

TASMANIAN EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION

PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD NOMINEES

2008



MERRIN PIKE



Merrin has worked in the early years sector for nine years. Merrin, a trained teacher, supports other teachers and paraprofessionals from other Launching into Learning schools and has initiated new programs in response to the needs of children and parents in her area. Some of the programs that she has initiated include:

- Little Ones Book Buddies where children are paired with older students who read stories to them;
- Let's have Fun Out which provides regular sessions out of the school environment to a variety of community organisations; and
- Dad's Night which recognises the need to provide support for dads as well as mums.

Merrin is currently the coordinator and facilitator of Little Footprints Early Learning Centre based at Mt Faulkner Primary School.

CLARA BAKER



Clara has worked in the early years sector in the George Town community for sixteen years, supporting young children and their families. Clara is a member of the George Town Early Years Committee, responsible for Tiny Tots on Show and Let's Read. Clara's early years literacy work has identified her as a leader in this field and she is currently a Literacy Coach and First Steps Speaking and Listening Facilitator for Learning Services North. She has recently initiated an Infants Aquatics Program and the Aboriginal Early Years Project. Clara is a Pre Kinder Advanced Skills Teacher at Port Dalrymple School as well as the Early Years Coordinator of the Junior School.

ANNA KAYSA DE VRIES



Anna Kaysa De Vries, known to all as Kaysa, has been teaching for around 40 years and she has been a valuable part of the Channel Christian School since 1990. Her years at Channel Christian School have left a whole generation of parents and children, some now parents themselves and entrusting their children to Kaysa, richer in community, in education, in faith and confidence. Kaysa has spent years as a volunteer councillor, leader, national president, trainer and ambassador at large for vital ministry to teenage girls called GEMS.

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FRAN PARKER



Fran Parker has worked in education for more than 30 years. Fran's knowledge, skills and experience were recognised with a Westfield Scholarship (2006) to travel to USA and Europe to further develop her expertise in the development and delivery of programs Birth to 6 years.

Fran was instrumental in getting the International exhibition *The Hundred languages of Children* to come to Hobart in 2007. Working with the Tasmanian Research Network in 2008.

LORRAINE MCGEE



Lorraine McGee has been the resident Family and Child Health Nurse in Break O'Day Municipality for over 11 years and has worked tirelessly for the children and families in the community. Lorraine has been awarded the Break O'Day Council Australia Day Citizen of the Year 2007 and also the Children's Week Award for outstanding achievement in child care in 2000.

NORMA PANAGAKOS



Norma had a change of career, undertaking a Bachelor of Teaching in 1998, and has been working with children for the last 8 years. Norma developed a parallel kindergarten program at the Friend's School and went on to establish the New Horizons Pre School Learning Centre. As the Director of the Centre, Norma is a dedicated trainer to her staff and bases her work on the Reggio Emilia philosophy and an inquiry based curriculum. One of the initiatives at New Horizons is a conservation program teaching young children about creating a greener environment. Norma's dream is to create a one-stop-shop concept for early childhood health, wellbeing and education.

ROWENA WILKINSON



Rowena has worked in the education sector for more than 28 years and has developed a strong focus on working inclusively with young children with disabilities and their families. Rowena's leadership strengths are based on strong and positive working relationships with families and colleagues across sectors. Rowena is currently the State Coordinator Early Childhood Intervention Service and is President of the Tasmanian Chapter of Early Childhood Intervention Australia.

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TAMIKA ROSS

Tamika Ross is a senior social worker with the Derwent Support Service. Over the last 10 years she has worked tirelessly with children, parents and families to provide the care, support and resources required to foster safe, happy home environments. Tamika is the co-ordinator of the 'At School, On Time, Ready to Work Project' and is a member of the newly formed state-wide school attendance working group.



SUZANNE PURDON

Suzanne, an early years educator, has achieved significant outcomes with communities, family and individuals across Tasmania building increased social capital and enhanced life opportunities for children and parents. Some of Suzanne's achievements include:

- Initiating and developing the b4 concept at Herdsman's Cove Primary School and now across 5 primary schools in the Brighton municipality;
- Initiating and coordinating the 'Walk of Wonder' in 2006 and 2007, a project that aimed to market the importance of the early years to the Brighton Municipality; and
- Initiating, planning and launching the 'Adopt a Patch' project at the local nursery.

Suzanne is currently the Network Leader of the South East schools in the Launching into Learning program facilitating and supporting schools to provide high quality early years programs for their local community families.

SUE HALL



Sue Hall is the Kindergarten teacher at Dover District High School, running the Launching into Learning Centre that incorporates the B4 Kinder program, Little Kinder at Dover and Southport and the Little Kinder Outreach program for isolated families in the region. Sue has raised the profile of early years education and parenting within the community through local media, photo displays and excursions in the broader community. Sue's work locates the child within the community, nurturing families and older and younger children to develop ties that are carried throughout the school years and beyond.

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CLAIRE MCKAY



Over many years Claire McKay has been a committed and enthusiastic member of the team at Blackmans Bay Children's Services. Claire has been responsible for the development of several projects that have enriched children's learning. These include:

the Empathy Program 2000 an innovative social skills program for pre-school children; and

Snowflake- the room's mascot. The bear 'Snowflake' is taken on home visits by the children, with families documenting the visit in a room portfolio.

Learning Together Award for Education Excellence Literacy Journey Project (2002); and

Learning Together Award for Education Excellence-Empathy Program 2002.

MARILYN MARKS



Marilyn works with three Neighbourhood Houses (Pittwater, Okines and Dunalley) in the Sorell Municipality and set up the South East Parenting Support Program in the area. Marilyn worked tirelessly in this program for two years that was modelled on the Early Support for Parents program. Making many contacts in the community, training volunteers and matching them with parents in need of support. This was a particularly difficult project due to the issues of small rural communities trust and confidentiality.

LEE FARRELL



Lee has been a teacher's aide at the New Norfolk Primary School for nearly 5 years and assisted in setting up the Supporting Togetherness and Relationships in New Norfolk program. Lee played a pivotal role in setting up the program with the kindergarten teachers, determining activities and taking the groups on many of the activities. Lee is also an artist in the Derwent Valley community and as a prep aide her creative skills have assisted in the development of many art projects over the last 12 years.