



## NEWSLETTER: December 2014

### Message from the President

Wow! What a year 2014 has turned out to be! Early on the Centre was rated as 'Exceeding' the National Quality Standard by the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. It's only because of our amazing employees and their dedication that the Centre achieved this result.

Ariel Wadick (Rainbow) won the State award, and has been shortlisted for the 2014 ASG National Excellence in Teaching Awards (NEiTA). This is a fantastic effort not only for Ariel personally and the Centre as a whole, but also for Early Childhood Educators, of which there are only eight throughout Australia in the National final. The Award winners will be announced early next year.

**Ariel Wadick's award was celebrated at a ceremony with the kids. "We're all proud of you Ariel."**



The current Federal Government redirected the money set aside for the Early Years Quality Fund to now be used to train and educate early childhood educators, as well as cover the cost of backfilling positions while staff are training. Staff will be putting together their individual further education plans early in the New Year.

The Committee of Management has successfully navigated its way through another year. As with previous years, it is the dedication of parents and caregivers that enable the Committee to function. I thank all of the Committee members for their contribution throughout the year. Without it the Centre would not be in the strong position it is in today. A special thanks to, Roslyn, Eve, Allison and Danni who are turning over the Committee member baton to a new group of parents and caregivers.

The Landscape master plan has been finalised (thanks to Mark Gillingham for providing his landscape architecture expertise to the Centre pro bono). We will begin to see yard work and working bees guided by an overarching purpose and goal in line with the Master plan, over the coming years.

A special thank you to Lara and Anna, without whom the Centre would not have the 'glue' necessary to stick all the good bits together.

To the Kinder kids leaving the Centre this year to take on their next educational adventure, I wish you the very best.

Finally, try to take the time over the Christmas break to listen to your child and how far they've grown since the same time last year. I know that I am constantly amazed at how much my three kids absorb each year.

I wish you and your family a wonderful and safe Christmas!

Matt Zaba, President (2014)

## Centre News

As we approach the end of year, I reflect back on the last 12 months and am always amazed at how quickly the year passes before my eyes. It seems like only yesterday that the babies were settling into the Possums room, becoming familiar in their new environment, bonding with their educators, and here they are now, walking, talking and ready to break out from the room ready for their next adventure. The kindergarten children too are well and truly ready for school, transitioning to school and proudly wearing their school t-shirts and uniforms to Annie Dennis. They too are starting another journey.

The end of year party was well attended as always and our annual disco was certainly a hit with the children. Thanks to Jonathan for providing the sound and lights and to Tali and Scott for the music outdoors and for the parents that volunteered time to assist with cooking, serving and managing the bar.

Thanks to some eager knitters and crocheters our yarn bombing project launched in October. A handful of yarn bombers met in the foyer over tea and bickies and started our wool panels. We have been eagerly creating colourful panels, culminating in amazing masterpieces which were sewn in place around poles and some trees in the Bastings St yard a few weeks ago. Let's keep the momentum going, we still have 3 playgrounds to go! Thanks to all involved.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our families and friends for being a part of the Annie Dennis community, for supporting our educators and acknowledging the tireless work they do each and every day.

To the families leaving the centre, we hope that you and your children will take some fond memories of the time spent at Annie Dennis. We wish you all the best as you enter a new and exciting phase. To families returning in 2015, we look forward to another productive and exciting new year ahead.

Lastly, I would like to thank my team of educators; you certainly all deserve a well-earned break.

Have a safe and relaxing break, and see you in the New Year.

Lara Bamundo . Director

## Dates to remember

- 18 December: last day for kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten
- 19 December: Last day for the children

- 8 January 2015: Centre reopens
- 26 January: Centre closed
- 29 January: Kindergarten and Pre-Kindergarten commences
- 3 February: Centre Information evening
- 4 February: Sessional Kindergarten Information evening; Pre-Kindergarten Information evening

## Fee Increase

The Annie Dennis Committee of Management have reviewed the 2014/2015 budget and a fee increase will be effective from 8 January 2015.

The 2015 fees for all programs will be as follows:

- Daily fee: \$106
- Kinder session (Rainbow room): \$66
- Term fee Kindergarten: \$400
- Extended hours Sessional Kindergarten fee: \$90
- Term fee Pre-Kindergarten: \$408

For information regarding claiming Child care Benefit and the Child Care Tax Rebate, contact the FAO on 13 61 50

If you would like to discuss your fees please do not hesitate to approach Lara or Anna.

