

K.I.C.S News



November 2017 – January 2018

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Carmel Coutts
Playgroup Support Assistant
Colin Coutts

Field Team 2
Playgroup Leader
Liz O'Brien
Playgroup Support Assistant
Jamie O'Brien

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KICS is turning 30!
During this year and into 2018 we will continue to showcase this event through the pages of our newsletters.

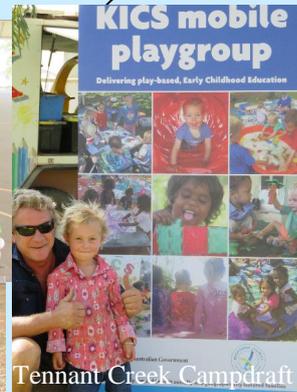
It has been very gratifying to receive letters, photos and reports from previous KICS Team members as KICS history is compiled and passed on through our newsletters. Many thanks to these people! We are still hopeful for more stories to come in from past team members and the families who were visited by KICS over the years. So, if you would like to tell us about your KICS experience past or present please email us. This issue bears reports and photos from our 2008 Team 1 Carla & Peter McInnes and Jan Hill & Charlie Mills our Team 1 in 2013.



Martinja



Robinson River



Tennant Creek Campdraft



Borroloola

2017

Memories!



Daly Waters 2001



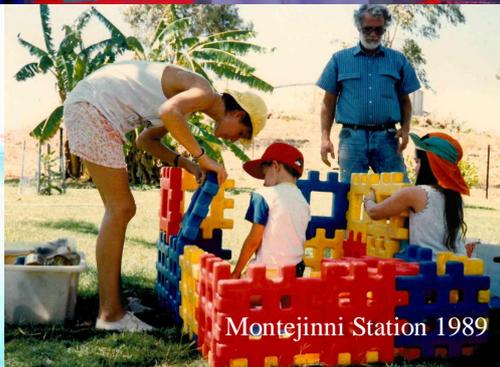
Newry Station 1990



Camfield Station 1989



Manyallaluk 2003



Montejinni Station 1989



Manyallaluk 2013

Katherine Isolated Children's Service
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Hello Everyone

Katherine received rain overnight through to daylight hours, beautiful! Hopefully this weather is widespread and we can all enjoy the Festive Season with more than joy in our hearts! Closing the books on another year can have melancholy overtones or boundless amounts of optimism that puts hope in every step. Both sentiments are good! With fond memories of the year our KICS Team (all) have enjoyed the task of organizing and delivering playgroups to the many children across the Top End. Carmel and Col our Team 1 have headed home to NSW after two stints with KICS (2014 and 2017). All the very best Carmel & Col, your time with KICS brought many children much happiness and not forgetting the NT friends you made along the way. You will be missed! Liz & Jamie are very excited about catching up with you all next year and are now planning their trip home to QLD and Christmas with family. There's more news from both Teams and Mandy as you read through the newsletter. Please see the listing of our new Board for 2018. Thank you to our new members and those outgoing from all of our families and KICS staff for your time and commitment. Also thank you all for your friendships, support, and that good old Territory hospitality extended to us all throughout 2017. Merry Christmas and all the best for a happy and healthy 2018! Cheers from us all...Royelene Hill



Carlton Hill 2008

Anyone who knows my work , knows that I am a HUGE advocate for play, especially nature play. Basically our children learn almost everything they need to know about life through play, from physical coordination, decision making and problem solving to empathy and social and emotional skills. ...**Maggie Dent**.

As I wrote in my book '9 Things': by Maggie Dent

'Play is the way babies and children develop their sense of self, sense of the world, and sense of where they fit in. Children are biologically wired to play. Play is a very serious business for them. Opportunities for play are essential because they help a child learn many of the emotional and social competencies. These cannot be developed through direct verbal interaction with adults. Solo play, parallel play, imaginative, adult-directed and interactive play are all healthy forms of play for children to experience in childhood. However, there are so many factors that are eroding children's opportunities to play and so many busy parents tell me they simply struggle to make the time for such opportunities. Children really need opportunities for creative, exploratory play in stress-free environments, especially in nature without restrictions on time or their freedom.'

We need to prioritise play, especially in this world where a tsunami of screens has massively changed the way we interact with each other, learn and engage. I hope the resources on this page will support you in prioritising play, and see that it is anything but kid's business.

