Hi Everyone,

Just a quick note from me at such a busy time of year.......I hope it brings a smile because this week I want to talk about the importance of underwear.

We all encourage independence in our students. Both at home and at school we push them to do as much for themselves as possible including dressing themselves. Sometimes our students are forgetting to put their undies on. It becomes apparent during toileting routines and sometimes when the students sit on the floor for group activities. We always change them when this occurs, however we have limited supply of undies at school.

I guess I am asking families for two things here.

1. Can you please check that your independent students have remembered to put on all their clothes.

2. We would be grateful if you could supply a spare pair of underwear in your child’s bag.

On a related issue it has been suggested by staff that for the dignity of the girls, bike shorts under dresses are a good idea.

Don’t relax there are only 33 days ’ til Christmas.

Cheers Sue
Sensitive Santa will be here soon...

We are so excited to let you know that this year there are 4 locations offering ‘Sensitive Santa’, with special times reserved for children with ASD.

Thanks to the GPT Group which runs many shopping centres across Australia, Sensitive Santa will be available at:

- Chirnside Park 19 Nov-21 Dec (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday only)
- Dandenong Plaza 19 Nov-21 Dec (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday only)
- Highpoint Centre 19 Nov-21 Dec (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday only)
- Parkmore Centre 3-21 Dec (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday only)

“We are delighted to offer children with Autism the opportunity to meet and have their photo taken with Santa this Christmas. The sensory friendly environment provides a low stress, quiet surrounding creating an ideal setting for your child to meet Santa.

“Each participating family will receive a complimentary photo. There is also the option to purchase a wide selection of photo packages starting at $19.95.”

Bookings are available between 8am and 9am. Call your preferred centre to book a spot.

- Chirnside Park Centre Management (03) 9727 9000
- Dandenong Plaza Centre Management (03) 9767 2000
- Highpoint Centre Management (03) 9318 1699
- Parkmore Guest Service Desk (03) 9798 9494

We hope that you are able to take advantage of this opportunity to enjoy an important aspect of the Christmas traditions.

Kind regards
Notice to all parents looking for polo shirts for students at Dandy Valley

One of our parent’s at Dandy Valley has kindly donated quite a few size 5 & 6 polo shirts with the school logo and colour. If your child is in need of a polo shirt in these sizes, please contact the school office for details. These polos are in good condition and are free.

School phone: 97044800
Siblings in Sync is a unique and innovative school holiday program for children with disabilities and their siblings.

It aims to:

- Foster relationships between siblings
- Provide positive shared experiences
- Give children the opportunity to express themselves
- Communicate with their sibling through creative music-making

The session is run by two Registered Music Therapists and will be tailored to suit the individual needs of participants within a small group.

Participants will have the opportunity to:

- Create music together
- Use music technology (including The Special Access Kit)

A music therapist will be in contact with you prior to your session commencing to obtain relevant information in order to plan for individual needs.

All participants must be accompanied by an adult for the duration of the sessions.

Venue: Arts Centre Melbourne, Digital Learning Hub
Times: 11am
Dates: Tuesday 14 January or Thursday 16 January
Duration: 60 mins
Cost: $25 per family
Bookings:
For more information or to book, phone (03) 9281 8194, or email snap@artscentremelbourne.com.au.
**Communication Corner!**

**TOP TIPS TO ENCOURAGE LANGUAGE**

**Why is paying attention and listening important?**

One of the ways children learn language and how to speak is by listening to people talking. Children who find it hard to listen or pay attention don't make the best use of what they see and hear. They need to learn how to pay attention and listen effectively.

**Make time for listening without lots of distractions, turn off the radio, turn off the TV and play games that involve using different sounds:**

**Join in with play.** Let your child decide what to play with. Copy what s/he child does e.g. banging 2 bricks together, brmming a car or hissing like a snake. Wait for your child to do the same and then repeat. Before long you might have some waiting and listening which leads to turn taking!

**Go for a listening walk** - take your child out and see what you can hear in the garden or at the park, take pictures of things you think you might hear so your child can point to what they can hear, or you can show them by pointing at the picture yourself.

**Listen to your world**, draw in your child’s attention, point to the direction the sound is coming from and say what is making the noise. such as the phone ringing, or the doorbell going, or a plane overhead.

**Music Makers:** you could make 2 sets of ‘instruments’ eg a pot with rice or dry pasta in to shake, or a metal tin with beads in, or bells etc. You have a set and give your child a set. Shake the instrument out of sight and see if your child can work out which one made the noise, they can shake the matching instrument. Take it in turns and have fun!

