

Happy New Year!

Welcome back to Term One. We hope you all had a special Festive Season and a relaxing and fun-filled holiday!

Celebrating our superhero parents...

“You may not leap buildings in a single bound or run faster than a speeding bullet but you are a superhero none the less. Every day, you manage situations that a regular parent would think are impossible. You stretch tight muscles, remember pills, inject and infuse medicine. You hold hysterical children during horrendous medical procedures. You deal with tantrums and melt downs. And most often manage not to have a tantrum or melt down yourself. You encourage your child to do things doctors told you they would never do but you never gave up hope. You are a therapist, nurse, doctor, friend and confidante. You are no regular parent”. (By Dr Darla Clayton, PsyD from an article; 20 Things Every Parent of Kids with Special Needs Should Hear.)

Congratulations to the Winners of our End of Year Party raffle: Lillyana’s mum Nicola chose the New World Rototuna Gift Basket, Lane’s dad Mark chose The Super Power Baby Project book and Kayden’s mum took the giant Teddy Bear home. Thanks to everyone who donated the prizes and supported this raffle. We had a lovely party and it was so nice to have everyone together.

Teddy Bear’s from Whitcoulls and SmileDial NZ:

A huge thank you to Jacqui, Toby and Finn Dale for nominating McKenzie Centre to receive some beautiful Teddy Bear soft toys through a wonderful initiative run by Bob and Rose Sands from SmileDial NZ, an organisation which supports families raising children with special needs, and Whitcoulls. The Teddy’s are sure to put a few “Smiles on Dials” at McKenzie Centre!



Dates to Remember Term One 2016

Term 1 starts	2 February
ESW start	2 February
Waitangi Day holiday	Monday 8 February
Good Friday	25 March
Easter Monday	28 March
Term 1 ends	15 April
Term 2 starts	2 May
ERO visit	Education Review Office highly likely to be in the Centre 22 and 23 March
ESW Workshop	8 April
Premmies group	Second Thursday of each month, first one is 11-2-16

Water play will be a feature of this term. We plan to set up opportunities for children to enjoy the outdoors through water play using water and other sensory play. So please bring a spare set of clothes and togs for your child, and a towel just in case you, or your child, needs it! This will allow many play opportunities to practice dressing, taking turns, physical activity and development and lots of fun. Have a look at our curriculum planner on the wall, down by the music area, to see our areas of focus. Talk to your Key Worker for more information.

Hot matting outdoors. Remember that the grey matting gets very hot during the summer months; we will keep the umbrellas up and the sprinkler may help a little but this may also make the matting a little slippery, so take care. Wearing shoes is a good idea.

Education Support Workers, ESW. Some children are eligible for an ESW to support their child's inclusion at their early childhood centre. Your Key Worker will organise this. Every 6 months we apply for ESW hours from the Ministry of Education. Please expect that there will be changes of ESW from time to time, and when this occurs we do try to ensure the transition is as smooth as possible for everyone (child, family, early childhood staff and the ESW). We do support our ESW staff with professional development and many have been with us for some time. They are all very competent support people. Change of staff is inevitable (Early Childhood Centres often have staff changes and when at school your child may have different teachers and teacher's aide every year) so remember it is often not the person but the supports and strategies that are the key things to be consistent for your child to flourish in the learning environment.

ESW hours are a limited resource and so we do ask that you help us to ensure they are fully utilised, by letting us know of any anticipated absences in advance if possible. We also need to know of any changes in arrival times and pick up or days away due to illness so that temporary ESW changes can be arranged.



Carers NZ has launched this new online service in association with MyCare. The National Carer Matching Service has been developed for people with disabilities and their families to help them easily connect with relief carers in their communities. If you receive Ministry of Health Disability Support funding, this means you can use MyCare's Match feature/facility at no cost.

Check out the information on the Parent to Parent website regarding Respite Care assistance. They have a direct link through to connect with the service, alternatively, you just need to contact your NASC and ask them for a referral to the National Carer Matching Service. Completing the easy online form will take just a few minutes. If you have questions about the service you can phone Jude Dodson at Carers NZ, 0800 777 797 or email her at atadmin@carers.net.nz

Respite Care. At times, a few of our ESWs express an interest in providing respite care for families. This is a private arrangement made between families and the ESW. If you are having difficulty finding a suitable carer then ask your Key Worker to put you in touch with them.

Entitlements. Remember to ask your Key Worker for any information regarding your entitlements from WINZ, Travel Allowances, Health Support Options, and other general support options that may be available.

Just a reminder that we have changed our bank account: McKenzie Centre now banks with the BNZ so we are asking everyone to make all future payments into our new bank account. The number is 02-0316-0466333-00. This is the number that will be on all our Family Invoices from Term 4 2015. Sandra and Lillian are very happy to help if you have any questions about this.

