

Parent Newsletter



Term One, 2015

“Play reaches the habits most needed for intellectual growth” Bruno Bettelheim, Austrian -born American child psychologist

Yippee, it is sun hats and sunscreen time! Please try to make sure your children wear appropriate sunhats when they are at their early childhood centre, and when they come to McKenzie Centre, to protect them from our harsh New Zealand sun. At McKenzie Centre we have some hats that can be borrowed during the sessions and our sunscreen is always available on the deck near the front entrance. Once used, please place the hats into the laundry basket. If your child has difficulty wearing their hat, talk to your Key Worker.



A ‘heads up’ that the grey and green safety matting in the McKenzie Centre playground can become very hot and children will need to wear sandals on the hot days to protect their feet.

Dates to Remember 2015

Term One starts	Monday 2 February
Waitangi Day	Friday 6 February, no sessions
ESW contracts start	Monday 2 February
Parent Focus Week	16-20 February
Family Zoo Visit	Sunday 15 March
ESW Workshop	Friday 20 March
End of Term One	Friday 2 April
Term Two 2015 starts	Monday 20 April

Parent Focus week, 16-20 February: This term our focus will be on ‘getting to know each other’ as we have new families in each session. It will be a great opportunity to make new connections, catch up and share some summer holiday break stories. During the time the parents are catching up, the staff will be available to care for the children.

Curriculum Focus Term 1, 2015: A poster in the music space outlines our focus areas for the term. We are focusing on providing a range of fine motor experiences, sensory and messy play opportunities, our Hanen course and loads of other interesting plans. As with all early childhood centres, Te Whāriki, the Early Childhood Curriculum, provides the framework on which we plan experiences, activities and events which occur in our learning environment.

Annual Zoo Day: Enjoy a day of fun at HAMILTON ZOO - Sunday 15th of March 2015. Entry is free for people with disabilities and their immediate family/caregiver. For more information see the poster in foyer or speak to Sandra.

Ongoing Toy and Clothing Swap: During Term 1 a large cardboard box will be kept on the deck at McKenzie Centre for any clean, unbroken toys and children’s clothing that you would like to pass onto to other McKenzie Centre families. Please donate items which you no longer need.

Children’s End of Year Party: The raffle for the \$100.00 Prezzy Card was won by Nadine Henderson and the Lido Cinema tickets were won by Beau Powell at this event last year, on December 17th. Thanks to everyone who bought tickets and attended the celebration. We were very lucky that the bad weather held off till the end, which was great!

Talia Evered shared her fabulous stories with us and donated a set of her books to the Centre. If any of you would like to make an order, the forms are in the whanau room. Talia generously gives \$2 from every book sold to the Centre.

Notices of Interest:

Asia Pacific PRADA-WILLI Syndrome Conference will be held in Melbourne 11th & 12th of April 2015 the Australian and New Zealand Prader-Willi Syndrome Association. The conference theme is "From Better Start to Better Living" which symbolises the importance of giving kids the best start possible, leading onto a better life for them as adults and the current emphasis of looking for residential options. The conference provides opportunity for scientists, professionals, parents and caregivers to join together, providing a forum to share expertise. For more information about the conference email conference@pws.org.au

2015 Down Syndrome Conference will be held in Brisbane Australia, 13 and 14 March 2015 at Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. Check details of the 'It Starts with Us' online at <http://www.pandf.org.au/NoticeBoard/>

Autism workshop: Sue Larkey is a highly qualified special educator and has authored several books and resource materials. She is a truly inspirational speaker and not only is her one day seminar informative; it is also a lot of fun! She has a remarkable ability to captivate her audience for an entire day, and attendees come away fuelled with strategies and ideas to teach children with autism and Asperger's syndrome. Hamilton: Monday 2 March 2015 9.30-3.00p.m. at the SKY City Convention Centre. Early bird registration (\$160) closes on Monday 9 February 2015 (payment after this date is \$180). Book online at www.creatingsuccess.co.nz

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Daily Signing In: It is necessary, for parents/whanau to sign both in and out every time they come to McKenzie Centre. We encourage you to stay for the full session and hope that you are enjoying the extended session times and making the most of the play environment. The sign in sheet is on top of the cabinet in the corridor.

