

FREE
PLEASE TAKE ONE

Bright Start

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2013

The Magazine for the Kidicorp Community
For happy, confident learners
Mo nga akonga hari-koa a me te maia

**Am I
at Dad's
house
tonight?**

Making
separation
easier

**Hooking
BOYS into
learning**

**TIPS for
settling
into
childcare
& school**

**How do
babies
LEARN?**





As a new parent, there may be many reasons why you're not sleeping through the night. We'll help you be prepared for any money worries that could keep you awake.

BNZ has partnered with Plunket to expand its Parenting Education Programme with the Baby Budget workshop that offers financial planning and advice for your growing family.

Talk to your local PEPE coordinator or Plunket clinic for more information.

plunket.org.nz/babybudget

Welcome to the Kidicorp family

Welcome to our new parents and those of you whose children are continuing on a learning adventure with Kidicorp.

We are proud of the professional quality service our teachers provide for your child. We put a real effort into building relationships with you and your family. The closer we are to you and the more we can share the more our teachers can use this to support your child's learning.

We value the trust and confidence you have placed with us and in turn, we offer your child chances to discover, explore, and learn with confidence. Our teachers are experts at making what looks like play into important foundations for learning.

We spend more on professional development and ongoing learning than any other childcare provider. Each year, all our teachers from over 240 centres, meet over 10 times for professional development. We also get together once a year at regional conferences to learn new teaching ideas, be stimulated and share information. Our teachers have many other opportunities so that we are all up to date with the best ways to support children's development.

This is one of the great things about being part of a large New Zealand company, we have the scale and size to reinvest regularly in our people and places.

Ultimately we believe one of the most important aspects of childcare is the fact that our qualified teachers are skilled at developing close bonds with all the children in our care. We firmly believe that children who feel safe and cared for in a homely and stable place will learn best.

We are the only childcare provider with a dedicated 'Be School Ready' programme. This will be rolled out through all our centres this year to support the transition to school programmes. The 'Be School Ready' initiative aims to make sure all children over four are readied for their next important learning journey.



We firmly believe, "It takes a village to raise a child." Thank you for the opportunity to make a difference in the life of your child.

Fiona.

Fiona Hughes is Chief Operations Officer of Kidicorp.



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Kidicorp is New Zealand's largest private early childhood provider. Over 18,000 children are enrolled annually in Kidicorp centres around New Zealand.

Bright Start aims to increase our sense of family amongst our teachers and to better connect us with our parents and their families.

Shorts

TOP PARENTING TIP



GROOMING

Have you seen kittens or monkeys being groomed by their parents? Grooming strengthens the bonds between them, as well as keeping them clean and tidy!

That's what happens when we human beings groom our children - when we brush their hair every morning without fail, make sure their buttons and laces are done up, that their faces are clean, that they're wearing freshly washed clothes - we're grooming them. It makes them feel cherished, and it also teaches them to look after themselves, and to have self-respect.

And when we do the same in the evening, watch them clean their teeth, help them wash behind their ears, and dry properly between their toes, and brush their hair, so that they go to bed feeling the comfort of being clean and shiny, we are building up a reservoir of well-being in our child.

Grooming makes them feel cared for, and makes them feel good about themselves. It's a sad fact of life that many school teachers and other authority figures like dealing with neat and tidy children, so it's another way to make sure your child feels confident and able to cope with their world.

*"Today you are you, that is truer than true.
There is no one alive who is youer than you"*

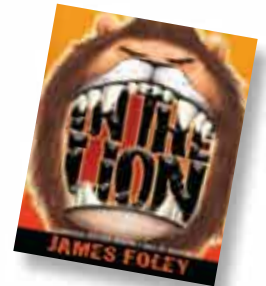
Dr. Seuss

BOOKS

IN THE LION

By James Foley
Walker Books \$27.95

We thought this was one of the better books we have seen in a while to suit boys or girls with boisterous and brave hearts! This is a playful book with wonderful repetitive phrases, a bit like 'going on a bear hunt' about a lion with a ravenous appetite for people and animals. For 3+.



