

FaPMI newsletter

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Would you like to contribute to this newsletter?

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Welcome to the Summer Edition of our 2016 Newsletter. It's been an unusual Spring and Summer, but now beginning to have more sunny and warm days. Have you heard any Christmas Carols at the supermarket yet? Whilst decorations are beginning to emerge, I heard from my local supermarket that they only start the Carols in December! We hope that everyone who attended the Annual Family Fun Day enjoyed themselves and were able to try a range of different activities which may give you some ideas for the summer break with your children. The librarians who came on the day said that they would love to see some of the children at the library over the summer - it can be really good on a really hot or wet day to visit and participate in summer activities on offer.

Book Reviews Our book review for this newsletter edition, written by Merinda, is *'You Are Not Alone'*. If you are interested in providing us with a book review, please contact us, and we will provide you with the book for you and your child to read. You will receive a book as a gift for providing us with the review.

School Holiday Ideas Included in this newsletter is the Eastern Region Library Network website, which is www.erl.vic.gov.au. It has information about the free and low cost activities that are on offer in Maroondah, Yarra Ranges, and Knox Shires over the Christmas and January period. For further ideas that may be close to home or at home, www.kidspot.com.au is a great website and there are some outdoor activities included in the newsletter for paper plane making and bug hunting, which children and young people love.

The FaPMI Team

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School Holiday Activities:

REALM Library

Source: www.erl.vic.gov.au

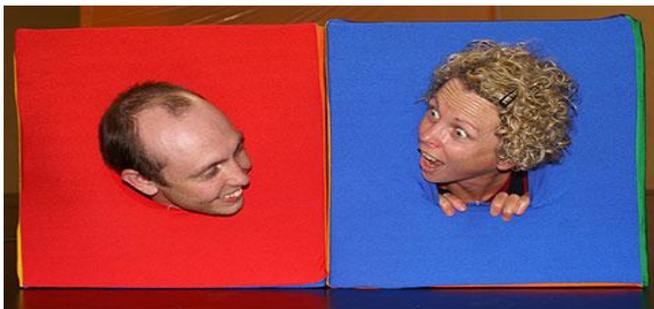
Maroondah offers an exciting and informative range of arts and cultural events, talks and workshops throughout the year. These complement the exhibition program and offer opportunities for all ages, and levels of skill and interest.

Events include free talks by featured artists and other specialists on themes related to the exhibitions, as well as hands on workshops where you can learn to make your own art works.

Keep an eye on this page and on our Facebook page for activities that you might like to attend.

BlockHead

Monday 9 January to Sunday 5 February 2017



Enter an imaginary world full of fun. Colourful children's blocks dance and play. You can too!

Captivating creative dance workshops and roaming performances for children ages 3 to 7 years and their families. Created by award winning choreographer Rochelle Carmichael and her dance company Liquid Skin with artist Edwina Atkins.

BlockHead workshops

- Tuesday 17 January, 10am and 11am
- Friday 20 January, 10am
- Friday 27 January 10 am

All sessions will run for 40 minutes and will cost \$5 per child. Adults and babies free. Sessions will be held at Realm in Ringwood Town Square.

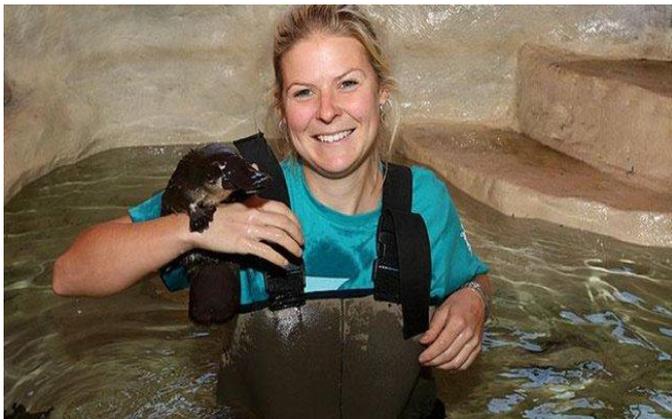
Make a booking via this link or on the following number: 1300 737 277, and a librarian will make the booking for you.

BlockHead performances

- Thursday 19 January, 10am and 11am
- Tuesday 24 January, 10am and 11am
- Saturday 4 February, 10am and 11am

All performances run for 30 minutes and are free. Performances will be held at Ringwood Station.

Healesville Sanctuary



- Think the Platypus is a shy and reclusive creature? Think again! Tales from Platypus Creek lets you see Platypus as they have never been seen before.
- Come face-to-face with Healesville Sanctuary's most iconic species in a world-first interactive Platypus show. Observe Platypus as they interact with keepers, play in the water and even enjoy having their tummies tickled!
- Not only will you see Platypus in a unique riverside tank environment in our brand new amphitheatre, but you will also get to meet some of their special animal friends. You will hear stories of amazing waterway adventures and learn about you can contribute to saving the Platypus' natural environment.
- Tales from Platypus Creek runs twice daily on weekends and once each day during the week. The show is free with general admission and kids under 16 years get free entry to the Sanctuary all school holidays!

