



Equipment for Playcentres



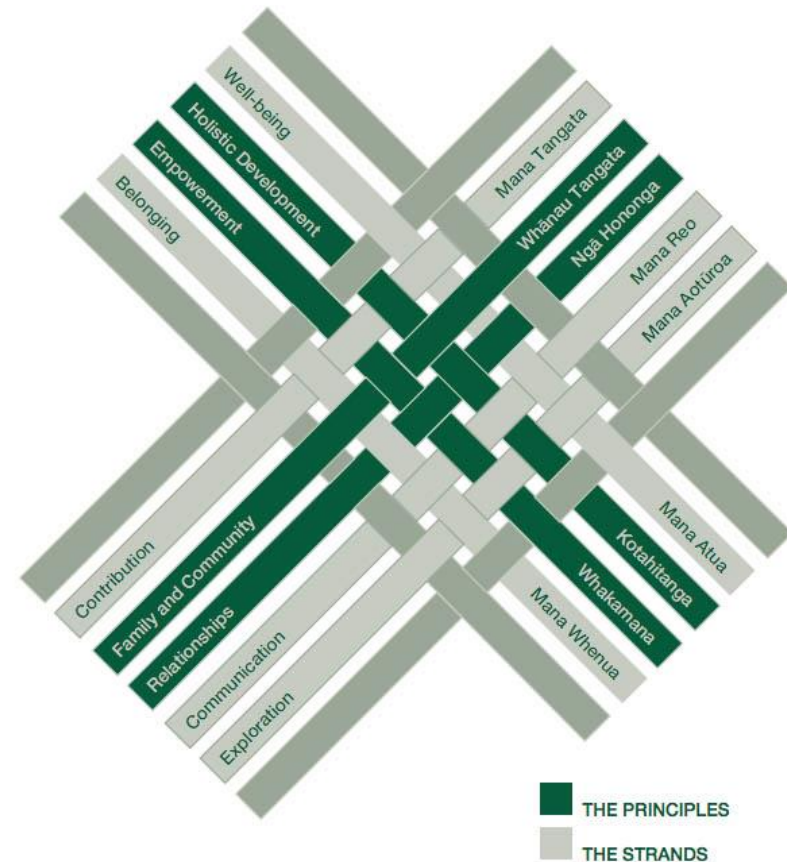
2016 Edition

Te Whāriki

The Principles of Te Whāriki provide the foundation for all that we do in Playcentre. When providing an environment for children, we must ensure that the Principles and the strands of Te Whāriki are the basis of our equipment planning.

For further information refer to Te Whāriki document available in your Centre library. ISBN 0-908609-50-7

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Introduction

Basic equipment

The **Playcentre Basic List** is what is required by the Playcentre Federation as the MANDATORY MINIMUM STANDARD for a good basic play session. These items must be available for use at every session – not necessarily put out each time – but can be alternated with another activity. Equipment for the activity should be within easy reach of adults and children if needed. Centres and Associations should work from these lists when checking their equipment.

Notes on the basic equipment

This describes in detail items listed in the first column. It gives, where applicable, siting requirements, ideas for storage and display, suggested measurements and materials, and suitable examples.

Additional suggestions/play extensions

This information is intended for use as Centres become established. It gives ideas on extra equipment and materials, ways of extending children's play in the area, and suggestions for presentation.

Choosing equipment

This Basic Equipment List does not have every item that you will require, so add to your equipment where necessary. Think first of the children, the numbers, their age range and their particular needs. For example how many children have open fires in their homes? The basic list makes only passing reference to 'fire play', so providing opportunities to play with fire may be as important in your Centre as having water play.

If you have to pack away your equipment, this will influence to some extent what you choose. The cost of items and what equipment is available will be other factors to consider. Think about the seasonal changes and the climate in your area. It is helpful to visit other Playcentres and, if possible, your nearest Playcentre shop. Discuss ideas and difficulties with your Association Equipment Convenor, Liaison or Field Officer.

Note for new centres: one of the first steps should be to set up your adult library area so that reference material on play and equipment is available.

Add wisely to your equipment, but remember too much can be confusing. 'Have a selection – not a collection.'

Looking after equipment

Keep equipment clean, tidy, attractive and in good order. Don't be afraid to throw away pieces damaged beyond repair. Note if something is not being used – find out why.

Maintenance of equipment will cost less in the long run

Homemade equipment

It is important that the Centres make some of their own equipment. If you do, it means you can provide for your own special needs, giving an individual flavour and a sense of place to your Centre and reflecting the special work interests and materials of your neighbourhood - for example by making a logging truck or using chunky pine logs in a forestry area. Parents who make equipment themselves will understand the possibilities of the items better and so use them more effectively with the children.

Remember to check for safety aspects of homemade equipment.

Suggestions for using this book

Appropriate pages may be distributed to the parents who are responsible for maintaining and extending particular areas of play. Photocopy the pages as you wish. Centres and Associations: can insert your own 'additional suggestions'.

Resource awareness

We recommend that you use the booklet Whānau Tupu Ngātahi (Report to NZ Playcentre Federation from the Working Party on cultural issues) which is available from Ako Books.

Specifically:–

Areas of Play	Page 29
Food	Page 37

In general we would like all Playcentre people to think about resource conservation when gathering materials for your Centre. Make sure you take only what you need, carefully, so as not to destroy the resource for others who may want to use it. Dispose of your natural materials carefully returning whatever possible to the earth, if in doubt consult with your local iwi.

Safety awareness

Supervision is one of the most important keys to children having fun and learning through play. Through proper supervision children can be exposed to a broader range of medium, thus expanding their understandings of the environment around them.

It is vital that all children are supervised in any area of play, regardless of the type of equipment they may be interacting with.

Any of these items could be dangerous:

- brittle plastic
- detergent
- eggshells
- plastic bags should be knotted in the middle
- face paint is preferred to lipstick for making-up faces. It's unhygienic to pass lipstick from mouth to mouth
- "real" appliances used to play with at Playcentre could be dangerous if used in the same way at home
- all cleaning items, linseed oil (for blocks) is not recommended due to toxicity and combustibility of cloths
- polystyrene and toilet roll inners should not be used at all
- gladwrap
- polycell wallpaper paste
- bread bag tags
- glass
- tin foil – possible sharp edges

A useful toxic plants poster, Poisonous Plants in NZ by H E Connor. Information on toxic plants can be found at this website:
<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/publications/factsheets/poisonous-plants>

Playcentre Journal & Ako Books

Playcentre Journals are also an excellent source of information. Journal No.66, 1986 includes an index for numbers 37-64.

There are many useful books from Ako Books. Discuss books with your Association Librarian, Education Trainer, Liaison or Field Officer. Playcentre Journals have children's and adult book reviews in each edition.

Our own reference books

These should be ordered through your local Playcentre Association, Ako Books or nearest Playcentre shop and each Centre should have at least one copy of each book.

Challenges For Children, Barbara Jordan

Creative Collage, Shelley Hancock

Dance Upon a Time, Book and CD, Tanya Batt

Earthen Treasures, Shelley Hancock

Food for Funky Families

Good, Clean Fun, NZ's Playcentre Movement, Sue Stover

Imagined Worlds, Book and CD, Tanya Batt

Learning Together, Ailsa Densem

Look Who's Cooking, Shelley Hancock

Magic Places, Pennie Brownlee

Recipes for Messy Play

Take Another Look, Pat Penrose

The Story Sack, Book and CD, Tanya Batt

Whānau Tupu Ngātahi: Report to the NZ Playcentre Federation from the Working Party on Cultural Issues

Woodwork Wizardry, Nic van Onselen

Work and Play, Gwen Somerset

Working in a Group, Tess Conran-Liew

Ako Books and Playcentre Shops

Ako Books

www.akobooks.co.nz

Telephone: 09 8278655 or 0800 Akobooks

Canterbury Playcentre Shop

www.playcentreshop.co.nz/

Telephone: 03 377 4354

Opening Hours:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9.00am to 2.00pm

Wednesday: 9.00am to 4.00pm

Saturday: 9.00am to 2.00pm

We are open during the school term only.

Taranaki Playcentre Shop

tpashop@orcon.net.nz

Telephone: 06 756 7570

Opening Hours:

Monday: 1.00pm to 5.00pm

Wednesday, Friday: 10.00am to 2.00pm

Tairāwhiti Playcentre Shop

taiplay@xtra.co.nz

Telephone: 06 867 0010

Opening Hours:

Monday to Friday: 8.30am to 1.30pm

Te Ao Māori

Basic equipment

	Basic List	
Number of children on session	Up to 20	Over 21
Family Play:		
Dolls depicting Māori babies/toddler	1	2
Boys		
Piupiu	2	4
Headband	2	4
Sash	2	4
Girls		
Piupiu	2	4
Headband	2	4
Bodice	2	4
Korowai for poroporoaki (farewells), huritau (birthdays) or special occasions		1
Manipulative Play:		
Depicting Te Ao Māori - colours, food, numbers, life cycles, birds, elements, plant life, designs etc	5	
Kei a Wai games	a selection	
Movement and Sound:		
Māori waiata/chant/haka CD	a selection	
Waiata o Aotearoa/Taranaki Association CD	1	
Ngā waiata o te Taniwha/Hataitai		
Playcentre CD	1	
Booklet/poster of waiata/haka	1	
Te Reo Kori volumes 1 & 2	1	
Ti Rākau	10	20
Poi long	2	4
Poi short	10	20

Painting:

Māori sponge shapes 1 set

Books and Storytelling:

Māori language posters/charts – a selection
Alphabet, songs, numbers, colours, seasons, vehicles,
pronunciation, kaimoana, Matariki or posters unique
to the celebration of your area. Days of the week
(depicting transliteration/traditional). Months of the
year (depicting transliteration/traditional)

Māori Version of the Tiriti o Waitangi 1
Local Iwi Myths and Legends a selection
Traditional Myths and Legends a selection
Stories/images of Māori reflected positively
in NZ society (both genders) a selection
Images of whānau/tamariki in cultural
setting a selection
Books written in Māori a selection

Magnetic Stories

1

Hand Puppets

Weta, Pukeko, Pungawerawera (spider), Kiwi or
native to Aotearoa a selection

Naming cards for curriculum areas of play.
Naming cards for common parts of the whare.

Collage:

Natural materials

Muka, raupo, flax seed, different types of shells,
riverstones, pumice, flowers, sheep wool, feathers,
acorns, leaves, driftwood, items common in your area
a selection

Adult Library:

Māori Dictionary – 1
for reference 1
for loan 1

Marae Protocol 1
Flax Weaving 1
Fun with Flax 1
Māori Games and Waiata 2
Karakia a collection
Whānau Tupu Ngātahi: Report to NZ Playcentre
Federation from the Working Party on Cultural Issues 2
Structural Analysis Working Party Findings 1
Māori Pedagogies by Whareuia Hemara

Association Rōpū/Pūriri/Whānau group poster/noticeboard

1

Make resources available giving parents the opportunity to further increase their knowledge and participation within the wider community:

- ✚ Te Reo Māori Courses
- ✚ Performing Art Events
- ✚ Local Marae Activities
- ✚ Local History of Area

Equipment for the premises

Items for cleaning:

- ✚ Separate equipment for toilet use only
- ✚ Separate equipment for general and kitchen
use
- ✚ Separate buckets for children's play.
- ✚ Separate cleaning cloths for designated areas

Suggested colours for cleaning only.

Toilet (red) - Prevent the spread

General (green) - Keep it clean

Children (yellow) - For those below to let it flow.

Suggestion: Use paper hand towels when cleaning toilet walls, sink and seat. These can easily be disposed of.

Suggested sources

-  Te Reo Kori 1 & 2: Kimihia Resource Centre
-  Phone/Fax 09 620-8924
-  Māori Pedagogies an ECE pukapuka:
www.nzcer.org.nz
-  Playcentre Shops

Adult Library

Basic equipment

	Basic List
Storage and display area	As appropriate
Association parent education	
Programme/material	As appropriate
Reference books	A selection

Notes on the basic equipment

Display – the parent library needs to be well displayed and to look inviting for parents who want to browse.

Storage and display area – some suggestions are a narrow display book case, shelves, table top and notice board. Display copies of Playcentre Journals, and other reports, newsletters and pamphlets. Remove all out-of-date material to prevent clutter.

Parent education programme material – as recommended by the local Association. All Centres should hold all Playcentre Publications, available from Ako Books, which are the most recent editions, and replace them if they go missing.

Reference material – include books that give ideas for extending play (e.g.) nature, science, music, finger plays, art activities, creativity, etc.). After training needs have been met, include a selection from the following general areas:

- Child development
- Children's play
- Body awareness and sexual abuse
- Family/whānau relationships
- Discipline
- NZ family life and education
- Personal growth

- Leadership and group skill
- Special needs
- Self esteem
- Cultural diversity
- Health
- Treaty awareness
- Related resource material referred to in any of your Centre's policies and any other material of interest to parents.

Remember that many of the above reference books may be provided by your Playcentre Association library, or public Library. This makes a more varied selection possible.

Additional suggestions

Seating – provide comfortable chairs/cushions.

Review a new book at each monthly meeting and in your Centre's newsletter. Provide back-up material for TV programmes or current issues to use in discussion groups (e.g. sex education in schools, TV series on children's play, etc.).

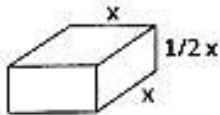
Visit libraries and booksellers to keep up with new books.

Titles – for suggested titles, refer to your Association's adult library booklist. The Playcentre Journal is also a great source of play ideas. Your Centre should retain one of each issue for Centre parents to read on session.

