

*Kia ora whānau*

**Welcome Back! Thank you for your cooperation and vigilance during the changes to alert levels for Covid 19. Let us have a healthy and exciting final term for the year!**

**DATES FOR TERM 4 2020**

Now and Next Course:	Final Now and Next Evening Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 6.30-9.00 pm
Shakeout Earthquake Drill:	Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> October
Fire drill:	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November
ESW Workshop:	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> December
Parent Focus Week:	Week beginning Monday 2 November
Term 4 ends:	Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December
End of Year Family Party:	Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> December 10.30-12.30pm
Term 1 begins:	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2021

**Health and Safety.** *Our community is continuing to take COVID-19 seriously through using the COVID tracer App, staying away if you are sick, seeking medical advice and getting tested if recommended to do so. Thank you all, for your efforts.*

*While we are doing the right things, it is important that we continue to pay attention to the right information.*

**Attending McKenzie Centre: Safety procedures under Alert Level 1.**

- ✓ When you arrive, you must sign in and sanitise your hands before going inside. Use the Sign-in sheet stored on the cabinet on the deck.
- ✓ Visitors: Must sign in on the register in the foyer area. Use our QR tracker, it is attached to the door to keep a record of where you have been.
- ✓ Make sure your phone and address details are up to date at the office and check with your Key Worker what is recorded correctly.
- ✓ If you, or your child, are sick, stay at home. We can reschedule or arrange an online or phone session. If you arrive and staff observe that you or your child are unwell, with flu like symptoms, we will ask you to go home.
- ✓ If you or your child are showing signs of illness, flu like symptoms, remain at home and seek medical advice.
- ✓ If the cause of the symptoms is non-infectious e.g. asthma, hay fever or other conditions, you can attend. Staff will have a conversation with you to ensure the symptoms are from a condition such as asthma.
- ✓ Wash and dry your hands often and thoroughly. This is our number one defence! When you come inside after being outside washing hands thoroughly is a must!
- ✓ Sneeze or cough into your elbow.
- ✓ Placing mouthed toys in the blue mesh bag for cleaning after the child has finished using it.
- ✓ Tidy up and cleaning - we have plenty of supplies, so please do help us to keep our Centre clean and tidy.

**If we have a suspected or confirmed case of COVID 19,** we will follow the directions of Health Authorities. This may mean McKenzie Centre will be closed for 72 hours to allow for contact tracing and, potentially, for another 14 days. If this occurs, our online services can be resumed.

If you have any concerns about your health, talk to your GP or Healthline 0800 358 5453. There is lots of information on the COVID 19 website ([www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz)).

We will keep you informed by email, Facebook or Key Worker contacts. If you have ideas or suggestions to help us, please talk to your Key Worker, Trisha or Suzanne.

Staff continue to be vigilant:

- Cleaning and using disinfectant on our high touch surfaces and equipment regularly.
- Our cleaners are working with us and have upgraded health and safety cleaning procedures.

### **Staff Changes:**

This term we farewell Leona Birss, one of our friendly Occupational Therapists, as she moves on to her next chapter. Thank you Leona, we will miss you!

We also welcome Emma Gale and Tricia Pauley as new Occupational Therapists to the McKenzie Centre team. We know you will make them feel welcome.

**Introducing our Tuakana:** McKenzie Centre currently employs five Tuakana, including Eram Afroze, Fiona Fu, Linda Depledge-Brooker, Angela Amai and Stacey Baker. Each of these mothers brings different strengths, skills, interests and experiences to their Tuakana roles, but all with the same focus of building whānau capacity. Their role, currently, is to be present within McKenzie Centre early intervention sessions, as friendly faces, and to have intentional conversations with other parents to build relationships. Tuakana also facilitate Parent Focus groups each term and other workshops of interest. They create and maintain Families Empowering Families social media presence and assist with marketing, research, evaluation and consultation for other projects. For McKenzie Centre, this is just the beginning of utilising the potential of parents to facilitate and develop connection, interaction, support and learning. Watch this space for exciting developments as our Tuakana workforce grows and establishes itself. If you are interested in more information talk with one of the Tuakana, or Marcia, who is leading our peer to peer project.

**A Good Start in Life Practice Guidance:** This resource was informed by people with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, Ministry of Health and Education staff, and those working with people with disabilities. Trisha was involved in writing the Practice Guidance and several stories are included that mention McKenzie Centre and our whānau. It is a resource about how whānau, community and services can work collaboratively to give children with disabilities a good start in life. Do talk to us about this or follow the link to access the guidelines: <https://www.odi.govt.nz/guidance-and-resources/a-good-start-in-life/>

**Matariki Celebrations:** This year we celebrated Matariki (Māori New Year) from the 20<sup>th</sup> July-24<sup>th</sup> July. We enjoyed making star fairy bread, singing waiata, making a special light display in the multi-sensory room and shared kai together.

**Te Wiki o te Reo Māori:** During the week of 14<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> September we celebrated Māori language week. You may have noticed we added Māori resources including ngā pukapuka (books) and new waiata at music time.