Immunisation and Birth Certificates a reminder if you have not bought these in to be photocopied for our enrolment procedure please do so. Thanks.

Loan equipment. Please check if you have the 'Paint 1-2-3' disc, as it has gone missing. It is important that we are able to maintain our resources so that all families have access to a full and interesting loan pool. So please check your shelves for any other items and discuss the timing of their return with your Key Worker. We ask that all care is taken with loan equipment. Please also let us know if you borrowed 'Big Bang Pictures' in Term 4 of last year.

Hanen, It Takes Two to Talk. Anita Wilson, Speech Language Therapist, will be facilitating another programme to encourage development of language, interaction skills and play with a number of children and their parents. Parents have already made a start with this programme, with a visit from Anita over the holiday period. This is a valuable learning experience offered by our centre for families enrolled here.

Parent Focus Group will be during the week of 22-26 February. An important focus of this time is parents getting to know other parents attending the same session. Alongside this, we will be talking about 'Including Others in Play'. There are many opportunities during our sessions, at Early Childhood Centres and during social family visits for our children to learn about developing their skills for socialising sharing and turn taking. Here are some strategies to encourage and build these opportunities.

-  We encourage regular play dates! It is a great opportunity for children to build relationships and connections and to generalise skills across settings.
-  Help the children 'tune in' to each other by drawing their attention to what other children are doing e.g. 'look, Paul is bouncing the ball.'
-  When a child approaches your child playing, greet the child, and invite him to come and have a look. Draw your child's attention to the child approaching saying e.g. 'look George wants to see what we're doing...' If your child wants to join a child playing with a favourite toy, TALK to him or her about what the child is doing, acknowledge that they are playing with the toy, make fun comments, so your learns what to do while they are waiting to play with a toy.
-  Remind yourself that sharing and turn taking is challenging for everyone - acknowledge that when playing with the children; talk to the kids while they are waiting, and include them in the play while they have to wait for their turn e.g. holding a part of the toy, or asking the child for ideas, giving them a small responsibility.
-  If you are playing with a toy, make turns short, fun, interesting and frequent, to keep the children engaged.

Thank you Neil Hintz for repairing our bubble tube and other building jobs around the Centre!

Bike Ride Fundraiser for McKenzie Centre. Lawrence is planning to ride 680 miles/1100 kilometres in eight days (27 March - 3 April) from Cape Reinga to Wellington. Why?... you might ask - well, Lawrence's grandson, Ben (4) was diagnosed with Autism and he is fundraising in recognition of support McKenzie Centre gives by providing an early intervention programme for Ben and his family. Not only that - living in North Devon, England, he is also supporting P.O.P.S.I. (supporting families with premature infants) in North Devon District Hospital. If you would like to sponsor Lawrence;

**Make a payment on-line to Lawrence's Cycling Charity at Lloyds Bank -
Sort Code 30-98-90 Account No. 15272660**

Lawrence is hoping to reach his £5,000 target. Thank you Lawrence!

Emergency evacuation place. In case of fire or the need to evacuate the building please congregate in Hamilton West School with access through the back gate by the concrete bike pad.

ERO review in March 2016 dates are highly likely to be 22 and 23 March. A team from MOE will be reviewing aspects of our practice here at McKenzie Centre. An ERO education review gives an external perspective on an early childhood service's teaching and children's learning. The aim of a review is to help an early childhood service improve the quality of teaching and learning in the service. McKenzie Centre will provide copies of relevant documents and a review team will visit our centre to talk with families and observe our team at work. A report will be published and displayed on the ERO website and will comment on our strengths and if we need extra steps for development. There will be opportunities for parents/whanau to talk with the reviewers as they are interested in your opinion. The Education Review Office will be looking at the state of healthy eating and children's physical activity levels in early childhood education services from the start of 2016 for its next national report.

Candace Mayall Dance School. If you are interested in dance classes for your child please contact Candace on 0211205013, email candace.mayall@gmail.com or see her facebook page, Candace Mayall Dance. These are a fun way for students to enjoy music and movement and learn a range of dancing styles in a more relaxed manner than a typical class. Classes will be held on Monday 4-4.30pm at Berkley Normal Middle School. This session is only for McKenzie Centre families however siblings of students are more than welcome to join in.

The Hamilton Dinsdale Lions Club is holding its **Annual Zoo Day on Sunday March 20th** from 11am till 3pm for people with disabilities and their immediate family/caregiver. This is a great day with entertainment, a sausage sizzle, soft drinks and ice blocks provided. Entry is free and you don't have to book. There is also help with transport if you need it.

SibCamp Parent to Parent: Confirming that a Waikato Sibcamp will be going ahead April 29th - 1st May Totara Springs Camp - Matamata. For more details please contact Parent to Parent, with how to register your expression of interest. Sibcamps are for children aged 8 - 18 who have a brother or a sister with a disability or health impairment.

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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