

Editorial

Transitions and life changes for children

Nuhisifa Seve-Williams | *New Zealand Tertiary College*

In this edition of *He Kupu*, transitions are defined in terms of the changes in context that occur in one's lifespan. Formal transitions for some children begin in infancy as the child transitions from the home to the early childhood centre. Transitions also occur within formal institutions, for example when a toddler moves from one room to another. Transitions continue from childhood to adolescence and adolescent to adulthood and can involve shifts in socioeconomic and cultural contexts. How well we prepare children for transitions at an early age, may influence their later transitions (Huf, 2013). Transitions can involve the child experiencing a range of socioeconomic and cultural contexts.

The articles in this edition of *He Kupu* - **Transitions and life changes for children** raise awareness of many of the critical challenges associated with transitions that children and their parents and families may experience within and external to the early childhood context. Included in the articles is discussion of various strategies and techniques that the authors suggest may mediate the transition processes for children.

The Practitioner Research section comprises three articles that offer teaching strategies for teachers to consider in the development of their own transition practices. The first article by Barbara Scanlan and Galina Stebletsova examines the literature on transition practices for children from early childhood education to the formal school sector. The authors introduce a range of theoretical perspectives that emphasises the dynamic and emergent nature of transitions for the child and significant others. The authors argue that there is a need for educators to develop individualised transition processes for children that are tailored to the requirements of the child and their parents and family. This article is followed by a focus on children's emotional needs during transitions by Sue Nicolson. The author offers a range of practical ideas that teachers and parents and families can refer to that support children's emotional needs during change. The last article in this section by Ché Hancock and Emily Gott discusses the benefits of joining a community of practice composed of primary school teachers and principals, and professionals from the early childhood sector. The authors explain the processes involved, advocating for the visiting of multiple perspectives to elicit from those in the primary sector their aspirations and hopes for children who are transitioning to school.

Moving onto the Articles section, Jo Dean and Andrea Delaune's article raises awareness of the characteristics of gifted children and the implications of their transitioning. Dean and Delaune advocate for strong collaborative partnerships between school and early childhood educational settings to enhance transition experiences for gifted children. The article offers strategies that can be implemented by both parent and teacher to support transition processes of gifted children. In the second and final article of this section, Vikki Hanrahan, Karyn Aspden and Tara McLaughlin discuss how teachers can support safe risk-taking play for young children as they transition into, or within an early childhood setting. The authors argue that risk-taking play, particularly in the outdoor environment, supports children to develop social competencies, skills and resilience. Using the findings from a study that explored early childhood teachers' beliefs, practices and experiences in relation to safe risk-taking play, the authors suggest a number of strategies to support children to navigate safe risk-taking to foster their learning.

This issue of *He Kupu* concludes with three Book Reviews: Sherideen Lange has written a review on *Understanding Transitions in the Early Years: Supporting Change through Attachment and Resilience* by Anne O'Connor; Phoebe Tong has reviewed *School Readiness and the Characteristics of Effective Learning: The Essential Guide for Early Years Practitioners* by Tamsin Grimmer and lastly, Alicia Savage has reviewed *Kindergarten Transition and Readiness:*

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Promoting Cognitive, Social-Emotional, and Self-Regulatory Development by Andrew J. Mashburn, Jennifer LoCasale-Crouch and Katherine C. Pears.

I hope that you will find the articles in this edition encourage you to reflect on transitions and life changes for children.

Reference

Huf, C. (2013). Children's agency during transition to formal schooling. *Ethnography and Education*, 8(1), 61-76.

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