thomas and Chess).

What objective evidence is there for these ideas? There is now a Neonatal Behavioural Assessment Scale (T. Berry Brazelton). This scale includes assessment of such things as the variability of the infant's state of wakefulness, his ability to quiet himself after an unpleasant stimulus, or his response to the efforts of others to console him. It also records his responsiveness to animate and inanimate stimuli, e.g. face, ball, voice or rattle, and his ability to suppress his responses to unimportant stimuli, e.g. bright light—this is termed habituation.

Using this scale, behavioural differences between infants of different ethnic groups have been demonstrated on their first days of life. For example, in one study with Chinese-American and European-American infants significant differences were found. The Chinese babies tended to be less changeable, less perturbable, tended to habituate more readily and tended to calm themselves or to be consoled more readily when upset.

Then there is the work of Thomas, Chess and Birch. They have highlighted the behavioural individuality of children in a longitudinal study which began when the children were aged two to three months. They obtained detailed descriptions of children's behaviour through structured interviews with parents at regular intervals. They identified nine characteristics that could be reliably scored on a three-point scale of medium, high or low. These included:

1. The level and extent of motor activity.
2. The rhythmicity, or degree of regularity, of functions such as eating, elimination and the cycle of sleeping and wakefulness.
3. The response to a new object or person, in terms of whether the child accepts the new experience or withdraws from it, i.e. approach-withdrawal.
4. The adaptability of behaviour to changes in the environment.
5. The threshold, or sensitivity, to stimuli, i.e. threshold of responsiveness.
6. The intensity, or energy level, of responses, i.e. intensity of reaction.
7. The child's general mood or "disposition", whether cheerful or given to crying, pleasant or cranky, friendly or unfriendly.

8. The degree of the child's distractability from what he is doing.
9. The span of the child's attention and his persistence in an activity, i.e. attention span and persistence.

The original characteristics of temperament tended to persist in most children over the years though environmental circumstances may heighten, diminish or otherwise modify his reactions and behaviour. They also found that certain characteristics tended to cluster together producing three general types of temperament. Of course, some children did not fit into these general categories. These were termed: Easy children, Difficult children, Slow to warm up children.

The Easy Children

In infancy quickly established regular sleeping and feeding schedules, were generally cheerful and adapted quickly to new routines, new foods and new people. As they grew older they learnt the rules of new games quickly, participated readily in new activities and adapted easily to school. They presented few problems in care and training.

The Difficult Children

As infants were often irregular in feeding and sleeping, were slow to accept new foods, took a long time to adjust to new routines or activities and tended to cry a great deal. Their crying and laughing were characteristically loud. Frustration usually produced violent tantrums. These children were a trial to their parents and required a high degree of consistency and tolerance in their upbringing.

The Slow to Warm Up Children

Had a low activity level, tended to withdraw on their first exposure to new stimuli, were slow to adapt and were negative in mood and responded to situations with a low intensity of reaction.

Forty percent of the children were classified as easy, 10 percent as difficult, and 15 percent as slow to warm up. The rest (35 percent) had mixtures of traits. Far more of the difficult children developed behavioural problems, approximately 70 percent compared with only 18 percent of the easy children. The slow to warm up child had an incidence of behavioural problems midway between the other two groups.

Fortunately most children demonstrate behavioural traits which fit them well to cope with a large variety of child care practices. Most children tend to be regular, rather than irregular; highly adaptable rather than unadaptable and most have a predominantly positive mood.

How can one help a child with inherently difficult behaviour? Firstly you must recognise the nature of his problem and acknowledge that his

management will require special care. His disability must be explained to his parents, and the burden of guilt which has usually been heaped on them by themselves, their families and their advisers lessened. Then practical guides on tailoring management to the child's behavioural abilities has to be given.

Let us consider Environmental Disadvantages using again the three dimensions.

