

# Early Education

The British Association for Early Childhood Education

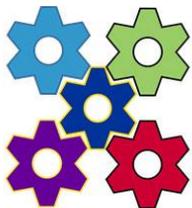
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## Early Years Teaching Newsletter June 2018

Welcome to this month's news. We gather information and links on early years pedagogy to inspire and support your practice.

### Pioneers, creativity and child-centred education

Our opening link this month is [What happens to student behaviour when schools prioritise art](#). I am encouraged when I read that the story of transformation

*illustrates an essential truth in education. The problem is not usually the students; it is the system. Change the system in the right ways and many of the problems of poor behavior, low motivation, and disengagement tend to disappear. It can be the system itself that creates the problems.*

I also invite you to watch this video [The best kindergarten you've ever seen](#) (10 mins) about a kindergarten designed in Tokyo by architect Takaharu Tezuka. I hope that it will inspire, enlighten or even challenge your thoughts about early years pedagogy and designing learning "enabling" environments for children. [Inside the world's best kindergarten](#) blog shares more.

Back in the UK, this documentary [West Rise school by the marsh](#) (16 min) shares a vision of how the head, Mike Fairclough leads freedom, innovation and creativity in this junior school and how he believes challenging children physically creates grit and resilience. You can [follow the head and school](#) on twitter.

Take a look at this [piece from the BBC](#), featuring an interview that Simon Schama

had with pupils from Alperton Community School. This school is where Andria Zafirakou works. Andria is an arts and textiles teacher / associate deputy head and was the [winner of the Varkey Foundation global teacher prize 2018](#).

[This video](#) (a 5 minute watch) shows how Andria inspires a passion in us for doing what we love. Her enthusiasm and commitment are infectious. Congratulations to her for winning this prestigious teaching award. You can follow her on twitter [@Andriazaf](#).

I encourage you to keep pioneering for what is right for young children. Creative solutions and passionate practitioners and leaders are everywhere inspiring EYFS provision that is child-centred and pedagogically sound. Remember that [our principles](#), [documentation](#) and [Associates](#) can support and affirm you in your pioneering. Please do [contact us](#) if you would like further information.

Another very worthwhile watch and share is the film [Project wild thing](#) on BBC iPlayer. It is made by dad and filmmaker David Bond who wants to take his children back into nature and break their indoor screen habit. It covers brain development, screens, pedagogy, regulation and being outside. It's a long watch (1 hour 20 mins), so perfect for an evening as you sit down after your busy day or week. *(Please note this link is only available on iPlayer for a VERY limited time only – until Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2018, I think).*

If you need further affirmation or conviction about your pedagogy, the [Child centred diversity in quality early childhood education and care](#) will be very informative. This is a research project led by Verity Campbell-Barr (who is also an Early Education trustee) and Jan Georgeson. All project partners are listed in the link. [Their](#)

[literature review](#) (same link as before but scroll to the bottom of the page) is a quality pedagogical document which I consider a must read for all those involved in child-centred practice. It states:

*According to numerous researchers... child-centred practice should be seen as:*

- a) focusing on children learning through play,*
- b) respecting children's needs, interests, strengths and capacities,*
- c) recognising children's learning strategies,*
- d) recognising children's uniqueness,*
- e) respecting children as capable learners,*
- f) respecting children's participation and decision making,*
- g) respecting children's diversity and individuality, and*
- h) respecting children's family and culture.*

Truro and Cambourne maintained nursery schools, both in Cornwall, are partners in the project and they along with Verity Campbell Barr and Jan Georgeson [presented their project at our conference in May](#).

### **Communication and language**

Our Annual National Conference had inspiring presentations about communication. All the conference handouts and papers are on our [conference page](#). Associates and members Helen Moylett and Nancy Stewart gave a great conversational presentation about Learning, Playing and Interacting and Di Chilvers shared with us inspiring stories about engaging in our own sustained shared thinking through practitioner and teacher research in practice. Kathy Hirsh-Pasek was the keynote speaker. Talking with children matters so much and here is an article co-written by Kathy: [Talking with children matters: defending the 30 million word gap](#).

### **Babies, communication, brain development and research**

Thanks to colleagues Suzanne Zeedyk, Alison Gopnik and Fiona Holiday, I have discovered @nprEd on twitter which has recently done a series called [#howtoraiseahuman](#). NPR is America's National public radio and has an education section.

The interview with Alison Gopnik [What kind of parent are you: carpenter or gardener](#) (click on the play button top left of page) advocates "providing protected spaces for unexpected things to happen" in early childhood, and as a parent. Listening brings to mind for me the conflicting pedagogy that Bold Beginnings offers in contrast to Early Education's principles (linked previously).