WILLIE NEEDS TO WEE WEE

By Murray Ball
Pub Scholastic \$13.50

Reading books about every day activities makes them seem less daunting, whether it's going to preschool or something like this - toilet training! Willie wakes up and needs to go to the loo. The story describes what goes through this mind before he remembers the toilet is the best place! Another good book for boys! This is a quality hard back. 0-4.



THE CAT'S PYJAMAS

Catherine Foreman
Pub Scholastic \$13.50

Another colourful good-sized hardback, this book won the NZ Post Children's Choice award. Colourful and fun story of a cat who wears different pyjamas each night and has very interesting dreams. When he wears his space pyjamas, he dreams of Saturn, Mars and shooting stars, but what happens when he wears his monster pyjamas? Great repetition and rhyme which children are bound to join in with.



*The end of the day can be a rush
picking up children, shopping and
hurrying home to get a meal, make
sure you have a bottle of water for
each child with you - being thirsty
makes everyone tired and irritable
- plus a snack, a carrot, an apple, a
biscuit (gingernuts don't crumble) or
some dried fruit for them to chew.*

**Atawhaitia te rito
Kia puawai te taimaiti
Ako I te taimaiti
Kia tu tangata**

**Cherish and nurture the
tender shoot
So that the child will bloom
Learn with the child
So you both stand tall**

How do babies LEARN?

By Jane Brown-Smith

What does my baby/toddler do all day at childcare?

This is a question many parents must ask themselves. Actually keeping babies and toddlers happy and amused is a skilled job, and child care teachers have special skills for this age group.

Teachers learn what is called 'heuristic play', which is a concept in which children discover things about their environment for themselves, and learn to make sense of their world.

The method is simple - teachers have baskets filled with everyday objects for children to play with and explore. For safety's sake they're no smaller than a matchbox, and are made from natural materials, wood, metal, and other natural substances. The objects can be things like pegs, shells, spoons, whisks, old CDs, pine cones, keys ...

They're called discovery baskets or treasure baskets. These baskets are brought out at set times so that they are a treat for the children, and they then set to and explore.

Professional services manager Erin France explains, "A teacher watches but doesn't interfere. If they show her the object she can name it, and tell the child what it's used for. Simple as this sounds, this exercise is designed to develop hand and eye co-ordination and fine motor skills, which for a baby is basically picking things up, and fiddling with them! They learn muscle control doing this, and even learning to hold things is part of a child's pre-writing skills."

Babies and toddlers learn about colour, taste, shape, texture from playing with these objects – and most important of all, they start to learn how to concentrate – one of the most important skills for a person of any age.

One of the other advantages to this kind of play is that it's sustainable and recycles ordinary household objects – you could even call it 'green'. It's also something that parents can do themselves with their children. The important thing is to keep the items in a special container so that it's special when children play with them, and that they play under supervision, but without interference.

More ideas at this great website:

<http://www.theimaginationtree.com/p/discovery-boxes.html>



HOOKING YOUR BOY INTO LEARNING

By Rachel Goodchild

I used to think I was the perfect parent. It turns out, I was just the parent of girls. It's not that girls are perfect, but our idea of what makes a child good is often what a girl is more likely to be than a boy.

If you list all the ways we tell if a child is well behaved, there often isn't a lot of room on the list for running around outside, taking apart gadgets, asking constant questions and getting very very muddy. Nor does it include bringing in writhing worms for you to check out, or rough housing.

Perhaps if we stop looking at how we can make our boys behave in ways we think they should, we might enjoy who they are and what they have to offer to the world just as they are.

At some point your boy will have to sit still long enough to read and write. You'll need them to focus when you are giving them instructions. Remembering it takes them more energy to stop, listen and be still than to move, reminds us that a tired, and hungry boy will find it harder to learn. We also may need to change how we talk to our boys

adding the potential of something they love to activities we want them to complete.

