

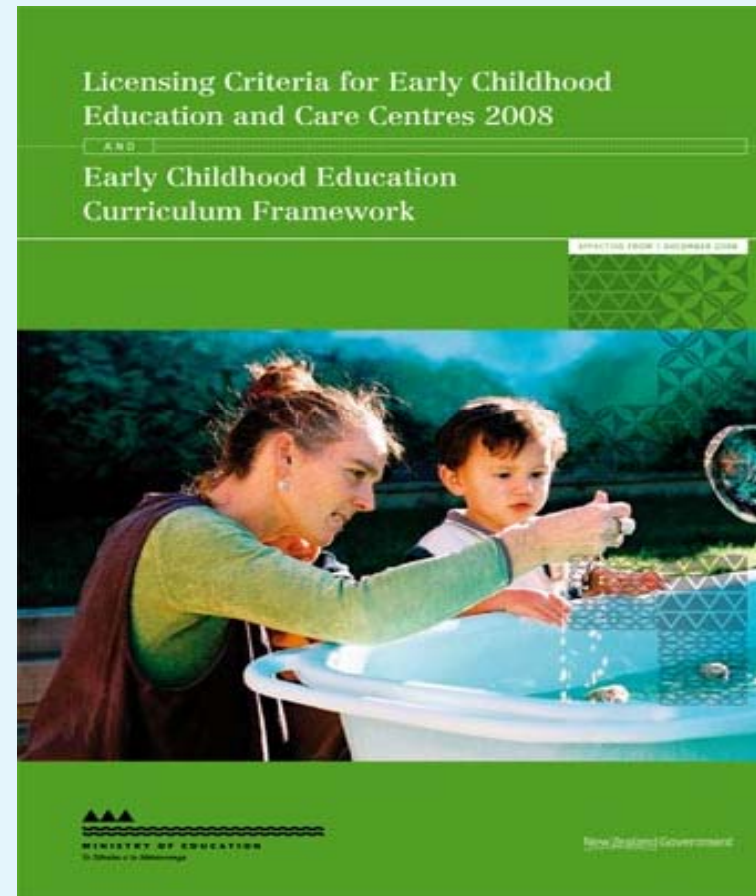
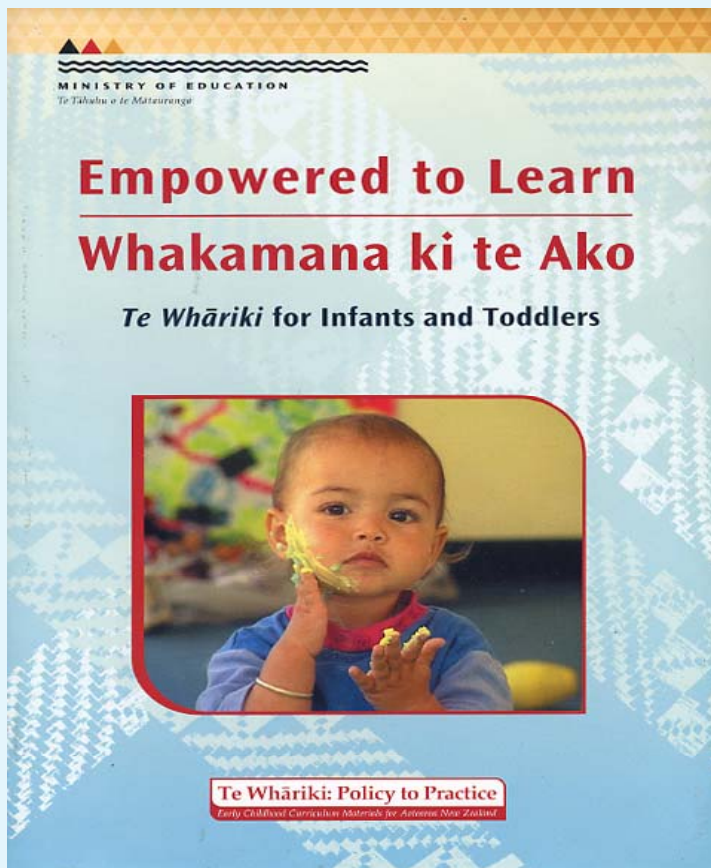
***“WHAT DOES QUALITY INFANT-TODDLER
CARE AND EDUCATION LOOK LIKE?”***

