

# Kyabracadabra



December 2010

Dear Readers,

As 2010 draws to a close I would like to express my admiration and appreciation to all of Kyabra's contributors throughout the year. Kyabra could not be such an effective and innovative organisation without the support of all of our partners. The past year has been a challenging one. The impacts of the financial crisis continued to have a flow on effect. Government and Philanthropic Organisations had to absorb the impact and this resulted in a financially constrained environment. I am reminded of Keynes who expounded the trickle-down effect of economies. His thesis was that a prosperous economy would trickle down to enrich the lives of those at the lower end of the economic scale. Whilst I don't subscribe to this, I do see that the parallel concept is true. The constrained economy has trickled down so that the most marginalised have experienced the pain of financial constraint.

Kyabra has experienced this in an organisational sense but community members on low incomes have experienced the most difficult set of circumstances. This social impact requires us to work harder in the coming year in all areas of service and social business.

I would like to wish all of our supporters and contributors a peaceful and happy break and look forward to 2011 as a year of continued striving towards a fair and safe community

Regards  
David O'Toole

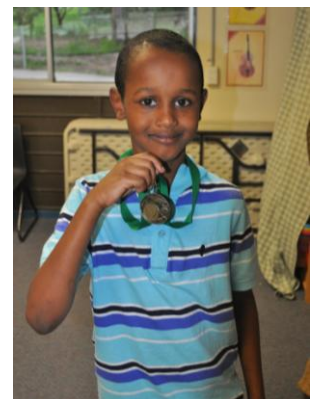
*Kyabra will be closed from  
midday on 24<sup>th</sup> December,  
reopening at 9am on Tuesday  
4<sup>th</sup> January 2011.*



Thanks to grants from Brisbane City Council and Australian Government Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Solar Panels have been installed on the Kyabra Cottage to offset power usage at our Kyabra Street property. We hope that over time this provides both positive environmental and financial benefits to the organisation.

## Homework Club

Homework Club ended for the year on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November. A celebration occurred with lovely home cooked food provided by the mothers. The children presented the volunteers with Certificates of Appreciation and all the children received Certificates of Achievement for all the



effort they put into their homework over the year. One of the children had received a medal for academic excellence at school on the day and proudly wore it at Homework Club.

Thank you to all the volunteers who assisted the children during 2010. If anyone is interested in volunteering for Homework Club in 2011 please contact Kyabra. New volunteers are always welcome.

# Families Change

Hello readers and welcome to the last newsletter of 2010. I won't say 'my how quickly this year has passed,' because time passing quickly is a sign that we are getting older...however here we are at the end of the year...again!

What a busy year. My year started after a beautiful break in the UK for the coldest Christmas since goodness knows when returning to the CYS (now FARSS team) team for a very short time before moving to the new Families Change Team in late February. Here I still am, at the end of the year wondering where to next. Hopefully it will be to stay put and develop this new service further into the following years.

The team to date has been myself, Trish (acting manager) Mel Hilditch (locum co-ordinator) Jean Tally (resource worker) Pat Milley (Director Child Care) Robyn Armstrong (child care assistant until term four) and Sannie Tanumhardjo (child care Assistant from term four) and a host of school based trainees and volunteers at LHCC and adjunct Child care casual workers at Kyabra Street main office. From February to March we engaged in a visioning process to get a clear direction for our service delivery since then we have been busily delivering services.

Limited Hours Child Care has continued to deliver a very high standard of Childcare for over 60 local families. Pat's article in this newsletter captures our thanks to the continuing support offered by families and staff to this service. What she does not mention are the countless unpaid hours that she herself offers up to this service and to the support of her trainees. Pat knows that when trainees leave LHCC with their Certificate III that they are ready for work in the early years sector. A huge amount of time and attention is given to support individual learning and this is done mostly in Pats own volunteer time. Thank you Pat! Pat has had her own medical mountains to climb this year, all that attend the service would be aware of this. We are also aware of the speed that Pat returned to health and back to work! Another successful year at LHCC, guided by our dear Pat.

