



*fka*CS eNews

Term 3 | 30 August 2018

Welcome to the FKA Children's Services eNewsletter for Term 3, 2018.

This edition includes interesting findings from the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, an ABC article reviewing Nielsen BookScan's 100 top-selling picture books of last year plus tips for reviewing your book collection, and an overview of the VicTESOL Symposium together with a lovely example of young children's story telling skills in the form of an animation.

Read about two fantastic resources from the Multicultural Resource Centre - one a redesigned series of Literacy Kits and the other a popular Story Bag - and refresh your memory on the language support options available to you when working with multilingual and newly arrived children and families.

We hope you enjoy!

The fkaCS Team



Sector Updates

Language as a Resource - VicTESOL Symposium 2018

Carolina Cabezas–Benalcazar (fkaCS Board member and PHD candidate) and Melodie Davies (fkaCS Executive Director) were honoured to present at this year's VicTESOL Symposium – the theme being Language as a Resource. Carolina and Melodie spoke on Language, Identity and Wellbeing in the early years and the importance of home language as the language of emotion. Within the number of great presentations, the following in particular resonated with our work in the Early Years sector.

Language as a resource or using languages resourcefully? Why perspective matters

Presented by Dr Julie Choi, Lecturer in Education (Additional Languages), Melbourne Graduate School of Education

Julie highlighted how learners' linguistic and non-linguistic resources are activated resourcefully in and out of the classroom. She made the case that the concept of 'resourcefulness' is more helpful and productive than the rather static understanding of 'language as a resource'.

Strategies for valuing and modelling language learning as an educator in a unique bilingual immersion setting

Presented by Daniel Thomas, Foundation Teacher, Huntingdale Primary School

Daniel focused on the pedagogical strategies used to promote and value home languages in the classroom, whilst also engaging learners in both English and Japanese language through explicitly modelling himself as a learner.

Story crafting with new arrivals

Presented Dr Mervi Kaukko, Monash University

Dr Kaukko highlighted the value of story crafting as an educational tool to enable newly arrived children to use their language(s), and told us of the many powerful, beautiful stories asylum-seeking students in Finland and Australia shared with her as part of her research. This notion led to a fictional story book *Ali and the Long Journey to Australia*, and an animation based on the book! The story and artwork were co-created by 13 students at Noble Park Primary School. Watch Ali and the Long Journey to Australia: www.vimeo.com/274040331

Active Participation for Children and Families

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework provides a guide for working together with families in support of their children, embracing and responding to the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Victorian Community and reminds us that all children influence, and are affected by, the environments surrounding them.

However recent community consultations undertaken by the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria found that 'culturally and linguistically diverse communities consistently underutilise early childhood services, and recommended the child and family services industry prioritise planning that specifically targets the needs of culturally diverse families and children. In addition, services and providers should prioritise investment and development of resources to improve the cultural competency of their workforce [ECCV, 2018].

Eligible Victorian Kindergartens can access free or subsidised support from fkaCS under the recently redesigned Victorian Kindergarten Cultural Inclusion Program.

The program supports teachers, early childhood professionals and service providers in critically reflecting on their practice at a service, policy and practice level to reduce the unintended barriers to participation for culturally and linguistically diverse children and families. See fkaCS 'Barriers to Active Participation Tip Sheet' at www.fka.org.au/resources/educator-resources

This article, written by fkaCS, will be featured in the latest Quality Rating and Assessment Newsletter.

Sector Updates

Possum Skin Pedagogy Professional Learning Project

A summary by Dr Sue Lopez-Atkinson, Convenor (Action on Aboriginal Perspectives in Early Childhood) and author of *The Possum Skin Pedagogy: A Guide for Early Childhood Practitioners*.

On July 27 we had a special beginning to the first of four sessions as Uncle Bill Nicholson, Wurundjeri Elder, formally welcomed us onto Wurundjeri Country; a respectful and culturally appropriate way to establish our learning community as we listen, reflect, converse and explore the central place of possum skins in the Victorian Aboriginal culture over the next few months.

