



Welcome to the Autumn edition of the Eastern Health FaPMI newsletter. As we say good bye to the summer months and make ready for winter, it's time to enjoy what autumn brings. The changing leaves, the cooler temperatures and the harvest of autumn vegetables and fruit. This April is also full of important religious festivals for various communities, including Easter, Passover, Vaisakhi and Ramadan, and we send our best wishes to all.

In this newsletter there are great ideas for the holidays, including a scavenger hunt, making healthy snacks for hungry children, and a neat interactive platform called Child Nation. There is also a range of information and activities for parents, children and families. Enjoy!

Programs Term 2

(see attached flyers for more information)

Martial Arts as Therapy (MAT) group begins 27 April.

Space4Us 17 April day out.

Kids Club every 4th Wed, 4-6.30pm

FaPMI Coordinators

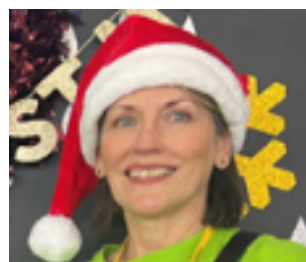
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Michelle Hegarty (Mon – Thu)
Becca Allchin (Mon, Tue, every other Wed)
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Newsletter produced by Elizabeth Fraser & the FaPMI team with Creative Content & Copy (rachel@ccandc.com.au).

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FaPMI is saying good bye to Ingrid, who has been with the team for the past 12 months. We thank her for her work and wish her the best in her new position.



SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES & EVENTS



Julian Opie: Studio for Kids

Kids are invited to create portraits in an inspiring studio setting featuring displays of the artist's works selected from the NGV Collection.

Using a custom-designed digital interactive that relates to Opie's recollection of looking into a mirror and carefully tracing his reflection, children can observe their image on screen, and experiment with line, colour and shape to produce a digital self-portrait in the manner of the artist.

Tues 21 March – Mon 10 April, 10am–5pm

NGV, 180 St Kilda Rd
FREE enquiries@ngv.vic.gov.au



The Little Food Festival

Join Beci Orpin, Melbourne Museum, United African Farmers, and more, for Australia's first food festival created for kids. It combines education, exploration, creativity and fun to help kids re-imagine what the future will look like for them, their communities, and the planet.

Plant seedlings, learn about bush food, get crafty, prepare nutritious meals, take part in a recycling relay race, discover a worm farm, and hear from Toot the Triceratops.

Wed 19 April & Thu 20 April, 10am–4pm

Fed Square, FREE, info@fedsquare.com



ArtPlay

Sit in the circle inside the camp. Think of an issue you care about. Choose inflatable sculptures to represent it. Mount them on your tent, sit inside ... and it's time to turn your mic on!

As visitors walk through the camp with magically lit up ideas on the tents, they can literally see what your thoughts are. Discuss things you care most about with the inquisitive audience.

They can't see you, but they sure can hear!

Parent and carers are invited to experience the Air Camp Exhibition for the last 45 minutes.

Age: 9 to 13 years Cost: \$15 per child

13&14 April, 10am–12pm & 2pm–4pm
Birrarung Marr behind Fed Square

Book: <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/artplay/Pages/artplay.aspx>



Child Nation

An interactive platform that guides kids from 7 to 11 years of age in creative place hacks –experiences that bring out their best imaginative headspace in response to the immediate world around them, celebrating their weirdest ideas and giving them permission to be themselves.

Child Nation is choose-your-own adventure in the real world!

<https://www.childnation.com.au>



OUTDOOR ACTIVITY: SCAVENGER HUNT

Let's get outside!! Autumn is a perfect season to get outdoors. It's cooler and there's a lot happening in backyards, parks and gardens. A nature scavenger hunt is a fun activity for the school holidays, birthdays or play dates. Use this poster or make up your own.

Set the time, place and even a prize for the kids who give it a go.



Download from: <https://www.ecoexplorers.com.au>

Check out Eco Explorers who provide a range of child-led and highly enriched sensory and outdoor bush programs for children and families of all ages. Their program has been developed to ignite your child's sense of curiosity, imagination and creativity through hands-on learning activities that support your child's development, social skills and physical development through movement and exercise.

<https://www.ecoexplorers.com.au>

Hidden Benefits of Scavenger Hunts



Text & photo: <https://occupationaltherapy.com.au/hidden-benefits-of-scamenger-hunts/>

1. Social Skills

Making a scavenger hunt a group activity is a great way to help your child play with others and practise using concepts such as keeping their body in the group, following the group plan, and using their thinking eyes. It also allows them to make some close friends along the way.

