

him. Rather than address the contradictions, this book illustrates them and in some parts appears to show a lack of awareness of them. A student of special education would come away from much (but not all) of Part Three of the book confused as to why a section on including all learners should have such an emphasis on their identification and classification – even in one instance to the extent of supporting their segregation.

Ballard (cited by Chapman & Tunmer) argues that the crucial question that educators should ask is “How can I teach this child?”. Chapman and Tunmer point out that this makes the issue of teaching and the student’s learning needs the focus of attention. Not all the chapters offer such an approach. The book would have been improved if all the contributors in Part Three had made this their major emphasis.

Considering the almost perilous cross currents in which special education finds itself today, the editors should take some satisfaction from their success in raising the issue of inclusion. Finding a means of identifying special needs in a truly inclusive system demands a careful reframing of existing knowledge and practices to ensure contextual assessment and collaborative planning with regular class teachers. This book goes some way to meeting that demand.

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KEITH SULLIVAN. *The Anti-Bullying Handbook*. Melbourne, Auckland, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press (2000). 267 pp. NZ\$29.95 (ISBN 0-19-558388-4)

Bullying has been a hot topic in the media over the last decade. Schools have become increasingly sensitive to the issue and parents are no longer accepting it as just being part of growing up. While it is recognized that the behaviour is widespread and frequent surveys point to its pervasiveness, there have been few books that provide assistance in dealing with bullying. Dr Keith Sullivan, Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at Wellington’s Victoria University, has produced a very useful manual that should be a must in every school’s library and compulsory reading for teachers and school administrators.

A mark of the quality of the work is that it is one of only three general works identified and recommended in the recently updated Department for Education Anti-bully kit, ‘Don’t Suffer in Silence’ in the United Kingdom. Sullivan clearly has the support of the leading English-speaking anti-bullying expert Professor Peter Smith, who has not only led the development of

the English kit, but has also contributed a preface to *The Anti-Bullying Handbook*.

The handbook provides an excellent bridge between practitioner need and academic research. Sullivan gives us access to the large body of research material that has been developed over the last 20 years and details effective strategies to counter this behaviour. What appeals most is that the strategies are grounded in practice and are described in sufficient detail to make them useful for practising teachers.

In the introduction the author clearly spells out the fourfold purpose of the work:

1. To summarize what we know about bullying.
2. To provide a guide for schools for the development, implementation, and evaluation of effective anti-bullying philosophies, policies, and programmes.
3. To recommend anti-bullying programmes that deal effectively with bullying.
4. To support a culture of problem-solving that uses the scholarship and research information available but also taps into the knowledge and experience of those involved (including teaching and administrative staff, students and the wider community) in developing and implementing anti-bullying programmes.

Sullivan's approach is clear from this statement of purpose; it reflects the current successful approach to defeating bullying and avoids the pitfalls of promising short-term, easy solutions. While acknowledging that bullying is a complex problem that faces school children in schools all over the world, the handbook provides a succinct description of the key issues and offers common sense workable interventions to all those involved. Sullivan does emphasise that for any specific intervention to be effective, it must be accompanied by a genuine school-wide commitment to an anti-bullying ethos.

In line with the purpose statement, Sullivan has divided the handbook into four parts. The first provides detail on the nature and extent of bullying as uncovered by various researchers over the years. By posing and answering eight fundamental questions, the author is able to define bullying, detail the various forms the behaviour can take (racist bullying, sexual harassment etc.). Importantly he draws a distinction between bullying and criminal behaviour. Issues of school safety, the level of the problem in New Zealand, Australia and internationally, the relationship between gender and the behaviour are all explored. By delving into the scholarship and addressing the impact of bullying on victims, and the characteristics of participants, Sullivan ensures that even the casual reader is able to develop an empathy

for those caught up in bullying, thus enabling the reader to construct useful interventions.

Ever since Swedish academic Dan Olweus began investigating 'mobbing' (bullying) in Scandinavian schools in the 1970s, researchers all around the world have agreed that the most effective strategy to reduce the behaviour has been what is loosely called the Whole School Approach. Sullivan devotes the second part of the work to providing details on this approach. He stresses the need for inclusivity, ownership and agreement, providing schools with a blueprint for a development project that should result in reduced levels of bullying.

The third section of the book builds on the strategy detailed in the preceding section and looks at preventative measures schools can put in place that will reduce the opportunities for bullying to develop and or flourish. These are strongly rooted in good teaching practice. At one stage Sullivan encourages teachers to "tap into their experience and common sense" to help provide safe classrooms. There will be few parents or teachers who will dispute this sensible advice and for all practitioners this section provides a great opportunity for reflection on current practice.

The final section contains a wealth of detail on eight specific and tried interventions that schools can use as a response to the inevitable bullying that will occur. Drawn from a range of international settings, the interventions are clearly described and provide enough detail for their immediate adoption.

The book is well laid out and is visually appealing. The use of photographs to accompany the chapter headings is a nice touch and the extensive diagrams are clear and easy to follow. The cartoons provide an amusing diversion. The smaller than normal font size for the main text is disappointing. I was particularly impressed by the references. The indexing is thorough and the appendices were very useful. Of specific note was the listing of Internet resources, which provide many very interesting links. These all combine to ensure that the book is easy to use and work around, an essential ingredient for a reference work for busy teachers and school administrators. The content of the handbook is equally accessible and will allow schools to put in place some well-tried and successful strategies that have proven to be effective all around the world.

Sullivan's handbook is a real treasure. It succinctly provides the reader with a wealth of important and relevant information about bullying and more importantly then provides clear detail on how to protect our schools and classrooms from the behaviour. It would be hoped that educational authorities in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States and elsewhere make this handbook available to all schools, thus following the lead of their

English counterparts who bankrolled the development of the 'Don't Suffer in Silence' resource kit.

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Further information about *The Anti-Bullying Handbook* can be found at: <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/education/anti-bullying>

HELEN MAY. *Politics in the Playground: The world of early childhood in post-war New Zealand*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books with the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (2001). 310 pp. NZ\$39.95 (ISBN 1-877242-18-7)

This thoughtful history of early childhood in New Zealand encapsulates the essence of the development of early childhood services, and related pedagogical and political swings, during the period from 1947 to 2000. It is a sequel to *The Discovery of Early Childhood* in which the author examines the concepts of care and education in institutions in Europe and New Zealand (May, 1997). The cover photograph of *Politics in the Playground*, taken in 1987, is in synchrony with the storyline of the book. Juxtaposed in the photograph is an infant (the author's) on a swing, observed by the Prime Minister at the time, Rt. Hon. David Lange, during his visit to a childcare centre in Hamilton, New Zealand. The book outlines and analyses the post-Second World War campaign in New Zealand for state support of preschool/early childhood education. Helen May introduces it this way:

At the heart of this campaign are the see-saws, swings and roundabouts in a seeming playground of political, educational and social opinion on the best place for the rearing and education of young children, and a century of emancipation of women from the confines of the home. The politics of this new world of early childhood impacted on homes, schools, communities and workplaces. Its story provides new insights into the major social, ideological, economic and political changes that characterised the twentieth century. (p. 1)

The book is carefully structured into three chronological and thematic parts. Part one focuses on *Growth and Expectation* during the 1940s to 1960s. It addresses the "psychology of freedom", including the concept of understanding children through observing play, and the emergence of playcentres (New Zealand parent co-operative early childhood centres with a parent education component), free play at kindergartens and "permissive parenting". It elaborates on "the psychology of disorder", encompassing contemporary