To access this page of Maggie's log onto: www.maggiedent.com/common-concerns/play-nature-play/

Carla and Peter McInnes - KICS Field Team Two - 2008

In 2008 my husband and I were lucky enough to take on the role as KICS Field Team Two. Our previous five years had been spent living and working on Victoria River Downs (VRD) station. The KICS team had been providing playgroups to our two children whilst living on VRD, so we knew what the job involved and always thought we'd like to give it a go!

The year was spent on the road with our two children, Bec (7), Connor (5), and even the family dog, Waxy, came along for the ride! We had a base in Katherine, where the weekends were spent replenishing KICS supplies (mainly flour, salt and oil for playdough, glycerine and detergent for bubbles and cornflour for slime!), changing over toys, lots of washing, and re-stocking our fridge and freezer in the KICS trailer with food for the upcoming week.

Every week was a new adventure on the road, heading as far east as Limmen Bight, south to Mataranka, and west to Carlton Hill station. Our mornings were spent packing up camp, heading to our playgroup location, running playgroup for the morning and driving as close as possible to our next location. Bec and Connor would attempt to do as much school work in the car that the bumpy roads would allow, then once camp was set up we would complete the day's school work (through Katherine School of the Air (KSA)).

Highlights of the year were finding off road camp sites (sometimes never knowing where we would end up!), meeting all the bush families on the stations and spending time in indigenous communities. There were lots of exciting times including when our trailer snapped off and up-ended on a remote track, blowing tyres and encounters with local wild life while camping!

It was such a fantastic year for our family, one that was enriching, social and educational for us all. We have now been living 'down south' for 9 years, but will always remember our time in the NT and with KICS fondly.

Carla & Peter McInnes November 2017

Carla & Peter, you have contributed to the KICS story and the ongoing success of this wonderful service. Thank you!



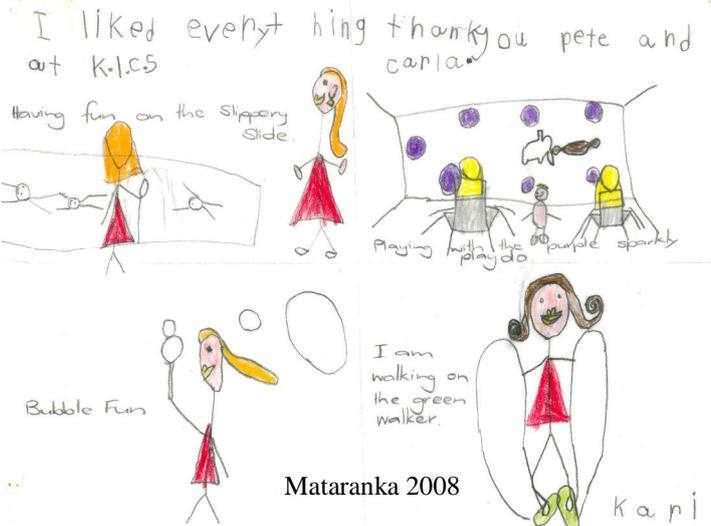


Hodgson Downs road 2008

This extract from the July 2008 KICS Newsletter written by Carla describes vividly the trailer turnover on the Hodgson Downs road.



There was some excitement for K.I.C.S team 2 (us that is!) recently when our trailer succumbed to the sometimes less than ideal road conditions and parted company with our troopy in extremely stylish fashion! The A frame had snapped and all we could do was watch through squinted eyes and with gritted teeth as our trailer continued to follow us for sometime. It ploughed and levelled the corrugations then sped to its demise until ever so elegantly it tipped on its nose adding a pirouette finale to position itself beautifully in the middle of the road to Hodgson Downs. Thanks very much to Wayne from Minyerri Community who came to the rescue and got us mobile again.



Mataranka 2008



2008



Kayla Struber from Rosewood Station drew these lovely pictures of Peta Romeyn (KICS) and her much loved dog Mack at a playgroup in 2006.



Barunga 2008

From 1997 to 2006 KICS get togethers were something both the children, governesses and myself all looked forward to 2-3 times a year. It was one of our main chances to catch up with the other families in the area. The children had a fantastic time, the adults got to talk, compare notes, get ideas from each other and just be social. In our Baines area we all took turns at having KICS at each other's properties. We would make a day of it, no school that day. When you first move to an area it is a great way to get to know your neighbours of which many have become life long friends for myself and our children.

