



Nature Play 2019

Conference Information

CONTACT:

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SPEAKERS & ORGANISERS



MICHAEL HANN-KEY NOTE SPEAKER

Michael is a Paediatric Dietitian and a forensic Clinical Biochemist who specialises in supporting children with unresolved chronic illnesses and complex conditions, particularly those with neurodevelopmental disorders, depression, chronic fatigue, immune dysregulation and the many underlying factors involving biochemical dysfunctions.

He has worked in more than 30 countries, treating children and chairing hundreds of forums on big issues affecting child health – attempting to connect-the-dots between modern malnutrition issues, agri-food toxicities, loss of biodiversity, a lack of nature play and the explosion of gut-brain disorders in children.



DR SUE ELLIOTT

Sue has been a leader in sustainability practices within early childhood education and care for over twenty-five years. She is an experienced practitioner, academic, consultant, author and researcher in early childhood education with a focus on education for sustainability, outdoor playspaces and forest preschools. Most recently, she led an early childhood education for sustainability scoping study for the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Environmental Trust and is currently leading two research projects around children's experiences in natural outdoor contexts



FRAN HUGHES

Fran is the Course Co-ordinator of the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and Care (Birth-5) at TAFE NSW, Randwick College. Her professional interests include nature play, sustainability, reflective practice, applied research and educational philosophy. Fran holds a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood, Graduate Certificate in Sustainability and is currently enrolled in a PhD on nature pedagogy and sustainability. Fran brings a passion for sustainability through her work in connecting young children, early childhood practitioners and environmental educators with nature



MATT MCKENZIE

Matt is the current teaching principal of Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre. Before this he worked as an environmental educator at Wambangalang Environmental Education Centre and Taronga Western Plains Zoo both near Dubbo. Matt's passion is for getting kids outside, connecting them with the natural world fostering senses of awe and wonder.



SUE MOTLEY

Sue is the Director at Armidale Community Preschool and has and has always had a vision to create a nature based programme and practice in line with current research. This has been supported through partnerships with University of New England and Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre. With professional development, modelling, challenging the educators, changing the philosophy, informing parents of benefits, the preschool environment, programme and practice has evolved and nature pedagogy has been firmly embedded. Sue has most recently spent time as an educator at the Baya Gaway Centre at Fitzroy Crossing, an experience which has greatly enriched her both personally and professionally.



Nature play is a concept to encourage children to spend more time playing outdoors using their imaginations in a natural setting. It inspires open-ended possibilities for self-designed play, creativity, learning and socialising.





Did you know?

Research has shown that contact with nature has been associated with a number of health benefits for children, such as improved cognitive function, increased creativity, improved interaction with adults, reduced attention deficit hyperactivity disorder symptoms and reduced rates of aggression.

INFORMATION ABOUT THALGARRAH

Thalgarrah EEC is nestled amongst woodland on the banks of the Gara River approximately 18km from the Armidale CBD. Thalgarrah provides a range of quality, curriculum-based environmental education and sustainability programs for school groups.

Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre is located on the site of the former Thalgarrah Public School. After the school closed, local educators campaigned for the site to be used for the establishment of a field studies centre. The centre opened its doors at the beginning of 1976 with the same facilities that the former public school had. Since then the centre has expanded and refurbished its original buildings to meet the needs of its changing role.

Thalgarrah Environmental Education Centre makes use of sites on and near the Centre for most of the learning programs. The centre also uses a wide variety of field sites in nearby National Parks, Nature Reserves, Aboriginal and Historical sites.

Surrounding the Centre grounds is Swallowfield Wildlife Refuge which is remnant eucalypt woodland with many of its original native fauna still living there.

The Gara River flows close by providing more opportunities for engaging programs at all grade levels.

We also have access to the "Old English Garden" on historic Thalgarrah Station, a once large pastoral run of over 24,000 acres established in the late 1800s.



CONFERENCE PRICING

CONFERENCE & ONSITE ACCOMMODATION

\$215

Price includes:

- \$190 Conference ticket for Friday & Saturday, including morning and afternoon tea, lunch and dinner on Friday night
- \$25 for one nights (Friday) onsite accommodation in shared, dormitory style rooms, including breakfast

CONFERENCE ONLY

\$190

Price includes:

- \$190 Conference ticket for Friday & Saturday, including morning and afternoon tea, lunch and dinner on Friday night

OFF SITE ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Powerhouse Armidale
www.powerhousearmidale.com.au

Abbotsleigh Motor Inn
www.armidaleabbotsleighmotorinn.com.au

Armidale Pines Motel
www.armidalepinesmotel.com.au

EXTRA INFO

- Pillows and sleeping bags will be required if staying onsite
- TEEC is a 20 minute drive from Armidale
- There's no such thing as bad weather, so come prepared to be out in any or all of the elements!
- There is no mobile coverage available at Thalgarrah, there is a landline available in case of emergencies

PROGRAM

The program is in draft form and is likely to change, so please use this as a guide only.

The self selection sessions will require participants to choose one of the three sessions available. Abstracts for each of these will be available in the coming weeks to give you an opportunity to gain an insight into each topic.

Registrations for these sessions will be available at the Conference.

Time	Participants	Activity
8:30 - 9:00	All	Registration
9:00 - 9:30	All	Welcome
9:30 - 10:30	All	Key Note
10:30 - 11:00	All	MORNING TEA
11:00 - 12:00	Self Selection	Inclusion in Nature Play
		Outdoor Learning
		Rethinking Bronfenbrenner
12:00 - 1:00	Self Selection	Babies in the Bush
		Wellbeing
		Nature pedagogy & sustainability
1:00 - 2:00	All	LUNCH
2:00 - 3:00	Self Selection	Insect Homes
		Core Stability
		School Journeys
3:00 - 3:30	All	AFTERNOON TEA
3:30 - 4:30	All	Pecha Kucha Session
6:30 - 9:00		Dinner and Campfire
		Learning in the Vegie Patch
		TBC
Time	Participants	Activity
8:00- 9:00		Early Years Nature Connections Meeting
9:00 - 9:15	All	Welcome
9:15 - 10:00	All	Provocation Panel
10:00 - 10:45	All	Bush Walk
10:45 - 11:15	All	MORNING TEA
11:15 - 12:15	Self Selection	A Culturally Diverse Journey
		Nature Play & Technology
		Indigenous perspectives of nature play
12:15 - 1:00	All	Provocation Panel
1:00 - 2:00	All	LUNCH
2:00 - 3:00	Self Selection	Naked Geometry
		Learning in the Vegie Patch
		TBC
3:00 - 3:30		Close / Evaluations
		TBC
3:00 - 3:30		Close / Evaluations

Connections Meeting

Journey

nology

Day 2

THOUGHTS FROM 2018



"I realise now that encouraging kids to take off their shoes & be barefoot - should simply be encouraged as normal behaviour"



"I was so challenged to realise that getting out into nature is so much more than just going to the park"



"We have such an amazing group of people who have such depth of knowledge and common experiences to network with and call on. We're in this together"



"Learning more about our Indigenous culture in such a special setting really made us appreciate more, the reasons behind our teaching"