2016 has been a busy year for both the CHIP Centre and the CHIP Family Support Group. The CHIP Centre has been involved with Cohort Assessment and Professional Development in several schools this year as well as identification and counselling of individual CHIP.

We acknowledge the death of Professor Brian Start founder of the CHIP Unit at the University of Melbourne. Brian was a true champion of CHIP.

We have had some much appreciated positive feedback from participants at the workshops this year and the CHIP Family Support Group are in the process of planning some great workshops next year with science, music and coding as well as outdoor activities.

The Christmas picnic on Sunday 20th November was a great opportunity for 40 parents and CHIP to get to know each other. The beautiful weather and venue made for perfect conditions and the picnic food was delicious. The children played games that promoted team work, problem solving and physical challenges.

In this CHIP Chat
- CHIP Forum Report
- Learning at Portarlington PS
- Marine Science workshop report
- Do “Gifted” and “Anxious” Go Hand in Hand?
- Flyers of Interest

Christmas Picnic

CHIP Forum Report

We welcomed Professor Karen Stagnitti from Deakin University to our latest CHIP Forum, which was held at Kardinia International College on the 21st November 2016. Karen’s talk on play-based learning is summarised below.

Small children begin to play by manipulating objects. They use single, repetitive actions but
To Develop Children of High Intellectual Potential

develop more complexity in their play by age two. They imitate others (e.g. help with chores) and use high level thinking to substitute objects into their play (e.g. use a shoe as a phone). Play becomes exponentially more complex as the child grows. A child may create characters with deep belief systems and logical story sequences, perhaps extending on an idea over days/weeks, or sharing their story with peers. Their dolls may have their own problems, make their own decisions and even have their own life.

Observational studies may provide us with evidence of high level thinking/theory of mind. For example, intellectual capacity can be inferred by observing the type and size of the problem at hand ("my 5yr old is using milk bottles to build an underground tunnel system for guinea pigs" - this child may be a CHIP!). Or we may observe that an older child, whose play simply involves manipulating objects, is developmentally delayed or perhaps affected by (early) trauma.

It is important that delays are recognised and addressed early because pretend play strengthens language and narrative. A lack of these skills can lead to serious impacts on school performance, reading and social competence. Researchers have noted that children who are unable to play effectively have been viewed by teachers as being ‘socially interruptive’ in class.

Generally speaking, CHIP will reach milestones at a faster rate than their age-based peers. Pretend play can be observed in CHIP at ten or 11 months whereas other children begin at 18 months to 2 years. CHIP are also known for building social skills early by having imaginary friends (this form of play should be encouraged as it teaches the child to think from other perspectives). However some CHIP who are ‘mathematical thinkers’ may not develop creative stories or narratives at all, but will still reach play-based milestones in a different way.

Karen’s tips for encouraging play:

- Make time for play (value it, don’t belittle it)
- Make space for play (environment sparks creativity)
- Provide objects to encourage object substitution (not just single purpose toys)
- Physically interactive play is important (think of the lovely, uplifting hormones that are released)
- Balance screen time (it has a place, but doesn’t help with language/narrative development)
- Spark thinking. Don't take over! Don’t provide solutions.

Learning at Portarlington Primary School

As part of our whole assessment schedule, we have incorporated measures to identify the learning strengths of our students.

Over the past two years, Dr. Sandra Lea-Wood has screened our students from years 3-6. We use a range of tools to determine the point of need for all of our students but we saw a real
importance to more closely identify the needs of our children who are operating at higher levels. In 2015 and 2016, all teachers have been involved in Professional Development with Sandra and three staff (including myself) attended a CHIP forum at Kardinia College. This year we held two parent forums with about 30 parents in attendance during the afternoon and evening sessions. Our greater depth of learning and understanding for both our staff and parents has benefitted our children immensely. This year we have implemented STEM education challenges, a Solar Boat Program and the children have experienced coding and 3D printing opportunities. Next year, we will be further developing our work in this area to strengthen our extension and enrichment programs.

