# Co-Editors' Introduction to the November 2026 Issue

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We are pleased to introduce the second issue of the *International Critical Childhood Policy Studies* journal for 2026. The journal is thriving, with the publication of two issues each year and the addition of the Critical Essays section (Beth Blue Swadener and Mark Nagasawa) including four essays in this issue covering ideas of self-advocacy, teaching of reading, the complexities of 'caring alongside,' and concerns of safety and education for girls in Northern Nigeria. We have also re-engaged the Children's Voices and Perspectives section with new section editors, Dana Frantz Bentley, Kerry-Ann Escayg, and Oona Fontanella-Nothom. In this issue, they offer their introduction and a call for essays for a future issue. Providing a space for children's views and voices has been a goal of the journal and we welcome this renewed section.

Additionally, we are encouraging independent submissions and planning to publish these regularly under a new Independent Articles section. With several additions of new sections, a strong editorial board, and a consistent publication cycle, we are continuing to expand our readership and are grateful for the creativity, depth, and passion of our authors, special issue editors, reviewers, and editorial board members.

Given this growth, we are indebted to founding co-editors Gaile Sloan Canella and Marianne (Mimi) Bloch for their vision to create an open access international journal focused specifically on critical childhood policy. Though the number of open access journals has grown, in 2008 the ICCPS was unique and indicative of a commitment to access and equity from the founders. Reflecting on the body of work of critical and postmodern theory oriented early childhood/childcare scholars, ICCPS, and the Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education group, Dr. (Mimi) Bloch wrote:

> It has been vital to provide a space for intellectual critique and new visions of what might be questioned or perhaps what ought to be in this field…Levinas (1969) in Totality and Infinity suggested that listening to the other—to begin to know the other—is paramount. When does our "expertise" give us the authority to speak truth to/for others? But when is this not the case? I am not suggesting that any of us should be, or could be, silent in the face of injustice--for to not speak or act is also

> a form of violence. But could we use our research, writing, speaking, and actions to listen more, and then to form more strategic, powerful alliances and actions? (Bloch, *International Critical Childhood Policy Studies journal*, (2023) Vol. 10(1), 23-27).

This 2026 Fall special issue offers poignant reminders of how and why the work of RECE and the ICCPS journal offer support for crucial connections in chaotic moments. Applying this 'act of listening' is present in the first article of the special issue in Rawinia Mihaka's "A Heartfelt Kōrero" as she "walk[s] backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past" (p. 1). This notion offers a connective kinship thread from RECE founder's insights (Bloch, 2023) blended with current activist work and a call to action in this special issue.

Serendipitously, this issue is published in conjunction with the RECE 2026 conference centering local knowledge and experience (Aotearoa/New Zealand) as a foundation for connection and relationship across difference. As Mimi suggests, listening is not passive, and the scholarship shared in this issue outlines the complexity of activism. As the special editors of this issue note there is a need for friction, as "differences invigorate social mobilizations" (Lowenhaupt Tsing, 2005, p. 245).

Specifically, the special issue editors Mark Nagasawa, Brooke Richardson, and Kate MacCrimmon welcomed manuscripts exploring "Early Years Policy and Activism: Signs of Hope in Im/possible Times." Framing their collection of articles using a 'praxis of Public Narrative' toward the 'healing potential of collective liberatory action' allows the reader to consider their own stories of frustration toward action and healing. After impressive personal sharing culminating in the story of the group coalescing, the issue continues to explore three areas of focus: The Personal is Political is Historical, Personal Activism by and for the Adults in Children's Lives, and Intergenerational Activism.

As the special issue editor's note in their introduction, "the contributors show us ways of combatting this malaise, of transforming anger, frustration, and despair into actions by dreaming, creating care collectives that inspire what Beth Swadener calls 'insurgent optimism,' and celebrating co-conspiratorial works." Perhaps reading the articles, stories, and essays bound in this issue is also an act of listening.

Finally, we are grateful to the new and continuing Editorial Board for their commitment to the work of the journal and support for emerging scholars and critical, progressive work as global shifts in politics, climate, culture, and context continue to escalate. As a journalistic entity we meet annually and are reminded of the connection across experiences in support of understanding toward justice in global early years contexts. The editorial board meeting will be hybrid and occur during the RECE conference in Aotearoa New Zealand 20-24 November. In conclusion, we offer thanks to Mimi, for trusting our team of editors to carry on this work. Readers know Mimi through her scholarship, activism, leadership, and decades of accomplishments; however, personally, her thoughtful texts, invitations to gatherings, and belief in our voices in the field of ECE bring connection and richness to life. We are listening.