

MEDIA RELEASE



15 October 2010

Good mental health for children

Developing good mental health is a key part of early childhood, and securing attachment behaviors with parents, educators and other key caregivers is critical to children's social, emotional and mental health.

If developed from birth, good mental health has a positive impact on a child's overall development, and will be beneficial throughout their lives.

Educators at Withcott Early Childhood Centre have a key role to play in introducing and maintaining protective factors that support early childhood mental health.

At Withcott Early Childhood Centre, children are provided:

- secure attachment relationships with key educators
- responsive care
- positive, supportive relationships between educators, children and families
- strong partnerships with families
- educators with good knowledge and understanding of child development
- sense of community
- inclusive practice
- respect for diversity.

Through attachment, good self-esteem and positive social and emotional wellbeing, children have the tools to develop good mental health throughout their lives.

Children who have these tools learn faster, are able to progress at school more easily and better able to manage the transition to school.

Withcott Early Childhood Centre tailors their learning program according to The Early Years Learning Framework, which is structured around three major components: belonging, being and becoming. All three are integral to promoting good mental health in children.

Belonging – young children learn the skills for sustaining mental health through positive interactions with significant people. The relationships we establish with the children and their families at our service contribute to the children's sense of belonging.

Being – highlights the value of childhood experiences like learning through play. Being encourages educators and families to support children in the experiences of childhood – experiences which help them to develop their social and emotional wellbeing.

Becoming – ties in all aspects of social and emotional wellbeing and mental health promotion. Becoming is about the growth and changes that occur in the early years and how these are shaped by experiences, including forming positive attachment relationships and experiencing planned play-based learning with parents and educators.

Educators at Withcott Early Childhood Centre are laying strong foundations for mental health early in the children's lives through positive social and emotional development that will help them grow into resilient and engaged adults.

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(Information taken from KidsMatter Early Childhood, 2010 and Childcare and Children's Health, 2009).

The Withcott Early Childhood Centre is currently seeking casual relief staff for all rooms at the centre. New staff will need a Certificate III or Diploma in Children's Services.

If you are interested in becoming a relief staff member, or would like more information on the after school care program at the Withcott Early Childhood Centre, please phone (07) 4630 3722 or drop in to see them at 42 Biggs Road.

If you would like any information about the centre please call (07) 4630 3722.

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