Lesley-Ann Allbutt
Principal
Portarlington Primary School

Marine Science October

Sixteen CHIP became Marine Scientists in October as eager minds descended on the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre in Queensliff.

The children had the chance to get up close with some of the marine animals in the ‘touch pool’ and then were able to take in the informative displays. We cheered when the elderly one-eyed pufferfish managed to find her food!

There was in depth discussion about different shark species and whales; with the children asking some very in-depth questions.

Finally the children were able to look at the Marine animals under microscopes to discover the unique structures that these animals possess and the purpose of their structures.

A big thank you to our guide Alex for her enthusiastic introduction to Marine Science and to the Centre for hosting us.
Do “Gifted” and “Anxious” Go Hand in Hand?

http://anxietyfreechild.com/gifted-children/

If your CHIP is dealing with anxiety and stress, consider some of these helpful steps.

Teach Coping Skills

Though totally eliminating anxiety may be an impossible task, parents can help their gifted children to manage anxiety and turn it into a tool. Clinical child psychologist Maureen Neihart suggests these techniques:

- Practice deep, controlled breathing before or during stressful situations: Have your child place one hand under their belly button and the other on their chest while taking deep, slow breaths. When done properly, their bottom hand will move farther out than the top hand.
- Learn to relax by tensing then relaxing their muscles: Have your child clench their fists for five seconds, then open them slowly for 10 seconds. Apply this technique through all the major muscle groups in the body, from arms to toes, in order to reduce tension
- Help your child overcome their fears: Though it may be easier to swoop in and rescue your child from anxiety-inducing situations, it’s actually more beneficial to encourage controlled, incremental steps toward overcoming their fears

Encourage Positive Social Interactions

For many gifted children, especially those who tend toward shyness, social interactions may lead to anxiety. According to Dr. Jill Burness, factors such as fear of being evaluated, a tendency toward self-criticism, perfectionism or hypersensitivity, and even simply being singled out as gifted can all exacerbate feelings of anxiety and stress.

Help your gifted child develop social skills by:

- Role-playing social situations with your child to prepare them for real life encounters
- Acting as a buffer in sensitive or difficult situations
- Teaching children positive self-talk to temper self-criticism
- Providing additional time to prepare for social events, presentations or displays of abilities

Utilize Available Tools and Resources

There are many books and programs for child anxiety such as what we offer and others, so take advantage of using a predefined system that’s been optimized to make it easy for parents like you to help their kids.

Stimulate Creativity

Creativity may be a defining characteristic for many gifted children, but it’s also among the most fragile, according to Carol Morreale, President of the Illinois Association for the Gifted. Our society tends to value productivity above creativity, so it falls to parents to nurture and stimulate this important trait in their gifted children.

- Help promote your child’s creativity by
To Develop Children of High Intellectual Potential

disorder by providing a structured discipline – such as art or music — in which to explore the child’s interests

- Providing access to materials, supplies and resources that further creative exploration
- Withholding judgment on the product of creative activity; instead, encourage the activity itself, as even praise can influence and stifle children’s natural exploration of their creative impulses
- Limiting TV and screen time; instead, spend time imagining and conversing with your child
- Modeling creativity by exploring your own interests
- Allowing children to solve problems for themselves and to make their own aesthetic judgments

Promote both Emotional and Cognitive Intelligence

For many gifted children, cognitive intelligence develops quickly – while emotional intelligence develops at a more typical rate. According to Dr. Sandra Ma of Northwestern University, when parents make a special effort to nurture emotional intelligence, their children have a better chance of gaining confidence and feeling emotionally secure.

You can help nurture your child’s emotional intelligence by:

- Providing them with ways to articulate their feelings, as they may not be able to express their emotions and experiences clearly

- Offering access to non-competitive, extra-curricular activities that allow them to explore their interests without the pressure to achieve good grades

Gifted children’s unique traits make them special – but can also cause anxiety and stress. The good news is that with a bit of help from parents, these characteristics also offer the potential amazing life experiences and achievements.

Above all, let your child know that you value them for who they are, and not just for what their talents allow them to accomplish or produce. Allow your child to explore the possibilities their talents represent, all while providing a safe environment where they can push their limits without fear of judgment.

