Fostering positive emotions

‘If’ you were put into an fMRI scanner—a huge donut-shaped magnet that can take a video of the neural changes happening in your brain—and flash the word “NO” for less than one second, you’d see a sudden release of dozens of stress-producing hormones and neurotransmitters. These chemicals immediately interrupt the normal functioning of your brain, impairing logic, reason, language processing, and communication.

In fact, just seeing a list of negative words for a few seconds will make a highly anxious or depressed person feel worse, and the more you ruminate on them, the more you can actually damage key structures that regulate your memory, feelings, and emotions. You’ll disrupt your sleep, your appetite, and your ability to experience long-term happiness and satisfaction.

If you vocalize your negativity, or even slightly frown when you say “no,” more stress chemicals will be released, not only in your brain, but in the listener’s brain as well. The listener will experience increased anxiety and irritability, thus undermining cooperation and trust. In fact, just hanging around negative people will make you more prejudiced toward others!

Positive words and thoughts propel the motivational centers of the brain into action and they help us build resilience when we are faced with life’s problems. According to Sonja Lyubomirsky, one of the world’s leading researchers on happiness, if you want to develop lifelong satisfaction, you should regularly engage in positive thinking about yourself, share your happiest events with others, and savour every positive experience in your life.

Choose your words wisely and speak them slowly. This will allow you to interrupt the brain’s propensity to be negative, and as recent research has shown, the mere repetition of positive words like love, peace, and compassion will turn on specific genes that lower your physical and emotional stress. You’ll feel better, you’ll live longer, and you’ll build deeper and more trusting relationships with others—at home and at work.

As Fredrickson and Losada point out, when you generate a minimum of five positive thoughts to each negative one, you’ll experience “an optimal range of human functioning.” That is the power of YES.’

For more information on the effects of positive and negative speech, see *Words Can Change Your Brain* (Newberg & Waldman, 2012, Hudson Street Press), and for strategies to reduce stress and improve communication, visit www.MarkRobertWaldman.com.

**Parent Evening– Positive Education**

**Tuesday 6th June 7-9.30 pm with guest speakers Carla and Andrew Ford**

Positive education is the application of the science of positive psychology in an educational setting. It promotes the holistic wellbeing of children, educators, staff and the wider childcare community. Carla will give an introduction to the science of positive psychology, outline PERMAH as a framework for wellbeing (including some of the empirical evidence), and some examples of how it can be applied in a Child Care Centre.

Carla is a qualified teacher with nine years teaching experience in Australia and the UK. She has recent experience as Education Facilitator at the South Australian Health & Medical Research Institute's Wellbeing and Resilience Centre, where she created Positive Education initiatives for government and non-government schools.

Whether delivering a keynote speech to a filled auditorium or facilitating a small group workshop, Carla’s mix of creativity, authenticity and engaging humor builds rapport. She thrives on making complex and abstract concepts accessible and relevant to the audience. Behind her creative and thought-provoking presentations, lies critical thought and a passion to see systems and individuals challenged and transformed through new understanding. *Registration on the parent notice board.*
Spotlight on Educators

Several years ago we had a regular monthly focus on each of the staff at WCCC. With several changes to the teams we are reviving this for 2017. As new educators commence we hope they will write a brief piece about themselves to share with families. In between these we will have a focus on other staff members. This month the focus is on Kaarin

I have been Director of WCCC since November 1994 which was 3 months before the Centre opened. My background in education begins with growing up in NSW with a junior primary teacher, my mum, who often took her children to school at weekends or after school hours. I think most of my old toys made their way to her Kindergarten classrooms. My mother, with her Finnish heritage, also fostered in me the value of early childhood and the importance of critically reflecting on our changing education systems to meet the best interests of young children.

My original training was as a secondary teacher of History and Social Science with a degree and graduate diploma from Sydney University. After having 3 of my own children and spending time living and working on Indigenous Homeland Communities in Central Australia I then completed a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education at Uni SA in the 1980’s.

My move to childcare in the early 1990’s was a result of few permanent teaching positions. After a series of contracts in preschools and schools I began working in long day care as I wanted continuity for myself and my family. Pay and conditions for educators were poor and while demand for services was growing the system was increasingly complex for families. My social science background then lead me to complete a Master of Public Policy and Management at Flinders University with a focus on childcare policy. After 3 years as an educator and assistant director at a southern service I worked at Flinders University Child Care Centre as a Director for 3 years.

The position at WCCC has allowed me to use the knowledge and skills I have gained from my diverse educational background and experience as well as my passion for quality education and care. I am proud to have been the Director at WCCC more than 22 years and also now the proud grandmother of 3 beautiful granddaughters aged 22yrs, 8yrs and 15 months.

Diary Dates:
Please remember the following important dates:
Friday 12th May 2-5pm working bee
Centre closure day—Friday 26th May
WCCC is closed for whole team PD

Parent evenings:
Tuesday June 6th — Positive Education;
Monday August 7th — Sensory development

Staffing 2017

We have employed Jo James as the new Room 2 educator. Marta will move to R3 from Monday 15th May and Jo will commence in R2 on the same day. Some families will have met Jo in the past when she worked as a casual relief with both children and as cook. Jo has been employed for the past 18months at Strathalbyn Childrens Centre.

Educators are continuing to refresh their first aid certification. Dani completed her refresher on Thursday May 4th and Eunice will be completing the refresher course on Thursday May 18th. Cherry, Eunice, Dani and Karen are also completing the Asthma and Anaphylaxis refresher.

