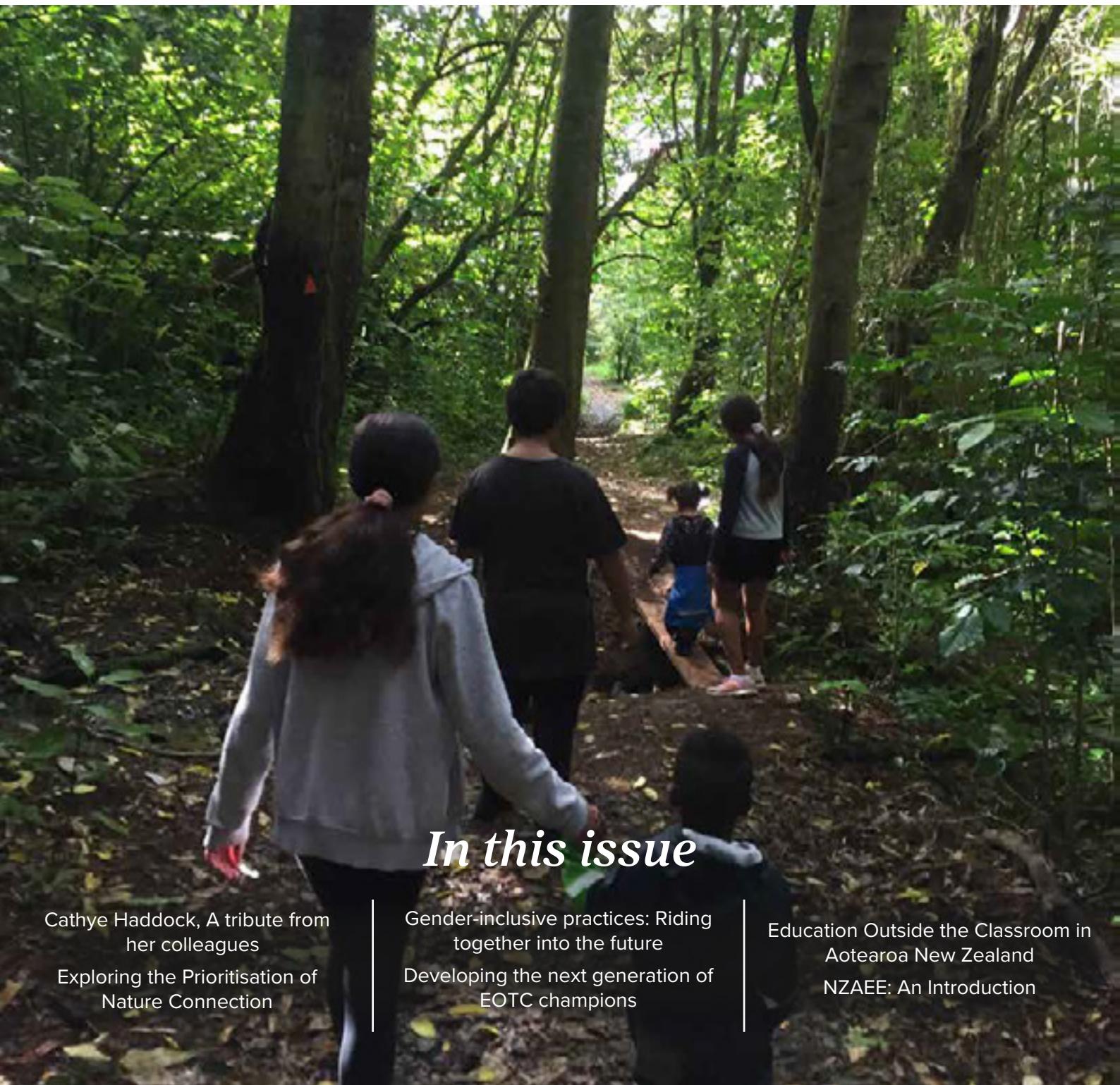


# *Te Whakatika*

The Aotearoa New Zealand Professional Practice  
Journal for Outdoor and Environmental Learning.

**Issue 40**  
**Summer 23**



## *In this issue*

Cathye Haddock, A tribute from  
her colleagues

Exploring the Prioritisation of  
Nature Connection

Gender-inclusive practices: Riding  
together into the future

Developing the next generation of  
EOTC champions

Education Outside the Classroom in  
Aotearoa New Zealand  
NZAEE: An Introduction

**Editor**  
Dr Maureen Legge

**Editorial board: Interim**  
Dr Allen Hill  
Dr Chris Eames  
Celia Hogan  
Becky McCormack

**Design and Layout**  
Kadin Williams

**Front cover image**  
Becky McCormack

**Back cover image**  
EONZ

**Contributions**  
Material for publication is welcome. Please send contributions to the editor Dr Maureen Legge email address: editor@eonz.org.nz A review of all articles occurs before publication and blind review can be arranged for academic articles upon request. If you would like support and guidance with your writing we are happy to assist.

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## ***Te Whakatika Purpose statement***

Sitting at the nexus of academic inquiry and educational practice, *Te Whakatika* seeks to create a space to share good practice, innovative ideas, and critical engagement in outdoor and environmental learning.

### **In doing so, *Te Whakatika* seeks to:**

- Provide access to the space between academics and practitioners, to connect these spaces.
- Encourage academics to make their work accessible to practitioners through practical application
- Encourage practitioners (teachers and other education providers) to share good practice and innovative ideas from their work through writing articles.
- Encourage strong connections between theory, research, and practice
- Encourage and support high quality learning and teaching in outdoor and environmental contexts.

## ***Te Whakatika – Editorial Issue***

Summer 2023.

Welcome to this issue of *Te Whakatika*, The Aotearoa New Zealand Professional Practice Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Learning. After a break from publishing *Te Whakatika* over the last 18 months due to Covid-19 and capacity pressures, we are delighted to be relaunching *Te Whakatika* with a revitalised kaupapa, refreshed design, and innovative online presence. More importantly, we are excited that this important publication is now a partnership between the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE) and Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ). For several years EONZ and NZAEE have been looking for ways to work more closely together as the purpose and values of our organisations are closely aligned. This collaboration means a wider audience with a broader range of writers and contributors. It also advances the kaupapa of *Te Whakatika* in ways which reinforce the intersections between experiential hands-on learning in outdoor places, and the crucial outcomes of environmental and sustainability education.

The purpose of *Te Whakatika* has also been refreshed and clarified. Sitting at the intersection of academic inquiry and educational practice, *Te Whakatika* seeks to create a space to share good practice, innovative ideas, and critical engagement in outdoor and environmental learning.

This editorial is a collaborative effort from our interim editorial board: Dr Allen Hill [EONZ board member], Dr Chris Eames (NZAEE national executive) and our new editor Dr Maureen Legge.

## Editorial Continued

Before handing over to Chris, and Maureen, we believe it is important to formally recognise the amazing contribution that previous editor, Dr Dave Irwin, has made to both Te Whakatika and outdoor, environmental and sustainability education over the last 2 decades.

Dave took over as editor of Out and About (as it was then called) in 2009. Over the course of 12 years, Dave moved the publication forward, broadening its focus and appeal to include a more diverse range of voices and issues related to outdoor and environmental learning. One memorable recent issue focused on the School Strike 4 Climate protests and featured a range of perspectives from rangatahi who were passionate about making a positive impact on climate change.

In 2017, Dave oversaw the process of renaming Out and About to Te Whakatika, working in consultation with Māori colleagues and the EONZ board. He held the editor role as a volunteer on top of his leadership position in sustainability and outdoor education at Ara Institute of Canterbury. Dave worked hard to ensure there were sufficient and appropriate articles for each issue, something that was not always easy. We are very grateful for the contribution he has made in holding and nourishing the kaupapa of Te Whakatika over a long period of time.

Ngā mihi nui ki a Dave.

*Dr Allen Hill*

### From NZAEE

On behalf of the New Zealand Association of Environmental Education (NZAEE), I am delighted to welcome you to this issue of Te Whakatika. NZAEE were very pleased to be invited into this collaboration with EONZ as we have long admired the kaupapa of this journal as a voice for the academic-practitioner space, and we wished we had access to one for our members. Now we do, and we look forward to bringing you exciting work in outdoor learning and environmental and sustainability education, and everything in between. Now more than ever this work is vital, as the need for connection to the outdoors to help foster more sustainable ways of living is urgent. Ngā mihi ki EONZ and NZAEE members.

*Dr Chris Eames.*

### From the Editor

In this issue of *Te Whakatika* a range of articles reflects our kaupapa. To begin, Dr Sally Birdsall gives an insight into the underpinnings of Environmental Education in Aotearoa New Zealand as we welcome them as partners in Te Whakatika. A tribute from friends and colleagues of Cathye Haddock, who tragically died in 2022, recognises her as a long-time contributor, author, promoter, educator, and advocate for education outside the classroom. After compiling a comprehensive study of EOTC, Dr Allen Hill et al, present an executive summary informing us of the recognised values, challenges, and importance of EOTC to Aotearoa New Zealand schools.



Recommendations from this study direct educators towards future steps to ensure that EOTC continues to flourish.

In her article, Thea DePetris describes how environmental education can make a difference locally in the face of increasing global environmental concerns. Her work draws together the effect of community-based environmental programmes in tandem with schools to emphasise nature connectedness which she argues must be prioritised for students to take action for the environment. Sophie Watson highlights practical and educative steps to ensure those on outdoor ventures support and respect women participants who may have their periods at the time.

Who is going to sustain teaching in the outdoors in the future? Dr Margie Campbell-Price considers this question and suggests guidelines for schools to support student teachers' EOTC learning and teaching during practicum. In turn, she notes that initial teacher education providers must inform schools of student teachers' learning about EOTC so that each is positioned to support one another. Margie's call is for a new generation of 'EOTC champions' mentored in schools, to ensure they are able to continue this powerful tradition of outdoor teaching in meaningful ways for today's contemporary society. Finally, an overview of website information from EONZ and NZAEE, a veritable feast of ideas, activities, and information, should leave you thinking about the variety of learning activities you can teach outdoors.

I sincerely hope you enjoy reading these

articles and I encourage you to think about and write about what you do, how and why, and submit it for future publication. You could even write a letter to the editor! How to submit details are available in this issue and you will be well supported when you make that decision. Finally, there must be a number of you who read this journal whom I have taught in the past. I would love to catch up and hear of your work in the outdoors so please get in touch and help keep the EOTC and Environmental Education kōrero moving along.