To all our CHIP families have a wonderful and safe Christmas and New Year.

Thank you to Kardinia International College and Highton Primary School for supporting our workshops and forums again this year.

Thank you to the wonderful CHIP Family Support Group who volunteers to organise and facilitate the great workshops.

Thank you to Mandy, Kate, Cassie, Laura and Lesley for your contribution to this newsletter.

Sandra Lea-Wood PhD
Manager
CHIP Centre Geelong 0407320043
www.chipgeelong.ingeelong.com.au

To Develop Children of High Intellectual Potential
Geelong Regional Chess Championships
Bellarine SC - Drysdale, Drysdale

Tuesday, 21st March 2017

Full details and entries from: https://au.tornelo.com/tournaments/geelong--4
Jump online to find more zones in close proximity. No geographical restrictions.

✓ A fun, safe, educational and socially inclusive environment.
✓ The Tornelo™ software ensures that all students play against players of a similar standard; we expect beginners and experts of any age to enjoy a fun, learning and social experience.
✓ Jnr Primary (P-3), Primary (P-6), Middle-Years (grades 5-9), Secondary
✓ Assistance and mentoring from Accredited Coaches
✓ No minimum or maximum participation (recommended team size of 14)
✓ All Zone events run from 9:15am-2:00pm (aim to arrive 15min early)
✓ Entry fee $20.00 (inc. GST) per player
✓ Medals and trophy prizes awarded on the day; a certificate for every player
✓ Winning school in each Zone qualifies for State Finals
✓ All players play 7 games (no knock-outs) Jnr Primary play only 5 games.
✓ All equipment provided

Venue: Bellarine Secondary - Drysdale Campus
Peninsula Drive, Drysdale

Date: Tuesday, 21st March 2017

Divisions: Primary, Middle Years and Open Secondary

Reserve your places early so you don’t miss out; most zones will end up FULLY BOOKED!

www.interschool.com.au

National Interschool Chess Championships
451 North Rd, Ormond, Victoria, 3204 041200 377 02 9008 6271
www.interschool.com.au interschool@chesskids.com.au

To Develop Children of High Intellectual Potential
Parent Learn to Play: Train the Trainer
Professor Karen Stagnitti with guest speaker Rachel Smith

Monday 23rd January 2017
Geelong Library & Heritage Centre
9:00am - 4:30pm
51 Lt. Malop Street, Geelong VIC 3220
Level 5 Wuri Youang South

ABOUT
This one day workshop trains participants to run the Parent Learn to Play course for parents. Parent Learn to Play can be either a 7 session or 12 session course for groups of parents. Parent Learn to Play aims to build parent capacity to understand their child's play and how to encourage their child to play. Parent-child interaction during play can build strong bonds between the child and parent.

The workshop covers 6 key play skills, what to say during play, and how to work effectively with parents. Rachel Smith, who is developing ‘Parent’s Play’ for parents who experience intergenerational poverty, will give a 2 hour session during the workshop on how to effectively engage parents. This practical workshop would be valuable to therapists and early childhood intervention workers who work with parents and children.

Workshop content:
- What is Parent Learn to Play?
- Parent-child Interaction through play – responsive parenting that builds attachment
- How to set up sessions
- What are 6 key play skills?
- How to increase complexity in play through verbal responses
- Working effectively with parents
- Workshop tricky questions

PRESENTER’S PROFILE
Professor Karen Stagnitti currently works as Professor, Personal Chair at the School of Health and Social Development at Deakin University, Victoria, Australia. She graduated with a Bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Queensland. For over 30 years she has mainly worked in early childhood intervention programs in community-based settings as part of a specialist paediatric multidisciplinary team.

In 2003 she graduated from LaTrobe University with a Doctor of Philosophy. Her area of research is children's play. Karen has written five books on play. She also has over 80 national and international papers published as well as 20 book chapters. Her norm referenced standardised play assessment, the Child-Initiated Pretend Play Assessment was published in 2007. From this research, the Learn to Play approach to building play ability in children was developed through clinical work. Throughout the year, she is invited to present her work on the play ability of children nationally and internationally. Currently she teaches into the Master of Child Therapy at Deakin University.

