



# Friday Footnotes

Giant Steps Sydney  
Term 1, Week 2  
5 February, 2010

Dear Parents,

Well we are up on the Myschool website and it is great to see that a decision was finally made not to compare Special Schools – I am not sure how this would have been achieved. Myschool links to our website so it is another way to access information.

The website will be updated with some new information over the next few weeks and the addition of links to essential Government sites. In the parent section; medication, leave forms, permission forms, etc., will also be available for parents. If you have any suggestions please let us know.

Over the last few weeks Ally (IT) has been installing the new desktops across all classrooms. The school received approximately 125 units from Baker College. The units are an upgrade as well as being smaller and faster and we have enough to replace any that are damaged. Simply fabulous.

Secondary 1 and 2 are busy preparing to kick off the year with a combined camp at Milson Island over three days and two nights. These camps have worked very well for our older students and we are looking forward to finding other accessible camps that have the facilities our students require.

This term staff are working on updating the students' profiles and these will form part of our reporting process this year. The profiles have been a wonderful resource for not only the school staff, they are used for respite houses, holiday programs, etc., (for new students profiles will not be available). Parents will be asked to comment as well as update information on the draft documents.

Transport arrangements for the majority of our students have worked quite smoothly this year, however, there are still a few runs to sort out. With DET coordinating approxi-

DIARY DATES	
Sat. 6 February	Junior Siblings Group
Friday 12 February	Friday Night Siblings
Sunday 14 February	Parent Working Bee
Saturday 6 March	Parent Welcome & Social Night
Thursday 11 March	Giant Steps Golf Day
Thursday 18 March	Parent Information Night
Sat. 20 March	Senior Siblings Group
Friday 26 March	Swimming Carnival

mately 6,000 runs across NSW it is taking a little time to find solutions.

Just a reminder to label clothing, school bags and personal belongings for students. Staff are very vigilant, however, clothing and hats can be misplaced and we do want to avoid sending home wrong items and then tracking them down. Thanks.

Hope you have a lovely weekend  
Claire and Kerrie

IMAGINE—INCLUDE—INNOVATE

# Working Bee

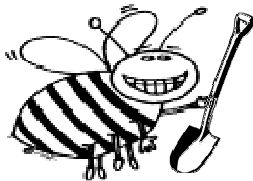
The first working bee of the year will take place on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2010 starting at 8:30am. As always the first working bee is a busy one so we encourage anyone who is available to come along even if your name is not on the list. We will serve lunch and look forward to seeing the following people:

- Astorri
- Dean
- Endrey
- Geronimo
- Hamilton
- Levin
- Liu
- Ryan Allan
- Ryan Peter
- Stevens
- Trayner
- Weir
- White
- Kostoglou
- Morris

Unsure what to bring along? Any gardening or handy tools would be great. Please ensure that you take these home with you.

Ian Morris has once again so kindly agreed to take on the role of coordinating the day.

Feel free to email Ian on  
[Ianjmorris@optusnet.com.au](mailto:Ianjmorris@optusnet.com.au) or  
[michelle@gaintsteps.net.au](mailto:michelle@gaintsteps.net.au)  
if you have any questions.



Discover Magazine has a large number of articles related to autism available online. Follow the link below for a listing. Some may be of interest.

> <http://discovermagazine.com/search?SearchableText=autism>

## Trial for ASD/Aspergers children over 12 years:

The Brain & Mind Research Institute at Sydney Uni are looking for participants in an oxytocin trial.

The trial involves a few trips to Camperdown for assessment etc, then an 8 week trial with the Oxytocin Nasal spray which is being tested to see if it helps with the child's social skills.

More information is in the flyer which is attached separately.

# DADS' GROUP

All Giant Steps' fathers are invited to our Dads' Group which will take place this term on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February

The venue will be in the Staff Room starting at 7 pm.

We'll order delivery from there so please bring along some cash money (\$20 will do) and BYO as beer and wine have never failed us before. Get ready for a good night of light talk, pure male bonding and occasionally some more serious topics.

Looking forward to seeing you there.  
See you there!

Emmanuel Bourges

Please confirm your presence via e-mail at [emmanuel.bourges@giantsteps.net.au](mailto:emmanuel.bourges@giantsteps.net.au)

## Chinese Red Envelopes needed for Giant Steps Ball

Chinese New Year is approaching and some banks are giving out red envelopes. Red envelopes are used by the chinese to put money in. We were hoping to get a hold of 500 for use at our Oriental Ball in June. If anyone is able to get some red envelopes could you please let me know - ph: 9580 6213 or email [leannemacallum@optusnet.com.au](mailto:leannemacallum@optusnet.com.au).