Jo Struber
Rosewood Stn.

Right: Kayla Struber and 'Mack' dog.



A word from Mandy...

It's been a big year for our two field teams travelling far and wide to bring the joy of play based learning to little people in over 50 venues in our very large region of the Northern Territory. KICS enjoys establishing and maintaining good relationships with all the children, families and other stakeholders that we meet along the way when bringing playgroup to remote socially and geographically isolated children.

This year we have had the usual cracks and creaks in the trailers but they are starting to show their age. We have applied for a grant to replace a vehicle and trailer but are still awaiting that announcement to date! We have Budget Based Funding (BBF) funding through the Federal Dept. of Education until June 2018, where it will change to the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Office (PMCO) to be combined with our current Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) funding. There may be some changes in our service provision and we will be asking our families for feedback regarding KICS playgroups at the beginning of the year. This feedback is extremely important in letting funding bodies know how important playgroup is to kids living out bush.

KICS were excited to welcome back Carmel and Col to the KICS team this year and sad to see they will be leaving us again for new horizons. Liz and Jamie are returning to KICS next year to continue as Field Team 2 for another year. Mrs Hill continues in her role as Admin Assistant updating our contacts list and ensuring our families and other stakeholders receive the KICS quarterly newsletter. I am continuing for another year and will stay until funding is secured. Advertising for a new full time team will take place in the new year for the team to commence at the end of March, to coincide with the necessary remote first aid course in Darwin. This will mean one team in term 1, two teams in terms 2 & 3 when access is at its best and the campdrafts are on.

We look forward to catching up with all our families (and new additions!) in 2018! Please let us know if you are moving away or if new families with small children have moved to the Territory so our database can be updated. Wishing you and your families a very merry Christmas, plentiful wet season and safe new year.

Mandy Tootell
KICS Coordinator



KICS Christmas Picnic December 10th Katherine



Campbell Springs



Katherine School of the Air Christmas Concert



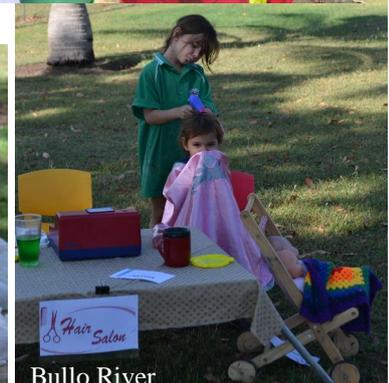
Beswick



Elliott



Newcastle Waters



Bullo River

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2017



Field Teams reporting... Team 1 Carmel & Col (2014 & 2017)



Change of Season & a Change of Scenery

Well the end of the year is upon us and with it comes a change of season and a change of scenery. This term has seen a change from comfortable sleeping temperatures to very uncomfortable build up nights of very little sleeping but plenty of sweating, it has seen a change of scenery from dusty paddocks and burnt out roadsides to lush green grass everywhere and verdant green growth on all the trees and bushes with the onset of the early rain we have experienced.

In the last few weeks we have had to cancel a couple of playgroups due to storms dumping rain on black soil driveways and no shelter being available on site. We have had to use all 8 cylinders of our Troopie to get out of a bog and then follow a road train getting towed by a grader to get back to the highway: I didn't mind, but Carmel was a bit nervy about the whole affair.

With the end of the year, it also brings an end to our time at KICS - again! We have thoroughly enjoyed our year at KICS after our recall by Mandy but a 2 year old grandson - who Nan wants to spoil - and a 90 year old house that needs our attention has made the decision for us to return to NSW. We wish the new team all the best for next year and you never know if someone is looking for a Station Cook and Bore Runner couple you might just see our names turn up in your inbox.

Cheers to all and hope you have a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Carmel & Col



Team 2 Liz & Jamie

Well Term 4 is coming to an end and what a year it has been! We've been woken by a boar nudging our tent at 1:15am, we've rolled up our tent to find a baby python resting underneath that when removed came back 4 times, we've been surrounded by angry donkeys because they couldn't get to their water hole, horses strolling on the highway in front, watching buffaloes wallowing in the rain that couldn't give a hoot that we were parked beside them watching, to dodging and getting hit by a kangaroo.

We've been greeted by familiar faces at our venues, catching up with photos and chats about different things and it's been great watching our future cowboys and cowgirls at the camp drafts and rodeos. The fresh produce and the great morning teas from the stations visited, the abundance of fresh caught cherrabin / redclaw / barra that has been passed onto others as we have had our fill.