**Praise reinforces the skill your child is learning, so be specific, eg**

- "That was good listening."
- "Well done, that was good listening."
- "you were looking at me while I was talking to you, good listening."
- "I like it when you listen to me."
The CareChoice Holiday Program enables people to access a range of activities throughout the school holiday period. With a social inclusive focus, enjoy age related group activities for groups 6-11 years, 12-17 years and 18 years plus.

Individuals can access an unlimited number of programs per week, each week of the school holidays.

- 25% off DHS Unit cost
- Socially inclusive activities
- Limited spaces available

Call Tatum Jackson (Operations Manager) on 1300 737 942 or via email tjackson@carechoice.net.au to book your place now!
EMA 2014

Payment Options

In 2014, on the EMA application form you can choose to have your EMA payment;
  • Paid by Direct Deposit (Electronic Funds transfer) into your nominated bank account or
  • Paid by Direct Deposit to school to be held as credit which you can use towards education expenses or
    Paid by cheque which will be posted to the school for collection

The EMA application form includes a section for you to tick which payment option you would prefer.
EMA application forms are available from your child’s school.

Payment amounts for 2014

The EMA is paid in two installments; installment one is paid from March onwards and installment two is paid from August onwards.
For 2014, the applicant payment amount for primary prep students will be $200 and the applicant payment amount for primary years 1-6 students will be $150.
For 2014, the applicant payment for secondary year 7 students will be $300 and the applicant payment for secondary students from year 8 onwards* will be $250 (except for students turning 16 during the year in which case a monthly pro-rata amount is paid).

EMA schedule of payments - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment to Parent (per child)</th>
<th>Instalment 1 (70%) From March 2014</th>
<th>Instalment 2 (30%) From August 2014</th>
<th>Annual Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary - Year Prep</td>
<td>$140</td>
<td>$60</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary - Year 1 – 6</td>
<td>$105</td>
<td>$45</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary - Year 7</td>
<td>$210</td>
<td>$90</td>
<td>$300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary - Year 8 onwards to age 16*</td>
<td>$175</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students turning 16 years during 2014 will be paid $20.85 per month until the birth month.
*Students year level (or age for ungraded and special school students) will form the basis for calculating the amount payable.

PLEASE NOTE:
There is no EMA paid to your child’s school, (commenced 2013).
The EMA schedule of payments listed above are payments that are made directly to parents, by direct deposit or cheque only.

Applicants MUST provide a copy of their Health Care Card or relevant Pension Card for their EMA application to be processed.

Please find an application form and information sheet attached to this newsletter.
EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE (EMA)
Parent/Guardian Application Form - 2014

The following details must be completed by the applicant (the concession card holder). EMA is payable by Direct Deposit (EFT) to the applicant, Direct Deposit to the school, or as a cheque payment.

SCHOOL NAME ________________________________

APPLICANT / PARENT DETAILS

SURNAME ________________________________
FIRST NAME ________________________________
ADDRESS ________________________________
TOWN/SUBURB ________________________________ STATE ______ POSTCODE ______

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: ________________________________

CENTRELINK PENSIONER
CONCESSION / HEALTH
CARE CARD NUMBER (CRN) OR
FOSTER OR PENSIONER

* Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Department of Human Services (DHS) or Courts, etc.

EMA PAYMENT METHOD Please TICK the box below for your nominated EMA payment method

☐ Direct Deposit to parent
   Payment will be made to your bank account by Electronic Funds Transfer (provide bank account details below)

☐ Direct Deposit to school
   Payment will be made to school to be held as credit which you can use towards education expenses.

☐ Cheque
   Payment will be made as a cheque which will be posted to the school

ACCOUNT NAME (e.g. John Smith) ________________________________
FINANCIAL INSTITUTION (e.g. Westpac) AND BRANCH ________________________________

BSB No. ________ BANK ACCOUNT No. ________

* If you are unsure of the above details check your Bank Statements or enquire at your Financial Institution.

STUDENT DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD'S SURNAME</th>
<th>CHILD'S FIRST NAME</th>
<th>STUDENT ID</th>
<th>DATE OF BIRTH</th>
<th>YEAR LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development collects your personal information for the purpose of administering the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) payment. Some personal information may be disclosed to other Victorian Government departments, such as the Department of Human Services, for the purpose of evaluation and monitoring of concession card services.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development may disclose some of your personal information to Centrelink to confirm that the details provided matches Centrelink's records. This is to be used for testing eligibility for EMA applications for 2014.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will provide the above bank account details to Westpac Bank for the sole purpose of making the EMA payment into your nominated bank account. The bank account details provided will not be disclosed or used for any other purpose. You are able to request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child's school.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT ________________________________ DATE __/__/____