Hello and welcome to the 36th edition of the Milestone newsletter!

I would first like to welcome all of the new families to the centre. I hope that you are all settling in well & I look forward to getting to know you over the next few weeks.

Term 1 has come and gone and we are now getting ready for a big term 2 here at Milestone! We have lots of exciting things planned for the next few months such as our 6th birthday celebration on April 19th and our annual Mother’s Day Tea which is always a lovely celebration.

Term 2 also means that it is Autumn time. Autumn usually brings with it some unpredictable - but usually lovely - weather which turns into lots of discussion about the changing colours of the leaves. Unfortunately, it also means that the cold and flu season is on the horizon. We have a very comprehensive Dealing with Infectious Diseases policy that has our exclusion periods for certain illnesses. If you are unfamiliar with this document, please do not hesitate to ask for a copy.

As you know, we are a very passionate bunch down here and there’s nothing we love more than advocating for early childhood education. Last year, we developed a brand new philosophy that was met with a lot of excitement but also some concerns from a few families. We want you all to know just how well this philosophy is working now so please turn to page 10 for a beautiful review on our progress.

Have a look at our Philosophy in Action on pages 10 and 11.

We are very proud to showcase what we believe in to you all.

You would have noticed that we have recently done some minor renovations. All of the children’s rooms and our hallway and foyer have been painted and we have also put up some brand new noticeboards.

The office got a mini makeover when we covered the awful green wall carpet at the back with a much nicer grey one! The yards got brand new tanbark and sand and we have done quite a big clean-out of old, broken equipment.

The new hallway boards are currently showcasing some photos of fun moments we have had at the centre. So, please take a look with your child next time you are in.
Research has shown us that uncluttered rooms with neutral tones are more calming for children and these spaces provide them with a sense of homeliness. From this research, we decided to move away from outdated child care design - rooms full of overly colourful furniture and equipment, busy wall displays, an abundance of artwork, and a lot of plastic resources - and adopt a more modern and natural philosophy.

Contemporary child care facilities build their services around natural elements, and this type of design is something we are currently working towards. The rooms have been stripped back and we have been seeking out natural resources to soften the spaces such as plants, baskets, woven materials and timber.

We are always looking for old furniture, rugs, wooden and metal resources (such as pots, pans, kitchenware), cushions, artwork, frames etc. Basically any item that would be found in a child’s home. Having these resources around & available to children provides them with a sense of belonging and connection to their normal home environment. If you no longer need any of these items, please feel free to donate them to us.

This excerpt from the Early Childhood News website explains it perfectly: “In the past, many early childhood classrooms were so filled with commercial decorations, materials and, "stuff" that young children were visually overwhelmed. Today, we are working to have less clutter and a more organised display of materials and work, so young children can visually attend to and enjoy the important features of the environment.”

So, if you are looking around and are a bit worried about the changes, please don’t hesitate to speak with me or Jo (our centre educational leader) as we are more than happy to explain the reasons behind this environment makeover.

I just want to take this opportunity to write a few little reminders for you all.

- At Milestone, we follow the Sunsmart sun protection policy so we wear hats & sunscreen every day between September and May. Please continue to send along a hat for your child to wear up until the May 2nd.
- It is very important that families leave enough money in their accounts or on their cards to pay their fees each week/fortnight. We have had many payments decline lately and it can be hard to collect. If you wish to change your payments to a different day, please let me know and we can arrange it to start automatically.
- We currently have a child at the centre who has anaphylaxis. This is a severe allergic reaction that can result in hospitalisation. Can all families please refrain from bringing food into the centre unless it has been pre-arranged with a staff member? If you are bringing food in, please make sure it is signed into the kitchen.

In the last newsletter, I told you all that I had a nephew due to come into the world in February - the first child of my brother and his wife. Well, little Thomas James Wright arrived on Wednesday 17th February and has had the family wrapped around his little finger since! We are completely smitten!

Thank you for reading.

Kindest Regards,

Alyssa Wright
Centre Director
Ingredients

- 4 rashers middle bacon, trimmed, finely chopped
- 2 cups cold mashed potato
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 green onions, finely chopped
- 3/4 cup plain flour
- 40g mozzarella cheese, cut into 1cm cubes
- 1 1/2 cups fresh breadcrumbs
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup milk
- Azalea grapeseed oil, for shallow-frying
- Mixed salad leaves, to serve

Makes 4 servings.