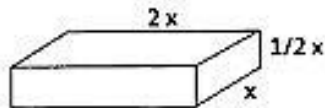
Blocks

Basic set

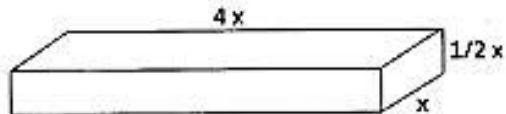
20 Half Unit Square



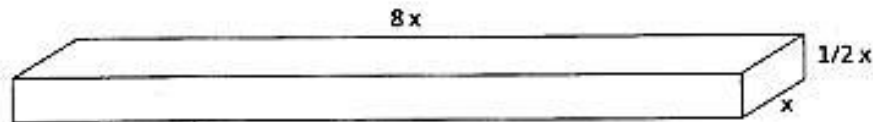
40 Unit



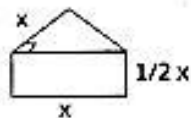
40 Double Unit



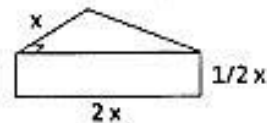
40 Quadruple Unit



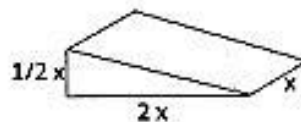
16 Half Unit Triangle



16 Unit Triangle



16 Unit Ramp

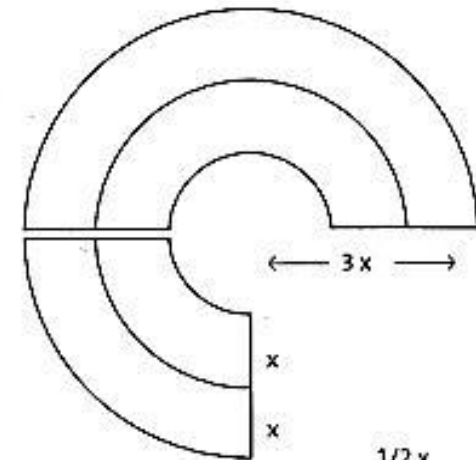


4 Large Circular Curve (1/2 circle)

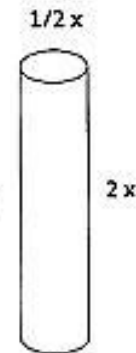
4 Small Circular Curve (1/2 circle)

8 Large Circular Curve (1/4 circle)

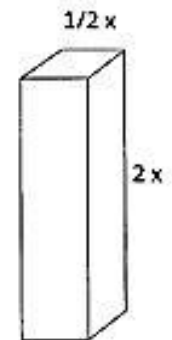
8 Small Circular Curve (1/4 circle)



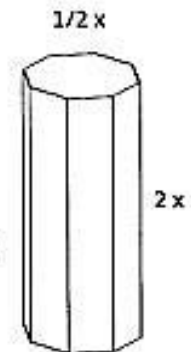
16 Column



20 Unit Pillar



16 Octagonal Prism

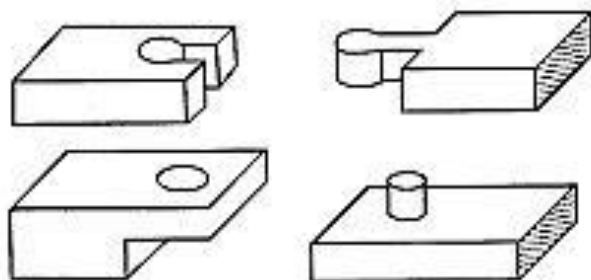


Recommended size of a unit block is 130 x 65 x 32.5mm
In these diagrams $x = 65\text{mm}$
All blocks should be of the same unit dimension

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Shelving or block cabinet	As appropriate	
Large smooth mat or piece of carpet	1	1
Multiple unit blocks	1 Basic Set	1 Basic Set
Smaller plain or coloured blocks	24	24
Interlocking set (without wheels)	1	2

Some types of interlocking set connections



Wheeled vehicles		
(1 large enough for large blocks)	2	4
Small vehicles	6	10
Animal shapes	1 set	1 set
People shapes	1 set	1 set
Other accessories	A selection	

Notes on the basic equipment

Area placement – do not isolate block play but place away from main traffic ways. Ample space is essential for the development of block play.

Shelving or block cabinet(s) – it is important to construct these in such a way as to display blocks side

on, thus showing their respective lengths. It is a good idea to indicate where blocks go by appropriate shadow drawings.

If blocks need to be moved, several small cabinets are easier to handle than one large unit. Have a low wheeled trolley to take the cabinets, or fit each one with good quality heavy duty castors. Make sure cabinets have a wide base for stability. If low enough, tops can be used as surfaces for building. A separate unit, box or bin is useful for accessories.

Multiple Unit blocks – 1 basic set = 264 blocks. They must have smooth surfaces and be accurately made, all based on the same unit dimension. Play with these blocks provides experiences which assist concepts of number, size, space, shape, etc., as well as judgement and manipulative skills.

Smaller plain or coloured blocks – a smaller set of blocks could be based on a different module, e.g. a 60mm cube. Blocks can be coloured by using food colouring or non-toxic dyes. Smooth uniform homemade blocks are acceptable.

Interlocking set – this set is to be flat bottomed (no wheels) in order that the children's imagination can go further than just vehicles e.g. as a train, boat, tractor and trailer, etc. Ideally, some of the pieces should be able to be filled with small blocks or built on. Lego/Duplo type blocks are not interlocking sets.

Wheeled vehicles – need to be solid, one of which should be capable of carrying the largest blocks. Examples include medium-sized indoor trucks (preferably with tray that tips), medium-sized wagons, crane, etc. Try to keep vehicles for inside use. A second set could be allocated for outside use.

Small vehicles – a variety needs to be provided, to be used on block road, etc., e.g. planes, motorbikes, cars, trucks, trailers, fire engines.

Animal and people shapes – must stand alone, the people shapes must positively reflect the group they portray e.g. family, occupations, special needs, etc. People shapes could cover varieties of ages, gender, ethnicity and ability.

Other accessories – cotton reels, flat dressed boards, hardboard pieces, to provide variety in types of material available. These are useful for roofs, ramps and taller constructions.

Play extensions

Extra set of multiple unit blocks – 264 blocks.

XYC set of multiple unit blocks – gives added variety, 16 pieces.

Large hollow blocks – 1 set. Light enough for a child to move, but sturdy enough to sit and stand on.

Set of table blocks – these are smaller and chunkier than full size multiple unit blocks. The set will often include interesting geometric shapes, such as cubes, cones and pyramids.

Large construction sets which interlock and which can lead into dramatic play.

Additional accessories – could include authentic traffic signs and signals such as railway crossing arms, also:

Telephone poles	Dolls
Bridges or tunnels	Large balance scales
Block furniture	Fences
Trees	Plastic animals
Natural materials	

Always have on hand materiel as suitable for making tunnels, rivers, garages, and so on, e.g. cardboard boxes and rolls, (no toilet rolls), pieces of cardboard,

large pieces of blue, green or brown material such as carpet or lino off cuts, black polythene, tin foil.

Visit – a construction site, a farm, ride on public transport, etc.

Additional suggestions

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi

Books and Storytelling

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Low Shelving	As appropriate	
Mat	1	1
Picture story books	50	75
Hand puppets	6	6
Magnetic or flannel graph story board with a selection of pieces for stories	1	1
Maori language poster/chart	1	1

Notes on basic equipment

Area placement – needs to be secluded, warm and inviting with good light. Preferably away from noisy areas. Shelving can be used to screen from other areas.

Shelving – must be low so that children can see and select their own books. Shelves could be sloping with a lip; or narrow with curtain wire stretched across allowing books to stand up; or in the form of a hinged folding cabinet – use the outside for picture and poster displays.

Māori language poster/chart – should be a variety of alphabet, songs, numbers, colours, books, etc.

Books – Playcentre offers a birth-school age programme; therefore the Centre library should have adequate books for babies, toddlers and older children books within a Centre library should reflect Playcentre's commitment to biculturalism, gender equity, sensitivity to special needs and other cultures.

To supplement and vary your library borrow from public libraries, or enquire if your Association lends children's books from its library.

Story and reference books - the selection should foster a love of storytelling and books. Have a variety of the following, choosing books that reflect different cultures and languages:

- ❖ traditional stories
- ❖ rhymes
- ❖ poetry and songs
- ❖ make believe, humorous, nonsense
- ❖ Māori myths and legends
- ❖ stories of Māori reflected positively in NZ society (both genders)
- ❖ books on ethnic groups
- ❖ stories of people in real life situations (e.g. adult's work, children's play)
- ❖ New Zealand stories and tales from other lands
- ❖ stories of children growing up, the things they do, the problems/fears they face, their feelings, children with special needs
- ❖ different kinds of families – solo, divorced, ethnic differences
- ❖ adventure, outer space
- ❖ areas of play
- ❖ stories of the forces around us – wind, rain, fire, energy, power, machines
- ❖ scientific and maths concepts – colour, weight, movement, numbers
- ❖ stories of nature – animals, birds, fish, and insects – include non-fiction, reference books
- ❖ appropriate age related content
- ❖ books written in Māori and other relevant ethnic languages

Look for varied writing styles e.g. repetitive, cumulative, humorous, rhyming or especially rhythmic; also varied styles of illustration.

The pictures should extend and clarify the text which needs to be brief and simple. If necessary seek advice from experienced people such as Association or public librarians.

Puppets – those used by adults need to be simply made, washable and friendly (not threatening) – keep one in your pocket to use at appropriate moments. Those used by children need to be smaller and easily manipulated, with fingers and thumb action. Many puppets may be made on the spot by both adults and children from materials such as paper bags, socks, small cartons, cardboard rolls, etc. A finger puppet can have features painted straight onto fingers or glove fingers.

Magnetic boards – metal trays (tin or stainless steel) make good magnetic boards. Attach small pieces of magnetic tape to the back of cardboard shapes or pictures. Covering with clear adhesive film allows them to be washed and be more durable.

Flannel graphs – make a good sized board covered with flannel, felt or any material with nap. Simple picture shapes to illustrate a story or event may be made from good quality felt, suitable vinyl cloth or cardboard. Back picture with felt, flannel or sandpaper so they adhere.

Additional suggestions

If the area permits, have a small table and chairs or a comfortable seat – covered foam cushions scattered on the mat will look inviting, and reduce noise.

Books belong in many places in the Centre e.g. in the family play area, with nature displays, in a quiet sunny corner for reading alone, etc. Have an extra rug or mat to spread outside on warm days.

Covering for books – a clear cover is best. It should be PVC. Cover the dust cover and attach this to inside of book covers at top and bottom. If original cover needs replacing make a new cover attractive with an appropriate picture. Mend or replace all torn books. Use book mending tape.

The National Library Service 0800 LIB LINE (0800 542 5463) gives advice on covering and repairing books – they also have a video on repairing books available. Remove books that are beyond repair or out of date.

A wide range of books should be available from simple concept picture books through to more detailed books. Some Association libraries will lend books to Centres.

Topics for home-made books:

- ❖ Centre visits and activities, person ‘finds’
- ❖ baby and family photos
- ❖ group Centre photos
- ❖ books of animals, insects, machines, etc
- ❖ books of everyday objects
- ❖ a book of shapes, a ‘red’ book, a ‘texture’ book
- ❖ children’s art

Other ideas to encourage language development and storytelling:

1. PowerPoint or pictures of interest to the children can be projected onto a wall to stimulate discussion.
2. Large pictures, poetry cards, posters, jumbo books.

3. Do remember that storytelling does not necessarily need books or props. Use imagination in inventing stories, e.g. about children’s own experiences; or tell an impromptu story so that not even a book comes between you the storyteller and your audience.
4. Listen to, and encourage children to tell their own stories, dreams and imaginings; use nature, e.g. clouds.
5. There is a place for touch and feel books – they are made very easily and can be related to everyday things around us.
6. Story tapes or CD’s can be used with or without books. Individual headphones are an optional extra.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi

Carpentry

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Sturdy carpentry table – to accommodate 4 children		
Sturdy saw bench	1	1
Storage: for wood	As appropriate	
for tools	As appropriate	
for nails	As appropriate	
Suitable wood	Adequate	
Hammers – claw	4	6
Saws	2	3
Hand drills and bits	2	3
Drill bits	As appropriate	
Screwdrivers and screws (flat head and Phillips)	As appropriate	
Pliers	As appropriate	
Vices (1 could be a G-Clamp)	2	3
Nails – recommended Bright Zinc A	A selection	
PVA glue (wood strength)	As appropriate	

Shoes should be worn at all times in the carpentry area

Notes on basic equipment

Carpentry Table – height up to 560mm. Could be a manufactured carpentry bench or a sturdy wooden table with legs shortened.

Other work surfaces could include a packing case or other firm surface. All surfaces should be level and at least 1 for under 2's.

Storage – all materials should be displayed for easy selection. A trolley to hold all accessories is convenient and keeps workbench free of clutter. A shadow board is another good idea for tools. Nail boxes should have several compartments.

Suitable wood – pine and other soft timbers. Have a variety of shapes and sizes from timber yards, building sites, joinery factories, etc. Discard used wood with nails in, after every session. Only untreated wood should be provided for use. Avoid recycled wood from homes, etc.

Refer to Whānau Tupu Ngātahi page 29, for more information about wood.

Hammers – all tools must be small sized adult tools, not toy ones. Hammers from 225-350 grams.

Saws – could include panel, tenon and coping saws. Check once a term, sharpen and oil as required. A sharp saw is safer than a blunt saw. Saws should have at least 10 teeth to each 25mm.

Screwdriver – short, stubby kind is easiest to use (have a selection of appropriate screws).

Pliers – at least one pair for this area; ensure that they are child size, which make them easier to use, and become safer.

Vices – attach close to right hand end of table or bench (and left hand end for left handed children). Swivelling vices allow for flexibility of use.

G-Clamps – to use in the joining and handling process.

Nails – assorted sizes up to 75mm. Larger sized nails have special uses, e.g. masts for ships, legs for animals, etc. Thin nails are less likely to split wood. Flat head nails are easier to hit. A horseshoe magnet in this area is great for picking up nails of all sizes.

PVA. glue and paint – should be available (use wood strength PVA). At a table nearby, due to the safety of glue and paint on handles of tools and being slippery during use.

Play extensions

Tools:

- ❖ brace and bit
- ❖ surform planes
- ❖ sanding block
- ❖ scissors – all-purpose cutters
- ❖ set square, ruler
- ❖ carpenter's pencil
- ❖ magnet – good for picking up nails, etc
- ❖ Blutak – for holding nails
- ❖ Cordless drill

Sawbench – a sturdy low work area approximately 380mm high. Could be a sawhorse with a 230mm wide top.

Safety Awareness -Safety glasses/goggles, earmuffs

Joining Materials:

- ❖ stapler and staples
- ❖ sellotape or coloured insulation tape
- ❖ glue, e.g. PVA.
- ❖ string and twine, paper clips
- ❖ soft wire, plastic coated wire
- ❖ leather or vinyl
- ❖ sand and flour concrete – mix equal parts with water to thick paste

Decoration Materials - paint, natural dyes, non-toxic printer's ink, food colouring, crayons.

Accessories - include cup hooks, screw eyes, hinges, door catches, nuts and bolts, furniture glides, wire staples, seconds from factories, cork, cardboard, leaves, cotton reels, lids, bottle tops, straws, toothpicks, buttons, etc.

