



# The Elder Street Herald

## National Child Care Accreditation at Elder Street

Greetings everyone, we hope you are all well and happy coming into Autumn.

If you noticed that the staff may have looked a little more stressed than usual on Thursday and Friday 19 and 20 March, that would have been due to the fact that we were undergoing our validation visit by NCAC (National Child Care Accreditation Council) We always have mixed feelings about these audits as it is stressful and a little nerve wrecking but at the same time a great opportunity to showcase all our hardwork and high quality practices. We are very proud to

announce that we have informally been advised that we were successful in passing another Accreditation cycle.

Thank you to all those parents who returned the Family Input Surveys provided by NCAC. These surveys form part of the information that is used to reach our final accreditation rating. The other components are the centre's Self Study and Continuing Improvement Plan, Staff surveys, the validation visit and then finally the NCAC moderators will determine whether the centre received a High, Good or Basic rating. We will now wait another 3

years before we are accredited again and in that time we are committed to continuing to improve on our partnerships with families, care and education of your precious children and generally being the best we can be!

Once we have our paperwork, formal feedback and rating returned to us we will publish the information for parents to read.



Baby team meeting discussing the quality of their care...verdict is HIGH!!

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## ATTENTION ALL PARENTS/CARERS —EXTREMELY IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!!

We have had a few instances over the last couple of weeks where children have been picked up in the afternoon by their parent/carer and staff have not been advised. We urge **ALL PARENTS TO ENSURE THAT THEY APPROACH A STAFF MEMBER FROM THEIR CHILD'S ROOM WHEN COLLECTING THEIR CHILD TO ADVISE**

### THAT THEY ARE GOING HOME.

We understand that certain times of the afternoon pick up are very hectic and staff can be having discussions with other parents and appear to be unavailable. If this is the case please feel free to interrupt and say goodbye. Also if your child's room staff have finished for the day, please advise

another staff member. Recently we had a big brother of primary school age collect his sibling from the playground whilst the parent collected bags inside the centre. Staff were extremely concerned when doing a head check they could not find the child and had some very frantic moments until staff checked the sign in sheet in the

foyer and saw that they child had been signed out.

We understand Elder Street is a busy place and we try our best to get to all parents, but request that parents make sure some kind of leaving acknowledgement is made each afternoon—Thank you.

## Your feedback from the NCAC Family Surveys

As mentioned in the article on page one we have read through and sent off the Family surveys regarding the centre's performance against the 7 Quality Areas of Accreditation. We do take all feedback very seriously and like to advise parents of how we address any areas you feel we could improve on. The following is some information for parents, to let you know a little more information on how we meet some of the areas of the survey, that you would not be able to observe yourself, due to not being with us all day long:

### 1. Safe Food Handling

We have a comprehensive policy available for parents to read on this subject. Following the procedures set down in this policy we practice the following:

- \*Hand washing before serving food
- \*Gloves worn during serving of food
- \*Correct storage, cooling, heating, freezing etc of all foods and a beautiful clean hygienic kitchen which parents are welcome to visit whenever

they want to see for themselves.

### 2. Opportunities for ongoing staff professional development

In the foyer of the centre at the bottom of the Staff Profile board we have a list of courses that staff are enrolled to complete this year—check it out, we are busy girls!!

### 3. Information on staff changes.

Each end of year we post in our newsletter which rooms staff will be working in come the new year. We also often update families on when staff are going away for holidays via the newsletter. On an incidental basis, we have just introduced a sign in the foyer that advises parents if any staff are off sick for the day and who will be replacing them.

### 4. My family is informed of how the centre operates and ways to make suggestions or complaints regarding its operation.

We aim to inform families on the running of the centre via our newsletter,

policy review, and general signs and notes around the centre and in family pockets. We have suggestion forms available from the sign in desk and provision for families to comment on our Centre Philosophy in the foyer. On enrolment all families receive a Centre Handbook which is great to refer to at any stage of your time with us. Please feel comfortable to come and chat with staff if you have any questions about anything. We will also be posting our annual Partnership with Parents Questionnaire in April and encourage parents to spend some time filling it out. This is a great opportunity to pass on feedback, ideas and your thoughts.



## Team Building at Elder St

We like to keep our families informed of any professional development that we undertake and we would especially like to share with you the fantastic team building that took place for Elder Street on Saturday 28 March 2009. We met up with Oliver Sheer from Be Challenged bright and early in Pacific Park. We formed into two teams of 5 being **Team Dominica**—Mel, April, Karen, Tahlia and Catherine and **Team Grenada**—Kim, Sheree, Kate, Shelly and Georgia—the name of the game was Metro Mayhem!

