UC Child Well-being Research Institute and
National Science Challenge – A Better Start: E Tipu e Rea – Successful Learning

Child Well-being Research Symposium
Programme

June 6th and 7th, 2019
University of Canterbury
The UC Child Well-being Research Institute, Te Kāhui Pā Harakeke, is committed to advancing high quality, multidisciplinary research to enhance the learning success and healthy well-being of children and young people. The focus is holistic, including research related to infants, children, and adolescents within the context of their whānau, family and community. We have a commitment to being a leader in developing a strengths-based discourse around child development, health and well-being that speaks to the context of Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Within the UC Child Well-being Research Institute, a number of large research grants are hosted, including the subcontract for the Successful Learning theme of the National Science Challenge - A Better Start: E Tipu e Rea (grow and branch forth). A Better Start National Science Challenge is a $34Million Challenge over 10 years, funded through the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment. The Challenge is focused on research to improve outcomes for our young people in relation to being a healthy weight, having successful learning experiences through establishing strong foundational language and literacy skills and being mentally well, thriving within their communities.

The Child Well-being Research Symposium showcases a number of research projects embedded in the Challenge, and also from members of the Institute’s research team – rooted firmly in the kaupapa of child well-being. The symposium also provides our community with an exceptional opportunity to hear world-leading experts discuss critically important topics to ensure young children’s learning and literacy success. We are very fortunate to have Professor Laura Justice from The Ohio State University as our keynote speaker. Prof Justice is visiting our Institute as one of our University’s Erskine Fellows. Thank you to all of our presenters for their valuable contributions to our symposium.

I would like to warmly welcome you to our 2019 Child Well-being Research Symposium. On behalf of UC, Child Well-being Research Institute and the Better Start National Science Challenge I would like to thank you for your participation and hope you enjoy the exciting programme of research presentations, poster session and panel discussions we have prepared.

Ngā mihi nui,
Professor Gail Gillon
Director Te Kāhui Pā Harakeke | Child Well-being Research Institute
https://www.canterbury.ac.nz/childwellbeing/
College of Education Health and Human Development
University of Canterbury

**A Better Start National Science Challenge Directorate:** Director, Prof Wayne Cutfield, Liggins Institute University of Auckland; Co-Director, Professor Gail Gillon, University of Canterbury; and Co-Director Professor Barry, Taylor University of Otago.

**Vision Mātauranga Leader:** Professor Angus Macfarlane, University of Canterbury.
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<td>9.00-10.15am</td>
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<td><strong>Lunch and Interactive Research Poster Session</strong></td>
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<td>Researchers will be standing by their posters from 12.45 during this session and informally discussing their findings with conference participants</td>
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<td>The use of diet and nutrition in supporting children with developmental disorders - what does the research say?</td>
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<td>Literacy Success for child well-being: insights from an expert panel</td>
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<td>Distinguished Professor William Tunmer (Massey U); Professor James Chapman (Massey U)</td>
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<td>3.30-3.45pm</td>
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### Day 2
**Friday 7th June**

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<td>Children, their well-being and their learning: an interdisciplinary expert panel</td>
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<td>(University of Canterbury); Associate Professor Sonja Macfarlane (University of Canterbury);</td>
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<td>Teacher dispositions and child well-being</td>
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<td>Co-constructing a culturally and linguistically sustaining, Te Tiriti-based Ako framework for socio-emotional wellbeing in education</td>
<td>Dr Veronica O'Toole (University of Canterbury) <em>and</em> Dr Rachel Martin (University of Otago)</td>
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<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
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<td>The collateral benefits of sleep treatment</td>
<td>Associate Professor Laurie McLay (University of Canterbury)</td>
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<td>1.45-2.15pm</td>
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<td>Professor Annelies Kamp (University of Canterbury)</td>
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<td>Early brain development and experience</td>
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<td><strong>Closing remarks: Director Te Kāhui Pā Harakeke, Professor Gail Gillon (University of Canterbury)</strong></td>
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For more information on the UC Child Well-being Research Institute, follow the links below:

- [Website](#)  |  [Facebook](#)  |  [Twitter](#)  

**Wifi connection:**

- UCvisitor
- Username: uc4905
- Password: 636058
**Presentation Abstracts – Day 1**

**Wiring a child’s brain for lifelong success**  
*Keynote Speaker: Professor Laura Justice (The Ohio State University)*

This keynote takes a journey through four disciplines – neuroscience, psychology, linguistics, and education – to discuss how we can ‘wire a child’s brain for lifelong success.’ Of particular interest is discussing how we can provide children with experiences that promote their early vocabulary development, given its foundational role to many areas of well-being. Strategies for ensuring that early-childhood programming provides children with frequent opportunities for quality conversations are presented.

