

September Newsletter 2010



Directors Notes **Happy Spring to all!** It's lovely to feel the days warming up and the afternoons lasting longer for a little more outdoor play time.

With accreditation just around the corner I thought I would tell you our plans, as always, are to achieve a high quality score in all areas. If you would like to learn more about accreditation please click on this link <http://www.ncac.gov.au/>. We will be keeping you up to date with what happens for accreditation as we go along and asking you for lots of your feedback and input into the whole process.

The next few months are exciting with the Wararabs moving into the transition to school phase of their program. We've also got our end of year concert practice and a lot of exciting events planned.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 21st September** – Fireman visit
- 16th September** – Waratah and Acacia Sports day
- 17th September** – Lilli Pilli Sports Day
- 22nd September** – Fancy Dress day
- 3rd October** – Daylight savings starts
- 4th October** – RSPCA Awareness Week
- 4th October** – World Space Week – Waratahs and Acacias will investigate space to extend interest in building rocket ships
- 6th October** – Vet visit
- 8th October** – RSPCA Happy Tails Day – Mikhala's dog Percey the pug is dropping in to say 'Hi'
- 10th October** – National Nutrition Week – children will be involved in making healthy afternoon teas and lots of healthy/nutritious conversations will be had during the week.
- 15th October** - Waratah and Acacia Sports day
- 16th October** – Granny Smith Festival
- 18th October** – Lili Pilli Sports day
- 25th October** – Pink Ribbon Day
- 26th October** – **Petting zoo coming**
- 28th October** – Bravehearts visit
- 29th October** – Bandana Day and Halloween celebrations – Dress in halloween costumes for fun!

DATES FOR HOLIDAY CLOSING

Many of you are beginning to plan your end of year holidays so we thought it would be timely to update everyone with our closing dates and times.

Top Ryde Early Learning will close at **4pm sharp** on **Thursday 23rd December 2010** and will reopen at **7am** on **Monday 10th January 2011**. If you have any questions about the end of year, please speak with Nicole, Nesha or Lorna.

Thursday the 28th of October we are excited that the children will be treated to a performance by "Ditto" from Bravehearts. This is a brilliant program about **Protective** Behaviours that is incredibly valuable for all of our children from 3 years up. We will be putting a flyer into your pocket about this event. The show costs \$4 per child and the cost will be charged to your account. If it is not your child's day to come, you are welcome to bring them and stay for the show, just speak with Nicole".

Thank yous

Thomas and Josie Berry, Dilan Lee, Joedy Papa, Harry Waugh, Ethan Kong, Connor and Lewis Spurdle and Lucas Scheiler for paper and envelopes in all shapes and sizes. We always love receiving lots of paper, even if they have printing on one side, as we so many young creative learners!

Sophia Kristianson for teacher resources, Tamara Waterfeild for a picnic blanket, June Yun for delicious and beautiful cakes that we all enjoy, Luas Scheiler for lots of great baskets, Chelsea Seeto for Japanese writing books and coming in to make Sushi with us, George Panagopoulos for lovely fresh fruit, Hayden for bringing your Grandad in to play with us, Dylan O'Neil for bringing your Grandma in to read us a story

Remember we have an open door Policy which means you are welcome at to join us at any time of day to join in with activities, read a story or just hang out with your little one for a while. We do recomend that you don't pop in and out too much for the first 6-8weeks of child starting care as this can be very unsettling for them, however if you would like to spend time here with them, come by early in the afternoon to play together. If you have a skill or particular activity you would like to share, there are calendars in our locker rooms that you can add your name to. Let the teachers know if ou would like to participate anytime, we are always happy to have you around!

