

College of Education

Bachelor of Teaching and Learning (Primary)

TECP315 Language, Culture and Identity

Enhancing Educational Experiences and Outcomes for Diverse Learners

Assignment 1: Report

An information report on an agency, organisation or group that provides support for culturally and linguistically diverse learners and/or their whānau

Due Date: Friday 22 September, 2017

Time: 5.00pm

Student Name: GIORGIA STECCA

ID Number: 26885343

Word Count: 985

(Maximum allowable = 1000 words. This does NOT include the cover page or the reference section at the end. It DOES include everything in between, i.e. the introduction, findings and conclusion.)

Declaration

- a) I understand that the 'Findings' section of this assignment may be compiled along with the findings from the other students in this course into a resource that will be made available on the TECP315 Learn site.
- b) I hereby declare that this assignment is my own work. I understand that if I am suspected of plagiarism or other form of dishonest practice, my work will be referred to the Head of School under the terms of the General Course and Examination Regulations Section J Dishonest Practice and Breach of Instructions. Penalties may range from denial of credit for the item of work in question, to exclusion from the University.

Note: By typing your name in the space provided below and uploading your assignment to the Learn dropbox, you are agreeing to this declaration.

Signature: GIORGIA STECCA

Date: 22/09/2017

Report: The Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council

This section has been formatted in 12 point Arial with 1.5 line spacing, 18 point spacing between paragraphs, and left hand alignment. Type your report below. Please do not alter the formatting.



Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council for early childhood educators who are looking for an organization that can assist them in supporting culturally diverse learners. Firstly, I conducted an online search to identify a suitable organisation. After looking at the Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council website at <https://www.dmec.org.nz/> and their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/DunedinMultiEthnicCouncil>, I decided to contact them by email. The communication officer, Jocelyn Singh, replied to me and we spoke on the phone. I also met the president, Paul Mac Donald Gorlie, and their playgroup coordinator, Izumi Arita.

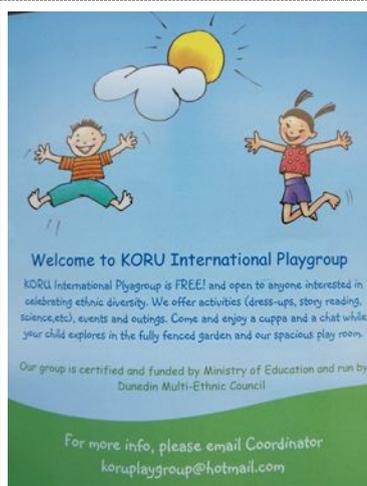
Findings

The Dunedin Multi-Ethnic Council (DMEC) is a non-profit organisation that caters for the multi-ethnic communities in Dunedin. Although most of its members are migrants, anyone is welcome to contact the organization and participate in their initiatives and events. The organisation is not only set up for diverse learners who share a different cultural background, but it reaches out to the wider community in Dunedin. The aim of the organization is to enable the multi-ethnic community to create a net of connections to better understand the New Zealand culture with the goal of feeling welcome in this country and feeling a sense of belonging in the respect of one another cultural differences. The members are actively committed to organising occasions to gather people and socially empower anyone who chooses to be part of their events. The values of the organization

are to spread understandings about different cultures, connect people to the community, recognising Māori as tangata whenua, and valuing all cultures through the promotion of events, communication, and education. The president, Paul Mac Donald Gorlie, informed me that anyone who has an ethnicity, and everyone does, is welcome to contact the DMEC and their members will try to match ethnicity as a first point of socialisation. According to Samovar and Porter (2004), words themselves carry no meaning but the message is shaped by the cultural context so when people from the same culture communicate they encounter less barriers. In addition, acculturation patterns can be different for each individual and I believe that the DMEC could play a positive role in preventing cultural shock (Lustig & Koester, 1996).

