



# Introduce ourselves



**Organisation:** Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

## Presenters

- Debbie Ryder (Research project leader/researcher)
- Gwen Davitt (Researcher)

## Other researchers/lecturers who will take part in the research project

- Sue Smorti
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- Tracey Dayman
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## LEADERS GROWING LEADERS:



## EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERS FOR SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP

### What is the purpose of this proposed research investigation?

To demonstrate how effective early childhood leaders:

- support the leadership development of themselves and their teams
- sustain leadership capacity in their ECE settings within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand

To promote dialogue in the sector on ways to maximise the potential for ECE leaders to contribute to improved outcomes for children and their whānau



# Why is there a need for ECE leadership research in Aotearoa NZ?



- Leadership is listed as one of the five key factors of quality in ECE and school development (ERO, 2011).
- More specifically, Bloom & Bella, 2005; Grey, 2004; Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Rodd, 2013 discuss leadership as an important factor in the quality of ECE services
- In New Zealand, the development of specific ECE leadership qualifications are very recent initiatives within the ECE sector.
- Most people in leadership positions in ECE settings have limited professional training for leadership and administration roles  
(Thornton, Wansbrough, Clarkin-Phillips, Aitken, & Tamati, 2009).

# Why are we focusing on 'effective' leadership?

- Whilst the term 'effective' in regards to leadership may be viewed as contentious , (i.e. How can 'effective' leadership be proven – similar to the 'quality' argument) it is important for the ECE sector to gain an understanding of what effective leadership looks like in ECE sector
- Siraj-Blatchford and Manni, (2007) discuss 'effective leadership' as having a significant effect on the achievement of children's educational outcomes and that successful early childhood settings are characterised by effective leadership
- With some outcomes of effective leadership being - minimal staff turnover; a shared vision of practices, pedagogy and curriculum (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007)
- Rodd (2006) states that "effective leadership in the early childhood profession is about working towards creating a community and providing a high-quality service" (p.24).

## What definition of 'effective' leadership will the research use?

For the purposes of this study ERO (2010) definition of an ECE 'effective leader' is drawn on:

- An effective leader is viewed as someone who is an inspirational, enthusiastic and innovative thinker
- who manages change
- motivates others to make change
- has a good awareness of change that leads to improved quality

(Education Review Office, 2010).

# Why is it important to explore the 'on-the-job' nature of leadership training?



- Leadership development is often limited to role modelling of others and on-the-job learning.
- With the lack of formal ECE leadership programmes and the importance of developing leadership on-the-job it highlights the value of leaders developing themselves,
- and growing others as leaders with greater awareness,
- to successfully sustain and build on a leadership culture in their organisations.

(Aubrey, 2011 and Nupponen, 2006)



# How have we been informed by the research objectives of Aubrey, Harris, Briggs & Muijs (2005)?

1. identify, describe and analyse what leadership means to key participants in EC settings,
2. consider the nature of the roles, responsibilities and characteristics of leadership in EC settings and explore how this affects their representation and effectiveness;
3. investigate the core components and characteristics of effective EC leadership, its knowledge, skills, attitudes and strategic intent, i.e. vision, goals and operational objectives;
4. capture EC leadership practice and judge how it is understood and enacted;
5. explore what types of leadership-development programmes or preparations are required to maximise EC leaders' effectiveness.

# Why is it difficult to research leadership within an ECE context in New Zealand?



- Variety in ECE leadership terminology makes it difficult to know who takes ultimate responsibility for the leadership of ECE centre.
- Range of titles such as manager, director, supervisor, senior teacher or team leader are just some titles used to label people holding responsibilities in ECE settings (Thornton et al., 2009).
- Research shows that teachers are only accepted as leaders (Sergiovani, 1998) when they are formally appointed with a leadership title (Heikka, 2013).
- However, in reality these designated leaders may have limited impact on teaching and learning, due to the managerial tasks they have to accomplish (Heikka, 2013; Hujala, 2004).
- Therefore, who it is often difficult to understand who is actually providing leadership within the settings

