



Dear Parents

7/7/05

Some important news items of interest to all families

30% government rebate

The 30% government rebate, over and above the CCB subsidy already received by most families, is in effect as from 1 July last year. Unfortunately, due to reasons known to only the federal bureaucracy!! nobody (including Harmony) was told about this until it hit the media about a month ago. Therefore, we are not surprised that most families would not have kept their Harmony receipts for fees paid from 1 July 2004.

However, our fees whiz kid Janet is emailing a summary statement to families connected to the internet, so please make sure that she has your up-to-date email address. This summary statement must be kept by families in a safe place for tax return of 2005/06.

Those families without any email address may receive a statement print-out from Harmony, once the new software has been installed to handle this (within the next few weeks). This statement must be kept for 2005/06 tax return.

From information that we have received so far, it seems that families are eligible who are working, studying, looking for work, or training.

Fees increase

The Harmony staff are receiving a wage increase, which all are certain to agree is well deserved. Every Harmony staff member is committed to the best care and education of your young children, during the most formative of their years. The wage raise means that, taking effect from week ending 10 July, fees without any CCB subsidy at all will be raised slightly as follows:

<u>Daily</u>		<u>Weekly (full-time)</u>
Over 3 ½ years old	\$53.00	\$193.00
Under 3 ½ years old	\$60.00	\$223.00

For some families there will be no increase at all, and for others there will be \$1 a day increase. For some the CCB subsidy increase will offset the fees increase.

Our apologies for the late notification, but we have been waiting for the list from Centrelink's Family Assistance Office that details all families new CCB percentages (see next news item) so as to minimise changes to invoices. We are now told that the list should be received by us on Friday, 8 July, in time to backdate your correct fees next week.

CCB subsidy increase

As most families will know, the new CCB percentages take effect Monday, 4 July, but, as mentioned above, the federal government is late with advising the details for each family and, therefore, Janet (and her computer) is unable to calculate what your higher CCB rate will be until the list is received. In any case, the new CCB rate will be backdated on next week's invoice.

Staffing

All staff have now planned their annual leave and, as families would know, some have taken leave already – Brooke, Yvonne and Sabina (both to Europe!), Janet, Toni, Melissa, Abbie, Kirsty, and Bénédicte (to Réunion Islands). We are lucky to have Marigold as Relief staff continuously for 5 months, Roxane (a native French-speaking TAFE student to take over from Bénédicte), and other relief staff who are well known to Harmony and are available during the winter months of illnesses.

Donations

Many wonderful parents have donated a heap of great recyclables that are really appreciated for arts and crafts creations and for other uses. So, everyone thanks you for thinking of Harmony: Blake C's mum (disposable nappies, doll clothes, & children's sunglasses); Aaron's dad (packing "peanuts"); Lucy's mum (movie tickets); CDs (Joseph's mum); Holly's mum (nursery rhyme book); mum of Grace & Jayne (color magazines & calendars); Joel's mum (toys); mum of Billie & Riley (30 sashes for excursions); Arabella's mum (bag of fabrics); Ronan & Lily's mum (boxes of toys, blocks, butcher's paper); Ben's mum (wall picture); mum of Riley & Jackson (recycled paper & envelopes); Louis' mum (wooden blocks); our own Toni & mums of Matthew & James (sticky labels); mum of Holly (books); mums of Jackson & Lachlan & Mitchell & Colton (toys); mum of Alana & Eamon (popcorn & clay pots); our own Erin (boxes of dried fruits); Emily N's mum (calico wall picture); Lucas A's dad (box of potatoes); Eya's dad (drafting/drawing paper); & our neighbor Phil (sandpit toys). Wow! What a long list, and thank you again to all of you!

International Festival

This celebration of the diverse cultures represented in Harmony is now in full swing. This year there are 28 different cultures amongst children and staff, literally from A to Z (Afghanistan to Zimbabwe). From May till now we have drawn on input from families in the way of family photos, posters, simple storybooks, recipes, musical instruments, costumes, artefacts, etc, as well as picture books from two libraries, for the countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, China, Croatia, Denmark, and Egypt. The meals are just fantastic and the children have, sometimes surprisingly, really enjoyed them. Your children's educators go to a lot of effort to pull ideas from library books and turn them into exciting activities for each age group, including the little Joeys.

Preschool Holiday Program

Week 2 is about to start, and continues with some fun places and people to entertain the Bilbies. We really appreciate the help from parents and grandparents who accompany our excursions, because without meeting the regulation one-carer to four-children ratio, we could not leave the centre. We are still looking for helpers on Friday, 15 July, to drive to Karrinyup.

Reminders

1. Please keep your child home if she/he has an excludable illness, i.e. symptoms of:
 - thick green/yellow/brown nasal discharge
 - heavy or frequent cough or sneezing
 - rapid or labored breathing
 - upset and crying
 - not drinking or eating
 - not sleeping well
2. Please remember:
 - to look in your child's message pocket every day for notes etc.
 - to bring a piece of fruit each day (children over 12 months of age)
 - to take home, clean, refill, & return drink bottle every day

That's all for now,

Robin Garbutt

Brooke Snow