Participants were also introduced to 'Possum Skin Pedagogy: A Guide for Early Childhood Practitioners', its history, and place in communicating the intergenerational knowledge of Victorian Aboriginal people.

Our special guest during the second session was an Elder who was consulted during the construction of the document, Aunty Fay Stewart Muir, a Boonwurrung Elder and language specialist. Aunty Fay spoke with the participants around respectfully sharing Aboriginal language with small children.

We are now half way through our learning project and have plenty to explore as more questions are raised with each session. In the third installment participants will be sharing what they have learnt by observing, listening and reflecting on and with the country around them, and in the final session they will be hearing from Vicki Couzens, prominent artist and Kirrae Wurrong/Gunditjimara woman.

We will keep in touch with participants beyond these sessions as conversations and learnings continue.



Choosing Books and Resources

A recent analysis of Nielsen BookScan's 100 top-selling kids' picture books of 2017, conducted by the ABC, proved that when keeping track of gender (who spoke, who was the lead character, what type of character they were), this "crucial cultural starting point" for children is "still male-dominated".

Teachers and Educators will find the fkaCS 'Pedagogy & Practice Resource Sheet: Selecting Children's Books & Materials' a useful guide for selecting and auditing resources available to children at their service. Reflective questions will aid you in identifying whether resources offered to children promote positive or stereotyped content; a key finding in the aforementioned mentioned article.

View ABC article: abc.net.au/news/2018-08-22/kids-book-top-100-analysis/10042904

fkaCS 'Reflection Tips: Selecting Children's Books & Materials': fka.org.au/resources/educator-resources

 **Sector Updates**

What are your language support needs - Interpreter, Translator or Bilingual Worker?

The Victorian Multicultural Commission offers the following definitions of language services:

An interpreter is a qualified professional who enables communication between people who speak or sign a different language. Interpreters take a spoken or sign language and convert it accurately and objectively into another language to enable communication between two parties who do not share a common language. An interpreter should possess training in interpreting and a formal credential.

Accessing an Interpreter

The Department of Education and Training has a contract with the Victorian Interpreting and Translation Service (VITS) to provide interpreting services to Department funded early childhood services. The free service is available for eligible providers to access telephone, video and onsite interpreting services.

See DET website: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/families

Interpreting service Standards and Guidelines courtesy of the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship (OMAC): www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/projects-and-initiatives/improving-language-services/standards-and-guidelines

A translator on the other hand only deals with written information and should also possess training in interpreting and a formal credential.

A language aide is an employee who uses a language other than English in the course of their work. However, language aides do not necessarily hold NAATI credentials and should therefore not be expected to perform the role of a credentialed interpreter. Language aides (such as fkaCS Bilingual Workers) should only assist with low-risk and non-critical communication.

Bilingual Workers

fkaCS Bilingual Workers work under the direction of our Pedagogy and Practice Consultant and early childhood education and care (ECEC) service staff to provide home language to support children's identity, wellbeing and belonging in the early childhood service.

Accessing Bilingual Support

Bilingual support is best used as part of a cultural inclusion plan.

Contact us on 03 9428 4471 to discuss your options for bilingual and cultural inclusion support.

Events & Professional Learning Opportunities

Workshop: Engaging Newly Arrived and Multilingual Children and Families

What can we do to support stronger engagement and connection to our early learning communities for these children and families? Community consultations indicate that multilingual and newly arrived families consistently under utilise early childhood services.

This professional learning session is designed to:

- Identify the factors that build strong connections with culturally and linguistically diverse families.
- Reflect on how services environments, cultures, practices, policies and philosophies “speak to” children and families.
- Determine approaches to curriculum design and pedagogy and practice that supports a sense of belonging for children and families.



Event Details

Thursday 18 October | 9:30am - 12:30pm

City of Melbourne Multicultural Hub

90-120 Swanston Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Save the date! Further details and registration information coming soon.

fkaCS Special Event - Future Directions

The Board of FKA Children's Services invites you to attend an important forum for our Members, Allies and Supporters.

For 110 years FKA Children's Services (formally the Free Kindergarten Union of Victoria) has worked tirelessly to support the Victorian early childhood education and care sector to be the best that it can be.

