A NOTE FROM THE ACTING MANAGER OF THE HOME EDUCATION UNIT

Dear Home Education Community

I hope you have enjoyed a great start to the new year and you and your family have settled into a daily home education routine that is working well for you. A special welcome to new families to the home education community.

A reminder: if you have received this newsletter and your child is now enrolled at a school, please inform the HEU in writing. Include in this written communication (to our email address homeeducation@det.qld.gov.au) the name of the child who has returned to school, the name of the school and the date they were enrolled. Please also be reminded that you must return the Certificate of Registration. This may be sent to:

The Manager
Home Education Unit
PO BOX 3710
SOUTH BRISBANE Business Centre Qld 4010

We wish all our families a wonderful year of learning and look forward to working with you through the 2018 year.

Regards
Paula

DO YOU WANT AN ID CARD FOR YOUR CHILD?
WHAT? A photographic identification card used to show a child is registered for home education.
WHO? Any child who is fully registered. (ID cards are not available to provisionally registered children.)
WHEN? The card will be valid for your child’s registration year, or until the registration ceases.

TRANSPORT CONCESSION FARES
Department of Transport and Main Roads determine concessions. Children aged 5 to 14 years fall under the child concession category. Students aged 15 years or older are eligible for a concession fare and will need to show the HEU ID card when purchasing tickets.

HOW TO REQUEST AN ID CARD: Email an electronic passport style current photograph of your child to the Home Education Unit (blank background, head and shoulders, facing forward) homeeducation@det.qld.gov.au. Unlike passport photos, smiles are permitted. Please include a statement that, “This is a current photo of my child (full name). Their birthday is (date); and current postal address.”

SCOOTLE Access
Scootle is an online database of educational resources directly linked to the Australian Curriculum. Available resources include video clips, information sites, games and material to promote critical and creative thinking. Further information can be found here.

If you would like to access Scootle to support your child’s home education, please contact Senior Education Officer, Regina Nommensen at homeeducation@det.qld.gov.au, providing your registered child’s name in your email. (Parents of children who are provisionally registered are ineligible to register for Scootle access.)
ANZAC DAY Wednesday 25 April 2018
Anzac Day goes beyond the anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli in 1915.

It is the day on which we remember all Australians who served and died in war and on operational service. The spirit of Anzac, with its qualities of courage, mateship, and sacrifice continues to have meaning and relevance to our sense of national identity.

Australian War Memorial website

See the following document from the Learning Place for numerous resources:
http://education.qld.gov.au/students/grants/scholarships/pdfs/anzac-day-resources.pdf
If you wish to attend a ceremony in your area, go to the ANZAC Day website to find out about ceremonies, or alternatively, contact your local state or federal MP or the local RSL to find out when and where the services are in your locality.

Out of the Box Festival
Queensland Performing Arts Centre’s (QPAC) biennial festival for children aged eight years and under is returning this year from 26 June to 1 July 2018. Out of the Box takes participants on a journey through cultures, tales and playful moments.

For the first time, Out of the Box is offering a one-ticket entry to the festival enabling all children to participate in all the in-theatre experiences and activities that they can fit into one day.

Teachers and educators can access a special preview of 2018’s festival highlights to help plan their itinerary. The full program will be announced in coming months.

You can find out more at the festival website.

(Source: A to Z of Early Childhood, Edition 102-January 2018)

For the North Queenslanders who are home educating, the Emerging Writers’ program is about to kick off again! It is a creative writing program for youth aged 13-17 years. The meetings are held at the Aitkenvale library from 4-6pm and are free. To attend these meetings, you must be a member of Emerge and the Townsville Writers and Publishers Centre (TWPC).

See the following link for more details: http://www.twpc.org/the-feed or email Chris Picone at emerge@twpc.org.
NATIONAL TESTING 1, 2, 3…

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM – LITERACY AND NUMERACY (NAPLAN) TESTS

NAPLAN testing will be conducted in all Australian schools on:

- **Tuesday 15 May 2018** – Language conventions and Writing tests
- **Wednesday 16 May 2018** – Reading
- **Thursday 17 May 2018** – Numeracy

Children registered for home education may be able to access schools, should their parents wish them to sit the NAPLAN testing.

If you would like to access this service, you will need to obtain a letter from the HEU to help arrange this. Emails have been sent to parents of all age-eligible children, explaining the NAPLAN procedure. If you wish your child to sit these tests, please refer to the email.

There is no need to contact the HEU if you do not intend for your child to sit the tests.

