

Editorial

In this issue of the South African Journal of Childhood Education, the leading article by Catherine Snow reflects the current movement in childhood education research and practice. With the founding of the South African Research Association for Early Childhood Education (SARAECE), we enter a new phase in the research brief of practitioners and researchers; no one body of knowledge or of practice can address the need we have for knowledge regarding how children learn optimally and how best the adults around them can make sure that they do.

So, when Snow argues that we need interlocutors and scaffolders, she also argues that practice and research need to come together to inform and educate reciprocally. In a recent article in the weekly newspaper, *The Mail and Guardian*, I wrote about the encouraging way in which academics from over the country are standing together to find out what happens on the ground and in the trenches of childhood education and I made a plea for a zero tolerance attitude to the important status of Foundation Phase teachers. I wish to extend that plea in this issue for a similar stance towards the professional and community status of all practitioners who work with children. In the words of Catherine Snow, we need to learn with each other and distribute our cognitions.

This issue is evidence of how much dedicated research is happening, and without commenting on the work, one can see, at a glance, that childhood education is claiming its rightful place as a very important field of inquiry. The foundations for conceptual development are laid in these early years of schooling. Our future astrophysicists, who can populate the Square Kilometre Array telescope for which we are bidding so fervently, the social scientists who can find ways of healing our social fabric, the medical researchers who can find ways for HIV to be stalled in its destructive path, and the educational scholars who can find ways to best use our languages of teaching – all of them may be sitting in the very classes we are teaching the three Rs now.

The editorial board of this journal wishes to thank the authors who have donated their intellectual work to *SAJCE* before the journal has been accredited. I invite all readers and authors to look back in five years, when the journal will have been fully established and when it will be flourishing, to look back at the content lists of the first two issues and to salute the first authors for their generous work. Next year we should be accredited by the DHET and then we can only go from this strength to more strength.

Best wishes
Elbie Henning (Editor)