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**Internet-related addictions and child development**  
*Distinguished Professor Niki Davis (University of Canterbury)*

The Internet is an ongoing part of everyday life in a world where young people are the most connected with multiple devices. Designed to the ‘sticky’ it is not be surprising that internet-related addictions related to gaming, mobile phones and social media have emerged (López Fernández, 2019). Dieter Wolke’s research into bullying and cyberbullying provides evidence of long-term impacts, so could that also be the case for these digital addictions? While parents and educators support children to develop resilience, more attention needs to be paid to children’s rights and agency.

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**The bigger picture of child health**  
*Professor Philip Schluter (University of Canterbury)*

Can we improve children’s health and wellbeing using routinely collected quantitative data? This is, in many ways, the promise of Big Data – or at least its future promise. But there is no doubt that purposefully collected quantitative data can save children’s lives and improve their health and wellbeing, is there? In this short talk, Professor Schluter will outline the motivation for his career in child population health and provide a glimpse into the Big Data opportunities that exist with health and education. Doctoral student Ms Nikita Gregory will then present part of her work looking at perception associated with health and education data-sharing amongst educational stakeholders. And lastly, doctoral student Ms Hyun (Alice) Kim will present some of her work showing what we can learn when multi-disciplinary data are weaved together in finding the determinants of learning success in Pacific children aged 6 years.

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**Positive ways of enhancing literacy success**  
*Associate Professor Brigid McNeill (University of Canterbury)  
Professor Gail Gillon (University of Canterbury)*

This study investigated the feasibility of a teacher-implemented intervention, supported by speech-language therapists and researchers, to accelerate children’s phonological awareness, letter and vocabulary knowledge within a response to intervention framework. A stepped wedge research design was used to evaluate the response to intervention for 141, 5-year-old children with lower oral language skills. Teachers implemented the first tier of intervention (Better Start Literacy Approach) at the class or large group level for 20 hours. The intervention was set within a culturally responsive framework using storybooks, game activities and vocabulary relevant to children in New Zealand and
that celebrated Māori culture and values. Tier 2 (small group) and Tier 3 (more individualised) intervention led by specialists was also implemented for children who needed further support to acquire key foundational knowledge in literacy learning. Children made significantly more progress in their phonological awareness, targeted vocabulary knowledge and decoding ability in response to the Better Start Literacy Approach (Tier 1) compared to their usual literacy curriculum. Preliminary analysis showed that tier 2 (n=47) and tier 3 (n=29) support was effective at promoting children’s knowledge in targeted areas. The findings have important implications for implementing a proactive approach to ensure all learners gain key foundational knowledge in literacy learning in their first year of school.

**Mana-enhancing teaching and research**

**Professor Angus Macfarlane (University of Canterbury)**

This presentation will describe a tribally-endorsed research project (Macfarlane, Webber, Cookson-Cox and McRae, 2014) that set out to identify the indicators of Māori succeeding as Māori. The project, Ka Awatea, recognises the altruistic history of the tribe’s educational provision, and acknowledges the foundation that was set down by tribal ancestors for the benefit of those who followed them. The references to the past have great importance to the study. This is made more real by identifying the qualities modelled by former tribal icons – qualities which inform the education and health (and political) communities today particularly since the emphasis has been repositioned to the Wellbeing of a nation. Essentially, four pillars and one overarching lever are the ‘drivers’ that evolved in the process, and as a suite, offer significant potential toward Wellbeing aspirations.

**The use of diet and nutrition in supporting children with developmental disorders**

**Clinical Psychologist Mairin Taylor (University of Canterbury)**

A number of families are already investigating and trialling dietary and nutritional treatments to compliment or even replace traditional therapies for developmental disorders such as ADHD and Autism spectrum disorders. The information available to the wider community about these treatments is often confusing and contradictory. In this talk, I will briefly review both the effectiveness and safety of diet and nutritional approaches as well as some of the research challenges that occur in this interdisciplinary field.