Nutritional disadvantage, that is the lack of the basic necessities for life, is uncommon in our community. Lack of adequate protection from accidents especially ingestion of poisons and burns is, however, more common. Similarly, inadequate help to prevent the development of such addictive habits as over-eating and smoking is not rare. Education of the community at all levels and ages would seem to be the best means of preventing these problems, but unfortunately education without motivation to use the knowledge is not very effective. We all do things which we know are detrimental to our health. Motivation can be achieved by involving people in planning and implementing their own health, educational and social programmes. The enormous amount of good work done by voluntary organisations stands in strong support of this claim.

Educational disadvantage. The first educational environment is the home and the first educators are the parents and close family. Parents may lack an understanding of the needs of children. Needs such as: opportunities to explore all about them; opportunities to practise skills, e.g. babbling and social interchange, crawling and rolling; opportunities to express their independency and individuality. These children are indeed disadvantaged. They frequently lack understanding discipline, instead they are subjected to inconsistent and punitive discipline. Clear guidelines for right and wrong are not established.

Finally, and perhaps most important, is the Loving Environment. Without security, acceptance, encouragement and constant loving care by parents, a child will grow and develop only with great difficulty, he will experience difficulty in developing close interpersonal relationships with others.

The educational and loving environment provided by the home are of extreme importance to the child. Most of us are only too familiar with children who are disadvantaged by their absence. These children do not usually present with severe intellectual or physical disabilities which would make their plight immediately obvious to all and so ensure their receiving adequate help. Their frequent developmental delay may be unrecognised; they often exhibit behavioural problems which do not endear them to either their parents or society. They are often slow in achieving important social attributes such as toilet training. Added to their own

disadvantages is the fact that their parents have often been similarly disadvantaged. The parents may be unaware of their child's problems or, if a problem is acknowledged, they may be apathetic about it, or just not know how to seek help.

Yet these children are in great need and somehow ways have to be found both to recognise and answer their needs. Recognition will come as all of us dealing with young preschool children become more familiar with, and look more closely for, these types of disadvantages. Help must be the

child's immediate right just as it is if a child fractures a leg, or is shown to have measles or cerebral palsy. Help must, as always, be directed not just towards the child but to the family and it must be ongoing throughout childhood.

Let us remember the first statement in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child:

"All children, without exception, shall be entitled to these rights without distinction or discrimination whether of himself or of his family."

AROUND AND ABOUT

NAPIER

After reading the article written and submitted to the March Edition of the Kindergarten Education by an interested parent of Whangarei, I too, am prompted to put pen to paper to give my views on the role we mothers play in the scene of Free Kindergarten in New Zealand—for we most certainly DO matter and our role is both important and rewarding.

Why DO we become involved? I would like to give my reasons and what Kindergarten means to me. I became aware, through friends, of the value of pre-school education when my first child was just a few months old. I was also aware of the enormously long waiting list at the local kindergarten, so when a public meeting was called in March 1974 to ascertain the need for a new kindergarten in our area and to form an establishment committee, I attended enthusiastically, certain that my son would attend a brand new kindergarten which I had helped to build. Three years, nine thousand dollars and two more sons later, I am a much wiser woman!

That first thousand dollars was hard going. New to fund raising we found ourselves in many difficult situations—like the Jumble Sale run by the customers—mere babes in the wood—we were at the mercy of experienced Jumble Sale Participants. However, we made the handsome sum of \$140 and a successful venture always spurs one to greater efforts.

Who could have told us then, in the mad Christmas rush we would be trying to tow a trailer laden with a full sized children's playhouse, built by a committee member for a raffle, out from a main city street meter space, which the City Council said we COULD have, and the traffic officer, sympathetic, but adamant, said we most certainly COULD NOT have.

Our second year, during which I was elected Chairwoman, saw us in full swing; washing dishes, catering, chopping wood, baking for cake stalls and running numerous raffles. By now the Committee had become highly efficient, but there is always something or someone to create utter confusion—like the crockery hire centre which has a 'back in 5 minutes' sign up for three quarters of an hour when you go to pick up your order for a catering fixture—or the caretaker who is not there with the key when you arrive at the hall with a car full of crockery (at last), food, plus bored and tired children.

It is not always hard grind though. All dedicated fund raisers will know the delight that we felt when our Jaycees responded magnificently to a call for help and raised \$1000 with a sponsored cyclathon.