This term, the side door to the playroom will be open on sunny days. However, please ensure you speak to the ladies at reception, so that we know you have arrived. You will find your child's photo on the table in the corridor to be placed on the blue wall.

Amnesty/Uninstall software: Please check to see that software borrowed from McKenzie Centre has been uninstalled from your home computer, as agreed

Also an amnesty on returns of McKenzie Centre equipment, books and toys will operate during February and we welcome the return of borrowed items.



Early Childhood student in Term1: Dena Baxter will be starting her placement at McKenzie Centre on 16th February for 5 weeks and will be working with children during the sessions alongside staff.

Tuesday Afternoon Early Intervention Playgroup: This playgroup is proving popular with children and families who are on the waiting list for a McKenzie Centre Key Worker. This group offers a valuable introduction to the benefits of early intervention. We are fortunate to have Marie Ma volunteer in this group. Some of you may remember Marie as she did a practicum at McKenzie Centre as part of her Specialist Teaching; Early Intervention practicum.

Premmies playmates: This is a group that meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month to provide opportunities for families of pre-term infants to support each other in a casually structured playgroup environment with input from McKenzie Centre therapists. Babies who would benefit from on-going monitoring and support are enrolled at McKenzie Centre and pay term fees. **Spread the word to others who may need support.**

Music Therapist - Helen McGann: We are trialling music therapy as part of the services we provide at McKenzie Centre. Helen will be with us for 4 weeks from 20 February, in the Friday

sessions. This will give all of us some time to look at ways in which music therapy can be used to encourage meaningful participation and engagement for the children while accomplishing their IP goals. Due to the fabulous fundraising generated by our 30th celebration last year, we have been able to consider extending our services to include this trial of music therapy.

Absences: We do appreciate you ringing or sending us a text when you are not going to attend your play session. Key Workers plan activities and prepare resources for your child in advance so a quick message would be very helpful.

Parent Notice Board. This is a great resource for information; please check it out the noticeboard regularly. McKenzie Centre policies and procedures are posted when they need to be reviewed and we appreciate parents taking a few minutes to help, as it is important to us that families are included in this process.

McKenzie Centre's 30th Anniversary Tea Towels: These beautifully designed cotton tea towels were made with our own children's hand prints to celebrate McKenzie Centre's 30 year anniversary and are still available for sale. The price is \$12.50 for one tea towel, and a mixed bundle of two costs \$20.

ESW Workshop: The ESW workshop is planned for Friday 20 March from 1 - 2.30pm. If this is a time when an ESW is usually with your child, then she will not be available on that day, as she will be attending professional development here at McKenzie Centre, to focus on learning strategies which can be useful when working with your child.

Thank you to all of our volunteers who regularly contribute to assist us with the smooth running of McKenzie Centre. Thanks to Richard Bennett for acid washing and water blasting our concrete - we hope the bike track has less glare now!

Emergency Evacuation Assembly Point: If there is a fire or fire drill, everyone is to go through the back gate by the bike track, and assemble just outside it in the Hamilton West School grounds.

In the unlikely event of an earthquake this is the procedure we will follow, as recommended on <http://www.dropcoverholdon.org/> and staff will be there to help you.



Hanen: "More Than Words" will begin in Term One with 4 Wednesday evening workshops and some home visits. 'It Takes Two to Talk' will be running on a Tuesday afternoon with Anita Wilson. If you are interested in attending please inform your key worker.

Parking:

If all the spaces in the car park at McKenzie Centre are full please double park behind someone already here and let Sandra, in the office, know, so that she can alert the person you are parked behind. Also, remember you will need a disability sticker to legally park in a Disabled Car park just outside the entrance. Contact CCS Disability Action to see if you are eligible. The parking wardens are active around the streets and monitor the 2 hour zones.

Best wishes from; Trisha, Claire, Sue, Anita, Estelle, Suzanne, Teresa, Ruth, Jacqui, Helen, Sandra, Lillian, Steph, Marcia and Richard.

Funders

THANK YOU to our wonderful funders, sponsors, friends and supporters who help make it possible for us to provide an affordable and high quality service to families



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