On the 30th September to the 2nd October, I was lucky enough to be sponsored by the Teachers Registration Board to attend the ASME 30th National Conference. It was a wonderful experience not only for changing my teaching practices but also awakening a renewed appreciation for the power of music. As an early childhood teacher with no musical background, I attended the conference thinking I would magically become more musical. I actually got much more.

After listening to the opening key note speaker Graham Welsh, I realised my kindergarten program is enriched with musical experience through which children learn every day. I will continue to promote such experiences, even though not perfect, after being inspired by Graham’s research and wonderful video.

On Thursday I attended a workshop by John Heyworth that explored the importance of our own childhood experiences with music. For me, some of my most positive memories from primary school involve whole group singing times whereby the school came together for song. Since attending the conference, my centre has now started a whole centre singing time on Music Mondays that includes babies through to the kindy children. So far it has been a huge success with each room taking a turn to host the session.

Thursday was also a highlight as I got to listen to the fantastic and enthusiastic Graham Gill who awakened a new appreciation for the music teacher in me. As an early childhood educator I will now be advocating for those schools who do have trained music teachers on board and encourage parents to consider those schools. Each year I hold information nights for school transition and I will now share this new found appreciation at these nights.

The conference sadly had to come to a close but not before I had the opportunity to attend a workshop specifically designed for ECT’s (it was a long wait but worth it). The workshop was called Jam on Toast: new songs, dances and creative recipes for children and was presented by James Madsen. This workshop was fun, energetic and hands-on and left me with many new techniques to introduce to my children. I have already begun implementing instruments with story and dance. The children look forward to our new music sessions each day.
In conclusion, I again thank the TRB for the great opportunity to attend this inspiring conference. As an ECT I gained knowledge and skills to promote my development as a high quality teacher which affects my everyday practise. The conference on a personal level awakened a new found appreciation for the wonderful work and practice of music teachers and how important their continued work is. Thank you.