

Friday 12 June 2020

Dear Families,

As you will know, the past few months have been challenging and have impacted us all in many ways. As I reflect on the months that have passed, I would like to thank our Families and staff for the messages of support and encouragement we have received. Our Educators and Service Managers have gone above and beyond to support the children, Families and community during these times. It is important that we all celebrate and acknowledge the pivotal part that they have all played as Essential Workers, providing outstanding care and education to the children in our care. They have shown up to provide children with a sense of normality and routine, but most importantly brought laughter and fun to their days.

As further restrictions are lifted, we continue to focus on maintaining COVID-safe environments at our Services. This week our Services have received communications regarding additional measures we are undertaking to maintain social distancing, including floor decals to remind Families and staff of the 1.5m distancing requirement. New adult occupancy posters will be displayed throughout the Service, at the entrance to each room, detailing the allowable number of adult occupants inside.

The implementation of these additional safety measures will allow Families to continue to engage with staff, while remaining socially distanced. We appreciate your continued support in following these guidelines, so that our Services can remain safe for all children, staff and Families.

Child Care Subsidy and Relaxing the Activity Test

From 13 July 2020, the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) and Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) is returning, along with new transition measures to support Families as we move back to the CCS model. The CCS Activity Test requirements will be eased for 12 weeks from 13 July to 4 October 2020 for Families who have been impacted by COVID-19. During this period, impacted Families will be able to access up to 100 hours per fortnight of subsidised care. This will assist Families to access affordable care as they return to the level of work, study or training you were undertaking prior to COVID-19.

If you have any queries regarding your Family account or statement, please contact your Service Manager and they will be more than happy to assist you.

To assist with our continued forward planning, including rostering of staff, we would appreciate you notifying your Service Manager of any changes relating to your care requirements and to discuss your ongoing care needs.

No Increase of Fees

Just a reminder that Busy Bees can also confirm that there will be no fee increase for at least the period the CCS Activity Test is relaxed.

KindyNow App

We excited to inform you that we shall be launching a casual booking App for our Bliss families called KindyNow. The App will allow families to have the flexibility to book casual days, be sent alerts of available places and allow Families to notify their child's absences. We shall communicate to families in the upcoming weeks the instructions on how to download the KindyNow App and provide you with additional information.

Updating your Income and Activity Test

In preparation for 13 July it is important for Families to update your **income** and **activity levels**. This can be done via your Centrelink online account through myGov or the Express Plus Centrelink mobile app.

Families who have received CCS in the 2018-2019 financial year (that is, for the period between July 2018 - June 2019), are required to confirm their income for that financial year, by 30 June 2020.

Families can do this by:

- Lodging their Tax Returns with the Australian Tax Office; OR
- Completing an 'Advise non-lodgement of tax return' with Centrelink, if you don't need to lodge a tax return.

NOTE: CCS won't be active until you have confirmed your income, and CCS will not be back dated.

How do I apply?

If you want to get CCS when it starts again, and you haven't already applied, you should [submit your claim](#) now.

Further information about updating your Family Income Estimate for the 2020-21 financial year can be found on the Services Australia website link here: <https://bit.ly/2YZbCJF>

If you have any further questions in regards to the above, please visit the Services Australia website via the following link: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/>

All prior communications sent to Families can be located on the Bliss Website <https://www.bliss.edu.au/covid-19-awareness-updates/>

Thank you for your continued support as we look forward to welcoming more children and Families back into our Services.

Warm Regards.

Robert Hughes
Chief Executive Officer