



REANZ: Reggio Emilia Aotearoa New Zealand

Tūngia te ururua

Kia tupu whakaritorito

te tupu

O te harakeke

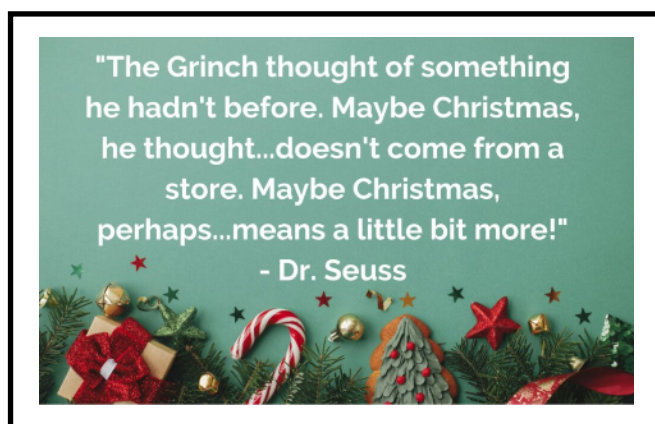
**Clear away the undergrowth
so the new shoots of the
harakeke can spring up**

A time to pause, reflect and to show love and gratitude

It's been a long year for many, and as you read this newsletter, everyone is working hard to make it to Christmas. Teachers put a lot of energy into ensuring this time is special for children and whānau, and it often feels hard going. Then you think about the memories that are made, the hearts that are filled with joy and the warmth that is created, and it reenergises you.

Rituals are things that bind us together and enrich us as human beings. Each school and centre has created these rituals over many years. We remember the smiles on the children's faces, the eager anticipation of the mums, dads and grandparents as they position themselves for the perfect photo. That's when you remember the joy of celebrating Christmas together.

We all know the feeling that comes the day after the Christmas party, or the carol service when you are on a high and everyone is buzzing. You think about the special gifts that you helped a child make. The Christmas decoration that hangs on the tree at home, long after the child has grown up. You know that you have made a difference. There is no better feeling than putting a sparkle, a twinkle and a smile on the face of another.



An Encounter with Tiziana Filippini. Pedagogista from Reggio Emilia

The Trustees recently met for professional development and planning for the 2024 year

In Reggio Emilia ECE settings, the school year begins in September with the team of pedagogistas sharing an intent to a meeting of representatives from the centres in the city. The intent has been created through a review of the past year, observations and conversations amongst pedagogistas and educators. The intent is discussed and shaped further from September to December through collaborative work of pedagogistas and centres. By December, a plan for the progettazione has been designed. It is put into a loose-leaf folder that allows for changes as centre educators reflect on and revise their plan month on month, with guidance from pedagogistas and atelieristas.

Tiziana Filippini shared an example from Allende Preschool of their design/plan. They planned to use:

- the atelier of nature, as the 'red thread' was what nature means to children,
- music and dance as the two 'languages' of children to be enhanced (under-used in the past),
- the key 'word' central to their narration: human figures,
- 'resonances' between dance and music and nature afforded by listening to music, experiencing musical instruments, experiencing dance and music.

When we asked about the length of this project, Tiziana said it took three years, partly because there had been little music and dance prior; also, it was harder to document performative(ephemeral) processes of learning. The project needed to start with analyses of existing knowledge of the participating teachers and leaders (minimal) and then spend time growing their knowledge and experience with these 'languages'. Tiziana talked about her own (minimal) knowledge of dance, saying she didn't know it as a 'language', she didn't have an existing lens or framework to look inside experiences of dancing.

Experts of dance and music were introduced to the teachers, and they participated in dance studio experiences. Children observed dancers and musicians who came into the centres and shared their instruments and music with the children. It was important for the Reggio teachers to be the ones who worked with the children and grow their capabilities in the languages of music and dance, if there was to be a lasting impact.

As the progettazione progressed and was documented, the teachers shared it with their pedagogista and with colleagues elsewhere. Sharing is critical for professional development. After three years centres had completed that project; all key documentation was brought to the Loris Malaguzzi International Centre to develop an exhibition. Its curation provided further professional learning through them articulating the intentions in teaching processes and interpreting the learning. The exhibition of their translated work allowed others to share in and learn from Allende Preschool.

