In This Issue:

- The Year That Was
- World Kindness Day
- PD Training Update
- Traineeship Suspensions/cancellations
- Fruit Kebabs
- Credit Card Facilities
- Community Involvement
- The Importance of Stillness and Calmness
- Water Safety
- Water Play
- Out of The Box Experiences
- Outdoor Environments
- Maternity Leave Announcement
- New CTAS team member
- Farewell

The Year That was…

Issue 5 of the CTAS Update is our final issue for 2013!

We have had such a wonderful year and would like to thank all of our students for their dedication to their studies. We would also like to thank our clients for supporting our vision to provide quality training by working closely with us and providing support to their students to help them reach their goals. With the end of the year fast approaching we would like to remind clients and interested students that anybody wanting to sign up to a traineeship will need to do so before the end of November 2013, if you would like a copy of the Expression of Interest form or more information on qualification training please contact Gabrielle via email admin@ctas.wa.edu.au or call the head office on 9350 9222.

Professional development in 2013 has proven to be very successful, the most requested PD was Child Protection with over 18 sessions held throughout the year! Professional development in 2014 will be even more exciting with new topics and guests speakers to look forward to. The February—June 2014 PD Calendar will be sent to your inbox in the new year.

We would also like to thank all our readers and contributors of the CTAS Update, we have had some very positive feedback and we have really enjoyed providing services with training news, CTAS Updates and inspirational ideas. A big thank you to all the services who allow us to share their wonderful ideas and experiences with all of our readers. We have also been so lucky to have had some great contributions from organisations such as REMida, U-Chus and Revive Emergency Medical Training and we look forward to working with even more organisations to bring you industry related news in upcoming issues.

CTAS will be closing over the Christmas Period. We will close on the 20th December 2013 and will reopen on the 6th January 2014. We would like to wish all our students and clients a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year.

World Kindness Day
Healing the World
13 November 2013

The purpose of World Kindness Day is to look beyond ourselves, beyond the boundaries of our country, beyond our culture, our race, our religion; and realise we are citizens of the world.

Here are some ideas to help celebrate World Kindness Day:

- Discuss with the children what acts of kindness are and how those acts can make people feel
- Ask the children if they would like to create special pieces of artwork to raffle off for gold coin donations and donate all the proceeds to charity
- Promote the message of kindness between staff by hosting a morning or afternoon tea in the staff room
- Organise a donation bin for the needy and ask parents and staff to contribute to the cause
- Leave happy notes or warm fuzzy in staffs lockers or pockets

Did you know...?  
Research shows that practicing acts of kindness is not only good for the recipient but also good for the doer. (Lyubomirsky, 2007)

Traineeship Cancellations

Trainees, if for some reason you decide to cancel your traineeship please ensure that you contact Apprenticentre on 13 19 54 to formally withdraw from your qualification. It is also your responsibility to contact your CTAS trainer and advise them of your cancellation. Your trainer will ask you and your centre manager to complete the CTAS Cancellation form that needs to be returned as soon as possible. Please be aware that if you are moving to another service that is happy to take you on as a trainee you are able to transfer your training contract between services. For more information on how to transfer your contract please call Apprenticentre or the CTAS head office.

Traineeship Suspensions

Trainees are able to suspend their training contracts on the condition that both the trainee and the employer agree to the suspension. Trainees may choose to suspend their contracts for reasons such as illness, maternity leave or personal reasons. Suspensions can be granted for up to 12 months of time and once the agreed suspension time has ended the student will resume their training. Students need to ensure they contact Apprenticentre on 13 19 54 to discuss the possibility of suspension and they will also need to contact them when they intend to return to their studies. It is also the student's responsibility to advise their CTAS trainer who will provide the student with the CTAS Suspension form that is required to be completed by the student and centre director and returned to CTAS as soon as possible.