Toolboxes, Carpenter's Aprons, Overalls

Logs – large logs set firmly in the ground can be used by all children for sawing and hammering.

Visit – a local hardware shop, watch a house being built, take saws to saw doctor.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi
- ❖ Woodwork Wizardry

Clay

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Suitable working surface to accommodate at least	4 chn	4 chn
Seating (if necessary) for	As required	
Suitable container (storage)	1	1
Clay	Sufficient	
Natural accessories	A selection	
Tools	4	6

Notes on basic equipment

Working surface – needs to be firm and level. Some ideas for surfaces include a canvas or hessian covered board to fit over the top of a table, a sheet of vinyl or polythene on the floor, a trough or individual tray. Replace hessian as necessary.

Storage – store either in wet Hessian in a bucket, or in an airtight container, to prevent drying out.

The clay – have an ample supply which must be in first class condition. The texture needs to be consistent with the intended use, allowing children to experience it in all kinds of ways. Remove all foreign substances after use if the clay is going to be returned back to the container. If it is a child's creation, then allow them to take it...

To reconstitute clay – if it has become too hard, enclose in a piece of muslin, immerse in a bucket of water, leave until quite soft, and then work up again,

children will enjoy helping. For clay that has dried out only a little, form into balls, make a hole with thumb, fill with water and plug with clay. Store as above.

Natural accessories – have a selection, such as leaves, twigs, seeds, pebbles, shells, rocks, bamboo. Bamboo ends can be notched in a variety of patterns to make imprints. Roll patterns into clay with pine cones, Norfolk Pine branchlets, bottlebrush seeds, etc.

Tools – a selection of wooden/wire tools for cutting/patterning the clay. Be aware of sharp edges, points and durability. Water squeezed onto clay can keep it soft and workable. Make sure that you have tools that are allocated to the clay area, as well as playdough. Although they can be used for both, it is sometimes easier to have a set for each.

Cleaning – clay tools and surfaces must be cleaned thoroughly afterwards, just like any other area of play. It is easier to clean wet clay than it is dried!

Resource awareness

Clay is a natural resource, and should be treated with the same respect as other natural resources.

When gathering clay, take only what you need, and leave the environment as you found it. To dispose of unwanted clay, return it to the earth.

Play extensions

Clay cutter – a length of nylon fishing line tied at each end to pieces of dowelling or buttons.

Clays of differing textures and colours – try clay from a roadside bank or a thermal area, as well as commercial clays – add oxides for colour variation.

Presentation ideas:

- ❖ try textured surfaces to work on such as corrugated cardboard, hessian, vinyl, metal
- ❖ try discs of drier clay for incising patterns
- ❖ put out a huge mound of clay for pounding and cutting
- ❖ have sticky clay to squelch with hands and feet
- ❖ add more water to make fingerpaint/body paint (can be mixed with tempera paint)

Adults should not put the idea of making say a pot or a basket into children's minds. Encourage them to make whatever they want to and enjoy the feel of the clay. The doing is more important than the product.

Trips – dig clay from a bank, visit a potter at work, see a kiln; your local secondary school may have a sawdust firing to observe.

Have a display of pottery

Ako Books:

- ❖ Magic Places
- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Recipes for Play
- ❖ Earthen Treasures

Collage

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Suitable working surface to accommodate at least	4 chn	6 chn
Seating	As appropriate	
Storage	As appropriate	
Childrens scissors	4	6
Adults scissors	As necessary	
Left handed scissors	2	3
Paste and/or PVA glue	Adequate	
Paste containers	4	6
Paste brushes	4	6
Sellotape	2 roll	4 roll
Sellotape dispenser	2	3
Stapler	2	4
Staples	Adequate	
Crayons	A selection	
Pencils – lead (HB or 6B sketching)	10	
Pencils – coloured	A selection	
Pencil sharpener	Adequate	
Natural materials	A selection	
Small junk	A selection	
Paper punch	1	1

Notes on the basic equipment

Use of food substances in play is unacceptable

Storage – needs to be low enough for children to see and select from an assorted range of materials and

tools. It should be adjacent to the working surface. Could be low shelving; a unit with pull out trays; small boxes or bins; a trolley with lift out compartments. Keep sorted and tidy.

Scissors – a variety, of good quality, and kept sharp. Suitable for all ages. Left handed scissors have blade reversed.

Pencils – having a selection of both pencils for writing and coloured pencils for creating provides children the option of choice, depending on their needs. Keeping pencils sharpened is important, as children may get frustrated with broken or blunt pencils. Have some triangle shaped and chunky pencils too.

Paste – wallpaper or cellulose paste powder is recommended. Ensure paste contents contain no fungicides. Mix with water to make a thick paste. PVA can be added to the mixed Polycell (try half and half) or, for very strong adhesion, should be used alone. Remember not to dispose of PVA down the sink.

Paste containers – so that they do not tip, have shallow containers with wide bases. Small squeeze bottles with a nozzle make good PVA containers. Try no spill paint pots.

Paste brushes – a variety of brushes and paste brushes could be used. All brushes need to be washed in warm, soapy water after use. Try paste spreaders as an alternative.

Stapler and Punch – need to be good quality. Craft shape punches e.g. circle, triangle, heart, square, etc.

Crayons – large (between 10-15mm) in diameter) crayons are recommended as they are easily handled. Good quality crayons are the best value for money. Crayons left in the sun will soften, so store well. A selection of at least eight colours per set is recommended, and depending on child numbers, 2-3 sets could be an appropriate amount.

Natural materials and junk – for tearing, cutting, pasting, joining and constructing. Remembering not to use or collect toilet rolls, polystyrene or plastic wrap.

Suggestions include:

1. Bases:

- ❖ cardboard – boxes, cartons, rolls, corrugated, coloured
- ❖ strong paper – wallpaper, cartridge, black
- ❖ calendars, paper plates
- ❖ clay or plasticine, plaster of paris, sand
- ❖ plastic, e.g. margarine or yoghurt cartons, plastic trays
- ❖ fabric – large pieces of various kinds
- ❖ very large wooden boxes as part of adventure play
- ❖ tree trimmings, etc. to make mobiles

2. Other materials:

- ❖ cellophane, tissue, wrapping, crepe paper
- ❖ silver and chocolate papers, magazine – for mosaics or paper tearing
- ❖ coloured, and gummed paper

3. Materials to encourage 3-dimensional constructions – corks, copper wire, bamboo cane, paper clips, craft ice block sticks, craft coloured matchsticks, rubber bands, blunt wooden skewers,

pipe cleaners, string, raffia, masking tape or insulation tape, small boxes, etc.

4. **Natural materials** – leaves, dried ferns, flowers, feathers, shells, pebbles, etc (be aware of choking), these materials cost nothing and are usually freely available. Take only what you need so as not to waste the resource or deplete the materials available to others. Collection, use and disposal of natural materials can be found in Whānau Tupu Ngātahi. Protocol of flax collecting and using can also be found in Whānau Tupu Ngātahi.
5. **Fabrics** – fur, silk, velvet, leather, carpet, felt, trimmings, net, vinyl, striped, spotted and floral cottons.
6. **Other** – sequins, feathers, confetti, cotton wool, sheep's wool, buttons, untreated wood shavings, sawdust, bottle tops, glitter.

Play extensions

The aim in this activity is to allow the children to carry out their own ideas. Adults provide materials, stimulation and techniques, e.g. how to use scissors. Add to basic list when necessary, especially extra scissors and brushes.

Ways to display completed work:

- ❖ use a display board.
- ❖ place flat on forms or chairs along wall
- ❖ hang on line or clothes rack
- ❖ set a tree branch in a bucket of sand for hanging mobiles and 3-dimensional construction
- ❖ display some collage work by children

Some types of collage – plaster of paris, paper mosaics, fabric collage, flower or seed collage, a collage of the same colour e.g. blue.

Allied activities – using similar materials

1. Drawing –

- ❖ coloured felt tipped water-based pens
- ❖ pastels, metallic crayons
- ❖ blackboards and chalk
- ❖ charcoal
- ❖ good lead pencils, e.g. HB or 6B sketching pencil

2. Printing –

- ❖ Stamping – with pieces of cork, rolls of paper, pieces of sponge, bottle tops, hands and feet and other small objects.
- ❖ Fold over prints – use smooth paper and paint which is not as thick as for brush painting. Paint half the paper, fold and press.
- ❖ String prints – dip string in paint and arrange on piece of paper. Place another piece on top and press under something heavy.
- ❖ Templates – e.g. Christmas, Easter, etc.
- ❖ Texture rubbings – thin paper, leaves, paper doilies, embossed wallpapers, bark, fabrics, coins, pieces of wood, etc. Rub with crayon held sideways, or rollers.
- ❖ Impressed prints – use clay, dough or plasticine.
- ❖ Small tools for patterning, thick paint, paper.

3. **Weaving** – To make simple small weaving frames from a piece of cardboard, cut evenly-spaced slots (V-shaped) in two opposite ends. Thread wool or string back and forth around slots, pulling tight, until cardboard is curved. For weaving, use wool, dried grasses, leaves, strips of material, wire fences, branches, etc.

4. **Simple sewing** – use hessian, large blunt needles, thick brightly-coloured rug wools, large buttons, short lengths of coloured straws, coloured pipe cleaners, dacron filling (for animals, dolls, cushions), etc.

5. **Mask making** – use thin cardboard, paper bags which will fit over head, or whole body, (help children position eye and arm holes). Have on hand elastic, safety pins, string, etc. to fit masks onto children.

6. **Instant hats** – have materials ready to add to dramatic play, e.g. newspaper for cocked hats, feathers for Indian head-dress.

7. Pressed flowers and plants.

8. Plaster of Paris

9. Papier maché

10. **Glue gun** – useful for some activities. Must be used with adult supervision.

Refer to your local iwi as to the appropriateness and protocols of certain activities such as flax weaving etc. Remember to respect all cultures when creating things such as hats, headdresses, masks, etc.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi
- ❖ Magic Places
- ❖ Creative Collage

Exploratory Play

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Table or display space	1	1
Containers (as needed)	As appropriate	
Insect box	1	1
(or plastic jars)	2	2
Natural and man-made materials which stimulate and reward children's curiosity about their social and physical worlds and the world of nature	A selection	
Reference books (a selection)	6	10
Magnifying glasses	2	2
Prisms	1	1
Magnets (horseshoe type)	2	2
Magnifying bug jar (any size)	1	1
Fish tank (or clear container suitable for frogs, fish, insects, etc). Safety Glass, Plastic or laminated glass, fitted to earthquake standard	1	1

Any creatures collected for viewing should be returned carefully to their habitat.

Notes on the basic equipment

‘Our job is to shape up the environment round a child so that he or she does have stimulation; we also structure the situation carefully in order that each experience links on to previous learning.’

G. Somerset, *Work and Play*.

Display space – this could be a table or shelving at a height for children to see and touch while sitting comfortably. The area could include a display board. All items need to be displayed at eye level, e.g. fish tank. Keep the ‘interest’

table or surface clean and attractive. Change displays frequently and discard items no longer of interest. A few items related to the children's current interests are better than a meaningless clutter. Glass fish tanks should have safety film on the sides.

Containers – trays, box lids, plastic containers, or plastic jars, glass jars with adult supervision. Label items brought by children saying ‘who brought it’, ‘where found’, ‘what it is’, etc.

Insect box – this should have at least one clear side. A good place for observation is close to the morning tea table. Insect boxes or jars can look very attractive with appropriate natural materials, e.g. leaf mould and fungi with snails. Keep a moist pad of cotton wool in containers holding live insects to ensure adequate humidity.

A selection of materials – usually equipment familiar to children, who, with adult guidance, come to a wider understanding of people and things through exploration and discovery.

Magnets – horseshoe and bar magnets. Always store with a magnet keeper.

Magnifying glasses – it is very useful for adults to keep one in their pocket for instant use.

Magnifying bug jar – for insects and small objects.

Reference books – a selection of titles, good photos or illustrations, simple language stories of the forces around us – wind, rain, fire, energy, power, machines, etc; scientific and maths concepts – colour, weight, movement; stories of nature – animals, birds, fish, insects, etc.

Play extensions

Discover with children and share their sense of wonder.

Some ideas for interest or discovery areas

These activities can be anywhere in the Centre, not only at an ‘interest table’. Use a wooden packing case outside for exploring iron sand with a magnet, grow a real garden, explore the effect of heat on food in the kitchen. These activities should focus ideas and complement children's experiences elsewhere, e.g. the 4-year-old who has just learned to unlock a door might be fascinated by being able to see, and perhaps dismantle, the mechanism of a lock and key.

Try things that work – switches, coils and springs, ball bearings, pulleys, levers, wheels, cogs, hinges, bicycle bell and other bells, tin opener, egg beater, hand mincer, thermometer, magnet with a variety of objects for testing – bottle tops, nails, plastic, brass screws, aluminium, copper, lead, sand.

Or things to take apart – old engines, telephone, clock, camera, seed heads, etc. need tools appropriate for the job. If the pieces cannot be put back together they should be disposed of. Supervision necessary with small pieces.

Explore science/maths concepts - torches for light and shadows.

Battery light and buzzer – can be set up on a board for more permanent use.

Large balance scales – use with blocks, large buckets of sand, etc.

Pulleys – set up a system of single and/or double pulleys from one area to another, e.g. from tower platform to sandpit.

Make nature collections – from the children’s own findings – pebbles, stones, rocks, leaves, shells, bark, seeds, nuts, feathers, wildflowers, etc.

Have some growing things – a carrot top in a dish, sprouting wheat or beans, different mosses and lichens kept damp in a dish, sweetcorn, radishes in a garden, coal flowers, etc.

Cooking – try also gingerbread dough, yeast dough for bread, cake making. Wrap scone dough round end of a stick and cook over a fire or barbecue. Keep record of food prepared and eaten at session for reference purposes should a child/adult feel unwell following e.g. an allergic reaction, upset digestive system.

Real baking facilities – electric fry pan, stove or microwave at the Centre or visit a child’s home for a special baking activity. Use separate utensils. A trip could be to the grocer’s to buy the ingredients, or to a bakery.

Illustrate social relationships – pictures, drawings, posters about families, extended families, animal families, occupations, recreation, photos of the children on a recent Playcentre trip.

Some ideas for exploring the physical world

Talk with children about their environment to enable them to understand and interpret what they see and experience. Relate what you say and do to each child’s experience by using familiar things and examples.

