

Kenmore District Kindergarten and Preschool

Newsletter

Term 2 - June 2009



President's Report - Susan Mylne

Kenmore District children have wonderful opportunities. We have a children's book lending library, and are one of the few centres to have a puzzle borrowing library. The children benefit from past families who have carefully managed funds to provide quality play areas and equipment. We have benefited from our location by participating in activities with Kenmore State School. Our very dedicated staff continues their learning journey by participating in ongoing professional development. We have a supportive parent body who offer their time and talents to talk to the children about their special interests, help on committees, rosters and working bees, collect science displays, obtain quotes, organise for sinks to be installed and more. **Thank you** to each of you for the contribution you have made during Term 2.

The committee at Kenmore District are aware of the numerous policy changes (state and federal) on the agenda this year (some are outlined below for your information) and are keen to where possible utilise these policy changes to further strengthen and sustain our kindergartens position in early childhood education in the Western Suburbs for the future.

With the overwhelming success of Prep, the government is now turning its attention to the year before Prep so we can provide the head start our children deserve. Queensland's kindy participation rate of 29 per cent is very low compared with other states where participation rates range from 85 per cent to 96 per cent. The Queensland Government will improve the early years system for parents and service providers by creating a new Office for Early Childhood Education and Care, which will report directly to the Minister for Education. This will bring together responsibility for early education and child care services in one agency. Taking lead responsibility for children's early development, this

office will manage the roll-out of the extra kindergarten services (240 in Qld), support the child care sector to offer recognised early education programs, and provide extra support where needed so that all children can access early education services.

A new funding model for community kindergartens is expected to be announced in the later half of 2009. It is uncertain if this funding model will come into effect from 2010 or 2011.

Implementation of Universal Access, ensuring that by 2013, all children in the year before formal schooling will have access to (but not compulsory) high quality early childhood education program delivered by a university-trained early childhood teacher, for 15 hours per week, 40 weeks of the year, in public, private and community-based preschools and child care. Parental choice is integral to this national policy statement.

The implementation of an Early Years Learning Framework will describe the broad parameters, principles and outcomes required to support and enhance children's learning from birth to five years of age as well as their transition to school. This will form the basis for ensuring that children in all early childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning. It was expected that implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework will occur from 2010. This will be complimentary to C&K curriculum Building Waterfalls.

A National Early Years Workforce Strategy will include creating additional early childhood education university places and financial incentives to train. Also Early Childhood Teachers in kindergarten settings are not being included in the proposed federal Modern Teaching Award. If this proposed change in classification takes place, kindergartens will be difficult to staff with qualified teachers, as they no longer will be recognised and rewarded for

their university degree qualifications. This committee is supporting our teachers in the fight to remain under a teacher's award with the primary role of education.

A National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care will raise quality and drive continuous improvement in early childhood education and care services. The key elements of the National Quality Framework are national quality standards (same across child care and kindergarten), a quality rating system, enhanced regulatory approach and the Early Years Learning Framework. Rollout is anticipated from the second part of 2009.

Centre Activities

As well as the wonderful program the children enjoy each day with play, stories, music and a multitude of creative activities, during Term 2 the children will enjoy having their special visitors at kindy - a wonderful opportunity for working parents, grand parents and family friends to see the centre in operation. It was joyful to watch the children's music presentation with our regular music specialist Helga Bateman. A parent offered to co-ordinate delivery of decorated biscuits to the Brookfield Show. Many children then visited the Show and proudly viewed their biscuits. Two groups will be joining with Kenmore State School to celebrate Under 8s week. **Thank you to KSS for inviting us to participate.** Kenmore District children will visit the school, and children from the school will also attend activities at Kenmore District. Of course, the children are also about to achieve great things in their obstacle-a-thon. **Thank you** also to our staff who go to extra effort to make each of these occasions special for all the children.

Ideas and concerns

You are encouraged to talk to us on any issues associated with the centre; this opportunity is not limited to safety issues. If you wish to talk about your child's progress, the program or curriculum, the first point of call is your child's teacher. The teachers are very happy to listen, explain and provide feedback. All of the staff want the best possible experience for your child at Kenmore District. For other issues, you are invited to speak to someone on committee or your class rep.

Enjoy the holidays and stay safe.