Recipe from www.taste.com.au

Method

1. Heat a medium non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Cook bacon for 3 to 4 minutes or until crisp. Drain on a plate lined with paper towel.

2. Combine mashed potato, egg yolk, onion, bacon and 1/4 cup flour in a large bowl. Roll heaped tablespoons of mixture into 20 balls. Push 1 cheese cube into the centre of each ball. Mould mixture around cheese to enclose.


4. Heat oil in a deep frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook croquettes, in batches, turning, for 3 to 4 minutes or until golden. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a plate lined with paper towel. Serve with salad.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

A big Happy Birthday to the children who have recently celebrated their birthday or will celebrate theirs in the coming months. Hope all your dreams and wishes come true.

April

3rd - James Heslop (1)
5th - Alexis Thompson (4)
5th - Evan Xue (3)
5th - Alfie Okoli (2)
6th - Madeline Draffin (5)
6th - Lachlan Edwards (4)
7th - Samuel Bryce (1)
9th - Hudson Ashby (3)
9th - April McDonald (2)
11th - Morna Su (4)
14th - Mia Stojanovic-Boag (5)
16th - Milla Heslop (3)
18th - Mitchell Kidziak (4)
20th - Eden Fussell (5)
21st - Ella-Rose Crone (5)
24th - David Okoli (4)
24th - Hermione Morris (1)
26th - Harper Monteau (4)
29th - Benjamin Nixon (3)
30th - Georgia Gaskell (4)

May

5th - Addison McDonald (4)
7th - Liam Mein (3)
8th - Owen Cochran (5)
9th - Jayden Bullen (5)
12th - Braxton Knowles-Kelly (2)
13th - Olivia Graham (2)
14th - Isabelle Jack (4)
16th - Luke Burton (5)
18th - Lily Poppel (5)
19th - Bobbie Watson (1)
20th - Mia Gissara (5)
20th - Phillip Cochran (3)
20th - Lily Teh (2)
20th - Finn Stallworthy (1)
21st - Alexander Livingstone (3)
23rd - Alice Churchward (4)
24th - Emma Fletcher (4)
25th - Nicholas Holly (3)
26th - Jai Conomy (2)
29th - Ethan Yeo (3)
30th - Kaylee Marchese-Rizk (2)
31st - Kayla De Iulio (5)
Hi Families. How are you all? I hope you all had a wonderful Easter with your cherubs! Can you believe it’s only 9 months until Christmas? CRAZY, I know!

Welcome to all our new families who have started in the Nursery. We have really enjoyed getting to know each one of your children and your families individually. That is one of our favourite parts of our jobs, creating warm relationships with our children and their families.

For those who have just started, just a few housekeeping issues:
- Please remember to label your child’s belongings (bottles, comforters, dummies, clothes). This helps us to remember whose items is whose, and minimises the chances of us losing any belongings.
- We encourage all families to send along a drink bottle for their child each day. We have found previously that the babies are more likely to drink their water if it is from a cup they are familiar with.
- We would absolutely love if you all could send a family photo along with your child. We had an amazing family tree wall last year and we would love to continue that this year. Even feel free to email a photo to nurseryroom@live.com and we can print it here.
- As it is coming into the colder months, please send along a rain coat and any other warm clothes so that your child still has the opportunity to play outside.

We have really been trying to take advantage of the last few weeks of warm weather and getting outside as much as possible. The babies absolutely love this. Regardless of their age, they all seem to find something to engage in. If that be laying on a blanket looking up at the leaves on the trees, or climbing around on the balance beams.

A Big Milestone Welcome to You!

