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# Waite Campus Childrens Centre Parent Newsletter

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*From the Director*

*September 2011*

## Early Years Learning Literacy and Numeracy

Current research into children's learning and development highlights the importance of everyday learning, children learn from everything they do. Literacy and numeracy concepts are learned through everyday experiences as children engage with adults, other children and the environment. The focus on play based learning in all early childhood services under the National Quality Agenda is based on extensive research into how young children learn best. In an active play-based learning environment children's natural drive to explore and make sense of their world is fostered.

Representing their understanding of the world around them begins and extends as their ideas develop. From an early age children begin 'mark making' as they act out adult activities such as making lists and writing notes. The role modeling from adults show children that we live in a literate world where marks (both writing and numbers) provide a valuable means of communication. The growing understanding that 'marks' have meaning supports both literacy and numeracy. Young children's mark making is connected to things that are significant for them, earliest writing often involves their name as this is important to them. For boys early writing happens when the motivation arises from something specific to them like a sign for a block construction, or wanting to keep a record of the number of bugs they have found. The motivation is

important as the writing is meaningful and relevant to them as individuals. These experiences are also spontaneous experiences and not imposed or directed. Children have a natural urge for 'mark making'. Providing access to a range of tools both inside and out supports children's writing literacy. The child who is not interested in drawing with pencils and paper will probably actively explore using a stick in the mud or sand. Literacy concepts include scribbling and drawing, exploring language, sound patterns, story sequence, playing with rhyme, understanding how books work by turning one page at a time, telling stories, Acting stories and much more..

**Come to the parent evening on Tuesday 27th September 7-9pm  
hear our guest speech pathologist Marney Yeates talk about  
language development and early literacy**

## Bookings and enrolments

We only have a few children moving on to school in October expect with some other changes that we will be able to move some of the growing group of 3 year olds from Room 2.

With only a small group of children going to school in January 2012 it is even more important to let us know as early as possible of any changes you may require.

### Booking policy

Our minimum booking is for two full days. 1/2 days are limited and currently only available with Director approval. The Board is currently exploring the idea of fixed booking patterns to assist with balancing bookings a cross the week. This would provide a more stable utilisation and income. It would also provide more places for more families and prevent our ongoing problem where we have several places available only on one day of the week. Fixed booking patterns would mean that families using 2 or 3 would be required to use consecutive days at the beginning or end of the week.

## Diary Events:

Please put the following dates in your diary:

**Parent Evening with Talk Speech Pathologist Tuesday September 27th 7-9 pm**

**Official opening of Pilyabilyangga Wednesday 19th October 5-7 pm,**

**Early closure of centre will be at 4 pm on Wednesday 19th October;**

**End of Year Celebration: Monday December 19th 6.30-8 pm**

**Centre closure 2011: Friday December 23rd at 1pm until Monday January 9th 2012**

## MSM messaging

We are in the process of connecting to an MSN messaging system that will allow us to send general text messages to all families to notify and remind them of Centre Events, for example reminders of events such as early Closure and parent evening.

In addition, should we have an emergency such as power or water failure we will be able to quickly send a message to all families.

The system will use the phone numbers in our current bookings and billing program Spike and can send messages to both mobiles and landlines. It will be important for families to keep contact numbers up to date to ensure messages are received.

## Board and PAG Matters 2011

**Adelaide University Childcare Services Inc (AUCS) meets on the last Monday of the month.**

The next AUCS meeting will be on Monday September 26th at North Terrace. The Board continues to assess the impact of changes under the National Quality Agenda and how best to ensure that AUCS services stay abreast of all new requirements.

The PAG will next meet on Wednesday 21st September to complete our policy review, and planning for the opening of Pilyabilyangga, and the end of year celebration. There will also be discussion of changes to early childhood services.

## Working Bee

We are having a spring Working bee on Saturday 17th September to do some weeding, mulching in pruning in Pilyabilyangga. We are hoping this will be enough to prepare for the official function on Wednesday October 19th. We have also entered Pilyabilyangga in the Schools and Communities section of the Botanic Gardens 2011 Native Gardens Award, new gardens less than two years. We will know in a few weeks if we have been shortlisted for a site visit. If you are able to help between 11am and 1pm on this day please bring gloves and weeding tools.

To give us an idea of number please email [childcare.waite@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:childcare.waite@adelaide.edu.au) if you can assist on the day.

## Audit and Budget

Our 2010-2011 audit was completed in August with WCCC making an operational surplus of \$23000. This is allowing us to upgrade some equipment with a new dishwasher being installed on Thursday 8th September, new food service trolleys, new educational resources, cleaning of the shade sails and yes we will replace carpets as well. We also have some upgrading of the kitchen to do to meet food safety requirements.

While the 2011-2012 budget has been completed there are additional changes to be implemented due to the National Quality Agenda and the implementation of National Regulations and National Standards which become effective from January 2012. The Board is currently exploring the impact of these changes and the best way to manage the impact on the Centre.

## Staff Matters:

### Professional Development:

Staff continue to attend professional development sessions that support the implementation of the National Early Years Learning Framework. Karen and Tamala attended training on Thursday 8th September and Eleanor and Cassie will be at training on Monday 12 September.

### Leave:

We have several educators taking annual leave in the next few months.

Daphne is currently away and will return ready to cover some of the following leave.

