

Waite Campus Childrens Centre

Parent Newsletter

February 2008

Staffing 2008

Most of the staffing changes have now been finalized. Unfortunately for WCCC Susan has decided to take up a position at another service This has meant a further review of staff with a priority given to maintaining continuity for children and families.

Helen Werner has been appointed as Children's Services Professional L 2 (CSP2) for Room 1 and will commence on 25 February. We have Bobbie returning from maternity leave on March 11 and Bobbie's son Oska will also be commencing in Room 1 on Wednesdays and Fridays. Emma will continue in her position as CSP1, and Helen G as Children's Services Assistant L 2 (CSA2). Kathy (CSP3) will continue working in Room 1, at least until Helen W is settled into her position and Bobbie (CSA2) has re-settled. Helen and Kathy will work together as Room 1 coordinators. Yvett's contract covering Bobbie's maternity leave will be completed at the end of March. Yvett will continue to be a valuable team member working on a casual basis across all sections of the Centre. Emma D (CSA2) has now accepted a permanent part-time position in Room 2. This means that Cassie (room coordinator), Bec and Emma will continue as the Room 2 team.

Vikki, who was a student in the Centre in 2007 commences in Room 3 from Monday 18 February. As a CSP1 Vikki will be joining Dani (CSP3), Eunice (CSP 2.5) and Lucy (CSP1) to make up the Room 3 team which is coordinated by Dani. We would like to congratulate Lucy who will now be working as Children's Services Professional L 1 following a review of her New Zealand qualifications. Eunice and Lucy will be coordinating the Mandarin Immersion program which commences Monday 18 February and Eunice will continue to present music sessions across the Centre.

Martine and Karen have established themselves as key relief staff. Please regularly check the staff photos in the entrance hallway and the roster display near each room to see who is working each day. In coming months we may need to expand our relief pool and will continue to update families on any changes via Centre newsletters.

A big thankyou to the parent members of our interview panels, Mark, Adrian, Rob, Helen, Amanda and Sarah. **A very big thank you to Susan** for her very valuable contribution to the Centre. We wish her all the best for her future career.

Redevelopment of the outdoors

We are all very excited about our remodeled outdoor area. The creation of different play spaces via platforms, gardens and planter boxes will support us in expanding learning in the environment. The storage boxes near the room 2/3 sandpit and the Perspex painting wall have been designed to slow the flow between areas. We now have a patch for growing veggies and will use the long planter boxes near the swings for a sensory garden.

We are also excited that the University has given us approval to provide a concept plan for developing a large area of the nature strip in front of and to the south of the centre as a natural play space for children. This would include the need for removal of undergrowth, planting of native water wise and butterfly attracting plants and pathways that would lead the children through the area. Other options for enhancing sensory exploration will also be considered. The area will be linked with our current yard via childproof gates so that staff can choose when to take children on an exploratory journey.

Welcome

to the following
children and their families

To Room 1 Emily, Archi, Edward, and Oska

SFCC Matters 2008

The Sustainable Futures for Children Committee (SFCC) is a group of parents and staff who have developed a strategic planning for enhancing environmentally sustainable practices. The current members are parent reps: Amanda Box, Mango Parker, Adrian Loschiavo, Simon Conn and Danielle Hopkins, and staff reps: Dani and Cassie.

This group is currently looking at a proposal for Waite CCC to be carbon neutral. In future months they will also be exploring sources of eco friendly products, ways to reduce waste, the new nature garden and possible grant applications to support this, solar hot water/energy options; and monitoring the implementation of water saving strategies funded by the community water grant.

Diary dates for 2008

Parent Evening

Monday 7 April 2008

with a special guest speaker who will share strategies for developing basic movement skills with young children.

Caring for our Earth

Simple actions can make a difference. Think about how you can participate in these two special events in March:

Clean up Australia Day

Sunday March 2

visit www.cleanup.org.au for how you, your community, your business or school can get involved.

Earth Hour

8pm Saturday 29 March

Cities across the world will turn off their lights for just one hour to show that it is possible to take action on global warming.

visit earthhour.org

Board and PAG Matters 2008

The **Adelaide University Childcare Services Inc (AUCS)** Board members are Sue Graebner (chairperson) Stuart Mossman (treasurer), Rob Miotti (parent WCCC), Jane Hardford (parent ACCC), and the directors from each of the Centres. AUCS meetings in 2008 will be on the last Wednesday of the month in the staff club at North Terrace.

