

# The Networker



Volume 3 Number 4 March 2009 Published quarterly

Free to SA Child Care & Out of School Hours Care services

## Kids' Zone Fun Day

*Stradbroke and Trinity Gardens Vacation Care services joined forces to provide a great day for kids during the summer holidays*

On Thursday 22nd January 2009, Stradbroke Vacation Care held its annual event, the 'KIDS' ZONE FUN DAY.' We have been organising this event for our children for several years, however, this time we invited Trinity Gardens Vacation Care to join in with the fun.

Each child was issued with an admission pass which gave them the opportunity to move freely to different activities. Some of these included a bouncy castle, a rock climbing wall, balloon animals, face painting, hanging doughnut game and super-sized games (giant chess, checkers, snakes and ladders, tic tac toe, pick up sticks, inflatable balls, ring toss, racing sacks and juggling rings).

Various competition stalls were also set up where the children could win a prize, such as mini golf, soccer goal challenge, fishing game, basketball challenge, quoits, hookey boards, bean bag toss and skittles. The Deputy Principal even joined in with the mini golf - and got a hole in one!

After lunch, the children cooled off with their choice of ice-cream ('sometimes' food) from the Noddy's ice-cream van. Each child was then issued a 'pretend' credit card which they were able to use to buy drinks, food and prizes from the 'KIDS' ZONE shop' which was entirely set up in advance by the older children. To wind down at the end of the day, the children participated in a piñata.

Providing a day like this for the children obviously involves a lot of organisation, however, with the children's involvement and assistance in the preparation, the workload was reduced significantly for the staff.

In particular, the older children helped to prepare the admission passes and credit cards, made signs, prepared bags of popcorn and other items, set up the shops and stalls and even served in the shop on the day, crossing the value off children's credit cards as they bought items.



The older children felt great achievement and success as a result of their accomplishments.

Inviting another vacation care group had many advantages. We had found that offering this day for the children had become quite expensive for us alone so including another vacation care service helped to relieve some of the financial burden.

We also believe it is a good experience for the children to interact with children from other groups to improve their social skills and develop an awareness of others (including children with additional needs).

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## Changes to publications

From this year, the Networker will be published quarterly, in March, June, September and December.

The Network SA e-news update will be published again shortly. We had been using a free-ware list but there are problems with the software and we may have to change provider.

If you do not have access to email and cannot receive the e-news update please call us and we will make alternative arrangements for you.

**Maureen McGuire**  
Editor

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The directors, Rebecca MacQueen and Edwina Guidolin, negotiated with each other in relation to the shared payment and organisation of activities. For example, Trinity Gardens provided all the materials and staff for the face painting activity.

Overall, a lot of hard work and organisation is needed but the joy on the faces of the children when it all comes together is worth it. Many children commented that "this was the best day they have ever had at KIDS' ZONE!"

**Rebecca MacQueen**  
**Stradbroke OSHC**



*Fun for all - the best day ever at KIDS' ZONE!*

## OSHC Association AGM

The Association will hold its AGM on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March from 10 – noon.

The meeting will be at the Gowrie Training Centre.

This is an invitation to all interested OSHC people to come along and part of the "voice of OSHC" in SA. We hope to see you there as we are looking to seriously boost our membership in 2009-10 and we need your support to do this. If you are shy about coming on your own fill your car with OSHC colleagues.

The special guest for the AGM will be **Mandy Richardson from St Pius X OSHC Service.**

Many of you know Mandy and know her passion and commitment to children in OSHC. She has now formally embarked in a research project at the University of SA and is investigating *EMOTIONAL EDUCATION: CAN IT BE TAUGHT OR CAUGHT THROUGH AN OSHC PROGRAM?*

Please come and hear directly from Mandy as it is possible that later in the year you/your service may be asked to play a part in her study.

## **Paid maternity leave report due soon**

In 2008, the Australian Government asked the Productivity Commission to undertake a public enquiry into paid maternity, paternity and parental leave. The enquiry concentrated on support for parents of newborn children up to the age of two years.

The Commission delivered its draft findings in September 2008. The introduction of a taxpayer-funded paid parental leave scheme was proposed. The scheme would:

○ provide paid postnatal leave for a total of 18 weeks that can be shared by eligible parents, with an additional two weeks of paternity leave reserved for the father (or same sex partner)

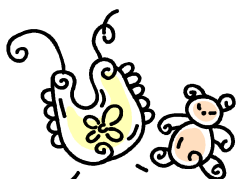
○ provide the adult minimum wage (currently \$543.78) for each week of leave for most eligible employees, with benefits subject to normal taxation.

