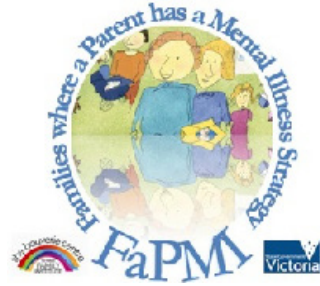


FaPMI newsletter



Welcome to the Spring Edition of our 2016 Newsletter. This is the time when the weather is improving, which makes it easier to get out of bed in the morning. With more glimpses of sunlight and having passed through the middle of the year, children and adolescents can sense that we are potentially headed for some more active times. Our heads may be clearer if we had colds during winter, but I imagine hay fever is now something to be aware of with all the beautiful flowers and trees beginning to come out of their slumber! Daylight hours are longer, and we are beginning to feel a 'spring' (pardon the pun) in our step again! Heading into term 4 for schools means that everyone also begins to consider Christmas, but let's not get ahead of ourselves!

Book Review Our book review for this newsletter edition is 'The Wise Mouse'. 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 a website from Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils with a range of information. Parks Victoria also has a fantastic website where you can look at lots of different activities across all parts of Victoria by choosing a suburb near you.

For indoor activities museum visits can expose children and young people to the Arts and Cultural life of your area. There is also a scone recipe that is really easy in this newsletter. Whilst I enjoy baking with my children, limited attention spans means that I need to have very quick and simple recipes. This is on the website www.myr.com.au and there is a video of it, so you can see how the MYR Kids Kitchen does this before trying it yourself.

Articles We have an article from Michael Grose, who has a free newsletter that you can subscribe to at www.parentingideas.com.au. He offers some general tips about parenting. His topic this time "Stay in the Game When Raising Teenagers".

Programs There are no CHAMPS groups during Term 4. The Annual Family Fun Day will be on Sunday 27 November. Planning for the day has been ongoing throughout the year and there are many different organisations working in partnership with Eastern Health FaPMI to manage this event.

Contact Bronwyn Sanders for more information on 9871 3988 or 0408 291 580.

The FaPMI Team

Becca Allchin & Kirsty Jungwirth FaPMI Coordinators
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Would you like to contribute to this newsletter?

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easternhealth
GREAT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

SCHOOL HOLIDAY IDEAS - INDOOR ACTIVITIES

MAROONDAH & YARRA RANGES ACTIVITIES www.myrkids.com.au

This website provides ideas for school holidays and also informs you about what is on in the Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Local Council Areas.

It provides information on drop down menus for activities, classes and groups, shopping, services, party information, visitor information, and activity ideas for home.

Included from this website in this newsletter edition are some locations and information about parks and also two museums.

The website was easy to navigate, and it is clear that there are some free activities, as well as paid advertising on this site, so you need to check about costs for activities.

Visiting parks can be a great way of burning off energy for young children and adolescents.

SENSEABILITIES

Having visited this shop and looked at the website, www.senseabilities.com.au, I thought it would be of interest to you. There are times when all of us struggle with managing emotions, thoughts, and feelings. This shop has a range of items to assist children, young people, and adults alike to identify their sensory needs and the range of products are incredible. Our five senses - sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell are triggered at different times, and we all have different ways to stay calm and alert. It is worth visiting this shop to look at and feel the products to discover what works for you. Visits are by appointment and the staff are very helpful.

BURRINJA (Upwey)

Burrinja is a community focused cultural centre offering a broad range of arts and cultural experiences that encompass visual, performing and community arts and education. Check out the school holiday programs! Ph: 9754 8723 events@burrinja.org.au

Cnr Glenfern Road and Matson Drive, Upwey <http://www.burrinja.org.au>

YARRA RANGES REGIONAL MUSEUM

Modern life, gourmet food and pop culture might not be what you expect to find at a museum - but at Yarra Ranges, we like things to be a little different. The multi-award winning Yarra Ranges Regional Museum opened in 2011. With stunning architectural design set in tranquil surrounds, the museum features exhibition spaces, programs for all ages and abilities, a resource library, museum shop and café. A range of historic and present-day exhibitions and programs bring art, artefacts and fascinating stories to life. The Museum is open 7 days, 10am - 4pm. Admission is free.

BUSHLAND EDUCATION PROGRAM

<http://www.whitehorse.vic.gov.au/Bushland-Education-Program.html>

The Bushland Education Program is a free service run by Whitehorse Council officers and a team of knowledgeable volunteers. The program provides environmental and sustainability education for local schools, pre-schools and a diverse range of community groups.

