

UPCCC Newsletter

' Where education, care and
community come together '

Newsletter Date:
April 2017

Dear Parents

I hope you enjoyed the Easter holidays and had a chance to catch up on some relaxation time with your family.

Since the March Newsletter we have had several new families join the UPCCC community. We welcome these families and hope their time with us will be happy and rewarding. Please let us know if there are any additional ways we can support your family during orientation and throughout your time at UPCCC. We have also had some of our enrolled children transition to their new room. Our educators and families have been supporting the children as they experience UPCCC for the first time, new rooms, different educators, experiences, expectations and routines. Our Educators are sensitive to the impact of transitions for some children and implement strategies to support them in managing change.

Food Week was a huge success and we thank our parents for the support they give to this great centre fund raising activity. Our educators work hard to ensure the children are offered a lovely variety of nutritious foods and from what I observed throughout the week, the menu and meal presentation

was deliciously appetizing and the children enjoyed the menu selection.

You will have noticed Eddie has been busy building a new bridge in the Toddler garden (with the assistance of his band of Toddler apprentices). This work is a prelude to other upgrades/working bee that will be happening throughout the year. And, did you know our Eddie is media star? The mezzanine Eddie built in Possum room is featured in the Autumn issue of 'The Space Magazine' (a New Zealand Child-space publication) and included a photo and write up of Eddie's work.

Thank you to the parents and staff who attend the AGM. We appreciate your support and we thank those parents who have nominated for positions on the management committee. We appreciate the ongoing commitment to the management of UPCCC by our parent committee.

Our Educational Leader Mel is arranging several exciting excursion for the children during April and May. The Kookaburras went for a walk to the museum to check out the vehicles on display. The preschool and Toddlers are heading by ACTION bus to Tidbinbilla to meet the Ranger who has planned activities to suit the younger

age children and the pre-school children. The children will have a picnic lunch before returning to the centre. And the most popular Bus Wash excursion took place after Easter. Mel does a grand job in arranging excursion and incursions that extend the children's experiences beyond those that can be offered at UPCCC.

We have received positive feedback on the relocation of our carpark signage. Being able to park close to our entry is not only convenient for parents it is so much safer for the families when they alight from the car. Remember using the footpaths is a safer option than walking across the carpark.

Finally a reminder to parents who come to drop off or pick up their children and bring siblings into UPCCC. Please remember parents are responsible for siblings who are not enrolled at UPCCC. The speed in which some older children move and the activities they chose can pose a risk to our children. It is best if the older child stays with the parent to enable our educator to focus on the children in their care.

Regards *Eileen*

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Autumn is here and it's time to add warmer clothing to your child's spare clothes locker. Don't forget to add spare socks - there is nothing worse than cold feet! Check with your educators to see if your child requires a warmer blanket/sheets on their bed and don't forget to bring a jacket and beanie every day

News from the Management Committee

The first business of the meeting was the election of office bearers for the 2017 UPCCC Management Committee.

Executive Members:

Stephanie Peatling - **President**

Bronwyn Davis - **Vice President**

Peter Linardakis - **Secretary**

Connor Choi - **Treasurer**

Adam Leavesley - **Public Officer**

Alicia Keers

Aino Suomi

Debi Hewitt

Emily Stokes

Tom Honeyman

Lou Farrer

Alison Robertson

Tanya Liu - Nursery Rep

Eileen Webster - Assistant Director

Lynley Rees - **Director**

Parent Representatives:

Jodie Neale

Jasmine Hope

Hrvoje Pejcinovic

Staff Rep:

Jessie Chan - Preschool Teacher

Helen Chan - Preschool Rep

Jess Henman - Toddler Rep

The committee meets on the third Thursday of each month. Parents are welcome to discuss with any committee member matters they want on the meeting Agenda or parents are welcome to attend committee meetings personally if they have a particular matter to discuss. Please let Lynley know of your intention to attend.

Management Committee Meeting 20/04/2017

Meeting held on 20th April 2017. Meeting chaired by Stephanie Peatling. The minutes of the March 24th meeting were approved as a true and accurate record.

Presidents's Report: Stephanie Peatling reported on the success of the Annual General Meeting held on Friday, 31st March, and thanked those parents who attended. Stephanie asked that the annual Staff Development Day continued to be advertised regularly to ensure parents know the centre will be closed on that day to enable all UPCCC staff to participate in Professional Development. The 2017 committee members were informed of the Pulitzer Prize Awards for staff. The reason behind these awards are to show appreciation to our staff for their work at UPCCC.

