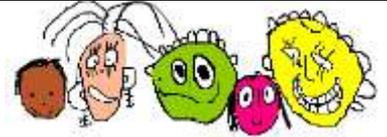


Hamilton Community Pre-School Newsletter



"Where discoveries, learning and fun connect."

Term 1 2018

Week 10

Hi everyone,

I am so sorry that it has taken me so long to produce this newsletter, but it has been crazy at Pre-School what with changes to the National Quality Standards, new programs needing to be organised just to name a few.

I am glad everyone has settled back into Pre-School and are looking forward to approaching new learning ideas with enthusiasm.

OUR PROGRAMS

Jackie - Children's Wellbeing

Hamilton Community Preschool has been fortunate enough to be a part of the Kids Foundation SeeMore Safety Education Program. This program engages educators and children to nurture a "think safe, play safe" attitude which children can implement throughout their lives. This program establishes the foundation for developing risk management life skills that will increase safety awareness and decrease injuries in children.

Educators felt that it was important for us to start with Safety with a Friend because we have been noticing that during Term 1 many inappropriate behaviours by the children, namely playing very rough with the toys, hurting one another, not greeting educators in the morning particularly when they greet the children, lying and not answering when a peer or educator speaks to them and so on. The concern for us is that these types of behaviours are not improving as the weeks progress

This program helps us learnt how to be happy with a friend and include

- Sharing
- Being kind
- Caring about others
- Being welcoming

We are working very hard to help the children understand how inappropriate some of the behaviours are and to support them, together we will be creating a Book of Responsibilities to use as a reflective tool for the children to revisit. It is important to note that the responsibilities are written in the positive sense e.g. we walk inside rather than no running inside etc.

The aim of this book is for the children and educators to create the responsibilities and hopefully be able to recognise, demonstrate and have ownership of the appropriate behaviours.

Reel – OMG

It has been a manic term, as you are aware the Tuesday children were involved in shooting a commercial, we were all very tired after that, we have had changes to the National Quality Standards so that meant a lot of variations to our policies, Quality Improvement Plan and so forth and not to mention getting STEM uploaded and organised for the children to be involved in the program.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths)

As you are aware the Pre-School is included for the pilot scheme for introducing STEM to Early Childhood Services. It will be running through the year with there being 4 apps that the children can interact with, these are: -

- **App 1 is Celebration** - Spatial Reasoning which includes patterns and ordering
- **App 2 Adventure** where the children will look at location and arrangement
- **App3 Create and Make** - the children will be discovering representations
- **App 4 Explore** - which is investigating

The apps look great and are very user friendly, the Early Learning Stem Australia (ELSA) was created by the University of Canberra and received funding to produce and support the program.

The Pre-School has committed itself to this program and to achieve the goal of developing the children's learning and understanding of the concepts, we will be following specific steps namely:

STEP 1 - Experience

The children will experience the STEM concepts through their everyday play. Educators will be helping your child notice the concepts - has your child gone home and called him or herself a 'Pattern Sniffer or engineer' these are Habits of Mind other examples are Inquirers, Observers, Describers, Encoders,

Decoders, Experimenters, Measurers and Predictors. Habits of Mind is a way of thinking about science, technology, engineering, and mathematics that is so integrated into the child's learning they become "mental habits". Then the children will begin to recognise their own experience and label it with a Habit of the Mind.

Educators will be marking off those children who have been engaging with experiences that promote STEM and then guiding them onto stage 2. We will be mindful of those children that are not participating in a STEM experience and encouraging them to have a go by asking questions that provoke STEM thinking

STEP 2 - Represent

This is where the children engage with the ELSA apps and can represent their ideas on the app.

Step 3 - Apply

The children can now apply what they have learnt from the app with more hands-on activities.

Educators will also be monitoring the amount of time each child is on the ipad.

If you would like further information regarding the program, please go to <https://elsa.edu.au/>

I was only looking at this webpage and they will be uploading a newsletter very soon.



Some STEM Happenings at Pre-School



The Sculptures

I appreciate how exciting it is for everyone to see the sculptures and wanting to take them home. I am organising for them and (hopefully) other children's work to be exhibited. Now my theory is (and this could be just because I am on a commercial high) is to go big or go home so I have contacted the Newcastle Regional Gallery to exhibit the children's work....to date I have not heard back from them. If not then we have a lot of other options available to us, my goal is to hold it early next term.....so please stay tuned and I will keep you up dated.

I have also sent a submission to the Little Scientist 2018 Awards for recognition of the sculptures as a STEM project, fingers crossed with that one.



Pre-School Pets

We have pets at Pre-School - Spiky Leaf insects. Which are very fascinating creatures; here's some fun facts: -

Stick insects can shed and regenerate their limbs to escape attacks by predators

Stick insects can reproduce parthenogenetically, without the need for males

Stick insect eggs resemble seeds scattered about the forest floor

Stick insect eggs may attract ants, which then collect and store the eggs in their nests

Stick insect eggs resemble hard seeds and have a special, fatty capsule called a *capitulum* at one end. Ants enjoy the nutritional boost provided by the capitulum and carry the eggs back to their nests for a meal. Once the ants feed on the fats and nutrients, they toss the eggs onto their garbage heap where they continue to incubate safe from predators. As the nymphs hatch, they make their way out of the ant nest.

