



*The Future of  
Early Childhood  
Education*



## SCHEDULE

**FRIDAY** 18 MARCH 2016

6:30pm – 8:00pm

## Cocktail Reception – Rydges South Bank

**SATURDAY 19 MARCH 2016** – Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

8:00am – 8:45am

## Registration & Exhibitors

8:45am – 9:00am

**Conference Welcome** – Christine Harrison and Barbara Langford

9:00am – 9:45am

## Montessori Pedagogy and Practice: Early Childhood Education for the Future – Cathy Swan

The latest research, government emphasis and thinking supports what has been known by Montessori educators and parents for over a century – Montessori, when implemented well, serves our children to be prepared for whatever the future may hold. Cathy will explore the key factors that support this claim.

9:45am – 10:45am

Beyond Swings and Roundabouts – Continue the Change – **Prue Walsh**

Play is central to early childhood education; so that the facilities within which play occurs must be able to scaffold a variety of developmentally appropriate activities. This seems obvious but translating this principle into effective design of early childhood centre physical environments covering sites, buildings and playgrounds is too often faulty, misunderstood or (even worse) deliberately dismissed as irrelevant.

In the absence of research, centres must look to practitioners to learn what works or does not work – in terms of developmentally appropriate settings to enhance children’s experiences and learning. A beautiful landscape with “just” swings or a climbing frame can be visually pleasing without the qualities of the physical environment that will support the ongoing enrichment of play. But is it educational? This presentation whilst clarifying some of the existing shortfalls in practice, will also promote a proactive stance towards developing a greater depth of understanding and planning of educationally appropriate physical environment provision. The role of the early childhood profession in ensuring that this occurs will be briefly discussed.

10:45am – 11:15am

## Morning Tea & Exhibitors

11:15am – 12:15pm

## Creativity Does Not Arise from Chaos – Laura Flores Shaw

There are two common assumptions about creativity: 1) creativity arises from chaotic free expression and 2) creativity is born rather than bred. The research shows, however, that creativity is actually a learned skill requiring knowledge and that everyone has creative potential. This session will discuss the creativity research and provide concrete ways in which teachers and parents can promote children's creative potential.

12:15pm – 12:45pm

ACECQA – NQS, EYLF, Ratings and the Future – Rhonda Livingstone

It is now four years since ACECQA was established. National Education Leader, Rhonda Livingstone, will give us an update and there will be plenty of opportunity for questions.

12:45pm – 2:00pm

## Lunch



## SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY 19 MARCH 2016 – CONTINUED

2:00pm – 3:00pm

**The Next One Hundred Years – Brett Rolfe**

Many authors have suggested that Montessori is the future of education – but what's the future of Montessori? There is a growing acknowledgement that we are living in a time of dramatic and accelerating change – from environmental to social, from political to ethical. People and practices in every industry are faced with pressure to evolve and innovate to remain relevant.

In this session we look at how other parts of the educational landscape are responding to these challenges, within the mainstream and at the fringes. And we consider how the Montessori community may respond – as individual practitioners, as institutions, and as a movement. What is the overarching vision for the future of Montessori? Is that even a meaningful question to ask?

3:00pm – 3:15pm

**Comfort Break & Exhibitors**

3:15pm – 4:15pm

**Building a Healthy Mind: Doing What Matters Most for the Developing Brain – Michael Nagel**

What are the most important things you can do to foster healthy development in young minds? What does technology do to a young brain? What are the keys to developing emotional regulation in children? Scientists know! This presentation shares what the latest science has to say about how to work with young minds and equally important, what to avoid doing. The presentation also debunks a number of myths related to brain development and explores the merits behind products and programmes suggesting that they can hyper-stimulate learning. The overall aim is to develop an understanding of how the brain works, what it focuses on in the early years and what are the key factors involved in building a healthy mind.

4:15pm – 4:30pm

**Closing – Christine Harrison & Barbara Langford**

4:30pm – 5:00pm

**Exhibitors and Raffle Draw at 5.00pm**

## WORKSHOPS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – PRESENTED SUNDAY 20 MARCH 2016

Suitable for anyone new to Montessori, Registration \$30

**9.30am – 11.00am**

**Montessori 1.01: An introduction to Montessori Practice and Principles**  
– Laura Flores Shaw

Ironically, over 100 years ago, just as industrialists were reforming education to prepare Australian children to work in their factories, Maria Montessori began developing a method that seemed to foreshadow the needs of the 21st century. Using research from multiple disciplines, including sociology, economics, cognitive science, psychology, education and neuroscience, this talk discusses why Montessori is the educational framework for the 21st century.