The human body – “me and what I am” – you could use two full-length mirrors facing one another so that children between them could see unlimited reflections of themselves; draw around the child’s shadow; dressing-up clothes for bodily awareness – the child notices relationship between

two arms and two sleeves; one head, one hat; have all kinds of dolls to identify with including both boy and girl dolls.

Earth – dig for clay in a clay bank; make mud pies or sand cakes (have a box for a stove and some old cooking utensils); dig for treasure and find roots, stones, pebbles, fossils, worms (have a magnifying glass handy).

Air – blow bubbles; fly kites; listen to the wind in the telegraph wires; watch a bird fly; ‘huff and puff and blow the house down’; use a pump to blow up a car tyre; note the weather and seasons, not with a chart but through the senses.

Water – one of the most enjoyable and valuable of activities.

Heat, warmth and cold – watch the sun melt the ice on a puddle or hold a piece of ice in your hands; watch a kettle boil; freeze an ice block mixture. What is happening? Build a fire for a barbecue; how does heat change the sausage or kumara? Note the clothes we wear on a chilly day. If we’re too cold we shiver. Experiment with fire (supervision necessary).

Light and darkness – compare a collection which includes a torch, kerosene lamp, carbide lamp, electric light bulbs, matches and a candle, the sun; tell stories about the sun, the moon and the stars; place coloured cellophane on a window for children to gaze through; make shadows on a wall; jump on each other’s shadows on the ground.

Time – clock time is sometimes difficult for young children to understand - read a story about it. Read a story about night time and day time; explain that tomorrow is after child’s long night time sleep; dinner time is after bath time. Morning, afternoon, work time, play time. Make a sand timer.

Space – climb over a log, through a tunnel; things which are far away look tiny; the parts of a puzzle fit together.

Care should be taken when setting up experiments to avoid using foodstuffs.

Visits and trips

These are a means of exploring outside home and Playcentre into the neighbourhood. A simple visit (to see Mark’s family of puppies) is often more successful than a complex one (to the zoo) which may be confusing and even frightening to some children. In the same way, small groups of, say, four or five children are generally preferable to a large group. Refer Association Policy re. excursions/trips. Conversely visitors to the centre can bring the community to the children, e.g. visit by a fire engine.

Books to read with children

Most story books contain nature or science concepts or ideas involving people and what they do. Be aware of these aspects when reading or telling stories.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Challenges for Children
- ❖ Recipes for Play
- ❖ Food for Funky Families
- ❖ Look who’s Cooking
- ❖ Cookin’ Good Recipes

www.allergy.org.nz

The language of science and maths:

Below/above, under/over, big/small, hot/cold, wide/narrow, long/short, inside/outside.

Family Play

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Storage – for dressing up clothes		As appropriate
Storage – for dolls' clothes and bedding		As appropriate
Storage – for other accessories		As appropriate
Small table	1	1
Chairs	4	4
Child's bed	1	1
Bedding		As appropriate
Doll's bed	1	1
Bedding		As appropriate
Prams	2	2
Bedding		As appropriate
Stove	1	1
Cooking pots	2	2
Plastic or wooden fruit and vegetables		A selection
Cooking utensils	2	2
Telephones (minus long wires)	2	2
Tea set and cutlery		Enough for 4
Dolls	4	4
Dolls' clothes		As appropriate
Items for washing dishes		As appropriate
Items for washing doll's clothes		As appropriate
Items for bathing dolls		As appropriate
Items for shopping		As appropriate
Items for cleaning		As appropriate
Items for dressing up		As appropriate
Full length mirror (safety glass or laminated)	1	1
Medical play kit	1	1

Notes on the basic equipment

Area placement – there should be easy access to the outside area so that prams, etc may be taken outside and so that dressing up clothes and accessories are handy to the outside and other areas. It should also be near the playdough table. Allow sufficient space.

Storage – a low wardrobe type unit with several compartments and/or drawers could be used, or several smaller units. Some suggestions include – box furniture with curtained fronts; a free standing rack for clothes; a tree branch set in bucket of sand for the display of scarves, hats, bags, beads, etc. Larger units can be on castors.

Table – for tea parties. This could be a folding kind or table top set on boxes, for easy storage. Approximately 600mm x 600mm.

Child's bed – suggestions include a cot with one side removed and legs shortened, a cot base on folding legs, a camp stretcher, etc. All bedding should be of the correct size, with enough for at least one change.

Doll's beds and prams – they must be sturdy. Bedding should be clean and attractive and the correct size. Check height of pram handles to make sure all ages are catered for.

Stove – may be simply made, but it needs to include hot plates, an oven and switches. It is preferable the oven door open sideways, not down. The finish should be smooth to facilitate cleaning.

Telephones – if real ones are used they may be connected, or try a hose-pipe telephone. This has two

wooden hand pieces with speaking and listening holes, connected by a long length of plastic tubing.

Tea set - large enough for adult participation, should be unbreakable and include a complete set of four cups, saucers and plates, a teapot (small) and perhaps sugar basin and jug.

Medical play kit – stethoscope, crepe bandages, plastic syringes (no needles), doctors/nurses outfits, disposable face masks, etc. Any stethoscope to be used under adult supervision.

Dolls – (representing people) care should be taken with the handling of dolls – all washable, if possible with movable arms and legs and some hair. The dolls should not be made of material and stuffed or Barbie type. Make sure all dolls will fit into beds and prams provided. Have a variety of dolls of different sizes, baby, both sexes, and varying ethnic origins. Dolls are to be dressed and stored appropriately at the end of each session.

Dolls' clothes – a good selection to fit all sized dolls. They need to be washable, simply made and easy to put on. Allow a variety of both male and female pieces of clothing to be available.

Washing activities

Separate bowls to be used for each

Items for washing dishes – could include bowl set in box, dish mop or cloth, pot mitt.

Items for washing dolls' clothes – two bowls set side by side in a box, or board, for washing and rinsing. Soap powder, clothes line, clothes pegs.

Items for bathing dolls – baby's bath, soap, flannel, towel. Nappies (velcro fastening).

Items for shopping – shopping bags, flax Kete, purses, plastic shopping baskets, etc. Also items for setting up shop, e.g. box of empty household packets (keeping in mind the requirement of collage), cash register, etc, plastic money (milk bottle tops are safe). Different types of shops e.g. hat shop, book shop, etc.

Items for cleaning – at least one child size or small adult broom or mop; a brush and shovel.

Items for dressing up – cater for male and female roles and other diverse cultures. Have a good selection of washable clothes which fit well and are easy to put on (to make adult clothes fit, lift shoulders, shorten hems, sleeves, etc). Could include elastic waisted skirts and petticoats, dad's old shirts, nurse's/doctor's outfits, bride's dress, football jerseys, fairy dress, pirate suit, fire/police, animal ears and tails, butterfly wings, space suits. Include also socks, stocking, shoes, gloves, belts, etc.

Hats – fire, police, air force, navy, beret, crown, ladies' hats, Indian head-dress, helmet, fez, stetson, sombrero, etc.

These should be washable. Children should be encouraged to make their jewellery, etc instead of having pre-purchased items, which may be dangerous. Threading larger size beads, etc onto elastic is one way of achieving this.

Facepaint – this activity needs to be well supervised by adults for healthy use of paints. Apply barrier cream to skin prior to applying paint – check for skin sensitivity. Transfer required amount of paint to palette. Use individual cotton buds (ear type) for each child and for each separate colour. Painting straight from the jar can cause cross infection. Paint could go mouldy.

Play extensions

Dividers – these could be screens and/or storage units.

Two sides of a play pen with curtains makes a good screen. All dividers must be low enough to allow for easy supervision. Ensure stability of dividers – they may need to be fastened.

An outside family area – can be set up near the sand pit and water area with washing facilities, stove, mixing bowls, saucepans, wooden spoons, etc.

Other equipment could include –

- ❖ ironing board and iron (small wooden)
- ❖ fridge, TV (homemade)
- ❖ dolls' high chair
- ❖ books, bookshelf
- ❖ clock
- ❖ mat or piece of carpet or homemade flax mat
- ❖ telephone directory
- ❖ dish rack
- ❖ cutlery container
- ❖ salt and pepper shaker
- ❖ egg cups and china or plastic eggs
- ❖ cookery books

Visits – visit and help bath a new baby; shop for some clothes pegs and soap powder, etc; visit someone in hospital, or a workplace, vet clinic, farm, etc.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi

Finger Painting

Basic equipment

	Basic List	
Number of children on session	Up to 20	Over 21
Suitable working surface to accommodate	4 chn	4 chn
Bowls and spoons	3	3
Finger-painting mixture		Adequate
Bucket or bowl (for washing hands/water needs to be changed frequently)	1	1
Sponges or cloths		Adequate
Individual handtowels or paper towels		

The use of food substances in play is unacceptable

Notes on the basic equipment

Working surface – large enough to allow full rhythmic arm and body movement at standing height, and of a material easily cleaned, e.g. vinyl (glued down with waterproof glue), with a lip around the edge. A light uniform coloured surface is preferable. Safety glass or perspex for under/over effect.

Bowls and spoons – there should be sufficient for the preparation of different colours and textures. All bowls, utensils, use only for fingerpaint label/mark clearly.

Fingerpaint mixture – can be smooth and inviting, lumpy or slimy. It can be prepared ahead, although on a cold morning it is pleasant to use the mixture whilst still warm. Colour with primary tempera colours, food colouring or natural dyes, so that children can mix their own secondary colours. Sometimes have black or white.

Aprons – these are recommended provided that children are not discouraged from finger painting by the insistence that an apron be worn.

Fingerpaint mixture recipes

Fingerpaint:

In a large bowl put 2 cups of cornflour and 1 cup of cold water. Whisk until all cornflour is suspended. Boil the kettle while stirring cornflour and cold water – add boiling water very quickly until mixture “grabs”, stir thoroughly until smooth, thick and see through.

Gradually add up to ¼ cup lux flakes (optional). Stir until smooth and white. It may be coloured with tempera powder paint. Wash hands thoroughly afterwards.

Magic Mud:

3 cups cornflour*
1 ½ cups water
Mix, don’t cook.

**Cornflour is not considered a food stuff in this context, as it isn’t usually eaten in this form.*

Slime:

½ pkt lux flakes and enough hot water to dissolve – leave 24 hours to “gel”.
Clay can also be made into fingerpaint. Vary the colours, textures and scent.

Additional suggestions

Time:

- ❖ to experience and experiment
- ❖ varying the texture of the fingerpaint
- ❖ finger painting to music e.g. classical, expressive, music the children know and like.

Cartridge Paper – good quality paper for making prints.

Space – to dry them

Rubber-edged window cleaner – for cleaning down table and making patterns. Ideal for doing on windows.

Other pattern-making material:

- ❖ cardboard combs
- ❖ small brushes
- ❖ rubber rollers
- ❖ sponges
- ❖ paint rollers

Texture – add sawdust, sand, collage to vary texture.

Screen-printing – screens may have wooden frames or can be easily made from cardboard box lids with the centre cut out. Stretch organdie, fine terylene or nylon curtaining over the frame and staple. Seal edges with masking tape.

Use:

- ❖ rollers, scrapers
- ❖ cardboard combs
- ❖ small brushes
- ❖ rubber rollers
- ❖ sponges
- ❖ paint rollers

Ako Books:

- ❖ Magic Places
- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Recipes for Play

Infants and Toddlers

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Stable walking trolley/pushchair	2	
Large knob puzzles	2	
Bead frame	1	
Mirror (safety glass or laminated)	1	
Posting box / shape sorter	2	
Interactive open-ended items	4	
Mobiles (suitable for age)	2	
Pull along toy	2	
Items to stimulate senses	3	
Containers to store items	1	
Highchairs	At least 1	
Sleeping facility	As required	

Notes on the basic equipment

There is equipment and activities for infants and toddlers in all areas of play. Please ensure that all areas of play are accessible. This is not necessarily a separate area of play. The equipment may already be in your Centre.

Walking trolley – is defined as one which toddlers walk behind and push. It is not a baby walker – these are not recommended.

Large knob puzzles – puzzles with knobs designed for little hands.

Mirror – plastic/laminated at low level- accessible to infants and toddlers. Be aware of safety requirements if it is proper glass as per Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008.

Posting box/shape sorter – pieces to be simple and large enough to be safe for the age group.

Interactive open-ended items – any item a child can carry out a repeatable action, e.g. stacking, nesting toys, hammer and pegs, etc.

Items to stimulate senses – rattles, squeezable toys, balls, vehicles, etc. Notes: No toys which are unable to be washed daily e.g. soft toys.

Sleeping facility and highchair – as per Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008. Both to comply with NZ Safety Standards.

All equipment used by Infants/Toddlers during session must be washed and sanitised at end of that session.

Construction Play (Recycling Play)

Basic equipment

Construction and recycled materials to construct props for dramatic play, e.g. huts, boats, trains, cars, airports, fire stations, hospitals, etc Sufficient for all children on session

Check “Watch Out List” when stocking this area
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Notes on the basic equipment

Select from the following:

- ❖ large wooden packing cases (these may need to be smoothed and sanded for safety)
- ❖ small wooden boxes (these may need to be smoothed and sanded for safety)
- ❖ cardboard boxes
- ❖ cardboard cylinders
- ❖ wooden planks and boards
- ❖ bamboo – large and small
- ❖ cable reels – bolt ends to be capped/covered
- ❖ hessian
- ❖ old curtains, bedspreads, sheets
- ❖ old non-steel belted tyres with drainage holes, inner tubes
- ❖ wheels, steering wheel
- ❖ rope and hay bale twine – different lengths
- ❖ bricks and blocks
- ❖ large sheets of cardboard, brown paper
- ❖ vinyl flooring, carpet pieces, sacks, cushions
- ❖ lengths of garden hose, fire hose or vacuum hose
- ❖ PVC pipes
- ❖ Telephones (analogue and cell)
- ❖ oars

Have available – water, digging materials, tools from carpentry bench, collage, hats and dressing-up clothes and other family play items, felt pens, paints, etc.

If climbable constructions exceed 600mm in height they must be on a suitable impact absorbing surface which has a 1.5m fall area.

Resource awareness:

Care must be taken –

- ❖ in collecting natural resources,
- ❖ being respectful to our environment, e.g. lashing things to trees that may damage them,
- ❖ in disposing of resources – where possible return them to the earth,
- ❖ keeping a balance between man-made and natural materials.

Additional suggestions

Presentation – have in a plentiful supply of materials where children can see and choose what they need.

