

JUMPSTART 4 KIDS PARENT FORUM 17th March 2010

PRESENT: Ms. Kieran Spoelder, Mrs. Alethea Walker Mrs. Renee Thorn Mrs. Katherine Checuti, Ms. Angela Humphries, Kelly Hardy (Authorised Supervisor) Maree Ley (Director)

WELCOME: OUR PHILOSOPHY

Maree: Welcomed new families to the centre and outlined the format / process of the Parent Forum. Parents were provided with a copy of our Philosophy and discussed content. The Philosophy of the centre is about an active partnership with families and that by meeting and having conversations with each other we can achieve a great learning place for all children in our care.

Maree spoke about the establishment of the centre and how JumpStart 4 Kids was built with the intention to provide more than just a baby sitting service. Our Foundations are based on educational and theoretical practices so that children are engaged in learning opportunities on a daily basis in respect to Literature, Numeracy, Exploration and Discovery.

Maree: Addressed the actions of staff who actively engage in at least two professional development opportunities each year and how these are shared at staff meetings. Maree gave the example of the last staff meeting when Lisa shared her insights about Language Development for children and skills and activities that all staff can employ across the centre to encourage active language acquisition for all children across the centre.

EDUCATIONAL FORMAT of the Centre:

Parents who attended the evening were provided with the 2010 Yearly calendar that highlighted the educational experiences for the children at the centre. Each month an additional event is held for children. These events alternate from Free or subsidized activities to fee paid events. The Fee paid events for families are capped at \$8.00 per child and occur 6 times throughout the year. These activities provide a focus for children and staff to develop activities around Healthy eating, Oral / Dental Care and theme based activities.

Maree asked parents to discuss this cost with all families expressing that this was in fact a reasonable amount for families and that the value of this experience was great for the children. Maree expressed that children who do not attend on these scheduled days can attend the centre for these events. Kelly expressed that these events are booked on different days so that all children have access to these experiences at some time in the year.

ROOM STRUCTURES:

Families were provided with extensive outlines for each room since January and progressing over the next two months. The Busy Bees Room focused on introducing our Early Childhood Teacher Tracy and the format for the **Ready to School program** for 2010. Maree and Kelly explained these to families. Copies of this information will be available to all families in the front foyer in the Parent Forum folder.

Kelly and Maree explained that each room has on display their room procedures and programs each week and that parents are encouraged to view these documents and have active discussion with staff about these areas. Mrs. Walker asked about the Ants in the Apple and the Jolly Phonics program. Mrs. Thorn expressed that she had had training in the Ants in the Apple program and was currently looking at the Phonics program. Maree asked Mrs. Thorn to provide us with some feedback later on from her experiences. Kelly expressed that we had used the Ants in the Apple program in the Busy Bees Room.

BEHAVIOUR:

Kelly explained to families that a large number of children are settling in to different room environments and for many preschool is a new experience. With this change comes behaviour challenges. Mrs. Spoelder expressed her concern about age and behaviour and Kelly highlighted the need for consistency with children and follow up both at preschool and at Home. Mare expressed that working together with the same goals was more effective.

Kelly shared the centre policy for behaviour with families and expressed that at times and on rare occasions a child may be moved to another staff member to change the environment so that the child could settle and return more appropriately to his or her learning space. Mrs. Thorn expressed that this was a more productive way to handle challenging behaviour. This information is also in the folder in the foyer for parent to view.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT FOR 2010- FUNDRAISERS

- Maree invited all families to share any fundraising ideas that they have throughout the year. If parents would like to volunteer their time or activities then they are most welcome. Maree shared Mrs. Minnetts idea for printed Tea towels for the centre.
- Maree identified specific times throughout the year when we try to invite families into the centre. Such as the grandparents afternoon Tea, Mothers Day, Fathers day and our Christmas events.
- Kelly expressed that if parents can assist us by cutting out craft activities or supporting theme ideas, we are very appreciative.
- Maree expressed that it was really important that we hear about Parents concerns and it is only when we can share concerns can we find solutions .
- Maree expressed and shared the complaints policy and process to the centre and the vigilance of all staff in following up parental concerns.

DISCUSSION:

Ms Humphries raised the staffing change for the baby's room. Maree and Kelly shared that this position would be temporarily filled by two current casual staff members and that we would be replacing this position in the coming weeks.

Mrs. Thorn expressed that the centre has a lovely feel and that she was very happy with the centre. Both Mrs. Spoelder and Mrs. Checuti expressed that they have child care centres in their vicinity that were closer, but that they preferred JumpStart due to the friendly nature of the staff and feel of the centre.

All families expressed that they were grateful for the informative nature of the meeting and even though their child may not be in a particular room where information was provided it was great to know the differences between the rooms. We thank parents for these valuable comments and trust that 2010 will be a great year all round.

**We welcome all families to our Next Parent Forum on
Wednesday 16th June at 6.00pm**