2. Sensory Regulation

Scavenger hunts can provide the perfect play activity for kids to enhance their sensory development – whether it be simply exploring and becoming aware of their different senses or as part of a sensory diet to help keep your child regulated.

3. Mind and Body Exercise

Giving your child a scavenger hunt checklist (visual, written or verbal format) for them to go through and collect items to tick off is an enjoyable way of working on executive functioning such as sequencing, organising and reinforcing problem-solving skills. Scavenger hunting can also be a good exercise for the body, particularly those kids who are inseparable from their screens!

4. Connecting With Nature

If your kids are bouncing off the walls, then take the scavenger hunting outdoors and let them explore the natural wonders of our fantastic backyard here in Australia! The fresh air, vitamin D and green space are known to reduce stress and improve mood in adults and kids, so it's a win all round.



RECIPES: HEALTHY SNACKS FOR HUNGRY KIDS

The following recipe ideas are from the Camp Australia Healthy Eating Cookbook for children and were tried and tested as healthy. These recipes also have kid approval!! They are easy enough to encourage children to get creative in the kitchen. Convenience snacks don't have to come out of a box or cost a lot.

Smoothies



Unsplash: Brenda Godinez

ingredients

- 1 banana
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp cinnamon

1. Peel the banana and break into pieces.
2. Blend all ingredients until smooth.
3. Serve cold.

You can experiment with other fruit and even vegetables!

Rice Bubble Hedgehog



<https://www.taniaskitchen.co.nz>

ingredients

- 1 cup dried fruit
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup cocoa
- 1/2 cup coconut
- 1/2 cup rice bubbles

Serves 24

1. Finely chop the dried fruit.
2. Melt the honey so it's warm and runny.
3. Mix all the ingredients together well.
4. Rolled the mixture into balls, spoon it into muffin wrappers, or flatten it out into a slice tin.
5. Refrigerate until set and then serve.

Cheesemite Scrolls

ingredients

- 4 cups self-raising flour plus extra for dusting
- 1 1/2 cups reduced fat milk
- 1 cup grated cheese
- Vegemite

Serves 6



1. Preheat an oven to 220°C.
2. Sift the flour into a bowl then mix in the milk.
3. When combined into a dough put extra flour on the bench and roll the pastry flat.
4. Spread a thin layer of Vegemite and grated cheese onto the dough then it roll from one side to the other.
5. Cut into 2-3cm thick slices and bake in the oven for approximately 30 minutes.

Apricot Balls

ingredients

- 200g dried apricots
- 1/4 cup coconut
- 2 VitaBrits
- 1 tbsp water



1. Place apricots, coconut and VitaBrits into a bowl and mash until smooth.
2. Add water gradually and continue to mix until well combined.
3. Using wet hands, form mixture into balls and roll in coconut.



BOOK REVIEW

Er...Mum?

Author: Wendy Lauder

Australian Authors (australianauthorsstore.com)

Er...Mum? by Wendy Lauder is based on a true story about when things don't quite go as planned in families. A busy mum who meant to drop her three daughters off at school on her way to work finds them still in the car long after they should have been dropped off, and it's stressful.

We know that many times in parenting we make mistakes (ruptures) and have to set to work, sometimes digging deep, to make things right again (repair). The story reminds us that we only need to be good enough as parents (not perfect), and that the great thing about rupture and repair is that if we do the repair well, then life lessons are learned and the relationship can end up stronger than when we started.

Er...Mum? can just be enjoyed as a story, knowing these principles are involved, or can be used to



discuss what it might be like for all involved, and talk about when ruptures happen in families.

Wendy Lauder is a Parent Infant Specialist and attachment worker and has been privileged to work with families for over 25 years in Central Victoria.

For further details email wlauder@hotmail.com.au



Family Relationship Support for Carers (FRSC) is a Victorian state-wide service that offers specialised support to families caring for someone with a disability. Support is offered to those directly involved in the care of the person with a disability regardless of age.

FRSC aims to improve children's wellbeing and prevent family breakdown by strengthening family relationships and building skills.

They recognise the role of young carers within our communities and are committed to providing tailored services to young carers to assist them in carrying out their responsibilities while also looking after their own health and wellbeing.

FRSC also runs **Tuning Into Kids** and **Tuning Into Teens** 6-week programs, at no cost to carers.