Fruit Kebabs

As educators it is important to ensure that we provide and promote nutritious food choices to children so that we can assist them in forming lifelong healthy eating habits. Encouraging the children to participate in healthy cooking experiences is a fantastic way to excite children about healthy food and encourage their independence skills by helping to prepare their own nutritious meal for morning tea, lunch or afternoon tea. Fruit kebabs are a great way to reinforce the 2 fruits a day message while also being a relatively easy experience to set up. The children at Great Beginnings Byford thoroughly enjoyed making their fruit kebabs using their fine motor and problem solving skills to create their own afternoon tea.

Credit Card Facilities

Please be aware that CTAS are now able to take credit card payments for professional development and student invoices. Please contact the office to receive a copy of the Authorisation for Payment form that is required to be completed and returned to us before any card details can be provided. Once the form has been returned the card holder will need to call the office to complete the payment over the phone. Please do not email or fax credit card details for privacy and security reasons. We do not keep credit card information after the payment has been made. Please do not hesitate to contact CTAS head office on 9350 9222 to obtain the appropriate documentation or learn more about the credit card facilities.
The Importance of Stillness and Calmness

There seems to be an overwhelming trend for adults to put pressure on children to make them ‘better’ or be the ‘best’ so we tend to over-programme and over-schedule them, we keep them busy. What we do know is that a hurried, pressured environment doesn’t allow children to ‘be’ children. What we now know, and research shows, is that children just under the age of five need to SLOW DOWN. They need to have time to be children, they need to experience all the joys of childhood.

We also know that children’s stress regulation system (system to self-soothe) and 85% of children’s brains are formed in the first 5 years by experiences they have had. So, what does that mean to us as early childhood educators? Simply -we should be promoting stillness and calmness in our environments.

The magic of silence and stillness is something that helps shape the developing child in a positive way. While there are many cognitive (left brain) benefits from teaching the magic of silence, there are even more emotional and social (right brain) benefits. (Maggie Dent – 2013)

Children need quiet spaces to allow them to process what’s going on in the world around them. They need spaces to ponder and develop their self identity and discover ‘who am I?’. Children cannot do that in a stressed, hurried, noisy environment (don’t forget noise can be threatening to some children).

As educators we need to be aware of nurturing children holistically – their mind, body, heart, souls and by creating spaces of stillness and calmness we allow children’s psyches to be soothed, encouraging quiet time creates a positive pattern for children’s psychological wellbeing. Sadly adolescent children are now presenting as less resilient, anxious, socially and emotionally inept, struggling with relationships.

So how do we, as early childhood educators cognitively assist children to appreciate stillness and calmness?

1. Model quietness and stillness – use children’s quiet time to sit with them (instead of running about cleaning etc.)
2. Remove distractions
3. Pay ‘nature’ sounds – triggers relaxation
4. Implement meditation and relaxation techniques, eg:- Deep Breathing (lie children down on back or stomach with arms by side and legs straight, close eyes and inhale and exhale deeply as you count to 20.)
5. Stretching exercises, hold out arms in front of you, and then lift them up high over your head and backwards and back by your side again.
6. Craft ideas – origami, painting, play dough. Clay and pottery are also known for their calming effect
7. Music is a great stress-buster. Shake a leg, have a laugh, sway to slow music – experience it all.
8. Implement activities that encourage human connectedness e.g.: cooking activities
9. Allow children to interact and mix in nature – lie down and watch the clouds, watch the leaves on trees it’s soothing and inspiring
10. Use silent sound signals instead of shouting

Stillness and silence builds resilience in children and strengthens their spirit. It encourages children to think deeper, get along better, be more creative and less anxious.

Make it a habit to enhance children’s health and wellbeing by incorporating stillness and calmness into your environment – your children will be happier, calmer and kinder.

“We need to return to the solitude within, to find again the dream that lies at the hearth of the soul. We need to feel the dream with the wonder of a child approaching a threshold of discovery. When we rediscover our childlike nature we enter a world of gentle possibility. Consequently, we will find ourselves more frequently at the place of ease, delight and celebration.”