Hub and FREST have joined forces for most of the group work that this service has offered since

and Grow group and the Friday Sing and Grow Group. FREST staff have also worked toward the delivery of Choices, and continued work at Sunnybank High School. FREST staff in collaboration with Queensland Police and PCYC, developed a Cyber Bullying forum which has had great response from those who have attended. Hub joined with LHCC this year to provide three evening workshops. Hub continues to support the joint work with our Community Partnerships Team with the weekly Play Bus trip to Svoboda Park.

Play and Grow will continue on over the school holidays with only a short break. Our last session for 2010 will be Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December and the first group after Christmas will be Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January. The last Playbus for the year will occur on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Playbus will resume in 2011 on January 19<sup>th</sup>. It will take place at 9:30am to 11:30am at Svoboda Park, Kuraby.

Our team will enter an evaluation and planning process before the start of the New Year. We hope to engage with those of you who have attended our services this year to gather feedback and thoughts for service delivery in 2011. We hope to have a program for service delivery available by the beginning of 2011.

Thanks to all of the team for all the hard work put in to getting this new team off the ground. Thank you to the funding bodies and Kyabra Board for supporting this new team.

Trish



## Limited Hours Child Care

Hi from all at Limited Hours Child Care. As we near the end of the year it is amazing to see the changes in the children. As we look back at the photos taken in the first term there are so many physical changes. Changes in all other domains of development have been documented as well. The children moving on to Prep in 2011 are so ready for the next huge step in their lives. We will miss them; however many have siblings

either coming for the first time or continuing so contact will hopefully continue. The centre is full for 2011 with a waiting list. Many children wanting two days have been offered one day.

This year has been one of financial struggle. Money has been extremely hard to find. The government funding is appreciated but insufficient even when combined with fees charged, to offset the costs of running the centre. Families who attend know how we use recycled materials as much as possible. However some things like paint and glue have to be new.

We are grateful for the generosity of our centre's families; particular thanks to the Gray, Kelly, Kordis, Winter and Hussey families for their generous donations to this service, together with Desley Griffiths from Sandwood Op Shop and her connection with the Givit website (Juliette Wright). All of these folk have assisted the centre financially and/or with resources, dress-ups, toys and games which will help towards achieving a break-even point in 2011. The children have been appreciative of your items. Thanks also to all the parents who donate toys. At times it is hilarious as the children try to recover and take home the toys (no longer wanted) that their parents have donated to the centre.

Many thanks to Kyra and Juliette from Givit for organising sponsorships of fees. We do not know the identity of the benefactors (of the sponsorships). There are no words to describe the generosity afforded us this year. 'What goes around comes around' so these generous persons will be undoubtedly rewarded when they need it.

As we approach the end of term we practise for the mini concerts that each group performs on their last day. This is an opportunity to close the year on a high note and say goodbye to those children exiting to Prep or kindergarten. If you would like to attend please call Pat on 33441488 for a copy of the program.

#### **Staffing.**

This term has seen staff, children and families say goodbye to Robyn Armstrong. Robyn worked as the assistant for over three years and forged many attachments with the children and families. We wish Robyn all the success in the future and thank her for her input over the years. Robyn continues to work with the older children in "out of school hours care" and is studying to

become a teacher- aide in the primary school. We also said goodbye to Gayle White who was a valued volunteer and temporary assistant. Gayle drops in from time to time and the children appreciate her return. We wish Gayle all the best in her future endeavours.

We welcomed Sannie Tanumhardjo as the temporary assistant while Robyn was on leave and Sannie applied for the position when it became vacant and was appointed the assistant. Sannie worked at Limited Hours four years ago until she left on maternity leave to have her first child Livinia. Sannie has now two children – Livinia and Darren.

We acknowledge the valuable work done by the team of volunteers - Chris Walker, Pat Greig (our resident artist), Brendan Huddy, Caroline Turner, Ruby DeGreef, Kasek Hayes, Kat Hayes, Jane Stanley, Janis Price, Ray Milley and Liz Miles. Jane Stanley and Janis Price are currently studying their Certificate III in Children's Services.



