

Parent Newsletter

Term Two, 2015

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us. Henry S Haskins

Welcome back for Term 2. We all hope that you have had an opportunity to relax and re-gather yourselves for the coming term. The weather is certainly cooling down and we are all reaching for warm items of clothing. We are all looking forward to having another fun and rewarding term with you and your child. Here's to a great term!

Dates to Remember 2015

Term 2 starts	20 th April
Term 2 ends	3 rd July
Anzac Day	27 th April - Although Anzac Day is 25 th April, the following Monday 27 th will be a holiday, therefore no sessions.
Queen's Birthday	1 st June, no session this day.
Parent Focus Group	25 th -29 th May.

Staffing Changes:

- Ruth is now working as Key Worker on Mondays. She is relieving for Stephanie who has started her Specialist Teaching: Early Intervention Diploma. Suzanne is in the second year of this course. Last year Suzanne completed the year one papers and achieved very high marks. Good luck to both of you as there is a lot of work to complete this course on top of your typical day to day tasks.
- Suzanne Kok will be completing her practicum during Term 2 and 3, so she will have some time away from McKenzie Centre to do so.
- Marie Yan Ma, Early Childhood Teacher and Jacqui Kay, Speech Language Therapist, will be joining the Tuesday Afternoon Early Intervention Play Group. We look forward to having them both on board for the term.
- Qingsong Yu is a second year Early Intervention student and she will be at McKenzie Centre during Term 2 and 3. She will be here on Friday mornings to gain experience and further her knowledge in working with children with different needs.

Congratulations:

- Through hard work and long sleepless nights, Ruth Michels has achieved her Bachelor of Teaching qualification and attended her graduation in April. Well done Ruth!
- Trisha has been invited to enrol in the Community and Enterprise Leadership Programme run by Waikato Management School at Waikato University. Trisha is very grateful to the very generous sponsorship offered by Stainless Design who will cover all her course costs.
- **Ken Williamson**, current Chairperson of McKenzie Centre Trust, has celebrated 20 year's service as a trustee. This is a remarkable voluntary contribution that Ken has made. Ken is a genuine, compassionate man who has made an outstanding contribution to McKenzie Centre and we are very fortunate that our Centre is his passion. We were able to thank him with a wonderful hand print painting made by the children and Anita.

Bugsy Malone Fundraiser for McKenzie Centre: Friday 15th May 2015 at 7.30pm at Riverlea Theatre; Tickets \$20 each: McKenzie Centre is very lucky to have been chosen as the recipient charity of Musikmakers *Bugsy Malone* Benefit night. Tickets are available at \$20 each to see a pre-opening performance of this timeless classic, with ticket sales directly benefiting McKenzie Centre. This is a great show for adults and children aged 5 years and older, and features fabulous music, singing, dancing and fun. Please support McKenzie Centre's important fundraising efforts by purchasing your tickets from Sandra and Lillian in the office.

Parent Focus Group 25th -29th May.

Last term our parent groups had the opportunity to catch up with one another to share ideas, concerns, celebrations and just purely to meet each other. There were some fantastic connections made.

This term we thought it would be useful to have some discussions around toileting and dressing. It will be an opportunity to share resources, celebrate success stories and give ideas for you to try with your child. This can also be followed up with your Key Worker.

Curriculum Focus Term 2, 2015:

During the holiday break, staff members discuss a focus for the upcoming term, based around the Te Whariki Curriculum. As Term 2 is likely to be a little more unsettled, weather-wise, we will endeavour to ensure there is plenty of interesting sensory play activities and play on the decking to capture our children who like to move. We will also continue to explore the various communication aids we have available e.g. some children are being introduced to the Core boards and others are using signing, the Picture Exchange Communication System, PECS, and visual schedules.

We are fortunate to have both of our Hanen programmes running this term. Anita Wilson, SLT, is taking the 'It Takes Two to Talk' programme and Estelle Pretorius, SLT, is starting the 'More than Words' programme with a group of parents and children. This is very exciting and we know that all families involved will learn some very positive and useful strategies to encourage and develop communication and language with their children.

Music Therapy last term we had a very successful trial of Music Therapy with Helen McGann. Helen helped us to look at how we use music and musical instruments in our sessions with the children. Have a look at our curriculum plan for the term as we have focused on how to extend the use of music for both individual children and in our group times. Although Helen will not continue coming in for sessions she does have a private practice and you may want to look at this as an option for your child. Helen's flyers are in the whanau room.