Written by Jenny Dyball
Water Safety

Parents often turn to educators for advice, information and guidance on topics that do not always relate to the day to day care of the children in the service. Parents often appreciate being provided with current resources and information that may aid them with a new skill or knowledge that benefits their friends, family and the community. As the summer time approaches it is important to be forward thinking about keeping you, the service and the community safe around water to prevent drowning. You may also consider this information helpful if you are planning on taking the children on a water excursion. Keith from REVIVE Emergency Medical Training has provided us with a fantastic article on how to keep safe around water and what to do in an emergency situation.

Minutes Matter - Drowning

Keep You & Your Family Safe Around Water This Summer

Now that summer is coming- educators and families at the service will be glad to start heading back to the beach or pool. So if you are swimming or boating this summer: it is worth remembering that tragically 284 people drowned in Australia during 2011/12; and of those 34 were children aged 0-14 years old.

So what can you do to keep safe and still enjoy your favourite swimming spot?
Some simple prevention measures can really help.

- Check that your pool fencing is safe and secure.
- Make sure that you and your children are safe and confident swimmers.
- Never swim in water conditions beyond your own capabilities.
- Always swim between the flags, a Life Guard patrolled beach will always be a better choice than an unpatrolled area.
- Supervise your children in and around water; Remember no one will ever watch your children better than you can. Teach them to be safe. Small children should never be further than an arm’s reach away.
- Alcohol and drugs significantly increase the risk of drowning.
- Learn CPR.

What to do in a drowning emergency

- Raise the alarm. Call the lifeguards or call 000 (112). Keep the victim in sight. If they go under you can direct the lifeguards to their last sighted location.
- Do not attempt a water rescue beyond your swimming abilities and training and only if it is safe to do so. Rescuers have drowned trying to save others.
- If they are still able to move, conscious and are close to you; try to reach them with a stick or beach umbrella. If they are further away try to throw a rope, life preserver or something buoyant that will help them float until a safe rescue can be attempted.
- If unconscious, turn the casualty face up and carefully remove from the water.
- A Near Drowning is where the casualty has survived and possibly inhaled water. Medical Assistance should still be given, as secondary complications are very common even if they seem OK at the time. Spinal injuries should always be suspected; especially if the incident involves being dumped by waves or diving.

Drowning First Aid

Make sure an ambulance has been called. Roll the casualty carefully onto their side while supporting their head & neck to clear their airway. Perform CPR if required. If they are unresponsive but breathing normally keep them on their side. Treat any other injuries including possible Hypothermia. Be aware that they will be likely to vomit or regurgitate and will need to be turned onto their side so that their airway is kept clear.

Whatever you do on the water this summer- enjoy it. Some of the best family fun that you can have is at the beach; and it’s free. Just take care and remember the best First Aid is the First Aid that you never have to do.

Keith Emin, Revive Emergency Medical Training, (08) 9467 4805. www.ReviveEMT.com.au

Disclaimer: This article contains only generalized first aid advice and is not a substitute for attending a nationally accredited training course. You should always keep within your skills and training limits.
Water Play

Water play is a sensory experience that children often enjoy especially in the warmer months of the year. Water play provides children with the opportunity to explore and experiment with natural materials, develop fine motor and problem solving skills. With this popular experience we also must ensure that we are aware and proactive in keeping our children safe from the risks of drowning. We also must remember that children don't only drown in pools, lakes or at the beach and that a child can drown in less than 5 centimetres of water. While children are in your care it is your responsibility to ensure that children are kept safe from harm and therefore we encourage you to not only consider the positive aspects of water but also the risk and hazards it also presents and carefully plan on how to prevent them.

As we are coming in to warmer weather this may be a good time to review your centre policy and procedures on water play to ensure that your practises are current and relevant. Staff meetings are a great forum to discuss important topics with the entire team and provide a great opportunity to refresh staff on the water play policy and procedure and the recommended first aid response to drowning.

There are some things to consider when providing a water play experience

- Are you able to provide active supervision at all times? It is important that an educator is stationed with the experience at all times providing adequate supervision
- What risks or hazards could occur and can they be planned for this accordingly?
- How can you educate the children that the water is for play and not for drinking to ensure that children maintain good hygiene practises?
- Consider the age group that is participating in the experience and fill water troughs/buckets/containers at an appropriate level.
- Ensure after the experience water troughs / buckets / containers are emptied into the garden.
- When and how will you have conversations with children about how to stay safe in and around water?
- Do you have the required first aid knowledge to assist in an emergency situation?

