

"The Elder Street Herald"

June July Edition

In this edition we will be talking about:

***REVIEW OF PARENT INFORMATION EVENING
*CHANGES TO PROGRAMMING - EMERGENT CURRICULUM
*DENTAL VISIT *CALLS FROM THE CENTRE * FAMILY DETAILS UPDATE
*CHILD CARE BENEFIT CHANGES *WARM CLOTHES
*NEW SHADES IN THE PLAYGROUND
*GEORGIA'S FARWELL - STAFF CHANGES
*FACE PAINTING TREAT - great photos!!**



Our lovely Georgia at her farewell afternoon tea

WELCOME TO ELDER STREET

We would like to welcome little Cameron to the Possum's room. Cameron is Alissa from the Wallabies, little brother. We are very happy to have Cameron and hope mum and dad (Melissa and John) enjoy their time at the centre second time around!!

DENTAL INFORMATION VISIT



Linda showing the children how to brush the "big teeth" - 10 times each side!!



Maicee the dentist being shown how to brush Alissa's teeth

On Tuesday 3 July we had a visit from Linda a dental hygienist. The talk was very interesting and the children listened well and enjoyed the songs and involvement of learning about looking after their teeth.

Linda talked about eating the right foods and the children were able to share some of the foods they understood as "sometimes food" like; lollies, cakes, biscuits and juice. They were also able to tell us all about food that is good for their teeth like; fruit, vegetables, meat and milk. Using the "big teeth" Linda showed the children how to brush their teeth properly and explained that they still need mum or dad to help them do it properly until they are much bigger. She showed them how to "flick and make circles" ten times on each side of their mouth and also sang a song about drinking water after they eat called "swish, swish, swallow". There was a story and some dental/patient acting by Maicee and Alissa - a great morning of learning and fun!

Our special thanks to Karen van Eldik for organizing this visit and the ongoing program that her dental students will be implementing at the centre in the coming months!

PARENT INFORMATION EVENING

We held our first information evening for this year on 30 May. Lisa Sloane an Occupational Therapist came and talked about how play is the most important tool for preparing your child for school. The book that Lisa and her business partner have written "Skills for School - your child can fly" is available to borrow from our Parent Library. After listening to her talk about very interesting and surprising

information with lots of audience participation and learning for all, it was clear that this information would have been extremely relevant to parents of children of all ages not just those going to school. If you missed out this time, don't fret, we are planning to have her back next year. Thanks to those parents who came along for the very interesting and fun night.

CALLS TO PARENTS FROM THE CENTRE

An important reminder to parents about being contacted by the centre if your child is ill. For the best interests of all the children, especially the sick little one, we would strongly encourage parents when they are contacted by us to collect their child, that they make it a priority to come directly to the centre. It may seem that stopping at the shops or finishing one last errand before coming here will only take a few minutes, however in the mean time we have a sad, sick little person, staff that are monitoring that child closely therefore neglecting the other children somewhat, and other children at risk of infection. We do not call parents to come to collect children on a whim, the situation is always carefully considered, so we would ask that parents offer us the same careful consideration. Many thanks.

UPDATING FAMILY INFORMATION - on a similar note could parents as a matter of urgency contact the centre if they have had any changes to home, work or mobile phone numbers. We rely totally on being able to contact you on the information you provide us with on enrolment. If that changes, please either phone the centre or leave a note of any new contact information in the fee/message box in the foyer. Thanks again.

NEW PLAYGROUND SHADE SAILS



New sandpit shade cover

After the events of 8 June when we thought the whole of Newcastle (including us!) would get washed away and our playground would never see the sun again - it stopped raining!!!! We haven't had too much time outside lately, but we are very happy with the new shade structures and feel they will really help our back playground come summer time, be a much cooler space for the children.



New larger sails in the climbing area

Our next job is to create some seating/storage for the sandpit area and then when the weather is a little friendlier and predictable we will introduce some grass and trees.

We hope you all feel the equipment levy for this year was allocated wisely - we think so!