Thank you to those whānau that participated in Te Wā Tuku Reo Māori/ Māori Language Moment with our staff at McKenzie Centre. New Zealand was set the challenge to get 1 million New Zealanders singing, speaking, and celebrating Te Reo Māori in one connected moment. You may have seen our rendition of “Te Aroha” on our Facebook page.

**Mental Health Awareness Week:** During week 10 of Term 3 we participated in Mental Health Awareness week. Activities were related to Te Whare Tapa Whā and we encouraged whānau and staff to take time to reflect on what they were grateful for, re-connect with nature and enjoy some exercise to promote wellbeing. A special thanks to Mike Hamblin for bringing in his dog to the Centre for our whānau to enjoy.



**International Guidelines for the Education of Learners with Down Syndrome:** These guidelines have been developed to promote awareness of the rights of people with Down Syndrome to inclusive education, as well as improving the access and quality of education. Here is the link which is also available on our website. <https://www.ds-int.org/education>

**Makaton Course:** Makaton New Zealand/Aotearoa are offering a beginner's workshop to parents and caregivers of children with communication difficulties to introduce New Zealand sign language and Makaton. The course will be run online via Zoom on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> October and the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020. The cost of the course is \$100 per family. Ask your Key Worker for more information about how to register.

### **Quiz Night has been postponed until 2021**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the ongoing impact that this has had on our community, including many of our sponsors, supporters and friends, we have decided to postpone our annual Quiz Night fundraiser until 2021. We thank everyone who has generously supported us so far with the donation of auction items and offers of assistance and can promise you that we will be back next year, bigger and better than ever!

**Families Empowering Families:** Recently one of our families shared a positive experience with attending Peachgrove Dental Services. The staff were patient and allowed time for one of our McKenzie Centre children to watch what the dentist was going to do by practicing on his brother, and to touch some of the equipment so he knew what to expect next.

If you haven't already, check out the Families Empowering Families Facebook group - parent to parent (or peer to peer) support is invaluable. If you have any questions speak to Eram, Fiona, Stacey, Angela, Linda or your Key Worker. This group is open to any parent of a child with special needs.

**Developmental Playgroup:** McKenzie Centre, in partnership with The Neonatal Trust, will be hosting a Developmental Playgroup for premature and high-risk babies. The group will run on the second Monday afternoon of each month from 1pm-2.30pm and on the last Thursday of each month from 10.30am-12pm, beginning on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October. The group will be facilitated by Jadey Drury, ex- NICU Mum and family support co-ordinator at the Neonatal Trust, with support from Sue Scott, Physiotherapist, and other staff from McKenzie Centre.

**Parent Focus Week:** 2<sup>nd</sup> until 6<sup>th</sup> November. Our Tuakana will facilitate this group and the focus is on Self Care. The aim is to inspire and encourage whānau to prioritise self-care, and to increase awareness of strategies you already use and options you can try. This is an extension to our Mental Health awareness week when we utilised Whare Tapa Whā model.

### **Earthquake and Fire Drill**

A practice of drills happens in session but, just in case you are not at the Centre to practice with us, this is the earthquake procedure: **Drop, Cover and Hold.** Drop to the ground, get under cover and hold on. Be like a turtle for about 20-30 seconds. Do not evacuate unless staff tell you to. Wait for the shaking to stop and then follow the instructions of the staff.

In case of a fire emergency evacuate through the nearest fire exit and assemble in the area beside the bike track (in the Hamilton West School grounds).

It is important to practice your own emergency procedures at home too.

**Early Intervention Fees** are a family contribution towards the cost of providing all of the services for your child, for example: meetings, resources, equipment. It is not just for sessions. Families who do not attend sessions, or who may be transitioning to school, will still receive a termly invoice. The WINZ Childcare Subsidy is available for many families and covers 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 Key Worker or the Admin team - we are happy to help.

**End of Year Family Party:** current and past families are very welcome to gather at McKenzie Centre on Monday 21 December 10.30am- 12.30pm. Bring a plate of food to share, your children and enjoy an end of year celebration with friends.

**Curriculum Focus:** This term we have a focus on Loose Parts Play. There are many positives to encouraging Loose Parts Play. Opportunities include promoting creativity, problem solving, fine and gross motor skill development, social interaction and language development. Have a look in the playroom for our Loose Parts Play stations e.g. shells in the playdough area. Have you built a structure from our foam shapes with your child yet? Speak with your Key Worker for more ideas and details.



**Thanks so much to:**

The Tawha family for their donation of books and toys.

All our volunteers and sponsors, they do an amazing job for us in many areas, including gardening, general maintenance and repairs, helping us at our fundraising events and assisting our admin team. We love looking after our volunteers as they contribute so much to us and their support means we can deliver more services to your family. Special thanks to Richard Bennett, Richard Stewart and Jim Newlands, who regularly give their time to maintain our building and gardens.

**Best wishes from:** Trisha, Claire, Sue, Rachael S, Laury, Leona, Estelle, Jaime, Suzanne, Teresa, Ruth, Helen, Henny, Lillian, Steph, Rachael F, Marcia, Amanda, Richard, Linda, Eram, Fiona, Angela, Stacey and Siobhan.

**THANK YOU to our wonderful Funders, Sponsors, Friends and Supporters:**



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