As we enter into the final year of our 3 year financial plan it is time to review our purpose and place in the Victorian Early Childhood sector in line with current government policy direction and funding constraints.

Event Details

Wednesday 12 September | 6:00pm - 7:30pm

Northcote Multi-Use Space

185-187 High Street, Northcote VIC 3070

Please RSVP via Eventbrite:

www.fkacs.eventbrite.com.au

An event flyer has been included at the end of this newsletter.

Local Events

Ukrainian Festival | Sunday 9 September

Come along for a family fun day at Queen Victoria Market and experience the colour and vibrancy of Ukrainian culture and tasty food.

Sofra Festival | Sunday 16 September

A celebration which will transform the Immigration Museum into vibrant space where visitors will experience the tastes, colours and sounds of Turkish culture.

Moon Lantern Festival | Saturday 22 September

Chinatown Square will host a day of Chinese celebrations including traditional dancing, workshops and musical performances.

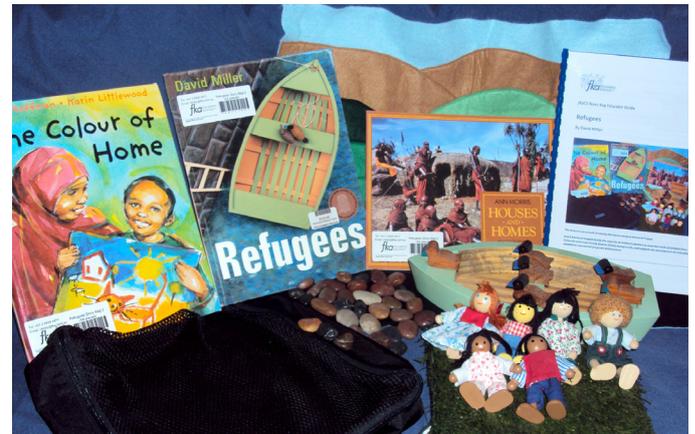
Assam Convention & Dinner | Saturday 29 September

A cultural evening showcasing and celebrating the arts and culture of Assam, a north eastern state of India, held by the Assamese Community of Victoria.

For more information visit www.whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au and www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/events



From the Multicultural Resource Centre



The Value of Rhymes...

Rhymes are sophisticated literary devices which empower children to understand more about tone, volume and patterns of language.

- Rhymes expose children to the rhythm and sound of a language and teach children about the patterns and structures of both spoken and written language.
- Rhymes often follow a clear sequence of events, supporting children to follow, read and understand; preparing children to make predictions and support crucial decoding skills.
- Rhymes expose children to a wide vocabulary and the repetition of rhymes builds memory capabilities.
- Rhyming helps children learn about word families such as let, met, pet, wet, and get.
- Rhymes support phonological and phonemic awareness; the ability to notice and work with the sounds and the smallest units of sounds that make up words.
- Rhymes expand children's imagination and help introduce abstract concepts to children.
- Rhymes allow all children (including emerging English learners) to feel confident in trying new vocabulary.

fkaCS has repackaged a series of Literacy Kits originally written and developed by Rosemary Milne and illustrated by Andrew McLean. Each card comes with a rhyme and a small set of resources. There are 20 available for loan now, with more to come!

Story Bag: Refugees

Using numerous books and props, this story bag has a distinct focus on the meaning of displacement and seeking asylum, prompting discussion around how feelings of safety and belonging are important to our sense of wellbeing and place. It gives children insight into how we can communicate with one another and build relationships, all while creating safe, inviting spaces with props as prompts for children's thinking.

A comprehensive fkaCS Educator Guide is included in this story bag, with prompts, recommended topics for discussion and reflection, and suggested lines of development.

Days of Significance Calendar

Have you downloaded the fkaCS Days of Significance Calendar? There are multiple events coming up in September and October.

This exclusive members-only resource is available for download on our website.

Visit: www.fka.org.au/resources/educator-resources

Member? Browse online www.library.fka.com.au or download resources www.fka.org.au/resources