*A discussion on shared care
as a contemporary context of childhood.*



*Jean Rockel,
CPC Network
Auckland, 2011.*

The Ministry of Education provide guidance regarding regulations and professional development and seeks information on what quality looks like for children under two years.



*Quality early childhood education for
under-two-year-olds: What should it look like?
A literature review.
Report to the Ministry of Education, by*



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<http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/ece>

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New reality...

- More infants and toddlers in childcare (U3 doubled over two decades)
- ERO report (2009) highlighted variable quality across licensed ECS

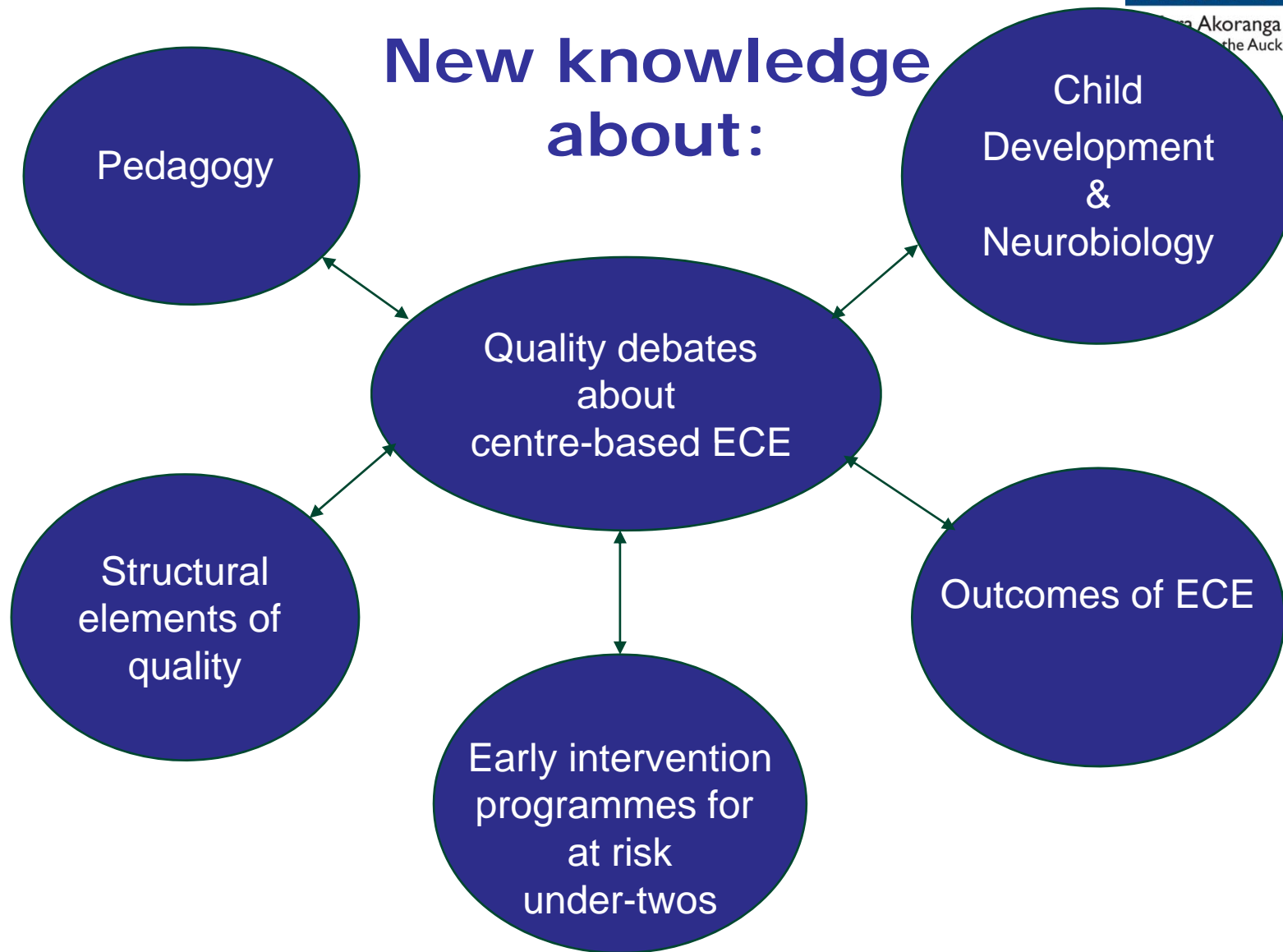
New questions...