**Literacy success for child well-being: insights from an expert panel**

**Professor Gail Gillon (University of Canterbury)**
**Professor Laura Justice (The Ohio State University)**
**Distinguished Professor William (Bill) Tunmer (Massey University)**
**Professor James Chapman (Massey University)**

Early reading success is a strong predictor of later reading and subsequent educational achievement. Literacy achievement of New Zealand children requires attention, to lead to better early literacy, learning and health outcomes, particularly for Māori and Pasifika children, and those from low socio-economic backgrounds. This panel of international experts share their priorities for supporting children’s literacy success. Questions are welcomed from the audience during this interactive session.
Presentation Abstracts – Day 2

Opening address: Vice-Chancellor Cheryl de la Rey (University of Canterbury)

Children, their well-being and their learning: an interdisciplinary expert panel
Professor Laura Justice (The Ohio State University)
Senior Lecturer Yvonne Crichton-Hill (University of Canterbury)
Associate Professor Sonja Macfarlane (University of Canterbury)
Associate Professor Laurie McLay (University of Canterbury)

Child well-being is an important topic for parents, whānau, practitioners and policy makers interested in the growth and well-being of our country. With a range of experience from Te Ao Māori and Kaupapa Māori, Pasifika advisory and social work, sleep practices, and child learning, this expert panel shares their expertise for enhancing children’s holistic well-being and learning success. Questions are welcomed from the audience during this interactive session.

Teacher dispositions and child well-being
Professor Misty Sato (University of Canterbury)

Dispositions for teaching have been in the initial teacher education literature for more than 30 years. There is consensus that dispositions are an important aspect of becoming a teacher. There is less consensus about how to frame what we mean by dispositions, what dispositions matter for successful teaching, or how to develop or assess teachers’ dispositions. This talk will survey the U.S. literature and landscape on dispositions for teaching, share an equity-based dispositions framework from work I conducted at the University of Minnesota, explore connections between teacher dispositions and child well-being, and put forward New Zealand’s current stance on dispositions for teaching in initial teacher education.

Literacy success and self-concept in older readers
Professor John Everatt (University of Canterbury)
Dr Amanda Denston (University of Canterbury)
Adjunct Associate Professor Jane Prochnow (University of Canterbury)
Leali’ie’e Tufulasifa’atafataf Ova Taleni (Kaiārahi Pasifika – University of Canterbury)

Reading and writing are fundamental for success in education. Failure to acquire these skills can lead to poor educational achievement, negative feelings about education, lowered self-concept/self-efficacy, and behavioural problems; all of which can impact on the well-being of the individual. These negative consequences will be particularly evident in older readers who have experienced several years of struggling with literacy learning. Research funded by a Better Start & Cure Kids grant has been looking at ways to support literacy learning in year 4 to 6 (aged 8 to 10 years) students who have struggled with reading/writing, while at the same time increasing self-concept, and reducing negative consequences. Interventions included relatively challenging, age-appropriate texts to build interest/self-efficacy, and targeted competence in decoding strategies. Comparisons between students who experienced the intervention first and those who experienced the same intervention later in the year indicated intervention-specific improvements in measures of word and text reading, spelling, vocabulary, and morphological awareness. There were also increases in global self-esteem, academic self-concept and self-efficacy, as well as increased resilience, and reductions in emotional
and behavioural problems. Delayed positive psychosocial outcomes were apparent, suggesting the need for a period of reappraisal following successful learning and/or the need to apply strategies outside of the intervention.

Co-constructing a culturally and linguistically sustaining, Te Tiriti-based Ako framework for socio-emotional wellbeing in education
Dr Veronica O’Toole (University of Canterbury)
Dr Rachel Martin (University of Otago)
Professor Letitia Fickel (University of Canterbury)
Dr Amanda Denston (University of Canterbury)

National research indicates that many Year 5-9 students are failing to experience desired outcomes for student wellbeing. These students also demonstrate lower levels of achievement and increased rates of being stood down or suspended. Developing knowledge and skills related to socio-emotional wellbeing can offer positive support for students during this developmental period of transition and identity development, contributing to positive mental health and educational engagement. This presentation overviews a Teaching & Learning Research Initiative (TLRI) aimed at supporting young adolescents by enabling teachers to develop and integrate socio-emotional learning (SEL) pedagogies within their classrooms. A key outcome is the co-construction of a transferable teaching-learning framework of SEL among teachers, students, whānau, iwi, hapū and community, that supports students’ identities, languages, and cultures, reflective of the bicultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand. The project is underpinned by participatory action research methodology, aligned with and mutually informed by Kaupapa Māori Research.