Treasurer's Report: Lynley Rees (on behalf of Treasurer Thu-Huong Roberts) reported that ANU have approved the Handyman Grant for 2017 however we have not yet received the grant. A copy of the Handyman Audit has been forwarded to ANU. We are tracking well to budget due to the following: Food Week delivered a profit of \$3,000 for materials and resources for the children: Fee's in arrear are being paid: increase in enrolments.

Director's Report: Lynley Rees reported that April has been a quiet month. Children's moves through the centre and new enrolments have proceeded successfully with current utilization at 95%. Several new families have enrolled and will commence at the end of April. ANU Parking have been thanked for changing the child care parking signage to enable UPCCC parents to park close to the centre entry. A Child Care Liaison (CCL) Meeting held in April reported that ANU has approved funding for painting the four child care centres on campus - this is scheduled to take place in 2017 following consultation with each centre. As internal and external painting will occur, work will take place both in and out of hours. Christine Allard the Director of ANU Facilities and Services will retire and Andrew Sharp will replace her and convene the CCL meetings in future.

Other Business: Lynley reported on the scheduled visit of Natalie Howson, the Director General of the Education Directorate on Monday, 24th April. Stephanie suggested setting a definite date for a working bee and also enquired who will replace Eddie when he is on extended leave July/August this year.

Policy Review: The following policies will be reviewed by the Policy Review Committee - Behaviour Management Policy; Medication Policy; Pandemic Response Policy; Return to Work Policy; Staff Development Policy; Sun Protection Policy; Nutrition Policy.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 18th May at 12.30 in Lynley's office.

Staff Development Day Centre Closure — A reminder that the centre will be closed on Friday 14th July 2017 to enable the UPCCC staff to participate in professional development as a whole team.

Staff news

During April several of our Educators took the opportunity to extend the Easter holiday to include the school holiday break. Lynley has just returned from visiting family in New Zealand and Tongbo has returned from visiting family in China. Julie has enjoyed a family holiday in Queensland and Cass, Jessie Chan and Hang will take days off to be with their children during the school holidays. Eddie enjoyed a restful holiday on a cruise ship somewhere on the ocean heading towards the Pacific Islands.... sounds so restful. We send our congratulations to our Preschool Educator Lisa, Brett and 'big brother' Elliot on the birth of Henry. Jess Henman and Zahra Kanwal have both

signed with the Apprenticeship Support Centre to complete their apprenticeship towards a Diploma in Early Childhood Care and Education. A representative will continue to meet with Jess and Zahra to review their Traineeship towards attaining the Diploma.

The children and staff were excited by a visit from our former educator Ingrid Moe – who has relocated to Melbourne and has enrolled in nurse/midwifery training. Ingrid's former little Gumnuts and Possums recognised her and there were lots of hugs and catching up chatter.

A big THANKYOU to Austral Pavers Lithgow Street Fyshwick for donating

approx 40sq meters of pavers for our garden. This donation came about through the initiative of our Bilby Room Leader Julie, who contacted Austral to enquire if they were able to donate to not-for-profit organization. Fortunately for UPCCC they had pavers they no longer required and were more than happy to share them with us. So many thanks to Julie for organizing this donation. Eddie has some plans to have a paved path leading from the Toddler bridge and a few other ideas—all those pavers will be put to good use.

....there's no such thing as a good school, but there is such a thing as a school full of good teachers. Dylan William.

On Monday, 24th April we received a visit from Natalie Howson, the Director-General of the Education Directorate. Natalie Howson is newly appointed to her role and requested to visit some ACT Preschools and Early Childhood Education and Care Centres. UPCCC was suggested as one centre for her to visit. The visit was planned as an informal chat and look around the centre. Natalie spent approx 1 hour with us as she toured our centre and was introduced to our educators. She was particularly interested in our orientation program with the focus on the 'whole family'— Natalie commented that this was the first time any preschool/care service emphasised the importance of this and also our focus on family involvement. She was impressed with UPCCC's staff retention and quality of educators also, our strategies for ensuring quality of staffing. She discussed our Educational Program and our focus on community involvement, and was particularly interested in the annual camping trip to Wee Jasper and the swimming program. Natalie discussed upcoming forums that will look at changes to the Early Childhood sector and encouraged UPCCC to be active in lobbying for Government funding for the community based preschool sector.