Following the delivery of the draft findings, the Commission began a period of consultation before submitting its final report to the Australian Government which is due in late February 2009.

There has been some speculation that federally funded paid maternity leave may be a victim of the global financial crisis. Although some employers have their own schemes, most do not, so a delay in implementation, or a decision not to introduce a federally funded scheme at all, would impact on most working parents of children under 2 years of age.

The Minister for Employment, Education and Workplace Relations, Julia Gillard, has advised that the Government would wait to see the final report before deciding whether a parental leave scheme would be in the budget.

At present, staff employed under the Child Care (SA) Award or the NAPSA derived from the Child Care (SA) Award may be entitled to up to 52 weeks unpaid maternity leave.



## **Changes to WorkCover effective now**

There have been some significant changes to WorkCover, effective from 1st January this year. The WorkCover Corporation has published a useful guide to the changes called *The WorkCover Scheme - a guide to the January 2009 changes*. This is available from the website, [www.workcover.com.au](http://www.workcover.com.au). It is important that all employers are familiar with new requirements and that the relevant information is passed to employees.

The key changes that started on 1 January 2009 are:

- The introduction of 'rehabilitation and return to work coordinators' to focus and coordinate return to work efforts in workplaces with 30 or more workers
- A streamlined dispute resolution structure
- The introduction of provisional liability – a process which allows for weekly compensation payments and medical expenses to start within seven days
- An early reporting reward for employers who report a claim within two business days with a waiver of the first two weeks of wage payments.

## **Grants resource available free online**

**Grants in Australia; management and accountability made easy for not-for-profit organisations**

A straightforward guide for not-for-profit bodies to manage grants and satisfy accountability requirements published in 2007 by CPA Australia. Winning grants is one thing, but sometimes managing the accountability requirements can be a challenge for services. This publication includes a series of helpful checklists which organisations can use to assess whether they are satisfying the requirements (bearing in mind that this is a 2007 publication and you should always check with bodies such as the ATO for information about their current requirements). It can be downloaded from [www.cpaaustralia.com.au](http://www.cpaaustralia.com.au) > [Employment Sectors](#) > [Not-For-Profit](#) >



## Kay says "Goodbye"

Yes this time it is official, Kay Thomas is giving up regular paid employment. She will leave Network SA on the 26<sup>th</sup> February after 4 years with the agency and some 19 years service to the OSHC sector both in SA and nationally. In Kay's words - *"I am not ready to stop yet and so I will transfer my time to the OSHC Association of SA – back to where it all started"*.

Since June 1990, OSHC has been a major part of Kay's life. *"OSHC has created many wonderful opportunities for me and enabled me to meet some truly beautiful people, many of whom have become dear and special friends"*

Kay has many great stories to tell about successes and personal development of those she has worked with. Inevitably there a few sad and negative tales too but Kay has not dwelt on these, rather she has become more determined to support those who she believes are not treated fairly and justly.

*"This fight more than anything is what has held me in the sector for so long."*

Kay's OSHC journey began in June 1990 at St Augustine's School in Salisbury where a dynamic school principal took a step in faith to open an OSHC service. This initiative was innovative because there was no support for families using care and the school board advanced a 6 month loan of \$3000 to see if it would work. It did. Many people recall Kay's personal introduction in various forums *"I'm Kay Thomas and I'm unfunded!"*

*"Most of the people I knew at St Augustine's then have moved to other lives but my gratitude remains"*.

Kay spent more than 10 years in DECS, mostly in the OSHC team but that work took Kay to different office locations and with several different projects in that period, Kay really got to know most OSHC services in SA.

*"It is often the case that I know more of the history of a service than the people who work there."*

*"Thank you to those in DECS who shared my journey. Thank you to those who nurtured me and gave encouragement."*

Kay always enjoyed a good relationship with the Commonwealth staff with oversight of OSHC matters and she undertook a couple of short term projects with that team. The passing years have seen many personnel changes there too. *"I will always be grateful for the opportunities afforded to me by Commonwealth staff"*.

For Kay, Network SA created a setting for her to continue her OSHC work as well as try some new ventures.

*"I am very grateful to the Management at Network SA for my time there. They put up with me as I metamorphosed into a very grumpy old woman"*.