**11.45am – 12.45pm**

**What Parents Want to Know about Montessori: How Much is Too Much? – Amy Kirkham**

Can you explain the principles of Montessori and how this is achieved in a prepared environment in simple terms? This workshop will assist you to work on refining how you explain Montessori to parents and the general community.

**Montessori : Order : Nurturing**  
**Tried and tested : Environment : Self-sufficient**  
**Sense education : Opportunity**  
**Respect : Independence**



## SCHEDULE

**SUNDAY 20 MARCH 2016** – Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

8:30am – 9:30am

Exhibitors

Delegates select one of the following concurrent sessions to attend (sessions are continued after Morning Tea Break):

9:30am – 11:00am

### **BREAKOUT SESSION 1: 0-3 YEARS**

Language Development in the Child Under 3 – [Naomi Stuckey](#)

How do babies begin to process language and what can we do to prepare the environment and ourselves during this crucial time to assist in developing language?

### **BREAKOUT SESSION 2: 3-6 YEARS**

Montessori Fun and Games – [Amy Kirkham](#)

Do you have fun with your community of 3-6 year olds, and more importantly do the children have fun? What does it mean to have a 'joy of learning'? Come along and explore creativity in a Montessori context and how we, the prepared adults, can encourage, support and foster this.

### **BREAKOUT SESSION 3: ALL WELCOME**

Montessori 1.01: An Introduction to Montessori Practice and Principles – [Laura Flores Shaw](#)

Ironically, over 100 years ago, just as industrialists were reforming education to prepare Australian children to work in their factories, Maria Montessori began developing a method that seemed to foreshadow the needs of the 21st century. Using research from multiple disciplines, including sociology, economics, cognitive science, psychology, education and neuroscience, this talk discusses why Montessori is the educational framework for the 21st century.

This session is ideal for those new to Montessori.

11:00am – 11:45am

Morning Tea & Exhibitors

11:45am – 12:45pm

### **BREAKOUT SESSION 1: 0-3 YEARS**

Connecting to the World Through Language – [Naomi Stuckey](#)

Language is a vital part of our ability as humans to communicate with others and to think, create and problem solve. This session looks at how language is constructed and how we can help or hinder this process in children under 3.

### **BREAKOUT SESSION 2: 3-6 YEARS**

The Moveable Alphabet – the Ultimate Keyboard – [Cathy Swan](#)

A brief overview of the writing process and how writing develops into reading. How texting reflects a fairly sophisticated understanding of writing and more...

### **BREAKOUT SESSION 3: ALL WELCOME**

What Parents Want to Know about Montessori: How Much is Too Much? – [Amy Kirkham](#)

Can you explain the principles of Montessori and how this is achieved in a prepared environment in simple terms? This workshop will assist you to work on refining how you explain Montessori to parents and the general community

**M**ontessori : **O**rder : **N**urturing : **T**ried and tested : **E**nvironment : **S**elf-sufficient : **S**ense education  
**O**ppportunity : **R**espect : **I**ndependence





## OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

**FRIDAY** 18 MARCH 2016

1:30pm – 4:00pm

### MONTESSORI SCHOOL & CENTRE VISITS:

Go to <https://montessoriaustralia.org.au/schools-centres>  
and phone the school/centre of your choice to make own arrangements.



# THE FUTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SPEAKERS



**LAURA FLORES SHAW** is the lead editor, writer, and founder of White Paper Press, a think tank specialising in translating scientific research into terms that allows people to make informed decisions about their lives. She holds bachelors and master degrees in psychology and is currently working towards a doctorate in education with a specialisation in mind, brain and teaching at Johns Hopkins University School of Education. Laura previously worked as a family therapist in the public school system where she realised her desire to work on the prevention rather than intervention side of mental health. That led her to reviving a failing Montessori school where she became passionate about creating environments that allow children to thrive in every way. In 2014, she retired from school administration to focus on advocating at a broader level for frameworks that can improve the lives of children and their families. She currently writes, speaks and consults internationally on education, brain development and parenting.