In addition, at each session set up a selection of these items to suggest to children imaginative and dramatic ways of using them. Consider:

- ❖ what to choose.
- ❖ how to group the materials (e.g. ladders, wagons, hoses might suggest one activity, large boxes, carpet pieces, cushions, telephones)
- ❖ where to put them.
- ❖ when it might be appropriate to start a construction for children to build onto, e.g. three strong bamboo lengths tied at the top make the beginnings of a light wigwam-like structure. (bamboo constructions can be very strong if lashed firmly and braced diagonally).

Make sure children have space to work, then stand back and see what happens, e.g. a vacuum cleaner hose may

become a petrol pump, paint sprayer, speaking tube, or fire hose. **Replace “well used” items when necessary.**

Other materials –

- ❖ pulleys
- ❖ pieces of rubber inner tubes make good hinges
- ❖ smaller materials, e.g. for making road signs, traffic lights and pedestrian crossings.

For a wet day make smaller items indoors, e.g. fishing lines, yoghurt carton telephones.

For a windy day try making kites.

For a hot day build a sun shelter from bamboo or hessian.

Trip suggestions – visit a fire station, an airport, a railway station or a parking building; go down to the wharves, a sawmill or dam construction site; watch people lay water mains or a pilot top-dress a farm. Use what is local in your area. Arrange specific props as a follow-up to outing.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play

Manipulative Play

Basic equipment

	Basic List	
Number of children on session	Up to 20	Over 21
Storage		As appropriate
Working surface to accommodate	4 chn	6 chn
Seating for	4 chn	6 chn
Picture puzzles	5	8

Concept Puzzles:

Basic Maths raised whole pieces, different shapes or sizes, one colour only

	2	2
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Fraction Shapes Board: raised pieces one colour only	2	2
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Geometric Puzzle: containing true maths shapes, e.g. square, triangle, etc	1	1
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Graded Size puzzle: pieces small to large	2	
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Mosaic Board	1	1
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Collection for colour/shape	1	
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Collection for size	1	1
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Seriating materials		
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in length	1	1
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in area	1	1
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in volume	1	1
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Sorting and matching materials		a collection
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Patterning materials		
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100 peg board with suitably sized pegs	1	1
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Screwing materials		a collection
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Threading materials		a collection
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Extra unspecified	11	16
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Notes on the basic equipment

These materials develop the abilities of sorting, matching, ordering, measuring, patterning, manipulating and problem solving. Remember to choose, where possible, items that will have several uses, e.g. beads can be used for colour and shape matching, and for patterning as well as for threading skills. They are then often used in ensuing dramatic play. Many of the items can be homemade or of natural materials gathered.

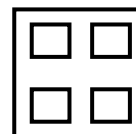
Storage – items should be displayed so that children may see and choose for themselves. It is recommended that puzzles are shelved separately. These can be rotated.

Picture puzzles – can be inset puzzles (the whole shape lifts out) or jigsaw puzzles, ranging from very simple to difficult, with a range of relevant subject matter which will attract the child's attention. Watch for clear colours, smooth tactile finish and accurate snug fit. They should be cut to follow the outline and be sub-divided into 'natural' pieces. Refer also Whānau Tupu Ngātahi.

People body shape/cultural puzzles: check your local iwi for suitability

Concept puzzles –

a) Basic maths – puzzles with a base board which is one colour and the raised whole pieces in another colour, e.g. base natural, pieces red.

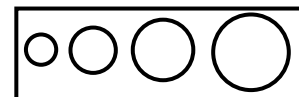


b) Fraction shapes board – puzzle pieces divided into fractions (e.g. 1/2, 1/4, etc) with the board in one colour and the pieces in another colour. The pieces to be raised.

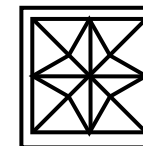
c) Geometric puzzles – a puzzle made up of true maths shapes (e.g. square, rectangle).



d) Graded sizes – a puzzle of 3-4 pieces the same shape and colour, from small to large, e.g. math shapes, animals.



e) Mosaic Board – these are multi coloured puzzles with a variety of shapes from which a range of different patterns can be made.



f) A collection – for sorting and matching into colour and/or shape, e.g. buttons, pieces of coloured cellophane, coloured plastic bottle tops, etc.

g) Collections of different sized items – could include nails or screws, empty containers and tops, lengths of plastic straws, tubing or Cuisenaire rods.

Seriating materials:

- ❖ In length, e.g. graded dowels or stairs.
- ❖ In area, e.g. graded inset boards, graded pyramid, seriated shapes on pillar board.
- ❖ In volume, e.g. nesting items – building cones, building tower, nesting boxes.

Patterning materials – a 25 build up peg board with 75 pegs (cotton reels with dowel glued into one end could be used). These boards can also be used for colour and shape matching and seriating.

Screwing materials – e.g. metal or plastic nuts and bolts, screwing construction sets, etc.

Threading materials – e.g. large beads (wooden or plastic) in various colours and shapes, threading boards (holed or stapled), model shoes or threading balls are also available or could be made. Use shoelaces, plastic threading wire or rope for larger items.

Other items:

- ❖ for colour and/or shape matching – pebbles, leaves, shells,
- ❖ posting boxes (make sure that the shapes are not interchangeable in the holes),
- ❖ picture or shape dominoes, or stand up jigsaws,
- ❖ a set of special shapes, e.g. geometric, animal, or varying sizes, colour and thickness,
- ❖ hammer mosaic set with board – coloured wooden pieces, mallet and nails. An alternative is to use a metal tray and magnetic tape on the back of the wooden pieces,
- ❖ geoboard with coloured elastic bands.

Play extensions

Sorting and matching materials:

Colour:

- ❖ matching coloured cups, saucers, and plates,
- ❖ finding all the yellow leaves,
- ❖ putting the red brush into the red paint,
- ❖ making a yellow collage,
- ❖ putting the green top on the green bottle,
- ❖ choosing matching clothes to wear.

Shape:

- ❖ sorting and matching leaves, shells, stones, feathers, machinery parts, blocks, pieces of felt, etc,
- ❖ looking at and talking about shapes from nature, e.g. snail shells, trees, leaves, clouds, flowers,
- ❖ making shapes from playdough, clay junk materials, sand, wood, paint, etc.,
- ❖ putting away the tools in the shadow box.

Size:

- ❖ sorting out the nail box,
- ❖ putting the right sized lid on the saucepan,
- ❖ choosing the right sized block to fit into a space or onto the back of a truck,
- ❖ matching two gumboots to make a pair,
- ❖ pouring water from one container to another,
- ❖ making matching sandcastles,
- ❖ putting a doll into the right sized bed.

Other sorting and matching collections:

Can be made on the basis of –

- ❖ texture – make a feely box (rough, smooth, hairy, etc., e.g. feather, stone, fur, hollow and solid objects)
- ❖ weight e.g. containers of varying weights
- ❖ smell e.g. herbs, flowers, oiled wood
- ❖ emotions – happy, sad
- ❖ sound – deep, high, soft, loud, etc.
- ❖ function – display of different kinds of footwear, etc. things that go together e.g. knife and fork, hammer and nail, bat and ball, cup and saucer.

Seriating materials –

In length – making a staircase with blocks climbing up log steps; discovering that the 50mm nail is bigger than the 25mm nail but smaller than the 75mm nail.

In area – using different sized playdough cutters of the same shape; playing with flannel graph or magnetic board.

In volume – playing with quantity measures in the water trough, ranging shells in order of size, packing up the bowl set to put away, making larger and larger balls of clay, stacking the saucepans, sorting out the pegleg family.

Other ways of seriating:

- ❖ In colour – mixing paint to produce different shades of blue,

- ❖ pieces of wool of different shades,
- ❖ paint charts – shades of one or two colours.
- ❖ In weight – small containers (all same size) filled with various items of graded weight, e.g. for loading on a truck.
- ❖ In pitch – chime bars, xylophone, aqua phone, etc.

Patterning materials – using flannel graph with a variety of shapes in many colours, coloured gummed paper at collage table, making patterns in the fingerprint or clay.

Screwing – using screwdrivers to dismantle old machinery parts, e.g. typewriter, clock, radio, etc.

Threading – shop purchased straws, milk bottle tops, rolled round knitting needles, vinyl or leather pieces, etc., on strings to make necklaces. Sewing plastic mesh bags with wool, raffia, etc.

Tactile puzzle – pieces are matched by feel.

Natural materials - can be used in a lot of manipulative categories, use them with respect, and when required dispose of them thoughtfully.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi

Movement and Sound

Basic equipment

	Basic List	
Number of children on session	Up to 20	Over 21
Storage for instruments		Appropriate
Storage for tapes/CDs		Appropriate
Percussion and/or string instruments that provide different notes/pitch	12	20
Cassette tape recorder, CD player or Ipod	1	1
Blank cassette tapes, Pre-recorded music/stories		Selection

Oral or wind instruments are not acceptable

Regular maintenance of instruments will keep them in good condition which should mean the long life of the instruments.

Notes on equipment

Encourage skills in:

Rhythm – listening to a simple rhythm and trying to copy it. Not only can the children play this with their instruments but they can copy it with their feet and hands and even voice.

Listening - listening to each other playing an instrument, listening to a tape or CD. Trying to guess what instrument they are listening to.

Singing - singing the songs they love, teaching the children new songs. The children may even like to make up their own songs.

Creative Movement - playing some music that children listen to and act out what they think it sounds like. Play a game where the children act out things they like to do and

others guess what they are doing, e.g. climbing trees, fishing, bathing their baby, riding their bike, etc.

Siting – the music area should be located away from noisy activities so that listening skills may be developed. Instruments with big sounds are good outside. Set up an outdoor music area (many adults and some children feel more free when outside, and creative movement is often more spontaneous). Movement and sound can be encouraged everywhere.

Storage – display instruments where they are easily accessible. Many can be hung. Storage should encourage care and respect for instruments.

Instruments – many percussion instruments are easy to make at home and give added variety. Hold centre workshops to make musical instruments that can be strummed, banged, plucked, shaken or rubbed. Make sure sounds are satisfying and varied, e.g. shakers, scrapers, clappers, jingles, gongs and drums – a large hollow drum is well worthwhile. Varying lengths of bamboo, hollow metal pipes, shells, rocks or kitchen utensils may be hung on a stand, or outdoors as chimes.

Instruments such as wrist bells, low bells and sleigh bell for variety of notes – pitch. Trade Aid and similar shops have a great range of interesting and varied ethnic instruments.

Tapes – C10 or C20 tapes are useful for recording small segments of music. Blank tapes can be used for the children to record their own voices.

Video - the children might even like to be videoed singing and playing their instruments.

Additional suggestions

Carpet – soft and comfortable to sit on.

Cushions - making the floor even more comfortable.

Tapes, CDs, Digital – a variety of the following:

- ❖ children's stories, songs and nursery rhymes (check that accent is more New Zealand than American and songs have known tunes)
- ❖ Māori and other cultures
- ❖ classical
- ❖ rhythm
- ❖ jazz

Books – of songs and rhymes, rhythm and action songs, fingerplays.

Sound games – 'what can we hear with our eyes closed?' Tell a story and let the children provide the sound effects, sound lotto game.

Rhythm, singing and dancing activities – recognise and use each child's own rhythm, e.g. hammering at the carpentry bench, running footsteps, speech rhythms – music is everywhere. Scarves, ribbon sticks, poi and rākau sticks.

Visit – a music shop, look at instruments. Ask a parent to bring a musical instrument to the centre, go to a concert.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi

Painting

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Easel or an equivalent	4	6
Paint containers	10	10
Pegs or clips to hold paper		Adequate
Paper		Adequate
Paint – basic colours	8	8
Hogfitch brushes (varying handle length and size)	10	10
Aprons (their use is optional)	4	6
Drying rack / Space		Adequate
Rollers	4	6
Trays for rollers	4	6
Shallow trays for rollers	4	6

Toxic substances should not be added to paint e.g. detergent

Notes on basic equipment

Siting – place where there is plenty of light. Have painting outside when weather permits.

Easels – height: a child should be able to paint at the top of the paper with very little lifting of shoulders, i.e. the top of easel approximately 105 cm from floor. Double-sided, three- or four- sided easels can be made. Easel boards need to be at least 600 mm square and sloping. Handles and wheels can be added.

The design should incorporate some means of attaching paper to easel, such as with pegs or clips. The finish of the easel should ensure easy cleaning.

Other surfaces – these could include using paper on the floor, walls, tables, fences, packing cases, and their use should be actively encouraged.

Brushes – varying length, width and density of hair. Have one brush in each paint container. Clean thoroughly after each session and drain with bristles upward, e.g. in a jar. If brushes harden wash in hot soapy water.

Paint holders – a tray attached to the easel; holders are useful to take paint to different tables, e.g. collage, outside activities, etc. A small table with low sides but high enough that the pots don't fall or topple off.

Paint containers – there must be at least 10 containing a variety of colours. Containers need to be heavy enough to hold paint without tipping, shallow enough to keep brush handles clean (approximately 10 cm deep) and allow paint colour to be seen. If using coloured paint lids, match the lid to the paint colour, if possible. However lids are not necessary during the actual time of painting, they are more for storing and containing the paint.

Paper – have a variety of kinds, shapes and colours, e.g. newsprint, cartridge paper in black, grey or white, wallpaper, plastic, different textures. Large pieces are necessary to allow large arm movement.

Paint – use tempera powder or any liquid variety, have clear, dense, bright colours, within reach of each child. Always include black and white, and the primary colours, with an occasional pastel shade for contrast, maybe even fluro, metallic glitter.

Primary colours are red, blue and yellow.

Secondary colours are: orange (red and yellow), purple (red and blue), green (yellow and blue). For brown, mix yellow and blue and red. For pastel colours, add a little colour to white.

To mix paint – follow suppliers instructions. For bulk supplies, put a packet of tempera paint powder into a large container and mix to a paste with a little warm water. Add more water until of the right consistency (no dribbles from a blob of paint on a vertical surface). Try not to add water to pre-mixed paint, as it drastically changes the consistency, and will be runny on the paper.

Aprons – may be made from vinyl, plastic-backed towelling or other waterproof material. The apron should cover the front and sides of children's clothing, and allow children to take them on and off themselves, if desired.

Play extensions

If more than 4 children wish to paint at once, it is easy to set up extra areas, e.g. on a table, outdoors, etc. Increase paint pots and brushes to suit.

Paint – try a range of blues or greens one day in addition to the usual colours. Try also acrylic, fluorescent and metallic paint.

