
Editorial

Kieran O'Donoghue and Mary Nash

This double issue of *Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work* speaks to challenges found in everyday social work practice. These challenges are balancing the science and humanity of social work, developing supportive environments for clients, understanding and repairing damaged relationships, responding to changes in our client populations in a multicultural, globalised world, whilst at the same time responsibly working towards a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based society. We include, as an underlying and essential part of the challenge to everyday practice, issues of social justice and human rights.

In regard to the underlying concern for social justice and human rights on which social work is founded, we offer an article by former president of the Association, and life member Mike O'Brien, who reports on his recent survey of members of the Association and the links we make between social justice and our practice. It makes for good reading and those of you who contributed to the research will feel particularly involved with this material. Our second article, by Sophie Trevathan and Lynne Briggs, is very topical, looking as it does at issues around physical punishment and child abuse deaths in New Zealand. Readers will be able to consider this article together with Mike O'Brien's and Pia Sandström's piece on the human rights of the child that we have included in the practice notes section. We think there are interesting synergies between the three articles.

We then come to the challenge of balancing science and humanity in social work, where Robyn Aldrich appraises the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) against the recovery approach in the field of elderly dementia practice. She argues that the DSM and psychosocial models of recovery are complementary, and in being so balance the science of evidence-based practice with the humanity of strengths and recovery approaches.

Sally Denley's article entitled 'Nurturing social capital in local communities', describes how a family mentoring service that matches volunteers with families develops a supportive environment that enhances clients' social connection. The journal indirectly picks up the theme of nurturing social capital in the article on social work with migrants and refugees.

Maree Foley, Mary Nash and Robyn Munford, provide extensive coverage of attachment theory and explore the relevance it has for informed reflective practice, particularly, in terms of the relational nature of human life and social work practice. One reviewer noted the value of an article covering the role that a social worker's organisation should play in supporting reflective practice based on attachment theory. Without a secure (organisational) base from which to work, practitioners become unnecessarily vulnerable.

In our next article, Jenny Pepworth and Mary Nash provide a review of the research and evidence informing social work practice with refugees and new settlers in Aotearoa New Zealand and in doing so emphasise that the demographics of our population have changed and that we need to be attuned to the challenges, strengths and issues facing those who are new to Aotearoa New Zealand if we are to be culturally competent and humane in our social work practice. A wide review of practical research is particularly useful in this developing

field and the article draws attention to the need for advocacy and holistic practice when working in this area.

Rebecca Giles and Shirley Rivers return us to our responsibilities towards a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-based society, highlighting the importance of relationship, dialogue and space in the cultural development of students. In addition, it is a stark reminder of the social and cultural blindness present within our society to the ongoing imbalance and injustice arising from New Zealand's colonial history and sociological arrangements.

We follow this with a visit to a Swedish school which is implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child and has won awards for its successful strategies. Mary Nash has worked with Pia Sandström to edit this material, which Sandstrom presented at the 'Social work in schools' conference in Auckland earlier this year. We think it particularly interesting in the light of the earlier article by Trevathan and Briggs, and the Swedish connection to the fascinating review article by Professor Ivan Snook.

We look forward to our readers' comments and feedback and would like to run a 'Letters to the editors' column if you send us your views. While Noticeboard and our ANZASW website, with the new Kete feature, are great ways of keeping up with the play, your journal is probably the most enduring record of the issues that confront us over time. Keeping a record of these concerns is always worthwhile and though you may not rate your ideas highly, you could be surprised at how they resonate with other readers.