UPCCC Emergency Evacuation Procedure

As an Approved Service, The National Quality Standards state that we must have policies and procedures which set out instructions for what must be done in an emergency. Also emergency and evacuation procedures must be rehearsed at least every three months that the centre is operating. Following these regulations, and under the guidance of ANU Fire Safety Officer Adam Agius UPCCC held an evacuation *drill* on Monday, 27th March at 11.20am. The centre was evacuated and all persons accounted for within 3 minutes.

Lock Down Drills are another emergency procedure that we rehearse every 3 months. Staff members are randomly chosen to arrange a scenario necessitating a Lock Down and ensuring all staff, children and centre visitors are alerted and the correct procedure is followed. Each section has a designated, secured area which has a supply of emergency food (dry biscuits) and bottled water. The use by date on these rations are checked by our WH&S officers. A lock down *drill* was held on Friday, 17th March at 9.30am. This time was chosen to enable parent involvement in the drill and we thank those parents who followed staff instruction and participated in this drill.

At least once a year we arrange drills to coincide with children's rest time - this is to give staff the opportunity to practice rousing children from rest and evacuating the building. To date we are able to evacuate the building at rest time within 4 minutes.

Throughout the year we will arrange for emergency drills to be held at arrival and departure times to enable parent involvement in our drills. We apologise for delaying our parents however, by involving family and community members we are able to evaluate the effectiveness of our procedures and determine necessary changes or adjustments to procedures to improve performance.

How children learn through play



Play is something in which humans of all ages from diverse cultures engage, although the purpose for and the type of play may be different across ages and cultures. Relationships between children and with adults are central to learning and teaching through play. Two-way interactions and the exchange of ideas and thinking between children and adults in play contexts influence children's continued motivation, sustained interest in the experience and what they learn. A child's intense interest in watching some snails when he is playing in the garden can be sustained by an adult sharing his interest and asking questions or making comments as they observe the snails together. Using questions such as, 'Where do you think the snails are going?'; 'How do the snails move?'; 'Look Oliver, can you see a trail where the snail has been?' will help to keep Oliver interested and extend his understandings about snails. There is considerable research on the benefits of play for children's learning across all areas of development.

Cognitive and creativity outcomes: Play is associated with the development of intellectual skills and understandings. In play experiences children integrate emotions, thinking and motivation that establish neural connections critical to effective brain functioning (Lester & Russell, 2008). When children play they use imagination and imitation which requires complex cognitive or intellectual processes. The development of cognitive skills, including dispositions for learning (such as curiosity and persistence), memory and thinking skills, and language and literacy skills, have strong links to play (Bodrova & Leong, 2005). Play is associated with the development of creative skills. Play fosters creativity of thought, imagination, strategies for problem solving and the development of divergent thinking ability (Lester & Russell, 2008, p. 34).



Social and emotional outcomes: Play is associated with the development of social and emotional skills and understandings. Research shows that play assists children in building social skills that support positive relationships. Playing also helps to teach children how to regulate their behaviour, and understand others' feelings, as well as promoting a sense of independence. Early play experiences between adults and very young children have a central role in developing strong attachments in children (Lester & Russell, 2008). Emotional competence and empathy are developed through play experiences as children become aware of their own and others' emotions, motivations and desires. Through collaborating and cooperating in play, children learn how to negotiate and problem solve their personal dilemmas.

Wellbeing outcomes: Play is associated with increased feelings of wellbeing which lead to good mental health outcomes. The pleasure and satisfaction associated with play and the freedom from pressure to perform in play supports the development of a strong sense of wellbeing (Gordon, O'Toole & Whitman, 2008)



Physical outcomes: Play is associated with physical health. Physically active play is related to the development of physical skills and the increased health benefits of improved metabolism and energy expenditure (Lester & Russell, 2008; Frost, Wortham & Reifel, 2006)

Source: Early Childhood Australia, Research Practice Series, *Learning and Teaching through play*. Anne Kennedy & Lennie Barblett.

The UPCCC program uses the "[Early Years Learning Framework](#)" (EYLF) a National Curriculum Framework which is an initiative of the Commonwealth Government designed to support the learning of young children. The framework uses the underlying principles of *Belonging, Being and Becoming*. Working within this framework we have developed a play-based emergent curriculum for the children that aims to encourage the children to be actively involved in the learning process, to experience a