



**National Institute of Labour Studies  
Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia**

GPO Box 2100, Adelaide, South Australia 5001

Tel: +61 8 8201 2265 Fax: +61 8 8276 9060

[www.flinders.edu.au/nils](http://www.flinders.edu.au/nils)



**To Whom It May Concern,**

Between June 2006 and March 2007, I conducted an action research project (with Ann Hefferan and the centre directors) on the implementation of the Listening to Children strategy into three childcare centres. Publication of the research is in progress. The research involved interviewing twenty early childhood educators and three directors, conducting focus groups with three Listening to Children parent groups, and observing staff-child interactions within the centres. Based on this research, I have been asked by Community Transformations to provide a testimonial of Listening to Children.

The data gathered through this process indicates that Listening to Children is of great benefit to children's emotional wellbeing, particularly in dealing with issues around separation, transition, or challenging behaviours such as biting. For the centres this resulted in being able to offer an environment that was calm, secure and enjoyable for the children. For the parents this meant that they had higher levels of confidence in the centre and, for those who used the Listening to Children strategies, better connections with their children. Where Listening to Children worked best was when children had consistency in the approach through both the centres and in their home environment. The parent groups were an important forum for learning how to become 'better' parents: to connect with their children and have more loving relationships, to make time for their children, to empower their children to make good choices and take responsibility; and to discipline their children within a supportive and nurturing framework.

Yours sincerely

Dr Debra King  
Senior Research Associate