Some boys are not ready for formal learning until well after they reach five. There is not a magic switch that changes a lively, active four year old into a quiet, ready for reading five year old on their birthday. Many parents can worry about their boy if he is not yet ready. However if he is happy, talking about the things he finds interesting, has access to a range of books, and loves to explore, then you are on the right track to him reading at some point.

Boys may not find sitting down with a pile of picture books that much fun. But they might love sitting alongside you while investigating a boating magazine, or surfing the internet for how to make a bird feeder (and then go shopping for the ingredients)

If you've got a wriggly, active boy, how can you hook him into learning?

1. Reward stillness with action. What this means is if you want him to sit still, let him know he's going to get to move soon. Start with small amounts of time- like three minutes, then build up to 30. It takes more energy for him to sit still than to move, so he needs to know he's not going to have sit for longer than he can manage.

"At some point your boy will have to sit still enough and long to read and write"

2. If you are going anywhere new, like a playground, or a friend's house, physically walk him through the boundaries - so he knows the expectations. If you don't, and he oversteps a boundary you just assumed he'd know about, it's not really his fault.

3. If you are somewhere new with lots of things he might want to touch and explore, let him do so a little before you try to talk to him about anything you want him to hear. You might think he's listening to you explain the rules, but all he's hearing is "look at all these amazing things to touch!"

4. Change your idea of "quiet play". For a boy, quiet play may mean getting very very messy, or taking apart something that will never be able to be put back together. It probably won't mean colouring in, or reading a pile of books on a sofa.

5. Make reading and writing and drawing meaningful. If it's planning how to make something, or creating a sign to tell his sisters to keep out of his room, it's more engaging than just doing it because you think it's important.

6. Spending time handling things from nature, or being outside naturally calms your child down. Allow him to get dirty, get wet, and feel and touch things outside. Physical activity relaxes your child, even if they do it noisily.

7. Give him jobs to do. Girls tend to have higher expectations on them than boys, when it comes to looking after their own belongings, tidying up and helping around the house. Expect your boy to carry his own bag, and look after his own things.

8. Praise is really important, but use it at the end of a task, instead of halfway through. Boys tend to hear praise as a sign that they have reached your expected level, and then find it hard to complete the task to just get more praise. Set a challenge (and make it something you know they can do) then praise once completed.

Rachel is a parent and education coach, specialising in behaviour, relationships and creativity. She works all around New Zealand and loves every minute of it.



Settling your child **easily** into childcare

By Victoria Carter

Many parents are anxious about leaving their child for the first time and how they might settle. Here are some tips to help settle your child.

Says Jo Lancaster, centre manager at Edukids Flatbush, “spend some time together at the centre, to get familiar with the sights, sounds, toys and faces. Visit say two weeks before start date, and then one or two more visits which get longer.

“I suggest mums point out to their child as other parents leave and remind them that soon they will do that too.

“The most important thing is, if your child sees you happy in the centre they are more likely to feel settled. Children can often detect if parents are anxious, so make yourself at home and join in with any activities that are happening.

“Make sure we know your child’s routines, food preferences, toileting, how they like to be soothed and how they ask for and accept affection.



“Other things teachers will talk with you about, are what your child does at home, what are their interests, who is in their family, what languages they speak, what is their cultural heritage, what are their favorite stories and do they have any special toys that they have for comfort. Not only does this help settle your child but it helps us develop an individual learning programme for them”.

When you leave your child on their own at the centre they may get upset. This is a normal response to separation and should change over the following week or two depending on how often your child is attending.



The first day

Don't make too much of a fuss or build up their hopes too much. Let them look forward to what is a normal activity. Visit the school several times beforehand so it is as familiar as possible.

Try to meet other people from the school. Look through the fence to show your child playtime.

Help your child learn their teacher's name. Find a book to read about starting school. Make sure they know who is picking them up and be on time!

Make sure your child knows where the toilets are and how to use them, wash hands and so on.

Can your child open their lunchbox and drink bottle? Show your child what they can eat for morning tea and then have for lunch. Show your child how to get water from a water fountain.

