

# playground

March 2008



## *Crikey! A reptile encounter*

On January 21, Balarang joined Unanderra OSHC to welcome guests of a different kind to their school holidays - reptiles!

A turtle, blue tongue lizard, baby crocodile and olive python entered the centre escorted by reptile expert Mark Richmond from research and conservation group *Crocodile Encounters*.

Everyone, including a couple of very enthusiastic staff, had a chance to hold the creatures they'd learnt about, before ending the session with a reptile quiz.



*Young fan, Caleb, excited to get his hands on an olive python!*

## *TAFE Students win prestigious awards*

Illawarra Children's Services has awarded two \$1500 scholarships to outstanding students at TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute.

The winners are Katherine Ashelford and Kylie Graham who are guaranteed permanent local employment along with the cash awards.

CEO, Bill Feld, said that the organisation gave the scholarships to two outstanding achievers who have a real passion for early childhood education.



*(From left) Scholarship winners Katherine Ashelford and Kylie Graham with (TAFE Head Teachers) Melinda Little and Jenny Hopkins of TAFE Illawarra and Illawarra Children's Services CEO Bill Feld*

## *From the CEO's desk...*

Welcome to the March issue of *Playground*!

Illawarra Children's Services operates many centres, each with a unique local identity, expressed through each centre's philosophy and goals.

Whether sharing your thoughts at pick-up time or participating in your centre's formal planning, have your say! It's your community - your centre.

Meanwhile, we've developed an exciting new program of holiday experiences in music, art, dance and circus skills.

Some sessions feature in our regular school holiday programs, with others presented as half or full day holiday clinics.

Visit our website at [www.ics.org.au/oshc](http://www.ics.org.au/oshc) for details.

We are very pleased to present the new look *Playground*, and look forward to a great year for every child in our care!

*Bill Feld*  
CEO  
Illawarra Children's Services



**Illawarra  
Children's Services**

*Staff Profile* - Pam Booth, Director at Fairy Meadow Outside School Hours Care



*How long have you been at the centre?* 9 months.

*What's the best thing about your job?* Meeting families from my local community.

*Worst thing about the job?*  
Too much paper work.

*If you weren't in child care, what would you be?*  
A counsellor.

*Your favourite film?*  
*The Notebook.*

*I'm passionate about...*  
The welfare of children.

*Three words that describe me...*  
Compassionate, dedicated, family.



*Paris and Jason with Pam Booth at Fairy Meadow OSHC*

*Be brave and shave... Bill!*

Over three days, it is expected that more than 100,000 Australians will shave or colour their hair to raise funds for the Leukaemia Foundation.

With a brave smile, CEO Bill Feld has agreed to participate this year in the foundation's national fundraising event, the World's Greatest Shave.

Funds will go toward vital research into treatments and improving the quality of life for leukaemia patients.

If you would like to sponsor Bill's shave for a cure on Thursday 13 March, contact Emma at [emma.kucelj@ics.org.au](mailto:emma.kucelj@ics.org.au). Don't forget to check out Bill's new look in Playground's June edition!



*CEO Bill Feld before the big shave*



For more information about the Leukaemia Foundation and the World's Greatest Shave, visit [www.worldsgreatestshave.com](http://www.worldsgreatestshave.com).

*Sand Meets Sea*

Children from Kiama Downs Children's Centre linked with preschool children at the Al Jazeera Academy in Qatar via a video call last month.

Centre director Kate McCallum said that the aim is to provide children with an opportunity to share information about the similarities and differences of growing up in Australia and the Middle East.

"The event launched the beginning of a communication project to develop an ongoing relationship through children's work, photos, letters and emails."

Tiziana Lucato, Children's Services Manager at Illawarra Children's Services, has worked and taught in Qatar for the past five years. The connection was made possible with help from Tiziana's contacts and colleagues at Al Jazeera Academy.