Public transport:

- First catch a train to Lilydale station and then buses will take you to Healesville Sanctuary.
- Train to Lilydale: catch a train from the Melbourne city centre to Lilydale Railway Station, travelling on the Lilydale line.
- Bus to Healesville: from Lilydale Railway Station you need to catch bus 685 to Healesville, and then a connecting bus (686 towards Badger Creek) will take you to Healesville Sanctuary. Please see timetables for current bus times: Route 685 to Healesville and Route 686 to Badger Creek (via Healesville Sanctuary).

Cost: \$32.50 for an adult, children under 16yo are free

Who should attend: Sessions are open to all ages. Limited seating. Please note that phone bookings cannot be accepted. Arrive 10 min before the show to make sure you get a seat.

Carols By Candlelight - Christmas Eve



- As a sponsor of the Vision Australia Carols by Candlelight, Eastland will host the official live-site of the annual event on Christmas Eve (from 6pm, 24 December).
- Guests can gather around the crystal Christmas tree in Town Square for a special evening of live family entertainment followed by the Carols by Candlelight broadcast live from Sidney Myer Music Bowl on the big screen. Candles will be available for purchase to support Vision Australia's work with children who are living with blindness or low vision.
- **Cost:** Free admission.
- **Who should attend:** This event is suited for all ages.

Paper Plane Activity



Source: kidspot.com.au

Making paper planes is a simple paper craft with enormous learning benefits for children. At its most basic, it's a clear hands-on example of geometry, symmetry and how shapes fit together.

To transform a two dimensional piece of paper into a three dimensional flying machine is not only magical, but it's a unique exercise in spatial reasoning.

The first real airplane was designed, built and flown in 1903 by the Wright brothers. Today, over 100 years later, there's still something enchanting about watching your own paper version sail through the air.

Here's five reasons why you should spend an afternoon with your kids trying to make a paper plane that will actually fly:

- no need to go to the craft shop: all you need is some A4 paper
- it's relatively mess-free: no glue, no cutting, no glitter, no paint
- it's a great way to engage their minds in some mathematical and spatial thinking
- there's nothing more confidence-boosting than creating a paper plane that actually flies
- it will get them running outside to fly their paper planes

There are all types of designs for paper planes; something like a simple dart design gives more distance while the 'mantis' comes with its own in-built landing gear.

Most paper planes begin with the same series of folds, but we've sourced some more unique designs that will engage and challenge serious young "plane spotters."

Kidspot have a range of videos showing how to fold different paper planes on their website. Examples include, traditional, a dart paper plane, javelin, flying fox, cat's ears, and UFO.

If you don't have internet at home, you can go to the library and make this part of the activity to look up how to fold the paper planes. To find the videos go to kidspot.com.au, then 'things to do', 'outdoor activities', 'paper planes'. You could also make a kite and then fly either of them at the park, or in the back yard.

Bug hunting

Source: kidspot.com.au

There's no better way for kids to learn about the world around them than by getting out into it. Bug hunting encourages your kids to explore their own backyard or a local park in an open-ended way that will lead to adventures and imaginative play.

What you need

- Plastic tweezers, or a large wooden spoon
- Clean jars or containers
- Magnifying glass
- A notebook



Activity

1. Start your search by looking around flowers, bushes or at the base of trees.
2. Turning over small or medium sized rocks, you will usually be able to find some bugs.
3. Once you have found a bug, place some clean dirt in the bottom of the container and pick him up with the spoon or tweezers.
4. Place him carefully in your container.
5. Now you can examine the bug through the container and using the magnifying glass.
6. Once you are finished examining the bug, you can keep him for a day or two and then put him back in the garden.

Notes:

Much of the fun of bug hunting (aside from looking for the bugs of course!) is learning more about the bugs you find. While younger children will be happy just to look closely at what they find, older children will be interested to learn more. Think about the following questions:

- Where did you find him?
- What season is it?
- Were there any other bugs around?
- What colour is he?
- Does he have any distinctive features?
- How many legs does he have?
- Does he have wings?

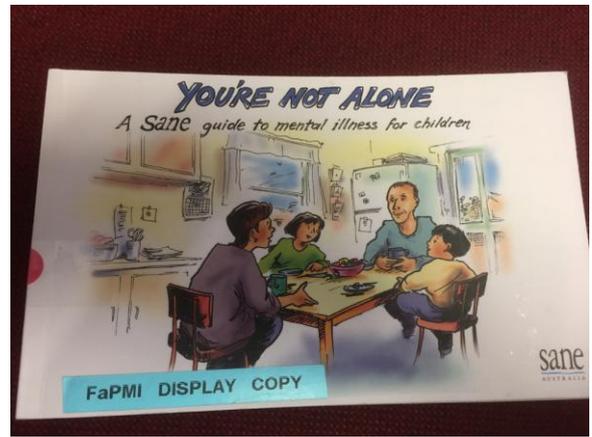
BOOK REVIEW

You Are Not Alone

By Sane Australia

Review by Merinda Wurz

After reading this book, I felt the general presentation (cartoon layout) and the content would appeal and be very suited to the young teenage years.



