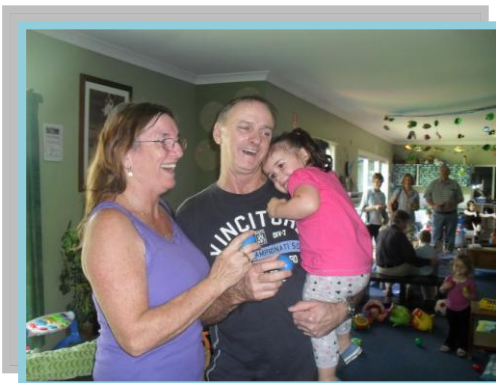


Parent Newsletter April 2011



Directors Notes

Welcome to the April edition of the Norwest Parent Newsletter. The children and staff at the centre have been getting up to so much and are currently preparing for all the different events we have in the coming months including our mothers day morning tea, the Easter Hat Parade, Hatch'N'Grow and many other wonderful activities and occasion.



A big thank you to all the wonderful Grandparents that attend the grandparents afternoon tea here at the centre. It was great to have so many of you visit and see where your grandchildren have fun and learn. We had a fantastic turnout.

We have also been recently nominated in the Australian Family Child Care Awards for Service of the Year. We had a wonderful family write a fantastic testimonial for the centre and their experience with us which we included.

Dates for your Diary

- Thursday 7th April - World Health day
- Friday 15th April - Doctor Visit
- Thursday 21st April - Bush room sports day - eat a good breaky, wear sports clothes and sunscreen!
- Thursday 21st April - Easter Hat Parade – 10.30am
- Friday 22nd April - Good Friday (**centre closed**)
- Monday 25th April - Anzac Day Public Holiday (**centre closed**)
- Tuesday 26th April - Easter Monday Public Holiday (**centre closed**)
- Thursday 28th April - Transition to School Information night(All families welcome)
- Monday 2nd May - Hatch'N'Grow eggs arrive
- Thursday 5th May - Mothers day morning tea
- Tuesday 17th May - Families open day
- Friday 20th May - Bush Room Sports Day and Loud Shirt Day

Care Centre is closed for Public Holidays – Enjoy the Break!

We will all be back at Norwest on Wednesday the 27th of April. All families continue to pay for public holidays but you also receive them as allowable absences for all those families who claim back their 50% rebate. You also have a Make Up Day that can be used for each public holiday if they fall on your child's day of attendance. These need to be used within a month of the public holidays and are subject to your account being up to date.



Parent Newsletter April 2011



Safety in the Car park and gate security



The car park is a dangerous place for children especially with the amount of traffic that moves through it at peak times during the day.

Road safety is a skill that children can learn and here we teach some groovy songs about putting on seatbelts, wearing helmets and staying safe on the road, however it is not enough. The best way to keep children safe is to hold their hand until they are 8yrs old and they should be closely supervised on the roads until they are 10yrs old. Children simply do not have the skills or ability to estimate distance and speed of travelling cars and are easily distracted. Click on this link and go to the fact sheets for some great information on road safety for young children <http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/>

Child Nutrition

We're often asked questions about children's nutrition, so we thought we'd give you a few links to some recognised authorities on health and nutrition. These links are packed full of great information.

- The Australian Breastfeeding Association

<http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au>

- National Health and Medical Research Council Dietary Guidelines for all Australians

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/dietsyn.htm>

- Healthy Kids

<http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/topics/2015.html>

- As always, the Childrens, Youth and Woman's Health Website is a source of practical help

<http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicCategories.aspx>

- The NSW food authority has some food safety tips

<http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/>

- Nutrition Australia

<http://www.nutritionaustralia.org>

Information on safe food handling

Food handling is a big part of a teacher's role here as we serve up to four meals each day for the children. A number of our staff underwent a thorough food handling course late last year and the main things we learnt were that hand washing is the most effective way of preventing food contamination. At every meal time we help children wash their hands so they are ready for their meal and to support that process there are two songs we sing, the first song is to the tune of *Row your boat* and the second is to *1,2,3 4 5*. Maybe you could sing them at home to!

Wash wash wash your hands,
Wash them after play,
Round and round and up and down,
Wash the germs away,
Wash wash wash your hands,
Wash before you eat,
If you sneeze and after the loo,
Then dry them nice and neat.

1 2 3 4 5 wash my hands they feel alive
6 7 8 9 10 then I wash them once again

Why do we wash them so?

Because we want the germs to go

Which germs could that be?

All the germs that bother me!

If you would like any additional information on safe food handling please go to this link:

<http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry/food-business-issues/health-and-hygiene-for-food-handlers/>

Parent Newsletter April 2011



Details of policy changes

Recently we have reviewed and made some minor changes to our Fees and Charges policy under the heading 'Sibling Discount' and to the Leaving the Centre / Giving Notice Policy. We have only made very minor changes to the wording of some of these policies to make them clearer to our families. The reviewed policies were on display in the foyer below the white board and can now be found in our red Parent Policy Folder. Please feel free to comment or give suggestions on any of the changes that have been made. We have also reviewed our policies on Inclusion, Reducing Bias and Equity, Child Abuse and Prevention, Milk bottles, cups and Dummies and Childrens Belongings. None of these policies have been changed.