Water play provides children with the opportunity to:

- Use fine/gross motor skills by splashing, pouring, mixing and transferring water from one object to another
- Further develop hand eye coordination
- Allows children to explore social roles for example washing baby dolls or washing the dishes
- Provide science and thought provoking experiences by experimenting with water, you can do this by adding food colouring, ice, bubbles or including different objects that will either sink or swim
- Children can use their creative minds and use water play as a opportunity to role play
- Children are provided with the opportunity to socialise and co-operate with one another

Water Play Inspiration:

- Make your own water jug using recycled milk
- Create a bathing station for baby dolls
- Use ice to create a sensory tub
- Make a water station using recycled funnels and plastic pipe
Out of The Box Experiences

We have been inspired this month to explore different sensory bins that will enhance children’s sense of touch, sight, taste, smell and hearing. Exploring sensory with children will also help to extend children’s fine/gross motor skills, creativity, social and cognitive development.

Ice Cube Sensory Tub
What you need:
*Container for freezing water
*Water
*Freezer
*Toys or items to freeze in the ice cub
*Tub to place frozen ice blocks

Find materials or toys to freeze inside your ice cubes. Once you cubes are frozen place them in a tub in either the indoor or outdoor environment and allow the children to discover what will happen to the cubes once they are out of the freezer and explore the cubes while they melt. You can also offer the children materials to carve the ice with.

Grass Clipping Bin
What you need:
*Grass seeds, soil, water, square pot
*scissors for older age groups
*LARGE tub to place grass once grown

The first stage of creating this sensory bin is to grow the grass seeds in a square pot until it reaches a suitable height. Once the grass is ready to go you can provide the children with scissors to cut grass. You can also extend on this activity by providing magnifying glass, adding natural materials or toys such as dinosaurs/cars etc. to the tub.

Baking Sensory Tub
What you need:
*Red lentils
*Butter beans
*Pearl Barley
*Cous cous
*Real sprinkles
*Variety of cooking utensils
*Cupcake cases
*Empty flour packet
*Candles

This is a great bin for children to explore different textures, role play and if they are feeling adventurous even taste! Some other great taste sensory bins could include pudding, Chinese noodles, pasta and rice.

Mud Sensory Bin
What you need to create mud:
*Tub
*Sand
*Water

This sensory bin is so easy to create yet will provide the children with the experience of connecting with the outdoor environment by using their touch, smell, hearing and sight. To extend on this experience you can add in other natural materials, children’s toys of interest and different kinds of sand (yellow, brown etc.)

Outdoor Environments
We love how the educators at Cloverdale Childcare Centre created a fantastic natural outdoor space using tree logs, wood chips and plants. You will also find a worm farm, a rocking chair and a chicken coop in the area. It is fantastic to see the use of natural materials in their outdoor environment and the transformation of this outdoor area has proven to be popular with the children. Thanks for sharing Cloverdale!

Maternity Leave
Our Training Support Coordinator Mikayla will be on maternity leave from November 2013 and will return to CTAS in 2014.

We wish Mikayla all the best and look forward to having her back with us in the new year.

For all PD enquiries please continue to email pdtraining@ctas.wa.edu

New Staff Member
We would like to welcome Jenna to the CTAS team. Jenna will join us in the role of Training Administrator.

Outdoor Environments
We love how the educators at Cloverdale Childcare Centre created a fantastic natural outdoor space using tree logs, wood chips and plants. You will also find a worm farm, a rocking chair and a chicken coop in the area. It is fantastic to see the use of natural materials in their outdoor environment and the transformation of this outdoor area has proven to be popular with the children. Thanks for sharing Cloverdale!

Farewell
Thank you for taking time to read Issue 5 of the CTAS Update. Please do not hesitate to contact the team on 9350 9222 to discuss your training needs, further information on professional development training or to share your thoughts and ideas for Issue 6 of the CTAS Update.