By now, buoyed up by successful fund raising, our Committee, although assured by the Ministry of Works that the section would legally be ours by the time we had the money to go ahead to build, wanted to see something concrete for their efforts. What frustration! How many miles of red tape are there in Government Departments? All these hold-ups, we saw only from a personal point of view even though we were aware of the efforts being made on our behalf by the Association.

By this time I was taking my first uncertain steps as a Council representative, into the kindergarten world outside the familiar confines of the Establishment Committee. At first reluctant to take any interest in the running of established kindergartens and the problems of the two other Establishment Committees, I found myself becoming increasingly interested, not only in the kindergartens but in the teachers and committees. I began to realise that OUR kindergarten was not the only 'problem' or 'interest' on the plate of the Napier Free Kindergarten Association, and my interest expanded accordingly.

This year, still Chairwoman of a loyal establishment committee (doesn't anyone else want a turn?) I am also one of the Association's two Vice-presidents and fully realise the magnitude and implications of being thoroughly involved in the Free Kindergarten movement. One of many hundreds of, I hope, responsible parents who most certainly do care about their children's preschool experiences and do their 'bit to help the cause'.

When OUR kindergarten is finally built I hope we will have capable and understanding teachers who will do their best to understand our children and make their time at kindergarten happy, rewarding and stimulating.

Well, that's what Kindergarten means to me. We live in hopes that our new building will be included in this year's list but in the past three years I have made many friends, and enjoyed a lot of new experiences, coping with some of which, has given me a new found confidence. My eldest son, of course has long since become a 'kindy kid' and I have found that mothers are always welcome at the Kindergarten and encouraged to participate in sessions. Furthermore, we are kept up-to-date by a regular newsletter. Maybe we are among the lucky ones here, but I am glad I became involved in Kindergarten.

Kindergarten IS people and what more fascinating and rewarding interest can one have?

MARGARET ESTCOURT,
Chairwoman,
Riversdale Establishment Committee.

ASHBURTON

Thomas Street, Ashburton's fifth Kindergarten was officially opened by Mrs K. D. Lockhart, President, New Zealand Free Kindergarten Union, on 6 November 1976. The building, designed by a private architect, is characterised by two recesses separated from the main playroom by exposed beams. These recesses provide natural 'corners'.

DUNEDIN

So you want a kindergarten? You find that others in your area also feel the need for a kindergarten; all you have to do is form a committee, raise a few thousand dollars and Hey Presto!—There's your kindergarten! . . . Or is it? Be Warned!

Have you ever catered for 200 or so for supper, dug manure, sorted jumble, conducted a house to house survey, sold raffle tickets to protesting friends or run a baby photo contest? It is all fun once you get going and you will find hidden talents in yourselves and others, but I'm sure the motto of all establishment committees should be 'patience is a virtue'.

Our committee has been in existence for over three years and we have raised as much money as we need but our kindergarten is not very much nearer than it was three years ago because of Government administrative delays—but we work on regardless.

How did we raise our money? Jacks and Jills of all trades is what we are called and we feel we have earned our name. During the Committee's life time we have packed the Consumer magazine, run a Chinese Banquet, put the cardboard inserts in 2 litre ice-cream packs, held a shoe parade and a fashion parade, published a cook book, run a Baby Photo contest, held a barn dance, a wine and cheese evening and a beef and burgundy evening, we have dug, bagged and sold pig manure (not as bad as it sounds), held jumble sales and cake stalls, catered for dances, 21sts etc etc, collected newspapers and of course raffled anything from a colour T.V. to a Womble. We have also had to conduct no less than three house to house surveys for the Department of Education in order to convince the bureaucrats that there were enough preschoolers in the area.

Every committee will have their own ideas and each community will have different opportunities and openings for money raising. Good public relations projects such as newspaper collections do not usually give a good financial return, in proportion to the number of man hours involved. However good 'money spinners' are few and far between and are often once only affairs. It is all hard work but good fun as well; washing dishes in a different sink and with friends is bound to be an improvement on your own sink by yourself while the family pursue their own interests! A local establishment committee is also an opportunity for families to get to know each other; this is especially valuable in a new or developing suburb. After all it can't be all work and no play. Past and present committee members or their wives have added between 20 and 30 (we have lost count!) new names to our prospective waiting list in the three years we have been functioning!