These programs are available to any family member, parent, sibling, guardian, grandparent, or foster parent, caring for a person with a disability, living anywhere in Victoria.

General services are FREE to eligible carers.

For more information contact us on 1300 303 346.

<https://www.each.com.au/service/family-relationship-support-for-carers>

FIONA'S LET'S TALK STORY



Let's Talk is a structured discussion between a mental health or family worker and a parent who experiences mental illness about parenting and their child's needs. Let's Talk supports healthy parent-child relationships, promoting the wellbeing of the child, parent and families. FaPMI Coordinator Bronwyn speaks to parent Fiona about her experience with Let's Talk.

Bronwyn: When did you do Let's talk?

Fiona: I did it with my family services worker a few years ago.

Bronwyn: What was going on for you at the time?

Fiona: I had several admissions to the inpatient unit at Northern Hospital but had not heard about FaPMI or Let's Talk. The only resource I accessed at that time was the *Let's Talk About It* flip book that I found in a brochure stand at the hospital. I was referred to family services because I wasn't able to care for my children on my own. When I was discharged, I lived with my mum and 3 children at her house during the week and went home with my husband at the weekends.

Bronwyn: How was Let's Talk introduced to you?

Fiona: I was still quite unwell at this time and was finding parenting a struggle. I had a good relationship with my family support worker and I knew that her main focus was to help me with the kids. She did not introduce Let's Talk in a formal way but just casually suggested that we work through each child's needs. One of my main concerns was the children squabbling with each other.

Bronwyn: How did you find using the log and working through the strengths and vulnerabilities for your children?

Fiona: I can't remember if she used the word vulnerabilities initially. I find this word a bit awkward because I didn't think of my kids as vulnerable, but I did have areas that I wanted to work on and change.

We were able to work through each child, identify their strengths and vulnerabilities, unpack these for each child and come up with specific strategies for me to try and help them deal with their own emotions and fight with each other less. I talked about the strategies with my mum and she helped me to implement some of them. It took several weeks to work through each of my 3 children and we did discuss other things along the way too.

Bronwyn: What was beneficial about Let's Talk?

Fiona: Completing Let's Talk was really helpful. It made me feel better about myself, it empowered me to deal with the kids, and it increased my confidence and really helped with my recovery. Let's Talk provided a way for me to re-engage with my kids. I was feeling a bit hopeless and thinking "I can't deal with this" but Let's Talk was a real empowerment tool which made me think "Yes, I could try this".

Bronwyn: If you were introducing Let's Talk to someone else, how would you do it?

Fiona: When I was having trouble with my kids, I did this thing called Let's Talk. It helped me to identify what my kids really needed at that time and gave me strategies to support the kids better than what I was doing previously. The clinician asked me questions about my kids and asked me what was happening with them. We talked about each child's strengths and challenges and then came up with some strategies to work on the vulnerabilities. Let's Talk is not about being a bad mum, it's about making parenting easier!



Making Kids Sport More Affordable For Families In 2023

Eligible families can apply for vouchers of up to \$200 to use at their registered Get Active Kids Voucher Activity Provider without having to worry about upfront costs. The vouchers can help pay for sporting equipment, uniforms and memberships in a range of activities – even learn to swim classes for toddlers.

To be eligible, kids must be aged 18 and under, a Victorian resident, named on a valid Commonwealth Health Care Card or Pensioner Concession Card, and named on a valid Medicare Card at the time of application.

A special consideration stream is available to support children residing in Victorian Care Services, temporary or provisional visa holders, undocumented migrants, and international students aged 18 and under, at the time of application.

Applications for this round of vouchers close 10 May. Families can also continue to claim reimbursement for expenses already incurred from 28 November 2022 up to 10 May 2023.

For more information: <https://www.getactive.vic.gov.au/>



Take a look at What's On in the Satellite space including upcoming programs, workshops, and activities!

<https://www.satellitefoundation.org.au/programs/program-calendar>

APRIL SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Ready Steady Balance – Mobiles workshops (online)

Wed 12 April, 10am–12pm AEST, ages 8–11 approx.
Thu 13 April, 1–3pm AEST, ages 12–14 approx.

Satellite Camp @ Urban Camp, Melbourne

Mon 17 April – Wed 19 April, ages 9–12 approx.

Our next **Satellite Connect program** (ages 18–25 years) will start in April. It will be followed by a FREE overnight retreat in May.