Thanks,  
Leanne Macallum  
Ball Coordinator

## Foot spas needed...

If anyone has any foot spas not being used, Secondary 1 would love to have them.

Many thanks  
Charlie Strickland.

## PLEASE NOTE

Please can parents return any outstanding forms and documents that require signatures to Giant Steps as soon as possible.

## FOUND—KEYS

A set of keys has been found: it's possible that they were lost on Family & Friends day last term. They are on a key ring with the letter "J" . If anyone wants to claim them, please contact Rosanna in the admin office.

# A New Home for Music

The new music room is up and running in Building 31 for all our older students!

All the students have been loving having so much space, especially for our big movement and Irish dancing activities.

We've even found a great use for the heritage stove as a home for the stereo.

There's space for the drum kit, piano and lots of drums, so Rock Band has kicked off again this year with lots of noisy rock music.



We are on the lookout for some adult size beanbags (preferably washable) to make the space a bit more comfortable during relaxation time.

If you have any you don't need anymore, please send them in, 'attention' to the Music department.

Also, if you have a couch or easy chairs in good condition, we'd love to have a couple of them too. And lastly, if you have a copy of a Riverdance DVD that can be loaned for a term, we'd love to borrow it and see some Irish dancing in action.

Looking forward to a new year of making lots of LOUD music and dancing!



## INTEGRATION IN 2010

**I am really excited about taking over the Integration program and have begun the process of handing over information with Nicole Trinca. I will be making contact with our host schools next week with the aim to begin integration in Week 5. I will also be making contact with parents soon, however, if you would like to contact me please feel free to email me on [pippa.sweet@giantsteps.net.au](mailto:pippa.sweet@giantsteps.net.au)**

**Thanks  
Pippa Sweet**

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# Crimson Class

There is a lot of chatter in Crimson Class about "My World". The unit of work explores a variety of countries including Australia, China, England, France, Italy, etc.

Our week was filled with watching different styles of dancing, matching the flags to countries as well as jumping onto *Google Earth*. Students loved anticipating which direction the "world" spins before landing on our next destination. It's great to see how quickly Crimson students are making these connections and referencing the maps and globe of the earth around the room during discussions.



# Early Learning News



*Dom and his sister Poppy*

We have been delighted to hear news about some of our 2009 students.

As you can see from these photos, the students are very happily moving on to new and exciting experiences!

As the weather continues to be very warm, remember to send in a sunhat (with name on it) for your child, that we can keep at Giant Steps use.



*Anastasia ready for school!*

## Community College Snapshot!

A healthy start for the college this year our resident celebrity Udi has started the year with a new lease on life. Udi is looking slimmer, fitter and ready to take on the world.



David continues to hit the gym each week, working on his boxing! Watch out Danny Green!

The action will continue in 2010 with surfing and rock climbing among the adventures set for the young charges of Community College.

# SECONDARY 2 IN 2010

Secondary 2 has had a great start to the year! All the students have settled well so far into term 1 and are looking forward to going back to Milson Island on the 17<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> February for another camp.

Nicky, Caitlin, Joshua, Alex, Jacques and William Trayner have all participated enthusiastically in the program each day in this first week back.

Lunchtime has become a chill out time for everyone. Listening to music, reading magazines, listening to Seb play the guitar and basically relaxing on the lounge chairs and couches. Although we did get a workout during pamphlets on Thursday.





**J**unior Siblings Day is tomorrow! We've got cooking and games planned, and some enthusiastic Giant Steps staff ready to play!

Please let me know ASAP if your child would like to come along... there are still lots of room for more, though knowing numbers is very helpful.

The Seniors have a new challenge this term... surfing! We're heading along to Manly beach for a surf lesson. No experience needed and we'll have lots of GS staff around to help out.

If you have a child who is turning 11 this year and is interested in coming along to the Friday Night Siblings group, please contact me. I want to make sure everyone has a chance to come along and have enough time to make our movies as well!

Please RSVP to book a spot- email me at [helen.appleton@giantsteps.net.au](mailto:helen.appleton@giantsteps.net.au) or you can call me on 0404 114 347 if you have any questions.

Thanks!  
Helen

### Junior Siblings group

**When:** Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 11am-2pm  
**Where:** Meet at Giant Steps  
**What:** Art and cooking  
**Who:** 3 – 6 year olds  
**Cost:** \$10 per sibling  
**Bring:** A packed lunch

### Friday Night Siblings

**When:** Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 5:30-8:30pm  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March 5:30-8:30pm  
**Where:** Giant Steps  
**What:** Dinner and games  
**Cost:** \$10 per sibling  
**For:** +11 year olds

### Senior Siblings group

**When:** Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March 11am-5pm  
**Where:** Meet at Giant Steps  
**What:** Surf lesson at Manly beach!  
No experience necessary, so come along for some fun!  
**Cost:** \$30 per child  
**For:** +6 year olds

## AQUA CLASS

Aqua class this year is a super cool group of young men. They have settled in to the class routine so fantastically and we are already having a great time doing our Theraball Aerobics as well as our Tooth Brushing Program.

