Welcome

Hi everyone, welcome to Issue 16 of the CTAS newsletter. We are always looking for long daycare and OSHC centres doing amazing things that we can share with others for inspiration, if you have something you are proud of and what to motivate and encourage others, email a short paragraph and some photos for us to include. You could be given a $100 resource voucher for your efforts. Email us at admin@ctas.wa.edu.au.

Celebrations….

It was Early Childhood Educators Day on Wednesday. Here are some of the ways a few centres celebrated it: morning teas, thank-you slips from parents, certificates, thank-you cakes, balloons, speeches, and even gifts. Thankyou to Kidz Biz Early Learning Centre Beaumaris, Hocking Stars Early Learning Centre, and Community Kids Warwick for sharing how they celebrated with their educators and families.

FESTIVALS in PERTH SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

Here are two community events that are happening in the following months, you could organise an excursion or just add the information to your parent newsletter/notice board.

Kings Park Festival is on all through September, it celebrates the wildflowers that make an appearance in WA’s south-west around this time. The theme this year is ‘Beauty Rich and Rare’. There are daily free guided walking tours at 10am, 12 noon and 2pm. For groups larger than ten people, you will need to call the Visitor Information Centre by email guides@bgpa.wa.gov.au or by phone on 9480 3634.

Awesome International Arts Festival for Bright Young Things, happens every year in the Perth Cultural Centre from 3-16 October. There are lots of free and ticketed events to inspire and delight children from 0-12 years. For more information visit awesomearts.com.

Did you know?

CTAS provides traineeships in CHC30113 Certificate III Early Childhood Education and Care, CHC50113 Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, and CHC40113 Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care

Future Skills courses, subsidised by the Department of Training and Workforce Development

If you would like your staff trained by a team of passionate, committed and highly experienced child care professionals— Call us today on (08) 9350 9222 to organise a consultation at your centre to discuss your specific needs.
At CTAS we are able to tailor a professional development workshop to suit your service, we can run that workshop at our training room in Cannington, or at your service. If we come to your service, your staff don’t need to travel anywhere after work.

We have lots of topics to choose from, including Creating Learning Environments, Intentional Teaching, Supporting Children’s Behaviour, Transitions: Preparing for Change and, our most popular Child Protection and OSHC Child Protection. Contact Stacey on 9350 9222, to discuss your requirements and available dates.

As John Cotton Dana said “Who dares to teach must never cease to learn.”

**What’s Coming Up?**

**Educator Wellbeing**  
23 September 6.30pm  
Facilitator: Jan Spence  
*The most important element that leads towards job satisfaction and positive outcomes in the work place is the wellbeing of each educator.*  
In this session we will explore ways of looking after ourselves and each other physically, intellectually and emotionally in order to gain optimum satisfaction from our careers. The session will also explore the benefits to children of happy, confident and passionate educators.

**Nutrition and Menu Planning**  
30 September 7pm  
Facilitator: Nikki de Domahidy  
*Webinar*  
This webinar explores the Healthy Eating Guidelines and how to meet the Australian Dietary Guidelines. It looks at the challenges of meeting a budget and dealing with allergies and special diets. This is a great webinar for all the food coordinators in early childhood services.

**Child Protection**  
4 November 6.30pm  
Facilitator: Nikki de Domahidy  
*In this session we will cover types of child abuse, indicators, protective strategies and reporting procedures. Participants should be aware that the session content is sensitive and may be confronting, however, it is extremely important that early childhood educators have the skills and knowledge to deal with child protection issues should they arise.*

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**Retinoblastoma**

According to the Australian Cancer Research Foundation, a Retinoblastoma is

“a cancer of the eye. It is a relatively rare cancer, but it accounts for approximately 5% of blindness in children.

Most cases of Retinoblastoma occur in children under the age of five, although it can affect children of any age.

Retinoblastoma occurs in the retina, which is the light-sensitive lining of the eye”

There are two forms of this type of cancer, an inherited version where both eyes are affected, and a non-inherited from which only affects one eye.

Some symptoms include:

- The pupil of the eye appearing white instead of red when a light is shone into it. May be seen in photos of children.
- Eyes may appear to be looking in different directions.
- Pain or redness in the eye.

