



Newcastle Five Star Family Day Care

Parent & Carer Newsletter Autumn 2010

Welcome to the first newsletter for the year

The new year has commenced with 65 carers and 550 children. To the new families - welcome to Five Star Family Day Care. We hope you and your child/ren are settling well into their care. To all our returning families - welcome back we look forward to a fantastic year ahead.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the staff at the coordination unit.



Alice	coordinator (mon - fri)
Karen	administration officer (mon - fri)
Caroline	child development officer (mon - fri)
Jane	child development officer (mon - fri)
Michelle	child development officer (mon - wed)
Anita	child development officer (mon - wed)
Liza	child development officer (wed thur fri)
Tracy	brighter futures coordinator (mon - thur)
Trish	brighter futures support worker (mon - thur)

What contact will you have with these people.

Co-ordinator— Alice is responsible for the overall operation of the service. She is available to answer any of your general enquiries about the quality of the service; policies and procedures of the scheme or individuals. All feedback (good and/or bad) is welcome.

Administration—When you ring the office it will most likely be Karen who will answer the phone. She can assist you with all your admin enquiries and will forward you to the appropriate person for other enquires.

Child Development Officers (CDO)— A CDO team is allocated to visit carers regularly. They spend time with the carer ensuring regulations are being followed, discussing FDC business issues, programming and individual children's needs and development. They will sign the visitors book, apply a sticker to the attendance records and will complete a visit record sheet to identify they have attended. When a child is new to the scheme, they CDO's make every effort to see the child in care as soon as possible. Families can contact their carers CDO to discuss their child or care arrangements at any time.

Brighter Futures staff—provide additional support carers and families referred through the Early Intervention project.

WHAT IS QUALITY ASSURANCE?

Quality Assurance strives for:

Positive outcomes
For every child
In every home



This year we are looking forward to embracing the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

The framework has been endorsed by the government and is being rolled out to all children's services to ensure that children receive quality education programs no matter what childcare environment a parent chooses.

Carers will be using the framework, in partnership with parents, as a guide to develop learning programs which are responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities, and recognise that children learn through their play. The key aspects describes childhood as:

- ◆ Belonging
- ◆ Being
- ◆ Becoming

As Carers have typically been following these practices in a family oriented way, the major change for most will be getting used to the language of the framework.

The Family Day Care staff are currently attending training & information sessions so that this information can then be passed on to carers.

Brighter Futures Supported playgroup

The new brighter futures playgroup venue at Hamilton school has had a successful start with a mixture of old & new clients. The supported playgroup is working in partnership with Samaritans "Parents as Teachers" program. Call the office for referral details.

Love as much as you can.
Give all you have, and
always forgive



2010 scheme goals

As a result of feedback from the parent & carer surveys, the following goals have been set for the scheme for 2010.

- Increasing opportunities for carers to liaise with other children's services
- Develop strategies to assist with adapting to change whilst maintaining personal wellbeing
- Explore a variety of ways to assist effective communication exchange between carers and families including documenting children's experiences and routines
- Engage in increased marketing opportunities

If you have any ideas to support the scheme in achieving these goals, please call the co-ordination unit to discuss.



Review of the 2009 goals

the following goals were identified for the scheme for 2009—below in italics is how they have been achieved.

- **Reviewing the regulation/accreditation monitoring process to ensure consistency**
Carers now have access to a team of three support CDO's. One CDO on each team is dedicated to Regulation/accreditation monitoring, the other CDO's are dedicated to other support matters
- **Review child development feedback strategies**
The scheme has streamlined information collection, reviewed the system for following up new children in care and are currently revising the child development checklists
- **Review communication systems with all stakeholder**
- **Develop the infrastructure to enable effective email correspondence with parents and carers**
The computer data base software is now more email friendly. All carers and families are being encouraged to correspond with the office via email & attachments
- **Develop improved systems to engage carers and parents in policy & procedure review**
In 2009 a new system was trialled for reviewing sections of policies with a group of carers and their families. Policies have also been emailed to interested parents for review
- **Provide clear information to parents in regards to accreditation indicators**
Each newsletter has featured an area of Quality assurance and some of the indicators of quality that they are looking for



NOTICE BOARD

What's happening in Newcastle during February / March

Lambton food and wine festival sat 6th and sun 7th March

Where: Lambton Park - 10am to 4pm - visit: <http://www.wineandfoodfestival.com.au/>



Olive tree markets

1st Saturday of the month 9am to 3pm Junction school

Newcastle Farmer markets

2nd and 4th Sunday of the month at the showgrounds 8.30am to 1.30pm

OFFICE CLOSURE

The FDC office will be closed during the following times: 26th March due to Newcastle Show day & Friday April 2nd and Monday April 5th due to the Easter public holidays

In the event of an emergency call the mobile on
0400356867

New Relief Carer

Pam Bullen is now a registered relief carer on Friday's for Newcastle Five Star Family Day Care.