We would like to welcome all of our new and returned children to the centre and hope that both the children, and their families, are settling in nicely:

Harley & Piper Jones and family
Ethan Crawley-Walsh and family
Tenuli Madugalle and family
Kailan Apostolopoulos and family
Dehanshi Dunhappawa and family
Pia Walton and family
Bobbie Watson and family
Keeley Keogh and family
Charlotte & Finn Stallworthy and family
Xavier Payne and family
Samuel Bryce and family
Verena Grais and family
Alia Kelly and family
Lola Charleson and family
Taliyah Broad and family
Olivia Jin and family
Hermione Morris and family
Morna Su and family
We are currently updating our centre records for 2016 and are encouraging all families to let us know the dates of their child’s immunisations. According to the National Immunisation Program Schedule, children need to receive immunisations at Birth, 2 Months, 4 Months, 6 Months, 12 Months, 18 Months, & 4 Years. If your child has received any immunisations since beginning at Milestone, we must be notified. Dr Robert Chan, who attends the centre each Monday, is able to give immunisations and can answer any questions families may have about immunisation.

NURSERY NEWS CONT.

We have been receiving some AMAZING family input stories of what you guys have been up to on the weekend. We love hearing about your adventures! This also gives us as educators the chance to work on an interest that they have begun at home, and continue it on at crèche. Just recently James and his family visited Werribee Zoo. James got to keep a toy hippo from the zoo and has become very fond of it. To continue on with his interest, we set out lots of different animal toys in the room. If you and your family get up to any fun activities on the weekend, let us know! We love hearing about it!

Later in the month, Monique will be having a week of annual leave. Ashleigh and Hannah will be in the room to help you while she is gone.

Although Mother’s Day is not until next month, on Friday 6th May we are hosting a Mother’s Day Morning Tea and would love if you could all come. We know how hard it can be to work around work, school and other children but we hope to see you all there.

We look forward to continuing to build nurturing and warm interactions with your children over the next few months! We hope you all stay safe and keep healthy as we enter the dreaded ‘Cold Season’.

Lots of Love, Monique, Ashleigh and Hannah

UPDATING YOUR CHILD’S IMMUNISATION

We are currently updating our centre records for 2016 and are encouraging all families to let us know the dates of their child’s immunisations. According to the National Immunisation Program Schedule, children need to receive immunisations at Birth, 2 Months, 4 Months, 6 Months, 12 Months, 18 Months, & 4 Years.

If your child has received any immunisations since beginning at Milestone, we must be notified. Dr Robert Chan, who attends the centre each Monday, is able to give immunisations and can answer any questions families may have about immunisation.
Hello toddler families. Wow, how fast has this year gone so far. We are already in April. We have had an amazing start to the year and have had so much fun.

We recently had our special Easter egg hunt and a visit from the Easter Bunny. The toddlers loved collecting the eggs and bringing them back to the basket. The toddlers are very interested in collecting items and placing them into baskets, bowls, tip trucks etc. So the Easter egg hunt was right up their alley.

Lately, the toddlers have enjoyed being outdoors but now as its getting colder they are requiring warmer clothing. But, as always, Melbourne weather is very unpredictable. If parents could please pack both cool and warmer clothing to cater for the changing weather that would be awesome. We still go outside if it's raining so a waterproof jacket is a must.

We do have gumboots here in the room for those really wet days or you can bring along your own if you wish. Please note that our gumboots need to be removed and placed back into the gumboot box before going home. The toddlers love finding puddles and jumping in them.

Thank you so very much to those parents who remember to take their child's drink bottles home with them. It is very important that your child's drink bottles go home each day to be cleaned. We have downgraded to a smaller tub now as the large tub took up too much space. It is vital that you remember to remove your child's drink bottle so that we have enough room for everyone's each day.

A majority of the toddlers only attend 2 - 3 days in total attending the toddler room over the week so please be fair to others and remove your child's drink bottle as there isn't space to hold it here.

Also, we would love to thank all of those parents who have been labelling their child's belongings. It makes it so much easier to find lost items when they have their owners name written on it. We do have a lost property basket in case of any lost items. Please feel free to go through it every now and again if you have lost anything.

Our next big special day will be the Mother's Day morning tea which is on Friday the 6th of May. We hope to see some of our mums come in for a play.

Don't forget that you can always email us at 'toddlerroom@live.com' with any questions or concerns. We endeavour to reply as soon as possible.

Thanks. Love Becky, Bree, Nadia, Kellie and Anu.
Hi families. We hope you had a safe and happy Easter! We all had such a fun day last Thursday doing our Egg Hunt and meeting the Easter Bunny, as well as doing lots of messy art to celebrate.