Topics explored include: Wetlands, Lake Life, Life Cycles, Food Webs, Urban Water Cycle, Indigenous History. Most visits are to Blackburn Lake Sanctuary but other sites, including incursions, can be arranged. A series of these activities have been aligned with AusVels. School holiday programs are offered regularly and provide an opportunity for 5-12 year olds to explore their local bushland through a series of interactive activities. Further information about these sessions is available on the Blackburn Lake Sanctuary website <http://blackburnlakesanctuary.org>

SCHOOL HOLIDAY IDEAS - PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS

GLEN PARK COMMUNITY PLAY SPACE <http://www.glenparkcc.com.au>

Lots of equipment and open spaces. Great facilities for everyone, a spinners heaven with lots of spinning equipment! Cafe at the Community Centre, BBQs and a Community Garden which is great for family get togethers. (The Community Centre Cafe and Playground is separated so you couldn't go in there and leave the kids to play outside.) Next to the Play Space are free tennis and basketball courts - BYO equipment. The Play Space is connected to the Dandenong Creek Trail for easy walking and cycling access. **30 Glen Park Rd, Bayswater North**

Equipment includes: Pyramid Nets, Swings, Spinning Poles, Outdoor Gym, Slides, Spinning Dish, Rocking Horse, Bongo Drums, Bead Rollercoaster, Animal Sculptures, Climbing Wall, Dog On Leash Required around Playground, Bike Tracks and Learning to Ride Paths, Bus Stop - Route 664



YARRA GLEN ADVENTURE PARK, McKenzie Reserve

Cnr Anzac Ave and Bell St (Melba Hwy), Yarra Glen (Melways 275 A1)

New, award-winning, fully landscaped regional playground with a huge variety of activities. Adjacent to skate park. Good shade. Public toilets, picnic facilities and barbecues available. *This playground is accessible for all abilities.

LILYDALE LAKE PLAYGROUND

This large playground is adjacent to Lilydale Lake with a wide variety of trails and sand. The double-masted climbing net is a particular feature. Public toilets, picnic facilities and barbecues available. *This playground is accessible for all abilities. Swansea Road, Lilydale (Melways 38 G7)

BORTHWICK PARK PLAYGROUND

This large playground was constructed in 2011 and is particularly good for younger children, with an enormous 360 degree basket swing for older kids. This playground has lots of shade beneath giant California Redwoods and is adjacent to Belgrave Swimming Pool. No toilets. Blair Road, Belgrave (Melways 75 F11)

BOOK REVIEW - 'THE WISE MOUSE'

Author - Virginia Ironside;

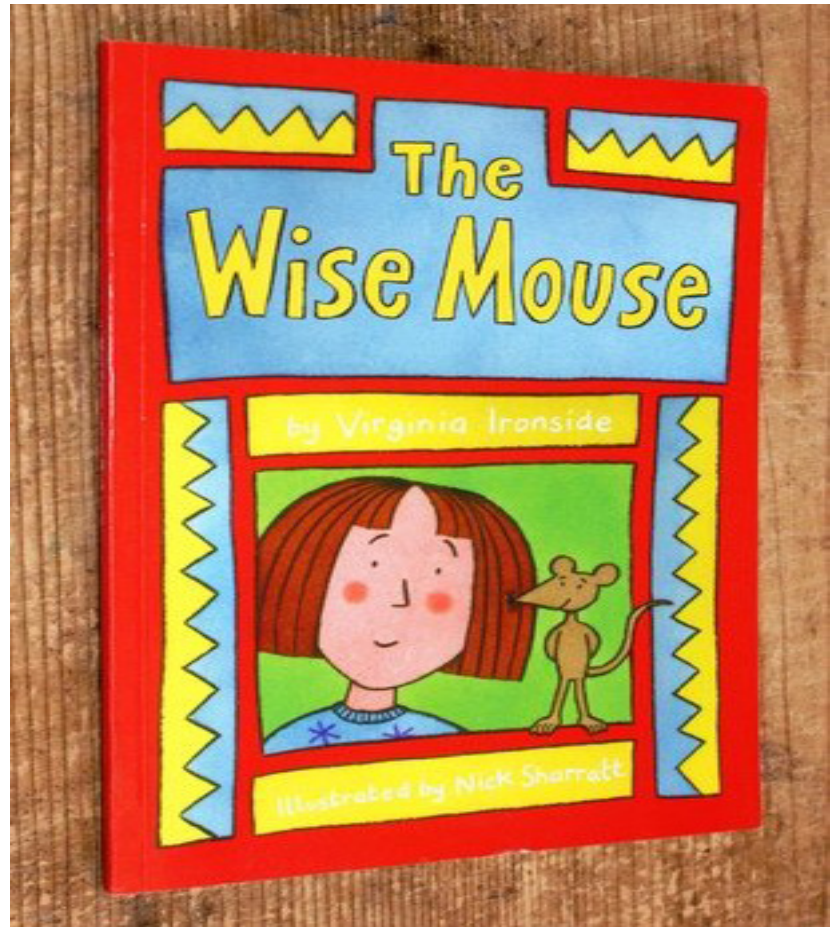
Illustrated by Nick Sharratt

Review by Kirsty Jungwirth

This is a short book for late primary school aged children or early high school.