Parking and fines

This is a big and really important one that so many of the parents here are still choosing to ignore. **Please** follow the road rules when using our car park, drive in and along to the 1st space right at the end of the drive and if you are staying for more than five minutes please use a parking space. We know how furstrating it can be when you are needing to get to work or just want to go home at the end of your day, however it is your children you are putting at risk. Please do not ever reverse out of our driveway and please do not stop at the end of the driveway on the road waiting to get onto the driveway.(if you can't drive in, you can't wait on the road and hold up traffic, you have to drive around the block) We are currently investigating some more options for the car park, however until there is an alternative you must follow road rules. A parking inspector came in to see us today and told us about a frightening incident this morning. He explained that if he sees people stopping outside the driveway or reversing out, especially during school times he will be fining them \$258 and a demerit point will be included as it is such a serious offence. Please also remember that it is illegal to leave any children in the car while you come to collect/ drop off your children.

Road Safety

Young children always need an adult's help to keep them safe because they:

- Are small and difficult for drivers to see in the busy traffic environment.
- Don't always do what we expect them to do.
- Sometimes have a short attention span.
- May not make full use of their side vision.
- Can be easily distracted.
- May not always do the same thing in the same situation.
- Will focus on what is important to them.
- Are not able to cope with sudden changes in the road traffic environment.
- Take in different information from the road traffic environment than adults.
- Have difficulty judging speed and distance.
- Have difficulty in identifying where sounds are coming from.
- Are not able to understand what 'safety' means, and what will keep them 'safe'.

Health and Wellness - There are a couple of areas we would like you to help us with.

Illness at the Centre

We have noticed that some of our families are sending their children in unwell. We are aware that sometimes kids become unwell while they are with us. However, if they have a runny nose, a cough, fever or are generally unwell you need to keep them at home. We are aware that it can be frustrating to change your plans/work schedule etc but we have this policy to protect your children. We are happy to provide a letter for your employers if you need one. Please refer to our illness and exclusion policy for time frames of when you need to keep your children home.

No Nuts please

It is important to us that all the children who attend stay safe and healthy at all times and so we would like to remind you to stop bringing foods that may include nuts in them. We have had several incidents in the last month when children have come in with peanut butter or nut based musli bars. There are children that attend the centre who are highly allergic to nuts and so we have made Top Ryde Early Learning a nut free zone. Please help us to keep it that way.

WHAT'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN?



We have a fabulous new spring menu about to go up on the wall with lots of delicious dishes like tuna and crab sushi, san choy bow, vegetarian curries (thanks Christina Ellis), chicken and Mango salad and Donna Hay's delicious 'Chicken, Risoni and Lemon soup'. If you have any delicious recipes that you would like us to try, please contact Kathy.

COOKBOOK

We're developing a cook book for Christmas that you will be able to order, and your children will personalise. We'd love to include some of your favourite kids' meals, so please speak with Kathy or email us at director@toprydeearlylearning.com.au with your ideas before Friday 24th September!

SERVICES TO HELP YOU AROUND THE COMMUNITY

- Ryde community health centre – [Ryde Early Childhood Health Centre](#)

Services involve the multi-disciplinary care of children from birth to five years of age. Treatment is provided for early childhood conditions relating to developmental, behavioural, feeding or sleeping disorders.

- Pregnancy and Parenting Wellbeing Centre- www.pregnancyandparenting.com.au

At the Pregnancy & Parenting Wellbeing Centre you will find a dedicated team of health professionals, offering specialised services to support you and your family.

- Wesley Mission www.wesleymission.org.au/centres/Family/familiesconnect.asp

Our services provide support at every stage in a family's life - financial and legal difficulties, domestic violence, family mediation, foster care, kids' camps, short-term accommodation and more.

- Kidspot – www.kidspot.com.au

A pregnancy and parenting resource to find advice and activities for baby and children

We also have a wealth of resources available for you at the centre through our children's library, staff resources and information folders in our foyer. Please speak with staff should you require any specific information from allergies to sun safety, immunisation to nutrition.

STAFF TRAINING

OH&S – the whole team did some great online training on OH&S this month and Amy Mikhala and Nicole went to some to an 'Early Years Learning Framework' inservice. Matt, Bryn, Nat, Dalia and Meg are due to go to the same one this month. Amy is brushing up on transition to school information with a visit to a primary school information session this week. Nicole did a course on responsibilities of an Authorised supervisor and staff recruiting course and in the next few weeks we are all embarking on a food handling course.