At this point, Tiziana explained that it is like having many components of a puzzle and, in the final stage of the project, the puzzle comes together. A pedagogista's role across the months/years is to view the teachers' and children's work with curiosity, not with judgement. The main goal is for teachers as well as children to learn and grow from the complex learning and research experiences, especially those relating to the 'red thread' at the heart of the design.

Thank you Tiziana for this rich experience where we were able to take a closer look at the process of the formulations of research and professional development within the preschools and infant-toddler centres.



REANZ Trustees with Tiziana

Logan Burson. Helen Aitken, Karen Liley, Lorraine Manuela, Tiziana Filipini, Kerri Fallon, Chris Bayes, Anne Meade, Chrissy Lepper, Rachel Denee. Absent; Lindi Newt, Michelle Doherty and Diti Hill.

Each year the REANZ Trustees meet to look back, to see where we are at in the present, and to think ahead to the next year. We take time to reflect on what went well, what didn't go so well and what we need to improve on.

We have been delighted to provide great professional development opportunities across the country this year, at reasonable cost. It has been so encouraging to have had great numbers for our study groups to Reggio Emilia and Melbourne. A highlight was the primary seminar we held that attracted teachers from a variety of schools and teams of teachers attending together. It's always very helpful when Senior Management is there too!

One of the areas we want to concentrate our efforts on for 2024, is to support our Networks throughout New Zealand to become re energised. Several Networks have a group of people who are committed to planning and putting on professional development for their community. Some of the plans we have will also connect with teachers across Aotearoa.

Our Trustees are from Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Palmerston North. We have primary and early childhood teachers as well as Trustees who work in professional development and tertiary education.

“Italo Calvino in his book ‘American Lessons’, says that imagination is a place where it rains inside. Maybe education is also a place where it rains inside, an open place where words, actions, memories, knowledge, love, amazement, emotions, passions, efforts, bitterness, joys, all rain down.

Education is a place at risk, exposed to the unpredictability of time, an uncomfortable place, but adventurous, true, intense, fascinating.” Sergio Spaggiari. Shared in a presentation by Tiziana Filipini

Transformative change happens when it is explicit - it's a change of a mindset that is achieved by challenging assumptions. Surfacing ideas and misconceptions... and discussing the undiscussable.”

Niho Taniwha: Improving Teaching and Learning for Ākonga Māori.

Dr Melanie Riwai-Couch

Looking Ahead: 2024

Professional Development Opportunities

In February we will be sending out further details for our professional development opportunities. Below are some of the events we are planning.

Online Learning Community Conversation

These three online conversations through the year are free to join. A reading is sent to you prior to the night and used as a catalyst for discussion. These conversations have been very popular and we are looking forward to you joining us.

Unpacking an Inquiry - Coronavirus. A global Pandemic explored by 4 and 5 year olds

In March, Laura Magnavacchi, Atelierista and Prue Crarer, Pedagogista from Peacocks ELC, will step us through this inquiry, sharing the children's theories and the decisions made by the teachers as they created shared meaning. Participants will also have the opportunity to visit the centre.

Collaboratively Creative - Kirsty Liljegen

This series of full day and evening workshops will be held in May. Kirsty and Kelly Goodsir from through their Consultancy, Creative Collective, have developed a series of booklets centred around materials and creativity and these will be used as a catalyst in these workshops. This hands on workshop will combine theory and practice to inspire and engage hearts and minds.

Reggio Emilia Study Tour 11th - 21st, April 2024

This study tour is being led by Helen Aitken, Rachel Dennee and our REANZ Kaiarahi, Brenda Soutar. You will find further information at www.reanz.org and you can register for the study tour at www.reanz.org

Melbourne Study Tour 2024 **Tuesday 3rd - Saturday 7th September**

This study tour will be led by Lorraine Manuela and Kerri Fallon. It combines centre visits and presentations to make it a positive way of seeing Reggio pedagogy that has been interpreted in educational spaces in another cultural setting. You will find further details in the flier attached to this email. Use the link **in the flier** to register or go to www.reanz.org for further information.