As usual along the highways the occasional chat with Matches in the remotest areas over the 2way, the history lessons from Royelene and learning of the ever-changing local knowledge from Amanda and of course the knock on our door on Monday mornings from Liam and Flynn - Jamie were here! What an exciting year! We look forward to seeing you all in 2018.

Happy and safe holidays!

Liz & Jamie



The Very Special Birthday List...

November

11/11/2011 Charlie Kessner
 11/11/2013 Clancy Rippon
 12/11/2005 Shantelle Tapp
 13/11/2014 Lucy Watts
 22/11/2014 Slater Herrod
 24/11/2006 Olivia McDonald
 25/11/2011 George Milne
 25/11/2013 Amelia Gill
 25/11/2007 Kash Angel
 26/11/2015 Brodie Geltch
 27/11/2015 Charlotte Cox
 27/11/2012 Henry O'Connor
 27/11/2012 Opal Walker
 29/11/2007 Colton Lorimer

January 2018

01/01/2007 Lachlan Johnson
 02/01/2007 Nathan Hockey
 05/01/2007 William Brett
 07/01/2015 Liam Tootell
 09/01/2009 Ila Scott
 09/01/2017 Kace DiPasquale
 14/01/2014 Emylou Brock
 15/01/2015 Freya Brooker
 23/01/2006 William Johnson
 26/01/2013 Blake Hore
 27/01/2006 Abraham Bracey
 27/01/2010 Charlie Gatty

December

08/12/2011 Tex Hill
 12/12/2008 Georgina Russell
 16/12/2012 Chloe Leslie
 16/12/2009 MacKenzie Cook
 18/12/2012 Kooper Sauer
 22/12/2006 Aidan Elliott
 23/12/2016 Ella Farr
 24/12/2010 Abby Leslie
 29/12/2009 Charlie Murphy
 29/12/2014 Elsey Millership
 29/12/2009 Joe Brown



feedback from you...

Thank you for all the wonderful playgroups we enjoyed at Newcastle Waters Station.
 Melissa Dayman

We haven't had any KICS playgroups this year at Carlton Hill but last year was great and so much fun for Freya and another little boy - Felix that lived here. They would be so excited when that trailer arrived and immediately wanted EVERYTHING out!! Play dough and any kind of messy craft was loved here along with the bikes and shopping trolleys. You all do an excellent job and we thank you sincerely for everything that is done behind the scenes and the teams for travelling to us. We look forward to future playgroups.
 Lisa Walker

Lorimersølove KICS!
 Nicky Lorimer

K.I.C.S is funded through Budget Based Funding (BBF) from the Commonwealth Department of Education and through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) by the Prime Minister & Cabinet (PMC).



Many thanks to the families who took advantage of the toy catalogue shopping opportunity with **Parent Direct, Chalk & Educational Experience.** We are very appreciative of your support affording us the opportunity to gain bonuses from sales in the way of toys and educational resources to enhance our playgroup service.

If you are into FBing then do a search for K.I.C.S. and like our page.

Scholastic Book Club
Thank you to the many families who purchased books and resources throughout the year. KICS will continue to offer you Book Club in 2018.

If you do not wish to continue receiving Book Club brochures please let us know. As a non profit service this will help with unnecessary postage costs.

 Once again KICS took **Scholastic Book Fair** on the road to ensure our families didn't miss out on a great opportunity to purchase quality books. This venture also brought rewards to KICS with points earned from Scholastic for us to add more books to our library.
Thank you, for taking part!

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Indoor / Outdoor Waterproof Mats. Made from 100% recycled plastic. Road tested at K.I.C.S Playgroups. 1.8 x 3 m \$110 each Also comes in green. Reversible, Foldable
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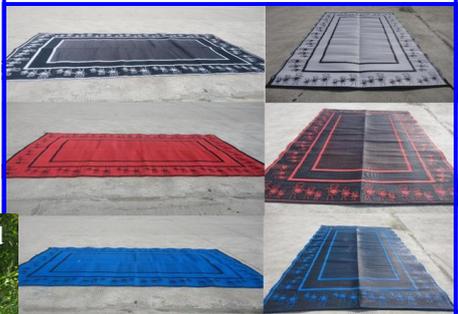


Photo Gallery 2017

Memories! 