The collateral benefits of sleep treatment
Associate Professor Laurie McLay (University of Canterbury)

Sleep is essential to children’s health, wellbeing, and development. Chronic and persistent sleep disturbance has a number of adverse consequences for both children and their families. Sleep problems are ubiquitous among children and adolescents diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and are likely to be the result of a unique combination of biological, psychological, social and behavioural factors. Without effective treatment, sleep problems are likely to persist resulting in detrimental secondary effects. Melatonin is an empirically-supported treatment for sleep problems in children however, it does not address the role of the environment and learning in such problems, and in many cases sleep issues persist. This presentation will provide an overview of a research study investigating the effectiveness of parent-implemented, individualised, behaviourally-based interventions for sleep problems children with ASD. This will include data on the sleep outcomes in addition to the collateral benefit of resolving sleep problems on the daytime behaviour and well-being of children with ASD and their families.

Collaborative leadership for child well-being
Professor Annelies Kamp (University of Canterbury)

In this presentation, Associate Professor in Leadership, Dr Annelies Kamp will explore the leadership implications of the collaborative policy agenda in social policy contexts, including those focused on child well-being. In the context of a globalised world, collaborations are seen as essential in responding to what are commonly called, drawing on Rittel & Webber’s 1973 study of wicked
problems of policy. Every wicked problem is unique, resistant to resolution given its complex interdependencies. Responding to wicked problems requires engagement with a wide range of underlying conditions, adopting contingent forms of leadership and a reflective stance rather than reliance on ‘best practice’. In posing four leadership provocations, Annelies will introduce concepts that will allow insights into how we might most productively imagine leadership in the context of wicked problems, collaborative solutions, and particular forms of accountability.

**Early brain development and experience**  
Professor Lianne Woodward (University of Canterbury)

There have been major advances in our understanding of the human brain and how it develops over the last two decades. This talk will provide an overview of the neurobiological development of the human brain from conception through the early school years. Also discussed will be the importance of children’s early life experiences in shaping brain development and behaviour over the life course.
Interactive Poster Session Abstracts

*ordered by poster number

1. Leona Harris (University of Canterbury)

*Visibility of language diversity in the educational settings of 4 to 6-year-old multilingual children*

An important way to value and support language diversity and multilingualism is to include children’s languages and related cultural artefacts in their linguistic landscapes. Languages visible in both the physical and digital environments can reflect the formal and informal policies and practices and can influence how languages are perceived and used. This research describes the linguistic landscapes of seven early childhood centres and five primary schools across a year to understand the language and digital technology policies and practices in the physical and digital environments of multilingual children, with a focus on educational services and their links with whānau.

https://ebdwwebsite.wixsite.com/ebdw

2. Maryam Sharifkhani, Associate Professor Annelies Kamp, Dr. Kerry Vincent (University Of Canterbury)

*School to work: Immigrant youth in Aotearoa New Zealand*

Globalization and the economic recession impact dramatically on employment process of young people instability as they have to deal with challenging labour market and youth from immigrant background are more at-risk of unemployment. For this group, the school-to-work transition is a critical stage and important juncture in the lifelong process. In this study, I aim to explore how immigrant families and career advisors understand the youth school-to-work transition process and identify factors that influence the school-to-work transition of immigrant youth in Aotearoa New Zealand.

3. Matthew Hobbs, Lukas Marek, Melanie Tomintz, Jesse Wiki, John McCarthy, Malcolm Campbell, Simon Kingham (GeoHealth Laboratory, University of Canterbury)

*Obe-city: child, parent or environment?*

We simultaneously investigate child, parent and environmental risk factors and childhood obesity using a nationally representative sample with measured height and weight. Individual-level data were sourced from the New Zealand Health Survey (NZHS) and pooled (2013/14 - 2016/17). Child data were related to parent adult NZHS data (n=9,022). Nationwide environmental data included green and blue spaces, fast-food, takeaway, supermarket, fruit and vegetable, and convenience food outlets and physical activity facilities. Child and parent level risk factors were important in determining childhood obesity risk. No food or physical activity environment exposures were associated with childhood obesity.