Well Done boys on an excellent start to 2010.



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# Giant Steps Parent Social Night



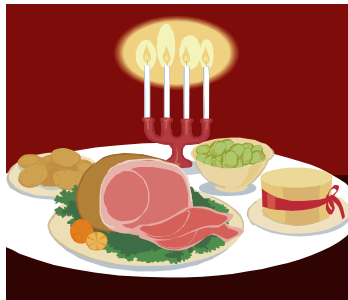
**All parents** who have children attending Giant Steps from Early Learning up to Post School, **(especially our new families)** please come along for a fun social evening of getting to know new families and catching up with old friends.

Date: Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2010

Where: Giant Steps Library

Start: 7.30 pm

**BYO: Food (see below) PLUS your own drinks including soft drinks**



Early Learning Families – salads, vegetable dishes, nibblies  
K – 6 & Post School Families – please bring meat dishes, quiche, bread  
Secondary Families – please bring dessert or fruit  
(The kitchen will be available for re-heating if required)

**Return to the office or email RSVP by MONDAY 1 March  
to Leanne Maccallum – [leannemaccallum@optusnet.com.au](mailto:leannemaccallum@optusnet.com.au)**

**For enquires, contact your Parent Advocacy Group representative**



## Parent Social Night

- Yes, I/we would love to come.  
 No, unfortunately I / we can't make it.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ No.attending \_\_\_\_\_

I/we will bring \_\_\_\_\_

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NSW

### What is the Companion Card Program?

The Companion Card has been developed to reduce existing discriminatory ticketing practices of many entertainment, leisure and recreation venues/activities and services.

People with a disability, who require attendant care type support, are often required to pay two admission and/or booking fees; one for themselves and one for their companion. This has the effect of increasing the admission and/or booking price for the person with a disability.

### How does it work?

The card has a photograph of the cardholder and can be presented when booking or purchasing a ticket at events and venues, provided the cardholder requires attendant care support in order to participate at that particular activity. The participating venue or service will issue the cardholder with a second ticket for their companion at no charge.

### Who is eligible?

The Companion Card is issued to residents of NSW with a significant and permanent disability who are unable to participate in most community based activities without significant assistance with mobility, communication, self care, planning and where the use of aids and other technologies does not meet those needs.

The card is only provided to people if their level of support is life-long and they meet all of the eligibility criteria. The card is not provided to people who require social support, assurance or encouragement.

The Companion Card is not means tested. It will be issued to people who are assessed as meeting all of the following eligibility criteria -

- ▶ severe or profound and permanent disability.
- ▶ unable to participate in most community-based activities without significant assistance with:
  - mobility
  - communication
  - self care
  - planning and
  - where the use of aids and other technologies does not meet those needs.
- ▶ their level of support is lifelong.



**Contact the admin office if you'd like an application form sent home in your child's bag.**



Ageing,  
Disability &  
Home Care



## Respite Intake & Allocation Process

# Do you need a flexible respite service?

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Dear Carers / Parents,

**The RIAP intake line opens on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2010** for all referrals for flexible respite services beginning 1st July 2010 and ending 30th June 2011. The RIAP intake line phone number is 9841 9354.

**The RIAP intake line closes on Friday 5th March 2010.** If you call to make a referral after this date, you may not be included in the annual allocation.

Calls will be taken everyday from 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. Due to a very high number of calls at this time, you may have to leave a message. When leaving a message please leave your name, the name of the person you are referring, phone number and the best time for your call to be returned. A RIAP representative will then contact you to complete the application. Every message left before the closing date will be included in this year's allocation process.

Applications will be prioritised during March 2010 and allocation meetings will take place from the end of March onwards. The date RIAP receives the referral will not affect the way it is prioritised. You will be notified in writing of the outcome of your referral after the allocation meetings.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding this process, please speak to your current respite service provider or you can call the RIAP Intake line on 9841 9354.

## RIAP Intake Line - 9841 9354

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**Metro North**, Ageing Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW  
**Address** Level 5, 93 George Street, Parramatta NSW 2150 **Post** PO Box 3004,  
Parramatta NSW 2124 **Phone** (02) 9841 9500 **Fax** (02) 9841 9322 **TTY** (02) 8270 2167  
(for people who are hearing impaired) **Website** [www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au) **If you require help translating this information, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50**