

Keynote Address I:

“Communication, Collaboration and Creativity: A Model for Theory and Practice in Early Childhood Education”

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A strong consensus has emerged regarding the importance of developing Communication, Collaboration and Creativity during the early years. This presentation will argue that these three principles are related to each other very closely at the level of theory and in some of the very best early childhood educational practice.

Constructivist theory explains how children participate in the creation of their own knowledge. It is therefore surprising that so little research has been concerned with the connection between creativity and children's development. Vygotsky distinguished between two types of cognitive activity, those 'reproductive', and those involving 'combinations' or creativity.

In their socio-dramatic play, young children quite naturally separate objects and actions from their meaning in the real world and give them new meanings. Their powers of expression and abstraction may be enhanced when they are encouraged to communicate these creative representations in the class/play room. The keynote will present a coherent model, fit for the 21st Century and illustrate this with examples from young children's work/play.