

Parent Newsletter

Welcome back to Term 2, 2011!



Dates to remember are:

- Term 2: Sessions begin **Monday 2 May**
- Parent Focus Group Week: **30 May- 3 June**; 10.30 am morning session, 1pm afternoon session. The last few Focus groups have been very successful and feedback indicates that most of you want to continue to have time together, getting to know other families in your session, sharing a coffee and chatting. So this will continue- remember the staff will care for the children so sessions are a bit different for that week.
- ESW workshop: **Friday 24 June, 12.30-2.30 pm**
- Hanen 'More Than Words' Programme for Parents with Children with Autism/Social Communication Difficulties finishes **8th June**.
- Last session this term **Friday 15 July**. Term 3 starts 1 August.
- True Colours is a Charitable Trust that support children and young people living with chronic, serious or life threatening illness and their families. Kim Hurrell, a True Colours staff member, facilitates an informal morning tea at McKenzie Centre once a term where all parents and caregivers are welcome to discuss any issues, support and spend time with other parents. If Friday is not your usual session come in anyway- you are very welcome. Staff are available to care for the children. **Friday 1st July at 10:30am.**

Happy Mothers Day to all the Mum's- we hope you have a truly lovely day. All of the staff are truly inspired by what you Mum's do every day and want you to know how special you are!

Staff news

Changes to staff working days:

Ruth Michels, Assistant Technology Specialist, will now be in for Tuesday, Thursday and Friday sessions.

Trust news

When Helen took over the role of Business Manager, resigning from the Trust, Nan Jensen took up the role of Community Representative. At the same time Justine Grant and Raewyn Risi, both Wednesday session parents, joined the Trust as Parent Representatives. Here are their introductions:

Justine Grant

I am a stay at home mother of four year old twins James and Emily. James has attended the centre since early 2008 and we have appreciated the reassurance and guidance the McKenzie Centre provides to both the children and to their parents. As a family of a child with special needs, we understand how important education, support and advice is during their ongoing development and value all that the Centre aims to achieve in progressing the children and their families.

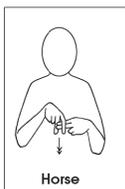
Raewyn Risi

Raewyn is married to Steve and they are dairy farming at Maungatautari, just south of Cambridge. Raewyn is busy with a school aged girl, a 4yr old boy who attends McKenzie Centre and a very active younger dynamo girl. The McKenzie Centre staff have become part of the extended family since first visiting in 2007. We are extremely passionate

about the level of care and expertise our special needs kids require and are extremely grateful to be part of the unique and wonderful Centre.

General News

Building Plans: After serious discussion and planning the Trust has approved altering the current building. We have plans to extend the building to give more space for play areas, family/whanau room, office space and a private area. You will recall that having a private space was mentioned in our parent feedback as essential- this means that families can withdraw and privately talk with staff when they need to. At the same time the building will be reconfigured so the playrooms and administration areas are separate. This is a HUGE project; fundraising to pay for it is essential so if you have ideas or contacts please come and see Trisha or Helen. As we proceed with our plans we will let you know how this will impact on sessions as there will be alterations to service delivery while the contractors are working on site. When completed, the plans will be up in the family/whanau room.



Makaton Signing course: we are planning to organise a Makaton signing course for families. This is likely to be held in the second week of the July holidays. The **Introduction to Makaton** is a one day workshop and is \$60 per person/couple. The **Beginners Workshop** is a 2 day course and is \$100 per person/couple. Please email Estelle if you would like more information or to register your interest: slt2@mckenziecentre.nz. Spaces are limited.

Travel Allowance: families who travel more than 50km return to McKenzie Centre are entitled to this. See your key worker for more information.

Music sessions: We welcome and encourage all parents/whanau and children to attend and get involved, to enjoy the range of learning and social opportunities that our fun filled music sessions provide. It can be distracting when conversations continue while music time is on and we ask that you consider either moving to another space or waiting until music has finished.

Car park: As we are short of space sometimes it is necessary for families to double park or park in the driveway. When leaving, please come in and ask that parent to move their car rather than run the risk of damaging cars.

Intervention Fee - Parent Contribution: as you know, we have a term fee and the Trust is very aware and focused on making it reasonable for families. This fee is your contribution to the costs of intervention and, for the sake of clarity, will now be known as: Intervention Fee - Parent Contribution. As you can imagine, the total cost of intervention is much higher than the current \$65 charged per term for one child. Your contribution goes towards the highly trained staff you see, and all aspects of the service delivery including; assessments, IPs, visits to early childhood centres, resources, etc. We really appreciate your contribution, and it does have an important impact on the services we offer to families. Remember, you may be eligible for a Child Care Subsidy which contributes to the Intervention Fee. Please see your key worker about this if you would like more information about this.

Student: Lisa Spyves, a 3rd year Early Childhood student from Wintec will be on placement at McKenzie Centre from 30 May for 5 weeks.