GUEST SPEAKER
Rachel Smith has a Bachelor of Education and has worked as a primary teacher in Catholic education for the past 15 years. Currently Rachel is a PhD student at Deakin University. While working as a teacher Rachel completed her Master of Education in early number learning and leadership. Rachel is an expert in working with parents and children who experience intergenerational poverty. Rachel is trained in analyzing the quality of engagement between parent and infant/child using an internationally recognized tool. Rachel's specialty is play based parenting programs and parent child engagement.

Rachel's first study gathered information about what parents believe about play and what they would like to see in playgroups and community services. Rachel has designed and trialed ‘Parents Play’, a play based program based on what parents want. Rachel has implemented the program in a primary school setting and facilitates this program with parents and children each week. Parents Play is currently being implemented Australia wide and internationally. The study will be complete by the end of 2017 and Parents Play will be made available to organizations worldwide.

COST
$320 (GST Ind.)

Registration opens Monday 7 November 2016. Please register online at www.learntoplayevents.com/events
Play in Schools for Teachers and Therapists
Professor Karen Stagnitti and Dr Louise Paatsch

Tuesday 24th January 2017
9:00am - 4:30pm
Geelong Library & Heritage Centre
51 Lt. Malop Street, Geelong VIC 3220
Level 5 Wurdi Youang South

ABOUT
Play in the classroom is controversial as the link between a child's play ability and education is not always immediately clear. This workshop combines the expertise of Karen Stagnitti (play) with Louise Paatsch (language and literacy and education) to bring to teachers and therapists ideas and explanations of why and how to embed play in the classroom. This workshop will cover why play is relevant to learning and the classroom, how to assess and report progress in play ability, how to link play ability to language and literacy, and how to embed play in the classroom to extend children’s language and literacy.

This one day workshop is a very practical and hands-on workshop with examples linking play abilities to the Australian curriculum. This workshop would be valuable to professionals who work in schools and are interested in play, language and literacy.

PRESENTER PROFILE - KAREN STAGNITTI
Professor Karen Stagnitti currently works as Professor, Personal Chair at the School of Health and Social Development at Deakin University, Victoria, Australia. She graduated with a Bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Queensland. For over 30 years she has mainly worked in early childhood intervention programs in community-based settings as part of a specialist paediatric multidisciplinary team.
In 2003 she graduated from LaTrobe University with a Doctor of Philosophy. Her area of research is children’s play. Karen has written five books on play. She also has over 80 national and international papers published as well as 20 book chapters. Her norm referenced standardised play assessment, the Child-Initiated Pretend Play Assessment was published in 2007. From this research, the Learn to Play approach to building play ability in children was developed through clinical work. Throughout the year, she is invited to present her work on the play ability of children nationally and internationally.
Currently, she teaches into the Master of Child Play Therapy at Deakin University.

PRESENTER PROFILE - LOUISE PAATSCH
Dr Louise Paatsch is the Associate Head of School (Research and Research Training) in the School of Education at Deakin University in the Faculty of Arts and Education. Her teaching focuses on the areas of language development, and literacy teaching and assessment. She teaches in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses in early childhood and primary education.
Louise’s research interests include investigating pragmatic skills and conversational competence in children with hearing loss and their hearing peers; inclusive education; and literacy, multimodal and multiliteracies practices in primary schools.
She is currently working on a number of research projects including: (1) Creative, critical, digital: Connecting home-school literacies; (2) Play-based program in the first year of schooling, which is investigating the association between children’s play and their oral language skills; (3) Teachers’ Talk, which looks at teacher pedagogy in stimulating oral language development in young children in preschool contexts and the early years of school in vulnerable communities; and (4) CONVERSATION: A model for supporting children’s pragmatic skills.

COST
$320 (GST incl.)

Registration opens Monday 7 November 2016. Please register online at www.learntoplayevents.com/events