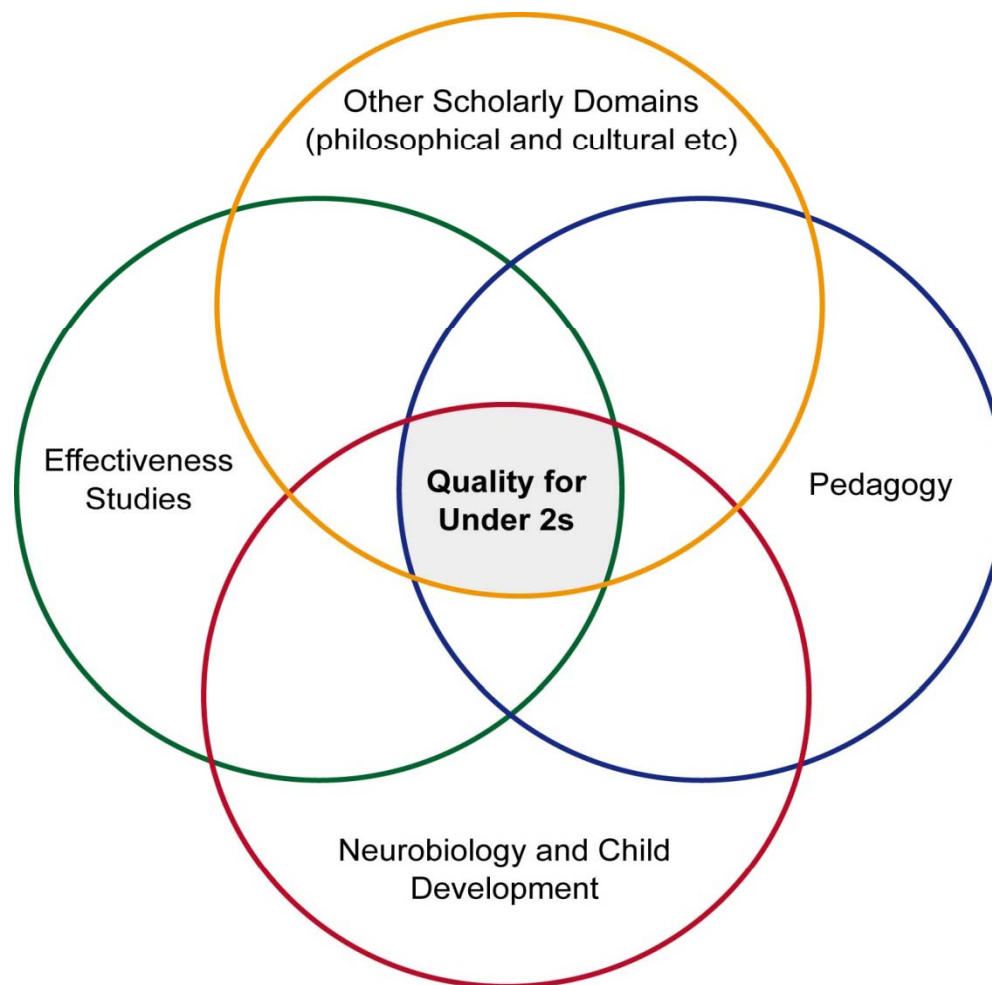
- What implications arise for centre-based EC care and education?

