



# PERIWINKLE PRESCHOOL – NEWSLETTER –

1st JULY, 2012

## A Word From Ellon ...

As term two draws to a close, I feel gratitude and appreciation to have the opportunity to spend my days at Periwinkle with such an amazing, inspiring group of learners. As staff we have watched as the children have made Periwinkle their space. Each day, as they become more familiar and confident, we observe inspirational learning.

I think the winter spiral last Tuesday night was an example of how beautifully each child is unfolding and taking an active role in their learning process. It was special to be able to share that evening with you, and I am always amazed how each child—in their own unique way—experiences the spiral with awe, wonder and reverence. What extraordinary memories are being created for the children, as well as ourselves.

My sincere thanks to all our parents who were able to attend the parent night. It was fabulous to see so many there. These nights are very much two-fold, and a lot of learning occurs through us having the opportunity to share with each other. I am very open to hear from you if there are any particular topics you would like to focus on in these evening.

Our time with Christine is very quickly coming to an end. It has been a very positive experience to have Christine with us for the year and I can't believe it is nearly over. Christine has shared with the staff that it has been a very important year of her life and she is absolutely thrilled she has had the opportunity to be part of our community. Christine is very much part of our team and we will miss her.

I would like to extend my appreciation and thanks to all the families who have cared for Christine, all those on the management committee who made her dream possible, and lastly but not least a heart felt thank you to Christine, who has given so generously of her time—she has always been open to learn and meet new challenges. At all times, Christine has been an outstanding ambassador for her generation.

These holidays I am off to Alice Springs for the Anthroposophical Conference, and will also be spending a weekend at Uluru (Ayers Rock). Although I grew up in the outback of NSW, I have never been to the centre so I am very much looking forward to the experience. I wish you all a very happy and restful winter holiday and we look forward to the return of sunny weather.

Look forward to seeing you all next term.

Regards, Ellon

## The Parents Curriculum Night

### 2012 Parent Management Committee

Abigail Sawyer	President
Jen Henderson	Secretary
Gerald Anderson	Treasurer
Members:	
Kristie Monson	Cyndi Harris
Glen Walmsley	Daniel Harris
Amber Greene	Jackie Smith
Bec Hagan	Lyn Brechbuhler

Sincere apologies to Lyn for omitting to include her name in last term's newsletter.

"In the Head the power of Faith  
In the Heart the might of Love  
In the full human-being all-sustaining Hope"  
Rudolf Steiner.

## Tuesday 12th June, 2012

### 'The Art of Storytelling'

The rich timbre of the voice continued to weave the simple narrative of the timeless story, letting each listener draw pictures in their own mind, in their own time. Although the story was known and familiar to most of us listening, each heard the story afresh—different, yet the same and shared.

Earlier in the evening upon arriving, I'd walked in to find the scene in that gentle warm room so wonderfully familiar, while strangely different. The twenty or so children who usually sat on those small wooden chairs that circled the big carpet, had been replaced with parents. These parents were now just settling in, ready to listen, learn and share. I took my place in the ring, catching the last of the notices and announcements, before the main business of the night began.

The lights dimmed. We were told that we would have an opportunity to experience the magic of story, as our children do daily at Periwinkle, for ourselves. Afterwards, we would be gently encouraged to share our thoughts and feelings about this experience.

With a song to welcome it, a candle's flame heralded the coming story. Then a few notes on the lyre drew our attention inward, allowing us to open our ears and hush our minds. As Ellon began to speak in an even and rich tone, each of us journeyed to the land of the *Three Bears*.

With the end of the storytelling, a couple more notes plucked from the lyre brought us back to the room where we sat still and silent. As the light of the candle was extinguished, the teachers led the way in teaching us a gesture to signify the sending of good wishes and love to other children around the world (as our children do each day). Then we broke into smaller groups. After a time of sharing and consideration how this storytelling experience had been for each of us, the groups rejoined the circle.

The lights were once again dimmed and the second experiential activity of the evening began. This time the illumination did not come from a candle's flame, but from a computer screen. The camera zooming in and out—panning across bright bold illustrations—while a somewhat cheesy narration emanated from the speakers. Yes, another version of the same *Three Bears* story, but wildly different. A retelling that so alienated the listeners that Goldilocks had barely broken baby bear's chair before it was agreed by the group to turn it off. (Anyway, we all knew how it ended.)

This experience too, was shared in our small groups. Once again there were common themes, but they were vastly different from the first. The first round of sharing in all the groups had been filled with words like *connection* and *deep memory*, *journey* and *expansion*—they had been rich with image and feeling. In the second round the groups shared new words to express their experience of storytelling through a screen—*jarring*, *suppression*, *lacking interest* and *assault to the senses* were common.