"When words fail...music speaks"

Music therapy is an evidenced based (well researched) professional practice. The sessions are child led, where the music/activities are individualised to suit the needs of the child. Music therapy respects and fosters the notion that every child is unique and works with their strengths and abilities. Music therapy works on the basis of a positive, trusting and musical relationship between child and therapist. Helen is a registered music therapist currently working in Tauranga and Hamilton. Her current area of expertise is working with children and young people with special needs and she has also worked with adults in aged care facilities. Please contact Helen for details around cost, possible funding options, for enquires or information: Email: helenmcgannmusictherapy@gmail.com Phone: 0276750666 or 07 8880789

Some General Housekeeping:

☺ Toy and Clothing Swap Box has been a success with toys and items being bought in and exchanged by families. It is great to see this happening so that items can find another deserving home. We will continue to have this box on the decking available for you to drop off clothes and toys, in good condition, that your child has outgrown. At the end of the term we will take any remaining items to the Gateway Op Shop to ensure they are 'shared forward'.

☺ Ongoing thought and investigations are underway to solve the 'very bright and glaring' problem at our bike area. We are looking into a number of solutions e.g. a mural on the wall and/or a shade cloth or umbrella. Hopefully, next summer will be a little easier on your eyes at the bike track!

☺ You will notice a few new songs during mat time. We will again have a few songs that use signing and we encourage everyone to have a go. Mat time is a great opportunity to encourage language, sharing, turn taking, socialising and a number of other positive skills. So join in and have some fun, please keep your

conversations to the play room rather than the mat circle. Let's model the mat time routine for our children.

☺ Please ensure that your child is well enough to come to sessions. Not only do we want your child to have a positive experience here, which involves being in good health, but we also need to ensure that some of our children, who are health compromised, are kept away from bugs and infections. If you are unsure then please phone the office or your Key Worker. There is information regarding stand down periods e.g. how long to stay away from daycare following a bout of vomiting. This is in your Home Folder.

☺ **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. If your child is unwell often during the term we may need you to sign an EC 12 form. Your Key Worker will talk with you about this if needed.

☺ Remember to sign in and out as this is important for our records and legal requirements. Remember, the sessions are 4 hours and 5 minutes long so please stay to enjoy the entire session.

Of Interest:

An interesting article we found in the Early Childhood News encouraging Primary School Teachers to include play based learning and reflect Te Whāriki early childhood curriculum and weave this pedagogy thread throughout all levels of primary school. "In order to face the challenges of the 21st century, our children need to be critical and creative thinkers. The industrial age is truly over. We are now ensconced in the knowledge age with its unique challenges that are largely undefined as yet. Why not create a classroom environment to reflect a play-based pedagogy approach which encourages children to think outside the square and be creative? Why not arrange materials in provoking and inviting ways to encourage exploration, learning and inquiry?"

We all know that play contributes positively to a child's sense of well-being. It enhances a child's natural capacity for intense and self-motivated learning. It helps build creative and critical thinkers, and lets children test social boundaries. Play produces curiosity, openness, optimism, resilience and concentration. It enhances a child's memory skills, develops their language skills, helps regulate their behaviour, advances their social skills and encourages academic learning to take place. Why not be that brave teacher who says 'I'm going to bring play back into my classroom'? Maybe your next PD session could be a visit to a local kindergarten to see the learning that is taking place...through play."

Stephanie Menzies recently completed her Master of Education degree, with her final assessment on play-based learning. Useful websites for play ideas include www.pinterest.com, www.backtoblocks.com and www.playbasedlearning.com.au

Star Buddy Charitable Trust, we were approached by Joy Adams who is the main driving force behind the Trust. Joy raises money and awareness for children's charities and the St John Ambulance service. Part of the donation allows the Trust to arrange a personalised gift for a child dealing with an illness or disability. Some of the donation would also go to McKenzie Centre and Joy is asking for children to support. See your Key Worker or Sandra for brochures.

Thank you to all of our volunteers.

In March we said thanks and farewell to Audrey Durose who has kept our gardens looking fantastic for the past four years. She has moved to Whangarei. In her place we welcome David Brown who is going to be our new volunteer gardener.



Parking:

A number of parents have drawn our attention to school traffic using the McKenzie Centre car park, which has created a few difficulties for our families trying to get in and out for

sessions. We have conveyed this message to the Hamilton West School and we have started to place a road cone with a McKenzie Centre message for school patrons to read. This has had a positive effect and the car park seemed to be more available for our families at the end of Term 1. Keep us in touch with any further issues. Remember to come in and double park if there are no available spaces in our car park. Tell Sandra if you are parked behind someone so that she can alert you to move your car when the other family needs to leave.

Gymnastics classes:

YMCA Early Learning Centre & Home Based Childcare Gymnastics is having 40% off their class fees for the month of May. These classes can be in a group setting or as individuals. It will be \$84 for May instead of \$140.00. You can contact them at the Hamilton Recreation Centre in Pembroke Street on 838 2529 or www.ymcahamilton.org.nz

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:



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30th Gala Dinner Sponsors:

Gwen Lyon, Ruby Lyon, Zoe Lapwood, The Hummingbirds, Brian King - auctioneer, Mark Bunting - MC, Southwell School- venue and Waikato Diocesan School for Girls.





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