FEE & CHILD CARE BENEFIT CHANGES

All families received a letter outlining the changes to fees come 2 July 2007. Attached to the letter was a current statement and also new weekly fee sum. We needed to raise our fees to meet ongoing costs of running the centre and so took advantage of the Child Care Benefit's rebate-able hourly fee increase from \$2.96 to \$3.37. This is why even though our daily fees have increased, some families fees would still be less than before 2 July 2007. I have today (11/7/07) received a new financial year centre statement from the Family Assistance Office with updated percentages for families who have given new income estimates. For these families, you will receive another note with amended weekly fee amounts. If any one would like to discuss the change to fees or child care benefit please do not hesitate in contacting me in the office Tues-Fri 8.30 -5.00pm. Thanks.

STAFF UPDATE - changes to room staff for 2007

BABY POSSUMS: We had a lovely afternoon tea a couple of weeks ago when Georgia left the centre to begin her maternity leave. She is due to have her baby in early August. We welcome Donna McRae who is working with Karen (Kate and Shelly) in the nursery. We feel very lucky to have Donna who is a qualified teacher joining our team for 3 months. If you have not been introduced to Donna, stop and say hi as you come through the nursery. Donna is doing a fantastic job and has loads of experiences working at many different children's services in the Hunter area. Karen, Kate and Shelly will remain working in the Baby Possums as per usual.

TODDLER JOEYS: As of next week (16 July 2007) Andrea will be leaving us for 3 months to begin her teaching internship at Jewel's Public School. In her absence I will be working in the Joey's Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday each week. When Andrea completes her internship she will be returning to work at our centre again as a teacher. She will be taking over from Donna in replacing Georgia for the remaining three months of the year. The end of 2007 will see Andrea leave Elder Street as she will be pursuing teaching jobs in primary schools, getting married in March and then traveling overseas for 3 months - busy girl!! April and Kate will continue to work in the Joeys as per usual. Towards the end of the year we will be looking to have another casual child care worker join the Joey team so I can resume my office and directing role full time.

PRESCHOOL WALLABIES: No big changes here, Kim will be having a few weeks off to complete a university practicum for her teaching degree and Sheree will be having 2 weeks off towards the end of September for her honeymoon - very exciting.

If you have seen some new faces around the centre lately, it is due to us trialing new staff for casual work and also potential traineeships. Please feel free to direct any further questions you may have regarding staffing to myself or Kim.



PROGRAMMING AT ELDER STREET - new ways emerging....

We have some very exciting news to share with our community regarding the planning and programming we do for the children at the centre. For those parents who have attended our information evenings regarding our Focus Child System of programming, they will understand that programming to date has been quite structured and follows a "box" type

format. This system has been tried and tested and used for many years. However, as with all professions, new research, methods, models and curriculums are constantly being developed for us to consider - and consider we have. Since the beginning of this year the staff have been involved in learning about another way of programming, a way that is we believe a better way for children to learn and reach their potential. It also allows for further development in the relationships between home and the centre. This way of planning is called the "**Emergent Curriculum**". It is actually not a new concept and has been around for many years. Very briefly, the Emergent Curriculum follows the principles that a curriculum is what happens in the educational environment, not what is planned to happen, but what actually takes place. Children between the ages of 0 and 5 do not learn because they are taught. They learn as a result of their own doing, through actions, relationships, inquiry, opportunity and repetition. With this in mind the children lead their own learning and staff act as facilitators and assistants to their learning. The process uses two main tools:

Daily Reflective Journal: By using this journal method of recording, the focus of programming weekly and filling out a sheet of boxes shifts to recording daily what occurs. The diary style of programming will include photographs and detailed entries of what happened during the day. This ongoing journal then forms the basis for each child's individual portfolio of learning.

Individual Portfolio: Currently at the end of each year we send home a portfolio of children's art work for the year. What parents do not get to see is how the child created this art work, what the art work means to them in terms of learning and development and where else that art work may have led

them to further learn. Using the Emergent Curriculum, the children will have a growing and living portfolio of learning whilst they attend the centre. Included in the portfolios are work samples of art, photographs and explanations of learning that occurs at the centre (similar to the written observations we now carry out), our professional interpretation of their learning and further opportunities and planning. Each child will have approximately one portfolio entry per month and we believe they will be not only informative but also a treasured memory of your child's early years.