**CHRISTINE HARRISON** has been involved in Montessori education since 1985 and was Principal of the Canberra Montessori School, one of the largest Montessori schools in Australia, for over twenty years. She is the founding President of the Montessori Australia Foundation. Christine has been involved in policy development, compliance, student care, curriculum development and educational leadership in schools and has a background in mediation, mentoring, conflict resolution and adult education. She works as a senior consultant for the Montessori Australia Foundation with a particular emphasis on education services (independent and public schools, quality assurance, centre based care, government liaison and quality assurance). She has trained and mentored Montessori school administrators in Thailand. Christine now has a supporting role with Montessori Aged Support Services, an organisation set up by MAF that supports the elderly living with dementia by applying Montessori principles and practices. She is on the Advisory Council of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and on the Second Tier Review Panel of ACECQA.



**AMY KIRKHAM** has been involved in Early Childhood Education since 1988 and is the 3-6 AMI Director of Training for the Australian Centre for Montessori Studies in Melbourne. She has also directed a course on the Sunshine Coast and is on the AMI Faculty of Trainers for ITCMEC in China. In addition to offering Montessori teacher training and assistant courses, Amy oversees the Children's Services courses. Amy is actively involved in the provision of professional development for Montessori staff as well as parent and community education. She is a member of the Quality Assurance Council.



**BARBARA LANGFORD** has been a Montessori teacher for the past 25 years during which time she has established six highly regarded Montessori ECEC centres in Adelaide. Barbara is a passionate advocate for raising the quality of education and care for young children. She spent many years as the President of both Childcare SA and also Childcare Associations Australia enabling her to champion at both a State and Federal Government level for the benefits of high quality early education for children. Barbara also runs a consultancy business called Montessori Management and Mentoring (MMM) through which she offers her expertise to assist others in the establishment of new centres and the training of staff. Barbara is the Manager of Montessori Early Childhood Australia (MECA), a division of the Montessori Australia Foundation.



**RHONDA LIVINGSTONE** is the National Education Leader, ACECQA and brings a wealth of experience to this role, having worked in preschools and long day care centres and as an assessor of programmes and services for both the Queensland Government and the Crèche and Kindergarten Association of Queensland. Rhonda's extensive involvement in the National Quality Agenda reforms saw her contribute to the development of the National Quality Standard and its Guide, assessment and rating tools and processes, and the training and testing programme for authorised officers. Rhonda has also worked as a Senior Advisor, Excellent Rating with ACECQA and as a sessional education academic with the Queensland University of Technology.



# THE FUTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SPEAKERS



**DR MICHAEL NAGEL** is an Associate Professor in the School of Education at the University of the Sunshine Coast where he teaches and researches in the areas of cognition, human development, behaviour and learning. He has written a number of journal articles and books related to neurological development in children and has delivered over 300 workshops and seminars for parents and teachers nationally and internationally. Nominated as Australian Lecturer of the Year each year since 2010, Dr Nagel has been a guest on 'Sunrise' and 'The Project', is a member of the prestigious International Neuropsychological Society, is the Queensland Director of the Australian Council on Children and the Media, sits on a number of education boards and committees and is a feature writer for the 'Child' series of magazines. When he is not busy professionally, he spends his time learning the important lessons of life from his own children, Madeline and Harrison.



**BRETT ROLFE** Brett Rolfe is the founder of The Schoolhouse Centre for Progressive Education, a non-profit initiative to drive awareness, discussion and adoption of progressive and innovative approaches to education. He was executive producer of TEDxYouth@Sydney (a celebration of ideas by and for teenagers), and last year spoke briefly at TEDxSydney, asking 'What would school be like if we invented it today?' He was recognised as one of four global winners of the prestigious Cannes Chimera award for creativity in the service of social endeavour. Brett holds a Masters in Teaching (Primary) and a Masters in Public Communication. He has written academically on subjects ranging from social movements to teaching mathematics, and was recently published in the Australian Financial Review discussing the transformation of Australian education. As the chief strategy officer at communications agency Naked, Brett has run workshops and training on creativity and innovation, both locally and internationally.



**NAOMI STUCKEY** has been involved in Montessori in one capacity or another since she was a very small child. She has worked with children and adults from babies to grandparents. In roles such as classroom assistant, teacher, coach, playgroup leader and lecturer. She has been involved with many different kinds of programmes and situations, including mainstream and Montessori, home environments, schools, child care centers and playgroups. Naomi enjoys working with people interested in applying Montessori education principles as a lecturer and mentor. She is currently an owner and director of a Montessori child care centre in Western Australia and a lecturer and examiner for The Montessori Institute. Naomi is the mother of two delightful teenagers who bring a whole new level of application of Montessori principles into her life.