It has a young girl talking to a mouse about her concerns having a mother with a mental illness. The mouse responds with realistic and accurate answers to her questions and gives her some ideas for support.

There are some illustrations, but a lot of writing. It appealed to me due to having considerable discussion points identified, which could assist older children and teenagers to reflect on their situation, as they begin to ask questions that are more in depth.



RECIPE - SCONES

Ingredients

- 4 cups of self raising flour
- 1 cup of cream
- 1 cup of milk

Method

- Combine flour, milk and cream in a bowl and mix with a knife
- Put flour on the bench and place combined mixture on the bench - it will still be crumbly
- Squeeze/knead together for a couple of minutes
- Pat the mixture until it is an inch/few centimetres thick - so nice and high
- Have the mixture the size of a dinner plate
- Cut the mixture straight down with a cutter, don't twist the cutter
- Place on baking tray (with baking paper underneath the scone)
- Bake for 10-12 minutes in an oven at 180 degrees
- Time of baking will vary, depending on the oven, so watch the scones rise and become golden
- Serve with anything you like - margarine, honey, jam and cream



STAY IN THE GAME WHEN RAISING TEENAGERS

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

During a recent parenting presentation, it suddenly struck me that there is so much to talk to young people about.

Developmentally adolescence is a time of risk and identity formation; it's a stage of moving away but teens also have a need to stay close. It's a stage when one day/week/month/year they can be inward-looking, high maintenance and (let's face it) awful. And suddenly they can be incredibly funny, insightful and loving. Some parents would argue that they see more of the former, but despite this adolescence is a stage when we really need to be talking with teenagers about BIG issues such as risk, relationships and life choices.

Here are three ideas to help:

1. Make the most of mealtimes

There is a strong correlation between good teen mental health and regular family mealtimes. Presumably because there is something therapeutic in sitting and talking, as well as the fact that it gives parents a chance to keep an eye on their young person. While many rituals are left behind when kids move into their teens, don't let regular mealtimes go. Make mealtimes a must.

2. Keep the banter up

Leading boys' educator and author of '10 Conversations You Must Have With Your Son', Dr Tim Hawkes, believes in the value of banter when talking with boys. He maintains that parents who also engage in give and take banter with their sons are more likely to have successful conversations about issues around risk (alcohol, going out, parties) and relationships (friendships, mates, social media) as the banter gives them permission to enter these tricky spaces with boys. The same principle applies to girls, but perhaps replace banter with fun, attention and shared interest.

3. Take an interest in their interests

Show a genuine interest in their interests (music, fashion, sport, etc.). This will give you some buy-in when talking with them, as well as providing a greater insight into what's important in their lives. It's worth remembering that many young people are focused in the present (I want to hang with my friends today and homework gets in the way), while parents usually take a long term view (you need to study hard so you can get a good job). These built-in tensions can be alleviated when we focus on the present - their interests - which gives permission to have more difficult conversations when needed.

4 . Keep the lines of communication open

It's a myth that teenagers are low maintenance. Most teens, like toddlers, are very high maintenance taking up a great deal of parent time and energy. But it's important that we keep talking with teens so that we can influence their thinking as well as impact on their behaviour. It's an old-school maxim but it's as true today as ever: You've got to work hard to keep the lines of communication open when you are raising teenagers as it will pay enormous dividends in the end.



PERSONAL STORY

My grandson has been involved in the CHAMPS MAT Group.

This group is run very efficiently and effectively by a person named Craig Cole. All aspects of Craig's program are suited towards a style of self-defence for children. This also assists the children with confidence in themselves and their own ability to enjoy and complete tasks Craig asks of them.

Craig has specifically designed these classes with thoughtfulness for the children attending them. He has excellent clear communication skills and abilities which the children can understand and respond to. The philosophy of the program is "Be Strong", "Be Calm", "Be Kind", "Try Hard".

My grandson likes Craig and enjoyed previous classes he asked me could he come again. The program meant a lot to him. In his terms "Craig's Cool".

I recommend the CHAMPS MAT Group should be continued as I believe it is a great and safe way for children to learn the above philosophies which would hopefully assist them in later life.

Craig does a great job with the children and on behalf of my grandson and I, thank-you.



A participant undertaking an activity in the MAT program



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FINISH LINE

EVER!!! EVER

SPOTLIGHT ON A SERVICE

In each newsletter we plan to interview someone from a support agency so that you can learn a bit more about resources that are available to families.

