

Libby Davy - Resume

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Skills & Experience

Research, writing and editing to a broad range of briefs, project management, strategic planning, issues and trends analysis, business development (including childcare) and management. Other skills include: interpersonal, intrapersonal, facilitation, coaching, public speaking, media relations, photography, new media (websites, email lists, etc), employee relations, government relations, organisational change, community consultation. Tertiary educated in communications and stakeholder relations. Practiced (then taught) in these areas since 1990 - in private, community, government and corporate settings.

Community Work

Have undertaken voluntary roles to help progress understanding and capacities in the areas of:

Peace & reconciliation	Media literacy & ownership
Sustainable business	Environmental issues
Conscious consumerism	Birth choices
Community development	Children's & parents rights
Indigenous issues	Diversity

Organisations and projects established &/or assisted include:

- Community Midwifery (WA) – Strategic facilitation.
- Birth Choices (South West) – Co-founder.
- Maternity Coalition – Member and activist.
- Sustainable Business Network (Aust.) - Co-founder, www.barkingowl.com/sustainable
- Dalai Lama in Australia 2002 – Social documentation photographer.
- International TV Turn Off Week 2000 – Co-ordinated Australian campaign.
- The Big Love Gift Guide 1999-2004 – Developed this conscious consumerism website.
- ANTAR (WA) – Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation, founding member.
- Cliff Street Publishing 1993-1999 – publishing new Australian fiction.

Employment

Nov 1998 – present Barking Owl Pty Ltd, Director (Perth/Fremantle & Margaret River)

Barking Owl is the vehicle for our paid work and activism. Naturally, Barking Owl has two wings in order to fly. COMMUNICATIONS WING (Libby) – Consultancy, coaching and project management in communications and business development. TECHNOLOGY WING (Graeme Sutherland, my life and work partner) - Technology consultancy & software development.

In the last 18 months my work has focussed on establishing a progressive, community-inspired local Early Learning Centre in South Fremantle. See attached information.

Communications clients in the past have included: Awesome International Children's Festival, National Native Title Tribunal, Dept of Conservation & Land Management, Curtin Business School, WA Farmers Federation, Telstra, ABC Broadcasting Corporation, Solutions Magazine.

1995 – 1999 Curtin University, Business School. Tutor & Guest Lecturer (Stakeholder Relations)

1995 – 1996 Edith Cowan University, School of English. Tutor & Guest Lecturer (“ “)

1991 – 1997 Roles in consultancy and in-house communications in Perth, Melbourne, Jakarta & London. Employers included: self-employed (2 years), Fremantle Arts Centre (6 months), Porter Novelli consultants (2 years), Rene Gordon Publishing (6 months) and BankWest (1 year).

Formal Education (Selected)

Role of the Atelierista (Art Teacher) with Infants, Toddlers & Preschoolers
Patricia Hunter-McGrath (Evergreen School, California USA)
August 2004, Bold Park Community School

Reggio Children Advanced Study Tour – Infant Toddler Centres & Preschools
October 2003, Reggio Emilia, Italy

An Introduction to the Reggio Emilia Approach
June 2003, Meerilinga Children’s Foundations

Bachelor of Arts (Media Studies & Public Relations)
1987 – 1991 Edith Cowan University

Bachelor of Arts (Communication Studies)
1985 - 1986 Murdoch University (transferred to ECU)

Travel Experiences

Australia (lived in the South West for 3 years, travelled extensively around the country including rural and remote areas), Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Italy, United Kingdom, Greece, Denmark, Spain, Caribbean, France. Have stayed with local families on many occasions.

Interests

Children, healthy communities, social justice, politics, spirituality, the positive potential of business, the positive potential of people, food, conversation, reading, bush walking, creative writing, art and photography.

Family

Married to Graeme Sutherland with one child (Bea) who is 3.5 years. Hope to have more!

Knowledge, experience and a commitment to the provision of quality child care, education and recreation services for children 0 – 6 and/or 6-13 years.

- Became a mother to Bea Davy-Sutherland in January 2001 (she is now 3.5 and in Long Day Care 2 days a week). Began looking closely at early learning including Steiner and Montessori methods.
- November 2001. Took Bea and my niece to The Hundred Languages of Children exhibition at WA Museum (Reggio Emilia touring exhibition supported by Meerilinga). Blown away! Began studying the Reggio approach.
- First accessed regular Long Day childcare in Margaret River 2002. Tried two centres. Ended up at a centre set up the year before by a friend and began to ‘understudy’ her.
- Travelled to Melbourne Mid-2002 and continued looking at childcare centres as a parent/consumer/researcher (occasional Long Day Care).
- Moved to Fremantle February 2003 and started looking for a suitable Long Day Care Centre. Looked closely at 8 centres within a 10 minute radius. Managed to secure one day a week at a good quality centre – International ELC. The Director of this multi-cultural centre has mentored me since mid-2003.
- May 2003. Resolved to set-up a Reggio Inspired (Social Constructivist) childcare centre in the Fremantle area.
 - Began looking more closely at the Reggio approach.
 - Read extensively.
 - Completed Meerilinga short-course in Reggio Emilia practice in childcare and early learning settings in 2003.
 - Member of the Reggio Emilia Information Exchange Australia (REIEA).
 - Australian delegate on the Advanced Study Tour to Reggio Emilia, Italy in 2004. Acceptance into program required demonstration of significant reading, education and experience.
 - Published an article in “Challenges” the REIEA national journal – “Reggio & Buddhism” reflecting on the study tour.
- Began meeting regularly with local parents all around the area to find out what they were looking for in high quality childcare – in the park, at playgroups and cafes and swimming lessons, over heartfelt emails. It got to the point at one stage where I started avoiding playgrounds as there were so many parent’s wanting to share their experiences and get on our waiting list.
 - *It always delights and still surprises me how quickly and fully contemporary parents can open up to each other, particularly when their children are around the same age. It does not seem uncommon to be swapping birth stories with a complete stranger in a supermarket queue!*

