

# Cardinia Shire Council 2011 Early Years Conference



  
CARDINIA



## *Creating a child-friendly city*

Cardinia Cultural Centre  
Lakeside Boulevard, Pakenham  
(Melway ref: 215 H5)  
Cost: \$175



Friday 21 October 2011  
9am–4pm

Register online at:  
[www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/children](http://www.cardinia.vic.gov.au/children)

## Keynote speaker – Pam Cahir



Pam Cahir has been the Chief Executive Officer of Early Childhood Australia for 22 years; a national organisation which advocates on behalf of young children. Passionate about supporting parents and other professionals who are responsible for the growth and development of young children and to do that work well. She strongly advocates quality, social justice and equity in all issues relating to the education and care of children from birth to eight years of age. Pam's background was a research officer with the Australian Council of State School Organisations, the national government schools parent organisation and later senior Vice President of that organisation.

She initiated the National Children's Services Forum (NCSF) which brings together the national children's services peak organisations to discuss issues, reach policy agreement and engage with government ministers and departmental officials. She was also responsible for the development of Early Childhood Australia's flagship magazine *Every Child*.

Pam conceived and lead 'Building Bridges: Literacy development in young Indigenous children' project, which sought to find a way to bridge the gap between what Indigenous parents and their communities see as important about what their young children know and are able to do, and the teaching and learning process in early learning services. The methodology used in this project has been recognised worldwide as respectful of and empowering for people from different cultural backgrounds.

She is committed to maximising the capacity of the world wide web to support those who work directly with young children and reduce their professional isolation. The outcomes of this have been the development of the [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au), ECA Webwatch a respected early childhood eNewsletter, and the work currently being done by ECA in regard to the potential of social networks to support those working with young children.

### Topic: Children as citizens

ECA suggests that a further reason for the development of a national agenda for children arises from the recognition of children as citizens. As citizens, children have a value as human beings in the here and now, not simply for what they might become. As citizens, they have an entitlement, independent of their parent's capacity to pay and shared by all other citizens, to the resources, that is policies, programs and funds necessary to ensure:

- their wellbeing in the here and now experience of childhood
- their increasing capacity to participate as full and responsible citizens in the social, economic and political life of society
- that they can and will exercise their responsibility as adults for future generations of children.

## Keynote speaker – Julie Rudner



Julie Rudner lectures in Community Planning and Development at La Trobe University – Bendigo. Julie focuses on child-friendly cities, children's rights, children's experiential learning, cities as sites for learning, and children's participation in planning and design. She uses child-centred mixed methods approaches to her research. Her PhD thesis explored parents', local government officers' and policy conceptions of risk in relation to children's independent mobility.

### Topic: Reconceptualising planning with and for children

This presentation will provide a brief history of the position of children in planning, dominant conceptions of children and their abilities to participate within policy and research about, for and with children in cities. It explores how many disciplines or fields contribute to the conceptions of children, including planning, urban design, transport, education, health and community development.

## Keynote speaker – David Engwicht



David Engwicht is one of the world's most inventive thinkers on creating vibrant public spaces and is the founder of Creative Communities International, an incubator for social innovation which works to build the capacity of citizens and cities to create vibrant neighbourhoods, prosperous shopping streets and add magic to the public realm.

An award-winning and prolific author, David is known around the world as a social inventor, artist, and 'street philosopher'. Often hailed as the 'traffic calming guru', he is credited with pioneering the concept of the Walking School Bus and invented the Neighbourhood Pace Car.

### Topic: Child un-friendly cities: is the problem in our heads?

Urban environments are an incarnation of our mental maps – our meta-stories. The child unfriendly city is therefore a result of the meta-story we tell about childhood and children. This story began to change dramatically with the scientific revolution and certainly the industrial revolution. Before this time, children shared the same identity as adults – rooted in place and kin. After this time, children could not share adult identity which was now rooted in 'being a productive machine'. Children became 'productive machines in training'. The creation of this new concept of 'childhood' produced a new form of city which was fundamentally child unfriendly. Ironically, much of what is done in the name of making cities more child friendly reinforces this meta-story. Creating child-friendly cities requires a radical rethink of the nature of childhood, and what becoming 'grown up' really means.





**8.30am–9.15am Registration and traders display**  
**9.15am–9.30am Official opening and launch**  
**Cardinia Shire Mayor Cr George Blenkhorn**

**9.30am–10.15am Keynote speaker – Pam Cahir**  
**Children as Citizens**

**10.15am–11am Keynote speaker - Julie Rudner**  
**Reconceptualising planning with and for children**

**11.am– 11.15am Morning Tea**

**11.15am–12.15pm Workshop – Concurrent sessions – Block 1**

**Session 1A : Pam Cahir**  
*Talking with Children*  
We need to remember that it's not necessarily how much adults talk to children that makes the difference. It's how well they talk. How can you weave rich conversation into the regular fabric of children's experiences in your programs?