STEPS TO SETTling YOUR CHILD IN

Step 1 When you arrive together ask what activity your child wants to start with. Be direct. Let your child know what is coming up. Talk to your child about who they might play with when they get to the centre. It helps your child focus on where they are going and what they might do.

Step 2 Ask your child who they would like to look after them when you go. This helps your child know you also trust this person and that you know they will be able to comfort your child. Warn that teacher that they are the 'chosen' one!

Step 3 You must say goodbye to your child and reassure them you will return. Yes, the first few times you may have to peel them from your leg, but give them a hug and kiss and walk out. Don't look back. You know your child will be safe and in minutes will be settled in an activity.

Our professional teachers are skilled at comforting and reassuring children. They will acknowledge your child's feelings by providing them with reassuring words such as "I will keep you safe and play with you until dad/mum comes back to get you after lunch. I will be here when you need me."

At the end of the day we will share with you how the day went and ask you any questions that we may need to know to support your child further.

One way to reassure your child is to talk about their day, who was the teacher who was at the play dough table, sand pit and so on to help your child become familiar with the new faces and names.

Remember we've seen it all before and are very familiar with settling children in so that they love coming to our centre and beginning their learning journey. Always feel free to ask questions.

Make those first few school weeks a bit easier.

Make sure your child can:

- Get dressed and undressed independently.
- Choose clothes your child can easily do up and get undone.
- Give them lots of practice if they have a special school uniform.
- Make sure your child can put shoes on the correct feet, tie and untie shoe laces and so on. Most schools don't let children wear shoes in the classroom so they need to be able to recognise theirs.
- Label everything. Buy iron or sew on labels so it is easier for your child to spot their clothing.

Why does my child seek **attention?**



By Valerie Davies

I eavesdropped on a family group in a coffee place. They were on holiday, and the adults were talking about one of their grandsons of two and a half.

“He’s asked to go home”, said one. “But he knows the bach and loves being here”, said another. “Oh it’s just attention seeking,” said a third, and they all relaxed then, problem solved, finish the lattes.

I felt sad. Attention seeking was a label they’d put on behaviour they didn’t understand. If he was attention seeking, it was because he needed attention! When a child needs attention, it’s because they don’t feel safe, or need some extra nurturing, may be a little more time, a little more cuddling.

When children play up, seem to be doing things that adults label naughty, start being difficult or uncooperative, they don’t know why they’re doing it. Do any of us know why we behave like we do?

But in a child’s case it’s usually because he’s feeling insecure, anxious - needing re-assurance, and an extra dose of loving kindness. But too often, he’s punished for his behaviour, which makes him feel worse and reinforces his unhappiness. Research has shown that children are naturally helpful and cooperative. When they stop being this way, there’s a reason.

When my son was six, his behaviour changed. I was a solo parent working five full days, but never with two days off together - one day midweek, one day at the weekend, when I tried to catch up with all the washing and housework. From being a happy,

chirpy little boy, he suddenly became aggressive, un-cooperative, rude and sometimes tearful.

When I went to see his school the teacher suggested that on my day off during the week, I keep my son at home, and spend that time with him. After the first time, his behaviour changed miraculously. I went on doing it for another three weeks, by which time, his confidence and peace of mind was restored. He had had the attention that he was craving, knew that he was important to his parent, and felt safe again.

Whenever there’s some big change in family life - a new baby, moving house, a parent leaving, a grandparent dying, these things can all affect a child deeply. Sometimes he may revert to wetting his pants or his bed, some children start telling lies, refusing to go to school or kindy, and older children can start stealing. It’s all a cry for help. Some children think the only way they’re going to get their parent’s concentration again, when a new baby comes, is to develop food fads, to rivet their mother’s attention - food fads which can last a life-time.

Other children can develop tummy-aches or head-aches. If it isn’t a medical problem, it’s an unconscious ploy to get the attention they feel they so badly need. Sometimes a child becomes accident prone or illness prone... and yes they need medical attention to deal with the topmost problem, but underneath, may be that desperate bid for attention, or to put it bluntly- for love. So none of their disruptive behaviour should be punished - they are already unhappy..