The services offered by the organisation are free of cost and there are no criteria to access the support. The Council provides specific sessions that serve the purpose of supporting migrants. For example, the Koru International Playgroup, Chai and Chat, and the community garden project. At the chai sessions, participants have the chance to listen to a guest speaker, share each other cultural artefacts and, for instance, receive free immigration advice. Other events that are promoted by the DMEC are charity events such as the Cultural carnival, the Celebration of the Race Day, Human Rights Day and Peace Day. They make use of local spaces, such as the Arai Te Uru marae and the Hub.

I personally attended the DMEC Annual Community Hui at the Arai Te Uru marae and went to observe one of the sessions of the Koru Playgroup at the Hub. At the Hui, the main points of discussion were to begin developing a new strategic plan, build new relationships and partnerships by having a rewarding experience at the marae to learn from each other. As a teacher, it is crucial to facilitate the learning by responding appropriately to cultural difference and inform students and whānau about cultural costumes (Lewis & Reinders, 2007). The Council meet this expectation ethically.



The Koru playgroup is managed by Izumi and offers educational and social experiences for children and their whānau. They have developed a programme that includes free play, art creativity, and shared kai. They meet once a week since 2015 at The Hub, which is a social space where attendees can also find lots of flyers regarding free parenting programmes, library activities, museum, ECE centres information, health providers suggestions, groups for mothers, and other languages courses and groups, such as Korean and Pasifika. Although the Council does not sponsor any language classes, it can provide all the information to assist learners in achieving their language goals. The programme at the Koru is funded by the Ministry of Education and, therefore, it must comply with current policies and legislation. A poster of the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017) is hung on the wall and the resources are approved by the Ministry. By coming to the playgroup, people are encouraged to socialise and share their everyday experiences. Izumi is activity promoting the playgroup and always looking at including more people, usually by word of mouth, to foster relationships.

The easiest way to contact the DMEC is by email or phone: Contact number: 022 4588 567; Email: dmec.contact@gmail.com.

The office is located at 103 MacAndrew Road, South Dunedin, New Zealand and is open from 9am-3pm Every Wednesday.

Conclusion

I have no reservation about recommending the organisation. It may be of support especially if any of the children attending an early childhood centre have a diverse cultural background and would benefit from meeting others who share the same culture. Moreover,

being connected to the DMEC becomes a useful way to stay informed on the cultural events in Dunedin and deepen one's own understandings of culture as they are an inclusive organisation that does not discriminate on any basis. The communication with the Council was straightforward and everyone was very helpful. Jocelyn, Izumi and Paul were the key persons who allowed me to investigate into the organisation and ensured that I did not encounter any challenges. I have found the organisation to be interested in working with me and knowing more about my studies and my living in Dunedin as I moved last year. This organisation can truly assist anyone in developing cultural awareness and it becomes an essential point of contact to any new migrant to Dunedin. By offering a range of initiatives, they create meaningful opportunities for inclusion.

References

This section has been formatted in 12 point Arial with 1.5 line spacing, 12 point spacing between paragraphs, and hanging indentation. Please type your references here. Remember to use APA 6th edition conventions. Here is an example.

Howard, J. (2013). *Cultural Studies lecture 2* [Powerpoint slides]. Retrieved from TECP202 Language, Social and Cultural Studies website:
<http://learn.canterbury.ac.nz/course/view.php?id=3934&topic=15>

[DMEC logo] [Img]. (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.dmec.org.nz/>

Koru International Playgroup (2017) *Playgroup* [Flyer]. Dunedin, New Zealand: Author.

Lewis, M., & Reinders, H. (2007). *Using student-centered methods with teacher-centered students*. Retrieved from <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/canterbury/home.action>

Lustig, M. W., & Koester, J. (1996). *Intercultural competence: Interpersonal communication across cultures* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Harper Collins College Publishers.

Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki māturanga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Samovar, L. A., & Porter, R. E. (2004). *Communication between cultures* (5th, Student ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.