



Ryde family support service **newsletter December 2006**

Suggestions for things to do with the Children during the Christmas Holidays

- **Free Festival of Sydney event: “ FEEL THE BEAT AND DANCE”**

When: Sunday 14th January 2007 at 4pm & 7.30pm

Where: Tumbalong Park at Darling Harbour

What: This event is a mega global dance party for kids – a celebration of lively music driven by traditional dances from all corners of the globe.

- **Mindful Walking**

Go for a walk, and while walking concentrate on the feel of the ground under your feet, and your breathing. Just observe what is around you as you walk, staying **IN THE PRESENT**. Let your other thoughts go, just look at the sky, the view, the other walkers; feel the wind, the temperature on your skin, the sounds; **enjoy the moment**.

New Coordinator

Michael Whitehead joined Ryde Family Support Service in July 2006, as Coordinator. In his first weeks at family support he had to organise moving premises from Ryde to Eastwood, employed 2 new staff members, sorted out endless computer and telephone connection problems, and arranged building work to provide access for clients with disabilities to the premises.

A lesser person would probably have fled from the scene! So the staff have really appreciated his calm directive presence and great sense of humour throughout the whole process of moving.

Michael comes to family support with extensive management experience in the public sector. He has 4 grandchildren, so was well equipped to facilitate the new grandparent support group, which began in November this year.

The Christmas party will provide a great opportunity for clients of family support to meet Michael, and also our two new Family Support Workers Kim and Bronwyn.

Possible Groups for 2007

- Parenting group run with Ryde Child and Family Health
- Mum’s Depression and Exercise group
- Living With Teens
- Teenage Boys group
- Triple P with Amanda Wheeler
- Helping Your Child With School – Korean families
- Toddlers Games and Story time at Ryde Family Support Service
- What Makes Toddlers Tick.

School Holiday Activity for January 2007

- Balmoral Beach on 24th January 2007, meet at right hand end of beach and bring picnic lunch, sunhats and blockout.

“Life Stories” Group

The Life Stories group began 17th October 2006 and ran for 8 weeks. Our Family Support Worker Bronwyn and Gaby Mason from TAFE Outreach facilitated this group. 9 women attended the group and each of them did some brilliant writing. There were some very lively discussions and fantastic interactions between the women. The support they gave each other was a delight to witness. Bronwyn felt extremely privileged to be part of their experience. The Service is hoping to organise another “Life Stories” group for next year – the enthusiasm and the creativity are certainly there.

Playgroup

- Playgroup at St Anne’s will recommence at the start of Term 1 on Friday 2nd February.

Recipe to Try

- Shortbread Marshmallow Slice
 - 250gms Scotch Finger biscuits
 - 100gm packed mini marshmallows (Baking Isle of Supermarket)
 - 125gm butter melted
 - 200ml sweetened condensed milk
 - ½ cup desiccated coconut.
 1. Place biscuits into food processor, and process to fine crumbs or put in plastic bag and crush. Transfer into a large bowl and add marshmallows, butter and condensed milk. Stir with a wooden spoon until well combined.
 2. Spread coconut over a large piece of baking paper. Form biscuit mixture into a 5cm-thick log. Roll in coconut. Wrap log in baking paper, twisting ends to secure. Refrigerate for 2 hours, or until firm. Cut into slices and serve.

Ryde Family Support Service will be closed Friday 22nd December at 4.30pm and will reopen on Tuesday 2nd January 2007.

The staff at Ryde Family Support Service wishes you and your family a happy, peaceful and safe Christmas and we look forward to seeing you in 2007

One hundred years from now
It will not matter what kind of car I drove,
What kind of house I lived in,
How much money I had in my bank account
Nor what my clothes looked like.
But the world maybe a little better
Because I was important in the life of a child
Author Unknown

Some Helpful Tips for Parents

- Be aware how children grow and develop
- Be wise enough to know that you can do things differently
- Be strong enough to say you don't know how.
- Be big enough to ask for information or advice.

Value Yourself

You are doing an important job. Be proud of the efforts you have put in through the day, no matter how small the tasks. When talking to friends about parenting don't moan and groan. Talk of it as a special task.

Look After Yourself

See yourself as a person first and as a parent second. Be careful not to expect too much of yourself and of others. Take notice of your own special talents. Praise yourself for simple things. Don't dwell on your mistakes. Mistakes are for learning from, not for making you feel bad.

Accept Your Feelings

Understand that mixed feelings are normal. At times of stress or changes in your family you can be swamped with a range of emotions. At these times it is important to reach out and speak to your partner, to your friends, to family members or to someone not caught up in the emotion.

Reward Yourself

Do at least one thing a day that makes you feel good. Get someone to fill in so that you can have 'timeout' to do whatever you feel like doing even if it's 30minutes – have a bubble bath, read a book, or kick a football.

Talk to Yourself

The way in which you talk to yourself matters. If you say "My child is trying to get at me" or "Why should I put up with this?" you will react differently than if you say to yourself "What's happening to my children to make them behave like this?"

Trust Yourself

Everyone has their own ideas about parenting and sometimes it's easy to become confused or to feel inadequate. Listen to other people's ideas - this is how we all learn. But do what feels right for you. Trust your own judgement.

Work Out Your Own Values

Clear values and beliefs are very important in forming the basis of a good foundation in raising children. Try to reach some common agreement with your partner if you have a different opinion. A shared and clear understanding of parenting practices makes for an easier road. If you differ try not to put each other down.

Get Support

Make sure you've got a listening ear. If you feel alone and can't find support within your family, look everywhere until you find someone to talk to about your concerns. Parenting is too hard to do in isolation. Don't be afraid to ask for help....it is not a sign of failure.....it is the smart thing to do. You will probably find that others feel the same as you.