Brushes – try flat hogfitch brushes, or very fine brushes.

Paint Roller – textured rollers can add variety e.g. solid, sponge patterned roller...

Ways of drying paintings – plastic coated curtain wire, fold away indoor clothes rack, wire coat hangers on curtain wire. Hang up paintings with clothes pegs.

Covering for floor – a piece of plastic backed by heavy cloth serves well or a piece of vinyl flooring.

Display board or wall – can be used to display children’s own paintings and murals, and prints by adult artists – change regularly. Try to display children’s work at their eye level; it encourages discussion and gives them pride in their creations.

Record folder – for children’s paintings. Have a representative collection from each child.

Group painting – try a mural on a long roll of paper on the floor or attached to a fence. Paint large cardboard carton ‘trains’ or ‘houses’ or small cardboard boxes at the collage table.

Visit – a school class during an art activity, an artist at work, etc.

You could also try –

- ❖ food dyes, experiment with water collected while cooking vegetables
- ❖ dyes – acrylics and oil-based
- ❖ screens and squeegees
- ❖ face and body paint
- ❖ fabric paints and crayons
- ❖ natural materials – to paint on or with sponges, cotton buds
- ❖ house brushes
- ❖ squirty bottles
- ❖ old paint tins with handles and big paint brushes
- ❖ “paint” buildings and fences with water
- ❖ Printers ink (non-toxic)
- ❖ Screen printing

Ako Books:

- ❖ Magic Places
- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Recipes for Play

Physically Active Play

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Storage	As appropriate	
Items for climbing	2	3
Item for sliding	1	1
Item for balancing	1	1
Item for swinging	2	3
Items for pushing and pulling	3	4
Balls (variety of sizes, shapes and weights)	6	10
Cleated plank	1	2
Ladder (child size)	1	1

The outdoor learning environment is an important part of the Centre. For more information on having a well created and designed area please refer to the POLE document “Process for planning an outdoor learning environment”, in the Association / Centre Equipment folder.

The Maximum fall height from structures is 1.5m.

Cable reels to be regularly turned and bolts capped. Recommended height 500mm or less. Check with your local Ministry of Education office to see if these are still allowed in your area.

Notes on the basic equipment

Space for free ranging movement – is necessary for activities such as running, throwing balls, pushing trucks and wagons, etc., and simple games.

Storage – could be a weather-proof-box, but a shed is better and also safer for backs. Shelving or large hooks on the walls means your storage area is more efficient. Remember that any heavy equipment needs to be stored and secured properly when thinking of earthquakes. This equipment storage needs to be lockable.

A storage shed – to house all outdoor equipment; 3 x 2.5m is a good minimum size. Have a wide double door, or roller door. An overhang is a good idea. Make shelving to fit equipment to be stored. Many items can be hung.

A storeroom – for example, a room with easy access outdoors; a lean-to attached to a building; a basement; space under a building into which trolleys can be run.

Bases – trees, a natural hill or slope, large reinforced boxes or cable reels make ideal bases for climbing, sliding and balancing items – trees or swing frames for swings. Levels of varying heights are a good idea. Climbing structures such as moveable cubes and boxes must not exceed a maximum height of 1.2m.

Safety – all equipment must be in good repair with appropriate impact absorbing surfacing under climbable equipment, including swings and slides. Requirements are to be found in the current NZ Safety Standards for Playground equipment and surfacing. Guard railing to conform to current specifications. Check regularly for splinters and nails.

Entrapment areas need to be reviewed regularly and in accordance with the current NZ Safety Standards. If at all in doubt, then please contact your Association Equipment Convenor.

Swings - should be well away from other activities or have a barrier. An alternative activity could be provided

for children waiting their turn. Don't site equipment next to regular traffic areas or concrete paths, and be aware of fall zones. Swings must conform to the NZ Safety Standards..

Items for climbing – could include tree or tree trunks, climbing frame, wooden or rope ladder, scramble net, foot holds, knotted rope, cleated plank, ramp, steps, non-steel belted car tyres.

Items for sliding – could include wooden, fibreglass, canvas or metal slide, a bank, (cardboard, canvas or vinyl sheets can be used here), a wide plank (cleated underneath). Slides should face south (to prevent heating up from the sun) and have sufficient run-off space. Slides need to meet the slope and fall height standards.

Items for balancing – cleated plank, balancing beam, logs, large rubber inner-tube, swing bridges, fences and low walls, stepping stones or logs, ledges, tyres (non-steel belted only) set on edge in ground, etc.

Items for swinging – static bars, monkey bars, tyre swings (non-steel belted only), rope, monkey swing, rings, looped ropes, barrels, etc all of which could be interchangeable. Rocking motion is necessary for vestibular (inner ear) development.

Items for pushing and pulling – should be sturdy and large enough to hold a child, e.g. cart or trolley, trucks of various kinds, train, tractor and trailer, tanker, wheelbarrow, porters trolley, etc. Screwed joints are necessary and rubber industrial wheels with metal axles are the ideal. Maintenance should be regularly carried out.

Balls – have varying sizes, weights and colours. Small bean bags make a good alternative. Quoits and hula-hoops are also useful. Alternatively use balloons (picking up all pieces if popped), flax balls, gourds, puff balls (very soft and inflate with a straw).

Ropes – various lengths for skipping, jumping over, reaching up to, tying, pulling, etc. Check regularly for the condition of the ropes.

If you are attaching equipment or ropes to living trees, take care not to damage them.

Play extensions

When adding to the range of equipment for this area try to provide a wide range of items in each section. One good idea is to have two slides, one for younger children and another one suitable for older children. Try to provide moveable equipment so that the children can change their play environment. Always group climbing and balancing equipment, rather than having isolated items. In this way pieces of equipment can be linked, e.g. ladders leading to a hut, stepping logs leading to sandpit, scramble net leading to platform. Have items arranged so that several may be supervised at any one time. Remember that wooden items need replacing from time to time. Use oil or stain for longer life. Timber put into the ground should be treated appropriately (see Playground Safety Standards). Clean off mould and fungus – waterblast, or scrub with bleach solution – rinse and oil.

Other activities:

- ❖ Parachute Silks
- ❖ Incorporating junk items to make tunnels, challenge or confidence courses, etc.
- ❖ Chalk for drawing on concrete or asphalt
- ❖ Ball games
- ❖ Games and stories that can include physical activities, e.g. “going on a bear hunt”, “what’s the time, Mr Wolf?”
- ❖ Canvas tunnels.

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play

Ensure NZ Safety Standards for playgrounds surfacing are always met.

Remember to consult with your Association Equipment Officer with regards to complying with the NZ Safety Standards.

Playdough

Basic equipment

Number of children on session	Basic List	
	Up to 20	Over 21
Suitable working surfaces to accommodate	4 chn	6 chn
Seating for	4 chn	6 chn
Storage for utensils		As appropriate
Playdough – enough for	4 chn	6 chn
Rolling pins	4	6
Playdough cutters	8	8
Other utensils		A selection

The use of food substances in play is unacceptable refer Whānau Tupu Ngātahi.

Food preparation items to be clearly labelled “Playdough only”.

Notes on the basic equipment

Siting – ideal if adjacent to stove and family play area. Remember playdough can be used outside.

Working surface – needs to be smooth for easy cleaning, e.g. wood or hardboard (finish with polyurethane or paint), formica or vinyl. Glue down with waterproof glue. A hessian covered board can be used for texture.

Playdough recipes

Playdough recipe: (4-6 children)

2-3 cups flour
1 cup salt
1 teaspoon oil
Enough water to mix
Food colouring (add to water)

Microwave Playdough: (2 children)

2 cups of water
4 tsp cream of tartar
4 tbsp cooking oil
food colouring
Add – 2 cups flour
– 1 cup salt

Mix with a knife in a microwave bowl. Microwave on high for 2 mins – then on high for 1 min – continue until ready, knead.

Cooked Playdough: (4 children)

1 cup flour
½ cup salt
1 cup water
1 tablespoon oil
2 teaspoons cream of tartar
Food colouring

Stir all ingredients together and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes or until the right consistency (like éclair batter). Store in a plastic bag or airtight container. Keeps well – Spring Knolls Co-op Washington D.C.
(Reprinted with permission from the Parent co-operative Preschools International Journal).

Uncooked Playdough:

2 cups flour
1 cup salt
4 tsp cream of tartar
1 tbsp oil
1 ¾ cups boiling water
add food colouring knead all ingredients together.

Storage for utensils – display utensils so children can choose, or put out only a few at a time. Sometimes have playdough by itself.

Rolling pins – a wooden medium sized rolling pin is ideal, but can also be made from a round plastic bottle with dowelling through each end, or from a length of broom handle. Patterned pins and playdough stamps are also available.

Playdough cutters – strong plastic cutters are preferable as they do not rust. Try also plastic screw or push lids. Plastic knives, spatulas and ice block sticks are also good for cutting. Have a variety of shapes and sizes.

Other utensils – bowls, wooden spoons, other cutlery, scales, measuring spoons, flour shaker, small pots with lids, pans, pie dishes, patty pans, pie plates, cake tins, fish slice, garlic press, etc.

Try natural materials – shells, insects, pine cones, leaves, bark and twigs, etc., or cars, animals, string, plastic coated wire, boxes, etc.

Additional suggestions

Playdough – increase basic amount whenever necessary. Natural materials that you have already in your Centre (e.g. sand, seeds) may be added for texture. Textured surfaces leave an impression on the playdough. Sometimes have more than one colour, e.g. two colours rolled together gives a marbled effect.

Salt ceramic – try for a change. This playdough will harden in 48 hours and can then be painted.

A recipe for salt ceramic is –
1 cup salt
½ cup cornflour
¾ cup water, added slowly

Mix and knead well. Cook over low heat stirring all the time until mixture thickens into a 'doughy' mass. Remove from heat and turn out onto a piece of wax paper or aluminium foil to cool. When it can be handled, knead for several minutes.

Items for decorating the playdough – may be added, e.g. coloured straws (short lengths), paper patty pans, candles, etc.

Children will enjoy helping to make the playdough. Have bowls, measuring containers, scales, ingredients and colouring on hand.

Real food preparation/cooking is a separate activity to playdough (see exploratory play).

Ako Books:

- ❖ Work and Play
- ❖ Recipes for Play
- ❖ Whānau Tupu Ngātahi

Sand Play

Basic equipment

	Basic List	
Number of children on session	Up to 20	Over 21
Sand Play area (1 large or 2 smaller)	1 or 2	1 or 2
Sandpit cover (if necessary)		Adequate
Storage		Appropriate
Sand	minimum depth 600mm	
Tools (spades and rakes)	6	10
Containers (buckets and measuring)	6	10
Vehicles (selection)	6	8
Rake and Spade (adult size)	1 of each	1 of each
Adequate Shade		

Sand must be raked before each session.

Notes on the basic equipment

Sandpit – site is sunny sheltered position, preferably with access for a large truck to top up the sand level when needed. Site must be adequately drained. Guidelines in the NZPF Property Manual give measurements of approximately 12m² for up to 20 children, or 18m² for over 20 children. There should be provision for shade in summer. Sandpits should have sides e.g. timber, tyres, etc and a bottom e.g. mudstop or polyweave, etc to define the actual pit area. Access to taps and water source need to be considered also. See also NZPF Equipment and Property Manual.

Cover – there are 2 types: a room type where the sides can be rolled up that has a sunshade as part of it or a cover that is directly over the sand having tyres between the cover and the sand. Covers are required to prevent fouling by cats or dogs. It should be of open material, e.g. wire, plastic or nylon netting, allow good ventilation and the sterilizing action of the sun and rain and should not touch the sand.

Sand pit must be raked over before each session. Check with your local Ministry of Education and Public Health Unit for further requirements.

Consider the shape – a circular/hexagonal sandpit is a friendly place. Edging can vary – timber/logs set either vertically or horizontally; whole tyres set upright in ground; a wide flat surface right around the edge of the sandpit makes a good road. Children need ready access for wheeled toys into sand area via an opening or a ramp.

Storage – keep smaller equipment in containers which allows sand to escape, e.g. box; plastic laundry basket. Spades, etc. can hang on a wall of outdoor storage shed. On-the-spot storage may be suitable if vandalism is not a problem – try a lockable weatherproof box beside the sandpit. The front of the box may be hinged to make a ramp.

Sand – adequate supply of clean sand, at least 600mm deep. Maintain and replenish as necessary – check with your Association Equipment Convenor. Sand requires sun and rain to sterilize it. Sand should be the consistency to mould but not to compact e.g. grade 1, river sand. Refer also to the NZPF Equipment Manual for a fuller guide to sand quality. Sweep/tidy the surrounding areas of the sandpit to eliminate animals soiling in it.

Tools – for scooping, tunnelling and digging include spades, scoops, shovels of varying sizes. They need to be strong with no sharp points – file if necessary.

Containers – for filling, measuring and carrying. These need to be of varying shapes and sizes, e.g. buckets, basins, pots, plastic containers, etc. Use also funnels, sieves, colanders, etc.

Vehicles – sturdy and durable for loading, moving, making roads and extending imaginative play. Trucks (preferably tip), sand rollers, bulldozers, tractors, cars, etc. Some of these could be made by children at the carpentry bench. Sit on diggers are also a valued piece of equipment.

Play extensions

Shade - plant a tree, umbrellas or a permanent fixture such as a shade-sail.

For wet sand – have water available from buckets, a hose watering cans, plastic bottles.

A big tree trunk – makes an interesting divider for a large sand area.

For family play – have a light box stove near sand with a supply of cooking utensils, e.g. old saucepans, bowls, jugs, wooden spoons or sticks, cutlery, etc.

For roadworks and construction – flat boards for roads and bridges; a sturdy crane or an excavator, small reels, overhead wire with pulley and hook for transporting.

For water play – sheet plastic for lakes and rivers, drain tiles, off cuts of plastic piping, downpipes, guttering, water trough.

For decoration – leafy branches, toetoe, grasses, wild flowers, shells and driftwood.

Other accessories – large wooden balance scales, rakes for patternmaking, sand moulds, junk, sand digger, cardboard rolls, etc.

Two sandpits – can allow for active and quiet play; or for wet and dry sand; or for sand on more than

one level, e.g., one area at the top and another at the bottom of a slope with a connecting pulley arrangement or bridge system. Alternatively, in addition to a large sandpit, have a sand trough at table height – this is useful to move under cover on wet days too.

Visit – nearby earthworks, quarry, beach, river or lake.