Online info session, Thu 13 April, 6:30–7:30pm.

Three workshops starting Thu 27 April, 5–9.30pm.

FREE, stand-alone, sessions of family therapy, without the waiting list!

WALK-IN Together

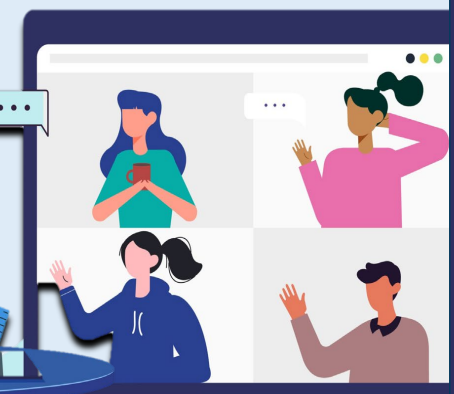
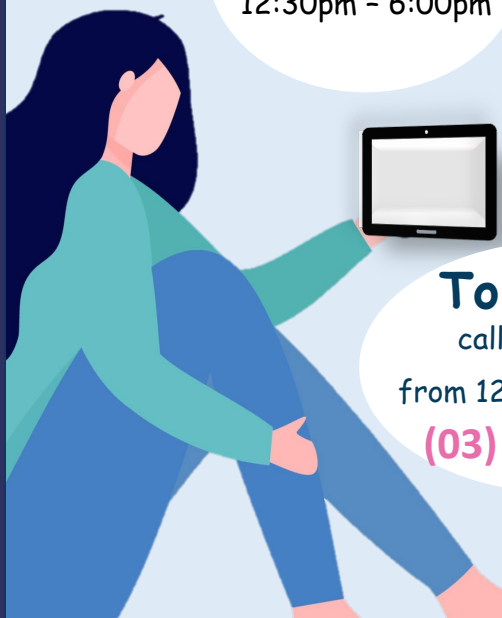
Session times
Monday afternoons
12:30pm – 6:00pm

For all
Victorian families, including those with alcohol/drug or serious mental health issues. At least two family members must attend together

Operates
on a first-in, first-served basis, online via Zoom

Website
<https://tinyurl.com/WalkInTogether>

To Attend
call any Monday
from 12:00pm – 5:00pm
(03) 8481 4800



A SPECIAL DONATION TO FaPMI

FaPMI has received a very special donation from Marcus Reeves, founder of She Won't Be Right Mate.

Marcus Reeves, the founder of mental health fundraising event She Won't Be Right Mate, hosted his second She Won't Be Right Mate car and bike show at the Yarra Glen Racecourse, drawing more than 1500 people and over 100 cars to the event. They raised \$18,000 which he donated to the Eastern Health Foundation for FaPMI.

Marcus says his own experiences of the Eastern Health Mental Health Program led him to want to give back in some way and help support men and young people going through similar issues. The cheque was gratefully received by Lisa Gill, Associate Program Director for the Eastern Health Mental Health and Wellbeing Program.

The donation will be put to good use supporting young people, parents and families by helping fund a range of peer support groups for children, information for parents, and the annual FaPMI Fun Day at the end of the year. With big thanks to Marcus!

<https://www.shewontberightmate.net.au>



She Won't Be Right Mate founder Marcus Reeves presenting the donation of \$18,000 to Eastern Health Associate Program Director Lisa Gill.



Marcus with a young participant in the FaPMI CHAMPS program.



The FaPMI team with Marcus and Lisa Gill.



Autumn Poems for Kids

AUTUMN PLUMS
My grandpa said
when plums are ripe
you know it's turning fall.
Plums are not a summer fruit;
their sweetness comes in fall.
I think of Grandpa every year
when plums are turning ripe.
I wish that he could be with me.
I'd tell him - he was right!

© Denise Rodgers ClassroomPoems.com

ClassroomPoems.com 

Hang out at Space 4 Us!

This is a monthly gathering for you to connect with other young people who have a family member with mental health concerns.

Meet new people, hear from others in similar situations, and learn new ways of looking after yourself.

Join us for games, group activities, outings, food, online catch ups and more!



IT'S A MONTHLY GATHERING – 4U!

Your Space – New Activities 4TK The Base 8 Station Street RINGWOOD



For more information contact
FaPMI Co-ordinator
Michelle on M: 0481 913 607
Or email:
fapmi@easternhealth.org.au
This monthly activity is fully supervised and open to young people aged 12 - 18 years in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Afternoon sessions run 4.30-6pm. School holidays dates & times vary.