*Dr Maureen Legge.*

# The New Zealand Association for Environmental Education: An introduction

*Dr Sally Birdsall*

The team at the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE) is excited to be joining with Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ) in this new venture. We are passionate about pursuing a more sustainable world through education, and about making research relevant and applicable for teachers and educators. We are focussed on connecting and inspiring educators, ākonga and communities to learn, collaborate, and take action for Papatūānuku.

This issue's theme of 'refreshing and reinvigorating' also aligns with the work that NZAEE has been undertaking in the past few years. With increased funding, our team now makes sure that the NZAEE website ([www.nzaee.org.nz](http://www.nzaee.org.nz)) is constantly growing with classroom resources, professional learning and inspiring stories. We see *Te Whakatika* as another way of linking academic research with classroom practice and student voice, and look forward to our future involvement.

## About Us

The New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE) was established in 1984. The organisation is the 'peak body' for a diverse group of teachers, educators, policy makers, academics, and service providers for whom Environmental Education or Education for Sustainability is core to their professional work, and usually to their sense of personal purpose as well. For many years, as a volunteer-led organisation, NZAEE has run biennial conferences, held branch meetings and advocated for the enhancement of our kaupapa.

In early 2021, we were successful in securing Ministry of Education Networks of Expertise funding for the first time, which assists subject associations to deliver support for teachers and kaiako. This has allowed us to conduct strategic planning, build a new website ([www.nzaee.org.nz](http://www.nzaee.org.nz)), run a national conference with more than 450 participants in October 2022, and offer regular webinars for professional learning.

## Our Strategy

Through our strategic planning, we developed a new vision in the form of three purpose statements:

### Our Kaupapa where:

- People of Aotearoa are empowered to be in sustainable relationships with the natural environment and each other, to regenerate our world

### Our Collaborators where:

- We support a community of educators – teachers, programme providers and communities – and keep all ākonga (and their children's children) at the heart of our mahi.

### Our Impact where we want our community of educators to:

- Have access to resources and learning opportunities
- Feel connected, informed and inspired anywhere in Aotearoa
- Have a louder, respected and united voice

Based on these purpose statements, the National Executive now has three Impact Areas and everyone on the Executive contributes to one or more of these areas:

### Impact Areas

#### 1. Capability

This group organises national webinars each term, has overseen the collection and curation of material for our revised website and organised a national conference

#### 2. Networking

This group has overseen the re-design of the website to make it a central hub for resources and profiling of providers. They worked with the Capability group to organise the national conference.

#### 3. Advocacy

This group has worked to communicate more regularly with members and make submissions about environmental education to local government and central government when needed, e.g. The Emissions Reduction Plan and the refresh of The New Zealand Curriculum and NCEA Achievement Standards. They are also working on reviewing the Constitution.

## The NZAEE Team

NZAEE is governed by a National Executive which currently has 10 members. The Executive is led by Sally Birdsall (Chair, University of Auckland), Robyn Zink (Co-chair, Enviroschools, Otago) and Elspeth McMillan (Treasurer, Greater Wellington Council). Other Executive members Gill Stewart (Enviroschools, Wairarapa), Annie McDonald (Enviroschools, Marlborough), Sian Moffit (BLAKE, Canterbury); Nettie Stow (Whenua Iti, Nelson), Chris Eames (University of Waikato), Pam Crisp (Seaweed Coordinator, Wellington) and Michaela Coleman (Ministry for Social Development).

We have skilled people assisting with logistics and administration – Debbie Courtney, our Administration Assistant, Becky McCormack, who looks after our revised website and keeps it current, and lastly our Executive Officer Chris Montgomerie, who expertly keeps our Association running and the Executive working together and on track.

## Become a Member

We invite you to consider joining our membership of educators from across the early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education spectrum, a vast range of environmental education organisations and local and central government. See <https://www.nzaee.org.nz/membership> for more details.

*Dr Sally Birdsall, Chair, NZAEE*

## Cathye Haddock (1957-2022). A tribute from her colleagues.

**“With the loss of Cathye, the outdoor field has lost one of its best educators and staunch advocates” (Mike Boyes)**

Cathye tragically lost her life at sea, along with other members of the Nature Photography Society, just a short distance from Kaikoura. On my calculation,

Cathye Haddock gave 45 years of service to education. By any measure, this is an extraordinary contribution and one that is even more noteworthy when the enduring impact and legacy of Cathye’s work in EOTC begins to be truly considered. This article considers a few of the many impacts Cathye had and will continue to have on EOTC in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Cathye: Educator and innovator

Prior to joining the Ministry of Education in 2002, Cathye had created a name for herself in the education and outdoor sectors. She taught at Turangi Primary School and Hirangi Primary School in the late seventies; the Christchurch Polytech; Rotoiti Lodge in St Arnaud (1991-97); the Christchurch Teachers College; the Central Institute of Technology (WelTech); and led several practical training modules in sea kayaking, ski touring, tramping, and camping for the School of Physical Education at Otago University. Ali Ward, a colleague who taught alongside Cathye in Turangi Primary when they were both in their first 2 years of teaching, recalls Cathye “had a lot of passion and energy and ideas about teaching right from the start”.

*Cathye was living in a teachers’ hostel with other young teachers from around the North Island (although Cathye’s family was in Turangi). They introduced me to basketball -I’d never played before as I’m quite short! There was a social competition on Thursday evenings,*



*and I often stayed at their hostel after our games as I was living 30 minutes outside Turangi at the time. It was a lot of fun. Cathye had such a ‘can do’ attitude – it was very infectious, and I so clearly remember her big smile and encouragement to give things a go (Ali reflects)*

Cathye’s inclusive and innovative teaching and leading approaches left a mark on everyone she taught. As Fiona McDonald recounts, Cathye was an “amazing teacher” who people remembered.

*I first met Cathye when she took me on my first Sea Kayak trip when I was at Otago PhEd School. Ten days in the Marlborough Sounds that everyone of us on that prac still remember and talk about when we bump into each other. Cathye demonstrated in no uncertain terms that there was a place for women to lead in the outdoors at a time when there weren’t that many female instructors. (Fiona reflects)*

Cathye brought thoughtfulness, humour, creativity, and innovation to her teaching and leading. She was equally at ease delivering safety management workshops for Boards, Principals and Teachers in charge of Education Outside the Classroom (EOTC) or working alongside community, volunteer, school, tertiary and sector groups in the outdoors. Cathye created environments that gathered people in and engaged them fully in learning. Gemma Periam notes her capacity to think outside the box to bring the learning alive:

*One of my fondest memories of Cathye was working on the first professional development package to support the 2002 EOTC guidelines at her home with a small group of passionate outdoor education teachers. It was her idea to chop up a treasured parachute (I think) to develop an interactive group activity to explain the “safety is a shared responsibility” concept. The PLD for EOTC management to this day still uses this or a variation. (Gemma Reflects)*

Cathye’s contribution as an educator was also evident in the significant role she played in the growth of Project Adventure NZ. This project saw the spread of the ‘Project Adventure

message’ through the 90s with games, initiatives and problem-solving activities, ropes courses, briefing and debriefing introduced into the outdoor world, teacher training programmes and schooling. One of the many legacies that Cathye leaves us with, as Ross Merrett notes, is the Rix’atix!

*You may have come across a Rix’atix if you have used a rope course built by Project Adventure New Zealand (PANZ) in the 1990s or early 2000s. The term refers to the static belay device of two vertical timber posts and three or more horizontal timber rails. One end of the belay rope is woven in and out, and at times around the horizontal rails, allowing varying levels of friction to be applied to safely belay and lower participants on a vertical rope course activity. Cathye was set on having this as the primary belay device on an element to be installed near Rotoiti Lodge and was determined to find a name that aptly described this technically simple belay device.*

*After a long day of activities at a Project AdventureNZ Trainers’ workshop at Lake Rotoiti Lodge, a game of Balderdash occurred after dinner. This is a board game where players each read out a seemingly nonsensical word, along with a selection of potential definitions from which fellow players try to choose the correct definition. That evening, Cathye had great delight in reading out the word she drew from the pile of cards – “Rix’atix”. Unbeknown to other players, she then embellished the options with her own nonsensical definitions, increasing the challenge for us all. To cut a long story short...we all selected what we thought was the most ‘believable’ definition yet unsurprisingly, no one got it right. After lots of laughter and with another of her trademark smiles, Cathye said, “That’s what I am going to call that belay device, a Rix’atix”. And that is how the Rix’atix got its name here in Aotearoa!*

*I believe the Balderdash card that night gave*



*the Rix'a'trix definition as 'silly old hag'<sup>1</sup>. I will always remember Cathye as a very strong and capable woman with the most amazing smile and laughter, and an ability to connect with anyone. I prefer to define Rix'a'trix as a strong capable woman and a static belay device, in other contexts. (Ross reflects)*

### Cathy: EOTC advocate, researcher, and leader

Cathy was a prolific writer and research was a continued area of interest and leadership throughout her career. In 1993 she researched and produced the NZ Mountain Safety Manual (NZMSC) #27: Managing Risks in OE Activities. Cathy's Master's degree thesis

*'Teachers talking about their epics: near misses in Outdoor Education' (1999) led to advocacy, workshops, and many published papers.*

Following two double school fatalities in 2000 the Ministry of Education, under pressure from advocates led by Chris Knol, created a position within its team in 2002 and seconded Cathye to lead a review of the Ministry of Education Outside the Classroom Guidelines.

Cathy established a Reference Group, aka advisory group, and sought the advice of the members, their organisations, personnel within the Ministry, including the legal folks, and schools through focus groups. Consultation was valued and research undertaken, sometimes in partnership with others. Cathye, Paul Reddish, Kay Phillips, and Liz Thevenard

wrote the Victoria University and Ministry published 'Training and qualification needs of EOTC Leaders' in 2009. This document informed both the Ministry and the Outdoor Leader Qualifications Alignment Project and illustrates the value that Cathye placed on informed decision making and collaboration.