Ako Books:

❖ Work and Play

Water Play

Basic equipment

	Basic List	
Number of children on session	Up to 20	Over 21
Shallow containers(s) on stand to accommodate	4 chn	6 chn
Storage		As appropriate
Water (a close tap is great)		Sufficient
Containers and accessories for:		
pouring	2	4
filling	2	4
measuring	2	2
siphoning	2	2
Items for floating and sinking	3	4

Remember: It only needs 3 inches (76mm) and 3 moments to drown.

Water play must be supervised by an adult.

Notes on basic equipment

Water container / trough – needs to be heavy duty and sturdy. This could be either one large, or two or three smaller containers which will hold a depth of 100-150mm water. Height from ground to top of a container should not exceed 550mm. When considering the shape keep in mind that all objects in the trough should be within arm's reach of a child. A raised platform at one end is helpful for small children to stand on. Variation of depth is a good idea. If two or three smaller troughs are used, consider platforms at different heights.

Siting – in wet weather, have indoors or under cover. Warm water may be used.

Storage – (of accompanying equipment) could be a box with rope handles, a large plastic stacking bin, a plastic clothes basket. Have a stand nearby so that the water trough does not become cluttered.

Water – it may be warm or cold, clear or coloured (food colouring), have bubbles sometimes, but watch for allergies and toxicity. Water should not be left overnight. Be aware of where your drains go, when emptying the trough.

Containers and accessories – have a colourful variety of differently shaped plastic jugs, bottles, basins, squeeze bottles, wine cask inners, funnels, small buckets, colanders and sieves, water wheels, small watering cans, containers with holes at varying heights, eggbeater, clear plastic tubing, etc. One jug or beaker set may be in graduated sizes. Clear plastic tubing comes in different diameters which can fit bottles and funnels. Many containers are suitable, no glass, rusty tins or containers which have held poisonous substances (children will not distinguish between the safe and the unsafe). Discard and replace containers as often as necessary.

Items for floating and sinking:

- ❖ wooden boats (may be made by children at the carpentry bench),
- ❖ blocks of cork, or small corks,
- ❖ pumice (and a heavy stone the same size for comparison),
- ❖ small pieces of driftwood, seaweed, sponge, feathers, balloons, shells,
- ❖ old decoy ducks, plastic ducks,

While exploring the properties of water, talk about cold-warm; shallow-deep; empty-half full; full-overflowing; wet-dry; still, running, rushing, splashing, dripping, trickling, slippery, squelchy, etc.

Play extensions

Water play is:

- ❖ a walk in the rain splashing through puddles,
- ❖ having a bath,

- ❖ blowing bubbles (Note: avoid providing any item a child/adult is required to place lips to for blowing through because of health reasons e.g. bubble trumpet),
- ❖ painting the fence with buckets of water and large whitewash brushes,
- ❖ exploring a creek,
- ❖ damming a stream,
- ❖ jumping in the waves at the beach,
- ❖ making lakes and rivers in the sandpit with plastic basins, water trough and polythene sheeting,
- ❖ pouring the tea at a tea party,
- ❖ standing under the sprinkler, hose, etc.,
- ❖ washing the dishes, cleaning the car,
- ❖ breaking the ice on the cattle trough,
- ❖ making ice blocks with different items, i.e. flowers, leaves, essence, colour, etc.,
- ❖ watching the steam from the hot water jug,
- ❖ bathing dolls, or a baby, or the dog,
- ❖ watering the garden with a watering can,
- ❖ helping to fill the paddling pool,
- ❖ siphoning the water out again – not mouth operated,
- ❖ washing doll's clothes and hanging them out to dry,
- ❖ make water whizzer or water board,
- ❖ melt large ice blocks or snow,
- ❖ nature – pebbles, stones, sand, driftwood.

Make sure there is a ledge or flat surface on which children can place containers for pouring, etc.

Have glass tumblers with a jug of water to make an 'aqua phone'. Different musical notes are made by tapping on the glasses according to the depth of water in each. This needs to be done under adult supervision.

Provide plastic tubing the same length but different diameters, or the same diameter and one length twice the length of the other. What does the water do? Have some oil and water in clear plastic tubing or bottle. What happens?

Visit and explore beaches, lakes, rivers and enjoy the rain.
Refer excursion/trip policy.

Ako Books:

❖ Work and Play

Equipment for the Premises

Although we may think of equipment as just being the resources that the Centre needs to have for children to play with, there are also a number of items that may be required for licensing purposes. Some of these things may come under the equipment umbrella, so they have been listed to assist Centre's with a good guide to some basic items that they should have.

First Aid Kit

The minimum First Aid Kit requirements can be located in Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Services 2008.

Saline solution – 0.9% saline	
Gauze Pads	12
Waterproof adhesive plasters	1 packet
Sterile strips	1 packet
Dressing strip	1
Bandages - triangular	2
Crepe - 50mm	2
- 75mm	2
Non-stick dressings	
- small	3
- large	2
Plain adhesive plaster, e.g. 40mm	1 roll
Medium sized stainless steel basin for cleaning wounds	
Stainless steel scissors	
Safety pins	
Fine point tweezers	
Plastic bags for soiled dressings	
Soap/liquid soap	
Disposable gloves – to be used for dealing with blood, broken skin	

Protective mouth shields
 First Aid book, e.g. St John's updated version
 Card listing local emergency numbers
 Accident/illness register –
 Register for administering medication
 Register for medical conditions/allergies
 Appropriate separate and secure storage for individual medications
 Sunscreen
 Tissues
 Visible copy of the medications policy

Storage – large enough for all supplies to be kept together. Keep a list of requirements inside the kit. Check regularly and replenish as necessary. Keep in a cupboard/cabinet which is inaccessible to children. It is a good idea to keep in the first aid kit, emergency phone numbers, and if necessary, where the nearest telephone is situated.

Be aware of any medication to be given – keep records. This includes homeopathic remedies. Ensure your Centre is following current ECE regulations in relation to the administering of medication.

A portable first aid kit for outings is a must.

Items for cleaning

Vacuum cleaner As adequate
 Brooms At least 2
 Mops At least 2
 Items for washing dishes As adequate
 Rubbish container with lid At least 2
 Various cleaning agents/cloths

Notes on cleaning

Should include brooms, vacuum cleaner, mops, sponge mops, dustpan and brush, bucket, toilet brush, dish mop, pot scraper, detergent, antiseptic, powder cleanser, towels, cloths, etc.

It is a good idea to colour code your cleaning clothes as you will need to designate a set completely for the toilet/bathroom area. This will also need to be done for mops etc as well.

Furniture / Utensils

Nappy changing table	1
Highchairs	1-2

Facilities for children's morning tea

Table counter or working surface	As adequate
Seating for children	As adequate
Adult chairs	As adequate
Utensils could include cups, plates, cutlery etc	As adequate
Means of boiling water	At least 1

Notes about furniture

Nappy changing table – try to position near running water and need to comply with the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008.

Highchairs – are an important piece of equipment and need to comply with the NZ Safety Standards.

As a general rule work surfaces need to be approximately 480mm from the ground for children sitting and approximately 560mm for children standing. The size of the tops of tables vary with the type of table, the problems of storage, the uses to which it is put, and

so on. However, a good size for 4 to 6 children is 1.5m x 1.0m. This enables children to work beside and/or opposite each other without crowding. Circular tables make socialising easier, chairs for the children should have seats from 230mm to 280mm from the ground. Alternative seating can be covered boxes, small forms or cushions. Although a lot of seating is specified in the list it is not necessary to have the full number of seats mentioned – they can be moved from area to area as needed. Easy clean upholstery is a must for allergy related conditions, such as asthma or hay-fever.

Storage

Storage for centre will vary according to space and financial resources. However there is usually some form of storage at each centre.

Try and have some form of area to hang artwork to dry, storage for collage, library (both children's and adult) and perhaps blocks.

Centres may also have storage for administration such as filing cabinet, etc.

The main thing to remember is that the unit is required to be secured to a fixed position if large and heavy, especially where there is an increased risk from earthquakes.

Ensure that you are following the current ECE regulation criteria in relation to storage.

Additional information for equipment

Firefighting equipment – as specified by your local authority. Fire exits should be clearly marked.

Sunhats

Sun umbrella or shade cloth in sandpit – ensure they are anchored securely.

Heaters – should be wall mounted, and adequately guarded if at child height.

Fencing – at least 1.2m high, not climbable, child proof gate locks.

Washing - suitable facility for washing sick and/or soiled children.

Storage for children's belongings – e.g. low shelving, locker unit, trolley or rack, coat hooks.

Additional display boards or surfaces – useful for special displays of children's art, newsletters, etc., or as an extra drying surface for children's paintings and collage work.

With all equipment please check the Watch Out List.

With all aspects of the Centre and equipment remember to think of allergies.

Civil Defence emergency preparedness checklist

Have you considered the premises and grounds?

- ❖ Are the premises structurally sound or is remedial work necessary?
- ❖ Is heavy furniture and equipment securely fastened to structural elements of the building?
- ❖ Are heavier items stored on lower shelves?
- ❖ Are windows and glazed doors fitted with safety glass?
- ❖ Will outdoor play equipment remain stable in an earthquake?
- ❖ Are any play areas near threatening objects such as power poles, high brick fences, etc.?
- ❖ Has your Centre a good first aid kit and manual? Is it checked regularly?

- ❖ Where are the fire and emergency drills displayed?
- ❖ Fire extinguishers must be serviced regularly.
- ❖ Is there a transistor radio (with spare batteries) to listen for emergency instructions and information?

Does the Supervision Team understand its responsibilities

- ❖ to first ensure their own safety so they can then care for the children?
- ❖ to remain with the children until all of them have been collected by a parent or other responsible adult?
- ❖ to keep children inside after an emergency (unless premises are obviously unsafe)?
- ❖ to prevent danger and further damage, after an emergency, by turning off electricity, water and gas at their mains?
- ❖ to learn first aid and keep up to date?
- ❖ to know how to use the fire extinguishers?
- ❖ To keep a note on the roll of who has collected which children after an emergency.
- ❖ to know where the nearest civil defence post is, in case help is needed?

Are the children prepared to make an appropriate reaction to an emergency?

- ❖ A key word learned and practised as a game may be useful to signal to children to take cover under tables, or move to a safe location away from windows, heaters, etc.
- ❖ Fire and evacuation drills practised on an at least three-monthly basis as per your Centre's approved Fire Evacuation Scheme approved by the NZ Fire Service.

Do the parents know what they should do in an emergency, and what actions the supervision team will take?

- ❖ Do they know that the supervision team will look after all children until it is safe for parents to come and collect them?
- ❖ Are parents prepared to stay and help the supervision team if necessary?
- ❖ Do any of the parents have specialist skills which might be useful?

Have you made contact with neighbours?

- ❖ Are they prepared to come and help the parents and supervision team?
- ❖ Is there a neighbourhood support group which may be able to offer you assistance? If so, meet with them.

After an emergency

- ❖ Keep calm
- ❖ Remember your personal safety
- ❖ Think before you act
- ❖ Reassure and calm the children
- ❖ Render first aid
- ❖ Turn off gas, electricity and water
- ❖ Stay inside if possible
- ❖ Record on the roll who collects the children
- ❖ Contact your neighbours
- ❖ Check and secure any pets
- ❖ Avoid using the telephone unless it is essential

Civil Defence/ Survival Kit to be stocked with adequate consumables/liquid, clothing etc to comply with local regulations. To be maintained and checked regularly. Replace contents as necessary.

The Watch Out List

You have heard lots about the equipment you should have in Playcentre, but what about the things that are not suitable?

This is a list of inappropriate or potentially harmful items with information on why these need close supervision, or indeed withdrawal from the Centre. It has been compiled as a result of ongoing discussions between Equipment Convenors from throughout the country, at Regional and National meetings. The 1995 National meeting merged the “Watch Out” list and the “Inappropriate Equipment” lists into this revised “Watch Out” listing.

It is supplied to assist each Centre/Association in making their own informed decision. This is not a statement of Federation policy. The list is by no means exhaustive, nor is it finite - add to it as you discover things that cause you concern. Remember that individuals can experience allergies to particular things - keep a separate list on display in your Centre.

The only item of equipment that is part of an official policy is from a 1991 Conference remit that requires Playcentre to be free of commercially produced War Toys;

1991 – Conference Remit was passed: “That Playcentre be free of commercially produced War Toys”

Note

Owners who have outgrown or no longer need them donate a lot of items to Playcentre - be aware that the item may have reached the end of its useful life. Also carefully evaluate if it is actually required or wanted by your Centre. Equally, items like books and puzzles not suited for Playcentre may be ok for

home use, but you need to carefully evaluate why you feel they are not suitable for your Centre, as that reason may affect their home use.

Not Negotiable Items

Equipment not recommended for both Health and Safety or Developmental reasons:

Baby Walkers/Exersaucers - there is always a danger that these will fall or be pushed over with the possibility of brain damage occurring to the occupant. Plunket supports this stand. The dangers of baby walkers are well documented. There are more stimulating things for these children to do within the Centre environment.

Polystyrene Packaging - particularly those that come off in small round pieces. Choking can easily occur, and if inhaled/swallowed it does not show up on x-ray. This includes all trays, cups, bells and balls.

War Toys - a Conference Remit was passed, 1991: “That *Playcentre be free of commercially produced war toys.*”

Linseed Oil - not for use in Centre’s. Cloths become highly combustible and if left in Centre they could cause a fire to occur.

Wind Instrument/Toy - one that is blown e.g. recorders, bubble trumpets, whistles etc. Saliva (spit) spreads many harmful viruses and diseases.

Borax – this is not to be used as it is highly poisonous.

Bread Bag tags – this is a choking hazard as they can break easily into small pieces. These are not to be used in play and are to be kept away from children at all

times.

Concrete Pipes - children get familiar in climbing/hiding in these pipes as a fun thing to do. When they see one outside the Centre, they think it is for playing in and could possibly fall down into storm-water drains. They may also potentially hold stagnant water (and perhaps harmful bacteria). When concrete starts to crack and break down there are often sharp edges. Concrete is also hard (non-flexible) to hit your head against as you bend down/run in, to enter.

Plastic Cling Wrap - An extreme choking hazard. Included in lunches and this is where the child is most likely to try to eat it (child eats food item without removing the wrap).

Medicine Bottles/Packaging - children recognise the bottles/package even though they cannot read the label. They may later try to play with real medicine and poison themselves.

Cleaning Products packaging – often empty boxes and bottles may appear in the Family play area. There may still be residue from boxes of washing powder etc that children may have the potential to ingest.