VICKY PERRETT,
Highcliff-Waverley Establishment
Committee.

The Teaching Behaviour of Kindergarten Teachers

A Summary Report
by Michael L. Cooper

The provision of kindergarten education and other forms of pre-school education is probably the fastest growing sector of the nation's education system. Indeed as comments in the "Hill Report" indicated it appears that the growth of pre-school education is not limited to New Zealand but is a world wide phenomenon. With this surge of growth public demand has also mushroomed and government investment in pre-school education has grown to keep pace with the increased interest. Yet despite professional and lay-bodies' continuing calls for facilities there is little definitive research to suggest that formal pre-school education is advantageous to parents or children, many of those involved in education have a feeling that children do profit, but little seems to have been done to measure outcomes of formal pre-school education experience, especially long term outcomes. While such evaluative research is sparse descriptive research as to the process of kindergarten teaching is even more sadly lacking. Many teachers could probably state in general detail what they do and how they plan their programmes but few if any attempts seem to have been made to actually describe the process of kindergarten teaching. With such general public interest the researcher is left with feeling that the public is demanding a product but is vague as to the nature of quality of the product it is buying. Recently kindergarten teacher training was taken into the fold of the primary teachers' colleges and "new" courses devised.

Having sat in on the development of some of these courses the writer has heard exhortations to include some things and exclude others, to build up one aspect of teaching but to eradicate another, and yet still there appears no research on what kindergarten teachers actually do.

It is the contention of the writer that until the activity of the teachers can be objectively described there is not sound basis for the evaluation of teaching programmes. The grant of the Helen Downer award for 1975 enabled the writer to initiate some research of a descriptive nature that, it

is hoped, will provide a basis of method and fact on which future researchers can build. Ten teachers in five kindergartens in Hamilton were selected on the basis of being experienced teachers running programmes that appeared "typical" of New Zealand kindergarten programmes. Two observers were employed to observe, time and record where the teachers were, what they were doing and to record the conversations that the teachers had with the children. This enabled a comprehensive picture of teaching in these kindergartens to be made. The description enabled some questions basic to teaching practice to be answered tentatively. Such questions were:

In what areas do teachers spend their time?

To what teachers' duties do teachers allocate their time?

What is the content of their talk with children?

What appear to be the major concerns of kindergarten teachers engaged in kindergarten teaching?

The analysis of answers to such questions helped to build a general picture of the process and nature of kindergarten teaching as it was in the kindergartens studied.

Some of the the results cause little surprise, others have brought a degree of what can only be described as defensive hostility from practising kindergarten teachers. The most positive point to emerge was the picture that teachers appear to develop a pleasant, reasonably free atmosphere in which children can work. This is borne out by the fact that of all the verbal statements analysed almost exactly half are the result of contacts initiated by the teacher and half initiated by the children. This contrasts sharply with the situation from some Australian research which shows that children make only 25 percent of the contacts with the teacher.¹

In terms of location within the kindergarten there was no overall favourite location although each teacher did have an area which she appeared to

favour and areas which they appeared to avoid. Over all teachers the mat area was the most popular with an average allocation of 14 percent of time. Some teachers spent as much as 60 percent of their time in this area. Cutting and pasting and manipulative areas also show a high allocation of time (12-13 percent) although some teachers allocated much more time than this to these areas. Some areas, especially dough, blocks and water, family play, books, science and music, appear to have been avoided by most teachers—only one teacher spending more than 10 percent of her time in the dough area and all other teachers less than 5 percent in these areas which seem to offer such potential for social and language development and the encouragement of basic mathematical experiences.

The allocation of teachers' time to teaching activity showed kindergarten teaching to be a process of interacting with either one child or three or more children and teachers spend up to 34 percent of their time in both these activities. The activity areas readily divided into areas where the teacher interacted with one child, areas where there were equal amounts of interaction with both one and three children.