## A day in the life of an OSHC kid

### Before School Care

7.00am: A healthy breakfast of cereal, toast, fruit and juice

7.30am: We choose from our favourite playtime activities including art experiences, outdoor play, construction, music or dance

8.30am: We're escorted to the bus so we get to school on time!

### School

9.00am-3.00pm: Books, school stuff and playground

Taylah (below) and Hayden (right), active at Northern Suburbs After School Care



Photo by Janine Kaye



Photo by Janine Kaye

### After School Care

3.00pm: The bus and OSHC staff pick us up from the front of our school

3.15pm: We arrive back at the centre ready for afternoon tea which is already waiting for us!

3.45pm: We prepare for our Active After School Communities program so we can play the sports we like with our new equipment

5.00pm: We end the day with indoor activities, before our parents come and get us, ready for another day of OSHC!

## Surf hero shares his experiences

2008 McDonald's Junior Life Saver of the Year, Beau Wheeler visited Fairy Meadow OSHC on February 11 to share his surf life saving experiences.

Beau, age 13, spoke to the children not only about his achievements, but also about the importance of being safe in the water.

The young achiever's love and enthusiasm for the surf was made clear as he was bombarded with questions about his experience in surf rescue.

Beau will also be visiting Balarang OSHC and Bulli Children's Centre in coming weeks.



## Run away to the circus!

Illawarra Children's Services, in partnership with Circus Monoxide's Half High Circus, presents the Half High Circus Skills Day, a school holiday clinic for ages 5-12!

The Circus Skills Day will be held on Thursday 17 April from 10am-3pm, at Circus Monoxide's Bellambi studio, with groups for children 5-8 and 8-12 years. The cost is \$45.

To book your place, phone Louise on 4283 9950 or email [louise.williams@ics.org.au](mailto:louise.williams@ics.org.au).

For more information on other school holiday programs, visit [www.ics.org.au/oshc](http://www.ics.org.au/oshc).

## Possum Magic

Illawarra Children's Services, with the help of the Merrigong Theatre company, is organising a group visit to see *Possum Magic - The Musical* on stage on Sunday 20 July in Wollongong at 10.30am.

We have front row seats, so come and join us for this beautiful stage production aimed at children 3-8 years.

Tickets are \$10 (discounted from \$15) for all Illawarra Children's Services families and staff. To book your place, phone Jennine on 4283 9913 or email [jennine.primmer@ics.org.au](mailto:jennine.primmer@ics.org.au).



## *Teachers Recognised for World Teachers Day*

Three of our early childhood teachers have received Peer Awards as part of this year's World Teachers Day celebrations.

The South Coast/Illawarra branch of the Australian College of Educators presented the awards to Fiona Archer (Supported Playgroups), Gail Crawley (Bellambi Point Preschool) and Jacqueline Hall (Dapto Children's Centre).

Special congratulations go to Fiona, Gail and Jacqueline as the only teachers from the early childhood sector (0-5 years) to receive awards in the Illawarra region this year.

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## *DRB Finance connects with community-based child care*

Developed for Illawarra Children's Services, the DRB Finance Referral Program is winning the support of child care centres across the Illawarra.

Families simply nominate the centre of their choice to receive a 'thank you' donation when choosing a mortgage product through any of DRB Finance's 30 banks and credit providers.

Child care centres are not the only ones to benefit from the Referral program, with families receiving a \$200 gift voucher from Freedom Furniture in return for their participation.

Presenting a donation to Bulli Children's Centre, DRB Finance's Barry Watson thanked local families for their interest in the program.

"We are very proud to support Illawarra Children's Services and the many families who choose community based care and education for their children, he said.

Enquiries can be directed to centre directors, or Barry Watson at DRB Finance on 4228 1888.

The \$200 Freedom Furniture gift voucher offer is valid until 30 June 2008.



*DRB Finance's Barry Watson presents a \$200 cheque to Bulli Children's Centre director Karen Tonge*

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Submissions or suggestions for future issues of Playground are welcome and encouraged!

*Deadline for the June 2008 edition is May 9*

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**Illawarra  
Children's Services**