GOLDILOCKS I

Now, it must be said this Youtube version of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* was not a great example of film making art, but even a far more sophisticated production would have failed to meet the mark set by the first storytelling example that evening. The biggest difficulty people faced in the second experience (storytelling through a screen) was that it lacked an opportunity for the listener to take a journey into their own imagination and creativity. For me, the evening and the two experiences of the story were profound and simple.

To summarise, in comparison with the story told through a screen, the evening's oral retelling of the *Three Bears* story gave us, the listeners, a vastly different experience or journey with the story. For it was our own.

Yes, we live in a digital age and no, the screen is not the enemy but a big part of many of our lives. Yet I feel I understand a little better now why Albert Einstein said '*imagination is everything*'. In fact, when asked by the parents of a child prodigy how they might ensure that their child grow up to be an intellectual giant, Einstein answered '*tell him lots of stories*'. The parent protested, '*No, I want him to be brilliant*'. To which the reply came, '*then tell him even more stories*'. As a parent, I too want the best for my child, and feel an obligation to protect and empower their imagination and creativity. We all know this is not an easy task in our instant world.

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One of the fundamentals of Anthroposophical education is to support and nurture imagination and to provide opportunities to explore and expand creativity. This engagement and activation of a child's naturally fertile mind is the foundation for greater future learning, and important life skills such as adaptability and resilience.

It seems to me that Albert Einstein, and the group of brilliant and dedicated Periwinkle women we entrust our children to each day, are on the right track when it comes to developing creativity and imagination as a foundation for lifelong success. You see, more and more of the world's leading educators and developmental researchers are getting up to speed with what Rudolf Steiner himself spoke about, early last century. Contemporary minds like Sir Ken Robinson, (google his TED.com talks on education—they are brilliant) or research the work of Dr Stuart Shanker. Self regulation and the development of self control in young children is his speciality.

All would agree that we now know it is imperative that educators leave space for the development of the child's self, and honour and nurture the development of **both** the intellect and the spirit in children.

One way to gain an understanding of these broad educational objectives is to get along to the next parent night at Periwinkle, and experience it yourself. I sincerely urge you.

Contribution by Bere, Makushla's dad.

*To truly know the world,  
look deeply within your own being;  
to truly know yourself,  
take real interest in the world.*

*Rudolf Steiner  
Verses and Meditations*

## 'Reflections on my year at Periwinkle' by Christine.



Since I just have about one more month left in beautiful Australia, I would like to say thank you to everybody who has supported me on this journey in all different ways.

I am glad I have been part of the Periwinkle community for nearly 1 year. I have got to know the most beautiful families, colleagues and friends. The whole Periwinkle Community is such a nice environment and I am glad that I was part of it for nearly one year.

I have learned a lot about children, myself, Australia's culture, cooking and so much more! I appreciate it all because this is information and learning you really need in life. My parents will be very proud.

I am totally included in all the work, so I'm not just getting said information, but testing myself and learning through it. Also, to hear the children saying that they will miss me when I go back to Germany, that I can stay at their home if I want to, or to hear a couple of parents telling that their children are singing German songs at home—this makes me so happy, and shows me I haven't done a bad job. It makes me sad as well though, since the time is soon over. But of course, life goes on and I'm looking forward to my future.

During the holidays, I always went traveling, so I have seen a lot of Australia. This is great, too!

I hope my time here was also an amazing experience for Periwinkle children, and especially for my three adorable host families and the people with whom I was spending time, because I really loved it and got so much of it.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity. I had the best time. I hope to see you all again someday.

Love, Christine.



# A Visiting Day at Periwinkle

## by Marion, Kaden's mum.

Recently I spent a day at Periwinkle with my son Kaden. The excitement started as soon as the date was set when it was going to happen. Kaden and I were really looking forward for it, and counting down the days. I could tell he felt so loved and so respected that I was interested to go and visit him at his school. I felt that he saw this as evidence that I look up to him, and value what he does at school.

When we went there together, he was simply bursting with pride. He joined in the day with his friends while I sat in a big comfortable chair preparing some wool for the felting. I don't know who enjoyed it more—me or him—but I hadn't felt relaxed and integrated like this for a long time. As I sat in the peaceful healing space of Periwinkle, I felt that time had stopped, and the world outside as well. My utmost desire was to live in a space like this all the time. I think it's a great aim to have for your family life.

For me, it gave me so much pleasure to be surrounded by the natural curiosity of the children and observe their beauty from a distance. I also enjoyed seeing how nurtured and protected they are. I knew then that this is what matters and all my doubts about this style of education have since been erased.

