

Te reo karanga mō ngā mokopuna

Making a noise for ECE

1963–2023

CELEBRATING TE RITO MAIOHA
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT 60

Helen May





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1923–2005

Celebrating the centennial of the birth of Sonja Davies

“We entered the picture at a time when there was still a good deal of mistrust and indeed even downright opposition to childcare. Unfortunately, too often, this opposition was reflected in the attitudes of those who occupy public office and from whom we would have hoped initially to have received support. ... We spent a lot of time planning for a situation that we already knew existed, and suspected would develop swiftly, yet were handicapped by a society that generally would not admit that social change was happening in its midst, accelerated as it was by the rapid growth of women in the New Zealand work force and the unfolding of the technological era.”

Sonja Davies, President's Report, 1970



Foreword

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā karangatanga maha. Tēnei te mihi atu ki a koutou katoa. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tatou katoa.

Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand is now 60 years young! This, our third jubilee book (2013–2023) celebrates the organisation one decade on from our last 50th jubilee book. We are fortunate to have had Emeritus Professor Helen May, noted historian and life member of our organisation, to have documented our history over the past six decades.

First called the New Zealand Association of Child Care Centres, then Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa New Zealand (New Zealand Childcare Association), and now Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand, each name change reflects our transformation as a membership organisation and teacher education provider, with our bicultural journey woven throughout the decades. In this latest book, *Making a noise for ECE*, Helen has carefully documented the changing political landscape alongside our commitment to biculturalism and quality early childhood education for every child.

Throughout the trials and tribulations of the past decade, this book chronicles what it really means to be an advocacy organisation, while at the same time developing and launching a plethora of teacher education and specialist qualification programmes, ranging from diploma to master's level (for both the early childhood and primary sectors). Following the style of previous books, the story is mainly crafted from the voices and opinions of our people. This has been an extremely busy decade for Te Rito Maioha, both academically and politically. Our 'noise' is perfectly encapsulated in the following whakatauki:

He waka eke noa
We are all in this together

Lesley Rameka (National President) and Kathy Wolfe (Chief Executive)

TE REO KARANGA MŌ NGĀ MOKOPUNA
MAKING A NOISE FOR ECE, 1963–2023

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all (past and present) members, staff, students, and Council members of Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand, whose mahi has shaped the essence of our organisation.



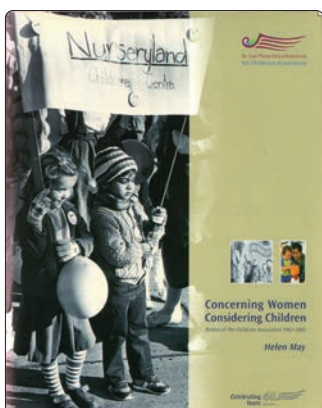


1 Our stories

So the election looms, and it's time for us all to make our voices heard.

Kathy Wolfe, Chief Executive, 2017

To 'make a noise for ECE' is a 60th jubilee political statement from Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand; an advocacy organisation which, from its founding in 1963 by Sonja Davies, has been shaped by aspirations of quality early childhood education and qualified staff for its tamariki. The kind of 'noise' has changed from the 1960s when advocates for childcare were in a wilderness of silence and disregard, to current times when Te Rito Maioha is recognised as a key player in the early childhood landscape, and indeed is currently carving a small niche into primary schooling. Our 60th jubilee book is a companion to earlier books; focusing on the



Making a noise in ECE



Drumming



Protesting at Collectively Kids, Pt Chevalier



Song and action



Shouting



Rattling



Signing at Bunnies Childcare and Preschool, Cambridge



Poi and dance at Te Puna Rea o Pihikati, Gisborne



people, programmes and politics of the past decade 2013–2023; reflecting too on the lessons of the earlier journey and the shifts in the political and pedagogical landscape of early childhood provision and teacher education.

The metaphor of ‘making a noise’ also embraces the pedagogy of early years development, when young children are hearing and learning the sounds and meaning of language and languages. The growing repertoire of noise requires practice and perseverance with self and others. Early childhood teachers play a crucial role in this task. The languages of young children are not just spoken but also expressive through the art, music, movement and play of growing up in the cultures of Aotearoa New Zealand. Valuing the diversity of the noise in early childhood and extending its repertoire for tamariki is the task of teachers. Te Rito Maioha’s teacher education, professional development and postgraduate programmes, including its research and writings, are a key conduit in the preparation of these teachers and their ongoing learning.



Kapa Haka roopu, Awbi Whānau, performing at Te Rito Maioha's 55th Annual Conference (2018) in Auckland.

TE REO KARANGA MŌ NGĀ MOKOPUNA
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The compilation of stories in this 60th jubilee companion reflect a cross-section of perspectives from 39 interviews, including Council members, staff, centre members, life members and students, about their experiences, concerns, initiatives and interests over the past decade who collectively give insight into the breadth of Te Rito Maioha's work. Moving beyond Wellington, I also spent time in Auckland, Rotorua and Whangārei, talking with staff, some students, and visiting centre members. The stories are woven into commentary from Te Rito Maioha documents significantly, and more broadly from Government and the sector. Older conversations are continued concerning challenges and initiatives threaded through the previous books such as the organisation's bicultural journey, the well-being of Pasifika programmes and industrial issues. There are also new stories amid a changing political landscape and the positioning of Te Rito Maioha within it. The book also celebrates the contribution of some key people and new initiatives but is frank about challenges and setbacks.



Visiting Rotorua Takiwā Ako, September 2022: L-R—Rahiri Ngāpuhi, Geraldine Koopu, Aria Macredie, Helen May, Rotu Mihaka, Bridgette Redder. BRIDGETTE REDDER