In 2003 the September minutes of the Reference Group noted "the attendance of Cathye Haddock in her role as full time Ministry of Education Senior Adviser." During the period 2002 to 2014 under Cathye's leadership the Ministry produced and published the following:

- Safety and EOTC – A good practice guide for New Zealand schools 2002
- Outdoor Activities Guidelines for Leaders 2005
- EOTC Survey Secondary School Report 2007
- EOTC Survey Primary School Report 2007
- EOTC guidelines: Bringing the Curriculum Alive 2009

Cathy was adept at assisting schools when tragedy struck. Guiding schools through trauma; incident investigations and reviews were strengths she brought to the role. As Catherine Kappelle so aptly notes: "Cathy was instrumental in keeping EOTC firmly on the MOE radar and never stood back completely until she knew it was in safe hands there. She continued to put her own time into EOTC after moving to other roles".

*Cathy was one of those formidably tenacious people who would not stop exploring every avenue to get what she needed to ensure whatever she was working on was of the highest quality. Such things as the MSC risk management manuals and the first edition and then subsequent excellent EOTC guidelines*

*documents are testament to this. An awesome and rare quality Cathye had - she just didn't seem to get anyone off-side when she was on a mission. I think it was her always calm and level demeanour and that wonderful little smile and chuckle. That she was incredibly competent didn't go amiss either! (Gemma Periam reflects)*

### Cathy: Loved colleague, peer, mentor & friend

A common thread in all the reflections and stories that have been shared in thinking about and writing this article was that Cathye was a truly exceptional *woman*. Known for her ready smile, frequent chuckle, respectfulness, grace under pressure, and inclusive approach Cathye's collegiality and commitment has been central to the development EOTC over the last four decades.

In his speech at Cathye's retirement function at the Ministry of Education early in 2022, Arthur Sutherland spoke about many attributes, including Cathye's ability to move within 'the powers that be' within the Ministry; within the Outdoor sector; and at the same time, she was able to connect with the personnel working at the coalface at the likes of the Boyle River Outdoor Education Centre; great collaboration skills; excellent communication skills; one to one and with large audiences; superb organisation skills and methodical approach; and goal oriented process. Cathye always strove to provide the Ministry with the best advice. According to Cathye the EOTC Reference Group which met 4 to 5 times per year was 'a team of 20 with the best brains in the country sitting around the table'<sup>2</sup>

*Behind the roles was an exceptional woman: (1) at heart, a warm, compassionate, and caring person and (2) a highly skilled and exceptional communicator who could get people to happily*

*work together for common goals. Beneath her effectiveness was a commitment to sound preparation, certainty that things could change and an ethic of belief that the natural outdoors is an incomparable educational medium. Cathy forged friendships where-ever she went and was very politically savvy. (Mike Boyes reflects)*

The recent national EOTC study (Hill et al, 2020) identified “EOTC champions”<sup>3</sup> as a key enabler of EOTC flourishing in schools. Cathy was the personification of an EOTC champion and has contributed significantly to the enrichment of the lives of young people in Aotearoa and to the enrichment of the environment. She was a skilled and knowledgeable outdoorsperson who deeply valued people and places in her work. The place of EOTC in the Ministry of Education is largely due to Cathy’s drive and dedication.

As Catherine Kappelle observed

*The change to include and embed curriculum in the 2016 guidelines was also thanks to Cathy’s work. This was an important shift for the understanding of learning in contexts away from the classroom and strengthened the future of EOTC in our education system.*

The final words are from Mike Boyes.

*Cathy’s presence in our lives and her contribution to EOTC will be so deeply missed. Cathy was a rare diamond who could move mountains. Kia tere te kārohirohi i mua i tōu huarahi. May the shimmer of light ever dance across your pathway.*

#### Footnotes

1. Google offers the following on Rix` a’trix
- n. 1. (Old Eng. Law) A scolding or quarrelsome woman; a scold. Webster’s Revised Unabridged Dictionary, published 1913 by G. & C. Merriam Co.
2. Personal communication
3. Hill et al, March 2020 EOTC in Aotearoa NZ-A Comprehensive National Study: Final Report talk about the champions of EOTC being one of the enablers of EOTC

By Arthur Sutherland, with contributions and thoughts from Mike Boyes, Fiona McDonald, Gemma Periam, Ali Ward, Ross Merrett, and Marg Cosgriff, and Catherine Kappelle.

#### About the author and contributors

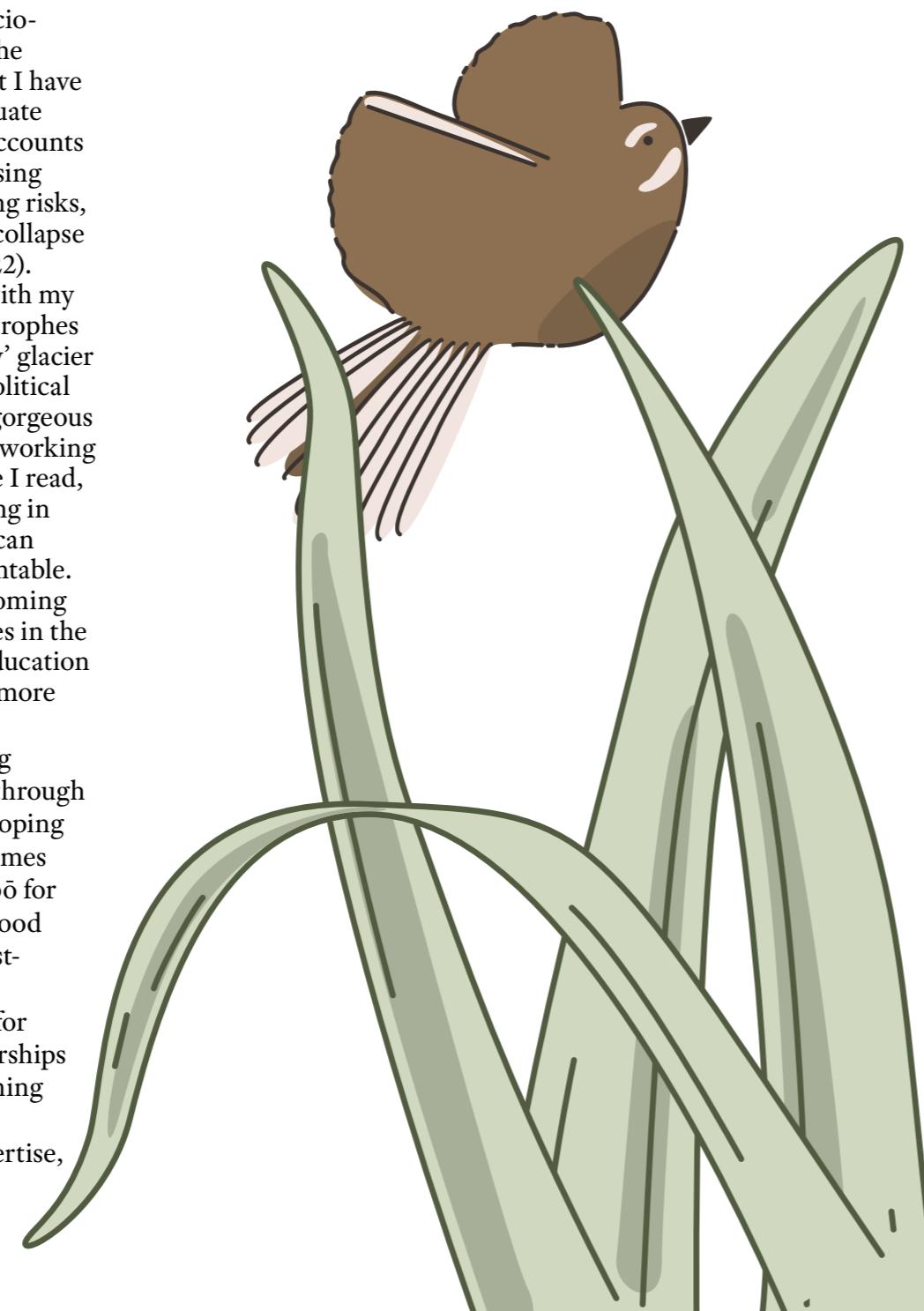
- Arthur Sutherland, one-time EONZ, OutdoorsNZ and Project NZ Board member. Life member of EONZ.
- Mike Boyes, one-time EONZ and OutdoorsNZ Board member. Life member of EONZ, Associate Professor University of Otago
- Catherine Kappelle, until recently EONZ Executive Officer. Life Member of EONZ
- Gemma Periam, one-time EONZ Executive Officer and Board member. Life member of EONZ.
- Ali Ward, retired teacher. Active rock climber, biker and tramer.
- Ross Merrett, one-time Project Adventure Board member, trainer, and Executive Officer.
- Marg Cosgriff, one-time Project Adventure Board member and trainer. Senior Lecturer University of Waikato
- Fiona McDonald, long time EONZ Board member. Currently, the EONZ Chief Executive Officer

# Exploring the Prioritisation of Nature Connection by Environmental Education Organisations in Aotearoa New Zealand

*Thea DePetris*

Accounts of the growing number of socio-ecological crises are commonplace in the environmental education literature that I have been exploring since starting postgraduate studies in 2015. Lately, though, these accounts reflect a turn for the worse with increasing references made to the likes of cascading risks, ecological tipping points, and societal collapse (Bradshaw et al., 2021; Maplecroft, 2022). Worryingly, such forewarnings align with my daily media intake that speaks of catastrophes in all shapes and sizes, from 'doomsday' glacier melting to global food shortages, geopolitical rifts, and warfare. As a mother of two gorgeous human beings and someone who loves working with rangatahi of all ages, the literature I read, in conjunction with the reality unfolding in front of me, is confronting. At times it can feel overwhelming and even insurmountable. But having a purpose is good for overcoming dystopian-induced apathy, and mine lies in the re-imagining and implementation of education in ways that lead to a regenerative and more sustainable future for all.

In addition to my studies, I have long worked as an environmental educator through which I have played leading roles developing non-profit, community-based programmes such as Kids Greening Taupō and Taupō for Tomorrow, which support early childhood organisations and schools. Through first-hand experience, I have come to know how important these programmes are for establishing school-community partnerships to provide real-life environmental learning contexts, and assist kaiako through the provision of professional learning, expertise,



and resources (Bolstad et al., 2015; DePetris & Eames, 2016). Support for environmental education programmes is, however, inconsistent, and often inadequate, which makes working in these roles not always a straightforward task.

