

Preschool Field Officer Service Newsletter Term One 2019

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AREA LEADER UPDATE

Welcome back to 2019; it is hard to believe that term 1 is almost over!

The PSFO Team have implemented a few temporary changes to staffing this term. Narelle Keleher is currently leading the Family Services Team to cover Leonie Quinn who is recovering from an injury and returning to work. The rest of the PSFO Team have all taken on extra days to cover Narelle's duties, with myself (Lisa Blake) taking on the majority of Narelle's role.



We are pleased to share that we have had a steady influx of Requests for Support so far this term; 74 new requests have come through, which encompass a mixture of 4yo, 3yo and Group requests. To manage the current volume of requests, we have commenced implementing the Active Hold service - phone/email support whilst you wait for PSFO allocation. Please remember to write your Planning times on your Requests for Support so a PSFO can contact you and provide Active Hold Support.

In February, the PSFO Team commenced 'Meet N Greet' visits to services (eg, Long Day care centres). These visits were a great opportunity to reconnect and meet with existing and new educators and inform services about what we can offer. Responding to Requests for Support are our priority, so if we haven't made it out to your centre for a Meet N Greet visit yet, please be reassured that we will arrange it soon.

In mid March we ran the first of our PSFO facilitated workshops – 'Accessing Specialist Support in Early Childhood.' The evening was well attended and positive feedback was received. Please look out for more workshops throughout the year on the Wyndham Child and Family Services Professional Development calendar which was emailed out this month – please contact us if you didn't receive a copy.

If you have any queries about how you can access specialist support for a child in your group, please refer to the PSFO Guide to Supporting Children with Additional Needs. There is a vast array of information in the guide, including how to refer to the new NDIS Early Intervention system (pg10), Drummond Street Services (pg40) that can support child anxiety and challenging behaviours, plus KU VIA inclusion support for Long Day Care Centres (pg59). If you can't find the answers you are seeking from the PSFO Guide, please phone the PSFO Service for a chat.

Have a safe and enjoyable Easter break,

Lisa Blake, Acting PSFO Area Leader



Early ABLES

Early ABLES is an online assessment for learning tool that helps early childhood educators develop and provide a more personalised learning experience for children aged two to five years with disabilities or developmental delay, within the context of the early childhood education and care (ECEC) setting. It is used by early childhood educators in consultation with parents and professionals and has been designed by the Department of Education.

Early ABLES can support an educator by

- Assessing the child's progress in learning
- Developing appropriate learning goals
- Monitoring the child's progress along a likely progression of learning
- Suggesting how to implement teaching and learning goals and cycles



More information can be found on the DET website via the following link:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/profdev/Pages/disabilitytraining.aspx>

Wedge Seats aka Move & Sit Cushions



If you have any of these just sat on your shelves not being used, we would be really appreciative if you could return them to us.

If you want to purchase your own, then you can get the new style ones (with a bicycle pump) from here:

<https://sensorytools.net/search?type=product&q=cushions>

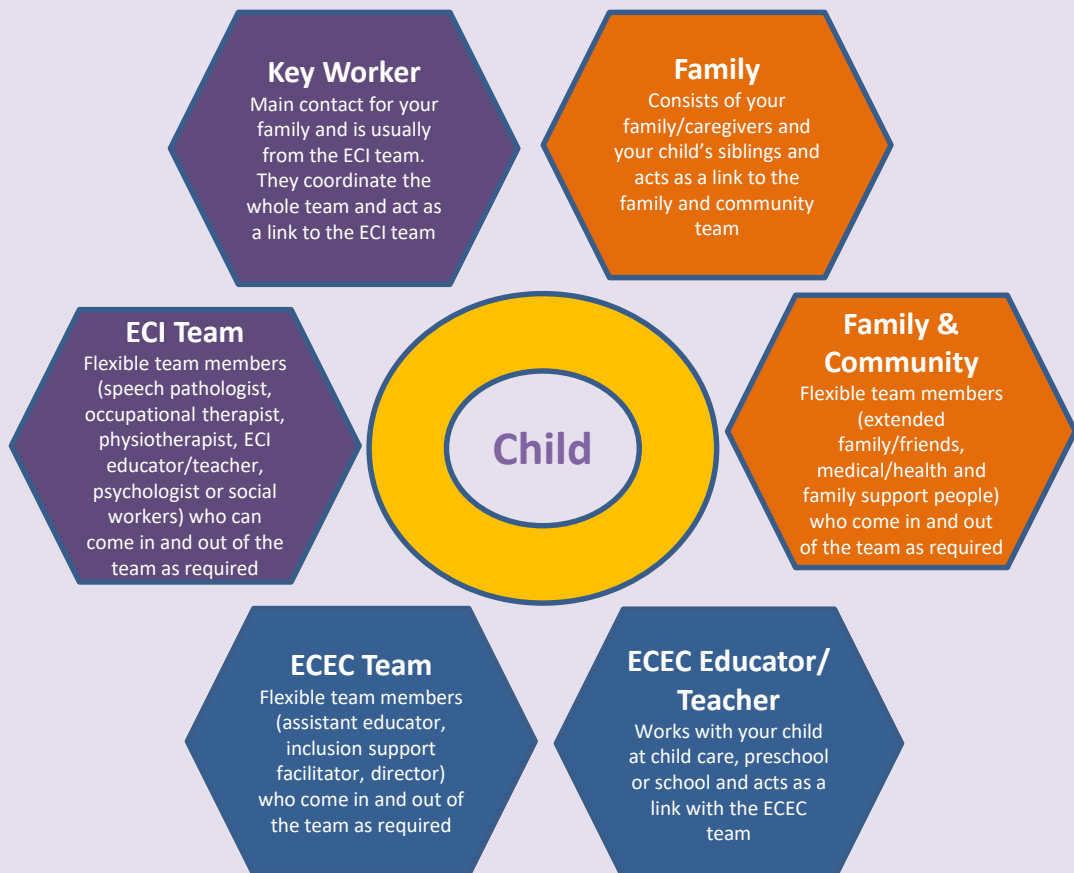
OR, if you want to purchase new plugs for the old style cushions, then you can get them from here:

<https://sistersensory.com.au/product/move-n-sit-cushion-2/>

TOP TIPS TO GET TO KNOW THE TEAM AROUND YOUR CHILD

(in your Early Learning programme).....

- ❖ Build positive relationship with the child and family/carers...What do you need to know about the child to support their participation and inclusion in your programme?
- ❖ Transitions and orientations – how can you support the child’s successful start in your programme through opportunity for ‘practice’ in your service?
- ❖ How do you find out about other supports in place for the child? Who else is involved? Allied Health/Therapy supports?
- ❖ Contact any other services that are involved with the child’s support. The child’s early learning programme is an important part of the team – children’s learning happens when consistency and all involved work together.
- ❖ What support strategies and routines are happening in the home? Can some of these strategies and routines be implemented within the ELC?
- ❖ Who is the child’s key worker? Who/What/Where are the child’s therapy supports?
- ❖ What other community supports is the child accessing eg: swimming lessons, dance class. How can these community supports be included within the programme to support the child’s learning?



Autism : Understanding Feelings and Emotions

“One minute Bailey’s OK, the next minute he’s crying and having a big emotional outburst.”

Why does this happen?

- Children with autism become more easily frustrated than other children. Their inability to express feelings, understand social situations and process sensory information can lead to some intense emotional outbursts.
- Children with autism have limited social awareness. In most typically developing children this awareness inhibits their behaviour. Children with autism lack this constraint, so they may have frequent emotional outbursts and display inappropriate behaviour.
- Children with autism seem to have fluctuating mood swings; these may be associated with their obsessive thoughts or reactions to their environment.
- Children with autism have difficulty understanding and accurately interpreting the feelings and emotions of others. They may also struggle to understand their own feelings.
- Children with autism have less ability to describe and communicate what they are feeling. Complex emotions and frustration are difficult for children with autism to verbalise, resulting in a higher likelihood of becoming over emotional or lashing out.
- Children with autism will become more emotional when overtired and out of routine.

What you can do?

- Help the child understand emotions by interpreting how they feel and giving that feeling a label. In time, the child will learn to recognise emotions and understand the feelings that lead to each emotion.
- Encourage the child to tell you and others how they are feeling.
- Make sure the child knows how to seek help and who to turn to when feeling overloaded.
- Using role play, teach the child how to act in certain situations, such as an appropriate way in which to say ‘leave me alone’, and how to react if the child doesn’t get what they want.
- Cut photos from magazines to make a poster that displays a variety of emotions, or use photographs of the child.
- Monitor the child’s emotional state and check whether their mood coincides with any environmental change, such as bright light or background noise.
- Structured routine is important both at home and at kinder/playgroup/daycare. Have consistent meal times and bed times.
- Social stories can support learning about feelings, the feelings of others and about appropriate behaviour when angry, sad or upset.