In March we also had our annual fees review effective as of Monday 11th April, followed by an upcoming entire policy review that will take place this month. You are welcome to make suggestions or comments on the policies displayed in the foyer or feel free to write a note or send Ashley an email about a suggested change you would like to see. We can't always make your suggested change, however we do value all the feedback you give us.

Art and Craft Exhibition

Our Annual Art and Craft exhibition took place a couple of Fridays ago and was a great hit. The staff, children and families all had a fantastic time. We love valuing the childrens wonderful work. We were all excited about having the opportunity to professionally mount your children's art works. Children's art is often not given enough credit. This was everyone's chance to see how creative our little ones are and for all of our children to experience a great sense of pride while we viewed and commented on their works. Each child created their own canvas and were involved in a group project. Congratulations to the following people who won the auctions for the group paintings:



- Donna Gordan – Brown with String
- Sarah Callister – Dia Gon Ally
- Vivian Mohan-Ram – Yellow circle hand prints
- Allison Fuller – Red with Gold Circles
- Frances Elms – Twigs and Leaves
- Leila Khattab – Beach Scene
- Lisa Bu - Round as a Button
- Dinosaurs – McIntyre Family

Hatch and Grow



We will have some eggs arriving at the centre in the first week of May (just after Easter) in an incubator that will hatch into Ducklings. Each child will spend lots of time learning the process of hatching and how animals change and grow. It is fascinating to observe and a wonderful opportunity for your child to learn about life cycles and caring for animals and creatures smaller than them. The ducks will be with us for 2 weeks so you will all have lots of time to see them. Each child will be charged \$2 to help cover the cost of getting the ducks in. Please let Sarah know if you will be absent during that time so she does not charge your account.

Parent Newsletter April 2011



Easter hat Parade



At Easter we like to get into the spirit of the chocolate eating season with something a little creative. We hold an Easter hat parade for the children to participate in. You can get your creative hats on and help your child make a fabulous hat for the parade.



Staff training

Our teachers are always involved in some great training to help further the professional development. Ashley and Nesha are all off to a big course on the Early Years learning Framework in April. Sarah, Nesha and Ashley are also doing a Qikkids webinar which is the accounts program we use here. A number of staff are going to an EYLF workshop this week, there is also an 'Interacting with infants' workshop, anaphylaxis training taking place at our next staff meeting and a 2 day workshop on 'building resilience through positive relationships' plus much, much more.

Staff Changes

Sarah...

As most of you are aware Sarah has jumped back on board and resumed her role as our wonderful Admin Manager. She is now your point of contact for any queries regarding your account, extra days or any other admin enquires. For those of you who don't know Sarah she started at the centre as a trainee 3 years ago. After achieving her Certificate III and spending time in the rooms Sarah took on the role of Admin manager in January 2010. Sarah took extended leave and moved to Melbourne before returning a number of weeks ago.



Congratulations to Ben on the birth of his first baby Ava. Ava is now almost 8 weeks old and is doing great. Ben is loving being a Dad and they have all adjusted to their new family member really well. Ben has started work back at the centre this week; you will see him helping out in all of the rooms.



Jacqui...

A huge welcome to Jacqui who has joined the team here at Norwest as our newest trainee. Jacqui has slotted right into the Ocean Room acting as Assistant to the Turtles group. Jacqui has come from a background in sales for a travel agency and has done a lot of work with children over the years. Jacqui has decided she wants to pursue a career in the Early Childhood industry. Jacqui has had experience working with children at day care centres in Argentina.



Parent Newsletter April 2011



This year Norwest will again be offering the ever popular **Entertainment Books** for families to purchase. These books are terrific value for families offering 25-50% off or 2-for-1 offers from many top restaurants, cafes, take away chains, attractions, and activities in the Parramatta, The Hills, Blue Mountains and Macarthur areas as well as amazing offers in Fashion, Health & Beauty sections and some great offers on resorts, leisure and travel. For a limited time you may purchase an Entertainment book and you will receive over \$15000 in valuable offers that you and your family can use until June 2012. Some of the great places in the entertainment books include Taronga Zoo, Sydney Aquarium, AMF Bowling, Hoyts Cinemas, Putt Putt Golf, and many more! And there are 5% discount cards for Coles shopping. An info leaflet was placed in all families pigeon holes. If we accidently missed you please see office staff.

Reminders

Front Gate - Please do not let your child swing on the gate (it will break and cost you lots to replace). Please take care and ensure your children's hands are being held as you enter and exit through the gate. Children below the age of 10 years do not have the capability or judgement to handle many pedestrian situations. Children need to be accompanied and closely supervised by a parent or adult carer to keep them safer.

