

Whānau Newsletter

Welcome to Term Four Whānau



We hope that you have had a lovely break and are excited to start Term Four at McKenzie Centre.

This term we will celebrate our 40th anniversary, please read this newsletter for more information. You will also find the results of the whānau survey along with an update from our Tuakana.

Check below for important dates and events this term:

Dates for Term Four

Term 4 starts:	Monday 14 October
Public holiday:	Monday 28 October
40 th Celebration:	Saturday 2 November from 2 to 5pm at Hamilton West School
Parent Focus week:	29 October – 4 November
Hangouts:	Week 4 TBC (evening hangout) Week 7 28 November

WELLNESS MONTH: November

End of Term 4:	Friday 20 December
End of year party:	Friday 20 December
Final session:	Thursday 19 December
Beginning of Term 1:	Tuesday 28 January 2025

40th Celebration

On Saturday 2 November we will celebrate our 40th anniversary from 2pm to 5pm at the Hamilton West School grounds.

We are very excited for this whānau event which will be lots of fun for the whole whānau. We haven't finalised all activities yet, but so far we know that there will be a bouncy castle, ice cream truck and yummy food and drinks for everyone.

Please come and celebrate with us!

GoodMeasure project by ImpactLab

McKenzie Centre collaborated with ImpactLab to conduct a GoodMeasure analysis, which quantifies the social impact of services in dollar terms.

The assessment revealed that the centre generated over \$3 million in social value in 2023, with a Social Return on Investment (SROI) of \$1.80 for every \$1 spent.

The centre created an estimated \$10,000 in social value per person, with over \$20,000 per child with disabilities. The analysis credited McKenzie Centre's transdisciplinary approach and family-wide support as key factors in these results, enhancing the lives of both children and their families.

The data-driven study validated the centre's impact and cost-effectiveness. You can [read the full report](#).

Whānau survey results

Thank you to everyone who has completed our whānau survey. This year we had a focus on our Tuakana/Peer support workers and the activities that they organise.

The whānau survey has provided insights into the experiences and feedback of 42 families engaged with McKenzie Centre.

Its key findings on their experience with Tuakana/ Peer support include:

- Participation in Tuakana/Peer support: 74% of respondents participated in peer support activities, with barriers like time constraints affecting participation of 55% of parents.
- Positive impact: 88.1% of parents felt less isolated, 76.5% learned valuable strategies and 85.7% felt empowered by Tuakana/ Peer support. Emotional support and advocacy skills were also enhanced.
- Suggestions: Some families seek clearer information on available services, including resources for adults with ADHD/ASD and assistance with forms (e.g. WINZ, IRD).
- Additional feedback: parents appreciated the support, especially the sense of community, and the role of specialists. Many praised McKenzie Centre's supportive environment and expressed gratitude for its impact on their children's development.

Community resources

Parent 2 Parent have got useful resources on their website. Here are some things that might be of interest to you:

- [Get Future Focused](#): a 'why, what and how-to' guide to planning a positive future for your loved one
- [Whānau wellbeing](#): simple ways to enhance Te Whare Tapa Whā (health and wellbeing) from parents with lived experience.

Tuakana / Peer support



Linda

My role is mostly to tautoko/support/awhi the whānau at McKenzie Centre. I work part-time every day except Thursday. I also do the music sessions, create some visuals when needed, and co-ordinate some of the events we do, along with the rest of the team. I learn so much from the people I meet at McKenzie Centre, and I love my job!



Keren

In my role as a Tuakana I use my lived experience as a 'special needs' mum to Isla (7 years old) to offer support to families at the McKenzie Centre. I love connecting with children and their families on Monday, Wednesday and Thursdays.



Shanayd

I'm a tuakana/peer support worker and I work on a Friday at McKenzie Centre. My role is to advocate, support and help connect our whānau with one another. I also get the awesome job of helping create our hangouts that we run through the term.



Victoria

I work on Monday and Thursday afternoons and I am usually hanging in the office area. My peer worker role is to support the Tuakana with plans and organisation with what's happening during the term for our whānau. I also get to be creative and design flyers for our awesome events as well as supporting the EI team.



Eram

At McKenzie Centre, I play a dual role as both a peer worker and a data analyst and both are part-time roles. I collect and analyse data from the various workshops conducted at the centre, ensuring that we continually improve our programs and provide evidence-based insights that benefit our families.

In addition to the data work, I also have the privilege of facilitating the Now & Next programme, guiding and supporting parents as they set meaningful goals for their children's futures. Through both data and direct peer support, I am committed to helping families on their journeys.

Staff changes



Trisha Bengie

Trisha's current contract as a consultant finishes on Thursday 31 October. Trisha has been with McKenzie Centre for 27 years, 19 of which as Centre Director.

Trisha has a wealth of knowledge and an incredible passion for early intervention and we are hopeful that she will remain a part of McKenzie Centre in some capacity.

Down Syndrome Awareness Month

October is Down Syndrome Awareness month. Its purpose is to raise public awareness of Down Syndrome and advocate for acceptance and inclusion.

There is clear evidence that inclusive education leads to better academic and social outcomes for both students with and without a disability. Many children with an intellectual disability however, are not accessing an inclusive education.