Take for example the 2017 update of the national strategy for environmental education for sustainability through a cross-governmental agency approach (Department of Conservation et al., 2017). The excitement that coincided with the publication of this plan and its key objectives soon diminished as the reality set in that no resourcing had been set aside for implementation. To say the least, a significant faux pas by the bureaucratic machine! And so, educators continued to do what they have always done, getting on with their jobs within the capacity provided by whatever resourcing can be secured to keep their programmes afloat.

## Exploring the network of Environmental Education Organisations (EEOs)

My study commenced by developing a national database of EEOs<sup>1</sup> as I was aware that there was very little research or documented information about this network of organisations. Through a web-based search and help from regional informants, 304 EEOs were initially identified, comprised of a wide range of organisational types (i.e., governmental, non-governmental, businesses, and individuals). An online questionnaire consisting mainly of multiple-choice questions was sent to all these EEOs, to which 43% responded. Analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire provided a useful snapshot summary of the EEO network and their respective programmes in terms of features like respective target audiences, learning outcomes, and pedagogies. Additionally, through the questionnaire's

one open-ended question, organisational representatives reported a need for more opportunities to network, collaborate, and increase the visibility of the benefits derived through the discipline. Alongside more sustainable funding, these mechanisms were perceived by respondents as critical to improving the overall effectiveness of the network.

Another key finding from the questionnaire revealed that the greatest number of participating EEOs, equating to 80% of all respondents, prioritised developing nature connection as a key learning outcome. Serendipitously, around the same time as undertaking this questionnaire, I had also started examining the growing body of international literature about the theory of nature connectedness and nature-based education. These constructs caught my attention because they were not part of the regular language I used as an environmental educator. And so, with this literature in hand, in conjunction with the finding that developing nature connection was significantly prioritised by EEOs, I set out to explore how nature connectedness and nature-based education aligns with, and/or could further contribute to our collective praxis here in our motu.

The following stages of my study included a second online questionnaire (stage two) and fourteen in-depth interviews (stage three). This next questionnaire was sent to all organisations listed on my EEO database. For stage three, a diverse group of organisational representatives were purposely selected and invited to participate in interviews, allowing for a deeper exploration of their praxis in relation to nature connectedness and nature-based education. The remainder of this article focuses on my findings from the stage two questionnaire, while a second article is planned for a later date about my findings from the stage three interviews.

<sup>1</sup>This database has since been integrated into the newly revamped website of the New Zealand Association of Environmental Education ([www.nzace.org.nz/providers](http://www.nzace.org.nz/providers)).

A total of 53 EEO representatives responded to the second online questionnaire, which simply asked:

1. Why does your organisation believe it is important to develop nature connection?
2. How does your organisation develop nature connection in learners, and why does it do it in this/these way(s)?

### **Why EEOs believe it is important to develop nature connection**

Analysis of data from the first question above demonstrated strong evidence of participants' belief that the root cause of our socio-ecological issues lies in humanity's disconnection from the rest of nature, and therefore, reconnecting was considered imperative. As explained by one participant:

*We believe that nature connection is important because most of the problems facing the world today come from humanity's disconnect from nature. This disconnect has led to indifference toward other species and the planet and created the climate crisis. (Participant #24).*

This belief of EEOs aligns with a growing global recognition that a failing human relationship with nature is an underlying cause of our environmental crises (Stockholm Environment Institute & CEEW The Council, 2022; United Nations Environment Programme, 2021). Often framed through the concept of 'disconnection', its theoretical origin lies in the global proliferation of cultural beliefs and structures through which humans have come to view themselves as separate from, superior to, and in control of nature. It is this anthropocentric worldview that underpins the model of societal progress in western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic (WEIRD) countries and

still pervades as a core assumption in how most countries conceive development and growth (Giusti et al., 2022). Additionally, this worldview is also characterised by an instrumental valuation of nature and the assumption that human-induced, negative impacts on Papatūānuku can be externalised and isolated from human well-being (Giusti et al., 2022). The significant impacts on our planet's functioning and web of life that the global community is now clearly witnessing makes evident that such a worldview is flawed. As posited long ago by White (1967) in *The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis*, our problems are as much philosophical ones as they are scientific, technological, political, and economic ones. Unless we prioritise and address the philosophical root causes of our socio-ecological issues, technology and science are mere 'band-aid' solutions to our problems.

Aligning with this call for a philosophical paradigm shift, many participants specifically claimed that their organisation prioritises developing nature connection to help learners develop a relationship with nature. Some examples of relevant responses included:

1. To help students and teachers' bond with nature (Participant #1),
2. We believe that reconnecting our rangatahi back to te Taiao helps with their whakawhanaungatanga (Participant #32),
3. It is all about relationships, creating relationships with nature (Participant #39), and
4. We want to foster a connection to nature to initiate a relationship between young people and the nature that surrounds them (Participant #43).

Some participants explained the importance of developing these relationships as a means for helping learners see themselves as part of nature, in line with an aspirational vision

where humans around the world sustainably coexist in relationship with each other and the rest of nature. This reasoning relates to encouraging a cultural shift in the community (Participant 55) through which an ecocentric perspective is fostered as an alternative to the anthropocentric worldview and the ecological degradation associated with it. As one participant offered:

*Being in connection with nature is the only way to feel we are part of nature. That we are one with nature. That we are in a symbiotic relationship. That we feel what nature feels and so forth so we can no longer turn a blind eye to the environmental atrocities the Earth faces, because we are part of the Earth (Participant #16).*

Other participants suggested that opportunities to develop these relationships help learners come to appreciate and understand the interconnectedness of everything in the natural world and our reciprocal obligation to the rest of nature. In this sense, the injuries we inflict on nature, we ultimately inflict on ourselves. One participant put it this way:

*It is one way to help us understand that everything is connected, and we are all interrelated. Connecting to nature helps us to understand that the natural systems sustain life in a dynamic balance. This connection helps us to understand we need to respect all that is around us and we have responsibilities to look after others (people and non-human). Nature connection also helps us to understand we are part of a community that we need to nurture and nurtures us (Participant 21).*

Learning about interconnectedness means coming to know the kinship community that

exists amongst all of nature, something deeply understood by Indigenous communities around the world (Salmón, 2000; Young, 2021).

Almost all participants linked at least one specific benefit to humanity that comes with having a relationship with the rest of nature, like increased health and wellbeing, a sense of belonging, and improved educational engagement, to name just a few. As this participant thoroughly describes:

*Being connected to nature has reciprocal benefits. Frequent, positive childhood experiences with nature have a major impact on [the] healthy growth of a child's mind, body, and spirit. It can stimulate creativity, improve focus, and build confidence. This connection can also build the underpinning of a caring approach or a sense of kaitiakitanga of the natural world later in life. In today's modern world and education system, there is a heavy reliance on screens and a considerable amount of time spent indoors. Some have called this Nature Deficit Disorder. Unplugging from screens and being in nature can really help students feel calmer, more at peace and more connected to their identity and sense of meaning in life (Participant 29).*

### **How EEOs develop nature connection**

In relation to the 'how' of developing nature connection, representatives from participating EEOs described a very wide range of educational approaches and examples. With respect to the reasoning behind this diversity of approaches, this comment might offer some explanation:

*We believe that nature connection is a complex characteristic that is related to a variety of social and environmental factors*

*in a person's development and that not all people will connect with nature in the same way or to the same degree (Participant #24).*

The ways of developing nature connection reported by EEOs ranged from the very general (e.g., engaging with Papatūānuku) to the more specific (e.g., walking in the forest alongside experts). Almost all the shared snippets of practice referred to doing things in/with/for nature rather than merely learning about nature. The pedagogical focus was on the use of holistic, hands-on, and sensory approaches through real-life contexts. This finding aligns nicely with principles that underpin effective environmental education for developing and enhancing environmental attitudes and values, as well as building skills for taking positive environmental action (Ardoin et al., 2020; Chawla & Cushing, 2007).

With consideration of findings from this study that demonstrated the prioritisation of EEOs for building relationships with nature, I took particular interest in this response:

*By considering how we frame questions, activities, and the language we use - [we] don't [say] 'catch a crab', [but] rather 'follow a crab'. It challenges us to think differently about how we ask visitors to engage during their visits, and how we encourage visitors to use their senses, acknowledge the beauty, build compassion, finding meaning and connecting to their emotions (Participant 54).*

In this example, the participant highlighted how educational opportunities can be reframed through the five empirically proven pathways of using senses, emotions, beauty, meaning and compassion for increasing levels of nature connectedness (Lumber et al., 2017). Although the term 'nature connectedness'



was not specifically referred to by any of my participants, it holds meaning for this study as a scientific construct frequently used in the literature to conceptualise and measure human-nature relationships (Ives et al., 2018). Simply put, the higher a person's level of nature connectedness, the more positive relationship they have with nature. Although we know time spent in nature is beneficial to everyone, the literature about these pathways stresses that enhancing nature connectedness is about the activities we do in nature and the ways we do them. In this regard, what critically matters to enhancing nature connectedness is the 'how' one spends their, nature-time, and 'what' one's attention is focused on while in nature (Richardson et al., 2019).

Participants also described developing nature connection educational experiences that help learners grow to know nature in the everyday places they dwell, rather than seeing nature as found only in 'special' places. Promoting that nature spaces are for every day, not a special occasion was contributed by Participant #31 with regards to working with teachers in the professional learning space around nature connection. Other participants indicated that building love, connection and a relationship with nature happens most naturally through life experiences during the early childhood years. As this participant wrote:

*Life experiences shape the way one interacts with other people, the environment, and the world. Children brought up in a natural environment will draw their whole environment if asked to draw a picture of themselves - because they find it hard to separate the environment from the person (Participant #46).*

This thinking correlates with a wide range of literature demonstrating the crucial role that

nature-based experiences play in developing environmental identity, nature connectedness and pro-environmental/conservation behaviours (Chawla, 2021; Clayton & Myers, 2009). Most people I know and talk with realise the importance of such experiences, yet norms and structures embraced and valued by western society seem to do everything but connect us to nature - think large homes, private motor vehicle transportation, digital technologies, mechanised agriculture, global food chains, indoor classrooms, standardised testing, and incomes linked to growth! However, empirical studies demonstrate low levels of nature connectedness in children (Hughes et al., 2018), as well as a significant 'dip' in nature connectedness levels in adolescent populations (Price et al., 2022; Richardson et al., 2019), it seems that we still have much work to do. In an increasingly digitised and technological-infused world, opportunities for nature connection have never been more important, especially for children and adolescents as illustrated by this photograph of a teenager hugging a tree.