4. Lukas Marek, Matthew Hobbs, Melanie Tomintz, John McCarthy, Simon Kingham, Malcolm Campbell (GeoHealth Laboratory, University of Canterbury)

*Spatial, demographic and socioeconomic patterns of childhood immunisation in New Zealand (2006–2017)*

In New Zealand the rate of childhood immunisation has increased steadily since the introduction of the National Immunisation Register (NIR) in 2005, but the nature of this change varies locally, and current indications suggest that immunisation coverage for children is actually declining in some
parts of the country. By undertaking a geospatial analysis of immunisation coverage and moderating factors, we identified significant differences in immunisation coverage, both overall and spatially. These variations remain when socioeconomic deprivation, demographic variables, health service accessibility, and urban/rural classifications are controlled for.

5. Felicity Morton-Turner (University of Canterbury)

**STAR NZ: Sit Together and Read New Zealand. Families reading together to build children’s early literacy skills and a love of reading**

The research I am undertaking will show the impact of Sit Together and Read New Zealand (STAR NZ) on supporting children to further develop fundamental emergent literacy, language skills, knowledge and a positive disposition towards literacy. STAR NZ is the New Zealand version of Professor Laura Justice’s Sit Together and Read (STAR) programme. STAR NZ has been specifically designed to meet the needs of New Zealand children and their families, attending Early Childhood Centres in New Zealand. This study will also examine what conditions support parents to administer the STAR NZ programme with high levels of fidelity and therefore ensure the programme is completed and yields the desired outcomes.

6. Michelle Conway, Dr Jane Newbury (University of Canterbury)

**Predicting expressive language outcomes at three years from pragmatic skills at two years of age**

It is difficult to predict language outcomes between ages two and three years. This study investigated the relationship between early pragmatics and later language outcomes using a sample of 80 children. Pragmatic codes from videoed language samples at 24-30 months and standardised language measures at 24-30 and 36-42 months were analysed. Children’s non-linguistic communication at age 24-30 months was moderately negatively correlated with concurrent expressive language scores, but not with later expressive language outcomes. This may reflect the progression from non-linguistic to linguistic communication in this age range. Early expressive linguistic skills was a better predictor of later expressive language.

7. Professor Gail Gillon (University of Canterbury)

**International Survey of SLP practices in working with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental impairment that affects children and families around the globe. To better understand the role of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) in differing countries in supporting children with ASD, the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics (IALP) Child Language Committee developed a survey for SLPs who were currently working with children or adolescents with ASD. The survey comprised 58 questions relating to background information of the respondent, characteristics of children with ASD and the role of SLPs in diagnosis, assessment and intervention practices for children with ASD. The English version of the survey was translated into French, Russian, and Portuguese and distributed on-line through speech language pathology associations who are members of IALP. This poster provides a descriptive summary of main findings from the quantitative data from the 1114 SLPs (representing 35 countries) who completed the survey. Most of the respondents (91%) were experienced in working with children with ASD and the majority (75%) worked in schools or early childhood settings. SLPs reported that the typical age of diagnosis of ASD for children on their caseload was 3-4 years and the
majority of SLPs participate in the diagnosis as part of a professional team. Generally, the results support positive global trends for SLPs using effective practices in assessment and intervention for children with ASD. Two areas where SLPs’s may need further support are involving parents in assessment practices and supporting literacy development in children with ASD.

8. Sarah Timperley, Elizabeth Schaughency, Jessica Riordan, Ella Hall, Jane Carroll, Shika Das, Elaine Reese (University of Otago)

**Benefits of Fostering Parents’ Interactive Reading with Preschool Children for Later Reading Interactions and Involvement in Children’s Learning in the First Year of School**

Numerous initiatives encourage interactive shared reading with preschool children; however, few evaluations examine whether parents’ skills are maintained after children start school or if there are benefits for other forms of parental involvement in learning. We compared two shared reading conditions, Rich Reading and Reminiscing (RRR) and Strengthening Sound Sensitivity (SSS), and an activity-based control (ABC), one year after parents and children participated in a randomised-control trial. During shared reading, parents participating in RRR or SSS showed continued intervention-specific talk. In addition, RRR was associated with more parent-reported involvement with children’s learning at home and school than the other conditions.