The Many Faces of the Assembly - Created by Reggio Children

Participants will work together to unpack this fabulous resource; a 'tool box' that includes ebooks and video examples of children and adults working together on a project about Reggio Emilia preschool assembly practices. The Tool Box is a study of the human figure in drawing, clay and photography and will promote new ideas of childhood, education and aesthetics. The workshop will be particularly useful for teachers working in settings that are Reggio inspired. Our REANZ Trustees will be facilitating these and they will be led by Lorraine Manuela. Lorraine has undertaken the Educator training conducted by Reggio Children and she is the REANZ International Representative for Reggio Children. These encounters will be held in various locations throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

After our very successful Primary focussed seminar held in October, we will be having another later in 2024. Keep an eye out for that!

A series of ECE and Primary Webinars will also be delivered over the year.
Watch this space!

REANZ Reggio Emilia Study Group

Join our REANZ tour leaders Helen Aitken, Rachel Denee and Brenda Soutar from the 11 - 20 April 2024.

What better place to stay in Reggio Emilia than in Hotel Posta or the adjoining annex Hotel Albergo, in the heart of the historical town. As you step out, the markets to the left, the perfect coffee to the right and all the comings and goings which place you in the centre of the cultural space of Reggio Emilia. You watch the evening promenading, see families and friends coming together and wander the old streets.

The group visits Cervi museum on the Friday 12th - a very moving experience that frames the week in the experience the historical and cultural context of Reggio Emilia and its preschools and infant & toddler centres. There are optional day trips to Venice and Florence on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th April. These days allow you to become acclimatised to the time difference. Essential so that you are ready to go on Monday, as the study group begins.

More Information and Registration at www.reanz.org.

A reflection on the April Study Group to Reggio Emilia

Embarking on the Reggio Emilia Tour was a very special experience for us. While we had already incorporated elements of the Reggio approach in our centres being physically present in the heart of this educational philosophy was an incredible experience.

The city itself is a canvas of inspiration, and our accommodation, overlooking the square where children actively participate in their learning, brought tears to our eyes as we woke each morning, pinching ourselves that we were here.

The tour has a magical way of slowing time, urging you to truly 'Be in the Moment.' Despite the packed days filled with inspiration and curiosity, we found ourselves craving more of the rich and diverse experiences it offered.

From the beautiful ateliers to the centres that were rich with open ended possibilities for learning, this tour takes you inside to where the magic of learning truly happens.

To anyone considering joining the Reggio Emilia Tour, we can't recommend this enough. The depth of learning and personal growth it provided made this the best professional development experience in our teaching career. However, it is important to note that this is not just a professional development experience; it is a deeply reflective experience that immerses you into a world where education is an art, and every moment is an opportunity to be captivated. This tour opens your eyes to a view that will forever shape your approach to education and life.

The tour leaders are passionate, personable and go to every length to ensure you get the absolute best out of this experience. They fostered connection amongst the group and by the end of the tour we found ourselves wanting to make plans for the future so that we can be together again.

Leanna Miratana and Maria Maresca. University Kids. Wellington.



The Wendy Larmer Memorial Award



Reggio Emilia Aotearoa New Zealand (REANZ) has created the Wendy Larmer Memorial Award in memory of Wendy's strong passion for the Reggio Approach and her many years of commitment to the REANZ Trust. Wendy passed away in December 2020 after a distinguished career in early childhood education; teacher, centre owner, Ministry of Education Senior Advisor, REANZ Trustee and Chairperson.

We miss her deeply.

Applications for this award are open until January 31st 2024. Further details and criteria are available at www.reanz.org.

Books from the REANZ Library

The REANZ library has a number of fabulous books for you to borrow: Check the books available and the instructions about how to order them, from the website; www.reanz.org

REANZ Trustees

Chairperson - Helen Aitken
Kaiarahi - Brenda Soutar

Secretary - Chris Bayes
Patron - Dr Anne Meade

Treasurer - Karen Liley

Reggio Children International Network Representative - Lorraine Manuela

Trustees; Diti Hill, Rachel Dennee, Kerri Fallon, Michelle Doherty, Logan Burson, Chrissy Lepper, Lindi Newth.

Meri Kirihimete wishing you all a relaxing, safe and joyous Christmas season from the REANZ Trustees

Kia kaha, kia maia, kia manawanui

The REANZ Trustees

Check out our website; www.reanz.org Be in touch; reanz@gmail.com