Tinfoil - particularly tinfoil plates. These may develop sharp edges when cut, with the potential to cut the child’s or adult’s skin.

Toilet Roll Inserts - potential risk of transmitting harmful disease. Not culturally sensitive/appropriate.

Stuffed Soft Toys - these become a hygiene risk to the child that chews or sucks them. Ideal breeding ground for saliva or runny nose spread germs. Not practical to wash toy between use by each child. Includes soft-bodied dolls.

Wood - tannalised wood may be toxic and can be rough.

Drawing Pins - can often be found on floor where they have flicked out of wall creating a danger for standing on (sore for bare feet). If picked up off floor by small child they may place into mouth. A suggested alternative is to staple paper to walls or hang horizontal lengths of string by nails and attach Bulldog Clips to display notices etc.

Chewing Gum - possible choking hazard -difficulties removing from equipment or surfaces.

Rebounders (Mini Tramps) - these need to be on impact absorbing surface but are so often seen on concrete or indoors! These are a one person item - turn taking necessary. Jumping action is jarring for young bones. Over balance sideways if child lands on edge.

High supervision items

Alum - has in past been added to Playdough to make soft. Can be purchased in a 500gm block. Playdough does not require it to be added.

Playdough, for health reasons should be made fresh each session.

Balloons - once broken the balloon rubber can be a choking hazard. Place all bits into rubbish, do not leave lying around for young ones to find and place into their mouths.

Sharing blowing up of balloons is not recommended because of the health risk of mixing saliva. Recommend using a pump to blow up balloons. Be aware of children's allergies to latex.

Bannister Slides - parallel, sloping, sliding poles, spaced apart. Young children appear to lack upper

body strength to sit on top of these and instead slip through between the poles, hurting their shoulders.

Batteries - no small batteries that can be swallowed. Check batteries in torches, radios etc regularly for corrosion and replace as necessary. Toys requiring batteries must have a screw down cover.

Bean Bags - Must be washable surface (vinyl) and monitored for splits.

Throws and Chairs - Must be double sealed. Check for splits and discard immediately if outer seal is broken. Discourage using homemade or cheap varieties.

Bikes and Ride-ons - does not encourage group play, tends toward anti-social play. Some areas are better suited than others - any sloping area creates speed. Frequently available at home. High supervision required due to high numbers of toddlers around more collisions are likely. Smaller children walk in front of oncoming bikes. Need to provide helmets for safety. Helmets for role-playing. Small ride-ons for young children should have 3-4 wheels for stability. Have a special bike day if bikes not usually allowed at Centre sessions. Is a developmental skill.

Bouncinettes - small children may bounce them too hard. Easily tipped over, especially by mobile children. Old wire ones may no longer be suitable. Recommend newer models only if necessary.

Brittle Plastic - sharp edges and breaks apart easily; can scratch eyes and skin, small parts can be swallowed and toxic when burnt.

Buttons - small enough to be a 'foreign body' problem in ears, nose and throat. Should be used under strict supervision. Check buttons on dress ups and family play to ensure they are fastened securely.

Carpentry - of course ESSENTIAL, but requires close supervision to ensure correct use of equipment and that items do not wander away from area. Use a magnet to locate nails in grass or pick up off ground. Maintain sharp saws; they are less hazardous than blunt ones. Discard old 'creations' with nails in - do not return to the wood box. Provide untreated wood. Avoid custom wood and bought dry kindling as it splinters. Shoes should be worn in this area for safety.

Chain - if using chain on swings put a plastic sheathing on lower part so fingers cannot be pinched and crushed in links. This should also be the case for any other kind of chain that is available to children through play. Links of chain should not be provided to children as they may put it in their mouths and the potential for bacteria to be trapped is high. Contamination from the metal and germs could be dangerous to children.

Change Tables - ensure that the table complies with current Ministry of Education regulations and Consumer standards.

Clothing - cord and toggles attached to clothing. These can catch on corners while the child is playing creating a high risk of entanglement and potential for the child to hang themselves.

Computers - Should be used for mainly administrative purposes. Children's learning through ICT should be adult supervised and supported. Playcentre equipment and environment, with good adult supervision and interaction, will teach a child everything they could learn from a computer. Can become solitary play rather than cooperative play.

Cots - Portable cots are not to be used (Education (Early Childhood Services) regulations 2008). Cots must comply to current Consumer standards

Doors - slamming doors injure. Consider installing

door closers that shut gently or hooking back doors that need to remain open. Purchase a 'no-jam' safety device from a hardware store.

Dress Up Clothes - make sure all ties are kept short so they do not become an entanglement or strangling hazard. Use of Velcro or similar closure to eliminate ties for fastening. Avoid clothes that may become entangled or caught on something e.g. branches, when involved in play.

Equipment -be alert for damaged equipment. Review maintenance checklist for specifics. Remember indoor equipment as well! Watch out for lead paint, particularly on donated items. Monitor traffic flows. Avoid collisions by positioning equipment well. Equipment designed for an older child is often unsuitable for younger child because of the different developmental stages of the children. Heights of platforms can be lowered. You can have challenging equipment for older children without excessive height. Conference Remit 1992 - fall height from a structure to be maximum of 1.5m. Easels, tables & chairs should be properly sized for age range of children. Ensure that Centre's have a copy of the current relevant Standards

Eggshell - crushed eggshell can cause injury to the eyes. Be aware of allergies. The use of egg cartons may carry the risk of salmonella.

Family Play - dolls bottles filled with toxic liquids. Pretty bracelets filled with liquid, glitter, beads. Plastic food to be washed after use.

Fire Hazards - your Fire Safety report should give an indication of these. Use flame retardant furnishings, or more fire resistant materials such as wool. Install the correct regulation alarms and follow any other Fire compliance directives.

Fireman's Pole - young children find these difficult to use as they lack the coordination needed to hold

tight and close to the pole. This causes swinging around pole, with their head leaning out to hit on the adjacent support structure. Inability to coordinate, hold and control descent speed leads to rapid heavy fall. This jars the developing growth plates in young bones. There is often insufficient resilience in the impact absorbing surface at the base of the pole. Refer to current NZ Playground Standards for more information

Fixed Structures - lack of versatility, need lots of ways on and off. Cost of construction is out of proportion to the play value. Moveable equipment lets children use their imagination and creativity; increase their grasp of math concepts. Prone to vandalism. Take care in commercially produced fixed structures that the equipment is developmentally appropriate for young children. Provide several angles of access (i.e. not all vertical climbers). Refer to current NZ Playground Standards for more information.

Flying Foxes - includes track type. These require careful, constant supervision. Motion, not height is the activity. What is learnt from this item? The child has no control once in motion. Requires large area of impact absorbing surface below. Considered inappropriate for early childhood and its play value, more suited to public playgrounds. Use a sit-in harness, not a rope knot to sit on; never use a wooden seat as if this hits someone passing by, it can cause severe head injuries. Refer to current NZ Playground Standards for more information.

Geo Gyms - these can be hazardous if not secured properly to the ground. Dependant on the make, model and size, Geo Gyms can be used inappropriately and may not foster social play and cannot be utilised by all age groups. Geo Gyms that are made out of metal and are coated could potentially rust and pieces may break off. There are other ways of providing the same climbing development without the amount of room that this piece of equipment requires

Glass - windows at low levels and sliding doors need to be laminated safety glass. Fish tanks and insect containers should be made of laminated safety glass, or covered with a safety film. Use perspex insect boxes as an alternative. Fish tanks should be anchored to wall or table to prevent tipping over, especially in the event of an earthquake. Bottles and jars stored safely or replaced with plastic ones. Do not have glass lampshades as in the event of an earthquake these will probably shatter. Mirrors must be made out of safety glass, covered by adhesive film or guarded by barriers.

Glitter - hazardous to small children and requires supervision whenever used. Can be abrasive to eyes, tongues, mouths, throats and lungs. Be aware of any child that eats playdough if glitter included.

Hot Drinks - keep out of children's reach to avoid burns. Consider a policy that forbids hot drinks in the play space and/or restricts them to the kitchen area. **WARNING** – Arcoroc Mugs have tendencies to explode and shatter.

Highchairs - must have a 5 point harness and be able to completely cleaned down and sanitised.

Hygiene - poor hygiene in a Centre is a health hazard (as we all know) but do not forget daily wiping over/cleaning dirty upholstery, baby toys, hand basin, water taps, and door knobs. Dishwashers are excellent for washing cups, plates etc. Can also be used for play equipment e.g. playdough items, but these should be washed separately to eating/food utensils. Remember that dishwasher powder is toxic and burns the mouth area if ingested - watch out for powder residue on inside of dishwasher door.

Insecure Fencing & Gates - No one likes to hear of stories about children who went home to Mum by themselves when they are supposed to be at Playcentre

and no one noticed them leave. Fencing should comply with current regulations.

Incinerators - these should be fenced off if you have one on the property, otherwise children may tamper with the ash (hot or not) or uncover dangerous items. Rubbish should not be burnt during a session.

Indoor Equipment - think about challenges that don't involve height (more than 600mm height); otherwise you will need to use impact absorbing surface around equipment (the same as outdoors). Gym mats are just that; for tumbling and rolling on, not falling onto.

Iron Filings - 1/3 teaspoon is a toxic dose for children. Consider using only if packed in a pre-sealed container. Consider using only if it comes with a science kit, or in a permanently sealed container

Jewellery - unsuitable jewellery with sharp points - not just on the fastener. Discard cheap beads that will not stay strung together.

Junk - remove & dispose of old disused, broken equipment & furniture lying around 'just in case' it may be used. Scrap used timber with nails, collage materials, painted etc. No one likes to use someone else's creation.

Kitchen - have restricted, limited access to kitchen. There should be a latchable door/partition to prevent a child wandering into the kitchen area unsupervised. Kitchens need to be completely inaccessible to children. Store sharp knives out of a child's reach. Use a stove guard to prevent spills. Use a kettle/jug holder to prevent this being pulled over. Buy a cordless jug; consider an automatic jug that turns itself off, or a wall heating system. Put safety latches onto cupboard doors. Secure crockery cupboard door.

Consider unbreakable coffee mugs; remember that Arcoroc type glass shatter into tiny pieces.

Marbles - not suitable for young children. Can roll away and be found by a smaller child. Maintain close supervision when these are being used. Account for each marble when taking out and putting away into safe storage.

Mechanical Pencil Sharpeners - keep out of children's reach; fingers are the same size as pencils! Use an ordinary pencil sharpener but check often that the blade is secure.

Money (Play) - be aware of size, could be a potential choking hazard.

Office Equipment - typewriters, cash registers, and computers if they do not work properly, can teach children bad skills - not how to use them, but to abuse them in frustration. These bad habits then continue as they meet 'the real' thing at home or school.

Open Drains - these collect water that can lead to drowning. Collection pools of water are unhygienic; a child should not play in this water. Be aware of drain covers that can trap little fingers or feet, and can be a trip hazard.

Photocopiers - working ones. Must be inaccessible to children when in use and kept out of reach when not in use e.g. cover, barrier or separate room.

Pins & Needles - store sewing items safely. Use under supervision.

Plastic Bags - suffocation danger and should be stored knotted and away.

Plastic Moulded Outdoor Play Equipment - e.g. Little Tykes, Flexible Flyer. Poorly designed, too

small. For domestic use rather than Centre use. Requires impact absorbing surfacing if over 600mm. Make sure the equipment is suitable for the purpose.

Play pens - better to let the little ones explore the stimulating environment of Playcentre!

Poisonous Plants - refer to a good New Zealand guide to poisonous plants. There may be other plants you wish to get rid of for allergy reasons as they give a burning sensation in the mouth, but are not highly toxic.

Power Leads - do not have these where children can reach them, particularly around water or scissors. Recommend the use of a RCD - Residual Current Device (Check local regulations).

Power points - at low levels should have a child proof/shock stop cover. Having points at adult height is even better.

Pull-along Toys - with fine or long cords which may not be seen by other children before tripping over them. Cords can become tangled around body. Be aware of the bead on end; too small and it could become a choking hazard.

Rope - some kinds of rope burn hands (friction burns). Substitute a flat braided nylon rope for play activities. Refer to current NZ Playground Standards for more information.

See-Saws - children misjudge the space underneath. Jars the back, squashed fingers, feet, legs under them. Crack chins on the handles. Unevenly weighted children result in one child being stuck high in the air.

Self-locking Cupboards - children may get into but not out of.

Shelving - overweighed shelving can collapse or

topple over (bookshelves common). Have well-constructed shelving that is securely fastened to the wall.

Slides - check that the slide you purchase has a flat take-off platform with guiding handrails at the top and a flat run-off at the bottom; ensure that the current NZ Playground Safety Standards are met.

Small Objects - any small object that fits into a 35mm canister can be a choking hazard. Be aware of where little people are, where small objects are, and don't forget the floor! Watch out for the hygiene of objects that are explored by mouth. Watch for small puzzle pieces and manipulative items.

Straws - always use purchased drinking straws for activities, not used straws from drinks. This is for hygiene purposes. Sharing of straws is not advisable also because of hygiene. Always discard after use.

Unwashed Containers - check any containers in the Centre for children's play are clean of their original contents.

Vehicles - cars, boats, tractors etc need to be well maintained and sited over impact absorbing surfacing if height over 600mm. Inspect regularly for rusting and deterioration. Remove and dispose of them when they get too old. Teaches children that playing in vehicles is ok and fun - IS IT? Prone to vandalism.

Water - any water that 'pools' in depressions; children drown in surprisingly small amounts. Containers of deep water, even buckets, a child can fall headfirst into and not be able to right themselves.

Wendy House - needs to be cleaned after each session for hygiene. Prone to vandalism. Supervision may be difficult. Play can become possessive and exclusive.

Wet Floors - slips cause injuries. Have areas where

wet weather gear can be removed safely. Have non-slip strips to smooth floors, outside ramps.

Wide Slides - very young children are heaviest in the heads and this causes them to drift across the slide until they are sliding down sideways, or head first. A wide slide encourages more than one child at a time, which leads to injuries if they land on top of each other at the bottom. Many children find the extra width frightening and daunting to venture onto.

Zoom Slides - require supervision at all times. Exit from platform requires gate across when the slide is not in place. Guy wire posts are a trip hazard, especially when slide not in place. Slippery when wet. Can be installed from a 1.5m platform. Take care that slide does not touch the ground when child descends. Ensure that the child cannot go underneath the slide when it is in use. Recommend opening 60cm wide to allow only one child to exit at a time.