There is no doubt that Kay is leaving Network with the same passion for OSHC that she developed at St Augustine's. She still has a hard nosed commitment to try and make it better for it better for all OSHC stakeholders. In Kay's own words *"If I am needed, I will help!"*

Kay can be contacted through the OSHC Association – 0411 558 050.

We, Kay's colleagues and friends at Network SA, will miss her passion and commitment and sometimes outrageous comments! Although her contract has been completed, we hope that Kay will continue to be available for casual work with our agency as one of our presenters of management committee orientations in community based long day care. *"It's not goodbye yet!"*



# OSHC: A CHILD'S PLAY SPACE

*What is the role of play in children's development?*

*How can OSHC staff plan for play?*

*How do staff interactions with children and the environment impact on children's play?*

**9.30 am to 2.00pm Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March**

at the Education Development Centre, 16 Milner Street, Hindmarsh

To meet the needs of children in OSHC, services should focus on play and its importance in achieving quality outcomes for children.

David Badenoch, Coordinator of Physical Education, Sport and Play Studies at the University of South Australia will present a 4 hour session that covers

***The nature and forms of play***, an interactive workshop which will draw on relevant play theory and your own experience to answer common questions about play;

and

***Play, Education and the OSHC program*** – this session will draw on a combination of theory, research and the participant's knowledge and experience to explore the role and significance of play in the educational process and programs for children.

Cost: \$44 (includes lunch).

***This is a joint venture between the DECS OSHC Team  
and Network SA***

Bookings essential. Spaces are limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

A Registration Form is enclosed in this newsletter.

Enquiries: Call Network SA on 8445 8128.



## Animal Ethics Committee

### Department of Education and Children's Services

- Do you have or are you intending to have, on site, any animals for observation or other purposes?
- Do you borrow animals from the Nature Education Centre?

If the answer is yes to either of these questions then you need to meet the requirements under the Department of Education and Children's Services Animal Ethics Committee. (AEC)

Keeping animals has the potential to enrich the program and increase children's understandings of creatures and their care but requires knowledge and a commitment from staff and the appointment of an Animal Ethics Focus Person (AEFP).

The DECS Animal Ethics Committee is responsible to the Department for Environment and Heritage and exists to ensure that schools, pre schools and long day care centres who wish to keep animals on site do so in ways that ensure the health and well being of the animals at all times. Sites should consider the ethical aspects of keeping animals, the welfare issues for each animal and what educational value keeping animals provide.

The Animal Ethics Committee is comprised of DECS representatives, vets, animal welfare people, agricultural teachers and people with responsibilities for caring for animals. It meets 4 times a year to consider:

- Applications for approval
- Compliance with the Australian Code of Practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes – 7<sup>th</sup> Edition 2004
- Implementation of the ACTS in sites
- Planning and conducting site inspections
- Providing support and advice to sites and
- Maintaining a web site

### What do you need to do to comply?

- Applications are required for all living creatures.
- Complete an *Application Form to Keep Animals on Site* including details of all the animals you intend to have or currently have on site. We recommend you keep a copy of the Application in your record file. Applications are required before you obtain the animal but if you have any now on your site for which you do not have an approval please forward an application as soon as possible. An application is also required each time you borrow an animal from the Nature Education Centre. Forms are available from [www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics)
- Ensure you receive an approval letter and an approval number which will be for 1-3 years, relating to the animals you intend to keep (or already have). We recommend you keep a copy of the approval in your record file.

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- Obtain and read the DECS Code of Practice for the use and care of animals in schools and early childhood centres and keep it in your record file. This can be located at [www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics)
- Ensure you have appropriate secure housing for each animal.
- Obtain the animal from a reputable source.
- Monitor and record the cleaning, feeding and health of each animal and retain these records. Forms are available from [www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics)
- Report to the AEC any Illness/injury, death or unexpected incident during the approval period. Forms are available from [www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics)
- Report to the AEC any changes to the AEFP that occur during the approval period. Forms are available from [www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics)
- Assist a DECS AEC representative through well kept records and providing time for the AEFP to meet to discuss the wellbeing of the animals during a site visit.
- Ensure that weekend, holiday periods provide ongoing care for the animals. Forms are available from [www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/animalethics)
- Have some back up plans for situations such as power failures (heating, cooling, lighting, pumps), the need to retire the animal from the site, what to do with any excess breeding animals etc

If you have any questions or concerns please contact:

Animal Ethics Committee

Level 6 , 31 Flinders Street

Adelaide

Ph: 08 8207-1806

Fax: 08 8226-0525

Email: [ucinek.anna@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:ucinek.anna@saugov.sa.gov.au)



## Exciting news for the OSHC sector – research projects

Currently the ground work is well under way for 2 separate research projects that can only be beneficial for OSHC and its stakeholders in SA.