**Session 1B Dianne Aykut:**  
*Creating a child-friendly city*  
Maximum 30 participants.  
Build a child friendly city using recycled materials! These programs are great in teaching everyone how to re-use recycled material in a creative, useful and fun way.

**Session 1C Narelle Debenham: Inspiring nature play**  
It is a child's right to have regular, meaningful connection with our earth. This workshop will illustrate how 'child-friendly' nature really is. Discover how children develop empathy, creativity and a sense of wonder for their natural environment. Learn how to map your area for happy, healthy outdoor family fun.

**12.15pm–1pm Lunch break and networking and traders display**

**1pm–2pm Keynote speaker – David Engwicht**  
**Child un-friendly cities: is the problem in our heads?**

**2pm–3pm Workshop – Concurrent sessions – Block 2**

**Session 2A David Engwicht:**  
*Profound play – the only way to create child-friendly cities*  
This workshop explores the concept of 'profound play' an adult form of play that combines reason and play. It explores how change agents can use six different types of play to change the underlying meta-stories and create more child-friendly cities. Participants will be challenged to change the relationship they have to the child in their own head.

**Session 2B Rosalie Rogers:**  
*Child Friendly Cities – the journey continues*  
This session will highlight the journey the City of Greater Bendigo undertook to become a Child Friendly City with a particular emphasis on the last two years. There will be examples of what has and has not worked. A future focus will also be presented.

**Session 2C Dr Jenny Veitch:**  
*Physical activity – healthy children*  
It is critical that we find ways to increase the time spent in physical activity and decrease the time spent in sedentary behaviours. Neighbourhood parks are an important setting for physical activity; so it is important to understand how to attract people into parks and facilitate greater levels of physical activity within parks.

**3pm–4pm Workshop – Concurrent sessions – Block 3**

**Session 3A Stephen Golding and Daniel Solis:**  
*Relaxation for young children*  
Introduction to the MAT program as a service for use in schools. The concepts and exercises used to teach students life skills within the school environment in an interactive session where participants can learn and enjoy some of the most popular techniques in the MAT program.

**Session 3B Mick Robertson:**  
*Gardening with children*  
We look at the reasons we need to engage early years children with our outdoor living environment and how we might creatively go about that. This will be a hands on and interactive session, full of practical ideas that can easily be incorporated into programs or play time at home.

**Session 3C Rose Meredith:**  
*ZumbAtomic with Rose*  
ZumbAtomic is a fun fitness program for children aged 4 to 12 years. Combining Zumba's fun rhythms and games, this session will provide a fun, safe demonstration of a typical ZumbAtomic class.

**4pm Conference close**



# Workshop presenters



## **Dianne Aykut**

Dianne Aykut has been running Mad Art Works for 10 years. She works with children and adults to show them how to have fun with art while using recycled materials.



## **Narelle Debenham**

Narelle Debenham is primary teacher trained. Over the past 20 years, Narelle has worked in schools and kindergartens helping to create dynamic outdoor areas for children to engage in creative forms of free and unstructured play. Since 2007, Narelle has planned and coordinated weekly opportunities for local families and their children 0–5 years, on the Mornington Peninsula, to play in nature together. Narelle is involved as a consultant in community education and training, to inspire ‘nature play’.



## **Rosalie Rogers**

Rosalie Rogers is currently Manager of Children and Family Services for the City of Greater Bendigo. She has a background in nursing and a Graduate Diploma in Business Management. Rosalie has been a strong advocate for children and has progressed the notion of ‘child-friendly cities’ of which Greater Bendigo was invited to be Australia’s first.



## **Dr Jenny Veitch**

Dr Veitch is a National Heart Foundation of Australia funded Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Centre for Physical Activity and Nutrition Research at Deakin University. Dr Veitch has a particular research focus on the neighbourhood physical environment and how the features and design of places such as public open spaces may promote opportunities for physical activity.



## **Stephen Golding and Daniel Solis**

Martial Arts Therapy (MAT) program is an active therapeutic modality combining the principles of traditional martial arts training exercises and games with those of psycho-social rehabilitation to teach life skills in schools. Features group programs at primary and secondary level and support for individual students with special needs.



## **Mick Robertson**

Mick is Education Coordinator at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne. He has a long-term interest in engaging children in the outdoors, sustainability and creative futures.

Originally trained as an outdoor adventure instructor he has worked increasingly in the field of early years and primary school education.



## **Rose Meredith**

Married with four children, Rose Meredith has worked in the fitness industry since 1991. As group fitness coordinator, mentor and instructor she has provided all types of group fitness to all ages and levels of ability. Rose has been instructing Zumba and ZumbAtomic since 2010. Her wish is that people lead a healthy and active life and enjoy any activity they would wish.