Health & Safety

Sickness: Unfortunately, as the winter months approach, there are inevitably more bugs and sickness around. We appreciate you keeping sick children at home rather than risk spreading bugs to other families and staff. Please stay away for at least 24 hours after vomiting. If you cannot attend a session because of sickness or other reason, please let McKenzie Centre know by calling (839 5357) or texting (0273597754).

Labelling belongings: Please label/name your children's bags, lunchboxes and bottles. This is important to ensure the staff can support the children at kai time, especially when the parents are busy elsewhere, and also encourages early literacy i.e. recognising their name.

Hygiene routines: Please support your children to wash their hands prior to eating. We would prefer that you use the hand basins in the toilet areas found at each end of the building. This is so the children learn what is expected of them at the early childhood centres where washing hands is done in the toilet area not at water play. We have placed visual schedules of toileting and hand washing at each area to support these routines and they are great opportunities to encourage a range of skills including; self care, fine motor and language skills. The recommended rule is 20/20; wash for 20 seconds and dry for 20 seconds.

Curriculum focus: each term we plan focus areas and this is displayed by the music area. Postural control is one of the focus areas this term. Sue went on a course which highlighted the importance of core stability as a foundation skill to build other skills. So be prepared we are planning lots of crawling, throwing and catching games to develop postural control.

Policies recently reviewed: we review policies in a cycle to ensure the content is up to date and relevant. We invite parents/ whanau, trustees and staff to review the policies so you are aware of what we do and also so you can contribute to what is done at the Centre. Copies of the policies are on the notice board in the Whanau Room while they were being reviewed. In Term 1 we looked at the Child Protection, Care of Staff Policies, Guidelines for Non-Employees, ESW Travel policy, Treaty of Waitangi Policy, IP Flowchart, the Assessment Procedure and Guidelines for the Assessment Process. If anyone has any questions about the review process or the policies they can see Lillian or Sandra in the office.

Missing items

- a Makaton signing book
- 2 computer games; Switch It Dinosaurs and Touch Games 1 CD was returned empty please check your computer.

Do you receive the 'Child Disability Allowance'? Some families are eligible for the **Child Disability Allowance or Disability Allowance**, if you do not receive these please talk with your key worker.

Transitions to Early Childhood Centre/School; we facilitate this process and need to know if you are enrolling or changing sessions. Sometimes children are eligible for support in their early childhood centre/school. Let us know so we can have the appropriate supports in place.

Thank you... to all the people who help around the Centre. We have volunteers who will be in some sessions during the week to help out where needed. **Rainy Lee** will be here on Wednesdays and **Jo Foster** on Friday sessions. **Paula Winders** comes in to help with Premmie Playmates. Many thanks for your help! We have several volunteers who continue to come in and help with admin, gardening and maintenance tasks. **Audrey Durose** often comes in on Thursdays to look after our gardens. The lovely pansies by the gate are her handy work. She will put some swan plants along the far wooden fence soon so watch out for them. **Richard Stewart** does our lawns and clears the car park of leaves. **Ivy Zhang** and **Alex Wang** come in to help with some cleaning, organising of the toys and general admin. **Graeme Park**, an extremely handy man, fixes many things for us.



FROM THE ADMIN TEAM

Did you know?

McKenzie Centre is a charitable trust, governed by 11 volunteer Trustees, which include current and past parents of McKenzie Centre children. About 75% of our funding comes from government, but we work hard to fundraise the remainder so that we can continue to provide the best possible services, equipment and assessments for the families and children who attend. To do this, we must apply to private trusts for funding, run fundraising events such as Round the Bridges, and solicit donations.

Remember if you have feedback or comments about services at the Centre, please feel free to talk with your key worker or Trisha.

Best wishes from, Trisha, Claire, Sue, Anita, Estelle, Ursula, Andree, Teresa, Ruth, Helen, Sandra, Lillian, Marcia and Richard.

Funders

As always we would like to acknowledge our funders, who help make it possible for us to provide an affordable and high quality service to families.



As well as:

Ministry of Education, Special Education

Community Fund

COGS (Dept. of Internal Affairs)

Norah Howell Trust

Trust Waikato

Sir John Logan Campbell Trust

Community Post

Frozen Funds Trust

AXA Hearts in Action

Walt Disney - Handy Manny

Hamilton City Council

Community Post

Page Trust

Freemasons

John Illott Trust

Gallagher Charitable Trust

Gull Community Grants

Ministry of Social Development

Ministry of Health Lotteries

Tidd Foundation

CJB Norwood Trust

Debbie Wilson

Wdff Karamu Trust

Todd Foundation

ANZ Staff Foundation

Talking Tech Foundation

And our donors and sponsors (private donors names not published for privacy reasons):

Southwell School Chapel Fund

Matt Fitzsimmons

New World Te Rapa

Stace Hammond Barristers & Solicitors

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Proform Plastics

Crombie Lockwood

Lollipop's Playland and Café

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Countdown Hamilton Central

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