We have just had our walls painted and are finally looking to move forward with our Community Wall. Thank you so much to families who have brought in photos and mementoes so far. We want to do an ‘Exploring Our World’ theme, putting up pictures and things to show everyone where the children go, or what they do when they’re not in childcare. So if you’re going out, or going away, or even just having fun in your own backyard, please feel free to share with us!

We’ll also be moving our program around, trying to find a better way to display information on what your children are up to. We are more than happy to let you know how they are going! We just want to make it more accessible for you. So watch this space!

There are a few housekeeping things we would like to get out of the way:

- While we are more than happy for your children to bring something with them to childcare - whether to show the other kids or just to help them if they need that comfort - we ask that you remember things are easily lost here. Making sure items are named is always a great help, and we will encourage children to leave their things with their bags, but sometimes this isn’t enough and things go missing. Please avoid any special items, or expensive ones, as we would hate for you to lose them.

- On that note, please have a look through our Lost Property box on top of the Pre-Kinder Room lockers. There are a lot of things in here that have been for a while, so hopefully it is something of yours that you didn’t know was gone! We will be donating the unclaimed things very soon.

- We have a soiled clothes bucket just out the side door, by the kitchen window. As a lot of you have unfortunately discovered, it can get very smelly if things are left in there for long periods of time. We will ensure that notes are left on the sign in book, and the communication book, so you know when you have clothes to pick up - but we will be disposing of any unclaimed clothes if they remain in the bin too long. We are sorry for any inconvenience, but need to consider the health and wellbeing of children and educators.

- We want to encourage all of our families to call us during the day to check on their child. Especially our new families, or families of children who have just moved into the room. We are more than happy to let you know how they are going! We would just like to ask that you avoid calling between 11am and 1pm, if possible. We really hate to restrict you, but during this time we have our only major transition of the day, coming in for group time, having lunch and going to sleep. It is really, really busy and makes it hard for us to dedicate our attention to your call. We thank you so much for understanding.

So many Pre-Kinder friends have had birthdays or are soon to be having them - which means not only are we starting to become so much more independent but we are also looking to move up into the Kinder Room. We have no concerns about the transitions that have been happening, but if you have any questions about the Kinder Room, or the transition, please feel free to ask. We are also aware that a lot of families haven’t seen the other end of the centre so feel free to ask one of the educators to show you around in the other room!

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter! As always, we welcome you to share your ideas, concerns, or questions with us. We also invite all new families, or families of children who have just moved up, to introduce yourself to educators and get to know the team better!

See you next time in the Pre-Kinder Room. From Lisa, Nancy, Krystal, Bo, Courtney, Leah, Amanda, and Hannah.
KINDER NEWS

Hi everyone. Thanks for taking the time to read what we’ve been up to in the kinder room lately!

Before we get into what we’ve been working on, just some quick reminders about important things in the room:

- Please bring a variety of warm and cold weather clothing while our Melbourne weather is doing weird and wonderful things! This means a jacket and rain coat, gumboots and some changes of clothes. By doing so, we know the Kinders are able to explore both indoors and outdoors, whilst still being comfy.

- Also just a reminder to ask the kids to leave their toys at home. We feel bad when things get lost or broken. Of course, bed toys and comforters are fine.

- As you know we have a child in our room who is anaphylactic to dairy & eggs, so if you bring any food into the centre, please let an educator know & be sure to sign it into the kitchen.

- Recently we’ve had some beautiful children come up from the pre-kinder room and also start new at Milestone, that are beginning to show signs of being ready to toilet train. Signs that they are ready may include: having dry nappies, staying dry in a nappy for longer periods of time, going to hide while they do their business, telling you they are going, pulling at their clothing, or showing an interest in the toilet. If you think your child is ready or you’re having trouble with getting your child to try toileting, we are here to help. Be sure to have a chat with us about starting!

- Also this applies for weaning off dummies; another tricky area. We can help you out if you need.

- Lastly, be sure to always check out our blackboard wall. We display our fortnightly program up there (it’s huge, you can’t miss it!), our fortnightly reflection, which is a visual display of what fun things we’ve been doing, and our goals we’re currently working on. We love your input and feedback so let us know what you think. Are there things, areas or ideas you want your child to be exploring or working on?

