

Researched News

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Schools Must Reach Out to Maori Parents for Students to Succeed

A study recently released by NZCER shows that Maori children's achievement at school is strongly linked to how well parents and children relate to school staff.

Maori parents want their children to have a better education than they had, and have a strong wish to be involved in their child's schooling concludes the report *Maori Parents and Education*, written by Sheridan McKinley.

In the past it has been assumed that parents who are less involved than others are not supportive of, or concerned with, their children's education. However, all the parents who participated in this study valued and took an active interest in their children's education. While this was confirmed by principals and teachers, they expressed the view that other urgent issues such as budgeting, employment, housing and health sometimes took priority.

Teachers often based perceptions of parental home support on information gathered from the type and extent of parental contact with the school. While contact was important, teachers' perceptions were not always accurate.

An impression was gained that relationships between parents/whanau and teachers within kura kaupapa settings were more collegial than within mainstream English medium and bi-lingual learning environments. A common theme among all parents/whanau was their concern for reciprocal respect between all parties. This included taking account of Maori student sensitivities so that they were not singled out as continually misbehaving or failing. Teachers' pastoral activities were greatly valued by most parents/whanau.

While there seemed to be a level of parental satisfaction with their children's perform-

ance at primary school, they were not so enthusiastic about secondary schooling. This raises issues about how secondary schools are structured, contextualised and operated. While some large schools may be able to deliver a wide range of services efficiently and effectively, empathetic relationships between students and teachers were a priority for Maori regardless of the size of school. Those relationships were considered essential for student satisfaction and positive outcomes.

Differences in attitudes between parents who enrol their children in kura kaupapa Maori and those who enrol their children in English medium mainstream schools were apparent. Parents who had children attending kura kaupapa understood that their contribution was as important to positive outcomes as school-based learning and teaching was.

Student attitudes to classroom activities and homework were problematic, especially in English medium secondary school environments. It became clear that some sort of scaffolding needed to be created so that understandings and goals could be achieved.

It appears that Maori teachers and principals find it easier to communicate with the Maori community than their Pakeha colleagues do. However, there are examples of Pakeha teachers and principals using their out-of-school interests and relationships to develop links with Maori families. Those links are seen as encouraging and supporting students to achieve.

To order a copy of this report, use the order form at the back of this newsletter.

People AT NZCER

A number of new staff have joined NZCER. A warm welcome is extended to them.

Two appointments to the Director's office are Pat Teodoro, Human Resources, and Suzanne Hay, Executive Officer.

Capacity for Maori educational research has been strengthened through the recent appointments of Taina Tangaere McGregor, Ngati Porou, and Garrick Cooper, Ngati Whanaunga and Ngati Ranginui.

Long-time editor, Fay Swann, was recently farewelled. We wish her well in her retirement. Researcher, Gavin Brown, has left NZCER to take up a position in the School of Education at the University of Auckland.

BEEBY FELLOW 2000

Neil Potter of Tweedsmuir Junior High School in Invercargill has been awarded the Beeby Fellowship for 2000.

During his time as Beeby Fellow, Neil plans to continue his research on team teaching, and produce a resource on guidelines for developing a team approach to teaching in New Zealand schools. This resource will provide a framework which schools can use to build their own team teaching approach. Neil believes that the team approach can benefit both students and teachers at every level of schooling.

The Beeby Fellowship is a joint initiative of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research and the National Commission for UNESCO.

NEW DIRECTOR

Robyn Baker has been appointed the new Director of NZCER. She will take up her position in early October.

Robyn is currently Director, School of Graduate Studies at Wellington College of Education. Robyn is a member of the Council of the Royal Society of New Zealand and has wide networks in many sectors of the scientific and education community. She believes



that independent, quality research is needed to support ongoing development and change within the education sector. She sees the need for a more systematic critique and commentary on educational ideas, and for policy to be informed by substantive research.

TRANSITION FROM SECONDARY SCHOOL

NZCER has completed the first year of a two-year study which looks at the intended destinations of a group of secondary school students who planned to leave school at the end of 1999.