It is requested you contact the Home Education Unit by **Tuesday, 6 March 2018** to organise the letter of introduction to a school. Please note that you will need to finalise arrangements with schools by **Tuesday, 20 March 2018** to allow them time to arrange additional booklets. When you have confirmed arrangements with the school, it is requested you advise the HEU of the name of the school at which your child is sitting the tests in order for the Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority (QCAA) to be informed.

Example tests are available on the National Assessment Program (NAP) website at the following link: [http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/the-tests](http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/the-tests)

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QCS TEST

Parents of students currently registered as age equivalent Year 12 and who are interested in facilitating the **Queensland Core Skills Test (QCS Test)** for their child later in the year, please provide an expression of interest to the Unit by emailing us at [homeeducation@det.qld.gov.au](mailto:homeeducation@det.qld.gov.au). Contact the authorising body, the QCAA, for further information regarding the test itself. QCAA contact details are: 3864 0394 or email [qcs.admin@qcaa.qld.edu.au](mailto:qcs.admin@qcaa.qld.edu.au)

Who sits for the QCS test?

Any student registered for home education in the final year of their program, who is working towards the **Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)** may wish to participate.

Participation in this test is one way that the home educated student can satisfy the literacy & numeracy requirements of the QCE. A result of a ‘C’ or above (grading A–E) in the QCS Test will ensure the literacy & numeracy requirements for the QCE are met. **The QCS Test on its own is not a QCE.** It should be considered as only one component of a range of credit-earning studies. Refer to the QCS link above, for more information.

**Alternative examinations to fulfil these requirements are available.** More information about the QCS can be found on the QCAA website [https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/qcs-test/publications](https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/qcs-test/publications).
**Aussie Educator - Student Competitions**

If your child is keen to take on a challenge, there are numerous competitions occurring throughout the year across a range of learning areas listed on the website below:


*See the website for further details and dates.*

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**A Social/Emotional Skill Development Program for children aged 8 – 12 years**

The Social Skills Training Institute is a subsidiary of the not-for-profit Autism CRC Ltd, which manages the Cooperative Research Centre for Living with Autism. The program was developed and evaluated through the Clinical Psychology program at the University of Queensland, by Dr Renae Beaumont.

As the new school year has now commenced for school-based education, the Social Skills Training Institute (SST) has produced new social and emotional skill development resources (for children approximately 8-12 years of age). **Secret Agent Society (SAS)** is an evidence-based approach using an espionage-themed computer game, board game, posters, learning action games and fun gadget and cards to engage children to learn to feel calmer, braver and make friends.

The free downloadable **SAS Individualised Planning Guide** aligns with their SAS Computer Game Pack and is a good place to start exploring SAS.

For further information, they may be contacted on 07 37208740 or visit their website: www.sst-institute.net

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Some Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks provide free services to job seekers.

The MEGT Website is an example of one group that provides assistance at no cost. A New Employment Services email is distributed weekly with general vacancies for all job seekers. Gateway Services provide a free-to-register online jobs board to help job seekers find an apprenticeship or traineeship.
**Library News** - Featured this edition:

**Redbank Plains Library**
From February 2018, library members and the local community will notice a change to the Redbank Plains Library building when work to repurpose the space commences. To ensure public safety during the implementation it will be necessary to disrupt service provision at the facility which will close from 12.00 pm Saturday, 3 March 2018 and reopen at 10.00 am Monday, 12 March 2018. Redbank Plains Library members will be able to return items using the after-hours chute located outside the library's front door. In coming months, library public programming (adults' and children's programs) will continue to be provided to the Redbank Plains community in outreach mode including at the new Redbank Plains Community Centre, local parks and other partnership based locations. Digital literacy training, such as computer and tablet-based programs will be delivered at existing library locations including selected Mobile Library stops.

**Springfield Central Library**
Located on the corner of Sirius and Main Streets at the Orion Town Centre and 8kms from the Redbank Plains Library, this state of the art library will provide the community with a new space to enjoy and a destination where they can relax, learn and connect with others. It will offer a new hands-on digital experience that will delight, inform and build the Ipswich communities' digital capacity while supporting the Smart City initiative. The facilities of the library service are designed to engage and promote self-development, helping users to gain knowledge and have fun. It will offer greater access to public transport with a bus terminal and train station in close proximity.


**QUEENSLAND MUSEUM & SCIENCE CENTRE, LEARNING RESOURCES, LOAN KITS**

The museum operates four separate campuses: South Brisbane, Ipswich, Toowoomba and Townsville.