Now, the fun stuff! This month we’ve been all about SUSTAINABILITY! We’ve been focusing on using a variety of recycled materials in our play. We had a huge box construction zone set up inside with cardboard boxes, plastic reels, a huge foil insulation tube & some tools. The kinders had a ball!

We’ve also used our cardboard boxes that families have been bringing in, to decorate at our free art table. The children have been making some beautiful and colourful creations using patty pans, recycled papers, scissors, sticky tape, glue and paint!

We’ve been talking regularly about sustainability at group time and putting it into practice daily by throwing our food scraps in the compost bin and to feed the chickens and guinea pigs. Nothing is going to waste!!!

In the kinder room we’ve also had a big focus on science, and in particular water and ink type activities. The kinders have been exploring how water changes with ink in the water trough, using glass jars, with eye droppers and blowing through straws. They have been very curious about how dye swirls through water and the different colours it creates, and have even been experimenting with the weight of water, different sizes (in jars) and how water moves in different shapes and containers.

Well, what a great a month it’s been! Thanks for reading, see you next time! From Rhi, Al, Michelle, Asten, Bron and the Kinders.
PRE-SCHOOL NEWS

Hi families. We hope the start to your year has been great. April already, can you believe it?!

The pre-schoolers have all settled well into the room and to our routines. In the pre-school room we focus on increasing the children's independence and social & emotional skills.

At the moment we have been talking about the changing environment outside. With our seasons changing to Autumn, the children have noticed that the leaves are changing colour and already dropping from the trees. We have been talking about this during group time.

Next term we are going to start talking about the human body. We will have a look at skeletons, organs and how to keep our bodies healthy.

As the weather is starting to change PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU PACK APPROPRIATE CLOTHING for your child. Warm jackets, jumpers, pants and gumboots are a must at Milestone as we like to explore the outdoors in all weather conditions (apart from thunder and lightning). If children are dressed appropriately to do this, we have happier families.

Letter of the week has been a great hit again this year. The children are starting to listen for all sorts of alphabet sounds when saying different words, in all aspects of their lives, which is fantastic to see. A good indication that a child may be ready to enter the more formal environment of school is when they are excited about literacy.

I will be starting to note down the children that will be moving off to school next year (2017) and those that are doing their 4 yr. old kinder with us this year (2016). I will be writing a transition learning and development statement for those children going to school and doing their 4 year old kinder with us.

If your child is doing 4 year old kinder elsewhere this year, that teacher will write the report. So stay tuned for more information.

Please don't hesitate to speak to any of the preschool educators regarding your child or any other questions you might have.

Thanks - Jo, Jodie and Bulie.

Do you have something that you need to tell us? Email your child’s room directly!

Nursery: nurseryroom@live.com
Toddlers: toddlerroom@live.com
Pre-Kinder: prekinderroom@live.com
Kinder: kinderroom@live.com
Pre-School: preschoolroom@live.com
If you follow our facebook account, you would have seen this post written in early February. I was standing in the planning room watching the children play outside through the window. The blinds in that room are see through if you are inside, but a lot darker if you are outside, so the children didn't know that I was watching. At that exact moment, I was just blown away as I could see our centre philosophy just unfolding right there in front of me. It was a really overwhelming and emotional moment! I just had to take a photo and share with the world what I was witnessing. We are very proud of our philosophy and even though we have met with many challenges, we wouldn’t change it for anything. We hope you can see the reasons behind what we do.

This was the post that came from that moment:

This photo taken this morning warms my heart and symbolises so many things that we stand for such as:

- **Creative Expression:** These children are free to paint where and what they wish with the colours of their choosing. The activity is very messy and sensory and is completely open-ended.

- **Barefoot Play:** One child has chosen to take her shoes off while exploring the outdoor space. Children are not discouraged from removing their shoes regardless of being inside or outside.

- **Multi-Age Grouping:** There are children from 4 different rooms in this group - toddlers, pre-kinder, kinder and pre-school. They are able to interact with one another when we open the gate between both yards.

- **Risk Taking:** The children are assessing their own abilities by choosing where to stand while painting. The older children are confident enough to stand on the ledge whilst the younger children are keeping their feet on the ground.

- **Developing Relationships:** The children had moments of solitary expression but also engaged in group expression. They were laughing and talking and sharing this beautiful experience together.