New knowledge

- What new knowledge should be factored into:
- understanding quality?
 - policy decision-making?

New knowledge about:





Three key messages

Quality early childhood settings for under-2s should be:

1. places where children experience sensitive responsive caregiving;
2. low stress environments that actively avoid toxic stress, including:
 - low adult-child ratios (1:3 or 1:4)
 - small group sizes (6 to 8)
 - calm quiet environment
3. places where environmental conditions and teacher action interact within a broader supportive policy infrastructure

Desirable ECC teacher practices for positive emotional regulation (Gloeckler, 2006, in Dalli et al, 2011)

1. Being both physically and emotionally present to the children
2. Providing warm, responsive, predictable care
3. Spending a large part of the day sitting, kneeling or bending down on the children's level
4. A steady stream of both verbal and non-verbal (emotional) communication that is positive and warm
5. Narrating what is happening, explaining, and giving advance notice for changes in activities
6. Language that is respectful and responsive
7. Appropriate use of warm, sensitive touch
8. Engaging in many, ongoing reciprocal interactions where teachers stop, look and listen for the child's response
9. Looking and listening with attention to what children are saying
10. Consistent primary caregivers/teachers

Cont'd:

11. Offering choices
12. Labelling and describing emotions
13. Daily routines that build a sense of safety and security
14. Setting limits in ways that model and teach children appropriate social skills and self-regulation
15. Offering comfort and support for children's emotions in ways that model for them strategies for how to take care of themselves and calm themselves down.
16. Emotional protection and fairness
17. Distraction
18. Inviting participation in activities rather than requiring it
19. Creating space or access for children to come and be near, around or on lap of teacher/caregiver
20. Calling children by their names
21. Allowing time for transitions
22. Engagement in shared activities - fun, enjoyment, delight, emotional connection and meaningful for teachers and children.

A place where teachers will say:

...our job is to be in partnership with the child and their families and find out what is important for each particular family and work out how that fits within the centre and our philosophy.

(Childspace Ngaio Infant and Toddler Centre of Innovation, 2010)

What should a high quality NZ EC setting for under-2s look like?

A place where...

“the ebb and flow of the environment, with its unhurried pace, sets the scene for children to explore freely...”

(White et al., 2009)

A place where a teacher might explain teaching as:

“...a finely balanced role, an intuitive role that sees each teacher making decisions ‘in the moment’ poised as provocateur, as listener, as learner, as teacher, ever vigilant for opportunities to widen and deepen knowledge ... It is a highly skilled position and one that can enhance and constrain learning in the blink of an eye”

(Greerton Early Childhood Centre’s Centre of Innovation
Research project final report, cited by Sands & Weston, 2010)

And perhaps the child will ask:

- Do you know me?
- Can I trust you?
- Do you let me fly?
- Do you hear me?
- Is this place fair for us?

(Adapted from Podmore, V., May, H., & Carr, M. (2001). The "child's questions". Programme evaluation with Te Whāriki using "Teaching Stories". *Early Childhood Folio*, 5, 6-9.)

“... teachers, in choosing to work with very young children, have taken on a serious vocation, they have become co-creators of childhood memories.” (Nyland & Rockel, 2007, p.90)



Reference:

Nyland, B. & Rockel, J. (2007). Infant-toddler care and education in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand: In search of status. In L. Keesing-Styles & H. Hedges (eds.) *Theorising early childhood practice: Emerging dialogues*. NSW: Pademelon Press.