

Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC)

MINUTES	29 JUNE 2011	10:00AM – 3:00PM	RM 3.26, LEVEL 3, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
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Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC)

DISCUSSION	Brief overview on the reports released regarding under twos recently and to identify issues that need to be addressed immediately
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Under-two year olds are the fastest growing group in ECE.
 A summary of some of these reports:
 OCC Report:

- Provided a good representation about what is happening for children under-two
- Mostly positive
- Signalled that ECE of high quality is good for under-twos
- Didn't focus on importance of ECE for children from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Didn't take into account educational shifts for children from Pasifika and Māori backgrounds
- 8 areas were identified that contribute to quality ECE for under-twos
- Many recommendations that cover areas from policy design to on the ground operation. Recommendations included actions for the Ministries of Education, Health and Social Development.
- Report proposed a basic redesign of ECE for under-twos in ECE services and that the funding system and initial teacher education be reviewed

Under-two literature review

- Report to the Ministry of Education. Completed by Carmen Dalli et al.
- Identified that only quality ECE is able to make a difference.
- High quality ECE can be a protective barrier for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Parallel findings with the OCC report
- Covers what should ECE for under-two look like and focuses on environments that support the development of under-twos

Taskforce report

- Supported ratio changes for under twos

Gluckman report

- Emphasises the importance of the first 5 years
- The earlier the intervention with high quality ECE, the more beneficial the experience is for children
- Link between risk factors and mental and health disparities in children

What are the priorities in this area? Some suggested about priority areas from the group:

- Breast feeding/parental support/maternal mental health
- Housing, health and wellbeing of whānau
- Cross ministry initiatives
- First 12 month initiatives
- Group size/ratios and regulation for low stress environments.
- Parental education, maternal and infant health
- Strengthening teacher understanding and knowledge
- Ratio improvement/regulation of ratios
- Discussion around regulating ratios to be smaller. Costing done in the ECE Taskforce report is based on the increase of funding from MoE to regulate for lower ratios.
- Decisions making space is in the next 6 months
- Under two group size to be major focus in centre size changes.
- Possible workshop on priorities for under-twos with the ECAC group and possibly big chain providers

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
SEND LINKS TO REPORTS DISCUSSED TO ECAC MEMBERS	██████████ s 9(2)(a) OIA	ASAP
INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT SERVICE TYPE UNDER TWOS ARE ATTENDING THE MOST	██████████ s 9(2)(a) OIA	ASAP
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO COME BACK WITH A PROCESS TO DEAL WITH WORKSHOPING AND DISCUSSING UNDER-TWO PRIORITIES AND GENERAL	██████████ s 9(2)(a) OIA	ASAP

Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC)			
MINUTES	5 December 2013	9.00am – 2.00pm	Rm 1.86, Justice Centre, Wellington
DISCUSSION	Group Size Discussion [Redacted] s 9(2)(a) OIA		
Key points from the presentation – supported by powerpoint <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we be clear that there is any evidence of a problem without a group size regulation? • Noted that the OECD table in the presentation highlights definitional issues, making comparisons between countries difficult. • ERO monitoring of quality since introduction of 150 centre size has found no evidence of a decline in quality in these larger centres. • Noted the challenge for delivering quality in a very large open space that has no natural space divisions • Concerns were noted in particular for group sizes for children under 2. • Noted that attempting to regulate might create unhelpful divisions by age which could serve to limit a child’s learning experience. • Agreed to have a working group to continue this discussion further and report back to ECAC. 			
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	
ECAC members to provide names for working group to secretariat [Redacted] s 9(2)(a) OIA	ECAC members	24 December 2013	

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Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC)			
MINUTES	3 June 2014	9.00am – 2.00pm	Rm 3.26 St Pauls Building, Wellington

DISCUSSION	Group Size Update [Redacted] s 9(2)(a) OIA
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- A working group has been put together made up of ECAC members and 2 academics.
- The Ministry has developed a paper on group size which will be passed to ECAC to review.
- The Ministry has developed a Terms of Reference for discussion which is to be circulated to ECAC.
- There is a lack of evidence on how we define group size, whether there is actually a problem and if there is, the size of the problem.
- The group feel that they need to commission some research and that group size is an issue that needs further exploration. It is possible that the research could be based on data that is available already.
- The Ministry has been clear they would need to divert funding from somewhere to cover the costs of this and that could pose risks to other programmes of work.
- ECAC recognise that people confuse 'centre size' with 'group size' but they are different things.
- Any research should cover all of ECE and not be limited to any age group.
- The Ministry hasn't had any feedback of specific instances where group size is an issue.
- The group discussed ECAC commissioning a survey, it was agreed that this probably would not provide the required information.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Circulate Group Size paper and TOR to ECAC	[Redacted] s 9(2)(a) OIA	asap

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