#### **Trainees.**

We said goodbye to Vincent Nguyen, Rebecca Miles and Kayleen Grinan who all graduated with their Certificate III in Children's Services. Congratulations to Vincent, Kayleen and Rebecca on this achievement!

We have been joined by some new trainees and currently have the following school based trainees working with us: Shene Nash, Amy Steel, Grace Makatema, Toni-Louise Stanley and Donzo Sheriff.

#### **Raffle 2010.**

The end of the year raffle consisted of over 50 prizes. The first prize to be drawn was a framed landscape by our resident artist and volunteer Pat Greig. Thanks to Pat for all her work and generosity. Thanks also to all the families who brought in small prizes. As this newsletter will be printed before the end of our year at LHCC we do not as yet know the winner of the painting.

As the year closes we wish you all a very happy, safe and healthy festive season and hope to see you after the holidays in 2011.

Pat.

## Do you know about the EYLF?

(Nothing to do with HARRY POTTER!)

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is part of the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) reform agenda for early childhood education and care and is a key component of the Australian Government's [National Quality Framework](#) for early childhood education and care. The EYLF is Australia's first National Curriculum statement for educators working in early education and care settings with children from birth to age five. The EYLF will enable a national conversation about what matters in early childhood education.

It underpins universal access to early childhood education and will be incorporated in the [National Quality Standard](#) in order to ensure delivery of nationally consistent and quality early childhood education across sectors and jurisdictions. The Early Years Learning Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development.

*Edited extract From the DEEWR web site Early Years Learning Framework fact sheet.*

[www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood](http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood)

## Get Set for Prep

*Excerpts from a series of fact sheets produced by Queensland Government (Department of Education and Training) 2008.*

Starting school can be an exciting but stressful time for you and your child. For some children it may be the first time that they have been away from their parents. They may be going into a strange environment with unfamiliar people and things around them.

There are some simple steps you can take to help make your child's time at school more enjoyable and relaxed. You could encourage your child to be independent by helping them get used to:

- Putting on and doing up his or her shoes
- Eating and drinking without help (opening lunchboxes, wrapping and unwrapping school lunches and drinking from drink bottles)



- Caring for and putting away play things
- Using a handkerchief or tissue
- Going to the toilet independently
- Using playground equipment safely
- Carrying his or her own bag
- Identifying his or her own belongings

If possible, you could familiarise your child with the school environment and routine by:

- Driving or walking by the school a few times so that the school becomes a familiar place
- Attending an orientation program or open day so you can meet your child's teacher and see the classroom
- Making sure your child knows how to get home from school safely or where to wait for you in the afternoon, or where to go for after school care
- Introducing your child to other children in the neighbourhood who will be attending the same school
- Asking the school what equipment and materials are needed such as school bag, library bag and hat. Most schools will have a list. Make sure all possessions are clearly labelled with your child's name.
- Checking with your pre-Prep provider (kindy, childcare, school) about how they can help children make a smooth transition to school
- Encourage children to understand that teachers are at school to help.

In Prep, children will be:

- Using blocks and manipulative equipment and creating collages to develop early mathematical concepts and skills
- Drawing and painting to encourage oral language, reading and writing skills
- Initiating and participating in dramatic play to build an understanding of the world around them
- Writing stories and copying signs as part of their play
- Playing and investigating independently, in pairs, small groups and as a whole class
- Participating in outdoor activities
- Actively making choices about what and how they learn
- Investigating and learning how to find out about their interests
- Planning with the teacher using a plan-do-reflect model
- Participating in music and language experiences

These learning experiences will help children to:

- Understand and use language to group, sort and describe objects and to communicate ideas, feelings and needs
- Develop early literacy and numeracy skills
- Develop independence and problem solving skills
- Learn how to cooperate with others
- Develop physical coordination skills
- Listen, respond to and give directions
- Increase self confidence

## Why is play important?

Children learn when they play. During play, they make decisions, solve problems, develop thinking skills, collaborate, communicate and develop a positive sense of self. As children grow older their play changes and becomes more complex.