- **Freedom:** Even though adults were close by, no educator was interrupting the children by entering their play without being invited. We were close enough that they could call on us if they needed assistance but far enough away that they could feel that freedom we all had as children.

- **Indoor/Outdoor Program:** Lastly, we are very proud of our indoor/outdoor program and treat both areas as one whole space. Years ago, art was done "inside" and the outdoor area was only for gross-motor play or to run off energy. Now, there are no defined "indoor activities" or "outdoor activities". Painting can be done outside. Bikes can be rode on inside. There are no boundaries. Just beautiful play experiences.

This photo sums up our philosophy in one beautiful image. They say that a picture is worth 1000 words and I hope that you can all see just how much this one is saying. - Alyssa
We shared our post with *Journey Into Play* - a professional development and consultancy company for the early childhood sector who are very big on play based learning. They hosted a session on preparing inviting play spaces last year at our centre and after looking around said, "Why did you invite us here? You already do everything we were going to suggest that you do!" 😊

As you can see from the message below, they were also very impressed with this photo. We are very proud to be recognised for our hard work and dedication to children's learning.

**Journey into Play**

Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. No boundaries, as in designated spaces for art etc. rocks. I also love that you have mentioned that adults reflect and work towards not interrupting children without being asked. Giving space to children and meaning it. Thanks for sharing Alyssa. ~ Justine

22 February · Unlike · 👍 3 · Reply
GRANDPARENTS MORNING TEA

Just like previous years, our annual Grandparents Morning Tea was a huge success!

The children just adore having all of these new people to play with & we just love seeing the joy in their little faces when they see their grandparent walk in to their room! We hope all of the grandparents that attended enjoyed themselves.

We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

EASTER EGG HUNT

Any time the Easter Bunny visits is always a very fun day! The children were so excited to hunt for eggs outside with their friends and boy did they get a surprise when the Easter Bunny arrived to visit them!

He was met with lots of squeals, giggles, excited faces and very big hugs!

I am very sure that he cannot wait to visit us again & that the children told you all about his special visit over the big Easter break.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Coming up next on our calendar:

Friday 6th May - Mother’s Day Tea
All mothers, grandmothers, aunties, friends and family are invited to our annual Mothers Day Tea at 5pm.

Tuesday 19th April - Milestone’s 6th Birthday Party!
It has been 6 years since we became Milestone, so we are going to celebrate! We are going to have a very exciting day with party food, balloons and games.

Wednesday 18th May - Dress Up Day
Calling all superheroes, cartoon characters, animals and fairy tale creatures. Today is your day to come to crèche dressed up in your favourite costume.
UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Free Family Fun Day
Tuesday 5th April
10am to 3pm
National Rhododendron Gardens
The Georgian Road, Olinda

Melbourne Autism Expo
Saturday 30th April
10am to 5pm
Karralyka Centre
Mines Road, Ringwood

Nature Play Day
Thursday 14th April
10am to 12pm
Royal Botanic Gardens
Alexandra Avenue, Melbourne
http://natureplayweek.org.au/

Mother’s Day High Tea in the Park
Sunday 8th May
10am-12pm, 1pm-3pm, 4pm-6pm
Fitzroy Gardens
Wellington Parade, East Melbourne
COMMUNITY ADVERTISEMENTS

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Dealing with anxiety: tips for parents

Nothing is more normal than worry about a new baby, or about how you’re going as a parent. But dealing with anxiety can help you enjoy your life as parent more.

Dealing with anxiety: why it’s important

Anxiety and worry about parenting is normal.

The problem is when worry or anxiety becomes extreme. Then it can get in the way of your health and your daily life. It can even stop you from being the parent you want to be.

That’s why dealing with anxiety is important.

Symptoms of anxiety

Some common symptoms of anxiety are:

- worrying a lot of the time
- finding it hard not to worry
- feeling restless
- having trouble relaxing
- having trouble sleeping
- feeling your heart racing.

It’s normal to have some of these symptoms from time to time. But if you’re feeling a lot of these symptoms and it’s making it hard for you to get on with your daily life, it might be time to find ways of dealing with anxiety.

