

Te Whakaahu Hautūtanga

Advanced Leadership

A programme for women in education.

“ I now introduce myself as Amy, Centre Owner and Leader, not just Amy from Cust Preschool...I wish I'd done it sooner. ”

Needs and challenges

With her primary teaching background, Amy felt disconnected from the early childhood sector, “even after six years” of owning and leading Cust Preschool. She was torn between further study and doing something “just for me”. As a programme for women in leadership, Advanced Leadership appealed, “it drew me in straight away”.

Amy liked that the programme was holistic, and centred around values-based leadership. Her aim was to “silence my inner critic”, resolving the self doubt she had about her ability. Committing to Advanced Leadership allowed her to dedicate time to personal and professional development. As someone who never put herself first, she felt particularly “indulgent”, but also very excited.

Key expectations

- Validation and confidence in own ability
- A holistic approach to leadership
- Engagement with other early childhood leaders



Amy Blatch

Centre Owner and Leader
Cust Preschool

Tūwhitia te hopo!

*Feel the fear and do
it anyway!*

Programme experience

Supporting her own children through learning from home during lockdown contributed to Amy feeling comfortable with the programme's online delivery. It was easier to fit into her busy schedule and eliminated the need to travel from her semi-rural home.

Initially Amy was “nervous about the delivery” and “dreaded the idea of writing essays”, but found herself pleasantly surprised. She discovered that she enjoyed the mixture of delivery styles, including webinars, online learning content and peer mentoring. The latter was extremely valuable, and it was “affirming to see people like me”. Advanced Leadership caters to leaders experiencing many different journeys and Amy realised she “wasn't the only one on an unconventional' pathway”.

During the programme, Amy felt “challenged by all the layers of learning” but supported to “work through the uncomfortable feeling”. She highlighted the incredible professionalism and manaakitanga from the facilitators. The evening webinars were engaging, and left her feeling energised afterwards.

Learning development highlights

Amy's learning journey has continued beyond the six-month programme. Advanced Leadership provided “accessible bits of content” she “could grab when needed”. When facing a challenge in her centre, she regularly revisits her notes, locating a strategy she is able to use “in a way that works for me”.

The programme has also impacted Amy's teaching team and the tamariki at Cust Preschool. She notes a positive shift that's been created, within the distributed leadership model in the preschool. Amy has become more open to seeking assistance, with feedback from her fellow leaders affirming “when you ask us for help, it shows you trust us”.

Understanding all the different communication and learning styles among her staff has also had a positive impact. Teachers are communicating better with each other, utilising their own strengths, ultimately resulting in better outcomes for ākonga. “Now children are getting the best from each teacher, every day”.



Key takeaways

- A personal, substantial collection of notes to refer back to
- A massive sense of pride and confidence
- Feeling calm during busy times – “a calm leader results in calm for everyone”

Learn more: leadership@core-ed.ac.nz | core-ed.org/AL21

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