

A TRIBUTE TO JANENE SWALWELL

I first met the beautiful, Janene Swalwell when I was working for ECIA Vic/Tas over ten years ago ...



Janene was a Psychologist and passionate early childhood advocate, who spent her entire career dedicated to supporting early childhood educators, children and their families, particularly within the fields of early childhood intervention, social & emotional development and positive behaviour support. Janene was also a persistent champion for equity and inclusion for young children and their families.

Janene was also a nature enthusiast who ran an animal shelter at her home in the Dandenongs. Often meetings with Janene included a baby wombat or wallaby swaddled on her lap as she attended to the tiny creatures feeding needs while not missing a beat within the conversation.

I believe Janene's legacy in a professional capacity will be her marvellous achievements born of her passion, drive and commitment. Janene was a 'doer', a 'mover and shaker' who reflected on what was needed and sought to provide this in whatever way, shape or form possible. These professional achievements include acting as ECIA Vic/Tas President, initiating the Psychology and Early Childhood Intervention Group, advocating on behalf of the early childhood sector with the Association for Positive Behaviour Support Australia and introducing early childhood programs to Australia such as the Parent Child Mother Goose Program (PCMGP).

Over the years, Janene and I worked on many projects together, Janene leading the way and me following behind with my eclectic set of skills, attempting to help bring her vision to life.



In 2011 Janene first brought Dr Mary Louise Hemmeter to Australia to begin training Australian educators in the Pyramid Model, then known as the Teaching Pyramid. Not only was I struck by the potential of the model from a professional perspective, I could also see how early childhood professionals using the model could have made a difference to my daughter's mainstream kindergarten experience which was often extremely fraught due to her complex needs being born with Down Syndrome and her later diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Dr Hemmeter helped Janene set up the first Pyramid Model research project in Australia and has visited us on a regular basis over the years. We are thrilled she will be visiting again in October to run new training with our team and the early childhood community.

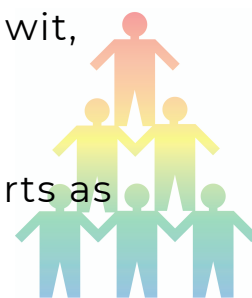
In 2019 Janene and I established the not for profit organisation, Pyramid Model Australia (PMA), together with our beautiful colleagues Sue Brear, Sara Stockman and Jenny Urbano. Janene drove the PMA team forward with determination and enthusiasm but also with a gentleness we will always cherish.

We are comforted knowing the ripples of her impact and influence will continue to be felt in the coming years.

The PMA team feels so fortunate to have known and worked closely with Janene over the years, as I'm sure many of her past colleagues and students would attest to. So many of us benefitted greatly from her kind, valuable and learned mentorship. Janene was an inspiration to all that met her, her presence always enriching her community with warmth, wit, passion and intellect.

We will miss you Janene, and always carry you in our hearts as we continue our work in the light of your memory.

Andrea and the PMA Team, Sara, Sue and Jenny.
2022



PYRAMID MODEL
AUSTRALIA