Dealing with anxiety: everyday tips

Here are some everyday tips for dealing with anxiety:

- Talk to someone about how you’re feeling – your partner, a family member or trusted friend.
- Try breathing for relaxation, muscle relaxation or mindfulness.
- If you have things on your mind, try to deal with them and then move on. Often questions like ‘How will I pay that bill?’ or ‘What will I cook for dinner tomorrow?’ or ‘When will I do the shopping?’ buzz around our brains and worry us more than they need to.
- Keep a diary or journal to record your feelings. You might be able to see a pattern in the things that upset you.

If these everyday tips for dealing with anxiety don’t help, seeking professional help is important. Making an appointment with your GP to talk about things is a great first step.
Mental Health First Aid

In February, Rhi and I completed a two day course in Mental Health First Aid. We are now accredited Mental Health first aiders.

The course was really interesting and we learnt all about the signs of mental illness and the best way to support people with a mental illness. This course is not just for early childhood but for anyone that you may come across in your life that has a mental illness or needs support.

We highly recommend it so go to this link for more information: https://mhfa.com.au/

Reflective Practice

In early March, we held a professional development session here at the centre on Reflective Practice. This was run by Gowrie Victoria - a very respected professional support agency.

This is an area of particular interest to us as we like to critically reflect on our practices to ensure we are always challenging ourselves and making changes to ensure we progress forward.

All of our participants really enjoyed it and felt they got a lot out of the session.

Healthy Together Victoria Achievement Program

You may have heard us talking about the Achievement Program before.

Just to refresh your memory, it is a program that encourages services to create a healthy learning environment and support the health and wellbeing of everyone at the service.

Jo & I will be attending our 2nd workshop for this program which will help us to complete the requirements of steps 4, 5 and 6 - known as the Create section. Once we have proven that we have met all requirements, we can progress to the Celebrate section. This workshop is on April 18th at Cancer Council Victoria.

Educator of the Month

You may have noticed that we have an ‘Educator of the Month’. We want to recognise how important our amazing educators are to our centre.

Each ‘Educator of the Month’ is given $50 to spend on an item for the centre. Congratulations to our ‘Educator of the Month’ for February - Krystal!
EDUCATOR BIRTHDAYS

Coming up next are the birthdays of these lovely ladies.

APRIL
Rhi - 2nd (Kinder)
Amanda - 3rd (Pre-Kinder)
Al - 9th (Kinder)

MAY
Ash - 7th (Nursery)
Alyssa - 16th (Office)

EDUCATOR PROFILE

Name: Ashleigh
Position: Nursery Assistant
Favourite Colour: Blue
Favourite Food: Pasta
What do you do in your free time? Watch TV
What music are you listening to right now? Meghan Trainor
What's a special skill that you have? Hairdressing

ANNUAL LEAVE

The following educators will be taking annual leave throughout February and March.

Nursery
Monique - 20/04 to 27/04

Pre-School
Jodie - 04/04 to 11/04

Floaters
Denise - 09/05 to 30/05
Kerry - 19/05 to 06/06

Office
Alyssa - 13/05 to 17/05
Thank you for taking the time to read our centre newsletter. Please remember our door is always open and that we value family participation across all aspects of our program.

Until next time,
Alyssa and the educators at Milestone.

 Babysitting
A few of our educators are available for babysitting and will help you out as best as they can. You can contact them at the centre on (03) 9727 4414 or on their mobiles:

Lisa - 0400 555 442
Monique - 0423 564 130
Rhi - 0403 476 507
Nicole - 0402 723 136

Our Book Recommendation
Our recommendation for this newsletter is Lest We Forget by Kerry Brown. A beautiful story about Anzac Day. This book is located in front of the office for your perusal. Please feel free to sit on our couch and read books with your child at any time.

 Policy Updates
We have just reviewed all 25 of our policies for 2016. These can be found in our Policy and Procedure Handbook located in the foyer. We will be sending them out via email each week, bit by bit.

 If you would like to read them all now, please let us know and we will forward them onto your email address.

Informative Links
Each newsletter we provide families with links to information and resources on topics of current interest.

 A topic very close to our hearts - Play Based Learning!

Irresistible Ideas for Play Based Learning

Inspired EC
http://www.inspiredec.com/

Journey Into Play
http://journeyintoplay.com/

Let The Children Play
http://www.letthechildrenplay.net/

Why Play Based Learning?