



## Newsletter March 2010

From the Presidents Desk; [Gracemcd@tpg.com.au](mailto:Gracemcd@tpg.com.au)

I welcome the International Family Day Care community to our first newsletter for 2010. I also extend to you all, belated best wishes for a bright and productive new year. Some of you may have been wondering if you would ever see another newsletter as this one is so long overdue, my apologies for that. I know that Patricia had a few challenges accessing articles from other countries when she was doing the newsletter so I know this is not an easy task. I'd like to thank those people who have sent me articles for this newsletter, I think that it is a well rounded version of the global Family Day Care picture. Thanks to Trudy in the USA for her interesting contribution, Maggie from Scotland for news from her part of the world, Carol from Aotearoa, New Zealand, Land of the Long White Cloud for her very informative article, Patricia from Ireland with very interesting information and Elise for her up-date regarding the Researchers Network. Once we get organised we are hoping that you will be able to read one of our newsletters at least quarterly on our web site. Of course, that will depend on whether we receive articles and items from our international members and friends to include in a newsletter; please send these on to either myself or Kathy Alexander our Newsletter Editor at [hgybear6284@bellsouth.net](mailto:hgybear6284@bellsouth.net) One thing that I wouldn't want is an Australian/USA only newsletter, there are so many interesting things happening out there in Family Day Care Land that I feel sure would be of interest to us all.

I found it very interesting to read of the New Zealand Home-based experience as being currently the fastest growing sector of child care in that country, that is a really positive achievement for Family Day Care. We wish that was the case here in Australia but sadly, not so. And what an interesting project the QUALITYstarsNY looks like. Scotland is also doing great things with their Training programmes to improve the knowledge and skills of their Care Providers or Childminders as they are called and Ireland have introduced something with their Pre-schoolers that Australia is currently trying to achieve. It is all happening world wide.

Malene Karlsson, from Sweden, has contacted me with the sad news that we have recently lost two of our IFDCO colleagues from Germany. Irmtraut Rhein and Susanne Stempinski have both passed away in recent months. They were both great supporters of our Organisation and will be sadly missed at our Conferences where I got to know them both well and by everyone else in the Family Day Care community. Following is a memorial notice from two of our longest standing IFDCO members.

## **In Memoriam**

Two of Germany's most important advocates for Family Day Care have passed away: Irmtraut Rhein and Susanne Stempinski. Irmtraut Rhein we met for the first time in Uppsala 1993 and after that at several other conferences.

Irmtraut was managing a Family Day Care agency in Hamburg and later became the Director of the German National organisation Tagesmutter. For IFDCO she became the European Representative in 2002 and did a great job to involve the German speaking Europeans in our organisation. Those who met Irmtraut will always remember her friendliness and warmth and her enormous engagement and belief in quality Family Day Care,

Susanne Stempinski participated in the Glasgow conference in 1999 where she presented a most interesting paper on Qualification Processes in Family Day Care-Evaluation of Training Programmes for Child Minders in Germany. Susanne was so young and so engaged in her research. She worked then for the Deutsches Jugendinstitut (German Youth Institution) in Munich and she was one of a group of four who worked for the German Government in planning a most interesting training program for Family Day Carers. Susanne was an

important informant in research on Family Day Care internationally. She was almost finishing her doctoral thesis and had been named Professor in Pedagogies at the University of Emden. Both Irmtraut Rhein and Susanne Stempinski left us all too soon and will be greatly missed. Our thoughts go to their families who were so important in both their personal and professional lives. Many thanks to **Malene Karlsson and Kay Jackson** for this memoriam notice..

In my role as President of IFDCO, I attended the New Zealand Home Based Early Childhood Educators Conference in Tauranga New Zealand last September with three other Australian Delegates. This was an amazing Bi-cultural event that covered so many areas. The Presenters were all so informative, entertaining, approachable and had a wealth of knowledge to impart. The New Zealand cultural aspects were displayed in many ways. This is an inclusive practice throughout the country, which the Australian Delegates found such a warm and friendly process of engaging with people.

One of the Speakers was David Spraggs who has worked internationally but is a New Zealander. He has worked in all different areas of Early Childhood but currently is what we call, a Co-ordinator or a Lead Visiting Teacher. These are the Professional Support workers who visit Care Providers on a regular basis. He presented an amazing session on the Forest Kindergartens of Europe. This was a real eye opener for all of us in this Hemisphere, so much so that I for one have, since then, done a lot of reading up on the subject, it is just so interesting.

