Te Whakaahu Hautūtanga
Advanced Leadership
A programme for women in education.

“With Covid, everything was turned upside down, and it was the ideal time to reinvent my role”

Needs and challenges

With over 30 years experience in early childhood education, and involvement in the leadership of her local Kāhui Ako, Liz joined the Advanced Leadership programme with a “desire to improve” her leadership skills. Leading a great team of kaiako, Liz found herself asking “what can I do for them?”. She wanted to add new strategies to her kete and “learn different ways of being and doing”.

For Liz, it was essential to find professional development that fit around her busy schedule — Advanced Leadership appealed as the evening webinars didn’t impact “teacher time”. As things had been “turned upside down with Covid-19”, she saw it as “a great time for reinvention”.

Key expectations

• Conflict resolution strategies
• Momentum and a fresh perspective of the role
• Gain confidence in self, to be like other Kāhui Ako leaders

Liz Lupton
Lead Teacher
Northcote Baptist Community Preschool

Ko Rimutaka te maunga
Ko Kairangi te awa
Nō Whakatiki ahau
Ko Lupton tōku whānau
Ko Elizabeth tōku ingoa
Programme experience

Advanced Leadership helped Liz build a network of support around her. Participants across Aotearoa kept in regular contact through the online forum and a group chat. She formed an especially close relationship with the two others in her peer mentoring trio. They were able to “look after each others’ wellbeing” in a year when leaders were “required to give a lot to their communities”. Used to face-to-face connections, Liz was surprised at how well she was able to connect with others in an online environment.

By completing programme mahi in her evenings and weekends, Liz was easily able to work it into her schedule. She described the programme facilitators as “knowledgeable and supportive, encouraging and professional”. The Advanced Leadership programme provided the “push needed to continue to grow as a leader”.

Learning development highlights

A significant highlight for Liz was working with the younger leaders on the programme, “seeing their skill, passion and a fresh perspective”. She described the support between the participants as “amazing”.

One key strategy she took away was the GROW Model for mentoring and coaching her team and student teachers at her centre. The programme created a “safe environment to practice new skills in”. With plenty of new strategies and ideas to try, Liz now feels she can “face conflict head on”.

Eight months on, her adaptive leadership challenge to “make bicultural practice ‘underpin who I am’, not just ‘something we do’” is still ongoing. Liz sees the benefits as far-reaching, not just for her as an individual, but shared with the other kaiako she works with, as well as tamariki. She notes that changing behaviour from kaiako is reflected in the children. Tamariki (mostly of Asian and immigrant backgrounds) are “starting to see themselves as bicultural Kiwis” and embracing te ao Māori.

Key takeaways

- Seeing bicultural practice in a whole different light
- More confidence to contribute in Kāhui Ako group
- A “toolbox of different strategies” for dealing with conflict

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