# Why is there a need for ECE leadership research from an Aotearoa New Zealand perspective?



- There is increasing need for research on effective early childhood leaders (Ord et al., 2013) and for more research on early childhood leadership nationally (Fasoli, Scrivens, & Woodrow, 2007; Thornton, 2005; Thornton et al., 2009).
- Whilst there is extensive research on educational leadership in the compulsory education sector within New Zealand, leadership in early childhood settings has remained a relatively unexplored area of research (Ang, 2012; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris & Briggs, 2004; Thornton, 2011, 2014).
- Thornton et al. (2009) discusses low profile of leadership; lack of an accepted definition, terminology or common understanding of leadership; emphasises on management over leadership; less experienced teachers taking on leadership positions; lack of emphasis on leadership in the early childhood sector by the Ministry of Education; and lack of leadership development programmes in ECE.
- It can be seen therefore that the challenges that make research on ECE leadership in New Zealand difficult are multifaceted due to the unique characteristics of the ECE sector

## Therefore, with this literature in mind what is the aim of the research?



- Create a model/framework of sustainable leadership development for the ECE sector
- Extend on current understanding on models of sustainable leadership in the early childhood sector
- Provide Insights and suggestions on leadership development and the design of early childhood education leadership programmes to policy makers and tertiary education institutions
- Have a direct impact on the course content of the post graduate leadership programme that the researchers in this study teach within.
- Have a impact on positive outcomes for children and their whānau within the ECE centres that students of this and other post graduate leadership programmes lead and work within.

# What are the research questions that drive the investigation?

## Main research question:

- ‘What leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture?’

## *Three sub-questions that support the main question*

- What professional learning and leadership development do effective ECE leaders undertake and how has it affected change in leadership practice?
- What leadership actions (pedagogical, team leadership, and organisational) do ECE leaders take in developing others as leaders?
- What are the ‘theories-in-use’ and ‘espoused theories’ used by effective leaders, and how can the identification of leadership barriers build capability and capacity within the ECE setting?

## Where to from here?

1. Currently awaiting ethical approval
2. An initial understanding needs to be gained of the 'current picture' of what professional learning and leadership development ECE leaders/teachers have undertaken and how they feel this development has affected change in their leadership practice.
3. From there, the leadership practices 'designated leaders' say they are using ('espoused theories') need to be explored and then analysed against the leadership practices they are actually carrying out ('theories-in-use')
4. Using the knowledge gained when exploring the differences or 'contradictions' between the 'espoused theories' and 'theories in use', the study aims to develop a leadership model that assists with moving through the differences and ultimately supports sustainable leadership development within the ECE setting

## What does (Argyris and Schön, 1974; Argyris, 1980) 'theories of action' look like?

### *Espoused-theories*

Argyris and Schön (1974) argue that people's behaviour is guided by and can be explained by their 'theories of action'. Argyris and Schön (1974) describe two types of actions: 'espoused theories' and 'theories in use'.

- 'Espoused theories' consist of theories and beliefs about what people think they would do in a certain situation.
- Therefore there is incongruence between theory and action.
- When someone is asked how he would behave under certain circumstances, Argyris and Schön (1974) would say that the answer they usually give is their 'espoused theory' of action for that situation.
- This is the theory of action to which they give allegiance, and which, they communicate to others.

### *Theories in use*

- However the theory that actually governs their actions is their 'theory-in-use', which may or may not be compatible with their espoused theory
- 'Theories in use' are led by people's mental maps and the way people act in situations.
- Mental maps shape people's plans, implementation and review of their actions.
- Argyris, (1980) says people's actions are governed by their theories-in-use of which they are mostly unaware and differ from the values and beliefs to which they aspire

# Why is it important to include kaupapa Māori and Pasifika world views?



## *Kaupapa Māori research principles*

- The key elements or principals of Kaupapa Māori research will provide the appropriate foundation to investigate leadership in Māori early childhood education centres from a Te Ao Māori worldview.
- Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand has a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the partnership between tangata whenua and tangata tiriti.
- The principles of kaupapa Māori research provide a clear definition and understanding around the purpose of kaupapa Māori.