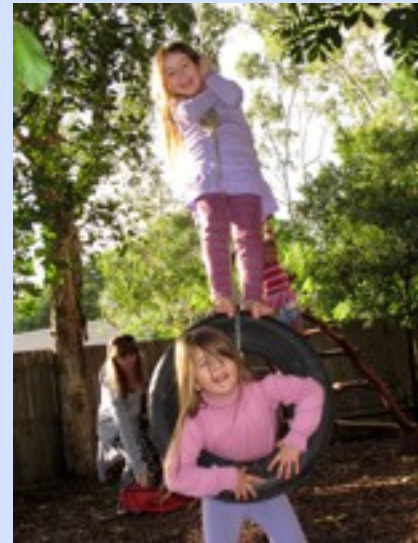
I'll be honest and say that before my visit, I did have the occasional thought that Kaden might benefit from more 'learning experiences'. Now, not only my heart and gut feelings are satisfied, but also my head is crystal clear that there is nothing better we can give to our children in terms of a pre-school experience. I have no doubt that the same will be true of his primary school experience at the Steiner school one day.

So, please come and spent a morning at Periwinkle with your child. You won't regret it.

With love, Marion Ellyard, Kaden's mom.



## Periwinkle Term 2



## Celebrating the Seasons at Periwinkle: The Mid-winter Spiral Walk



Welcomed into the quiet space, the children and their families gazed upon a ferny green spiral, lush and full of life. One by one, the children were invited to take the spiral walk with their parent, or alone if their spirit was brave, and light an apple candle, before replacing it along the path to light the way for the next friend. Slowly but surely, the spiral began to glow. The walking of the spiral is to symbolise the journey to the light, and the inner light that always shines, no matter how dark the world may seem. We, both adults and children, are encouraged to take this seed of imagination as a practical support as we traverse this life of joys and hardship, and take heed of the winter message—that each one of us is given our own light, and we can call upon, and reignite this light whenever we may need.

As someone who has prepared the winter spiral many times, I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to the staff of Periwinkle who so graciously prepared this one for all of us. Amber xx



## A message from Xiola...

Xiola wishes to send her love to all the children, staff and families at Periwinkle. She misses you all, and hopes to be back at Periwinkle really soon. Take care and enjoy this mid-winter season.

## It's time for a new kitchen at Periwinkle!

Some families might not know that this year the Parent Management Committee has a kitchen renovation as a top priority for Periwinkle.

When this issue was brought to the table, we were happily surprised when one of our own parents offered to voluntarily complete the construction of the kitchen. Ian Mathieson, a Periwinkle parent, has been quietly working away, building the frame of the kitchen and the cabinets, ably assisted by his stepfather Rudi, a cabinetmaker of 45 years. Ian himself is an artisan timber furniture maker, and for those of you who might be interested, he has recently begun a new initiative in this work, establishing a factory at Ballina.

While the work is time-consuming, Ian really wants us all to know that he and Rudi have been having a wonderful time creating this kitchen for Periwinkle. The carcass is finished and Ian intends to complete the rest of the groundwork (including cabinets, doors, and benches) for the kitchen so that it can be installed in full in the Spring holiday break.

The staff at Periwinkle have had input into the kitchen design, asking for special storage for the large flour bins and ensuring that the kitchen itself is made from sustainable, low pollutant materials. They are very excited to hear that the bench top is being fashioned from a large slab of ironbark, helping to retain the rustic feel we all love.

Everyone involved with Periwinkle would love to thank both Ian, Rudi and Jen for their glorious contribution to the future of Periwinkle.

## The National Quality Framework, the EYLF (Early Years Learning Framework) and Periwinkle.

This year at Periwinkle the focus is to implement the new Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards. The National Quality Framework applies to most long day care, family day care, preschool (or kindergarten) and outside schools hours care services.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations suggests that 'the National Quality Framework aims to raise quality, and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services through:

- a national legislative framework
- a National Quality Standard
- a national quality rating and assessment process
- a new national body called the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.

The National Quality Framework took effect on 1 January 2012, allowing for key requirements to be phased in over time. Requirements such as qualification, educator-to-child ratios and other key staffing arrangements will be phased in between 2012 and 2020'.

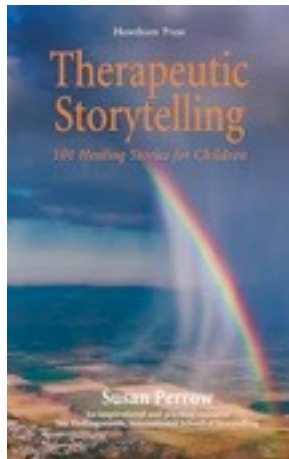
On a centre-based level, the National Quality Framework also includes the EYLF (early years learning framework)—a comprehensive, Australia-wide tool derived from contemporary research into child development and learning, to ensure that all centres provide programming and educational activities that meet the needs of young children in care. There are five learning outcomes:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected to, and contribute to the world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children develop into confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators.