## Conclusion

Improving human-nature relationships is paramount to resolving the socio-ecological crises of our time. Therefore, I have often contemplated the balance of developing awareness and knowledge about environmental issues, offering opportunities for problem-solving and taking action, and fostering nature connection through education programmes. In this respect, my intuition has always nudged me towards prioritising nature connection over other outcomes because, in my view, knowledge and capability are meaningless without an emotional connection to te Taiao.

Environmental education will only reach its potential as a transformative pedagogy for securing a regenerative, more sustainable

future when we pursue learning opportunities that tap into our hearts and hands to a greater extent than currently undertaken. Let us focus and commit to teaching about and developing physical, emotional, and spiritual connections between humans and the rest of nature, and prioritise relational ways of thinking, living and being on our planet. To achieve this, nature-based education and developing nature connectedness must be integrated into educational institutions at all levels.

This integration is what I explored in the next stage of my study, and I look forward to providing an overview of these additional findings in a subsequent issue of *Te Whakatika* in 2023.

## About the Author

Thea DePetris has worked as an environmental educator for over 15 years and is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Waikato. With a strong passion for creating community-school partnerships, Thea has been a key player in the development of education programmes and initiatives, such as 'Taupō for Tomorrow', 'Kids Greening Taupō' and the 'Taupō Environmental Education Collaborative'. In 2015, research for her master's degree resulted in the emergence of the 'Collaborative Community Education Model', a framework underpinning a number of emerging programmes and projects around the country.

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## Going with the flow: Menstruation and rainbow-inclusive practices in the outdoors



### Gender-inclusive practices: Riding together into the future

*Sophie Watson*

It's a beautiful spring morning on the shores of Lake Wānaka, and a group of teenagers are gathering for a day of mountain biking. After a round of introductions, World Off-road Riding Department, (WORD) instructors Pete Mitchell and Jo Guest, pull out some essential equipment items to run through with the group: a spare tube and pump, tools, first aid, rain jacket, snacks...and the group period kit.

Last year, the WORD team made the decision to include period products in their instructor kits. They also began talking with their youth riders about ways to manage periods in the outdoors. Given WORD delivers 'boys' and 'girls' programmes, some people wonder why this topic needs to be addressed with all riders – surely this is an issue just for the girls? But as WORD founder, Ash Peters explains:

*The outdoors is a space for everyone. As an organisation, it's really important to us that rangatahi feel welcome when they come riding with us. It's a no brainer for us to carry period products, and to provide training for our staff so they feel confident to facilitate these important conversations.*

Research shows that for some young people, having their ikura (period) is a significant barrier to their outdoor participation and enjoyment. Although many tamariki and rangatahi are taught about menstruation at school (though, often only female students), the information they are given tends to focus on the biology of menstruation and doesn't address how to manage periods during physical activity or when they're in the outdoors. Additionally, the secrecy and shame associated with menstruation often means that young people aren't given adequate support to manage their period.

Rangatahi are increasingly open about

their menstruation experiences and needs and want their teachers and outdoor leaders to feel comfortable having open, respectful and supportive conversations with them about periods.

*I wish someone had told me that having your period in the outdoors is ok and normal. And that you'll be able to manage it... (Young Pākehā woman)*

*Menstruation isn't something to be sorry or ashamed about. (Young Samoan woman)*

Talking about periods may seem like a daunting prospect, especially if you don't menstruate. However, offering your support to those who menstruate and considering their specific needs during outdoor activities can make a positive difference to young people's participation and enjoyment in the outdoors. Some young people have painful or heavy periods, which can affect their mood and physical ability. Others experience minor symptoms. There is no 'right way' to manage your period. Instead, it's important to follow the lead of each young person – they know their body best.

*My period can affect my participation... usually when I'm on my period I quite often feel hot, faint and sick. (Young Samoan/Pākehā woman)*

So, how can you support young people who might be menstruating?

- **Upskill yourself:** Think about the challenges menstruators might experience during the activities you facilitate and identify ways to manage them. Learn about the different periods management strategies that people use, so you can share them with others. Ask for help if you need it.

- **Think about language:** How you talk about periods, gender and bodies has a big impact on people's perceptions and behaviours. Remember that not all girls/women menstruate, and not everyone who menstruates is a girl/woman, so use inclusive language. You can do this by describing the function of something, for example using the phrase 'period products' rather than 'feminine hygiene items'. Also make sure to use inclusive language when addressing groups (for example, using 'whānau' or 'folks' instead of 'guys'), and learn how to say 'period' in different languages. For example, 'ikura' and 'waiwhero' are common te reo Māori words for period.
- **Create safe and open spaces** for young people to talk about their experiences or ask for help. This means talking about periods in an inclusive and empowering way in front of the whole group to normalise it. Role model supportive behaviours, for example by showing empathy if someone is experiencing painful cramps and needs to walk more slowly. If someone in the rōpū makes a negative or harmful comment, make sure you address it. It's important to consider that for some Rainbow participants, periods can be a dysphoric (feeling a sense of unease or discomfort because of a mismatch between their biological sex and their gender identity) and challenging experience. We can make this situation less stressful by talking about periods in a gender-inclusive way.

- **Consider facilities and equipment:** If you're adventuring in remote places, think about what toileting facilities are available. Share with the group where the toilets are (i.e., how many hours away). If there aren't any available, create a private place for people to change their period products. You

can do this by creating a temporary screen with a tarp, sarong or jacket that people can change behind.

- **Create a group 'period kit'** or carry spare period products. Make sure you talk about what's in the kit (and how to use it) before you head out. Talk about the period kit in the same way you would a first-aid kit by describing the kit to everyone in the group, not just menstruators.

There is a wealth of information and resources about how to manage menstruation in daily life. However, outdoor-specific and gender-inclusive information is less readily available. In recognition of this, Education Outdoors New Zealand created Going with the flow: Menstruation and rainbow-inclusive practices in the outdoors (see website reference below). This multi-media resource supports educators, youth leaders, and outdoor practitioners to provide safe and inclusive experiences for menstruating and Rainbow participants. It includes information about diverse experiences of menstruation (including Rainbow perspectives), practical tips and advice, lesson plans suitable to use with young people, and a four-part video series. As the WORD team can attest, embedding gender-inclusive practices in your mahi can have a significant positive impact on young people's participation and enjoyment of the outdoors. Feedback from WORD riders and their whānau illustrates that while this change can feel uncomfortable and can require some perseverance to get everyone onboard the waka, the benefits far outweigh any of the challenges – not just for menstruators and rainbow youth but everyone.

You can access Going with the flow on the Education Outdoors New Zealand website: <https://www.eonz.org.nz/menstruation-and-rainbow-inclusive-practices/>

Note: This article includes excerpts from an earlier article about Going with the flow: <https://sportnz.org.nz/resources/period-power-supporting-young-people-with-periods-in-the-outdoors/>

# Developing the next generation of EOTC champions

*Dr Margie Campbell-Price*

EOTC is a prominent part of the fabric of school life in Aotearoa. Despite this, the willingness of teachers to sustain their commitment to EOTC throughout their careers and the readiness of new teachers to lead EOTC experiences have been flagged as concerning for its future (Hill et al., 2020). This article focuses on the induction and mentoring of future teachers as they enter the profession, specifically around how their capabilities in EOTC could be fostered during initial teacher education (ITE) professional experience placements in schools.

## The current teaching workforce and EOTC

The capability and willingness of teachers were identified as both a challenge to and an enabler of EOTC in Hill et al's (2020) comprehensive research into the state of EOTC across Aotearoa. It highlighted the importance of well-trained teachers with the competence to plan and manage EOTC experiences, including meeting the learning needs of ākonga and the associated health and safety requirements. Flourishing EOTC was attributed to a positive and empowering school culture, the collective support of teaching teams, and quality management systems that include professional learning and development for staff. Additionally, 'EOTC champions', those teachers and school leaders who are empowered to make substantial contributions to EOTC were highly valued as enablers of thriving EOTC.

Concerns were expressed about the loss of teacher capacity related to staff who were aging, less motivated or unwilling to do overnight experiences, and lacking physical fitness or specific skills for EOTC experiences that involved technical components. The additional hours involved in the preparation work for EOTC (e.g., planning, administrating,

setting relief) and the way it can impinge on personal time contributed to concerns about teachers' willingness to sustain their commitment to EOTC over time.

Of particular concern in Hill et al's (2020) research was the adequacy of EOTC related learning during ITE. Given that future teachers begin their professional learning in ITE programmes, it is worthwhile considering ways in which EOTC-related professional experience placements could be harnessed to explicitly build student teachers' capabilities in EOTC and readiness to engage with it in their future teaching experiences.

## The future teaching workforce

Initial teacher education (ITE) is the first phase of the learning to teach journey. It is normally followed by two years as a provisionally certified teacher (PCT) before a teacher gains full certification. In recent years, the explicit coverage and inclusion of EOTC experiences in ITE programmes in Aotearoa has become somewhat ad hoc and reliant on pockets of practice facilitated by the 'EOTC champions' of ITE. Like schools, there have been competing priorities, funding constraints, fewer staff with EOTC experience, and redesigned curriculum and programme structures.

On the upside, increased time for professional experience (practicum) offers a beacon of hope that ITE students can be exposed to some quality EOTC experiences, focused learning and reflection, and mentoring when placed in schools and kura. The Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand (2019) stipulated that ITE students must have 80 days of professional experience for 1 or 2 year programmes, and 120 days for 3-4 year programmes. In the Masters programme I work in, 80 days equates to 16 weeks in schools of a total 41 weeks of learning time. That is substantial time in schools and presents a vital

and authentic context for developing their teaching capabilities.

Bearing in mind Hill et al's (2020) concerns and my long career in ITE, I devised an online survey to gain an insight into the nature of the EOTC experiences my student teachers had on their professional experience placement and what they learned about EOTC as a result.

Specifically, the survey focused on:

- What, where and for how long were their EOTC experience/s?
- What did they understand the purpose of the experience/s to be?
- What was the nature of their involvement?
- What did they learn about EOTC?