Carers can access her service on 49568874.

Parents must give written permission for a carer to use a relief service

Staff profile

Name: Jane
Position: Child Development Officer and Childcare Placement Officer
Days: Monday to Friday
Favourite food: loves all food except offal
Favourite movie: "Singing in the Rain"
Loves: Nature, Friends/family especially my 3 awesome children
3 people you'd invite for dinner: Jesus, Kermit the Frog & Johnny Depp (yum)
Something you like about your job:
 Interactions with children and admiration I have for the carers



Jane Frost
(CDO)





Cancer Council recommends you protect yourself in

5 ways:

- Slip on clothing that covers your arms and legs
- Slap on a broad brimmed or legionnaires hat
- Slop on 30+, broad-spectrum sunscreen
- Seek shade
- Slide on wrap around sunglasses

Tips for applying sunscreen

- ◆ Put sunscreen on 20 minutes before going outside
- ◆ Ensure the sunscreen is in date before applying
- ◆ Generously apply sunscreen by smearing over clean dry skin - leave a visible film and don't rub in
- ◆ Re apply every 2 hours if you have been swimming, sweating or wiping off
- ◆ Store sunscreen out of the sun

See the cancer council website for further details www.cancerCouncil.nsw.org.au



All carers have been sent some postcards from the NSW Family Day Care association to promote an awareness of the implications of the up coming changes in the ratio of children to carer. The FDC NSW are asking for the existing ratio of 1:5 to be maintained for family day care.

Please read the information on the postcards and feel free to respond to Kate Ellis, the Federal Minister for Children's Services and Kristina Keneally, the NSW premier



QUALITY AREA Five & Six

Carers and Co-ordination Unit Staff

Some satisfactory indicators you can observe: Further details can be obtained from the Quality Practices Guide available from the FDC office, carer or www.ncac.gov.au

Principle 5.1 Recruitment, selection and orientation processes for carers and co-ordination unit staff encourage and support the provision of a quality service

- ◆ There is an orientation program for new carers

Principle 5.2 The scheme has a systematic process in place to monitor current practice and identify areas for continuing improvement

- ◆ Annual surveys are collated
- ◆ FDC staff monitor and support the provision of care

Principle 5.3 Professional Development opportunities are accessed by carers, coordination unit staff and others involved in management

- ◆ Carers are invited to in-service training conducted by the scheme and are encouraged to undertake professional development

Principle 5.4 The scheme promotes occupational health & safety

- ◆ A Risk Assessment document is used by carers
- ◆ Carers have regular emergency evacuation drills

Management & Administration

Principle 6.1 Management practices are ethical and operate within relevant legislation

- ◆ Parents can access a copy of the regulations at their carers home

Principle 6.2 The scheme consults & works collaboratively with all stakeholders

- ◆ Parents & carers have the opportunity to review policies

Principle 6.3 The scheme has an efficient, effective & ethical process for the management of records

- ◆ All children's files & documents are retained confidentially

Principle 6.4 The scheme has a simple, transparent grievance & complaints handling procedure

- ◆ The complaints investigation procedures are documented in the schemes policy manual

Principle 6.5 carers & co-ordination unit staff are effective advocates for their service within the community & actively seek to build links with other agencies to benefit children & their families

- ◆ The service is promoted within the community

This information has been provided to assist parents in regards to observing accreditation practices



▶ Information for families using child care

Fact Sheet 8

What are my responsibilities for receiving Child Care Benefit (CCB)?

When receiving CCB you are responsible for keeping the Australian Government and your carer up-to-date and notifying them when your circumstances change.

Here is a checklist of responsibilities:

- provide your child care service/s with your Customer Reference Numbers, dates of birth and Jobs, Education and Training Child Care fee assistance assessment notice,
- sign or initial attendance records daily to show when your child starts care ('time in') and finishes care ('time out')—do not sign blank attendance records
- sign or initial attendance records each time your child is absent from care
- inform each child care service you are using when you have used your initial 42 absence days (only if you receive CCB as a fee reduction) and provide your child care service with documents where necessary for:
 - additional absence days your child is absent from care
 - an increase in the number of maximum hours you can get paid CCB
 - Special Child Care Benefit
- advise the Family Assistance Office when changes happen that may affect your CCB. These include when:
 - your child stops using child care
 - your child starts or leaves school
 - your and your partner's income changes
 - you change partnering arrangements (for example, if you get married, registered, separated or divorced)
 - your or your partner's residence status changes
 - your address or bank account details change