**The following extract is taken from the Early Years Framework Professional Program Newsletter, 'Talking about Play'. They are the thoughts of Dr Lennie Barblett, from Edith Cowan University in Western Australia.**

We know that '...play shapes the architecture of the brain in unique ways; it links social, creative and cognitive skills' (Bartlett, 2010)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms '...play as a fundamental right of all children' (Article 31).

The Early Years Learning Framework defines play-based learning as:

A context for learning through which children organize and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.

This confirms that play is nationally and internationally valued for its contribution to young children's lives and learning. But, it doesn't tell us exactly what is meant by 'play' and what roles parents and educators should fulfill as they interact with children.

### The characteristics of play

Drawing on the research of Dockett and Fleer (1999), Shipley (2008) and Lester and Russell (2008) Dr Lennie Barblett put forward seven

basic characteristics of play:

- Voluntary – something children choose to do, but other children can be invited to join in.
- Pleasurable – a deep sense of enjoyment, which will vary from child to child.
- Symbolic – usually includes some type of make believe or pretend and objects assume new meanings and purposes for the player/s
- Meaningful – to the player/s, but the meaning may not always be clear to an observer.
- Active – it requires active mental, verbal or physical engagement with people, objects or ideas.
- Process oriented – it's enjoyed for the activity itself, not concerned with an end product.
- Intrinsically motivated – it is its own reward.

### The role of adults in play

Lennie identifies five functions for adults in play:

- Quality adult-child interactions, including sustained shared thinking
- Taking different roles directly in the play
- Teaching to support play
- Challenging unjust and unfair play
- Intentionality

Intentionality includes knowing how to value-add to children's play by encouraging persistence and scaffolding to enable the child to complete a task.

Some of the roles adults can fulfill in children's play:

- Parallel player – working on the same tasks at the child, alongside
- Script writer – helping to tell the story
- Stage manager – providing space, materials, 'props', helping to resolve problems
- Co-constructor – listening to what children are thinking and saying, asking clarifying questions, making suggestions.
- Participating – with children's agreement, taking a direct role in the play.
- Modelling how to enter and exit someone else's play – '...Let's go and ask Alex, can we join his play?'

#### References

Barblett, Lennie (presenter), (2010, October 1). *Play-based learning and the EYLF* [online video presentation]. Canberra: Early Childhood Australia.  
[http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/eylfp/play\\_base\\_d\\_learning\\_and\\_the\\_eylf.php](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/eylfp/play_base_d_learning_and_the_eylf.php)

# Disability Services

November and December bring with them holiday spirit and festive cheer and it can definitely be felt in the office as we are busy organising holiday activities and vacation support for families over the December and January months. We also get excited about events like the Parent Dinner, the FSW end of year gathering as well as other staff break ups to come.

We also celebrate the fact that Flora and Monique our Resource Workers have both accepted full time permanent positions in the team which means we get to hang on to them a little longer. We celebrate too with some sadness the time that we have had with Matt Armstrong who has been working alongside our Building Tomorrows Together Project. Matt is leaving us at the end of the year but excited about a new opportunity at Next Health. We thank Matt for all of his support and encouragement to both the team and the families Matt has supported to put together clearly articulated and detailed plans for the future. You will be greatly missed Matt but we wish you all the best in your new role.



Celebrating aside, we are still busy organising supports for families and finalising the Brisbane South Flexible Holiday

Program to ensure that families have a well-supported and well rested break over the holidays. Of course we hope that all of our hard work and extensive planning pay off and everything goes smoothly during the time Kyabra is closed. However if an emergency occurs during the time Kyabra is closed the Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre will have on call staff during this period who can be contacted on 1800 059 059. The dates that Kyabra will be closed this year are between 12pm Friday the 24<sup>th</sup> December and 8:30am Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> January. On Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> January we will be open again and normal hours will apply.

Take care and have a fabulous holiday break.  
Tracey.