Annual leave:
Eleanor is have a short break May 11th — 15th Inclusive and Kate is on annual leave until June 5th.
Some of our relief educators are also taking leave with Kay away til May 29th and Emilie on leave May 26th to June 21st.

Board and PAG Matters 2017

Adelaide University Childcare Services Inc (AUCS) meets on the last Monday of the month. Annelise Wiebkin has agreed to be the WCCC parent member of AUCS.

The Parent Advisory Group (PAG) meetings in 2017 will be the third Friday of the month. Our QIP has been finalised and is on display in the reception area. Please speak to Kaarin if you are interested in joining this group.
Fostering Healthy Eating – from Grace ‘s kitchen

Chia seeds
Chia seeds contain antioxidants, protein and nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, fibre and minerals that are beneficial to body health, claims. These seeds also regulate blood sugar and reduce triglycerides and cholesterol while increasing high density lipoprotein cholesterol. The lipid content of chia seeds contain 60 percent omega-3, which makes them rich in fatty acids such as alpha-linolenic acid. Aside from enhancing memory, omega-3 reduces inflammation and cholesterol. Vitamins are vital for immune system function, energy production and strengthening of bones, Minerals are essential for muscle contraction, maintenance of teeth and bones, nervous system function and fluid balance. Grown in South America (Peru, Chile and Bolivia) Now grown in Western Australia.

Quinoa
Quinoa, pronounced ‘keen-wa’ is a great wheat-free alternative to starchy grains. There are two types: red and creamy white. Both types are slightly bitter when cooked and open up to release little white curls (like a tail) as they soften. Grown in South America (Peru, Chile and Bolivia) for thousands of years, quinoa formed the staple diet of the Incas and their descendants. In recent years, foodies in the UK and the US have heralded it as a superior alternative to bulgur wheat, couscous and rice. Though it often occupies a similar role to these grains in dishes, quinoa is actually in the same family as beets, chard and spinach. Now grown in Tasmania. Quinoa is among the least allergenic of all the grains, making it a fantastic wheat-free choice. Like buckwheat, quinoa has an excellent amino acid profile, as it contains all nine essential amino acids making it a complete-hight protein source. Quinoa is therefore an excellent choice for vegans who may struggle to get enough protein in their diets.

Quinoa popcorn chicken nuggets
1/2 cup (85g) quinoa
1 cup (250ml) stock
1 kg chicken tenderloins
5 tbsp flour
1 medium grated onion
1 large egg, lightly beaten
Sea salt flakes to sprinkle

method
Heat oven to 190°C (170°C fan-forced) and line a large oven tray with baking paper.
Place quinoa and stock into a medium saucepan and bring to the boil.
Reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook for 15 minutes until quinoa is cooked.
Allow to sit for 5 minutes before fluffing up with a fork and allowing to cool.
Cut chicken into 2cm cubes.
Combine flour and onion together in a bag, add popcorn chicken and shake to cover.
Add popcorn chicken to beaten egg to cover then transfer to quinoa.
Roll popcorn chicken in quinoa and place on prepared baking tray.
Bake for 15 minutes until chicken is cooked and quinoa crust is crispy.

Vanilla Chia Pudding
Ingredients (serves 2)
1 cup coconut milk
1 tablespoon maple or rice malt syrup
1/4 cup chia seeds
1 teaspoon vanilla bean powder (or vanilla essence if not available)

Directions
Pop all ingredients in a jar and give a quick stir
Put lid on jar and shake vigorously for 30 seconds - 1 minute
Leave in the fridge for a minimum of 4 hours, overnight is preferable.
Devour and enjoy!!

My favourite toppings include some cut up fresh or dried fruits, strawberries, natural yogurt, goji berries, blueberries, cereal or just by itself.
2 to 3 tables spoons of raw cacao powder into the main ingredients as above. Then it’s a chocolate chia pudding.
Outdoor Play in Cold or Wet Weather
Taking children outdoors daily, even in winter, is a healthy part of our program and is safe when clothing is appropriate. Active outdoor play at all times of the year is also an important part of obesity prevention and helps to establish life-long patterns of healthy physical exercise. With gum boots and rain jackets over their normal clothes children are warm and protected and able to enjoy uninhibited outdoor play. There are a range of websites where you can purchase great winter outdoor clothing for children. Here are some websites, both Australian and overseas recommended by Centre parents:
https://www.jako-o.com/
http://www.ernstings-family.de/kat/jungenmode-minis-regenkleidung-winterkleidung.html
"Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, and snow is exhilarating; there is no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather."
- John Ruskin

University Sustainability Plan
The Campus Sustainability Plan has been launched, detailing the first coordinated suite of emission reduction projects that will begin to transition the University of Adelaide to low-carbon operations. Read more about the launch of the Plan:
Ecoversity’s ‘how to’ page has great ideas to support you to put sustainability into action at work and home: http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ecoversity/resources/

Transitions Film Festival—Adelaide 19-28th May
The Transitions Film Festival showcases ground breaking documentaries about the social and technological innovations, revolutionary ideas and trailblazing change makers that are leading the way to a better world. Films include ‘How to let go of the World and Love all things Climate can’t Fix’ and ‘Riverblue’ - the darker side of the fashion industry.
http://www.transitionsfilmfestival.com/

War on Waste
Can we reduce our waste as a nation?
Craig Ruecassel hosts a 3-part series taking us across the nation to see what Australians know about waste and what they are doing to reduce waste to landfill.
Tuesdays at 8.30pm commencing May 16th.
http://www.abc.net.au/ourfocus/waronwaste/