Susan Mylne
☎ 3878 9902

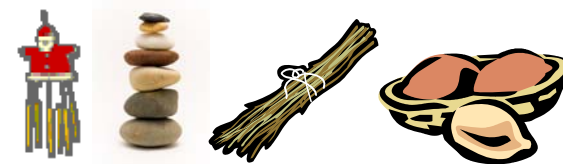


From the Teachers and Assistants

What an adventure we have been on this term!

In the program we began the term focusing on Australian animals following the visit from Dreamworld's Wildlife for Kids. The children enjoyed the visit with the rangers. The children were able to see firsthand a variety of Australian animals including a green tree frog, a shingle back lizard, a barn owl, a ring tail possum and a baby crocodile. The children learned about each animal's life and how it survives in the wild. Bringing real animals into the centre is a way the children can have a real life experience that will have a far greater impact on them than any other, excluding taking them to the natural environment of each animal. They were able to use nearly all their senses to appreciate the beauty and individuality of each animal whilst learning many facts and developing an appreciation of how important and vulnerable our natural heritage is. Many stories, books, art experiences and puzzles helped the children formulate and cement their knowledge and ideas. What the children remembered was amazing! The three day group will extend this project of Australian animals in different environments with our visiting shows "Going Bush" and "The Rainforest Experience".

We are continuing to develop our interactive gardens with the children and the support of many parents. **Thank you** for your contributions. *We are still seeking wind chimes, garden ornaments and toy animals, cut up branches and smooth stones of different sizes and colours as well as a variety of seed pods.*



The children are using their knowledge from past experiences, books and discussions to create features in the garden, for example ponds for the frogs. In his book "Last Child in the Woods: Saving children from nature deficit disorder," Richard Louv reminds us that unlike television nature does not steal time. It amplifies it. It offers new possibilities. The out-of-doors offers a larger world

for children. It can provide places for freedom, exploring and solace. Being in natural outdoor environments helps children thrive not only physically, but socially, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Likewise there are human costs that come with alienation from nature. Today's children are experiencing the symptoms: stress, obesity, fear, depression and ADHD. Well designed playgrounds help change these conditions for children -reducing stress, sharpening their concentration and promoting creative problem solving. We can nurture children's enthusiasm for the out-of-doors and their commitment to protecting nature for generations to come.

In advance we wish to thank all the people who contributed to our Special Visitors Day. The children are talking about who they are inviting and are busy planning their day. They are working out which recipes to use for making morning tea for their special visitor as well as which songs they will be singing. They are excited about showing their special visitors around the centre and sharing their favourite activities with them. We hope all the visitors will enjoy their time with us.



We have plenty to keep our creative minds rolling with the following planned for the rest of the term:

- Combining with Kenmore State School for an Under 8's Activity morning. This will include a picnic morning tea on the school oval with the school children (3 day group).
- The Imagine This show encourages children to use every day items and objects to create imaginary play scenarios. It will reinforce the idea that children do not need the latest and greatest man-made toy sold at the shop to have fun with their friends. Some of the best games are had with the simplest props. This show will encourage children to extend their dramatic play both during inside and outside times (2day group).
- Obstacle-a-thon. This is a great chance for the children to develop their gross motor skills, turn taking, patience, consideration for others and perseverance and at the

same time raise funds to purchase new equipment for the children to use. We will practice going over the obstacle course daily as a lead up to this event. We will be asking for many helpers on the day to assist the children on the course and supervise special stamps to count the laps they have completed. **PLEASE** make an effort to find as many sponsors as you can. This is our **MAJOR** fund raiser for the year and one the children really enjoy and benefit from.

A big **thank you** to all those parents who have given up their valuable time to come on roster so far. We certainly appreciate the extra pair of hands and your child really enjoys you spending the morning with us. It gives you the opportunity to see the program running first hand. We as teachers can achieve so much more with the children when we have that extra pair of hands. If you have been unable to make parent roster on a regular basis or have been unable to come at all, even if you can only stay until morning tea, it is a huge help to us. If any parent would like to participate in an activity with the children, we would love to have your input. Some suitable activities could include cooking, a science experiment, reading a favourite book, telling a story or an art and craft activity.



