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Dear Families,

It is at this stage of the year that we acknowledge the year is coming to a close very quickly! Days and weeks are full and busy.

Please make sure you note on your Calendar the following important dates:

Wednesday 30 November—Parent Information Evening re children's new rooms 2017 and for new enrolments—6.15-7pm

Monday 5 December—St Anne's 2016 End of Year Family Christmas Gathering—5.30-7pm (please see separate flyer distributed recently for details)

Friday 23 December 6.00pm—Centre Close

Tuesday 3 January 2017—Staff Only Day

Wednesday 4 January 2017—Centre Reopens—All children return to their 2016 room.

Monday 16 January 2017—Children start in new rooms and new enrolled children start.

2017 Enrolment Forms and paperwork will be available for everyone following the Parent Information Session on Wednesday 30 November.

ALL children must have a 2017 Enrolment Form completed for them and a 2017 "About My Child". This ensures ALL information is current and permissions are revalidated. We understand this can be tedious however it is very important we have CURRENT information for all children.

We thank you in advance for the time you will take to do this!

*Yours as we educate and care for children together,
Narelle Dewhurst,
Centre Director.*

ENROLMENT PROCESS for 2017

Offers for places in the Centre for next year have now been finalised.

The next part of the process will be distribution of **2017 Enrolment Forms**. **It is important that these be completed and returned as quickly as possible once you receive it.** We understand that a large amount of your information does not change but for many of you there are changes that need to be communicated to us. Your child's yearly enrolment form also needs to be archived in keeping with the Department of Education regulatory requirements.

So please bear with us and fill out the form to ensure all documents are up to date and accurate.

As your child changes from year to year you will also be asked to complete a new **About My Child**. This information is given to your child's educators to keep them up to date with changes in your child's growth, personal disposition and family life.

The Parent Information Evening is for you to become familiar with your child's 'new' room. This gives you the opportunity to ask some questions, find out where things are located in your child's new room, find out about the possible different learning programme approach for your child's new class including their different daily timetable, and why things may be done differently in their new room.

The Information sessions are for YOU!

The children will be introduced to their new room over a period of time (transition visits) during their usual days of attendance with their current educators.

As always, **please don't hesitate to ask ANY questions** at all about this process to make sure you feel comfortable with the process!

**Happy
Holidays!**

St Anne's will CLOSE on
Friday 23 December 6pm and will REOPEN
on Wednesday 4 December 2017
at 7.30am. (Tuesday 3 Jan will be a Staff only day.)

What is Kindness?

“Kindness” is the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate.

What’s happening in the Rockpools Room?

Recently the Educators in the Rockpools Room (Ange, Annaleise, Sharon and Carol) had some discussions around “The Ripple Kindness Project” which is an on-going, whole school curriculum targeting students aged 5-12 years (from prep to grade 6). It has been designed to cultivate a positive school community to help address and prevent anti-social behaviour and emphasises the importance of showing kindness towards others; maintaining an optimistic classroom environment where everyone feels like they are supported and that they belong; and helping students to apply values like respect, generosity, compassion, gratitude and resilience in their interactions with others.

The Rockpools educators decided to use the principles of this project in their daily work with the children. They have been focusing on how our actions and words can make others feel good and in turn make ourselves feel good.

The educators have also used two particular books to help in their discussions with the children:

Have you filled a Bucket Today? (Author: Carol McCloud; Illustrator: David Messing) This book encourages positive behavior by using the concept of an invisible bucket to show children how easy and rewarding it is to express kindness, appreciation, and love by "filling buckets." ...

Three Bears (Author-Illustrator: Cliff Wright). This is a story about friendship and forgiveness. Three friends are out on a fishing trip in Black Bear's boat, when a series of disasters strikes. This book describes how they help each other after a storm.

During class group discussions about “being kind” some of the children’s responses went like this:

“I’m going to give Mum a kiss.”

“I am going to help someone if they fall over.”

“I am going to paint a picture for Nanny.”

“I am going to play with everybody.”

“I am going to help friends make restmats.” (Put sheets on)

“I am going to cuddle mummy.”

From the Rockpools’ educators:

“We will continue the journey of helping the children understand their shared responsibility as ‘citizens’ to respect each other, become aware of fairness and bias, and guide and support them to use the tools to act with compassion and kindness!”

Do you know about Kids Matter?



KidsMatter is a mental health and wellbeing initiative for primary schools and early childhood education and care services – like preschools, kindergartens and day care centres. ... teaching children skills for good social and emotional development. working together with families.

For more information please go to:
<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au>

What are Mental Health Difficulties in Young Children

In a recent podcast on the Gowrie NSW website, Rita Johnston facilitator at KidsMatter Early Childhood, talks about mental health and how adults can recognise **mental health difficulties in young children**. She also spoke about the benefits of early identification of mental health problems in young people.

