

# NCNS NEWSLETTER

## WE CELEBRATE HARMONY WEEK!

Harmony week is a time to celebrate the multiculturalism of Australia. The week is about inclusiveness, respect and belonging for all of us who live in Australia no matter where we came from. Orange is the colour used to represent this week and signifies social communication, meaningful conversations, the freedom of ideas and encouragement of mutual respect.

Facts and figures from [harmony.gov.au/about](http://harmony.gov.au/about)

- nearly half (49 per cent) of Australians were born overseas or have at least one parent who was
- we identify with over 300 ancestries
- since 1945, more than 7.5 million people have migrated to Australia
- 85 per cent of Australians agree multiculturalism has been good for Australia
- apart from English, the most common languages spoken in Australia are Mandarin, Arabic, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Italian, Greek, Tagalog/Filipino, Hindi, Spanish and Punjabi
- more than 70 Indigenous languages are spoken in Australia.

This week we celebrated Harmony Day at our Braddock Playtime Playgroup. This included dance, and a multicultural feast for the children to enjoy with meals originating from Iran, Turkey, Samoa, Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Australia Mexico, South Africa. The kids had an amazing time celebrating culture with their peers.





We also celebrated during the Harmony Day Event last Thursday at Kingswood Park Public School. Connect, Kari, NMA, Gateway also joined the event, and each brought activities for the kids and their families to engage and enjoy.

The KP students are so amazing, throughout the event they were all so engaged and polite which we love to see. It is a wonderful community at KP Public, and we loved seeing all of the families having a great time, engaged and happy to celebrate each other and all cultures.





Download our Harmony Day Recipe Book

# HARMONY DAY

*Celebrating Our Cultural Diversity*

NCNS Staff share their favourite recipes from around the world.





## OUR GOLDEN OLDIES ENJOY CUSTOM SENIORS WEEK FIND-A-WORD AT EVENT

NSW Seniors Festival ran from 11th to 24th March 2024 and this year's theme was 'Reach Beyond.' The theme encourages seniors to seek out new experiences and make new friends by participating in activities during the festival. The week celebrates the role and contributions of older adults to the local community.

During Seniors week, we were unfortunately unsuccessful in obtaining a grant however we decided to still run a small event as we did not want our seniors to miss out. The event was held last Thursday at our South Penrith Neighbourhood Centre with our Golden Oldies Seniors group. We organised delicious catering for morning tea, we had lucky seat prizes to win and our wonderful Jerry made up a Find-a-Word puzzle with all words relevant to seniors.

Our attendees absolutely loved doing the customized find-a-word and some even took them home with them.



On the day, there was lots of smiling faces and laughs had by all. It was a successful morning here at South Penrith Neighbourhood Centre, ran by our amazing finance office, Lisa and our Admin & Community Worker, Jerry who is a favourite among our Golden Oldies group.

To find out more about our Golden Oldies group, please call the centre on 02 4721 8520.





## BACK TO SCHOOL : CREATING A STUDY ROUTINE THAT WORKS FOR YOUR CHILD

School holidays is about to start, and we know that when it's time to go back to school, it can be challenging for both carers and children to get back into routine. So how can we prepare for when our kids go back into term 2.

Now the hard part, how to set up a study routine.

To get you started here are some suggestions:

### Sleep Routines

All children need good quality sleep to function and get through the school day. Increasingly children are on devices just before bedtime with many, especially teens having devices overnight in their rooms.

Children aged 6-12 years need 9-12 hours of sleep and for teens, 8-10 hours is recommended.

It's important to note the stimulation caused by blue light can interfere with sleep patterns. The blue light can interfere with melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep. Children should therefore not use devices just before bed. Instead encourage children to read, do puzzles or meditation before bed.

### Physical Activities

Physical activity should be incorporated into your child's everyday routine. Research has shown that physical activity helps with memory, concentration, and processing of information, all which help with study.

Furthermore, regular exercise reduces stress levels by releasing endorphins thus promoting better mood. Another benefit to exercise is the increase in energy levels which can help with study.



### Study Space, Study Time, and organisation

A regular study time helps children to incorporate study into their routine. Perhaps after school, after a break or exercise works best.

Consider the physical space, can you dedicate a quiet, well-lit and distraction free place for study? New stationary, a plant or a new planner can help children start the year fresh. You want to make the area as calm and inviting as possible. Don't have a proper area? Consider the local library or homework club. Most schools and public libraries offer free options.

Take the opportunity to help your child to organise their time effectively. A visual planner can easily be printed out and filled out to include assignments, tests, and events that need to be scheduled in. Bigger tasks can be broken down into manageable tasks and assigned a time frame to help children stay on track.

Depending on the age of your child, you may find an app or electronic diary with built in reminders and alarms work best.

There really is no magic formula when considering a study routine, but a good place to start is to consider your surroundings, sleep quality, organisation tools and exercise.

**Article Written by: Sussan Omar**  
NCNS Parenting Facilitator



# FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY – FROM 1973 TO TODAY



Functional Family Therapy (FFT) began over 50 years ago and was developed by Jim Alexander as a different model to help adolescents and their families with family challenging dynamics. The model was developed in the early 1970's and borrowed from different areas of therapy like behavioural and family systems. Jim used these theories to create the FFT model which is a phase-based model where therapists use different techniques to create trust, build hope and reduce risk. After development of the model and up until 1982, Jim led the first randomised controlled trial of FFT to assess the impact of FFT on families against alternative treatments. The trial found that FFT had a really positive impact.

Between 1983 and 1991, the FFT model underwent refinement, and more research was conducted by independent researchers to replicate the model, with the research finding positive impacts of FFT on serious youth offenders. Other research that was conducted found that FFT had an impact on preventing foster placement for youth and families and youth with substance abuse issues. In 1986, Jim received the Distinguished Contribution to Family Therapy Research Award from the American Family Therapy Academy.

From 1992 to 2001, multiple organisations recognised FFT as an evidence-based model, based on the research findings from 1973 to 1991. This was a significant milestone for FFT, along with the publication of a study in Sweden of the first international replication of FFT. By this stage, the FFT model was being rolled out by community organisations across the USA and was helping over 2000 youth and family members.

From 2002 onwards, FFT expanded globally. In 2018 the first peer-review study was published, demonstrating the positive impact that the child protection arm of FFT, FFT-Child Welfare (FFT-CW) had on families. At present, there are 340 teams serving over 40,000 youth and family members across ten countries. Over 31,500 youth and families have participated in multiple research studies and there have been 72 peer-reviewed studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of FFT and its variations. FFT-CW started in Australia in 2017 and NCNS is proud to have been delivering FFT-CW since then, across the Penrith, Blue Mountains and Lithgow areas.

**Article Written by Wendy Adams**  
NCNS - Family Practitioner



# FEATURED

## NCNS TERM 2 PROGRAM DIRECTORY



CIRCLE OF SECURITY – PARENTING™ – TERM 2 2024



Tuning In To Teens - Term 2 2024



INDIGENOUS PEACEFUL PARENTS



Early Childhood Developmental Outreach Day



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