



February, 2016

Welcome to the first edition of the Community Support Service's newsletter for the year.

After a much needed rest over the Christmas period, the Community Support Service team have returned to 98 Birch St refreshed and eager to launch into another exciting year, filled with events, services and programs to support families and individuals in the Cairns community.

The positive energy of everyone returning from holidays serves as a reminder of how well we benefit from some time away from the rapid pace of life. While we can't always have holidays, we can take a few minutes each day to slow down and focus on the now. We discuss mindfulness on the next page, which is a great tool for reducing stress and taking care of ourselves.

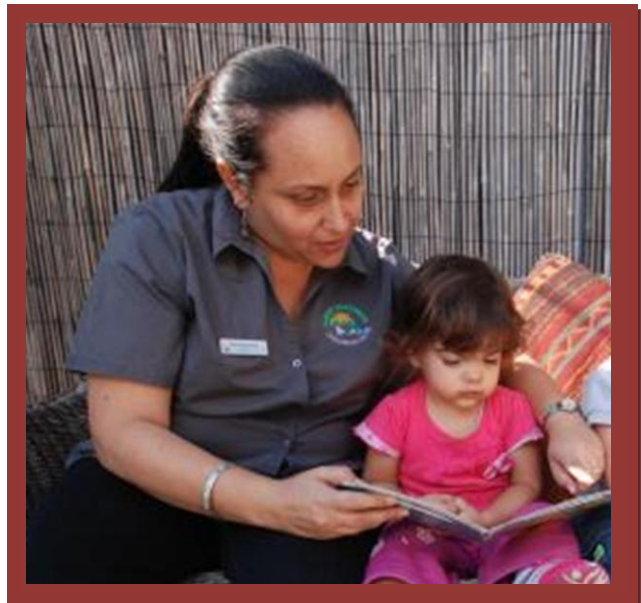
We hope that you too had a restful holiday break, and that this newsletter finds you well in 2016.

Here's to an exciting and fulfilling year ahead!

Contact Details

98 Birch St
Manunda
4032 6800

Community Support Service



The Importance of Reading to Young Children

Parents and guardians are children's first teachers. As author Emilie Buchwald quoted, "*Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.*"

Fostering a love of reading is not simply reading the words on the page, which can be a relief to those who find it difficult or unenjoyable to read. Point out to the child where the title of the book is, explain the job of the author and illustrator. Identify numbers, letters or even words within the text. Observe the pictures in the book or read some of the text, and have a conversation with your child about what they can see, what they can show you, and if they're old enough, what they can describe to you.

"Oh, you're looking at the picture of the duck"

"Can you find the letter 'd' in that word?"

"What do you think will happen next in the story?"

Children having engaging conversations with loved ones about books develop a positive, healthy association with reading, which in turn builds their confidence and instills a love of books. If you would like to know more about the benefits of reading to young children, we will be running an information session in Term two detailing this.

Lifeline | Child and Family Care | Counselling | Crisis Support | Disability Support | Social Inclusion

Our Values Compassion | Respect | Justice | Working Together | Leading through Learning

What's on for 2016?

Our family support and counselling services continue to be in high demand, and our calendar of events is shaping up nicely. The start of the new school year sees us recommence our Supported Playgroup for young families, and we are excited to welcome back our littlest friends and hear about their Christmas and summer holidays. The Community Support Service is also hosting the popular Help! I've got a Teenager! parenting course, for families with older children. This four week parenting course aims to build an understanding of both parent and teen, and focusses on how to better interact with one another. We have received a lot of interest in the budgeting seminar and the gambling help information session, both due to be held in February. These events are open to anyone in the public who wishes to attend and learn more about problem gambling, or to gain control of their finances. We have several more events in the planning stages for later months, so stay tuned for more information.

Mindfulness: the new buzz word.

Chances are, you've heard someone mention the word *mindfulness*, and you've probably come across colouring books with *mindfulness* scrawled across them. But what exactly is mindfulness, how can it help us in day to day life, and what on earth has it got to do with colouring?

When we are busy, our minds tend to go a million miles an hour, leaving us feeling stressed and frazzled. Being mindful is about being aware that all these rapid thoughts are going through our heads, and trying to block them out in order to restore calmness and balance within ourselves.

How do we become mindful?

Focus on the here and now. What can you hear? What can you feel? In essence, it's that age old phrase to "stop and smell the roses". People report feeling calmer after clearing their mind of the hustle and bustle and focusing on their surroundings and how they are thinking and feeling right now.



Escape those racing thoughts by focusing on your surroundings.

And the colouring?

Colouring is an excellent way to force our minds to focus on the here and now- the concentration of staying within the line, and the total absorption in seeing a colourful pattern emerge before our very eyes. We are becoming mindful, being focused on the task at hand, and giving our mind a vacation from the rush of thoughts we usually have.

Calendar of Events for Term 1 & 2

Tuesday February 9th: Budgeting Workshop

Wednesday February 10th: Play Connect Grow Supported Playgroup begins

Tuesday February 23rd: Gambling Help Workshop

Tuesday February 23rd– March 15th: Help! I've got a Teenager! Parenting course

Friday March 25th – Sunday April 10th: School holidays

Tuesday April 19th: Healthy Sexual Development of Children

Tuesday April 26th: The Benefits of Reading to Your Children

Tuesday May 3rd: Healthy Sexual Development for Teenagers

Tuesday May 10th- May 31st: Bringing Up Great Kids Parenting course (Birch St)

Thursday May 19th – June 9th: Bringing Up Great Kids Parenting course (Gordonvale Hub)