- Began working with Erudite early learning consultants at the Nedlands Early Learning Centre, social workers, child care workers, Meerilinga and many others to develop our thinking and plans.
- Began researching the community and business development required to sustain a “Centre for Excellence” in child care over many generations within the local community.
 - I attended Lance Holt School in Fremantle during my primary years and my family has a long association with the local community. This seems important as a proponent for the kind of model we are evolving.
 - I have also attended State and Private primary and secondary schools and believe I have a good ability to mix with people from all walks of life. I have had a variety of educational experiences because of this (from Lance Holt to PLC!) and am adaptable.
 - Began researching and writing about the issue of Corporatisation of Childcare as a shareholder in Australian Ethical Investments, as co-founder of the Sustainable Business Network (Aust.), as a childcare consumer and as a would-be childcare operator.

My life/business partner Graeme Sutherland and I have an application in to the City of Fremantle seeking planning approval to renovate two disused buildings in South Fremantle, near our home, to develop a 62 place community-inspired, sustainably operated Early Learning (childcare) centre funded by a private business structure. Bea and any future children would attend until Grade One.

We have 70 families on the waiting list and have been assisted by a groundswell of local support. There is high demand, a lack of places and a narrow spectrum of choice in styles of care in the area. We hope it will be open by January 2004.

We believe that the implications of our research and experience would have relevance beyond the local area. It is a hard job to try and do what we are doing. We would like to share any benefit from this process with others. We would also like to ensure equity of access for all people needing or wanting to access high quality childcare – wherever they live and whatever their situation.

Understanding of contemporary issues in the care, education and welfare of children in childcare.

See above. My fundamental interest is in causal pathways, which is why my previous community work has looked at birth choices and why my work is now focused on establishing childcare centres that not only look after but educate children, which not only give parents peace of mind but involvement in the daily life of the centre and access to each other and to support from staff members who are knowledgeable and compassionate and have some counselling skills. The Reggio Emilia experience seems to be of great relevance. Not to replicate but to be inspired by.

As a parent currently accessing childcare, I have experienced first hand what it feels like to try and find a good centre, to trust the staff and other children, to weigh up the pro's and con's, to have your child wrenched from you as you guiltily lope off to work, peering around the corner to see if she has settled. It's not easy, and I think it could be easier.

I am aware that people come from different backgrounds in terms of culture, race, religion, economic status, level of parent's education, physical abilities and prior life experiences.

I am aware that for some people, childcare is seen as a necessary evil and guilt ensues. I am aware for others it is the best way to make sure their child is fed and out of way during daily struggle. I am aware that for some it is a simple and satisfying service they think little about.

I am aware that for most single parents childcare is a life-saver, just to get a break, study or earn some money. I am aware that for others it allows both parents to balance work/study and parenting and in so doing, enhances their own wellbeing, self esteem and income.

People's reasons for accessing childcare do vary greatly. But it would have to be pretty universal that they want it to be as good as possible at a price they can afford. The challenge of the Advisory Committee would seem to be to provide that in an equitable and accessible way. I would like to be able to help achieve that.

I am also aware that my parent's generation looked at things very differently and that many of them are still in power.

I believe that expecting mothers to just stay at home will not solve the issue. It's about the life/work balance – for men and women. And a whole lot more.

I believe that we need to raise the post regarding quality and access. Maria Montessori, Gardner, Piaget, the Reggio Emilia educators and other leading educators and thinkers of our times never intended the profound implications of their work to become the exclusive domain of affluent children. We cannot ignore the vital importance of the early years in creating positive causal pathways for children and families throughout life. We need to find the ways and means to ensure all our children get the best possible start in life. We need to be powerful advocates. In WA we already have one of the most powerful advocates the Country has seen in a long time – Professor Fiona Stanley. What a great tradition.

I believe we need to listen to parents, children and childcare workers a whole lot more before we jump to any conclusions.

**I have the ability to represent the following interests
(eg. parents, children with additional needs, Aboriginal families, child care workers, families with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, rural and remote, business, employers etc.)**

Children and their parents

- Metro – I was born in Perth and have lived here most of my life. My family have been here for several generations in the City, Wheat Belt and South West.

- Rural – to some degree. Lived in Margaret River for three years and networked with parents, midwives and children throughout the South West due to Birth Choices South West being formed. Also through a vast number of relatives in the South West. Have colleagues, friends and relations living throughout the State.
- Parents from a wide variety of backgrounds and work/study environments (see below). I am a gregarious networker and love meeting new people and hearing about their stories and experiences.

Childcare operators & childcare workers

- Although we have not yet opened our Centre, I have consulted widely and researched our plans in depth and detail.

Employers

- See above.

Business

- Have owned a micro-business, worked in and consulted to small, medium and corporate environments. Have also taught business at a tertiary level.