All of the secondary cohort of student teachers in the University of Otago MTchgLn programme were invited to participate in the online survey if they had one or more EOTC experiences while on their first extended 7-week professional experience placement in term 2 2022. 24% of the cohort responded ( $n=16$ ), making it a small but insightful snapshot of the range and value of EOTC experiences to student teachers. Their responses have informed what follows in this article. Firstly, the nature of their EOTC experiences and what they learned are summarised.

## Student teachers' EOTC experiences and learning on professional experience

- Student teachers across all learning areas were positive about engaging in EOTC on professional experience.
- They acknowledged the way in which EOTC can enrich and extend learning in authentic contexts.

- They valued the way in which EOTC can foster relationship building with ākonga and colleagues.
- Most perceived that their value to the EOTC experience was as a 'spare pair of hands'
- Much of student teachers' learning about EOTC was 'by osmosis' – by noticing, casual conversations and/or access to some documentation.
- When they had an opportunity to facilitate some of the learning and had a specific role, they gained more from the experience.
- EOTC experiences that student teachers had with classes they were assigned over the full professional experience placement had the most learning impact. It enabled them to make links with and scaffold class learning and sustain relationships with mentor teachers and ākonga beyond the EOTC experience.

Based on the student teachers' experiences the following suggestions are for teachers and schools hosting student teachers on professional experience, with the intention to maximize their learning and develop their EOTC capabilities for the future.

## Maximizing student teachers' EOTC learning and capabilities on professional experience

- Avoid assumptions that student teachers will or should have a knowledge base about EOTC. Some will, some might, some won't. Find out what they know and what they would like to learn.
- Include explicit guidance and mentoring around planning and organisation of EOTC experiences. Introduce them to your school's EOTC systems as a way to

understand ‘the what, how and why’ (of what your school does).

- Perceive student teachers as being more than just a ‘spare pair of hands’. Assign them a role and explain how their role fits within the overall supervision structure of the EOTC event or experience.
- Assign and scaffold teaching opportunities for student teachers in EOTC. Their learning is deeper and more meaningful if they can contribute to and link the design and facilitation of student learning before and following an EOTC experience.
- Include reflection and feedback opportunities with the student teacher as you would following lesson delivery at school. These conversations can be concise and focused. If it is an extended EOTC experience (e.g., overnight or multi night) frequent reflective conversations are beneficial.
- Ask student teachers’ what they would like to learn or contribute to. They each have pumanawa (strengths) that can add value to the overall experience. These could include their knowledge of Mātauranga Māori, willingness to say karakia, outdoor or other technical/field skills, commercial/industry experience and networks related to their learning areas.
- Use the Ministry of Education’s (2016) EOTC Guidelines to help student teachers’ build their kete of knowledge. Encourage them to read chapters that are relevant to their role in the EOTC experience and use these as a focus for learning and reflective conversations.

Attention now turns to ways in which ITE providers and schools could interact more effectively to enhance their communication in ways that enable student teachers to engage in

and learn from meaningful EOTC experiences on professional experience.

### The interface between ITE providers and schools

Placing students in schools for professional experiences is dynamic and can be fraught with challenges. In the secondary sector, matching a student teacher’s subject combination with available and willing mentor teachers adds to the complexity. School ‘gatekeepers’ – usually the liaison teacher that agrees to host student teachers in their school for professional experience – can, for various reasons decline a place to a student teacher even when a potential mentor teacher (maybe even an EOTC champion) might be willing and available. To minimize missed opportunities, it is worth considering how the interface between an ITE provider and a school could be strengthened.

Some possibilities include:

- Greater dialogue between school liaison teachers and ITE providers about the quality of information needed from both partners to enable ‘good matches’ of student teachers to mentor teachers. This could include profiles of student teachers and their goals around learning through EOTC experiences.
- ITE providers could include more explicit information in their professional experience handbooks (or the like) to encourage student teachers’ engagement with EOTC. This could include a summary of what coverage student teachers have had in their course work to date and some guidelines about how school-based experiences could explicitly build on this.
- Include evidence-based comments about a student teacher’s emerging capability in EOTC as part of their overall development

as a teacher in the professional experience report.

- Schools could signal what EOTC experiences are available during a forthcoming professional experience placement. Teachers leading these experiences might need to ‘speak up’ in order that liaison teachers are aware of these when making decisions about hosting student teachers.

### What can quality EOTC learning and mentoring on professional experience look like?

This article has focused on ways ITE providers and schools can develop future teachers’ capabilities and readiness for EOTC through professional experience placements. I piloted the 2022 online survey with a small group of students in 2021. The following quotations by one of the pilot participants (in the social science learning area) illustrated the value of a ‘perfect match’ between a future and current ‘EOTC champion’ as they reflected on a senior field trip.

*I was fully immersed in the execution of the field trip. I was effectively a ‘normal’ member of staff. The value was in watching students build relationships, learn self management skills and build physical and emotional connections to the people and place. The value of my attendance was to watch the logistics play out, see the value of learning outside the classroom for students, and offer support to staff and students where necessary.*

Student teachers undertake professional experience ‘with support’, which means always under the guidance and supervision of a fully registered teacher. Even though the student teacher spoke about ‘watching’ how all aspects of the field trip played out, their full

immersion in each phase of the experience was instrumental. This included contributing to the logistical planning, and designing and facilitating some of the learning before, during and after the field trip. As the following quotation illustrates, the student teacher went on to describe the impact on their own learning from the EOTC experience within the wider context of teaching the students in the learning area over a sustained time.

*This experience was hands down the best way I could have imagined extending some of my teaching skills and pedagogies. The ability for student and teacher-student relationships to flourish in this environment is incomparable to that you would see in the classroom. As is the development of skills such as self management, relating to others, developing critical thinking skills, creating connections to people and place and in turn showing relevance of learning, facilitation coherence, community engagement, inclusion and focusing learning on the future. In terms of the NZC and meeting the vision, values, principles and key competencies – I couldn’t think of a better way to teach young people.*

The depth of reflection about the impact of the EOTC experience indicated there had been thoughtful, specific, scaffolded and ongoing mentoring of the student teacher by the mentor teacher. The student teacher had not been considered a ‘spare pair of hands’ and the mentor teacher was explicitly building capability. Furthermore, regular reflection and debriefing sparked curiosity and offered much more than ‘learning by osmosis’.

### Conclusion

Professional experience placements offer student teachers extended time in kura/schools over the duration of their ITE studies. Scaffolded and supported opportunities to

engage with EOTC have the potential to contribute significantly to building teaching capability and readiness for EOTC as they move into their teaching careers.

Chances are that if you are reading this article, you are an EOTC champion – either in ITE or in a school. Collectively, we can each play our part to develop supportive and capable teachers that value EOTC and enable it to flourish in schools. Even better, let's mentor the next generation of EOTC champions.

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#### About the author

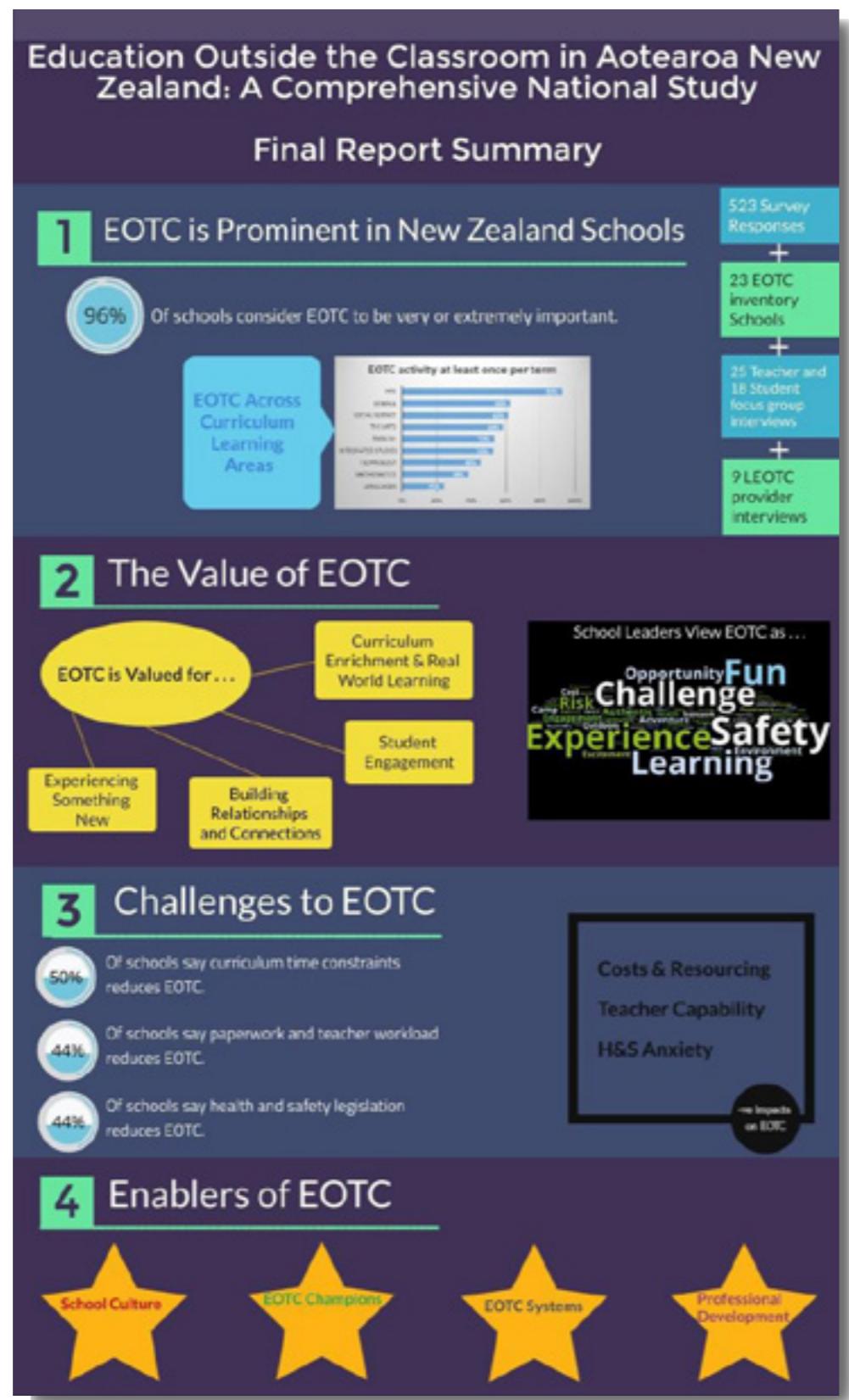
Dr Margie Campbell-Price is a senior lecturer at the University of Otago. EOTC has been integral to her career over many decades secondary teaching and in ITE. She is a foundation member of the NZ EOTC Tertiary Advisory Group (NZETAG). NZETAG works to develop strategies and resources to support quality learning in EOTC. We are keen to work with our colleagues in schools to find ways to strengthen the school-tertiary interface, including through professional experience placements. Do get in touch if you would like to join in the korero!