## Peer Support Group for Parents and Carers

The MyTime program offers facilitated peer support groups aimed at providing parents and carers of children with a disability or chronic illness with opportunities to connect with one another and share stories and information. Group activities and discussions are guided by participants and there is child care available. There are groups currently operating out of centres in Moorooka and Browns Plains. If you'd like more information, visit the website at [www.mytime.net.au](http://www.mytime.net.au) or call 1800 889 997.

## Interagency Siblings Activity Day

Following on from the success of last year's Siblings Program, this year the Disability Service took part in the Annual Interagency Siblings Activity Day. The day was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> September at the beautiful St Pius X Primary School in Salisbury and thankfully the rain held off and we even got a little bit of sun. We were lucky enough to have ten keen participants on the day ranging in ages from 6 – 16. Some were familiar faces from last year's program as well as some new additions to a fun and excited group. The purpose of the day, first and foremost, was to have fun and that we did. There was a range of activities, including drum making, some interesting lateral thinking games as well as screen printing facilitated by Marea from Art 4 Ages. We enjoyed a lovely lunch that was generously provided by the Brisbane Pinelands Lions Club and accompanied by some very entertaining activities hosted by Life. Be in it. All in all, it was a very successful day that left some of the kids asking us what we would be doing next weekend!

The Activity Day was sponsored by Life Be in it, St Pius X Primary School, Art 4 Ages and the Brisbane Pinelands Lions Club. The South-East Queensland Siblings Network prepared and facilitated the day and is made up of representatives from Xavier, Department of Communities – Disability Services, Cerebral Palsy League and Kyabra Community Association.

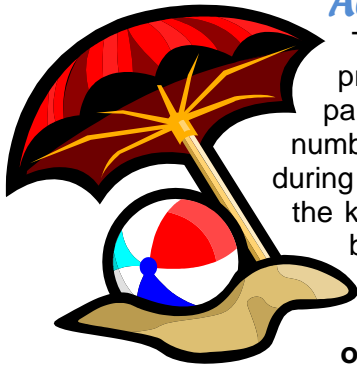
## Free Workshops about Autism

Early Days is a national program offering free workshops to parents and carers of children under 6 who live with autism. These workshops provide opportunities to learn more about autism spectrum disorder and suggest ways to support your child's development at home. Workshops are planned around the needs of parents and can be organised in your local area if there is enough demand. For more information, please visit the website at [www.earlydays.net.au](http://www.earlydays.net.au) or call 1800 334 155.

## Opportunity to Participate in Workshops

As many of you may already be aware, the Disability Team is currently exploring the option of introducing a series of workshops that will cover areas such as public transport use, money handling and other independent living skills. We would like to thank all the families that have returned the Expression of Interest forms and encourage other families who are interested to send in their forms as soon as possible so we can begin working on some concrete dates and themes. If you would like more information about these workshops, please contact Flora via Kyabra reception.

## Looking for Vacation Care Activities?



The summer holidays can present a big challenge for parents but there are a number of programs operating during this time that can entertain the kids and give you a bit of a breather. A few possibilities are:

- **Vacation Care offered by the Cerebral Palsy League of Qld at Mount Gravatt State Special School:** Contact Sandy Paterson or Amanda Kirkham on 3347 7200
- **School Holiday Circus Workshops offered by Flipside Circus:** Contact Flipside Circus on 3352 7233
- **Swimming Classes offered by Sam Riley Swim Schools:** Contact Swim Schools on 1300 726 745

The Disability Service will be sending out a brochure with some more activity ideas and events in the next couple of weeks. If you would like additional information, please contact the Disability Team.

### For Information and Emergencies: Commonwealth Respite and Carelink

A direct contact point for parents and carers to get information and assistance around a wide range of issues facing people living with a disability. They are able to provide emergency respite and funding in certain situations.

**Freecall: 1800 052 222**

**Website:** <http://www9.health.gov.au/ccsd/>

### Carer's Queensland

A nationwide service that provides information, advocacy and counselling for carers. They offer a wide range of training opportunities and peer support programs for carers of all ages and in a range of different situations.

