



Office of Hon Anne Tolley

MP for East Coast

Minister of Education

Minister for Tertiary Education

Minister Responsible for the
Education Review Office

27 JAN 2010

Russell Ballantyne

President

Men in Early Childhood Education Incorporated(NZ)

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Tēnā koe Russell Ballantyne

Thank you for your email of 7 December 2009 about low numbers of male staff in the early childhood education (ECE) workforce.

Whilst we know that research indicates that the effectiveness of the teaching that takes place in the classroom or early childhood service is the key factor that makes a difference to children's learning, not the gender of the teacher, I share your concerns at the low number of males seeking a career in ECE. Early childhood teaching is a worthwhile and fulfilling career for both genders, and the Government supports increasing the number of men in the early childhood education workforce.

As you will be aware, the number of men working in early childhood education has been slowly increasing, from 142 in 2002, to over 280 in 2009. The Ministry of Education supports men in early childhood education through TeachNZ. This is largely through promotional material aimed at encouraging men into early childhood teaching. Further information about this material can be found on the TeachNZ website, www.teachnz.govt.nz and I would be interested to hear from your group about the effectiveness of this promotion and any ideas about how to improve it.

I value your commitment to increasing the number of men in the early childhood education workforce and would be very interested in any suggestions you may have regarding this matter. I shall also ask my staff to ensure that on my next visit to Dunedin we make time to come and talk with you.

Nāku noa, nā,

Hon Anne Tolley
Minister of Education