Mikhala is continuing her Diploma, Rachelle has started her Cert III in Childrens Services, Natalie is continuing her Cert III in Childrens Services, Matt is enrolling in his Cert III in Childrens Services and continuing his degree in PDHPE.

And, as always, we are continuing to support new entrants to the industry by mentoring **university and tafe students** on 'prac placements' - where they get to put all of their theory into practice. You'll see some of them around the centre in the coming weeks. They are often a little afraid, as this is often their very first practical experiences of child care so if you see one of them say hi!

SPOTLIGHT ON MEGAN!



Originallly from Parkes, Megan has joined the Top Ryde Early Leraning team in the Lilli Pilli Room. All the children have warmed up to Megans friendly character and as a centre we are loving the contribution Megan adds to our team. Megan has a Diploma in Childrens Services and several years experince working with children. Megan plays hockey and likes to paint abstract artworks and hang out with her partner Rick in her spare time.

Our Male Teachers and their interviews We created a little stir in the industry having an abunance of male teachers at Top Ryde Early Learning and manged to feature in an industry article - once again highlighting our leadership in the child care industry; click on the link below to read this great article!

Thank you for all the wonderfull feed back you have given us on the Radio, newspaper and TV interviews. We all love having our male teachers around and believe they add so much value to the teaching and Early Learning environment here at Top Ryde Early Learning.

Matt was featured on 2UE with Tim Webster, and we've managed to put that audio file on our website – take a look. <http://www.toprydeearlylearning.com.au/>

This is the industry article! <http://www.careforkids.com.au/childcarenews/2010/september/men-in-child-care.html>



STAFF MOVEMENTS:



Megan who is Diploma trained and has several years experience has quickly settled into the role in the Lilli Pilli room as Room leader and is really enjoying the new environment. For anyone who has not met Megan say 'hi' next time you see her, we know she has been trying to get around to all the parents to introduce herself.



Tom has joined our team and will be working in the Acacia room. He has a BA in arts and is super creative. Tom is also starting his Cert III in childrens services.



And **Laura** who has been working casually has taken a permanent internal relief position with us. Laura has a Cert III and is working on her Diploma, you will often see her playing lots of group games in the garden!



Bryn has stepped in to the Waratah room and has a BA in Education (Early Eaducation). He will work with Amy, Shaun and Rachelle to ensure everyone who is going, is confident to go off to big school next year.



Kirsty dropped by to say 'Hi' to the staff and children a week ago and recieved lots of lovely hugs from everyone. Baby Angus is doing great and growing so quickly! Kirsty will be back on the team starting with part time hours early next year and asked us to say 'Hi' to everyone.

Many of you would have also seen the 'black van' in the carpark that means that **Tristan** is here. Tristan has got to be the 'handiest' handyman we've ever had - he's able to fix ANYTHING and he does a great job every single time. If you've got a bunch of stuff at home on the 'to do' list, we highly recommend him - you can call him direct on 0414 844 461.



Staff member of the month for August was Dalia for her consistant and happy attitude, plus she had been doing some really great experiences with the children that were well thought out and planned.

For September Kathy wins Staff member of the month. Kathy is a happy face at any time of the day for everyone has been cooking the most delicious dishes.



Family Meeting

Great turn out for our family meeting this year and lots of really good feedback on what you would like to see more of as well as what you have not been seeing as much of lately. You told us that your children love dress up days so we are planning a couple in the next month, keep an eye on the email for more details. You also talked about wanting more information on the program so we are in the process of creating some extra project books for you to read about what your kids have been learning. There was a comment on getting more personal information in your child's portfolio so we will continue supporting and teaching our staff (booked some training) on how to present these to better incorporate more personal information in them.

Anonymous Feedback

We have a white folder in the foyer that has 'communication' sheets in it for you. They allow you to give us feedback be it positive or critical. Alternatively you are able to email Nicole at any time or drop in for a chat if you have any ideas or feedback that you would like us to consider. On that, we take all complaints seriously and would like you to feel comfortable coming to talk to us at any time. Feedback and ideas on things you think we do well or would like to see more of are always welcome and we will do our best to implement all ideas that align with our philosophy.