PLEASE REGISTER TO ATTEND

2023 Dates

**Wed 18 January (school holiday activity)

Mon 20 February Games @ The Base

Mon 20 March Ringwood Lake BBQ

Monday 17 April DOCKLANDS DAY OUT

Mon 15 May Dinner Out – meet @ The Base

Mon 26 & Tues 27 June – 2 DAYS
SCHOOL HOLIDAY GROUP PROGRAM

Mon 17 July Tie-Dye @ The Base

Mon 21 August Movie Night @ The Base

Monday 18 Sep Horse Riding Holiday Outing

Mon 16 October Tennis Afternoon

Mon 20 November – Aquanation Swim

Monday 18 December – Celebration

With thanks to partner organisations



CHAMPS MAT LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

What is Champs?

CHAMPS (Children and Mentally Ill Parents) is a peer support program for children of parents who have a mental illness or mental health issues. The CHAMPS programs are for children aged between 8 and 12.

CHAMPS programs are based on the belief that children, parents and families do well when they have a shared understanding of mental health and wellbeing - and having a range of resources and supports can help when things are challenging. Most families experience a range of difficulties at some stage. Living with a mental illness or mental health issues can make coping with such difficulties and looking after children even more stressful. Children can benefit from spending time with other trusted adults and with children who may be having similar experiences. Eastern Health FaPMI (Families and Parents where there is a Mental Illness) program run a number of different CHAMPS programs including Peer Support Programs, Kids Club and a family fun day. The MAT Life Skills program is one of these programs.

What is the MAT Life Skills Program?

The MAT Life skills program is a physically active therapeutic program that combines the basics of behaviour management with the principles of traditional martial arts. It provides students with a structured opportunity to develop self-control and self esteem and it has been found it to be equally effective with both boys and girls, particularly those who display a lack of impulse control. It is our aim to teach students skills that they will transfer from the martial arts classes to other classes as well as to their behaviour in the schoolyard, at home, and in community contexts.

It is an eight-week program that focuses on teaching:

- How to identify various feelings
- Appropriate ways to respond to these feelings
- How to self-invest to achieve a positive future

The program does not teach children how to fight. There is no instruction in street fighting, throwing or weapons techniques. It does teach basic self-defence techniques such as palm blocks and evasions. It aims to provide participants with opportunities to experience success.

The program works around four basic teachings:

- **Be Strong**
- **Be Calm**
- **Be Kind**
- **Try Hard**

Who runs the group?

The group will be facilitated by staff from the MAT Life Skills program and Eastern Health. FaPMI (Families where a Parent has a Mental Illness) program. FaPMI coordinates referrals for the group and someone will speak to you by phone before the group commences to find out more about your situation and to check if the group is suitable for your child.

Is there a cost to attend?

There is no cost for children to attend the group. If assistance with transport is required we may be able to help depending on the area. Give us a call to discuss.

We welcome opportunities to catch up with you either at the beginning or the end of group time or, over the phone. Please let us know if your child is unable to attend for a week. We welcome your feedback and will be distributing evaluation forms at the end of the program. Please do not hesitate to contact **Michelle on 0481913607** if you have any questions or concerns.

Term 2 group runs on Thursday for 8 weeks 4.30pm – 5.30pm

**Mooroolbark Community Centre – Red Earth Room
125 Brice Ave, Mooroolbark**

**27 April , 4, 11, 18 & 25 May, 1, 15 & 22 June 2023
* Please note there is no group on 8 June**

**You must register to attend - please call
Michelle Hegarty 0481913607
Or email: fapmi@easternhealth.org.au**





Peer Support

A **Young Carer** is someone 25 years or under who provides care or support to a family member with an illness, mental illness, disability or addiction.

If this is you, then join and make connections with people who just 'get it'.

This is a free Carer Gateway program delivered by Little Dreamers across Victoria.



The program runs during the school term and is led by passionate Little Dreamers facilitators. An online program delivery is also available.

As part of this program you will:



- Have the opportunity to connect with people in similar circumstances
- Learn from your peers through the sharing of lived experience
- Participate in fun icebreakers and activities to get to know each other better and share some laughs

To sign up please complete [this form](#) and the Program Coordinator will be in touch to confirm details.

For more info, please email alma@littledreamers.org.au or give us a call on (03) 7067 8668.