<https://www.eonz.org.nz/about-us-2/tertiary-advisory-group/>

[margie.campbell-price@otago.ac.nz](mailto:margie.campbell-price@otago.ac.nz)



## Executive Summary Infographic



### Authors:

Dr Allen Hill, Ara  
Institute of Canterbury

Dr Chris North,  
University of Canterbury

Marg Cosgriff, University of Waikato

Dr David Irwin, Ara  
Institute of Canterbury  
Associate Professor

Mike Boyes, University of Otago

Sophie Watson,  
Educational Consultant and Researcher

## Education Outside the Classroom in Aotearoa New Zealand – A Comprehensive National Study: Final Report – Executive Summary

### Introduction

This executive summary of the EOTC National Research Project was first published in 2020. It is reprinted here with permission.

Education outside the Classroom (EOTC) has a long and rich history in Aotearoa New Zealand schools (Lynch, 2006), contributing positively to the lives of many young New Zealanders. The purpose of this study was to gain a contemporary and comprehensive understanding of what EOTC is currently occurring in schools across, the value that schools see in/ascribe to EOTC, and the various challenges and factors that influence the provision of EOTC.

Data for the EOTC Comprehensive National Study was gathered from late 2017 throughout 2018 utilising a multiphase mixed methods research design. Data collection involved a national EOTC questionnaire (NEOTCQ) completed by school leaders and EOTC coordinators' (n=523), specific EOTC inventories from a small sample of schools (n=23), and individual and focus group interviews with school leaders and teachers (n=28), students (n=140) and LEOTC providers (n=9).

This executive summary provides a succinct overview of the key findings from the comprehensive final report. The summary comprises four key sections addressing: what schools are doing with EOTC, teacher and student perspectives on the value of EOTC, how school leaders and teachers view challenges associated with EOTC provision, and enablers of flourishing EOTC in schools.

### Key Findings

#### *What are Schools doing with EOTC?*

A key conclusion from this report is that EOTC is very much part of the fabric of schools in Aotearoa New Zealand with almost all

participants in this study providing EOTC learning opportunities for their students. EOTC learning experiences in particular learning areas are more prominent than others, for example, camps are still prominent alongside other Health and Physical Education activities, whilst curriculum enrichment trips to places such as museums, art galleries, and other urban areas like historical sites are common.

For the 23 schools that completed the inventory, the majority of EOTC activities and trips were facilitated by teachers and took place within 20km of the school. Costs for such trips were most often passed on to parents/caregivers, possibly through donations, with some trips having no costs (particularly primary schools) or being covered by school or grant funding. A prominent theme from the inventory schools was the way that EOTC was seen as a vehicle to develop the key competencies of students as identified in the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007a).

There are a number of factors that impact on the quantity of EOTC in schools. It appears that time constraints and workload, often but not always linked to health and safety procedures, are issues that can constrain EOTC. Other factors such as parent help, inability to charge compulsory payments, risk aversion, police vetting, and assessment pressures were issues for some schools and not for others, in almost equal proportion. The challenges schools face in relation to these factors are explored in more detail in Chapter Four.

EOTC provision is also supported by a number of factors. The EOTC guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2016) appear to be effective in assisting the majority of schools and professional development related to safety management systems is perceived positively by schools who have attended. There are

however many schools that have not accessed that professional development opportunity. Community engagement, and to a lesser extent, sustainability and environmental learning appear to be factors that support EOTC. The most overwhelmingly supportive factor for EOTC was student engagement, which is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

### ***The Value of EOTC***

EOTC continues to be highly valued in schooling in Aotearoa New Zealand. EOTC was considered to be very or extremely important to 96% of national survey respondents, a finding that was repeatedly noted by students and teachers in interviews. Four interconnected themes of curriculum enrichment, student engagement, building personal and social skills and connections, and a sense of something new are at the heart of EOTC experiences.

Curriculum enrichment was a highly valued outcome of EOTC for all research participants. The familiar catch-phrase, ‘EOTC brings the curriculum alive’ was used by many teachers to describe how EOTC experiences enriched their students’ experiences. EOTC enabled students to personally connect with the learning topic through a total engagement of their senses and the freedom it afforded them to explore topics, environments and concepts that were of interest to them. Many students identified that the sense of individual responsibility they felt during EOTC had a positive impact on their motivation and engagement to learn. This idea was reinforced by teachers who noted when students were able to see and experience the learning in authentic settings, they developed a deeper understanding of the purpose of the learning, were able to place it in a wider context and recalled information more easily at a later date. The physical space and environment, as well as the different social dynamics and

interactions that learning outdoors provided, also contributed to increased student engagement.

While EOTC can have significant positive benefits to enriching student learning and engagement, some students found the social and sensory nature of outdoor learning to be overwhelming. Findings such as this highlight the need for educators to be wary of assuming that there are inherent benefits of EOTC that all students naturally experience, and desired EOTC outcomes organically ‘fall out’ of an experience.

Teachers, school leaders and students consider EOTC to be a valuable and alternative learning environment that supported their use of group-based and interactive teaching pedagogies that fostered interpersonal skills and relationships between students, and staff and students. A more relaxed dynamic and reduced time pressures in EOTC promoted opportunities for students to connect with class members beyond immediate peer groups and to get to know teachers more fully. Significantly, these enhanced relationships positively impacted learning back at school. Students appeared more comfortable to ask questions, to seek help in class and to work collaboratively in group work. Some teachers noted that a deepened understanding of their students meant they were more confident and able to recognise students’ needs and tailor individualised learning plans.

The contrast between EOTC learning opportunities and school-based learning generated a sense of newness and enjoyment for students. EOTC promoted fresh and memorable insights about what was ‘out there’ beyond the students’ immediate ‘bubble’, and the variety brought a sense of unpredictability and excitement to learning. Some staff identified the value that the school and their community placed on providing EOTC experiences that students would not

otherwise be exposed to, even if this was a one-off experience. A number of students also commented on the attraction, anticipation, and engagement generated from going to different rather than the same places. This finding reiterates the value of varied EOTC experiences and the potential for powerful student learning and engagement.

### ***Challenges to EOTC Provision***

The greatest challenges to EOTC were associated with costs and resourcing, staff competence, time constraints and health and safety regulations, which in some cases resulted in exclusion of students and frustration.

Financial constraints were a common complaint, but there were exceptions from private and higher decile schools. Bus transport was highlighted as the greatest cost and some respondents indicated the cancellation of EOTC trips (even to local pools) because of the transport costs. Concerns about relief costs were frequent, however, avoiding relief costs by having colleagues cover the classes compounded the personal cost of EOTC on staff. The rising costs of residential camps and trips, particularly those requiring specialised training and/or qualifications were also identified as contributing to costs.

The inventory data shows that these schools passed on costs to caregivers/whānau for around 50% of the EOTC trips and around 20% incurred no cost, but this varies greatly between schools. Nonetheless, this finding may partly explain the influence of decile on EOTC budgets as the lower decile communities have fewer financial resources to spare. Respondents noted that schools reacted in different ways to the constraints of costs and resourcing. Some cancelled EOTC trips entirely, while others reduced the frequency of trips, and others used more local trips which did not incur costs at all.

Some schools had teachers who were skilled and experienced in EOTC, but there were significant number who expressed concern about having suitably experienced and capable teachers to lead EOTC trips. This situation is exacerbated by new graduates of teacher education entering the workforce with little or no training in EOTC. Professional development in EOTC was valued although respondents noted that opportunities for such professional development were limited.

Time constraints also impacted EOTC, either because of the heavy workloads of teachers, or the reluctance of other teachers to release students from ‘more important’ classes to participate in EOTC. To overcome limitations of staff competence and time constraints, many schools relied on parent helpers and private providers. Lower decile schools found parents less able to commit to EOTC than parents from upper decile communities, and were also less able to afford to engage private providers to deliver EOTC.

There have been changes to the legal and social context surrounding EOTC since previous research was published. Respondents indicated that safety during EOTC events was a major focus. The majority of comments reflected anxiety about being blamed in the aftermath of an incident. Despite this, NEOTCQ respondents did not consider school leaders or Boards of Trustees to be overly risk averse. Respondents felt that legislation threatened the quantity of EOTC. There was a perception that legislation is not making students safer but rather creating a barrier to EOTC through increased documentation.

One of the most confronting themes to emerge from the study related to the exclusion of students from EOTC as a result of the students’ inability to cover costs. Some respondents even described turning students away at the bus door. Significant frustration was expressed by some respondents related

to the under-resourcing of EOTC. A variety of strategies to mitigate funding shortfalls, including seeking community sponsorship and timetabling EOTC over weekends to reduce relief costs and disruption were highlighted.

### ***Enablers of Flourishing EOTC***

Some school leaders, teachers, and their communities have worked to overcome challenges to the extent where EOTC could flourish in their school. The data revealed ways that school cultures and communities, EOTC champions, systems, and professional learning and development can contribute to EOTC flourishing. These four aspects often operate interdependently in the everyday provision of EOTC and enable programmes which enhance students learning. Schools face many challenges or pressures, but those related to EOTC can often be addressed through adaptability, innovation, and creativity. Enabling EOTC to flourish in such circumstances often involves new or creative thinking.