Note: If you are leaving the centre, please cancel your Direct Debit payments. Any reimbursements will be made to families when we return in 2015.

## Annie Dennis T-shirts

We launched our Annie Dennis T-shirts at the end of year party. The images on the T-shirts were drawn by some of the rainbow room children and combined to create the amazing images we see printed on the tees. An enormous thanks to Alison and Catriona for their graphic design skills and sourcing an eco-friendly product. The T-shirts are \$20 each or \$15 for 2 or more. They come in red, blue, green and purple from sizes 1 to 4.

Due to popular demand we will be ordering size 6 in the New Year and possibly adult tees too. We have plenty in stock now so drop by the office any time to pick one up... or two... or three.

## Parent Reps 2015

Thank you to the parent reps who volunteered to take on this role at the beginning of the year. Parent reps are the link in bringing families and children together out of the centre, encouraging other parents to come along to social events or just organising catch up for a coffee. As the New Year approaches

we are looking for new parent reps, while existing parent reps may continue in their roles in their child's new program. Let us know by dropping an email to the office. Programs can have more than one parent rep too.

## Educational Programs

### Christmas

I am not one to get caught up in the commercial hype of Christmas, but it is difficult to ignore it when you are accosted by decorations and all the other advertising in the months leading up to December. To me Christmas is spending time with my family, sharing fun times and food together.

This year we were gifted with a Christmas tree which we put up in the foyer, it has created some discussion amongst our educators and most recently at our staff meeting we reflected on this.

Why do we have a Christmas tree in our foyer? We never had one before. Are our programs based on the children's interests? It wasn't initiated by the children? Our educational programs are play based and initiated by the children; their ideas through their discussions and from observations made by our educators form our educational programs. Educators also bring their own ideas and intentions to the program to create an environment in which children can play and explore freely. So, why is there an issue with having a Christmas tree in the foyer? As individuals and families we celebrate many varied things. We celebrate important milestones eg turning 18, finishing school, birthdays, whatever's relevant to us. A celebration can be whatever you want it to be; it can be celebrating your child doing a wee for the first time on the potty or learning to ride a bike without training wheels for the first time. Most of our families celebrate Christmas but some do not, so is it inappropriate to have a Christmas tree in the foyer if some families do not celebrate Christmas? We are inclusive of all families and children and the diverse contributions they bring to our Annie Dennis community. The children embraced the tree, they decorated it with paper chains, and paper wrapped boxes and anything else they could find. They were so excited you could hear them squealing with laughter and singing songs throughout the whole centre. Our tree which was assembled by some of our educators, then decorated by our children, then evolved into a friendship and message tree: families were invited to share messages so that all of our community could be involved and contribute in their own way.

Through our staff meeting discussion we acknowledged that while it is important to celebrate what is significant to our families, just as important is

what we can bring to the programs from our own experience and blend it together so that is unique to our Annie Dennis community.

How would you like us to celebrate significant events in your family? How can we share this within our Annie Dennis community? Tell us what you celebrate and how can you be involved?

We look forward to this discussion.

## Staff News

Congratulations to Renee and her partner who are expecting their first baby. We wish them all the best as they venture into parenthood for the first time. We look forward to hearing their news in March 2015.

Congratulations to Amy for being appointed room leader in 2015.

## Playgroup

Due to our extended hours kindergarten program changes in 2015, our playgroup will wind up on Friday 19 December. It has been a successful program bringing together children and families to play and catch up informally. Thank you to the families for being involved and attending each Friday.

## From the kitchen

### Honey cake

Mix together:

- 3 large eggs
- 500gms honey
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 7/8 cup oil
- 2 heaped tablespoons cooking chocolate grated
- 1 rind of an orange grated

Sift:

- 1 ½ cup SR flour
- 1 ½ cup P flour
- 1 teaspoon bicarb of soda

Mix everything then add 1 ½ teaspoons instant coffee mixed with 1 cup of hot water. Heat oven to 260 degrees then turn down to 150 degrees when you put the cake in at the bottom of the oven. Cook for 1hr to 1 hr 15 mins (depends on the oven). You will need a large cake tin e.g. 21 cm x 29 cm. Keeps very well for up to a week if wrapped up. In fact, flavour improves after a few days.