



Dear Parents and Guardians,

26 October 2004

Everyone in Harmony hopes that you and your families are healthy and happy, especially as we draw close to the end of another year together. We are very comfortable with the way our relationships have strengthened over the year and truly value your feedback to carers so that we can best meet your needs and wants. We gain lots of satisfaction from the way your cherished children have blossomed into delightful young people who also are eager to learn about the world around them.

This newsletter is short, and it is very important that it is read immediately as it contains urgent information about re-enrolments for next year.

Enrolments & Re-enrolments for 2005

An Enrolment form is attached to this newsletter for your **urgent attention**. This is an opportunity also to **change days of the week and the number of days and to add siblings**. The completed forms will be treated in order of receipt and, in any case, must be returned to Harmony by the due date on the form. In most cases families will get the days they request.

Shutdown period

Our last day this year is **Friday, 24 December (closing at 4.15 pm)** and our first day back in the new year is **Monday, 10 January**.

End-of-year concert & Santa

We are holding this annual event on **Friday, 17 December, commencing at 2.00 pm**, so do start arranging time off work soon. Last year the high numbers of children and their wonderful audience meant the Harmony room was very crowded and noisy and even the air con could not cope. So, this year we are looking at another venue within walking distance and with plenty of parking (and also a PA system so that we can hear the children singing).

Staffing

First of all, we want to let you know that Marie, our new Child Care Assistant & French Specialist for the preschoolers, has settled easily and with good humor into the Bilbies group. She conducts a special morning session (for stories and learning new songs) and then talks in French with children throughout the day (in the sandpit, at lunchtime, etc). The children are catching onto new French words and are starting to recall French songs and objects from earlier this year. It's a pity that the French has been so fragmented these past six months but hopefully Marie can make up for lost time.

Perhaps the biggest staff news at present is the marriage of Kelly (Diploma-qualified Educator in the Possums group). On 13 November she weds the wonderful Aussie man in her life, Brynn, in beautiful gardens at Joondalup Country Club, with five of her immediate family flying all the

way from England (with the help of Qantas of course!!). We wish Kelly and Brynn the very best that married life can bring – some of us will take photos and post them in the front entry.

Workshops that have been attended by staff (and not notified in previous newsletters) have been:-

- Brooke (February) – *Culturally Appropriate Environment*
- Robin (April) – *Nyoongar Know How*, three days facilitated by six aborigines about their culture in the south-west of WA
- Kelly (September) – *Occupational Safety & Health*
- Robin (October) – *Managing Sticky Situations*
- Harmony group training (September & October) – *10 Principles of Parenting and Effective Parenting*

Quality Assurance Accreditation

There are two ways we can help you answer the questions in the current Accreditation survey.

- Families can look at any of our policies and procedures in the 23-page Parent Handbook at the sign in/out bench in the front entry (a Contents page makes it easy to find topics).
- Because Harmony has met all the criteria for a highest quality child care and early learning centre, if you have any doubts, please talk with staff so that we can provide you with evidence of what is happening.

As our amazing Scotswoman Janet says, if we are not providing the highest quality, why would you put your child in Harmony?

Robin (Garbutt).....

Brooke (Snow).....

Some sayings

- *Look in the mirror in the morning and smile and say, “I am too blessed to be stressed and too anointed to be disappointed”.*
- *Winners make things happen. Losers let things happen.*
- *To the world you might be one person, but to one person you just might be the world.*
- *People work hard to have a good life and forget what life is all about.*
- *Happiness adds and multiplies as we divide it with others.*

The amazing influence of exercise on the mind and the body’s muscles (*Newsweek*, Oct. 2004)

Exercise that challenges the brain as well as the body (eg gymnastics, formal dance steps, juggling) may provide benefits not previously realised. In a study published in the journal *Nature* this year, German researchers reported that people who practised juggling for three months actually enlarged a region of the cerebral cortex. Exercise increases the production of a chemical that helps neurons multiply and form new connections.

This is in addition to the better known benefits of exercise in raising levels of endorphins (a morphine-like relaxant), and dopamine and serotonin (mood-enhancing factors).

(So, without doubt we should be out there doing our 15 to 30 minutes a day to make our body healthy and to make us feel relaxed and happy.)