Door safety - Please help us maintain the highest possible level of security. At Norwest we run our security fob system to ensure the safety and well being of all our children throughout the centre. Occasionally you may find someone you do not know waiting to come inside at the doors. Please do not let them in. Kindly ask them to wait outside and inform them you will get a staff member to get them. Our staff need to conduct security checks on anyone who is not known to them, and we find it difficult to do this if strangers are able to wander on into the centre at any time.

OUR ANNUAL TRANSITION TO SCHOOL EVENING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 28TH APRIL FROM 6:30 – 8.00PM. THIS IS A GREAT INFORMATION SESSION PROVIDING YOUR FAMILY WITH THE LATEST IN INFORMATION ABOUT TRANSITIONING INTO A NSW SCHOOL.

THE SESSION IS HOSTED BY SCHOOL TEACHERS, EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS AND A CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO PREPARE QUESTIONS & BRING THEM ALONG.

WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE ALL FAMILIES TO ATTEND THIS INFORMATION SESSION AND NOT JUST THOSE OF CHILDREN WHO ARE OFF TO SCHOOL NEXT YEAR. WE INCLUDE INFORMATION ON OUR PRESCHOOL PROGRAM HERE AT NORWEST.

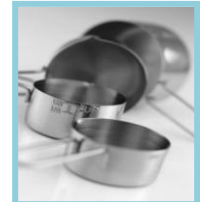
Parent Newsletter April 2011



News from the Kitchen

Our new autumn menu is in action and includes some new and exciting dishes such as a delicious Irish stew (that we had for lunch to celebrate St. Patrick's Day), Roasted lentil and Tomato Soup, and an Asian style chicken salad. Please feel free to share any feedback that you may have with her, there is a feedback from right near the kitchen window. If you cook a particular dish at home that your kids just love we would also love to receive you recipes and incorporate these dishes into future menus.

Michele and Rebecca are already working together on the centres winter menu with the hopes of creating a project and getting the kids actively involved in planting, harvesting and caring for the herbs and vegetables that will go into their meals each day.



Ezi Debit - Direct Debiting your fees

Many of our families have already moved over to Direct Debiting their fees via Ezi-Debit. They've found that it's a super easy way to have fees paid, and haven't had any hiccups sorting it all out. Fees can come out of your bank account or credit card, and you're debited once per fortnight, just before we do a statement run. By June our direct deposit account will be closed down and all families will be paying via cash / cheque or direct debit. Grab a copy of the sign up forms today from our office.

Influenza and Vaccines

With winter approaching some of you may wish to explore the option of flu Vaccines to prevent your children from getting some of the nasty influenza infections that will present during the season. Influenza is not a cold. It is a highly contagious disease. If your children are presenting with any of the following symptoms, usually occurring one to three days after infection, please seek medical advice. As per our Exclusion policy children with such symptoms would be best left home to recuperate.

Fever	Headaches	Muscle and joint pain
Sore throat	Cough	Runny or stuffy nose
Severe tiredness and lethargy		

For more information on the flu, please visit <http://www.fightflu.gov.au/> or speak with your family doctor.



Just a quick reminder to all families to bring in their Blue Book whenever their child receives another immunisation shot. These need to be recorded here at the centre so we appreciate you keeping us up to date. Please be aware of the centres policy on the exclusion of children who are not immunised as well as our full illness and exclusion policy, particularly during the winter months. You can find our red policy folder in front of the office.

"Children who are not immunised may be excluded from the centre during an outbreak, and families will be required to pay full fees during the exclusion period."

Please follow the below link for more information on the National Immunisation Program Schedule:
<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/Content/nips2>



An Australian, State and Territory Governments initiative

When Your Child Comes Home Messy

Red paint in the hair? Blue paint on the jeans? Sand in the shoes? Food on a favorite shirt? White socks that look brown? Sleeves a bit damp?

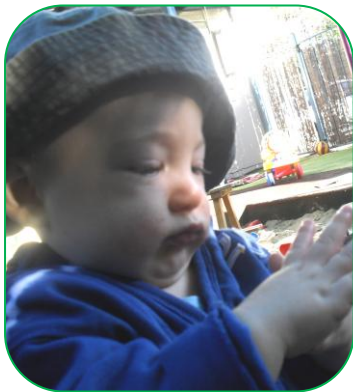
YOUR CHILD PROBABLY....

- Worked with a friend
- Solved a problem
- Created a masterpiece
- Negotiated a difference
- Learned a new skill
- Had a great time
- Developed new language skills



YOUR CHILD PROBABLY DIDN'T....

- Feel lonely
- Become bored
- Do repetitive tasks that are too babyish
- Do worksheets that are too easy
- Do sit down work that discourages learning



Young children really learn when they are actively involved in play.....not when someone is talking to them.

There is a difference between "messy" and "lack of care." Our team made sure your child was fed, warm, offered new skills and planned fun hands-on things to do because that's how young children learn!



Please remember to dress your children in clothes that can get dirty and shoes that are appropriate for running and playing outside. Pack labeled clothes that suit a range of seasons so your child can change if necessary!