Some information from the podcast:

- Mental health is often used to describe mental health conditions but what does it really mean? Rita described **mental health as being about** “well being, feeling good, being calm, being relaxed and liking yourself.” When we don’t feel like that, when we feel sad, or bad, or unworthy over a period of time we might be said to be having a mental health difficulty. If that condition gets worse and interferes with our life and functioning eg. depression, we would be said to have a mental illness—mental health and mental illness however are not separate things—mental health sits on a continuum and can be affected by both internal and external factors.
- We take care of our physical health, we must also take care of our mental health—diet, exercise, reduced stress all play a big role...AND...we now also know early childhood experiences also play a crucial role in the foundation of adult mental health.
- Research now clearly shows also, that it is RELATIONSHIPS that build healthy brain architecture in children** that develops resilience and well-being for the future and adulthood. It is not

academic skills like reading and writing that promote mental health—it is RELATIONSHIPS.

But how can adults recognise if a child is having mental health difficulties?

•Adults—parents, early childhood educators—are good at recognising when things are “not quite right” for a child—what we’re not so good or confident about doing, is acting on it.

•We might see that:

a particular child is too quiet, or gets very aggressive, or a child looks undernourished, or cries a lot, or only engages in one or two activities and does the same things every day, or that a child is not extending him/herself socially or in relation to activity, or that a child skips from one activity to another and is not able to settle with anything, or a child might not like meeting new people or becomes unsettled in new situations.

•Children with good mental health:

→Look grounded and know what they want and what they think about things

→They can make friends and relate well to adults

→They can concentrate on activities of interest.

•Rita Johnston believes it is relatively easy to recognise when something is not quite right for a child.

•In earlier times it may have been said that the child will “grow out of it”...but it cannot be guaranteed which child will grow out of something and which child will not!

•Again...RELATIONSHIPS are the key to good mental health in children—strong, heartfelt, loving attached relationships.

•Children need to feel valued and included, and they need to feel listened to as well as being in an environment where they can freely explore and learn in their own time at their own pace.

•In earlier times it was thought a baby would not realise, would not remember what was going on around them, or happening to them. We now know VERY differently. Neuroscience has helped with that!

•The emotional memory part of the brain is fully formed at birth, so emotional memories STAY, and, early experiences a child/baby has, become the foundations for the adult s/he will become.

•If a child experiences trauma, neglect, harsh discipline, exclusion, they will start displaying behaviours that reflect that experience and they may grow up into adults not being able to regulate feelings.

•Between 0-3 yrs of age the brain is developing rapidly. The years between birth and school age are critical years.

What to do?

Rita Johnston from Kids Matter suggests “seek help early and often”. If concerned about your child’s well-being find someone who will listen to your concerns—don’t wait for your child to “grow out of it” because they may not.

Parents know their own child really well!

Rita suggests perhaps at first (depending on your concerns) seeking a consultation with a Speech Pathologist or an Occupational Therapist—they too are good at recognizing children’s difficulties and may refer you on to a Psychologist or other specialist.

Where to find more information?

KidsMatter was developed by mental health professionals and education and childcare staff in response to the high rates of school-age children with mental health difficulties and the problems they face getting help. It is a partnership between education and health sectors and is funded by the Australian Government and Beyond Blue.

www.kidsmatter.edu.au

www.beyondblue.org.au

One of the guiding principles of the “Early Years Learning Framework” is secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships.



Lets measure - Materials: Socks, pencils, pillows (multiples of the same object for measuring)

Activity: Before learning to measure objects using millimeters, centimeters and metres we use informal objects to develop these skills. Choose your informal measurement objects like socks and get measuring. You can measure anything; yourselves, the lounge, a toy, the dog (if they will sit long enough). Demonstrate how to measure using the same items (Dads socks) ensuring there is no gap between each item. Ask your child “how many socks is the dog?” Answer: 5 socks (Saying the tool of measurement is an important skill.)





Summer is nearly here and its time to enjoy the beautiful Australian weather as we do best, swimming at the beach or in our pools. But there is a serious side to this ... Drowning is one of the most common causes of unintentional death in Australian children aged between 0-4 years, with children aged between 0–2 years being the most vulnerable. Australia has the second worst record in the world for preventable toddler drowning. Being vigilant with your children near pools or at the beach is paramount.

There are 5 ways to help prevent young children drowning in backyard pools.

1. Fence the Pool

Always keep your pool fence well maintained
The fence is only as good as it's weakest point
Don't leave objects leaning against the fence – it could be used to help children climb over
Pool owners that do not comply with legislation can be issued with heavy fines

2. Shut the Gate

Ensure your gate is self-closing
Regularly check your latch to make sure it isn't faulty
Never prop or leave gates open
Ensure doors leading out to pool or other water areas are locked

3. Learn to Swim

Learning to swim has many benefits for our children. It's great for their health and well being, it enhances their self-esteem and importantly teaches them a respect for water. While children are capable of being independently mobile in the water from a very young age, they must never be left unsupervised. No child is drown-proof.

4. Supervision

All adults are responsible for supervision

- Supervising adults should not be drinking alcohol
- Floatation devices do not replace adult supervision
- Older siblings should not supervise other children

5. Learn to Resuscitate

Anyone can be affected by a drowning or near drowning experience
Learn resuscitation—CPR—Chest compressions and rescue breaths

Providing first aid increases the chance of recovery