One child interaction areas include painting, manipulative and cutting and pasting. Areas of three children interactions were mat, climbing, dough, and areas where both kinds of interactions occur are blocks, family, sand, and climbing.

'Silcock, Anne (1970). *Aspects of the Role Performance of Kindergarten Teachers*. Australian Psychologist. Vol. 5. No. 1, March.

Routine housekeeping can occupy up to 45 percent of some teachers' programmes although the average mean time among all teachers was 8 percent without the children helping and 13 percent with interacting with children included. Such a high proportion of time spent in routine matters by some teachers would appear to offer potential for discussion with the children, and for extension of basic concepts about familiar happenings. Unfortunately like other potentials the kindergarten holds, opportunities do not appear to have been grasped by the teachers. Not only does it appear that many of the basic areas of kindergarten were avoided but that teachers also avoided communicating in depth with the children. Evidence for this conclusion comes from an analysis of the teachers' question-asking techniques and from an analysis of teachers' talk on a restrictive-permissive teaching style instrument. Of all questions analysed (1117) 88 percent of them were closed questions, i.e. questions that invite one or two word answers and which do not encourage the children to participate in conversation with the teacher. Secondly a high

percentage of the teachers' talk consisted of directions and explanations (44 percent).

The primary analysis of verbal material indicated that teachers tend to divide their talk between relevant subject matter (44 percent)—that is talk about the activity the children are involved in or related logically to that activity, and talk about organisation (36 percent).

Sociation matters surprisingly occupied very little of the teachers' talk (9 percent) and non-relevant subject matter only 12 percent. Kindergarten teachers were primarily tellers and 62 percent of their talk was spent in telling or explaining to children, 35 percent of their talk consisted of questions which as already indicated were predominantly closed questions of a kind which tend to discourage intellectual inquiry and language activity on the part of the children. It is when the figures on the percentages of teachers' talk in her two opposed roles of initiator of contacts and a responder to contacts made by the children are examined that the meaning of these figures becomes more evident. As an initiator 40 percent of the teachers' talk is about organisation and 46 percent about relevant subject matter. Sociation, and non-relevant subject matter both occupy less than 10 percent of all teachers' talk as initiators of contacts. Thus it seems from these figures that the teachers' concerns were more with keeping the children interested in the activity of the area the teacher was at and organising activity within the kindergarten. Indeed it could be said that the teacher appears over concerned with organisational matters at the expense of developing intellectual inquiry and curiosity.

As initiators of contacts the teachers studied were definitely disseminators of information—this occupied 61 percent of their talk as initiators and intellectual sations (questions) nearly 37 percent—still a considerable proportion when the quality of questioning was so poor.

The figures of talk the teachers engaged in as responders to children reflect the interests or concerns of the children rather than the teachers and show a different picture. The teacher is just as concerned with relevant subject matter but the figures for non-relevant subject matter increase to nearly 17 percent and sociation to 11 percent while the figures for organisation drop to about 28 percent. Thus it appears that the children were responsible for introducing extraneous topics to the teachers and were more concerned than was the teacher about matters of sociation and less concerned about organisation.

Such research as has been detailed here is not, strictly speaking, evaluative in nature. The results can only be interpreted in the light of individual

philosophies of education. However the results obtained do raise a number of questions concerning the sample studied. These questions concerned the nature of kindergarten programmes and the skills of the teachers prosecuting them. It can be asked if the heavy emphasis teachers place on organisation is their way of coping with a large number of pre-school children.

An Australian researcher cited earlier suggests that kindergarten teachers plan a programme and then adjust the children to the programme. New Zealand programmes have been thought of as child centred but this now appears erroneous. Perhaps the child centred programme is an ideal which exists more in the minds of theoreticians than possible implementation by practising teachers. Perhaps some research could set up an experimental situation to investigate this.