Another amazing Speaker was a Maori woman called Whaea (Aunty)Rose Pere. Rose spoke about the Polynesian system of caring and raising children in the Polynesian traditional society. This was another session that all of the Delegates found so emotional and awe inspiring. Rose has been strongly influenced by teachings that go back over 12,000 years. She has represented Aotearoa New Zealand internationally as an educationalist, taught from pre-school to tertiary level and researched ancient teachings in the Americas, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Great Britain, East Asia and the South Pacific. Rose is a Director of The Four Winds Foundation, an international body that works with indigenous and non indigenous people. Rose's passion for working with children was evident from the minute she began her presentation, it would be very inspiring for other people to hear her speak if an opportunity ever presented itself.

Pennie Brownlee was the third speaker. Pennie has been hugely influenced in her Early Childhood work by the work of the Dr Emmi Pikler Institute in Budapest. She believes that integrating practices Pikler taught is the pre requisite for World Peace. She is the author of "Magic Places: the Adults Guide to Young Children's Creativity" and "Dance With Me in the Heart: the Adults Guide to Great Infant Parent Partnerships" Pennie states that during the first six years of a child's life, they download their default setting for their life's journey. They download these emotional-behavioural programmes from the big people around them and they are stuck with these initial downloads until-and if- as adults they go to considerable efforts to delete or change the programmes. Will we the carers, commit to thinking, speaking, and behaving in ways that ensure our children can download Respect as their default setting.? Pennie's presentation was warmly received.

## **News from USA**

Our USA Representative has sent us some information to include in this newsletter regarding the QUALITYstarsNY. This is New York State's quality rating and improvement system. It is a voluntary program to rate, improve and communicate levels of quality in all regulated early care and education programs. QUALITYstarsNY is a comprehensive initiative to ensure that the 1.5 million New Yorkers under six, have the opportunity for high quality early learning experiences. QUALITYstarsNY has the potential to create an efficient and effective early learning system that is accountable to investors, easy to access and good for children and families. QUALITYstarsNY is a quality improvement and recognition system. It is designed to recognise programs that demonstrate quality above and beyond meeting New York's strong regulatory standards. An effective Quality Rating and Improvement System, whether for centre based or family based programs rests on the foundation of a states regulatory system. New York ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> among the fifty states, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense on both standards and oversight for centres and ranked 21st on standards and oversight for small family care homes. QUALITYstarsNY will be designed to improve quality and provide supports such as technical assistance and professional development. Participation in QUALITYstarsNY will not be required; programs that do participate will gain access to support services and financial benefits.

For a growing number of states and localities, the vehicle for improving quality across the full continuum of early care and education programming is to create a uniform set of standards that is graduated according to the level of quality and linked to a corresponding set of "star ratings" not unlike those established for hotels and restaurants. QRIS is a policy innovation that is rapidly sweeping the country. Since the first one in Oklahoma in 1998, 19 other states are planning or piloting them.

Thanks to Trudy Lackner for this information Trudy's contact is;

[tlackner@optonline.net](mailto:tlackner@optonline.net)

## **News from Ireland**

### **Hello Dear Friends in Family Day Care – Greetings from Ireland!**

We are still receiving positive feedback from delegates to the IFDCO Triennial Conference in Cork and very satisfied with the progress and enthusiasm of Drs Elise Davies and Ramona Freeman in moving the academic research team. In Ireland, we have finally achieved a free pre-school year for all children, called the Early Childhood Care & Education Scheme. Family Day Providers with the appropriate qualifications have the opportunity to participate, providing a formal early learning programme for 5 children in the cohort age group for three hours daily. Only a small number nationally are participating, but it is important that the opportunity to do so is established. 80% of Children (over 50,000) in the cohort are participating from the commencement in January. It is wonderful for children - but was hard for the childcare sector as the Scheme was introduced as a sudden policy shift, discontinuing paying parents a childcare allowance for under-six year olds and instead, paying a capitation fee per child in the pre-school year directly to the service. The staff in the Office of the Minister for Children & Youth Affairs certainly had a very short Christmas break and great credit is due to them and to our County Childcare Committees for the administration involved. We are preparing for our Annual Conference (one day) and Annual General Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> March. So far we have more delegates signed up than usual, but we are always a little disappointed by the % of our membership overall who attend. I would be interested in hearing % of members attending in other countries.

We are starting to get excited about IFDCO meeting along with the Australian National Conference, Brisbane, 2012 and looking forward to renewing old friendships and making new ones there.

Patricia Murray

Chief Executive, *Childminding Ireland*

## News from Australia

*Grace McDonald [gracemcd@tpg.com.au](mailto:gracemcd@tpg.com.au) (note new e-mail address)*

The Australian Government have recently introduced an Early Years Learning Framework which sits alongside the National Quality Assurance Program. This is a system that every licensed Child Care and Education Service is required to be part of in order to receive Government funding to operate. The Early Years Learning Framework provides guidelines for Early Childhood educators and describes five learning outcomes for centre based or home based settings. The EYLF (as it is known as ) has three components; principles, practices and learning outcomes. Interwoven throughout the discussion of these components are motifs of belonging, being and becoming.

