

**NEWSLETTER FOR NEW ZEALAND CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRES, KINDERGARTENS,
PLAYGROUPS AND INTERESTED PARTIES**

October 2016

GREETINGS

Tēnā koutou katoa, malo e lelei, talofa lava, ni sa bula vinaka, talohani, kia orana, fakalofa lahi atu and blessings and warm greetings to you all as we move, quite rapidly it seems, towards Advent and Christmas

SPIRITUAL REFRESHMENT IN SPRINGTIME

Springtime is a natural time for celebrating God's love, as seen in new growth. A reminder to consider incorporating prayer and thankfulness into your springtime activities.

<http://ministry-to-children.com/spring-family-devotions/> is, inevitably, American, but it may be useful.

You might spend some time just enjoying and be in awe of clouds, stars, plants.

And here are a few Biblical references for your own prayer before or after you sit with nature.

[Zechariah 10:1](#) Ask rain from the Lord in the season of the spring rain, from the Lord who makes the storm clouds, and he will give them showers of rain, to everyone the vegetation in the field.

[Song of Solomon 2:11-12](#) For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

[Isaiah 61:11](#) For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

[Isaiah 35:1-10](#) The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

[James 5:7](#) Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

ANOTHER WEBSITE TO VISIT

<http://allelu.com/activities-resources/index.html> has resources, songs and ideas for the religious education aspect of 3-5 year olds in preschool settings or in parish programmes.

APPS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

You are all likely to be using some apps in your services – perhaps to communicate children's learning to parents, and perhaps within the service, as children explore topics and document their learning themselves. Recent articles have highlighted the pros and cons of the use of tech with little children, and I do not have any expertise to present a viewpoint on that. However, the latest Iti Rearea, (quarterly newsletter), from Te Rito Maioha, has an excellent article reminding readers of research by Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, on the well agreed pillars of learning, as applied to app use in ECE. The article states that tech devices provide good learning when: the learners are actively involved, creating their own content; learners are not distracted by onscreen ads or similar peripherals; the app meaningfully relates to the child's experience (e.g. try to avoid American cultural content); tech use happens where children can interact socially, rather than an app isolating the child. Tech can be used for rich and deep learning, but every app needs careful evaluation. Parents might find it interesting to think about this in relation to the electronic devices they use at home with their children, and how and why the apps are used.

Netsafe has very helpful information for policies and practices around all aspects of technology, which, if adopted, will help keep your children, staff, community and service safe in the use of technology. It is very worth keeping up to date with what Netsafe is advising.

KAI TIME IN ECE – NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The second paper from the above 2014 survey describes the amount of active movement and sedentary time pre-schoolers have during their time in daycare. It seems that while children are not spending excessive amounts of time on electronic devices, nevertheless they are sedentary for large portions of their day in childcare. The full paper is available at www.growingup.co.nz/kai-time (see the item: Summary of research on physical activity and screen use in childcare.) There is a lot of other interesting research on this website also.

SOMETHING FOR STAFF AND PARENTS

Pennie Brownlie, <http://penniebrownlee.weebly.com/>, is a New Zealander who has trained at the Emmi Pikler Institute in Budapest, Hungary where her eyes were opened to what respect really looks like with infants, toddlers and young children. Pikler's approach was revolutionary, and fits perfectly beside what Jesus teaches us about the care of young children. www.parentingworx.co.nz/fantastic-reading/emmi-piklers-8-guiding-principles is a simple and very revelatory four page article that I would like to place in the hands of every single parent and child care worker. Do look it up.

NZCER'S EARLY CHILDHOOD FOLIO VOL 20 NO 1 2016

This is well worth reading. I particularly enjoyed the editorial, and a number of articles on how a number of early childhood services and play groups have worked with children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds. The articles are very timely.

FINALLY

Remember to pass on the newsletter, and to send us any news for circulating. Blessings to all.

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