In 2008 the **Parent Advisory Group (PAG)** .

will meet on the third Friday of the month from 1-2pm. We will be trialling having our meetings at Lirra Lirra. Kathy will be the staff rep to the PAG for 2008. The current parent members are Rob Miotti, Amanda Box, Sarah Carlson, Helen Collins, Mark Thomas, Dean Lanyon and Pat Warner. We are looking for new members who are able to commit to attending meetings every third Friday. Business between meetings is conducted by email.

Training and development

Staff will be attending a variety of training and development sessions during the coming months. Dani and Cassie are completing a series of 3 workshops on 'Leading with Impact'. These sessions follow on from a series that they completed in March 2007.

Several staff will be attending music and movement and basic skills workshops as part of our practitioner research project on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity. In addition project coordinators will attend project planning and hub group sessions during March, and May.

Kaarin will be away from the Centre on Friday March 7 as the SA representative of the National Association of Community Based Children's Services (NACBCS), attending a 2 day national planning workshop in Sydney.

We also have six staff who will update their first aid qualifications in the first half of 2008. We expect to have different staff attending training each month.

There will be other training conducted at monthly staff meetings including: fire extinguisher training, update of Asthma awareness, and Food safety.

2008 will see the introduction of the new food safety legislation which requires the Centre to have a detailed food safety program and to participate in an audit of this program. Leann and Kaarin will be attending further training/information sessions on food safety legislation in the next few months.

Enhancing learning in, for and about the environment will be further explored by all staff at a planning day on Saturday March 15. We are hoping to have a representative from KESAB as a guest speaker and support our growing skills for sustainability.

Parent evenings

Each year we hold at least two parent program and information evenings to provide families the opportunity to meet with staff after hours and discuss and explore Centre programs and their child's development. In 2008 these meetings will be Monday April 8 and Wednesday 17 September. These meetings also provide an opportunity to explore special projects that the Centre is involved in. Our April meeting will continue our focus on healthy eating and physical activity with a guest speaker who will present a workshop on basic skills development

Visitors and excursions

In 2008 we have several performers/shows visiting the Centre.

Tony Genoves will present his music program 'Fun in the Sun' on February 26.

The 'Cloud Catchers' show will visit in April and we will have an excursion to a performance of 'Where is the Green Sheep' in May.

Further visitors/performances are also planned for later in the year.

Information for families on the web

Working families often have busy hectic lives and do not always have time to visit or phone government and other services. You can view the what, why and how of family assistance, including information on childcare benefit and family tax benefit on the Family Assistance Office website at **www.familyassist.gov.au**

Other useful websites for families include:

www.ada.org.au the Australian Dental Association website has information in the Consumer Information section including fact sheets about dental health for babies and preschoolers and answers to frequently asked questions on dental health. .

www.choice.com.au the Choice Magazine website has up to date consumer information about a wide range of products and topics including: nursery furniture and bedding, infant health, safety and feeding, general health, nutrition, diet and safety and appliances

www.kidsafe.com.au the Kidsafe website is a directory of State sites which have fact sheets on such topics as nursery equipment, toys, storage and handling of dangerous products in the home and poisoning. General fact sheets on safety concerns for specific age groupings of children are also available.

www.immunise.health.gov.au the Immunise Australia website provides comprehensive information regarding immunisation for both adults and children. It has the most up to date immunisation schedule and also provides a question and answer section of the most commonly asked questions about immunisation.

www.parenting.sa.gov.au provides information fact sheets on parenting and child development topics as well as links to other useful sites.

Complaints Guidelines

Unhappy about something? Not sure what to do?

Adelaide University Childcare Services Inc (AUCS) has detailed guidelines for managing complaints about its services. A summary of these guidelines is displayed on the parent notice boards and a detailed copy of the guidelines is in the Centre's Policies and Procedures Handbook.

The principles guiding the AUCS procedure for handling complaints are that it should :

- √ Be easily accessible and well publicised
- √ Be simple to understand and use
- √ Allow speedy handling, with established time limits for action and keep people informed of progress
- √ Ensure a full and fair investigation
- √ Respect people's desire for confidentiality
- √ Address all the points at issue and provide an effective response and appropriate redress
- √ Provide information to management so that services can be improved

Complainants will be treated seriously and courteously and given the time they require to be heard. It is important to AUCS that the complainants have confidence in these procedures and know that their cases will be impartially investigated.