Environment

We've been working on creating a more natural environment for the children in the garden and have planted some lovely grasses to create a softer frame and sensory place for the children along with some new herbs for eating smelling and feeling! The vegetable patch has been planted with broad beans, lettuce, cabbage and broccoli. The herbs we planted last season are still producing heaps of food for our meal times!. If you like gardening and would enjoy gardening with the children chat to Nicole about how you can get involved.

Where are all the staff?

We often have families comment that when the children are outside, they can't seem to see any staff! And yet, we know that when we move the children outside our ratios actually drop (ie we need more staff, not less). So we spent some time trying to figure out why families felt that way, and realised that it was because the team are doing exactly what we tell them to do - which is to 'get in' with the kids. Rather than standing back and watching from a distance, our team are down at the children's level participating in the activities, and engaging the children in the planned learning opportunities we provide outdoors. Quite often they've got their socks and shoes off and are in the sandpit, or they're inside the cubbyhouse, or sitting down at the outdoor tables working on literacy skills, or lying on the rugs having a quiet moment reading with the children. We know it sometimes makes them hard to find, so we've issued them all with "Top Ryde Early Learning Hats " to wear outside to try and make them a bit more identifiable. It might take a few moments to find the team, but they are out there, ensuring that your children are safe all the time!

END OF YEAR CONCERT

To celebrate all the wonderful achievements throughout the year, Top Ryde Early Learning hosts a party for the whole centre in the December. You will have the opportunity to share in some great experiences with the children including singing, concerts and for the children off to school, a graduation! Due to it being quite a big event we have separated the end of year concert from the Graduation ceremony for the children that are going off to school. As we get closer to the dates we will update you with more specific information but for now, mark these dates in your diary. Grandparents, friend and family are warmly invited to join us on the night.

End of year concert – Friday 3rd of December – starting at 5pm

Graduation for Waratahs going to school – Monday the 6th of December – starting at 3pm



Fathers and Grandfathers day

Thanks to all our dads and Grandads (and mums) who came along to share breakfast with us and our children for Fathers day. We have had lots of great feedback from the morning and have some lovely pictures to share. Keep an eye on the hall way where we will be displaying some of our recent events. And of course we will add them to your end of year photo CDs.



POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE INFORMATION

A positive approach to behaviour guidance focuses on a child's strength and takes a developmental view of behaviour. Rather than constantly seeking to control children's behaviour or narrowly focusing on an inappropriate behaviour, positive guidance acknowledges that learning to behave is like any other developmental task a child has to learn. Just as a child needs to learn to walk, a child needs to learn how to behave in a socially acceptable manner. We wouldn't punish a toddler for falling over, nor should we punish a child who makes a behavioural mistake. Mistakes are an opportunity to teach a child a more skilful behaviour (Porter, p.33, 1999).

Two of the biggest challenges children face are learning acceptable behaviour and being able to manage their own behaviours. Behaviour guidance is all the things you do and say to help children learn and demonstrate acceptable behaviour. The aim of positive behaviour guidance, is for children to extend their capacity to manage their own behaviour and rely less on carers to guide them. This takes time and means that the child needs to understand what is acceptable and needs to develop the will power or self control to manage their own behaviour. Behaviour guidance is about supporting and encouraging children to learn to do the right thing and to want to do it. Behaviour guidance is part of your relationship and daily interactions with babies through to older children. Some ways to encourage positive behaviour guidance include:

- Helping them feel secure and letting them know that you are there to help them
- Letting them know when they have done something you approve of and like
- Encourage them to use language to express their needs, wants and feelings
- Help them to deal with conflict constructively and with positive outcomes
- Offer materials, equipment and experiences that engage their interests
- Give them choices and let them make some decisions
- Help them to feel good about themselves and to appreciate, care and respect for others

For more information, please go to the following link <http://www.ncac.gov.au/factsheets/factsheet6%20.pdf>