Around 470 students from 5 schools were surveyed for the study. The 5 schools covered a range of school deciles and had at least 50 Maori students at each year level. The baseline report of the study, by Eugene Kumekawa and Anna Chalmers, provides data from the student survey on their intended destinations, the information they used to help them make decisions, and any gaps they perceived in this information.

Later this year NZCER will be

conducting follow-up interviews with the students to understand more fully their motivations, perceptions, and impressions about their work and study choices; differences between their intended and actual destinations in 2000; and whether with hindsight they believe they had sufficient good quality information to make informed decisions about their "life after school".

Inquiries to Sally Boyd, Anna Chalmers, or Lia Mapa.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL FOR PACIFIC ISLANDS CHILDREN

A recent study documents the experiences of transition to school of families from five Pacific Islands groups.

The emphasis is on language and children's other experiences as they move from Pacific Islands early childhood centres into English-language primary schools. The report describes culturally appropriate methodologies, drawing on the interviews with Cook Islands, Niuean,

Samoan, Tokelauan, and Tongan families. It includes a literature review, background educational statistics, and detailed findings from interviews with children, parents and teachers.

To order a copy of this report, use the form at the back of this newsletter.

ASSESSMENT RESOURCE BANKS UPDATE

Strong growth has continued in the number of resources published in the Assessment Resource Banks, at curriculum levels 2–5.

As at 1 September, there are 2266 resources available, an increase of 1026 since *Researched News* reported a total of 1240 in April 1999. The number of resources by level are as follows:

| Level | Mathematics | Science | English | |
|-------|-------------|---------|---------|------|
| 2 | 139 | 150 | 60 | |
| 3 | 278 | 255 | 78 | |
| 4 | 324 | 308 | 90 | |
| 5 | 210 | 255 | 76 | |
| 6 | – | 43 | – | |
| | 951 | 1011 | 304 | 2266 |

A more detailed breakdown showing resources by strand, and achievement objective or function, is included on the ARB Website at <http://www.nzcer.org.nz> (PRESS return/enter). Click on the

ASSESSMENT RESOURCE BANK (ARB)

button. This will take you to the Assessment Resource Banks.

Alongside strong growth in published resources there has been an increase in the number of schools now able to access the ARBs. As at 1 September, 1892 schools (68% of all New Zealand schools) had access to the ARBs, along with 750 individuals (many of whom are teacher trainees) or other institutions.

Searching

There are now 279 TIMSS resources (mathematics 151 and science 128) included in the total of 2266. They cover levels 2–5 and are classified according to strands and achievement objectives as well. TIMSS is a keyword term, so schools wishing to access this material may locate it by the single keyword TIMSS. Using a combination of 'mathematics, level 2, TIMSS', for example, will locate 24 resources.

As the ARBs increase in size, a well-tailored search strategy becomes the most effective means of ensuring that resources selected are closely related to teaching. Where a search by learning area, level, strand and objective is augmented by the addition of keywords, a selection of relevant resources should be found.

The recent emphasis in development for science and mathematics has been on Practical Resources that require student responses which go beyond paper-and-pencil. To date, 53 Practical Resources in mathematics and 130 in science have been published.

Inquiries about the ARBs may be directed to the project leader, Cedric Croft, Chief Research Officer.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT REGIONAL SEMINARS

The regional seminars organised by the Ministry of Education in Christchurch and Palmerston North in July, and in Auckland in October, have all included a full programme on the Assessment Resource Banks.

Cedric Croft and Alex Neill gave a plenary presentation on the main features of the banks. This presentation served as an introduction to eight interactive sessions offered by Sally Boyd, Christina Smits, Kirsten Harrison, Nicholas Edmonds (Computer workshops); Alex Neill (Mathematics resources); Gareth Rapson (English resources); Sue McDowall and Ed Strafford (Level 2 and 3 resources); Chris Marston (Science and Practical Resources).

A comprehensive overview of the ARBs can be found in *School-Wide Assessment: Using the Assessment Resource Banks*, by Cedric Croft, NZCER 1999.

Between April and July, Cathy Wylie undertook a review of key aspects of the Special Education 2000 policy at the request of the Ministers of Education.

