

playground

September 2008

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Children trek to China

Olympic fever hit Northern Suburbs and Albion Park in August inspiring children to jump, skip, hop, walk and run all the way to China.

As part of the journey to Beijing campaign, the Australian Sports Commission provided all child participants with a pedometer so they could tally their steps and 'walk' to Beijing.

Northern Suburbs OSHC Director Natalie Garcia said, "It's wonderful that we can take a world event like the Olympics and use it to encourage fair play, teamwork and a healthy lifestyle".



Olympic fans Erin, Jazzlin and Madeline from NSOSHC

Joshua's coup unseats CEO

After insisting for weeks that they go on a big bus ride, pint-sized travellers from Bulli Children's Centre ventured south to Corrimal.

Striding boldly into central office, they marched to the Board Room demanding a pay rise for all staff and then took over the CEO's office.

The takeover was nearly complete when the children spied the picnic in the training room. The mood settled immediately and industrial anarchy was averted.

Bulli Director, Karen Tonge confirmed plans for an early return visit after such a great day.

Central office staff can't wait for the children to return, if only to see the managers tested again by our little leaders of the future.



Joshua filling in for CEO Bill Feld

From the CEO's desk...

As I travel throughout the region, I am constantly amazed by the wonderful work of our staff and our need to support the teachers and carers of the future.

With this in mind, Illawarra Children's Services recently awarded scholarships to outstanding final year students, Melissa Buchanan from the University of Wollongong and Katie Miller and Aimee Tallent from TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute.

Each of our worthy winners has received financial support for their final year of study and guaranteed permanent employment as teachers or carers.

I'm also pleased to announce that last year's scholars are now permanent team members - Kate Ashelford at Corrimal and Kylie Graham at Cobblers Hill.

Congratulations to all (and of course to our fantastic trainees - story page 2).

CEO
Bill Feld



Illawarra
Children's Services

Children's Centres jump for health

Barrack Heights and Dapto Children's Centres are exploring children's participation in physical activity in partnership with the University of Wollongong.



The University's *Jump Start Program* has become a valuable and enjoyable experience for both children and staff.

Barrack Heights Director, Rebecca Curry says the children have developed strong gross motor skills and new friendships along the way.

Barrack Heights preschoolers getting active



Stockland Corrimal donates Talk 'n' Play space to families

An initiative of the Children's Services as Community Hubs project, *Talk 'n' Play* opened at Stockland in August with a live *i98FM* broadcast.

The new shopfront assists busy families in the 2518 postcode area with information and access to parenting courses, playgroups, child care, health services and more.

The shopfront is offered free as a community service by Stockland, and Illawarra Children's Services staff attend throughout the week to chat with families and answer questions.

For more information contact Paula on 4283 9949.



Children soak up the atmosphere at the opening of Talk 'n' Play



Wollongong TAFE Trainee Coordinator Sam Stewart (far left) and HR Coordinator Sam Bowden (far right) with the graduates

Trainees graduate with flying colours

Eleven Illawarra Children's Services trainees celebrated their graduation recently at central office. The graduating trainees all attained a Certificate III in Children's Services, combining on-the-job experience with study at TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute.

Neil Arnold, HR Manager said that all children should have access to high quality care and the traineeship program recognises the importance of experienced and qualified staff in achieving this goal.

Children shimmer and shake at Unanderra OSHC

The children at Unanderra OSHC couldn't stop shimmer-dancing, scarf twirling and bellyjazzing during the last school holidays.

Teacher from *Jewels of the Harem Belly Dance Studio*, Jaqueline and her two young students took the class on an Egyptian journey using movement and sound.

Service Director Lorraine Simmons said the children were mesmerized by the beautiful costumes and loved playing the exotic instruments.



Tahlia from UOSHC showing off her graceful steps

Exciting new music program developed with Wollongong Conservatorium of Music

Illawarra Children's Services and the Wollongong Conservatorium of Music have developed an exciting new music program for children.

Development Manager Jennine Primmer said, "We want to take the Conservatorium of Music's expertise to the centres, to model inspiring music education to our staff and allow the children a diverse musical experience."



CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC
WOLLONGONG

Already trialled at Port Kembla Preschool and Barrack Heights Children's Centre, the project is destined for implementation across the Illawarra.

Miniature steam train ride for young and young at heart

A huge interest in trains by the children at Cobbler's Hill Children's Centre culminated in a recent trip to *Illawarra Live Steamers*.

Held on a weekend to allow everyone to attend, one parent reflected on the success of the day, also writing to central office:

"I have always believed that the staff at Cobbler's Hill provide a terrific environment for the children and families that attend the centre... They are a credit to all!"



October Circus Clinic

Thursday 2 October 2008
10am-3pm @ Circus Monoxide
Ages: 5-8 and 8-12yrs
(BYO lunch)

For more info phone 4283 9900
or visit www.ics.org.au/oshc.

Billy gets his groove on at Warrawong

The Transition to School Program helps parents give their children the very best start in life and the Westfield Warrawong Expo did just that.

Families had the chance to meet teachers and gather information from local schools and health professionals.

School starter packs were a hit with parents while arty activities kept the little ones engaged. The crowd went wild when mascot, Billy Backpack performed his new song on centre stage.

Creativity 0-12 years

The Illawarra Children's Services Creativity Conference 0-12 years is scheduled for November 6 & 7. Check our website for details.

Staff profile - Grant Peters Koonawarra Children's Centre

What made you become interested in childcare?
I was always being told I was good with kids. I still am just a big kid.

What's the best thing about your job?
Being able to re-live my childhood all over again.

If you weren't an early childhood educator what would you be?
A surf photographer.

You're favourite film?
Baraka. Intense cinematography of different cultures and ways of living around the world. Amazing.



Passionate about...
Body boarding, chasing waves up and down the coast and around the world, travelling, photography and my girl Amy.

Three words that describe you...
Creative, random, eclectic.

Stewart Street scores!

Wollongong Wolves Players Alfredo and Balla had to step up on their team skills when they made their way to Stewart Street Children's House in August.

Dressed in their Olympic outfits, the children learned to dribble, juggle and shoot with the accomplished football players. The day also involved egg and spoon racing before the preschoolers beat the staff at a game of tug-of-war.



A quick warm-up with Alfredo...



...before enjoying a game of tug-of-war!

For more stories visit the Illawarra Children's Services website at www.ics.org.au

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

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