**Freecall: 1800 242 636**

**Website:** <http://qld.carersaustralia.com.au/>

## Building Tomorrows Together

Once again the Building Tomorrows Together Project has continued to play a very busy role supporting families who are exploring options for their adult sons and daughters to move into a place of their own.

We have been meeting with a number of families to assist them to dream about and document their plans. Some of these families have submitted these plans to Community Living Initiative Funding Panel, Disability Services (Department of Communities). To date, we are aware that 2 of these families have been successful in receiving funding for their adult sons and daughters to start the transition into a more independent lifestyle away from the family home. At this stage, another family is still waiting to hear the outcome of the Funding Panels decision.

The Future Conversations Groups have been going well. We have had 2 successful get togethers, and would love for you to join us for our next one on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November from 10.00 – 11.30.

We have recently met with Emma Bennett from Parent to Parent. She will be joining with a group of parents on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November to

introduce them to the idea of developing a PATH for their sons and daughters.

Matt Armstrong will unfortunately be leaving the BTT project on the 13<sup>th</sup> December. Matt has been working alongside Karin and I for the past 12 months, and has been a great asset to the team. We would both like to say a very big thank you to Matt for his contribution to the team and the work he has done alongside many families and wish him all the best in his new role.

In other staffing news, Karin and I will both be taking some time off over the Christmas break. During this time, please contact another member of the Disability Service if you have any urgent questions or leave us a message or email and we will respond to you as soon as we return.

- Karin – Starting leave on Thursday 16/12/10 and returning to the office on Tuesday 4/1/11.
- Sarah – Starting leave on Thursday 23/12/10 and returning to the office on Monday 31/1/11.

We wish you all a happy and safe holiday and look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.



Cheers

Sarah Duce  
Project Supervisor

## Useful Links

Below, the BTT project has found the following useful links that may assist in people's thinking and planning about the future.

When you get a chance we hope you enjoy browsing the following websites and blogs. Happy surfing!

<http://www.inclusionworks.org.au/> Inclusion Works is a Townsville based community organisation that helps build better communities through the inclusion of people with a disability.

[http://www.pavetheway.org.au/articles/2010/01/12/A Place to Call Home - thinking it through December 09.pdf](http://www.pavetheway.org.au/articles/2010/01/12/A%20Place%20to%20Call%20Home%20-%20thinking%20it%20through%20December%2009.pdf) – this is a link to a resource from Pave the Way, Mamre, called: "A Place to Call Home: Thinking it Through. This is a great resource which details what families need to think about when planning

a future for their family member with a disability.

<http://www.parent2parentqld.org.au/> this is the link to the website of Parent To Parent, an organisation funded by Disability Services, Department of Communities to do futures planning work with families. They use tools such as PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) to do their planning work.

<http://juliafarrrobbi.blogspot.com> this is a blog by Robbi Williams from the Julia Farr Group in South Australia. He keeps people updated on current issues facing people with disability, such as safeguards, individualised funding and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

## Foster and Residential Support Services

Welcome to the final newsletter for 2010. We wish you and your families a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Foster and Residential Support Workers who are very committed to the work they do here at Kyabra.

### Dixon House Team

Team Leader: Amanda Brown  
Youth Workers: Rhett, Martina, Debbie, Donal, Heather, Joe, Matthew, Chris and Emma

### Foster and Kinship Care Team

Coordinator: Andy Harman  
Resource Workers: Karen and Sue

We also have Pat Greig who volunteers in the office once a week assisting with our filing, Pam Susic, Foster Carer Rep, who is available to support and represent Foster Carers and Claire Dovale who recently completed a student placement in our team.

To these workers and their families I wish them all an enjoyable, well-earned break at this time of year.

I will be taking Long Service Leave from December 24<sup>th</sup> until March 1<sup>st</sup>. During that time Amanda Brown will be acting Manager for the team. Please feel free to contact Amanda during that time.

Linda.