Early Literacy

Many children are showing an interest in literacy. " Early literacy development does not simply happen ; rather it is a social process, embedded in children's relationships with parents, extended family members, siblings, teachers, caregivers, friends and the wider community" *Fleer and Raban* .

The early childhood setting and the child's home environment play an important role in fostering and supporting children's early literacy skills. Recent research highlights the importance of meaningful experiences e.g. a young child will be more interested and thoughtful about letters within their own name rather than in isolation within the whole alphabet. Writing a shopping list of required items

together with an adult gives context and meaning of these symbol systems to a child and focuses on the importance of how, when and why they are used in daily life.

Parents may sometimes feel their child is not engaging in more formal types of learning literacy before prep, however research shows children who learn formal literacy skills prior to attending school do not do better at school. All children are at different areas of readiness with literacy skills. As teachers we support, encourage and extend children according to their strengths - one child may be scribbling to represent their name, another may be able to write theirs and another may be writing their own name as well as other family and friends. Through our play based program we are able to extend and challenge all these children different levels.

"In Europe formal reading and writing instruction is not taught until a child is six or seven. In Britain three and four year olds are expected to read and write. Seven year olds in Europe were given the same test as seven year olds in England. The results showed that in Britain 18% of students reached the top level, where as in Europe 50% of students reached the top level after two years less teaching"
Too Much Too Soon

This study illustrates that formally teaching reading and writing in early years does not produce better results in the later school years, in fact the opposite can happen.

At kindy we provide many meaningful literacy experiences. You will see early literacy skills being developed in many forms:

- songs, rhymes, recipes, poems, stories
- sharing stories with children assist them in understanding the basic principles of reading text from left to right and top to bottom and the relationships between written words, symbols, spoken words and meaning
- making stories with children- books with photos, drawings and children's stories relating to topics and events at the centre or at home. Children's portfolios, daily journal and group planning experiences also reflect literacy learning.
- Children have access to many writing implements to record their ideas e.g. write a

menu or a shopping list, design stop signs for roads they built

- Visual and auditory discrimination games help develop the underpinning skills for successful reading and writing
- A variety of equipment to develop fine motor control e.g. magnetic mazes, pen, pencil, stamp and paint brush experiences

Children need many materials that support them in transferring their ideas into practice - drawing, scribbling and plenty of opportunities to practice this leads to writing. That is why it is so important to provide plenty of writing and art materials for children to use on a daily basis. For children who are showing an interest in writing, it is important that we model and use the script that they will be using in Prep and throughout their school years. When children are writing their own name or when adults are writing it for them we use a capital letter for the first letter and lower case letters for the rest, i.e. **Mark**, not- MARK. It may seem easier for the child to write in capitals however this will confuse and make things more difficult when they get to school. Please see us if you would like a copy of Queensland script.



WHAT TEACHERS MAKE

The dinner guests were sitting around the table discussing life.

One man, a CEO, decided to explain the problem with education. He argued, "What's a kid going to learn from someone who decided his best option in life was to become a teacher?"

He reminded the other dinner guests what they say about teachers:

"Those who can, do. Those who can't, teach."

To stress his point he said to another guest; "You're a teacher, Bonnie. Be honest. What do you make?"

Bonnie, who had a reputation for honesty and frankness replied, "You want to know what I make? (She paused for a second, then began..)

"Well, I make kids work harder than they ever thought they could. I make a C+ feel like the Congressional Medal of Honour.

I make kids sit through 40 minutes of class time when their parents can't make them sit for 5 without an I Pod, Game Cube or movie rental...

You want to know what I make?" (She paused again and looked at each and every person at the table.)

I make kids wonder.

I make them question.

I make them apologize and mean it.

I make them have respect and take responsibility for their actions.

I teach them to write and then I make them write.

Keyboarding isn't everything.

I make them read, read, read.

I make them show all their work in math. They use their God given brain, not the man-made calculator.

I make my students from other countries learn everything they need to know English while preserving their unique cultural identity.

I make my classroom a place where all my students feel safe.

Finally, I make them understand that if they use the gifts they were given, work hard, and follow their hearts, they can succeed in life.

(Bonnie paused one last time and then continued.)
"Then, when people try to judge me by what I make, with me knowing money isn't everything, I can hold my head up high and pay no attention because they are ignorant... You want to know what I make?"

