



Position Statement for REAIE

To the children, families and educators of children in Australian education settings.

On behalf of our chairperson Ruth Wallbridge, teacher at a community kindergarten, we would like to share this important message from REAIE and the REAIE Committee.

2020 marks a hundred years since the birth of Loris Malaguzzi, a central figure in the development of the educational project in Reggio Emilia's municipal infant-toddler centres and preschools. It also marks the 20th anniversary of the formation of the non-profit organisation, the Reggio Emilia Australia Information Exchange.

The unprecedented world health crisis has precipitated the committee of REAIE to reflect upon our mission and vision, our values and the values that are inherent in the infant-toddler centres and preschools in Reggio Emilia. We will use these reflections as a compass to guide us in fulfilling our leadership responsibilities for our members and our responsibility to uphold the rights of children to continuity, hope and as Malaguzzi wrote, 'a nostalgia for the future'.

During this unsettling time, REAIE is going to make manifest a new relational pedagogical direction that we hope will uphold our values of citizenship, rights, listening, participation and solidarity. We recognise our responsibility during this time to support educators, families and children themselves. To that end, we are reimagining the way that we are going to offer professional learning in the new and unfamiliar times we find ourselves.

We acknowledge the emotion that is pervading our daily thoughts and would like to offer opportunities for exchange and dialogue by developing an online 'piazza'; a place to meet, connect and build relationships of solidarity and cohesion. We recognise the need for humankind to reflect on and mobilise the concepts and skills of kindness, empathy, trust, cohesion and courage. When we have mobilised these skills for ourselves, we can draw on these skills to renew hope and positivity in the daily lives of our children.

During the coming weeks and months, we will collaborate to offer new initiatives that will support educators to think innovatively and creatively about learning in an online environment. We know that some educators may feel apprehensive while others will be energised by the opportunity to reimagine learning in these uncertain times. REAIE will walk alongside you to support and explore your questions, your uncertainties and your innovative ideas. We invite you to collaborate with us to build a community within this online 'piazza' that we will create.

We are living in times of doubt and considerable uncertainty, and the committee and staff of REAIE are determined to support you and the children and families you work with during this uncertainty. We are committed to upholding the rights of children and every person to a future, an education, to safety and to good health and wellbeing during these turbulent times. We will do it together.