They don’t realise that their parent loves them to bits when they are doing all these attention seeking bids. They just feel they’re not getting it because their mother or father is busy, worried, pre-occupied or distracted.



They don't realise that their parent loves them to bits when they are doing all these attention seeking bids. They just feel they're not getting it because their mother or father is busy, worried, pre-occupied or distracted.

And so the simple solution is to give them lots of time and re-assurance, and the need for attention seeking disappears. A truck driver whose son had been diagnosed with ADHD took drastic action, and popped him into the passenger seat in his truck every day. Within a couple of weeks the child was behaving normally.

All of which goes to show that instead of labelling behaviour and thinking that's enough, we need to go a little deeper, and try to understand why our child is acting out this troublesome behaviour. It's quite simple. It's because he wants to feel safe and cherished.

Am I at Dad's house tonight?

By Liz Fletcher

THE TEACHER'S STORY

"Don't go, mummy, you can't go!" cried Laura, her small arms clutching around her mother's neck. The same thing at the beginning of each week. Once an enthusiastic pre-schooler now she barely participated. She had even had the odd aggressive outburst like today when she suddenly hit Kate with a cookie cutter at the play dough table.

Laura's parent had recently finalised a custody agreement, Laura spent a lot of weekdays with her father and most weekends with her mother. Such a major change may account for her erratic behaviour. How could we help her adapt without intruding on the family's personal situation?

ONE PARENT'S STORY

Laura acts as sad as I feel when I say goodbye on Monday mornings. When I pick her up on Friday afternoons she just clings to me and won't leave my side for hours. Actually I'd say she hasn't been herself since the July day when we moved most of her things to her Dad's house. My ex-husband lives only a suburb away, but it feels like a continent separates my daughter and me.

We talk on the phone nearly every day when she's with her Dad. In my job I sometimes have to travel whereas Laura's dad works from home. My ex-husband is pretty co-operative and he's a loving parent. But I don't think Laura understands why she has to move back and forth between us.

SITUATION

As her mother says, Laura doesn't understand why this is all happening - why can't she have her mum and dad at the same time, since she needs and loves them both. She may also be worrying that the break-up of her family is her fault and that she may lose both of her parents.

WHAT THE TEACHER CAN DO

Because there is so much that is uncertainty for Laura right now she needs to know that she can exercise some control in the classroom. Let her choose what toys she plays with, whom she plays with, although she may have to follow a few important rules around being friendly! Help her by acknowledging her feelings, "I'll bet you're wondering who is picking you up today? Why don't we have a signal?"

A child's list of wants

I want both mum and dad in my life. So please write to me, ring me, text me, and ask me what I'm doing, so I feel that I'm still important to you, and you still love me.

Please don't fight, and please try to get on with each other. Don't fight about me, it makes me feel guilty.

Please support me in spending time with each of you. If you seem jealous or upset, it makes me feel I should be loving one parent more than the other.

Please don't make me deliver messages, but communicate with each other.

Please don't criticise my other parent, it makes me feel you want me to take your side.

Please remember I want you both in my life, to teach me how to live, and to help me when I need you.

Then the teacher might suggest something for when Mummy is picking her up and something different for Daddy. Maybe involve the parent by getting them to put out a cuddly toy in the child's bag to remind them of the other parent when they go to the next home. Help Laura get some certainty around what is going on.

It's crucial too, to continue to develop a good rapport with both parents. Perhaps suggest that some people dealing with divorce find counselling helpful for the child as well as themselves.

"My ex-husband is pretty co-operative and he's a loving parent. But I don't think Laura understands why she has to move back and forth between us"...

WHAT CAN THE PARENTS DO?