For the next three hours we were involved in photo challenges such as “find a person in speedos and have one team member hug them in a photo”, “take a photo of one team member busking on a Newcastle street” and many more—Newcastle Beach locals will never be the same again!!! Other activities included a giant grid that required us to work together as a team to direct each

member through a mind field of “bombs”, there was the very physical Accuracy sling that required us to sling tennis balls from a huge rubber band into buckets, a secret message that had to be acted out by some of the team and the rest had to guess what we were trying to tell them—very interesting acting by some of the girls!! We also had little challenges along the way such as collecting as many business cards as possible, completing Wordles, Menza quizzes and mystery pictures.

Needless to say it was a challenging but great fun 3 hours that we all enjoyed immensely and also helped solidify even further our strong team morale.

It didn't really matter which team won

on the day (but, it was Dominica!!!) as the real winner on the day was the entire Elder Street Team!!!



## Equipment Levy 2009—Parent ideas please....

Our equipment levies have been paid by almost all families now with much appreciation. The staff always love this time of year as they pull out the educational catalogues and decide what the children would benefit from. What we haven't done in the past is ask parents what they think they centre could do with in the way of further resources. So now is your chance! If you have seen something or know someone whose child has a great toy or educational resource please let

us know, we are always looking for ideas and your input. There is a criteria that you should be aware of when making suggestions including:

- Durability, good quality
- The toy can serve more than one child at a time or be cost efficient enough to buy several of,
- Stores practically
- Safe features and non toxic

Also, if you have an idea for a

piece of equipment other than toys, that you feel the centre could benefit from, please also share this with us.

If any parent wants to go so far as having a look through our catalogues please just ask and we will let you have a look and make some suggestions.

Please email your ideas to:  
elderstreet@optusnet.com.au

Thanks ☺

## Parent Policy Review Committee

In April 2006 our centre formed the Parent Policy Review Committee. The committee has worked really well over the last 3 years, but as children leave to go off to school our committee numbers are dwindling.

Each year I include a small tear off section asking parents if they wish to join the committee, but I think the word committee in itself often scares people away. The best thing about this committee is that you never have to come to a meeting! Not that we wouldn't love to spend some time chatting with you all, but we understand very well how busy our lives are with work, children and other commitments.

To combat this and ensure that we are receiving feedback from our families on policy and procedure we came up with the idea of a "paper" committee. This simply means that in place of meeting as a group to discuss the policy, those who indicate they are willing to help will have the

current policy in review either placed in their communication pocket or emailed to them. It is then simply a case of reading through the policy at your leisure (usually 2 week time-frame), making any comments or changes they feel appropriate and sending it back to the centre. You certainly do not need to be any kind of expert to review a policy, a large majority of our policies are based around common sense issues.

So please consider joining our committee we would love to have your input on these important policies and procedures. Our first review for this year is our Behaviour Intervention and Support Policy.

Please complete the tear off slip below and send it into us and we will send you out a copy of our policy and a feedback form.

Thanks

### REMINDER....

Please take home your child's sleep bag at the end of their attendance - we have many of them left at the centre on the weekends...

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### *Preschool Wallabies*

CSIRO Early Science Lab

Thurs 23 April @ 10.30am

#### *All Ages*

Henny Penny Hatching

4/5/09-15/5/09

3 baby chicks & 13 fertile eggs!!

### STAFF HOLIDAYS

Karen away—9/4-17/4—

(Mel replacing)

Mel away—20/4-24/4

Sheree away—28 & 29 April

(Mel replacing)

Yes, I would like to join the Parent Policy Review Committee and give feedback of centre policies undergoing review.

Name: .....

Email address: .....

Green, gorgeous green!!



Thank you soooo much to everyone who ordered Bulbs through the Bulb Express Fundraiser. From this special fundraiser we raised \$490.00!!!

April, Karen and Mel had a great time visiting a nursery to choose more plants for indoors and outdoors. As the photos show, Elder Street is looking a lot greener, which has been one of our ongoing goals for some time. Thanks for your support of us achieving this important environmental goal.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!!

### March

- Levi turned 1
- Elliot turned 2
- Zoe turned 2
- Riley turned 2
- Bridie turned 2
- Breanna turned 3
- Abe turned 3
- Samara turned 3
- Eli turned 3
- Imogen turned 4
- Chloe P turned 4



Levi the happy 1 year old boy!!

### New Arrivals Congratulations!!

Welcome to lovely Avery Alexis! A beautiful second daughter for Nikola and Neil and little sister for Xanthe (Joeys) - well done guys!!

Congratulations to Peta and Bob on the arrival of their third little one—a beautiful girl called Sienna. Sienna is little sister to Samara (Wallabies) and Taj (Possums)



Hot off the press.....born Monday 30 March.. lovely little Lucy Gallagher, a little sister for James (Joeys). Well done Bronwyn and Ryan—first girl in the family for two generations—she is extra, extra special!!!

### April

- Antony turns 3
- William turns 5

Very, very hot off the press...born today Thursday 2 April is another lovely little girl for Bec and Dean— baby Annabelle, who makes Elise (Joeys) a very proud big sister - Congratulations!!!