This review was based on a wide range of material, including school visits, submissions, policy documents, and research, both here and overseas. Key findings point to undesirable fragmentation of resourcing, expertise, and purpose. The recommendations in the report suggest ways to counter this, and to develop the capacity and confidence of schools so that students' and parents' needs are better met. The recommendations are currently being considered by the government.

The full report, 'Picking up the Pieces', is available at www.executive.govt.nz

SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR MAORI

The process of ongoing development of Special Education policy requires a Maori perspective.

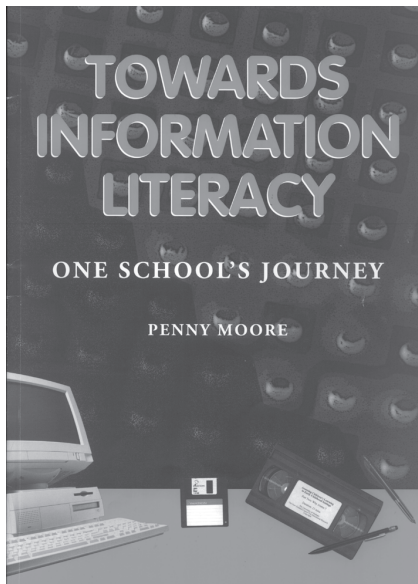
An earlier report, *So-What's So Special about Special Education for Maori?*, found that there is a definite Maori perspective about the education of children with special needs. The next report, *Matauranga Motuhake*, offers a Maori-centred view from the whanau of children with special needs in a range of settings throughout Aotearoa. The report uses quantitative data to show the over-representation of Maori in special needs statistics, including disability, behavioural, and learning needs. Eleven case studies present the unique experience of children in a range of whanau groupings and their interaction with government funded services, agencies, and schools in New Zealand.

The report is due out in December 2000. Inquiries to Margaret Wilkie, Kairangahau.

New Releases FROM NZCER PUBLISHING

Towards Information Literacy: One school's journey

Penny Moore



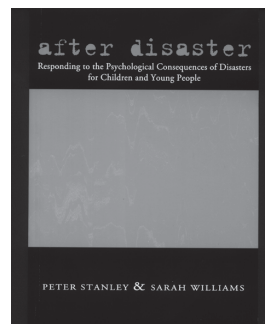
With information skills among the essential skills which the New Zealand Curriculum Framework requires all students to develop, *Towards Information Literacy* is timely. The action research described in this book shows the relationship of underlying information skills to various curriculum areas and levels. It is the product of four months' intensive professional development and

research in one New Zealand primary school. A resource pack is also available.

NZCER 2000 ISBN 1-877140-75-9
Price: \$29.70 A4 146pp.

After Disaster

Peter Stanley, Sarah Williams

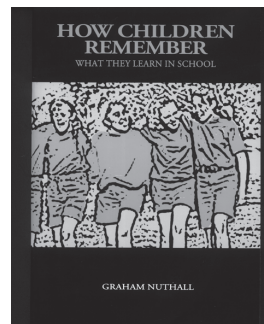


After Disaster explains the psychological consequences of disasters for children and young people. It is a kind of psychological first aid guide. It provides critical understanding and information about children's reactions to traumatic events and how to respond to them.

NZCER 2000 ISBN 1-877140-70-8
Price \$14.85 A5 66pp.

How Children Remember What They Learn In School

Graham Nuthall



This book looks at how classroom activities shape children's memories and at how teachers can manage children's experiences in ways that will improve their ability to remember and use what they remember. Understanding how memory works is critical to understanding how children learn.

The children in the study are in Years 6-8.

NZCER 2000 ISBN 1-877140-78-3
Price \$14.85 A5 57pp.

NZCER Publications Order Form

To: NZCER Distribution Services, PO Box 3237, Wellington, New Zealand.
Fax 04 384 7933. GST included in all prices. Post and packing extra if goods are invoiced. Personal orders must be accompanied by payment.

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| 13282 | Towards Information Literacy | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 13285 | How Children Remember..... | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 13284 | After Disaster | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 13270 | Using the Assessment Resource Banks | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| 13288 | So-What's So Special About Special Education for Maori? | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | Total enclosed | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | Please invoice me | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

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