9. Tracy A. Cameron, Jane Carroll, Mele Taumoepeau, Elizabeth Schaughency (University of Otago)

**New entrant screening and progress monitoring: Following children’s progress in word reading during the first six months of school**

Children (n = 105) were assessed at school-entry using a NZ adaptation of the Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI®; Kaminski, Abbott, Aguayo, Latimer, & Good, 2014) and followed monthly using a brief Year 1 high-frequency word-reading task. Results indicate progress monitoring with NZWIF:Y1 was sensitive to children’s growth—and differences in growth—in word reading across their first six months of school. Children who performed less well on PELI® and those not achieving book-level targets for six months of school had lower NZWIF:Y1 scores. Results support early screening and progress monitoring to inform instruction and learning supports in beginning schooling.

10. Dr Llyween Couper

**Improving School Playgrounds: Making Changes Based on Data**

Play is critical to children’s health, well-being and emotional development. All students need adequate time, play space, appropriate support and equipment for positive play experiences. In New Zealand, students spend about 20% of their school day in break-times or one day a week. This presentation describes the tool used by several Canterbury schools in 2016 that seriously looked at their school playgrounds. Motivation for using the Playground Audit came from the desire to make changes based on data. The role of adults in the playground was influenced by linking play skills with Key Competencies of the New Zealand Curriculum.

11. Nikita Gregory, Professor Philip Schluter, Associate Professor Brigid McNeill, Professor Gail Gillon (University of Canterbury)

**Teacher Perceptions of Sharing Student Health Information**

Sharing student health information with schools may provide direction for appropriate interventions to improve both learning and health outcomes for students with health issues. However sharing such
sensitive health information has significant risks to personal and whanau privacy. This investigation visits three Christchurch schools (decile 1-9) and asks parents and teachers about sharing student health information with schools. By listening to the community that is most impacted by sharing student health information, we are able to create a health information sharing system that is built on community engagement, addresses concerns raised by the this community, and consequently is valued by this community.

12. Dr Amy Scott, Associate Professor Brigid McNeill, Dr Anne van Bysterveldt (University of Canterbury)

_Extratextual talk during shared reading: Teenage mothers and their young children_

Teenage mothers are known to provide less rich shared reading experiences for their children, which includes less extratextual talk. This study examined the qualitative and quantitative change in teenage mothers’ (n = 14) extratextual talk during shared reading interactions with their young children, following attendance of an emergent literacy intervention. A detailed examination of change in extratextual talk following intervention will be presented, and implications for future research will be discussed.

13. Professor Gail Gillon, Associate Professor Brigid McNeill, Dr Amy Scott, Dr Amanda Denston, Dr Leanne Wilson, Professor Angus Macfarlane (University of Canterbury), Dr Karyn Carson (Flinders University)

_A Better Start to literacy for children who enter school with low levels or oral language ability_

This study investigated the feasibility of a teacher implemented intervention to accelerate phonological awareness, letter, and vocabulary knowledge in 141 children (Mean Age: 5 years, 4 months) who entered school with lower levels of oral language ability, as part of the Successful Literacy and Learning theme of A Better Start. The children attended schools in low socioeconomic communities where additional stress was still evident six years after the devastating earthquakes in Christchurch, New Zealand in 2011. The teachers implemented the intervention at the class or large group level for 20 hours (four, 30-minute sessions per week for 10 weeks).

14. Dr Amanda Denston, Professor John Everatt, Associate Professor Jane Prochnow, Leali'i'e Tufulasifa'atafataf Ova Taleni (University of Canterbury)

_Facilitating emotional well-being and positive behaviours in children with literacy learning difficulties_

Academic self-concept relates to the judgements (cognitive/affect) that children make about their academic ability, and self-efficacy relates to a child’s confidence in their ability to complete (specific) tasks (Denston, 2016). Both are aspects of psychosocial development that have been associated with subsequent feelings of well-being; and previous research has identified a relationship between the development of academic self-concept and self-efficacy and school achievement in children (Chapman, 1988). Research has also indicated relationships between negative behaviours, poor educational achievement and self-perceptions (Prochnow, Tunmer & Chapman, 2013). In the current research, a targeted intervention was implemented to improve literacy skills and reduce the potential negative impact on psychosocial development that can be caused by several years of experiencing literacy difficulties.