It has long been acknowledged that there is serious lack of relevant and up to date findings about the many facets of care for school age children in Australia and now there are two projects being proposed in SA. This is very exciting news.

In the first instance, Mandy Richardson from St Pius X OSHC has been accepted to undertake research into **Emotional Education: Can it be caught and taught in OSHC programs?** She is studying at the University of South Australia.

There has also been a pilot program funded through the Psychology Faculty at Adelaide University - **Child care and the psychological wellbeing of employed parents of children aged 5-7 years.** This pilot will test the feasibility of proceeding to undertake a full research project into the near future.

In both instances the researchers will be seeking the support of a sample of services to gather data and measure change. Therefore it is possible that your service will be contacted.

The timing is very appropriate for this research to be undertaken: there are changes happening in government policy at both federal and state that will impact on OSHC and simultaneously the OSHC Association is eager to become more relevant and useful to all OSHC stakeholders.

Both these projects have the full endorsement and backing of the OSHC Association SA and the association urges you all to support these projects. The ultimate findings will produce a sound platform that can be used to make improvements in the way OSHC is delivered, improvements that will result in better outcomes for all the key stakeholders, children, families and staff. Feel free to contact the Association if you have further questions.

Please give some thought to how your service can be part of the exciting changes that are happening either by participation in the research or active membership of the Association or maybe both.

**Kay Thomas**  
**Network SA**

# network sa

Network SA Resource, Advisory & Management Services Inc. (Network SA) is a non-profit community organisation providing information, support, resources and training to the children's services sector in South Australia.



ARMSU

ARMSU is a specialist unit within Network SA. ARMSU operates SA's Indigenous Professional Support Unit ([www.ipsusa.org.au](http://www.ipsusa.org.au)), funded through the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

Services provided to the children's services sector by Network SA & ARMSU include:

- Advice and support for Directors, managers, office staff, committee members, operators and other people responsible for effective management of child care and OSHC services
- Training and professional development services
- Specialist advice, support and training for Aboriginal services
- Aboriginal cultural awareness activities for children, and training for staff teams
- Indigenous inclusion support

From 2009 The Networker will be published quarterly in March, June, September and December. Closing dates for each edition are 15th February, 15th May, 15th August and 15th November. Contributions are welcome. Contact the editor Maureen McGuire.

This newsletter has been supported by funding from the Australian Government's Inclusion and Professional Support Program initiative.

Network SA & ARMSU are located in Building 2 at The Parks Community Centre, Angle Park. We acknowledge the Kaurna people as the traditional owners of this land. We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region.

Mailing address: PO Box 2440 Regency Park SA 5942  
Phone 08 8445 8128; Fax 08 8268 8065

**The material contained in this publication is of a general nature only and not intended to be advice on any particular matter.**

**Please share this newsletter with others in your service:**

- Director / Assistant Director**
- Staff**
- Administration**
- Committee members**
- Principal**
- Line Manager**
- Owner**



## Sector Association Meetings

Child Care in South Australia is supported by professional associations. Services are urged to support associations relevant to their service type by taking out memberships and encouraging staff attendance at meetings.

Meeting times are as follows:

### **ACCSSA (Australian Community Children's Services)** formerly NACBCS.

The committee of ACCSSA meets the 1st Tuesday of the month (beginning in February) at 9.30am at the Gowrie Training Centre.

### **The OSHC Association (SA) Inc.**

Meeting dates for 2009 are to be advised in the February Networker. For further information contact

0411 558 050.

### **Care-providers of South Australia (COSA)** (the peak group for Family Day Care Providers in SA).

All financial members are welcome to attend meetings, scheduled for 7.30pm on 9th & 23rd February, 23rd March, 27th April, 22nd June, 27th July, 10th August— AGM.

If you have any further questions please contact Priscilla Schwanz on 8252 0021 or 0423 303 093.

### **Childcare South Australia**

For information contact 0407 580 645

### **Community Children's Centres SA (CCCSA)**

No meetings in January or December. **2009 meeting dates** are 17th February, 17th March, 21st April, 19th May, 16th June, 21st July, 18th August, 15th September (A.G.M.), 20th October and 17th November (luncheon).