It's up to both parents to make joint custody work. Counselling or a divorce support group may help the parents. Stay tuned into Laura's emotional needs. Her father must ensure that his daughter has access to her mother even when she is at his house and vice versa. More importantly don't say nasty things about each other. Mutual respect towards each other will go a long way to helping your pre-schooler recover their self-confidence. It knocks children about when parents separate. Plenty of research now confirms this.

Try and maintain as much as possible the life before divorce, invite the friends over who used to visit, entertain family and do the things Laura loves.

Find opportunities to reassure Laura that, although you are not three together, that both her dad and mum will always love her and be there for her.

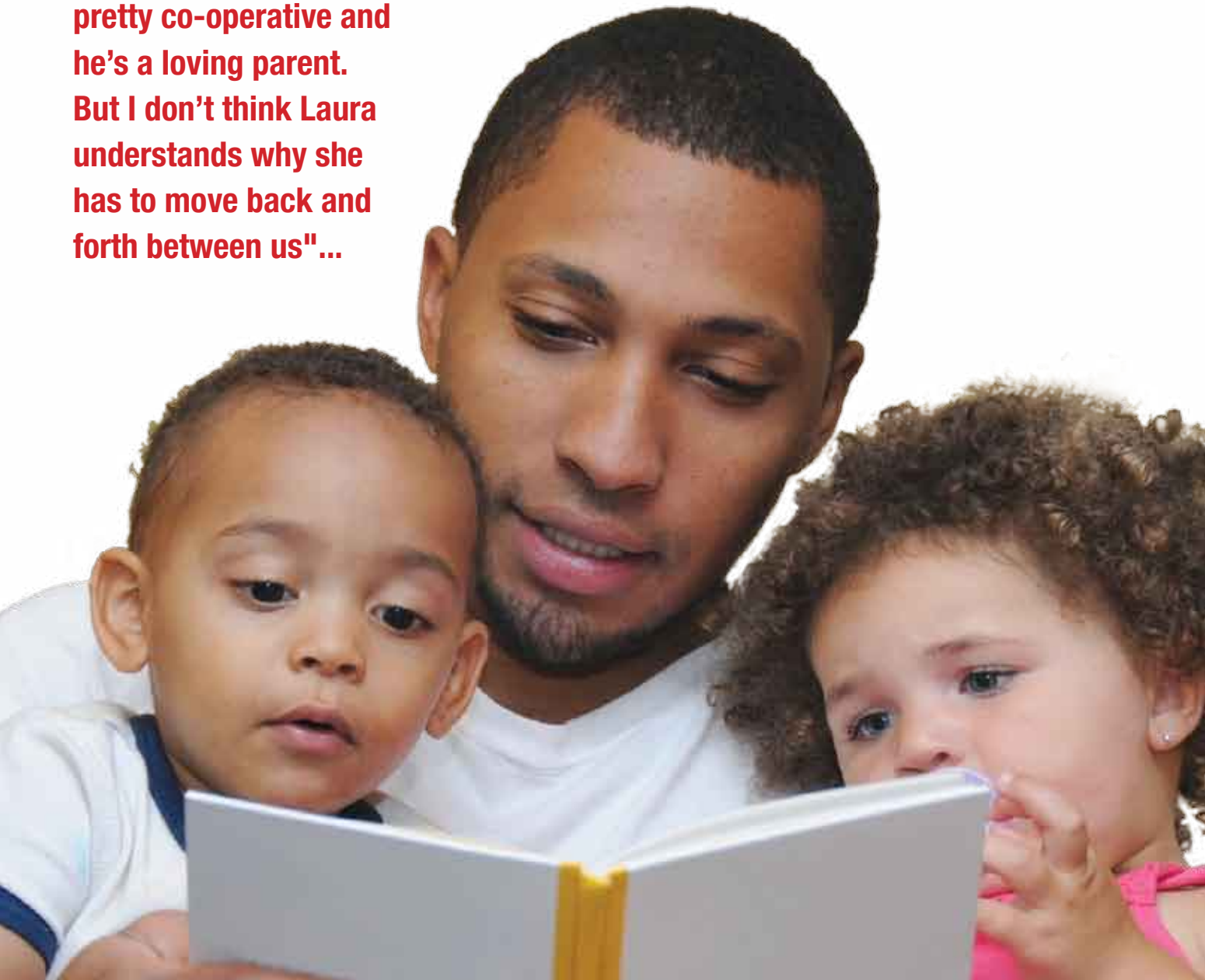
MORE READING

'Since Dad left'