Kathy will be on leave September 26th to 30th

Eleanor will be on leave October 4th –17th

Karen will be on leave October 24th to November 14th and

Cassie will be on leave October 31st to November 18th.

Kaarin will be on leave November 7-11 and then having her back fixed and be on leave from late November until sometime in January 2012. Our very capable team with assistant directors Dani and Kathy will manage day to day operations in my absence.

## Changes to early childhood services.. what do they mean for children, families and educators?

The National Quality Agenda for early childhood has several aspects that have been progressively implemented over the past 3 years. However, the biggest changes are yet to come. These changes will alter a system that has been familiar to many families for the past 4 decades or more, especially in South Australia. The National Quality Framework has also provided a revaluing of the work of early childhood educators. By implementing a system of high quality education and care that is consistent for all children in their first five years, NQA has recognized and valued the importance of the early years in creating a foundation for future wellbeing. By establishing requirements of minimum training for all educators it has recognized the essential role of professional and qualified educators.

However there is a **big step** yet to be taken.

There is now a huge disparity between the wages of educators working in different types of early childhood services. Educators working in long day care continue to be one of the most underpaid groups in the Australian workforce. This is the unfinished story of the National Quality Reform Agenda embarked on by the Federal Government. Early childhood educators provide a service that supports the social and economic wellbeing of communities across Australia. Services support families to work but more importantly they provide education and care to young children that builds success for life. For all educators to be paid fair and equitable wages that go some way to recognizing their professional skills, knowledge and responsibilities would cost an estimated \$1.4 billion Australian families will be increasingly asked to meet rising cost themselves unless there is Federal Government funding to go with the reforms.

Waite Campus Childrens Centre prides itself on the quality education and care programs provided to all children and families. Through an enterprise agreement that provides above award conditions we have been able to maintain and retain a stable professional team with the majority (85%) holding qualifications of a Diploma or higher and we are able to provide educators with a high level of professional development to support our transition to the National Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standard. However, all this is done at a cost to families.

In 2012 we will need to pay a teacher educator salary to maintain our ability to achieve high quality under the new accreditation system. At the same time we need to ensure that we have an enterprise agreement that continues to attract and support a professional team. While we are fortunate in having five early childhood qualified teachers on our team these educators currently receive salaries that are \$10,000—\$15,000 below the salary they would receive if they worked in a preschool or school. Why? Educators work in our service rather than other services because they are committed professionals. They value the diversity of working with young children and their families across all the early childhood years, knowing learning starts at birth and that education in the early years builds the foundations for future wellbeing, they appreciate a team environment, and the flexibility to be innovative and creative. As a team we do not see education and care as separate; quality education and care go hand in hand and in good early childhood programs the integration is seamless. The strategies used at WCCC for assessing children; learning stories and summative assessments; are increasingly a requirement of all early childhood services. Paying an a teacher's salary in Room 3 may increase costs but it will not change what we look like.

## Play Again

*What are the consequences of a childhood removed from nature?*

For those who missed the screening in June here is another opportunity to see this documentary.

This is MUST SEE viewing for anyone who is interested in children growing up today.

**Thursday 22nd September, 7:00-9:30pm Adelaide High School, West Terrace.**

\$5 General Admission \$2 for concession / student /child and AAEE members free.

Check out the website to see a short preview at [www.playagainfilm.com](http://www.playagainfilm.com)

RSVP to David Doherty by Monday 19 September on 83383237 or

[david.doherty@arburypark.sa.edu.au](mailto:david.doherty@arburypark.sa.edu.au)

# Waite Campus Childrens Centre Green Page

## Pilyabilyangga

Wednesday 19th October will be an early closure day with the Centre closing at 4pm. This is so we can set up safely for the official opening of Pilyabilyangga. This event will be held from 5 to 7pm and include a performance by Room 3 children, welcome and official opening by unveiling of signage by.....

There will be snacks and drinks available and opportunities for small groups to walk through the garden. Extended family welcome to attend. For catering purposes we will be asking for some idea of planned attendances closer to the date.

Did you know ? Pilyabilyangga is now a designated butterfly conservation site. Signage to be put up soon.

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## Spring Events:

Its spring and a time when lots of outdoor community events are planned. Also the time when we get out into the garden and bush both at home and in the wider community.

Some local events include:

Community Sustainability and Environment Expo Willunga High School October 8 and 9 10am-4pm

Food Forest Workshops: Building with Straw bales Nov 5-6 Fruit and Nut Growing Nov 19 and Organic vegetables and poultry Nov 20. The Food Forest in Gawler is a multi award winning certified organic permaculture property. Visit [www.foodforest.com.au](http://www.foodforest.com.au)

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## Wiping Out Waste

New signage on the northern fence from KESAB acknowledges us as helping to wipe out waste with significant reduction of waste to landfill over the past few years. We have increased our recycling by 80%.

In recognition of our programs of education for sustainability (EfS) Noarlunga TAFE's Children's Services Diploma students from will be visiting us on Wednesday 21st September to gain first hand experience of what they can do when they graduate as early childhood educators. A group of Room 3 children will be our waste warriors and give a tour of the recycling activities. KESAB is hoping to video this.

A graphic representation of our recycling activities is also available in the form of our new book: Avoid, Reduce Reuse Recycle at WCCC. Please see Dani for details!

‘For in the end  
We will conserve only that which we love  
We will love only that which we understand  
We will understand only that which we have been  
taught’

Senegalese environmentalist Baba Dioum