**CATHY SWAN** holds a Masters of Education specialising in early childhood with a curiosity and passion for her work that is contagious. For 37 years Cathy has been involved in education on many levels: as a conventional high school teacher of Language Arts, as a volunteer with Native American programmes for the Association Aroostook Indians in Maine, as an AMI Montessori 3-6 teacher, as an Adjunct Professor for Portland Community College, as a Parenting Skills Instructor for Kaiser Permanente, as a Head Start Centre Coordinator with migrant workers, as the Administrator of the local AMI Teacher Training Centre, as an AMI Primary Auxiliary Teacher Trainer, as Head of Montessori schools in the US and Australia, as a teacher's mentor for the Australian government serving Montessori Indigenous classrooms in the far outback, as a co-creator and presenter of an administrative curriculum for Thailand. She is currently head of school of the Montessori School of Beaverton in Portland, Oregon.



**PRUE WALSH**'s work focuses on creating educational environments which draw out children's interest and active engagement in play activities. Because Prue has worked with the development and the implementation of a wide range of services over many years, including the National Quality Standards, Quality Area 3 – physical environment, she has a profound understanding of the problems and pitfalls of upgrading and implementation of early childhood centre physical environments. She feels that it is critical that facilities scaffold but do not dictate usage for children and teachers. Her work extends throughout Australia, twelve countries internationally and in early 2016 the second edition of her book "Early Childhood Playgrounds, Planning an Outside Learning Environment" will be released.

# THE FUTURE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION VENUE, ACCOMMODATION & REGISTRATION



The conference will be launched on Friday with the Cocktail Reception, held at the Rydges South Bank hotel. The Conference itself will be held at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre on the Saturday and Sunday.

## BRISBANE CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE

Cnr Merivale and Glenelg Streets, South Bank, South Brisbane, QLD  
[www.bcec.com.au](http://www.bcec.com.au)

The Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre is a world-class purpose-built venue renowned for its operational and service excellence. The Centre is located in a unique urban cultural and entertainment precinct in the heart of Brisbane.

## PREFERRED ACCOMMODATION – RYDGES SOUTH BANK

9 Glenelg Street, South Brisbane

A 10% discount off the best available rate online (excluding special offers) is available to delegates attending this conference.

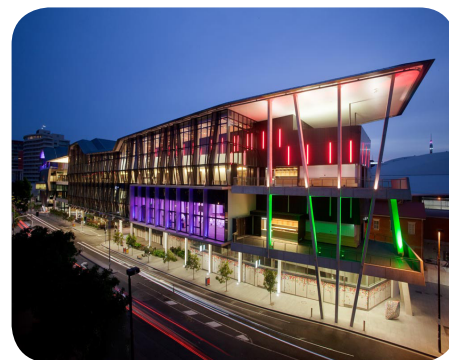
Book directly with the hotel via the online bookings portal:

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Or call 07 3364 0800 (stating the Conference Name and venue you are attending)

Rates are subject to availability at the time of booking and discount may not be used in conjunction with any other offer.

A 24 hour cancellation policy applies to all reservations. Any bookings cancelled after 2pm the day prior will incur a charge equivalent to one night's accommodation.



**REGISTER** online at [www.montessoriaustralia.org.au](http://www.montessoriaustralia.org.au) or fill in and return the form below

RATES	SUBSCRIBERS*	NON-SUBSCRIBERS
<input type="checkbox"/> 2 day Conference including Cocktail Reception	\$480	\$640

### PREFERENCES:

Cocktail Reception – Friday, 18 March at 6:30pm-8:00pm

☐ Yes

☐ No

Sunday Breakout Sessions Preference – please select one:

☐ 0-3

☐ 3-6

☐ New to Montessori (all welcome)

\*Discounted rates for Montessori Australia Foundation Individual Subscribers or Staff and Parents of School/Centre Subscribers.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School or Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone - Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone - Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone - Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate if you have special dietary requirements:

☐ Vegetarian ☐ Gluten Free ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL PAYMENT DUE \$** \_\_\_\_\_ **(GST included)**

Cheques payable to the Montessori Australia Foundation.  
ABN: 46 104 887 309

Payment Method: ☐ Cheque Or: ☐ Invoice School or Centre

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Please see our website for our cancellation and refund policy.

Phone: 02 9986 2282 Fax: 02 9986 2281

Email: [events@montessori.org.au](mailto:events@montessori.org.au)

Register online or send registration form to:

Montessori Australia Foundation, 3 Myoora Rd Terrey Hills NSW 2084



Montessori Early Childhood Australia Conference  
Friday to Sunday, 18-20 March 2016  
Brisbane Convention & Entertainment Centre, Queensland