What is your name?

SenseAbilities is a partnership owned and run by Kathy Clarkson Occupational Therapist and Robyn Kirkham, Retail Manager.

Who do you work for/what is your business?

We are an independent privately owned business that focuses primarily on providing sensory and developmental based resources and therapy equipment for people with special needs, however the resources are also very appropriate for those wanting to support typical development as well, particularly in the area of self regulation.

How long has the business been operating?

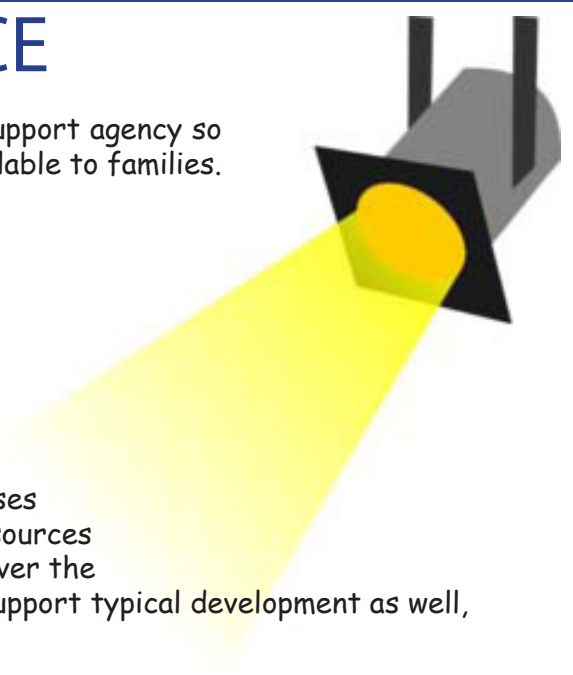
We have been trading for 14 years, initially purely as an internet home based business but expanded into a shop front retail outlet 6 years ago.

What made you decide to work/start the business?

When SenseAbilities began there was a very limited number of businesses able to provide resources for therapists, schools and parents of children with special needs, particularly those with sensory processing issues. We built our business from scratch focusing on quality, customer service and word of mouth. Each year we think that we might have reached our peak and then it grows all over again.

How do you think the items in this shop can help people? Can you tell us about some of the ways people use the items for themselves or their children?

The toys and resource in our shop can support people in a wide variety of ways from supporting or stimulating development, to helping address motor, planning or sensory processing difficulties or self care challenges such as feeding issues, through to anxiety and self regulation challenges. Self regulation is the way we calm or alert ourselves, the way we match our attention and energy levels to the demands of each different task that we face across the day. We begin to learn self regulate as infants and children using an increasing range of sensory and motor actions, for example sucking on a thumb, chewing on the collar of a shirt, cuddling a favourite toy, having a run around. As children begin to develop and move into teenage and adult years they start to add cognitive planning and organisational strategies to those sensory and motor actions. For some children and adults however the activities that are typically available in their day don't provide sufficient intensity or frequency of sensory input that they need to self regulate.



Many of the toys and resources in our store aim to provide that increased intensity of sensory and motor input to help them develop the ability to self regulate. For example necklaces or pencil toppers designed for chewing allow a child or adult to gain intense chewing actions rather than chewing on their pencils, fingers or clothing, biting or gaining this heavy work by pushing and pulling inappropriately. Other items like the weighted toys and blankets provide the heavy pressure that many find calming in order to concentrate on an activity, calm after being upset or calm sufficiently to get to sleep. All of the products are chosen specifically to support either an aspect of development or to use as a method of gaining sensory input.

How can families access the shop?

SenseAbilities has a website www.senseabilities.com.au; <<http://www.senseabilities.com.au>> with all our products listed for sale. Our Occupational Therapist has detailed information about each product and the purpose and ideas for it's use. The shop is located at 12 Winyard Drive Mooroolbark but not always open regular retail hours. If you are in the area and just want to pop in that is fine however if making a special trip it is advisable to phone 9726 8047 first to ensure we are open or to make an appointment.

What is the best part of your job?

Usually when people come into our shop, they are struggling with an issue or behaviour in their day to day life.

Sometimes these are small but often they are significant preventing them from being able to learn at school, be socially accepted or physically be calm and in control of the world in which we all live.

It is our hope that by the time they leave, a person has found resources to help them overcome some of these.

When you have customers, carers and professionals take the time out of their day to call you and say that our assistance has made a difference in someone's life, you know that it is all worthwhile.



Kirsty (editor) and the FaPMI team would like to thank **Lauren Cowling** for her assistance with the development of our **newsletter**.

Lauren has provided layout and editorial input for the last 18 months and decided to pursue some different career directions.

As a result this newsletter will be her last.