The data shows that EOTC does indeed thrive in many schools throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. There are lessons here which can help other schools to develop more robust and inclusive EOTC practices. With EOTC being so highly valued by schools that have participated in this research, it appears imperative that all schools are equipped to provide quality EOTC so all students in Aotearoa New Zealand can enjoy the benefits of enriched and engaging learning that EOTC delivers.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the findings from this study, the research team have made the following conclusions:

1. EOTC holds significant importance for

New Zealand schools and this should be recognised and celebrated within educational communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

2. School leaders, teachers and students see the value in EOTC contributing to curriculum enrichment and real world learning, student engagement, building connections and relationship within and between students, teachers and communities, providing opportunities for new or unique experiences that students may otherwise not have.
3. EOTC is utilised in many different ways across all learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa and especially contribute to the key student competencies. Some subjects such as HPE and Science utilise EOTC more extensively.
  - a. Further research which explores more fully the value of EOTC to teaching and learning across diverse New Zealand schools would be desirable. Such research could also explore equity barriers to EOTC and potential ways to address inequitable access to EOTC.
4. There remain a number of challenges to the effective provision of EOTC. These include: curriculum related time constraints, teacher workloads, EOTC paperwork, health and safety considerations to meet the requirements of legislation, and finding suitably experienced and capable teachers and parents to lead and assist with EOTC trips.
5. Funding and resourcing remains a significant challenge for EOTC in many New Zealand schools. The research team recognise that the funding issue may have changed as a result of the new Ministry of

Education scheme to provide \$150 extra per head funding in lieu of schools asking for donations.

- a. Further research into the effects on EOTC of the new donations funding scheme would be useful.
6. Having capable teachers to lead EOTC is a crucial component of effective EOTC provision and many schools struggle to meet this requirement. It would be useful for the New Zealand Teachers Council to review and improve EOTC education in initial teacher education programmes.
7. A number of factors help EOTC to flourish in schools: These factors include: School culture, community and place; EOTC champions, EOTC systems; and professional learning and development.
  - a. PLD can assist with both safety management system development and developing teacher capability. It is recommended that there is a review of the availability and resourcing of EOTC related PLD with an eye to making these more accessible across the country.
  - b. Effective EOTC management systems and software resources are an enabler of EOTC in schools. It would be useful for these to be made more readily available to all schools across New Zealand.
  - c. We recommend that EOTC champions and coordinators are suitably recognised and resourced across all schools in New Zealand.

### **Reference for the full report:**

Hill, A., North, C., Cosgriff, M., Irwin, D., Boyes, M. & Watson, S. (2020). Education Outside the Classroom in Aotearoa New Zealand – A Comprehensive National Study: Final Report. Christchurch, NZ: Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd.  
Available at: [https://www.eonz.org.nz/assets/PDFWord\\_Docs/EOTCResearch/EOTC-in-Aotearoa-New-Zealand-Final-Report-2020-compressed.pdf](https://www.eonz.org.nz/assets/PDFWord_Docs/EOTCResearch/EOTC-in-Aotearoa-New-Zealand-Final-Report-2020-compressed.pdf)

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## Support for Educators: Resources, Providers and PLD

We're here to help you access relevant and effective resources, support and professional learning opportunities. Both EONZ and NZAEE receive funding through the Networks of Expertise initiative, with a focus on peer-to-peer delivery to build capability and support kaiako throughout Aotearoa.

In this section we outline and provide links to the support available from our organisations and highlight some recommended resources to read, watch and listen to.

### New Zealand Association for Environmental Education

Visit our website [www.nzaee.org.nz](http://www.nzaee.org.nz) to find resources and support for teaching environmental and sustainability education including:

- **Events**  
We have a dedicated space to promote events that are relevant for educators, including online and in person opportunities. Please get in touch if you would like us to share your event (contact@nzaee.org.nz)
- **Providers Database**  
With over 300 listings for organisations, programmes and groups around Aotearoa, you can filter by location and learning context to find support near you.
- **Professional Learning resources**  
Access research, articles, webinars, books, and guides to support your personal and professional learning. These are updated regularly and include collections related to current issues or priorities, such as local curriculum and climate education.
- **Spotlights: Stories and Curated Collections**  
We also share inspiring stories and highlight providers and resources related to seasonal events and other relevant themes.

To stay in the loop about new content and upcoming webinars or networking events, you can sign up to our newsletter through our website or follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NZAssociationforEnvironmentalEducation>

### Education Outdoors New Zealand

Visit <https://eonz.org.nz/> to sign up for PLD, access resources and find details of how EONZ can support you with all things relating to education outside the classroom.

On the EONZ website you can access a range of wonderful resources including: EOTC templates and tool kits; gender equity in the outdoors; materials to support revisioning school camps; video interviews sharing good practice stories; EOTC research; Te Ao Māori; Unit Standard assessment materials; and much more.

### We offer a range of Professional Learning Development (PLD) opportunities including:

- **Revisioning School Camps**  
This superb PLD uses a model of Teaching as Inquiry to re-envision and actualise school camps. It draws on a teaching and learning resource called Revisioning School Camps to support teachers in the development of localised, place-responsive and student-centred school camp programmes.
- **DIY Camping**  
The 'DIY Camping' PLD has been developed to sit alongside our popular 'Revisioning School Camps' (RSC) PLD. The DIY Camping workshop brings these ideas and activities to life. This workshop is perfect for educators who want to develop their knowledge of localised curriculum and how EOTC can support the Aotearoa New Zealand Histories curriculum.
- **Mātauranga Māori in Outdoor Education**  
This PLD is for Outdoor Education teachers wanting to develop their understanding of mātauranga Māori. It has a focus on exploring significant local places, their history and pūrakau along with gaining a deeper understanding of some Te Ao Māori concepts. Support is given to help with planning programmes to intertwine mātauranga Māori and Outdoor Education.
- **EOTC and Effective Safety Management Systems**  
The PLD supports school staff to understand and implement good practice processes in EOTC and to embed the processes in programmes and school-wide safety systems.
- **Embedding Good Practice Systems for EOTC**  
This 1-Day workshop drills down and critiques participant schools' EOTC processes using self-review and the sharing of practice. There is a strong focus on three key areas: Testing your system; Refining your system; Supporting your system

## What We're Listening to...

- **Beings Seen and Unseen: Emergence Magazine interview with Amitav Ghosh**  
<https://emergencemagazine.org/interview/beings-seen-and-unseen/>

*Amitav Ghosh calls on storytellers to lead us in the necessary work of collective reimagining: decentering human narratives and re-centering stories of the land.*

- **Revisioning School Camps: Teacher Interviews** (audio and videos)  
<https://eonz.org.nz/resourcespublications/revisioning-school-camps/>

Listen to stories from schools who have taken part in the Revisioning School Camps professional learning with EONZ, with a focus on developing localised, place-responsive and student-centred school camp programmes.

## What We're Watching...

- **Ministry of Education: Insights into kaupapa Māori**

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/9958391>

This series of short videos (4-5 mins each) is designed to encourage and support initial conversations around kaupapa Māori, exploring 12 mātauranga Māori concepts including tūrangawaewae, hauora and kaitiakitanga.

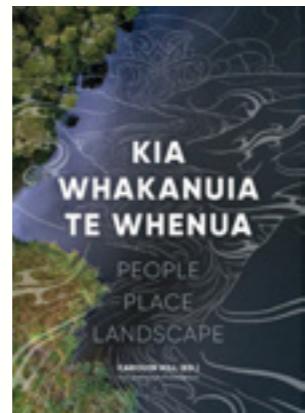
- **Waka Huia: Waiora** (30 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-Ey3sG3WBQ>

Te Rerekohu Tuterangiwhiu (Ngāti Rangi, Ngāti Hine, Ngāruahinerangi) and Kelly Ratana (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Rangiwewehi, Te Arawa) feature in this episode of Waka Huia.

Ki te kore te wai, ka hē katoa tēnei ao. If water didn't exist neither would the world we live in.

## What We're Reading...



*Kia Whakanui a te Whenua - People, Place, Landscape*

Landscape Foundation, Edited by Carolyn Hill

*This Māori-led work presents a rich collection of visual essays, papers, poetry and polemics that*

*challenge the way we think about environment, land and landscape in a changing world: te ao hurihuri. Its aim is to advocate for the land, to oust complacency. Kia Whakanui a te Whenua seeks to stimulate interdisciplinary thinking and knowledge.*

We love the range of voices in this book and the focus on themes such as decolonisation, access and connection to nature, Indigenous frameworks and wellbeing. Borrow it from your local library or order a copy here: <https://www.landscapenz.org.nz>

Here's the low down on one of our favourites '**Going With The Flow**' A multi-media resource about gender equity in the outdoors. It aims to inspire positive changes to outdoor practice and culture. It includes: a print resource; a four-part video series; lesson plans suitable to use with young people who are 10-15 years old (Years 6-10); diverse stories of menstruation and rainbow experiences in the outdoors; practical tips and information about gender inclusive practices

## Contributions: Get inspired – looking forward to the Winter 2023 issue of *Te Whakatika*.

With a commitment to two issues a year, we are already thinking about articles for our Winter issue which will focus on the journey that both NZAEE and EONZ have been on over the last several decades whilst looking into the future. *Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua. I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past. This whakataukī or proverb speaks to the Māori perspective of time, where the past, the present and the future are viewed as intertwined, and life is a continuous cosmic process* (Rameka 2016, p387).

In this spirit we invite contributions from the NZAEE and EONZ communities that provide diverse perspectives on our histories, and that reflect on how our pasts are shaping our present and our futures. As an example, one of the articles that will feature in the Winter 2023 issue is a summary of the history of EONZ compiled by Dr Mike Boyes who was awarded the Te Tumu Herenga waka, herenga tangata (the post that binds the waka also binds the people) life membership of EONZ. The full historical account from Mike can be found at this link. <https://eonz.org.nz/resourcespublications/publications/>

Please send your contributions to the editor via the instructions in this issue. (See P1 Contributions) If you have any questions or would like assistance with a potential article idea, please reach out to the editor or one of the editorial board members we are more than happy to give help and guidance.

Ngā mihi ki a koutou.

Rameka, L. (2016). *Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua: 'I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past.'* Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 17(4), 387-398.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1463949116677923>





*Te Whakatika* (formerly known as Out and About) describes the start of a journey (to set out), but also means to make correct (to amend and prepare). ISSN 2624-0513 (Print) ISSN 2624-0512 (Online) is published by Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ).

EONZ is committed to fostering and advocating for quality outdoor learning experiences that can educate for a sustainable future.