by Caroline Binch - Scholastic

'Two Homes'

by Claire Masurel - Walker Books





Early Years Cornwall St

Last year Early Years Cornwall Street commissioned a Waka from the local Marae to help to meaningfully introduce Tikanga Maori culture into their centre. After consultation with the local Marae their very own Waka was designed. The centre fundraised throughout the year and with the help of family, friends and the community welcomed the Waka at the beginning of 2013 with a small ceremony where Teri from the Marae blessed the Waka and explained the different parts to the children. This is now a much loved area of play.



Kidicorp Christmas party at the Groynes

The Kidicorp Christmas Party at the Groynes in Christchurch was attended by children, parents, caregivers, grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles and friends. It was a great day out, with plenty of fun had by all. Many thanks to Mr Whippy, Car Directors, Watermelon Shades, Santa, Christchurch Police Department, Kidicorp staff, parents and everyone involved in making this event a huge success.



Montessori @ the School House

The sports day at Montessori @ the School House was a fantastic success. Children competed in sprints, a sack race, a relay race, an egg and spoon race and even a Moonhopper race! Parents joined in the fun with a tug-of-war between mums and dads. The day ended with presents for the children and a shared lunch.



First Steps Ngata St

Children at First Steps Ngata Street, Palmerston North, came up with a great plan to cool down. They transformed an old water container into a refreshing foot bath to soak their feet in.



Early Years Hutt Rd

Early Years Hutt Rd held their annual Christmas party at Khandallah Park in excellent weather. Teachers organised fun games such as 3-legged races and egg-and-spoon, Santa visited with gifts for everyone.

First Steps Waiuku

The children at First Steps Waiuku have been busy writing and illustrating their own book about a cave they recently visited. Given the enthusiasm of the children, the Centre Manager decided to email Bruce Potter, a renowned illustrator, to come and talk to the children about illustrating the book. The children were ecstatic after Bruce's visit and are looking forward to completing the book.



Edukids Marshland

Edukids Marshland turned one in November and celebrated their birthday with a disco night. Children had so much fun dancing around and were very excited to see and taste their centre's special birthday cake.

Community Kindy St Leonards

Community Kindy St Leonards have their very own 'Pak n Save' as the children like to call it. The children have so much fun working together playing shops. It provides many learning experiences including taking turns, counting, using their imagination for role play and sharing their ideas and knowledge with each other.



ABC Morrinsville

The children at ABC Morrinsville show their appreciation to their local New World with a fabulous thank you sign. New World Morrinsville generously supplied the delicious food and drink for their end of year celebration.



Topkids Turangi

Topkids Turangi was invited by Te Kohanga Reo o Waihi to participate in their Pacific Island Hula Fashion Show. Parents did a wonderful job of creating outfits with the children for the big event.

The children joined many other centres and schools in the area for the show. Topkids Turangi was first on the catwalk, showing off their hula skirts and Pacific fashion. They then enjoyed watching the other centres perform and shared some kai .

ABC Manly Central

ABC Manly Central had a walkathon to support the Cerebral Palsy Foundation. The charity is close to the heart of the centre as they have had children, past and present, who have Cerebral Palsy. The children raised \$1348 and were very proud of their efforts.



be school ready™

Ka reri mo te Kura



discovery



friendship



maths



creativity

Enrol your child at a Kidicorp centre. We have NZ's only *Be School Ready™* programme.

- ✓ Maths and literacy
- ✓ Language skills
- ✓ Learning to think
- ✓ Relating to others
- ✓ Friendship
- ✓ Physical development
- ✓ Independence
- ✓ And much more....



Find a centre near you phone

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Education and Care Centres