Males



I will be asking the children to take them home during the holidays and weekends. They are low maintenance all they need is fresh gum leaves. I will provide an information sheet. We also have millions of babies if you would like a pet for your home

More Pre-School Pets are Coming Term 2

We are excited to announce we will be getting some stingless bees sometime during term 2. The native bee is family friendly which will make this bee a very popular addition to our backyard. We are hoping to produce some amazing honey not only for consumption but for candles, healing creams, but mostly for the conservation of this little bee whose population is declining because of human



development. Native bees are virtually maintenance free and will be busy pollinating our back yard and vegetable patch darting back and forth to their hive with bright coloured pollen.

Connecting with our Families and Community

StoryPark by Belle

This year we have started using Storypark for all our documentations, Reflective Daily Journal, communication, information on events and just "Fun things" that are happening. Please keep an eye out on your email as you will be notified when an educator has uploaded documentation regarding your child. You own your child's profile and you can invite anyone you would like to view it. It's great to invite family members from all over the world to keep them informed with what your child is learning at Pre-School.

Also, don't forget to add your comments, our National Quality Standards state that the Pre-School "Must demonstrate that 'Practice' is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and the community. This is one perfect way that we can ensure that.

We have open communication with each family about their child. You can also add stories and pictures about important events that happened in your family. This will then be talked about at Pre-School with educators and the other children. Storypark is a great way to keep us all informed.

Hamilton Happy Harvesters

We have been very busy in our backyard working on getting our gardens up and growing. We have also been worm farming and composting.



Growing plants and produce is a perennial favourite for our children and helps them engage with the important concept of sustainability and looking after the earth.



Gardening activities are hands-on, active learning experiences which offer opportunities for sensory exploration and the development of an appreciation of nature. In other words, as I like to say, 'Getting Grubby". Young children also need these types of direct interactions with nature to begin to form an understanding so that in the future they will actively seek to take part in conservation activities.



I really have some very enthusiastic gardeners working with educators. This group of children showed so much passion about our garden and were very interested to learn. The respect they all had for the established gardens really astounded us and I was so pleased that I have a new bunch of keen Harvesters with me to continue this program. The children showed such great confidence in maintaining, planting and watering the gardens. It's great to watch.

Grahame Ross from Better homes and gardens states, "*Share your passion for gardening with your kids while teaching them responsibility and patience.*" I have found that our group of children have taken lots of responsibility for these gardens and really enjoy maintaining them today - let's hope this continues.



Thank you to all those families who have been sending their food scraps in.

If you would like to save your food scraps, please send them in and we can put them into our compost bin.

The Advertisement

Hopefully you had a look at the photos that Belle posted on Storypark, a big thank you must be given to all my Tuesday families and the Greater bank. The crew shooting it were unbelievable and was able to keep everyone relaxed. Shooting started at 8.00 and didn't finish until 3.00ish....it was a very long day.

We made a point of giving every child the opportunity to be filmed but at the end of the day it's the crew who will decide what's in the advertisement and what has been cut.

They are expecting to run the ad in June

The children that went to the Greater Bank were the ones with a Greater Life Saver Account. If you would like your child to be involved in the program, all you have to do is: -

Go to the Greater bank with your child's birth certificate and your photo id to open the account. When you receive your child's book bring it into Pre-School so they can decorate it and start banking. Just remember to put money in it.

When your child arrives at Pre-School, the book will go into the Banking Buddies bag and then we will, walk up to do the banking.

Pending on the number banking will be the first week of the month.

The Committee

I would like to thank all the families for attending the Pre-Schools AGM, I would like to congratulate and thank the following people for volunteering to be on the committee and be an important part of the Pre-School.

Mark Davison - President

Peta Tehan - Vice President

Alison Davison - Treasurer

Kate Miller - Secretary

Committee Members

Nina Sherwood,

Katherine Greig,

Eric Miller

Krystal Scholl

Meeting will be held the 3rd Monday of the month at 7.30pm in the Pre-School room

Eye Tests

I have arranged for Statewide Eyesight Pre-Schooler Screening (STEPS) Hunter New England Health to come to the Pre-School on the 7th & 11/05/2018 to have my **4 and 5 years old** to have their eyes tested. The time Libby will start is at 9.30.

I have placed a permission slip and information sheet in your child's wall pocket and need to be completed and returned by the 4/5/18.

If you do not complete the form, then your child's eyes will not be tested. If the either of these days are not one of your child's enrolled days, bring your child in and we will slot them in first.

Mother's Day

With the end of Term 1 approaching, Mother's Day is just around the corner. Last year we took the children up the street to purchase a present for their mums. This was such a huge success that we are doing it again..... all you need to do is on the week starting the 30/4/18 (first week back after holidays) give your child or educators \$5.00 to buy a present for mum, and we will take care of the rest.