**Belonging** is about young children knowing where they belong and with whom.

**Being** is about the importance of the experiences of childhood for their own sake, not just as preparation for later development or adulthood.

**Becoming** is about the growth and changes that occur in the early years and how these are shaped by experiences.

### **The Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes**

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to the world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators
  - The learning outcomes described in the EYLF recognise that young children learn through play
  - Highlight the value of planned learning with the deliberate purposeful and thoughtful approach that characterises intentional teaching
  - Emphasise the importance of the nature and quality of relationships between young children, their carers and educators.

The EYLF is most likely to be a program similar to many other countries but called by an entirely different name. Frameworks are a popular strategy. I guess what it means in reality is that we are all working in our own localities to improve the way that we are providing our child care services to children and their families, either through Government initiatives or in other ways.

IFDCO is in a position to share this type of information with our members hoping that somehow it may be of use in your own services. These are some of the benefits of belonging to an international organisation.

### Conference News.

*We held our first conference planning meeting in Sydney recently and have since then held a local teleconference as well. We are all set to get on with the business of organising our Australian National and International Family Day Care Conference 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> July 2012. The venue is the Brisbane Convention Centre which is central to the Brisbane CBD. Ample accommodation is available close by and Brisbane Tourism and Marketing will be offering a range of sight seeing options for you to choose from. We hope to offer a study tour if we have enough interest and visits to local Early Childhood facilities. Australia being such a huge expanse, would take a lot of travel time to cover and the expense of domestic travel is a challenge to us all. However there are options of packages which may be more affordable and we will keep you all updated re a study tour as we go along. The weather in Brisbane in July is winter, but for people coming from other countries, you should expect it to be "beautiful one day, perfect the next". In the meantime, start your savings plan for July 2012, we would love to see a large overseas contingent arrive in Brisbane, we can guarantee that you will enjoy a conference to remember.*

## News from Scotland

**Scottish Childminding Association** in association with South Lanarkshire Council, is delighted to announce that the South Lanarkshire Childminding Development Programme has won a SURF award.

SURF (Scotland's Independent Regeneration Network) aims to improve the health and well being of residents in Scotland's most disadvantaged areas. SURF

believes that in order for regeneration to be successful, the intended beneficiaries must be meaningfully included in the process. SCMA 's Routes to Inclusion service complements the SURF objectives well as it actively encourages and supports low income or single parent families to set up childminding businesses. The child minding business not only benefits the new child minder, but provides professional quality childcare for other families in the area. The judges said of the Childminding Development Programme, which has successfully created a number of new child minding businesses in areas of high deprivation:

The project differs from normal child care programmes in that it provides a holistic approach to childcare by providing the means for young mothers to seek employment or further education, which they would otherwise not have had the opportunity to do so.

The judges were particularly impressed at the true sense of partnership that was apparent between South Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Childminding Association and most importantly, the young mothers who were benefitting from the project.

### **SCMA's Training Framework is working for Childminders**

Childminding is still the most widely used form of paid day care. It is a challenging and rewarding career. To develop the skills needed to provide quality services, child minders must have the opportunity to explore their learning and development needs and then access training opportunities to meet those needs.

The Scottish Social Services Council is responsible for regulating the education and training of people who work in Social Services. Their role is to raise standards of practice and to increase public confidence in the sector. The SSSC publishes a Code of Practice for Social Services Workers and Employers. Childminders, although not required to register with SSSC, fall within the definition of Social Service workers and therefore must adhere to this Code. One of the statements within the Code is workers must "be accountable for the quality of their work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills. SCMA has developed a Training Framework to help childminders attain these skills, The Framework provides childminders with the opportunity to become actively involved in their own development, at a pace that

meets their needs. The system has benefitted thousands of newly registered and established childminders, enabling them to provide quality childminding services for Scotland's children. From the point of induction to the attainment of a recognised qualification, SCMA endeavours to present learning opportunities on the issues most pertinent to childminding.

### **Scheme of Excellence**

SCMA believe that childminders undertaking practice development training should have a means of linking their achievements with a national training framework. The Scheme of Excellence offers childminders the opportunity to evidence their level of occupational competency. By undertaking the work for this award, including externally marked assignments, childminders can evidence the quality of their service by reflecting on and evaluating current working practice in line with the national care standards. It is designed for use by childminders with six to twelve months practice experience.