- **Brisbane address:** cnr Grey & Melbourne Streets, South Brisbane QLD 4101 **Hours:** Mon-Sun 9.30-5.00
  - **Ph:** 3840 7555
- **Museum of Tropical Queensland, Townsville**: [http://www.mtq.qm.qld.gov.au/](http://www.mtq.qm.qld.gov.au/) **Ph:** 4726 0600
FEATURE ARTICLE

Eleven games and activities for parents to encourage mathematics in early learning
By Sivanes Phillipson, Monash University; Ann Gervasoni, Monash University

How can parents best help their children with their schooling without actually doing it for them? This article is part of our series on Parents' Role in Education, focusing on how best to support learning from early childhood to Year 12.

Before beginning official schooling, parents can give their young children a boost in learning mathematics by noticing, exploring and talking about maths during everyday activities at home or out and about.

New research shows that parents play a key role in helping their children learn mathematics concepts involving time, shape, measurement and number. This mathematical knowledge developed before school is predictive of literacy and numeracy achievements in later grades.

One successful approach for strengthening the role of parents in mathematics learning is Let's Count, implemented by The Smith Family. This builds on parents' strengths and capabilities as the first mathematics educators of their children. The Let's Count longitudinal evaluation findings show that when early years educators encourage parents and families to confidently notice, explore and talk about mathematics in everyday activities, their young children's learning flourishes.

Indeed, children whose families had taken part in Let's Count showed greater mathematical skills than those in a comparison group whose families had not participated. For example, they were more successful with correctly making a group of seven (89% versus 63%); continuing patterns (56% versus 34%); and counting collections of 20 objects (58% versus 37%).

These findings, among many others, are a strong endorsement of the power of families helping their children to learn about mathematics in everyday contexts.

What parents can do to promote maths every day
Discussing and exploring mathematics with children requires no special resources. Instead, what is needed is awareness and confidence for parents about how to engage.

However, our research shows that one of the biggest barriers to this is parents’ lack of confidence in leading maths education at home.

Through examining international research, we identified the type of activities that are important for early maths learning which are easy for parents to use. These include:

1. Comparing objects and describing which is longer, shorter, heavier, or holds less.
2. Playing with and describing 2D shapes and 3D objects.
3. Describing where things are positioned, for example, north, outside, behind, opposite.
4. Describing, copying, and extending patterns found in everyday situations.
5. Using time-words to describe points in time, events and routines (including days, months, seasons and celebrations).
6. Comparing and talking about the duration of everyday events and the sequence in which they occur.
7. Saying number names forward in sequence to ten (and eventually to 20 and beyond).
8. Using numbers to describe and compare collections.
9. Using perceptual and conceptual subitising (recognising quantities based on visual patterns), counting and matching to compare the number of items in one collection with another.

10. Showing different ways to make a total (at first with models and small numbers).

11. Matching number names, symbols and quantities up to ten.

**Games to play using everyday situations**

Neuroscience research has provided crucial evidence about the importance of early nurturing and support for learning, brain development, and the development of positive dispositions for learning. Early brain development or “learning” is all about the quality of children’s sensory and motor experiences within positive and nurturing relationships and environments. This explains why programs such as Let’s Count are successful. Sometimes it can be difficult to come up with activities and games to play that boost children’s mathematics learning, but there are plenty. For example, talk with your children as you prepare meals together. Talk about measuring and comparing ingredients and amounts.

You can play children’s card games and games involving dice, such as Snakes and Ladders, or maps, shapes and money. You can also read stories and notice the mathematics – the sequence of events, and the descriptions of characters and settings.

Although these activities may seem simple and informal, they build on what children notice and question, give families the chance to talk about mathematical ideas and language, and show children that maths is used throughout the day.

*Parents are encouraged to provide learning opportunities that are engaging and relevant to their children ([www.shutterstock.com](http://www.shutterstock.com))*

**Make it relevant to them**

Most importantly, encouraging maths and numeracy in young children relies on making it appealing and relevant to them.

For example, when you take your child for a walk down the street, in the park or on the beach, bring their attention to the objects around them – houses, cars, trees, signs.

Talk about the shapes and sizes of the objects, talk about and look for similarities and differences (for example: let’s find a taller tree or a heavier rock), count the number of cars parked in the street or time how long it takes to reach the next corner.

Discuss the temperature or the speed of your walking pace.

Collect leaves or shells, and make repeating patterns on the sand or grass, or play Mathematical I Spy (I spy with my little eye, something that’s taller than mum).

It is never too soon to begin these activities. Babies who are only weeks old notice differences in shapes and the number of objects in their line of sight.

So, from the earliest of ages, talk with your child about the world around them, being descriptive and using mathematical words. As they grow, build on what they notice about shapes, numbers, and measures. This is how you teach them mathematics.