



For more information, check out [www.centralkids.org.nz](http://www.centralkids.org.nz)

Central Kids Early Education offers a child-led, community-focused and learning through play approach, with about 500 team members at 49 kindergartens and 8 early learning centres throughout Waikato and Bay of Plenty.

Central Kids offers a child-led, learning through play philosophy that enables children to grow at their own pace, socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively (thinking creatively, problem solving, decision making).

Central Kids has an excellent team culture and a focus on professional development.

**BECOMING AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TEACHER**

**Type of person**

- Dynamic
- Committed
- Team player
- Patient
- Determined
- Passionate about making a difference to tamariki and whānau

**Qualifications**

You will need a qualification in ECE teaching from an approved tertiary provider. This could be a Graduate Diploma in Teaching or a Bachelor of Teaching (ECE).

To find out more about this sector, profiles of young people like you in the industry, and career tools and tips...

*scan here* →



**JELENA KIDD**  
ECE TEACHER



The FutureForce® Crew sat down with Jelena to chat about her role...

**- WHAT FIRST INTERESTED YOU IN THIS CAREER?**

I love children, of course, and when I was younger my mother was a home-based early childhood education teacher. When I was at high school I got involved in helping Mum with the childrens' learning stories on the computer.

**- WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT THIS ROLE?**

I love it all! I especially enjoy watching the children develop and grow. Development in children before the age of two is my big passion. I also enjoy teaching and mentoring ECE students and encouraging others to find their passion in teaching. I like the fact that we become extended whānau to children. I have one student who calls me his Kindy Mum. That's really special.

**TOP CAREER TIP**

**THE WORLD NEEDS INTROVERTS AND EXTROVERTS – THERE'S A PLACE FOR EVERYONE – BUT IT'S ALWAYS IMPORTANT TO BE WILLING TO LEARN. YOU WILL NEVER STOP LEARNING AND THOSE WITH A REAL DRIVE FOR LEARNING WILL GO A LONG WAY.**

**- WHAT IS ONE MYTH ABOUT THIS CAREER YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISPEL?**

Some people tend to think that ECE teachers are just glorified babysitters. That's a huge misconception. This is a profession just like any other and it's a big responsibility. We are teaching the world's future doctors, engineers, scientists, artists... everyone really! We have professional standards and ECE is actually very academic.

**JELENA KIDD**  
ECE TEACHER



**- WHAT SORT OF QUALITIES DO YOU NEED FOR THIS LINE OF WORK?**

Patience, determination, resilience and a real drive for learning and upskilling. You also need to be adaptable and to be able to think on your feet! You never know what's going to happen from moment to moment. We need introverts and extroverts – there's a place for them both - but you do need to be a "people person"!

**- WHAT SCHOOL SUBJECTS DO YOU FIND USEFUL?**

All of them! We teach broadly when children are young, so everything is useful. One subject I would like to have studied more at school, looking back, is Te Ao Māori and Te Reo... we use these every day and it's an integral part of who we are here.

**- WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER AMBITIONS?**

My practise is based on creating safe, healthy relationships with children, community and whaanau. I would like to increase my mentoring of ECE students and eventually become a supervisor. I am an advocate of ECE as an academic profession so this is important to me as well.



**A DAY ON THE JOB**

**7.30am**

Arrive at work, knowing no day is ever the same and literally anything could happen! Start the day by greeting tamariki and whānau.

**8.30am**

Our philosophy is very child-centric, so the children really guide what happens throughout the day... they might want to craft, read or run around outside. They may want messy or physical or imaginative play... really their imagination is their limit – and yours!

**10am**

Could be kai time but, again, this is guided by the tamariki. They eat when they want to eat and will come and ask. We follow their rhythms.

**10.30am**

Mahinga-kai (literally meaning 'to work the food') is a big part of our centre and our community. The children are involved in gardening and we all cultivate our garden to feed our children, whaanau and community. This process supports our children to learn about sustainability.

**1pm**

I spend about two hours a week on admin tasks, like completing tamariki learning stories, portfolios or planning. I could also be doing something like making a wall display.

**3pm**

Mentoring and supporting ECE students might also be part of my day. This is why I completed my Certificate in Adult Teaching.

**3.30pm**

Farewelling children, as their caregivers come to collect them, helping with clean up and handing over to staff who will be closing at 5.30pm – never knowing what tomorrow will bring!