Secondly the avoidance of some of the basic areas of the kindergarten that offer potential for intellectual and social development must cause some concern. One is led to ask if the teachers have the technical knowledge and skill to capitalise on the opportunities these areas offer. Taken with the third areas of concern—the apparent lack of questioning skills, it appears that a certain expertise is lacking and perhaps inservice work could aim at building up the teachers' competence in these areas. The finding that individual teachers tend to allocate a high proportion of their time to a specific area of the kindergarten, visit others only infrequently and avoid others totally must also raise questions as to the nature of the activity in these areas. Perhaps the teachers' concentrated time in the manipulative and cutting and pasting areas is the outcome of the teachers' planning of activities that are far too difficult for the children meaning the teacher must

spend time with those activities if the children are to accomplish them. Perhaps teachers in these New Zealand kindergartens have adopted the limited view that kindergarten teaching involves structuring an environment and relying on this structure to keep the children occupied and busy for the extent of the session. Certainly there appears to be little evidence that these teachers see kindergarten teaching as involving the intervention of the teacher to stimulate language use, to develop basic mathematical concepts and to stimulate intellectual inquiry. It may be that Webb's comment about English nursery school teachers and their practices holds for the New Zealand situation also.

"It is a matter of common observation that young children so busy themselves with equipment and materials as to mask the inefficiency or indifference of the teacher . . . (1974 p 72)".

In summarising it appears that teachers concentrate their activities in a narrow range of kindergarten areas. Their talk is concerned with telling or explaining and with directing the children while the content of their talk emphasises relevant subject matter and organisation. Questions the teachers asked were of limited value as a teaching technique. Questions must be asked about the expertise of these teachers, their ability to capitalise on teaching opportunities within the teaching programme and the nature of the programme prosecuted in meeting the needs of individual children in the kindergarten.

Mr Cooper is a pre-school adviser with the Department of Education, and is currently working in the Taranaki area. Mr Cooper is a recipient of the Helen Downer award. This paper is part of the research he carried out as the holder of the award.

READERS REQUESTS

An Ashburton reader has suggested including a page in the Journal entitled 'New Ideas'. He has cited as an example a new type sand pit cover which we will feature in the October Journal. Articles are invited from readers for this page. New equipment, books, films, records?—share your ideas with others.

An Aucklander asks, "can you tell me something about the history of the oldest kindergartens?" This request is repeated in letters from Christchurch and

from an American reader. Two histories are included in this Journal, but Associations are requested to send in others which will be published to meet the request.

The secretary of a regular contributing Association wonders why some Associations are not sending forward something for inclusion in the 'Around and About' section. Another challenge to those silent voices to become contributors.

PROVERBS

Have you ever wondered about the origin of your favourite proverb? Have you thought that it could have a second meaning?

No news is good news. How do we know it is?

A nod is as good as a wink. How do you measure the goodness of a wink?

One good turn deserves another. Why? Isn't it better to give than to receive?

For want of a nail???

In no more than 250 words write your version (humorous, serious, sad) of this proverb.

Address your entry to: 'Proverb', C/o The Editor, 'The Mooring', 6 Zaida Way, Wellington 3, no later than 1 October 1977. Entries will be judged on originality. They should be typed using one side of paper only.

All entries become the property of the Kindergarten Union and will be published from time to time. The winning entry will be published in the February Journal, and the winner will receive a \$10 book token.

During a recent visit to a kindergarten I witnessed the two teachers having to carry a small child encased in plaster from her waist to her ankles from one place to another. It occurred to me that a low platform on small castors which could be propelled by the child would have given her mobility both inside and on the flat ground outside the building.

It has been brought to my attention following discussion on that particular child's frustration at not being able to readily join other children, that there is at least one centre which offers a service to help any person with a physical disability.

Called—N.Z. Aids and Appliances Unit—it has been set up at the Palmerston North Hospital.

Equipment is designed here, advice given on designs submitted, and articles are tested for ease of use.

Information is readily available on such matters as the size a toilet needs to be to allow for a wheelchair to be turned around in it, the type of taps which can be turned on and off by a disabled person, and telephones are tested for ease of use.

Kindergartens are being attended by numerous children with varying handicaps, and it is sad to see them miss out on some activities because of their disability.

If readers are not aware of other back-up services and they need assistance the address is:

N.Z. Aids and Appliances Unit,
Palmerston North Hospital,
Private Bag,
Palmerston North.

P. M. LOCKHART.