Sign IN and OUT every session

We encourage you to stay for the full session. There are a lot of important learning opportunities for you and your child. Please sign in on arrival, and out when you leave, as this is an early childhood licensing requirement from the Ministry of Education.

Curriculum updates and areas of focus for Term Four

As a team, we enjoy meeting the diverse learning needs of McKenzie Centre children. At the beginning of each term, we plan together as a team to formulate goals for each McKenzie Centre session.

Please check our Te Whāriki Curriculum goals which are on display on the whiteboard beside the sign in sheet.

This term you will find a particular focus on kai, fast focus workshops and music.

You will notice that we will be offering kai during our sessions as we are aware that there are many children who will benefit from this experience. We will continue to have 'fast focus' workshops during sessions, and these will be facilitated by a range of team members this term. Please take advantage of these workshops as they are a fabulous opportunity for connection and sharing of ideas and resources. Let a team member know if there is a particular topic you would like discussed.

This term we will also encourage our tamariki and parents to attend music time as music time offers a great opportunity to practice skills that are particularly important for the children that are transitioning to school soon.

To make the session flow, we have made some changes to the session routine:

WEDNESDAY:

10am:	Music time
10.15am:	Kai time
11 am:	Fast Focus workshops

THURSDAY:

12.30am:	Music
12.45pm:	Shared Kai
1pm:	Fast Focus Workshops

Health and Safety at McKenzie Centre

Emergency drills:

We practice fire and earthquake drills in session and lockdown drills with the staff only. These drills are practised every three months in February, May, August and November. This is an early childhood licensing requirement so we are all prepared should an emergency event occur. If you are unsure what to do, please talk with the staff.

Medication:

If you are bringing any medication, including Paracetamol, Disprin etc. into McKenzie Centre, please leave it in the office for safe keeping. Little fingers can get into bags left unattended.

Allergies:

Please let us know if your child has any allergies (food and other) so that we can adjust our planning around safety. Many of you have done this as part of the enrolment procedure but let us know if there are any changes.

SunSmart:

Now that the UVI levels are rising again, please make sure to pack a hat for you and your tamariki and apply sunscreen. We have spare hats available and also sunblock if necessary. From the SunSmart guidelines: “All babies **under 12 months** should be kept out of direct sun when UVI levels are 3 or higher. They should be protected by shade, clothing and broad-brimmed hats. Sunscreen may be used on small areas of a baby’s skin but do not rely on sunscreen as the primary method of protection”.

Changes to attendance

If you have or would like to make changes to the day that you attend McKenzie Centre, please talk with your contact person and have a chat with Henny in the office. We also need to know if your child’s enrolment days/hours at Early Childhood Education Centres have changed as this affects funding claims.

Loan Items

Please remember to bring back any toys or items that your whānau borrowed. If you're still using them, please touch base with your contact person.

Early Intervention Fees

Eftpos: We have an Eftpos machine at McKenzie Centre, so you can make payments when you are here. Please see Henny or Lillian who are happy to help you. Thank you for supporting McKenzie Centre with your payment of the Early Intervention Fees. They are essential to the running of our service.

The WINZ Childcare Subsidy is available for many families and may cover the entire cost of the Early Intervention Fee. We can help you apply for this, or find another option for you, so that your financial burden is eased. Please see your contact person or the Admin team – we are happy to help. Some people pay us a smaller amount every week – talk to Henny or Lillian and they will help you with this.

If you're a MSD/Work and Income client, you can apply for Childcare Subsidy using RealMe on the [SmartStart website](#).

Or if you prefer, you can continue to apply through MyMSD or on paper.

Policies and Procedures

All Policies and Procedures are on a review cycle, so they always remain current and relevant. A full list is available in the yellow "Licence, Policies, ERO Report" folder in the Whānau Room.

Those under review will be shared during Parent Focus week or listed on the wall in the Whānau Room and families' opinions are an important part of this review process. If you want to know more about any Policy, Procedure or how they are reviewed feel free to ask Lillian.

SibShop organised by Parent to Parent

Parent to Parent are organising a day of fun for siblings, [have a look](#) on their website.



McKenzie Centre

40TH ANNIVERSARY

Saturday 2nd November
 Hamilton West School Grounds
 (Fow Street entrance)
 2PM - 5PM

Come join us for a fun filled family afternoon celebrating our milestone

**Kai & Refreshments
 Bouncy Castle
 Raffles
 and lots of FUN!**

McKenzie Centre
 Realising a child's potential

Please rsvp to Henny by Friday 25th October

Party supplies for the event kindly provided by
Design by Ange

www.mckenziecentre.org.nz

Thanks So Much To All Our Volunteers & Sponsors.

We are very grateful to the many people and organisations that support McKenzie Centre and the work we do.
 We could not do it without you!



Best wishes from:

Suzanne, Rachael S, Henny, Lillian, Steph, Emma, Rachael F, Richard, Susie, Linda, Eram, Victoria, Siobhan, Diana, Larissa, Keren, Shanayd, Liesl, Chrissy, Joanna, Michael and Trisha.



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