I MAKE A DIFFERENCE. What do you make Mr. CEO?"

His jaw dropped, he went silent.

Thank You

A big thank you to **Michelle Williams**, Unit 1 3 day group for her work in stocktaking the first aid kits.

Thank you also to **Steve Regan from Sliding Glass Door Repairs (Mobile 0412 645 431)** for his wonderful work on our large classroom doors.



Honorary membership - Alison Kemp

Those persons present at the AGM heard of the tremendous contribution Alison has made to the Kenmore District Kindergarten and Preschool over the past 5 years. Her tireless dedication to the centre was recognised by those members present, awarding Alison with an honorary membership to the Kenmore District Kindergarten and Preschool Association.



Kenmore District C&K Kindergarten MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 6th May 2009

Next Monday 11 May, Shadow Minister for Education and Training Dr Bruce Flegg MP will meet with concerned teachers and parents from Kenmore District Kindergarten and other C&K Kindergartens to discuss early childhood issues.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd pledged that by 2013 all children in the year before formal schooling will have access to a high quality early childhood program delivered by a university trained early childhood teacher for 15 hours per week, in public, private and community based preschools and child care. In Qld currently only 29% of pre prep children have access to university trained teachers, a long way behind other states.

Yet in the proposed modern teaching award by Education Queensland, Early Childhood Teachers in Kindergarten settings are not being included in this award, they are being taken out of the Queensland Independent Teachers Union and being placed in the Miscellaneous Workers Union alongside Childcare workers.

If this proposed change in classification takes place, kindergartens will be difficult to staff with qualified teachers, as they no longer will be recognised and rewarded for their university degree qualifications. What qualified teachers would choose to work with less pay, holidays and other benefits than other teaching sectors? Teachers from C&K Kindergartens should remain under a

teacher's award with a teachers union as their primary role is education.

Policies and plans should be implemented to bring childcare standards up to kindergarten standards, not the other way around. If childcare too can attract good qualified teachers, with equivalent working conditions to other teaching sectors, then the outcomes for children will improve.

This proposed change is in direct contrast to the national election promise of universal access (15hr for pre-preps) by university qualified teacher - the commonwealth are entrusting the state to implement this however Queensland is already a long way behind other states with only 29% of pre-prep aged children currently accessing university trained teachers....NSW 65%, Vic 97%, NT 78%, ACT 83%, SA 93%, WA 100%, TAS 100% (source Early Childhood Education and Care Report to the Premier of Queensland by Marilyn McMenemy July 2008). Will these planned changes only make access to teachers at pre-prep level worse?

These changes in classifications are also happening at a time when teachers are protesting as Queensland teachers' pay is amongst the lowest in the nation, with differences between Qld and NSW apparently up to \$7000 less a year.

For more information on this meeting with Dr Flegg, please contact Donna Finland on 0409 226 504.



Indooroopilly state school

We have been advised by Indooroopilly State school that they may soon be unable to take many children out of their catchment area. If you would like your child to be put on their waiting list for next year please contact the school ASAP.

<http://www.indooroopilly.eq.edu.au/O6enrolment/enrolmt.htm>

Problems with child disobedience Is your child non-compliant?

The University of Queensland is conducting research regarding the effectiveness of a brief parenting seminar for parents who are concerned about their child's behaviour.

Child disobedience is common and can be improved. If you have concerns about your child's disobedience the Parenting and Family Support Centre at the University of Queensland would love to hear from you. A Triple P - Positive Parenting Program seminar for parents with young children who display disobedience has been developed. The seminar will provide parents with information and helpful everyday tips for dealing with disobedience and improving their child's behaviour. The Triple P Parenting Program is supported by 25 years of empirical research.

If you are a parent of a 2 to 5-year-old child who is often disobedient, we would love to hear from you!

The study hopes to provide support for brief group-based parenting interventions so that more parents can have access to parenting advice. Results of this study will also be available to participants.

Alina Morawska and Danielle Milne
Parenting and Family Support Centre

For more information about the study, please contact:

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Centre for Hire

Our reverse cycle air conditioned centre rooms are available for hire for meetings, etc out of operational hours. Please pass on our contact details (Alita as main contact) to interested groups/people. Hiring of rooms provides valuable additional funding for our centre.