The staff at Periwinkle are confident that the educational practices of Rudolf Steiner education exceed these expectations, and are currently asking the question, 'What do we need to do to meet the standards, and be authentic and responsive to our unique understanding of child development?' All educational facilities will be subject to an accreditation process. We are excited about this opportunity to reflect upon and improve our work, and share with our contemporaries the inner workings of the Periwinkle environment.

You are invited to Susan Perrow's  
Book Launch for her new book,  
"Therapeutic Storytelling:  
101 Healing Stories for Children"  
Lennox Head Library  
and Cultural Centre

27th July, 4.30-6.00 pm.



Local North Coast writer Susan Perrow has recently had a second book published in the U.K. Entitled 'Therapeutic Storytelling: 101 Healing Stories for Children', it will be launched at the Lennox Head Library and Cultural Centre on 27th July (4.30 to 6.00pm) and available from bookshops, on-line stores and as an 'E-Book' from mid 2012.

While her husband was project managing the construction of a safari lodge in East Africa, Susan spent the time living in a tent amidst the African wildlife, finding her time there inspirational and perfect for her writing.

A teacher trainer, mentor, and parent educator, Susan travels internationally, running workshops for various groups - from teachers in Nairobi, parents, teachers and therapists in China and Asia, and Médecins sans Frontières child trauma workers.

Her first book, Healing Stories for Challenging Behaviour, has been in bookshops for nearly three years. Richly illustrated with anecdotes drawn from Susan's workshops and experiences, with eighty (80) behaviour stories included, it provides an excellent tool for parents and teachers who are dealing with the daily challenges presented by children. The new book continues in a similar vein, adding to the resources available in this first book with 101 new stories.

Susan passionately believes that 'stories know the way'! Working with imaginative journeys and the mystery and magic of metaphor, she has developed the art of therapeutic storytelling for children's challenging behaviour and difficult situations. She offers a tried and tested method for creating a unique story for a child. Her treasury of healing stories address a range of issues – from unruly behaviour to grieving, anxiety, lack of confidence, bullying, teasing, nightmares, and much more. The stories also have the potential for nurturing positive values.

Susan recently returned from Switzerland, having addressed an International Teacher's Conference, followed by visits to England, Ireland, Scotland and Croatia where she ran workshops in conjunction with the release of her new book. (NB: I heard from an inside source that the workshops were wonderful! Amber.)

For interested readers, Susan's first book is in our local libraries and is available for sale online - see her website: [www.healingthroughstories.com](http://www.healingthroughstories.com)

To arrange local workshops, Susan can be contacted at [susanperrow@gmail.com](mailto:susanperrow@gmail.com)

### 2012 Term Dates

Term 3: 16 July – 21 September

Term 4: 8 October – 14 December

## Organic Shop



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## Periwinkle Fundraiser "Ebay Garage Sale"

The Periwinkle Management Committee is currently considering a novel idea to help raise funds for the proposed 2013 bathroom and laundry renovation.

It has been brought to our attention that hosting an Ebay Garage Sale may be a manageable, yet profitable way to recycle unwanted goods for the benefit of the preschool. The idea is that families are given the opportunity to donate their goods (pre-loved baby goods such as strollers, prams, high chairs, ergo carriers, second-hand clothes and pre-loved furniture in quality condition have been named as some of the items that retain their price and sell well) to Periwinkle, and Periwinkle benefits through the proceeds of the sales.

We are currently seeking a volunteer who has the skills and the time to co-ordinate such an activity. At this early stage, we envisage that those who donate photograph their goods and pass the photographs to the co-ordinator who will upload these to an e-bay shop for sale.

The actual process of creating a paypal account, managing online sales, and the postage of the sold goods is still under consideration and once we have a co-ordinator in place, we are intending to hold a community meeting to make firm decisions on these matters.

In the meantime, anyone interested in the volunteer position should please contact Jen Henderson on [jenhender@hotmail.com](mailto:jenhender@hotmail.com) or 0413 057 600.

And we ask that parents and friends begin looking through their pre-loved goods with an eye to what you might like to donate to the sale. The sale itself will take place in early Term 4, and more information will available shortly.

Amber, on behalf of the PCM.



An Invitation to join us in crafting...  
from Craft Co-ordinator,  
Toni Dumas

If you would like to join us, please call Toni Dumas (mother to three beautiful girls, Angelique, Genevieve and Jasia) 6680 4839 or 0458 400 610

*Wishing our Families a  
wonderful and safe,  
winter holiday.*

### PERIWINKLE CONTACT DETAILS

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### NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Periwinkle parents and friends are invited to submit articles and photographs for the newsletter. Please email submissions to: [info@periwinkle.nsw.edu.au](mailto:info@periwinkle.nsw.edu.au)

Editor: Amber Greene

### SPONSORSHIP WELCOME!

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Staff group by Amber Greene.