

Resource reviews

'Involving Fathers in Early Childhood Services' website

review by Phillip Rowell

This website helps child care professionals to explore the inclusion of fathers by posing the following questions:

- Which fathers are currently included in the activities of your centre or service?
- Do fathers experience your service as respectful of their fathering role, and is your service recognised as an advocate for father-child connection?
- Are fathers from diverse backgrounds represented among those who do access the service?
- Do recruitment of staff and staff development processes support the building of a mixed gender workforce competent to engage with fathers?

The website provides information on training and a link to resources which support the inclusion of fathers in service operations and children's experiences. 'Fathers' may be defined as either biological or social, meaning that men who are 'father figures' such as uncles, grandfathers, brothers or other elders can be valued and included in father-focused programs. The 'Tools' and 'Competencies' sections of the website encourage services to develop strategies to involve fathers, which includes child care professionals assessing their skills, knowledge and attitudes towards their perceptions of masculinity and fatherhood.

Developed by Good Beginnings Australia and the Family Action Centre at the University of Newcastle, the information is early childhood

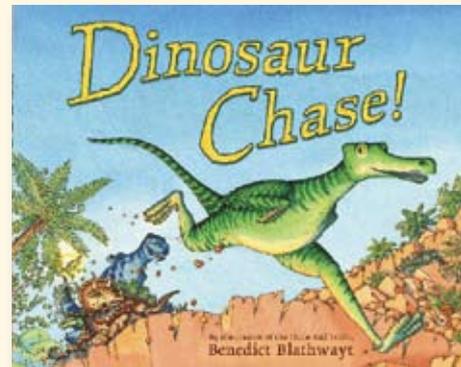


focused. However, child care professionals working in school age care settings will also find the information on this website valuable ■

www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/fac/efp/nifty/index.html

Dinosaur Chase!

review by Lauren Boyle



An issue children may face throughout their childhood, especially during their schooling years, is bullying. *Dinosaur Chase!* broaches this sensitive subject and discusses bullying and resilience in a straightforward manner, presented with colourful and engaging illustrations.

The story focuses on Fin the dinosaur who, while playing with friends, is interrupted by four bullies who are larger, stronger dinosaurs. Teased for his wimpy appearance, and chased through various landscapes by the bullies, Fin manages to triumph over adversity by using the very attributes they teased him about – his spindly legs, knobby ankles, bony tail, spiky claws and fluffy arms.

Full page colour illustrations are detailed and encourage young readers to engage with the story and its themes. This book is great for raising the issue of bullying while communicating the importance of self-esteem and embracing each person's unique talents and skills. Older children will also enjoy the themes of adventure, action and heroism as Fin discovers how to outwit the bullies.

Using familiar species of dinosaurs in its illustrations, this book may also entice dinosaur lovers and enrich activities with an animal and evolution focus as it includes dinosaur facts at the end of the book ■

Blathway, B. (2006). *Dinosaur Chase!* London: Random House Children's Books.