The explanation that when the person with mental illness is unwell, as with people with a physical illness, is a very valid point. Also when a person with mental illness has an episode or is in crisis, it is not the person but the mental illness.

The book goes into different types of behaviour when the person is unwell. The family and children also feel lots of different emotions, such as frustration, anger, sadness and worry and this is ok too. It's very important for the children to know it's not their fault and they can't catch it, and for an adult to validate their feelings.

I particularly liked the explanation and pictures relating to the brain chemicals and how they work. I feel this would be quite helpful for the kids to understand.

The children need to know they have someone to talk to and a safe place to go to when things get tough, especially when there are hospital admissions, as these times can be very scary for kids. Also that action plans need to be put in place, as stated in the book.

Keeping the lines of communication open are vital and the kids need to know there is always someone there for them. They are not alone; there are many different types of families with their own problems also.

But most importantly, kids still need to be kids, have fun, join sports and support groups and always have someone to talk to and feel safe with, and this goes for school too.

To finish off with, as stated in the book, I would love to see schools include mental illness in their curriculum. Great book!



How your kids can get a good night's sleep

Source: Michael Grose – www.parentingideas.com.au

Many kids today are sleep deprived. Teenagers, in particular, don't get enough sleep. They need between nine and 10 hours sleep each night, yet most get about seven or eight hours sleep. Some get less.

Not getting enough sleep leads to sleep deprivation, which is akin to jet lag, where kids don't function at their optimum. Lack of sleep leads to irritability, decreased creativity and memory lapses. It also has strong links to anxiety and depression.

How sleep helps kids: Sleep maximises the brain growth which occurs with toddlers and teens. Sleep also consolidates learning: sleep research has shown that the brain practices what it has learned during the day when a child or young person is asleep. So sufficient sleep consolidates past learning as well as keeps kids fresh to maximise their future learning.

Develop good sleep habits when kids are young: Sleep experts stress that while adults may not have control over biology we can assist children and teens to establish good sleep patterns. **Children usually carry good sleep habits into adolescence.** If you struggle to get young children to sleep or constantly battle kids who want to stay up longer, some knowledge of good sleep habits may be useful.

Good sleep habits include:

1. **Regular bedtimes** Kids may fight this, but make sure kids keep **regular** bedtimes during the week and allow them to stay up a little later on weekends. Children need between 10 and 12 hours of sleep each day, while teens need a minimum of nine hours.

3. A 45-minute wind-down time before bed This includes: removing TV and other stimuli, calming the child down and limiting food intake (and caffeine for teens). The wind-down time informs the body clock that sleeping time is near.

3. A bedtime routine Have a bedtime routine, such as story reading and teeth cleaning, that signals psychologically that it is time for sleep. A set routine means that kids can predict. It also means that some children will fight bedtime so you need some good strategies in place to get kids to bed and make sure they stay there.

4. Keeping bedrooms for sleep Bedrooms that resemble caves are recommended. It gets tricky with mobile phones and other information technology, but it's smart to keep devices and laptops out of bedrooms at sleep-time. This goes for parents too. I've noticed most parents sleep in technology-free bedrooms (apart from a clock-radio) yet their kids will have technology-full rooms. **Also don't let kids do schoolwork on their beds. If so, they'll begin to associate bed with work, rather than sleep.**

5. Maximise the three sleep cues These include: darkness (maintaining a cave-like bedroom); lowering body temperature (baths can be good for this); and melatonin (work within their cycle).

If your kids get less sleep than they should, check out the five habits above and work out which of these you can adjust to move things in favour of them getting more sleep.

CHAMPS Programs Term 1 2017

CHAMPS groups are for children aged 8-12 who have a parent with a mental illness

Champs After-School Group - Blackburn Term 1 2017

- **When?** Beginning Thursday 9th Feb from 4-5.30pm for 8 weeks
- **Where?** Then Avenue Church, 46 Blackburn Road, Blackburn

CHAMPS MAT (Martial Arts as Therapy) Life Skills Program - Croydon Term 1 2017

- **When?** Beginning Wednesday 8th Feb from 4-5pm for 8 weeks
- **Where?** Croydon Connections, 185 Mt Dandenong Road, Croydon

Contact Bronwyn Sanders on 9871 3988 or 0408 291 580 for more information or go to the website <https://www.easternhealth.org.au/a-z-services-directory/children-families-better-understand-mental-illness-champs>

FaPMI Family Fun Day

Sunday 27 November was a great day - not too hot and not too cold. Perfect for participating in activities as a family at Lifeworks in Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood.

37 families attended, including 72 adults, 99 children/young people, 171 people, and there were 54 staff/volunteers involved.

Feedback from families and volunteers alike, was that it was a great day, with a range of different activities to enjoy, such as badge making, photo with Santa, RACV driving school, jumping castle zorb balls, Scouts, Library Book Reading Corner, Men's Shed, sno cones, balloon artist, henna hand painting, face painting, pony rides, and a great BBQ.

Thanks go to all the families who attended the agencies who planned the day, and the organisations who participated on the day. It wouldn't have been possible without this enormous collaborative effort.