### **SCMA National Training Plan**

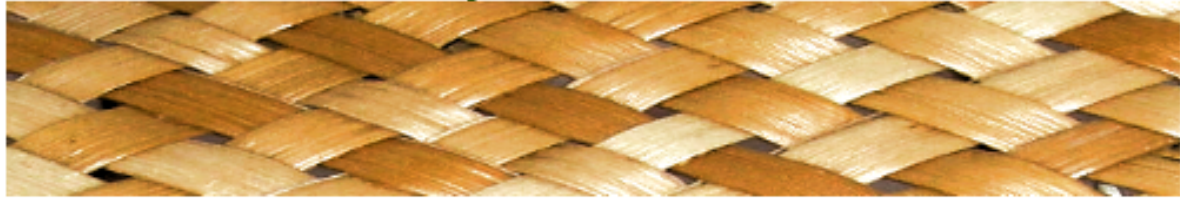
SCMA is currently developing a National Training Plan. The intention is to map all training scheduled in the coming year throughout Scotland, then to open up training delivery to childminders in areas not currently funded. A questionnaire was published on SCMA Forum to identify how best to inform childminders of training availability. SCMA has recently applied to become an approved learning provider with ILA Scotland. There are currently 310 active providers in Scotland with over 14,000 courses. This will allow childminders access to to an Individual Learning Account for SCMA Continuing Professional Development training and the Scheme of Excellence.

*Thanks to Maggie Simpson and her Office for all of this information*

### **IFDCO Research Network**

The IFDCO Research Network is currently developing a journal article on "An international perspective on Family Day Care: Comparing systems, challenges and opportunities." This paper will include representatives from the following countries: Norway, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Japan, France, Belgium, USA, England, Ireland and Germany. We're hoping to submit this paper by mid 2010. We are also looking at new ways to share information, including journals, new articles, new projects and new ideas. Please feel free to contact Dr Elise Davis (eda@unimelb.edu.au) if you would like more info or like to be involved

# **NZ HOME-BASED** Early Childhood Education Association



## **Te Roopu Matauranga Tamariki a te Papakainga ki Aotearoa**

Tena Koe, Tena Katoa,

Greetings from New Zealand to our International Colleagues.

Homebased childcare in New Zealand is currently the fastest growing sector at the rate of 54% per year. In September 2009 after four years of consultation, debate and parliamentary process licensing of the Homebased early childhood sector has begun for the first time in New Zealand. Licenses for services once issued will be in perpetuity and will enable the Homebased sector to finally become fully integrated into the early childhood education system.

The growth of Homebased has been at times somewhat of a challenge to our Ministry of Education who are often responding to this by developing new criteria and regulation to attempt to deal with the diversity of delivery. The Ministry is also looking to Homebased as a means of developing more Maori and Pacifica based community childcare groups and has a number of feasibility contracts underway. The New Zealand Homebased ECE Association has been working with the Ministry of Education by critiquing and offering advice on documents such as the recently developed guidelines on how to set up a Homebased service in Aotearoa.

The New Zealand Homebased ECE Association have also become very adept at asking the question “And where is Homebased in this?” in response to any education, health, justice or welfare initiatives. Issues around inequitable funding levels compared to the rest of the ECE sector and recognition of qualified Educators remain at the top of our agenda, as they have done for the past decade, for the provision of quality early childhood education for children.

Of immense interest in New Zealand has been the research being released regarding the vital importance of primary attachment, brain development and undisturbed sleep. Of course Homebased childcare is ideally placed to meet these goals and this is giving impetus to the wider uptake by parents choosing to place under 3 year olds in a Homebased setting for childcare.

On a brighter note representatives from the Homebased sector came together in 2008 to write a strategic plan, which was ratified in 2009 and can be found on our website [www.nzhomebasedece.org.nz](http://www.nzhomebasedece.org.nz) . Driving this plan forward has presented some challenges to the Association which is also rapidly growing its membership. The organisation is now moving from a voluntary model to a more professional business based one which is an exciting journey to be part of.

Our national annual conference is being held this year in Auckland and again we are delighted to be hosting our Australian colleagues. We are all looking forward to attending the International Family Daycare Conference in Brisbane and are planning to bring a large contingent of “Kiwi’s”.

Arohanui

Carol Stovold, National Secretary, New Zealand Home-based Early Childhood Education Association

***I hope that you have all found something of interest in this first newsletter for 2010. Please remember that we welcome items or articles for inclusion from the global Family Day Care Community. We would particularly like to hear from people interested in becoming members of our organization .Our aim is to strengthen the organization and promote our work worldwide. Becoming a member gives us ownership and opportunities to input our views from where we sit in the world. Best wishes to you all from Brisbane, Australia.***

*Grace McDonald*

**World President IFDCO**



