

# “This was the year that childcare got a toe in the door.”

Helen May

## After a shaky start, government begins to commit to ECE

- 1971 - Committee of inquiry into Early Childhood Education (Hill Report):
  - Industry, community, kindergartens and playcentres “encouraged” to initiate the provision of childcare
- National Advisory Committee on Preschool Education (NAPSCE) established to advise Minister on preschool education. Sonja Davies represented the Association on this committee.
- 1973 - Labour government gives fee subsidies and grants for families in need and a capital works subsidy for community centres.

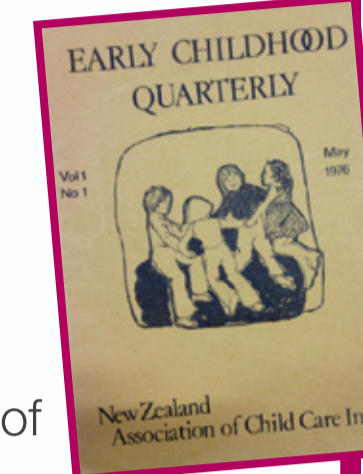
“Disappointing and lacking in vision” was how Sonja Davies described the Committee of Enquiry into Early Childhood Education (Hill Report).



**Labour government gives fee subsidies and grants for families in need**

## Association Milestones

- 1971 - Sonja Davies returns to NZ after a 5 month tour around the world where she witnessed the provision of paid maternity leave.
- 1976 - First issue of *Early Childhood Quarterly*
- 1978 - New Zealand Association of Child Care Centres Certificate of Childcare introduced.



## Project Atawhai

After raising two generations of Māori children herself, Joan Kennett recognised a need for a different type of childcare in Palmerston North; one with a focus on Māori parents as well as children, and thus Project Atawhai was born.



Joan began her Māori preschool in an old hall, bringing most of the equipment and toys herself. However, before long she had 32 children enrolled and was receiving support from a variety of organisations including the Department of Māori Affairs.

Domestic Purposes Benefit introduced

International Women's Year first celebrated

Correspondance School offers pre-school education

Working Women's Charter created



1972-1975 governed by Labour

1970

1979



1970-1972 governed by National

First Pasifika preschool opens

Committee of Inquiry into Early Childhood Education (Hill Report)

“Children at childcare centres are discriminated against in comparison to those going to kindergarten or a play centre, both of which receive government aid,” said Mrs Laidlaw. “Often these are children who are most in need of a stimulating, creative environment.”



1975 - Government funds training course - Wellington Polytechnic

First Early Childhood Convention



1975-1980 governed by National

Prime Minister's Conference addressed the need for a national childcare policy

New Zealand Association of Child Care Centres was awarded the first grant for research into childcare training by the Department of Social Welfare

## Students advocate for childcare

In 1972, under the direction of Crispin Gardiner, a group of university staff and students founded the Campus Crèche Society “for the benefit of parents studying [there] or at the Teacher' College”.



“No one in the male dominated organisations... is willing to provide, as a matter of urgency, a facility which will, because of the male dominated nature of our society, benefit mainly women students.” Crispin Gardiner, 1974

## The Attachment Debate

John Bowlby's Maternal Deprivation Theory sparked the attachment debate between childcare advocates. “I look on daycare centres as I look on smoking and its links with cancer.”



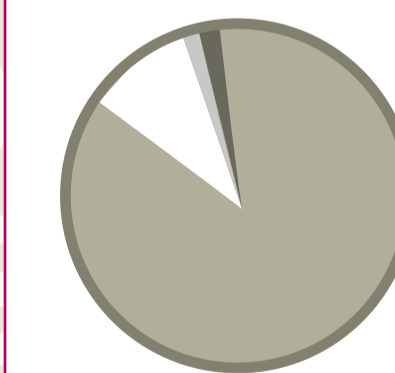
Although understanding Bowlby's concerns for children's emotional wellbeing, the Association took a different stance.

The Association's members and advocates for childcare defined the issue as one of quality, good staffing ratios and training.



“I was horrified by the people still offering these ghastly conditions. The only way we could do it, we thought then, was not to beat them but to encourage them to join [the Association].” Margaret Lamb, 1976

Population  
**3,129,383**

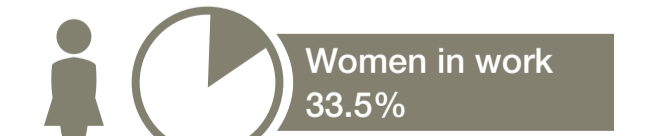


Children attending ECE  
**56,876**



Employment  
**\$112.22**

average weekly wage (both sexes)



Number of ECE services  
**424** **697**

free kindergartens recognised playcentres  
An additional 13,000 children below 5 years of age were enrolled in other preschool groups (childcare).