Birthday Wishes

Happy Birthday to all our Term 1 children & educators:

Jan/ Feb

Abigail
Adelaide
Chloe
David
Harrison
Lia
Matilda
Sarsha
Eli
Ollie
Ella
Felix
Lilla
Louis
Luis
Bean
Bree

March

Jackie

April

Amelie
Frankie
Nixon
Rell
Josie

Staff News

Belle is off work for the last week of Term but will be back at the start of Term 2.

Educators have been providing the children with opportunities to practice some of the Fundamental Movement Skills. These are a specific set of skills that involve different body parts such as feet, legs, trunk, head, arms and hands. These skills are the "building blocks" for more complex and specialised skills that kids will need throughout their lives to competently participate in different games, sports and recreational activities.

Fundamental Movement Skills categories include:

Balance skills - Movements where the body remains in place, but moves around its horizontal and vertical axes.

Locomotor skills - running, jumping, hopping, and galloping.

Ball skills - such as catching, throwing, kicking, underarm roll and striking.

If you would like to help your child learn how to correctly do these skills or for more information please go to the following link:

<https://goodhabitsforlife.act.gov.au/fresh-tastes/fundamental-movement-skills-fms-1>

To promote the children's understanding of jumping, educators have been intentionally setting up the outdoor equipment for them to strengthen their larger muscles

Recipes

I been asked for our *play dough* recipe, here it is happy cooking

Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup salt
- 1 tablespoon cream of tartar (I tend to add more)
- Food colouring (add this to the water)



Directions

1. Combine all the above ingredients in a bowl.
2. Stir until some of the lumps are gone
3. Place in microwave for approx. 2 minutes
4. Then stir and repeat
5. Check for stickiness repeat if it is
6. Tip it out and knead until smooth.
7. The cream of tartar makes this dough last 6 months or longer, so resist the temptation to omit this ingredient if you don't have it on hand.
8. Store this dough in an airtight container or a Ziploc freezer bag.

Cornflour Paint

Ingredients

- 1 tbs cornflour
- 1 tbs cold water
- 1 cup boiling water
- 2 drops gel food colouring



Directions

Mix cornflour and cold water together until creamy

Add boiling water and stir until thick.

Divide into small disposable containers and add a few drops of selected food colourings to each one.

General Info

Sun Smart

Vitamin D

Just a reminder though your child must bring a hat, at times we don't enforce it so the children can have some Vitamin D from the sun

- **From October to March - 10 minutes in mid-morning or mid-afternoon.**
- **From April, May, August and September - 15 minutes in mid-morning or mid-afternoon**
- **June and July - 30 to 40 minutes in the middle of the day.**

Don't Forget: -

- To sign your child in and out as it is a legal document.
- That we ask that the children don't bring toys to Pre-School, as they can get lost, broken and so forth we have lots of equipment. If a child turns up with a toy we will ask for it to be taken home. The exception is being if it is needed to comfort the child.
- To pack healthy foods, water bottle and spare clothes
- Please take the time to read the Pre-School e-mails, Storypark and empty your child's wall pockets
- Please remember that all siblings must remain with the parents (both in and outdoors) while collecting the Pre-School children, this is to ensure all the children are safe and no one is unsupervised. I would also appreciate it if older siblings were stopped from getting on the Pre-School equipment.
- The Pre-school is a peanut and egg free service as we have children enrolled that are anaphylaxis therefore it is imperative that **no peanut/nuts of any type, nut products and eggs be brought into the Pre-school.**
- Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can result in hospitalisation or death of a child. If your child comes to Pre-School with any products that contain these ingredients, then staff will throw them out and provide your child with a vegemite sandwich - we have to take this very seriously.

- Please remember that if you have given your child medicine (e.g. cough mixture or paracetamol) in the morning then they are too unwell to come to Pre-School.

Our policy states: -

- *If your child is considered unwell by an educator when the child arrives at Pre-School, staff may request that you take your child home for that day.*
- *The Pre-School reserves the right to exclude children who are regarded by the Director as a health risk for the other children, or who are obviously unwell.*

Dates to Remember

Date	Event
13/4	Last day of Pre-School
25/4	Anzac Day
16/4 - 27/4	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS - PRE-SCHOOL CLOSED
30/4	Children return to Pre-School for Term 3 Mother's Day money needed
30/4 - 11/5	Mother's Day shopping
7 & 11/5	Eye Tests
11/5	Fees Due
13/5	Mother's Day
25/5	Fees Due

Quality Area 1 SURVEY.

Every year we need to complete family surveys. To keep in line with our National Quality Standards we like to ask all our families to let us know how you think we are meeting these standards. We will begin with Quality Area 1 Educational program and practices. Please give us your honest opinion as its very important to us. As I have stated in the survey, your name is optional but it does help us follow up comments made as we can further discuss these with you if needed. The survey should only take 5 mins of your time and it will be closed on 13th April 2017. Thanks in advance for helping us make our preschool the best it can be. Click on the link to start the survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9ZQBTY3>