## *Pasifika research principles*

- The proposed research methodology is also consistent with Pasifika research principles that will be performed in Pasifika centres
- Research must be underpinned by Pasifika values, knowledge and beliefs and where particular Pasifika communities are involved such as Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands and Niuean then those distinct traditions, languages, histories, world views and identities must be respected.

# What research design will be used?



- 1. Phase One:** A quantitative nation-wide survey will be carried out across all ECE settings, where an initial understanding will be gained as to the professional learning and leadership development that effective ECE leaders currently undertake and how they feel this development has affected change in their leadership practice.
- 2. Phase Two:** From the survey, participants will be selected and recruited in regards to the ERO (2010) definition of 'effective leadership'. An exploration will occur into the leadership actions that the ECE leaders (of a minimal selection of ECE settings) take in developing others as leaders. The 'espoused theories' of effective leaders will be explored through individual interviews.
- 3. Phase Three:** An exploration will then occur into the effective leaders 'theories in use' (designated leaders observations will occur as well as interviews with members of the teaching team who choose to participate in the research).

## How will the research be analysed?

Each ECE setting will be viewed as a case study

### Phase One:

1. Quantitative statistical analysis will occur of current leadership development

### Phase Two:

1. The data generated from each case study's 'designated leader' interviews will analyse their 'espoused theories'
2. All case studies will be analysed using a cross-case, inductive analysis approach.
3. Participant perceptions will be grouped on common questions, and thematic meaning will be drawn

### Phase Three:

1. The data generated from each case study's 'designated leader' observations and teacher interviews will analyse the 'theories in use'
2. All case studies will be analysed using a cross-case, inductive analysis approach.
3. Participant perceptions will be grouped on common questions, and thematic meaning will be drawn

# What is the purpose of developing a leadership model/framework?



It will provide a framework for:

1. identifying 'espoused theories' against their 'theories-in-use'
2. identifying barriers to effective leadership
3. overcoming identified differences/contradictions
4. supporting sustainable leadership development within the ECE setting



Date	Research Timeline
<p>Beginning February - End of May 2015</p>	<p>Selecting the project team , Project proposal; Ethics application</p> 
<p>Beginning of June – end of June 2015</p>	<p><u>Phase One:</u> What professional learning and leadership development do effective ECE leaders undertake and how has it affected change in leadership practice?</p>
<p>End of June</p>	<p>Recruitment for phases two and three (from larger survey results); Selection;; Choosing research sites ; Invitations will be sent to ECE designated leaders and interview dates will be set.</p>
<p>Beginning August– mid August 2015</p>	<p><u>Phase Two:</u> What leadership actions (pedagogical, team leadership, organisational) do ECE leaders take in developing others as leaders?</p> <p><u>Interviews with centre designated leaders; anecdotal centre documentation; field notes</u></p>
<p>Beginning Sep/Oct– End Sep/October 2015</p>	<p><u>Phase Three:</u> What are the ‘theories-in-use’ and ‘espoused theories’, and how the identification of leadership barriers can build capability and capacity within the ECE setting?</p> <p><u>Interviews with team members; observations</u> (shadowing the centre designated leaders at the centres for 3 full days), <u>Leaders critical incident reflections; field notes</u></p>
<p>November – December 2015</p>	<p>Completion of individual case analysis and cross case analysis; data triangulation and final analysis</p>
<p>February – end of June 2016</p>	<p>Model building and report writing.</p>
<p>July 2016</p>	<p>Launch of publication at Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand conference</p>

# Questions?



# Workshop an aspect of the survey content

## as it relates to the sustainability of leadership development

- The final section of the survey looks at aspects of the leadership role adapted from Aubrey, Godfrey & Harris (2013)
- The question that guides this part of the survey is: What aspects of the early childhood leadership role would you say contribute most to the sustainability of leadership development in your institution?
- The terms Aubrey, Godfrey & Harris (2013) use to explain differing kinds of leadership are not ones we are necessarily familiar with
- Whilst very brief meanings have been included alongside each term we would appreciate brainstorming these with you to get your interpretation of what you think they mean
- The outcomes of this workshop will assist our further thinking in regards to these terms



**What aspects of the early childhood leadership role would you say contribute most to the sustainability of leadership development in your institution?**



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