

Book review



Flourishing in the early years

Contexts, practices and futures

Category: Book Reviews / Self-help

Author: Zenna Kingdon, Jan Gourd, Michael Gasper (eds)

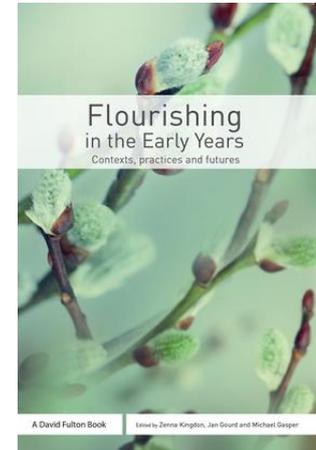
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Publisher: Routledge, UK

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Audience: For Schools & Education, For Community

Summary: Looks at the conditions that enable children and those engaged in the early years sector to flourish



Flourishing in the Early Years discusses the importance of providing preschool children with an environment where they have the freedom to play and learn. To enable this to happen, the book stresses the importance of supporting teachers and families, who themselves must also be flourishing.

The book is divided into three sections. The first section looks at the concept of flourishing, what it means and how it is shaped by historical, political and policy frameworks. It considers issues such as school readiness versus social and emotional development, holistic development and the influence of the cultural environment.

Section two examines practices, the issues facing early childhood educators when dealing with parents and professionals in the community. It stresses the importance of working in partnership with families, the role of pedagogical documentation, and the growth in popularity of outdoor learning.

Lastly, the book looks to the future and considers the long-term issues that need to be regularly reviewed in order for children, teachers and families to continue to thrive within the early childhood setting.

This book is a broad look at what a flourishing early childhood community looks like and how this can be facilitated. For this reason, it is an invaluable resource specifically for professionals training or working in the early childhood sector. This publication not only provides a lot of information and analysis of the issues raised, but also includes reflective tasks for the reader.

Although the authors are British, the issues explored are very relevant to New Zealand, especially in the context of the current government's desire to improve child wellbeing; the discussions around pay parity for Early Childhood Educators; and the growing popularity of forest schools. Its content is consistent with New Zealand's Early Childhood Curriculum, Te Whāriki, which places great importance on children's holistic development, the influence of the home environment and working in partnership with whānau and the community.

Reviewed by Charmaine Denney, Early Childhood Teacher and mum to two boys

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Phone: 09 623 4810 | www.mentalhealth.org.nz
Units 109-110, Zone 23, 23 Edwin Street, Mt Eden, Auckland
PO Box 10051, Dominion Road, Auckland 1446