As educators take lots of photos of children everyday, you may see the white pupil show up in photos, see the example on right. The unaffected eye will appear normal in flash photos (if you don’t have the red-eye removal settings on) but the retinoblastoma affected pupil will look cloudy or white.

If you have any concerns for a child, encourage their parents to take them to see the GP.

This article is for information purposes only, please seek the advice of a medical professional for specific advice.

Pets in childcare

There are numerous benefits of having pets in your childcare service, such as:

- Meeting the emotional needs of children and educators for love and affection
- Giving children caring for pets the opportunity to learn how to be gentle and responsible for others
- Teaching children about life and death, and unconditional love.

Unfortunately not all centres are suitable for a pet, and there are other ways to achieve the above benefits. It is a good idea to assess your centre for its suitability and ask all stakeholders their opinion before deciding whether a pet is right for your service.

Things to consider are: what kind of pet will be suitable for your space, how will the animal be cared for on weekends and holiday closures, do you have enough room for a pet, where will you keep it (not near meal or kitchen areas), who will care for the pet and its environment during the week, what are the health and safety implications of having a pet, who will pay for the vet if the pet gets sick, where will it go to the toilet, and is the pet food toxic to children (if a child eats some)?

It is a good idea to ask all stakeholders what they think about getting a pet. Do any educators, children or families have allergies, or phobias about certain animals. Discuss with children about the time, costs and effort of a pet. Do the children know how to handle a pet?

What changes or additions will you need to make to your policies and procedures? For example, you may need to update your hand washing policy to include washing hands after the animal has been petted. Do you need a specific pet policy? What will the procedure be if a child is hurt by the pet?

You may need specific instruction on how to look after your pet, so you may want to talk to people who can educate you about the animal you are choosing. It may be a good idea to ask a local Vet to educate, families and children about the to look out for, and what to do when the local council may be able to come out and them and how to stop them drying out. and could they come out and talk about animals as pets.

Think about how you will use your pet in the program, what are your goals for adding an animal to your service? Include your pet in learning stories.

If a pet is not right for your centre there are other ways to get the benefits of a pet: if there are no allergies or phobias a family could bring their pet in, one of your families could bring in the eggs from their chickens and share them with the centre, you could go on an excursion to visit animals or have an incursion with an animal farm or wildlife person, you could collect the scraps from the centre to give to a family with earthworms, chickens or a dog. To encourage the children to learn about responsibility, you can have a centre soft toy/doll that goes home with each child and the family can report back what they did with the toy.

It is a big decision to add a pet to your centre and not one to be taken lightly, but when you consult and involve all stakeholders, you are more likely to make a balanced and informed choice appropriate for your service.
Ideas to encourage children’s fine motor skills

- Use pipe cleaners and cut up straws to make bracelets.
- Give children sand paper and wool to make pictures.
- Pom-poms into ice cube trays or a jar, children use fingers or tongs to put them into the container (see picture on right).
- Children put pop-sticks into a jar with a wide opening for toddlers and a bottle with a smaller opening for older children.

- Children can insert pipe cleaners into the holes of a strainer/colander.
- Children put hair elastics (so they don’t snap children’s fingers) around a Pringle container.
- The Sticker Station (left) uses blue painter’s tape to define where the stickers do and don’t go, a plastic sleeve hold the stickers and can include crayons. From a great website called ‘No Time for Flash Cards’.

- Supervision may be required for some of these activities.

http://www.notimeforflashcards.com/2014/07/sticker-station-easy-fine-motor-activity.html

INSPIRATION SPOT!

Every newsletter we ask the CTAS trainers to collect photos of amazing experiences, simple ideas, and great spaces created by the services in WA. Thanks to Great Beginnings Gosnells and Ready Set Grow Dongara for allowing us to share some of their ideas and spaces with you. We hope they encourage you to think about imaginative ways to support children’s learning.

The foyer at Great Beginnings Gosnells uses recycled pallets and plants to create a welcoming space.

Natural materials being displayed at Ready Set Grow Dongara.

Ready Set Grow Dongara looking at emotions.

A really simple and cheap way to look at maths in the early years. This example includes patterns, numbers and shapes. Great for kinesthetic learners. Thanks Ready Set Grow Dongara for this idea.