If you read the article on the same page, in the paragraph at the end Gopnik encourages us to whisk egg whites with our young children and let them do it their way and make mess all over the walls. Her conclusion: *give the child the freedom to take risks, explore and be autonomous.*

Another NPR article and interview [Baby talk: decoding the secret language of babies](#) is a 30 minute listen plus short article read. At the bottom of the article there are some interesting videos of young children communicating – insightful for those of you working with babies and interested in interaction and communication in the youngest of children.

Also included is an enlightening and powerful video and explanation of a research project entitled [Interpersonal synchrony increases prosocial behaviour in infants](#) by Laura Cirelly, Kathleen Einarson and Laurel Trainor. The video shows how babies bouncing in a sling, in synch with an adult, are more likely to respond to a request for help later. The researchers' [full article](#) concludes that motor synchrony with

music could support the early development of altruistic behaviour.

A lovely watch is this YouTube video called [Talking twin babies](#). Their communication, social cues, exchange, intonation, rhythm and body language shows that they know so much about talking.

The [Brain Development page](#) for Zero to Three is a great resource for learning about brain development in babies and young children. They have written a resource called [A year of play](#) which might be useful for those of us working with babies, with parents and carers, and with children's centres – many of their ideas look useful, especially the practical, hands on, multi-sensory ones.

[Baby's brain begins now: conception to age 3](#) gives an overview of brain anatomy, how the brain is wired and how early experiences affect brain development.

In this Guardian article [Teenagers' brains not ready for GCSEs, says neuroscientist](#), Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, a professor of neuroscience, questions the timing of exams during a period of major cognitive change. She also wrote [Why teens should understand their own brains \(and why their teachers should, too!\)](#) for NPR.

Given that brains are developing and changing throughout childhood and adolescence we must teach and understand what children need and how they best learn.

### **Other news**

Lisa Cherry tweeted an article related to mental health and trauma that I thought I would share. ["We're going on a bear hunt" a metaphor for trauma and healing](#) written by Shelley Williams, a psychotherapist, offers a different perspective of the bear

hunt story and uses it as a metaphor for a healing journey.

You may already have accessed the [Early Learning Toolkit](#) from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF). The toolkits for early years and primary colleagues might be useful if leaders are looking at an analysis of interventions covering cost, impact and evidence.

I was interested to hear [Desert Island Discs interviewing Sir Peter Lampl](#) over half term. He was a businessman and now a philanthropist who set up the Sutton Trust. I liked hearing his fascinating story and about how he is committed to improving social mobility and combat educational inequality.

Anne Harding, Early Education member and associate, has a new blog out [Picture books and their value – and some useful websites and publications](#).

Take a look at what Zurich's department for education have produced in this brilliantly presented project called [I see something – what do you see?](#) It causes me to reflect on how fortunate Zurich is to have an education department promoting this pedagogy for their youngest children. The website is such a rich resource for us to share with colleagues.

## Churchill Fellowships

In our last newsletter, we shared information about the [Churchill Fellowship](#) opportunities. Weekend woman's hour had a feature on the fellowships on Radio 4, sharing stories about three successful fellowships are on this [Woman's hour broadcast on 4.5.18](#) (you can hear it from 33.37 minutes in and it's a 7 minute listen). These are not specifically early years related, but we look forward to hearing more from our pioneering and inspiring members who won the fellowship this year, including Pete Woodhouse (Early Education Associate) and Kierna Corr (Early Education trustee). Applications for 2019 are now open.

## Have a successful month

Do keep us informed of your successes and news that we can share with others.

*All the best, Cathy Gunning*

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Follow Cathy on Twitter [@earlyed\\_cathy](#)

This newsletter is designed to be read on screen so you can click through to the links (underlined in the text).

Don't forget we also upload lots of it into our member's pedagogic pages so that you can look it up there at a later date if you don't have time to read it all now.

**We welcome your feedback on the content and design of this newsletter.** Please email [cathy@early-education.org.uk](mailto:cathy@early-education.org.uk)

*This newsletter was produced by Early Education, in association with the following Early Years Teaching Schools:*

*Acorns Early Years Teaching School Alliance, Barnet Early Years Alliance, The Birmingham Nursery Schools Teaching Alliance, The Bradford Birth to 19 TSA, Bristol Early Years Teaching Consortium, Durham Primary Teaching School Alliance, Early Foundations Teaching School Alliance, East London Early Years and Schools Partnership, Foundations for Learning, Foundations Teaching School Alliance, North Liverpool Teaching School Partnership, Oxfordshire Teaching School Alliance (OTSA), Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance, Scarborough Teaching Alliance, South Thames Early Education Partnership, Warwickshire Consortium Teaching School, West Ipswich (Early Years) Teaching School Alliance.*

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