It is still early days at Elder Street on the road to moving towards the use of the Emergent Curriculum. We are presently engaged in training with some of our local institutions, seeking advice from other services that are already using this method and doing lots of in-service training and work-shopping. There are quite a few steps towards our end goal and the families of the centre need to be involved in this process for it to be a truly successful transition. This is step one and we will be keeping you up to date with any new information. Once we as a team feel more confident in our understanding of the Emergent Curriculum we will be presenting some examples of the Daily Journal and Portfolio work to the families. We also plan to organise a speaker to attend the centre at our October Parent Information evening to share further information on this topic with staff and families of the centre. Isn't it wonderful that even as adults, we never stop learning....

WARM CLOTHES REMINDER....

Please ensure that you pack a warm jacket or coat for your child when they are attending care. The children absolutely love playing outdoors and are happy to play in any weather. To make sure that they can play and stay warm they really do need a warm jacket and a spare change of warm clothes each day - and of course we don't need to remind any parents to label all clothing.....or do we!!!???????

IMPORTANT SECURITY REMINDER!!!!!!

When parents ring the doorbell and come through the security door, please ensure that no one else comes through with you at the same time. We ask that all parents ring the door bell so we know exactly who is coming into the centre. If someone you do not know is standing in the foyer, please do not let them in the centre without us speaking to them first. If we do not know a person at our door, we will always speak to them through the system first and then meet them at the door. We do not let strangers into the centre and ask that you help us with this. Thanks.

FACE PAINTING FUN

Here are some beautiful and funny faces...



Big thanks to Jesse's (the tiger to the left) mum Emily for asking her friend Lisa (the clever face painter) to come to Elder Street and share such a special treat on a cold, rainy winter day.. thanks Em and Lisa!

More thanks to all our very generous parents....

Killen family (Darcy) for donating the fantastic super big reels for us to play with...

Griffith family (Egan) for donating lots of very lovely toys...

Younger family (Isaac & Bella) for donating lots of fun bubble mix....

Stoddart family (Georgia & Imogen) for donating loads of very popular stickers for the Wallaby room

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS FOR MAY, JUNE & JULY!



May

Caleb turned 4 in May - sorry for leaving you off May's birthday list!!!!

June

Joseph turned 1

Maya turned 2

Shona turned 2

Mitchell turned 4

Georgia turned 4

Olivia turned 4

July

Sophie turned 2

Isabella turned 2

Abbey turned 3

Finn turned 4

Jesse turned

Jorjia turned 4



Happy Birthday to everyone!!!!



Latest Editions...

More beautiful babies, how exciting....

Welcome to *Gabrielle*, a very special sister for Isaac (Wallabies) and Isabella (Possums) and little girl for Katherine and Ben - well done!!

Welcome to *Spencer*, who joins his two big brothers Sy and Charlie (Possums) and mum and dad Josephine and Grant - congratulations!!

Welcome to *Anthony*, a son for Rose and Rob and little brother to Bianca (Wallabies) and Therese (Joeys) - worth the wait for sure!

We are so glad to share in your family's special times
.....congratulations everyone!

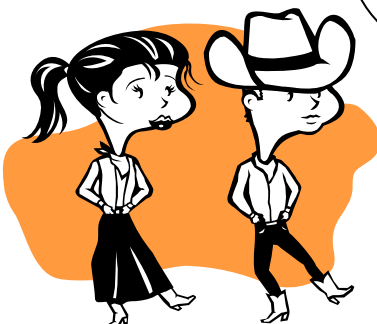


Beautiful Spencer

Don't forget to return your RSVP slip and gold coin donation for the Elder Street Family Bushdance on Friday 27 July 2007 from 6.00 - 7.30pm

A great night for the whole family and the chance to win a prize for best dressed "country and western family"

Yeee-haawww!!!!



See you next month.... Team Elder Street...