

The HU4K Focus



Term 4/2023

Hello to all and welcome to the last Hands Up 4 Kids Focus Newsletter for 2023. Focus has a bumper newsletter for you, packed with information, photos and reviews of events and entertainment throughout.

We are ever grateful to our volunteers who have continued to make an enormous difference to the reading lives of many school children throughout the South West. The difference you all make can never be underestimated, thank you. HU4K Co-ordinators have done a fabulous and efficient job, thank you. Our schools and staff working with HU4K volunteers to better the reading outcome for their students are to be commended, thank you.

We are always ready to welcome new volunteers to Hands Up 4 Kids and ask that you please share your experiences with people around you and invite them to consider just an hour a week to assist children with their literacy needs. Please pass on to prospective volunteers HU4K phone number : 0499 240 371 or email: handsup4kids@gmail.com



Cheryl with Parkfield PS Deputy Principal Rachel Harper at school parents information evening.

Save The Date

Bunbury Region Christmas Function

Eaton Family Centre

Tuesday 19th December 2023

Margaret River and Busselton dates to be advised.

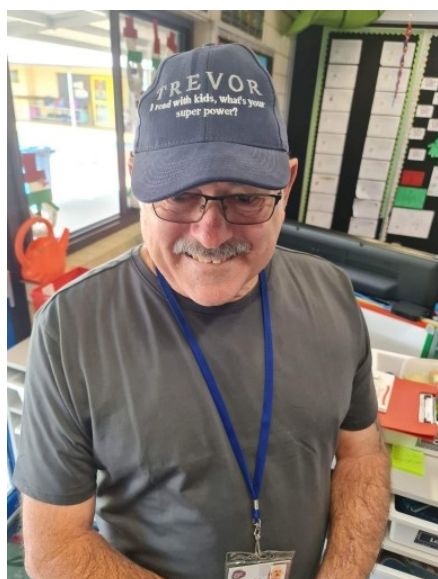


'Bibliosma' is the word for loving the way books smell.



Long term volunteer Esme showing how it is done at Parkfield Primary School.

In The Spotlight



Trevor Pengilly in a hat that the teachers and students from Treendale PS gave him.



Hands Up 4 Kids Focus asked long term volunteer, Isabel Suttie who volunteers at Australind Primary School our Spotlight Questions Here is Isabel's response. Thank you to Isabel for participating.

HU4K Spotlight questions

- How long have you been a HU4K volunteer? I'm in my 10th year with Hand Up 4 Kids. Always at Australind PS
- What do you like most about being a volunteer? I love it when children ask me if they can read to me.
- Where did you grow up? I was born and raised in Scotland.
- What was your favourite childhood book? Favourite childhood book was Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery
- What is your favourite comfort food? Favourite comfort food is Spaghetti and Minced Meat Casserole.
- What are you reading right now? At the moment I'm reading The Dead Secret by Wilkie Collins.
- If you were stranded on a desert island, what would you take with you? On a desert island I'd make sure I had lots of good books.
- Any tips or advice for new HU4K volunteers? For anyone new to Hands Up 4 Kids I'd say just relax and enjoy. I've found most of the children like to read to you and the one-on one attention they get.

Volunteer Network Exchanges—Understanding Autism

For our term 3-4 volunteer networking exchanges, the topic of autism was presented. Debra Parkes from the Special Autism Unit at Coinda Primary School presented for Bunbury and surrounds volunteers at Hudson Rd Family Centre on 21st September, 2023. Ronnie Madge from the South West Autism Network (SWAN) presented the combined Margaret River and Busselton volunteers on 11th October, 2023.

Both talks were informative and well received by all in attendance. Ronnie Madge and Kylie explained the diversity of autism and also cleared up myths associated with autism and gave tips for helping children who have autism. Some information taken from the SWAN slideshow presented to volunteers from Margaret River and Busselton follows.

People with autism experience differences and difficulties with:

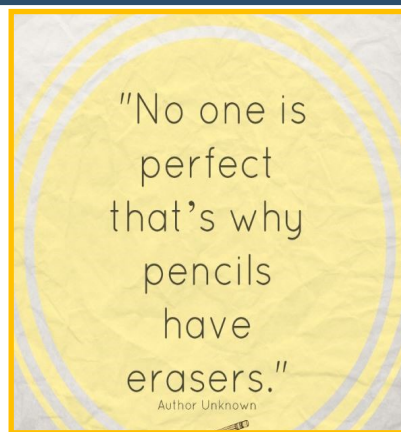
- Communication
- Executive Function
- Sensory Processing
- Motor Skills
- Perception

Important points to remember for people with autism:

- Autistic people are no better or worse than neurotypical people, they are simply different.
- Be genuine. Autistic people know when you are not
- Say what you mean, and do what you say. Follow through.
- Build self-esteem. Many autistic people have had a lifetime of hearing about their deficits. Acknowledge their strengths, and build on them.



Debra Parkes presenting on Autism



Busselton VNE with Ronnie and Kylie from SWAN

Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission report

A recently released report of data collection from the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission* reveals Australian charities generate \$190 billion in revenue and employ 10.5% of the workforce. This is the ninth annual charity report, giving data analysts comparative history to draw on. In the 2021 reporting period, revenue growth was up by nearly \$14 billion from the previous period. Donations increased and charities reported an increase in assets. However, expenses rose over the same period and there has been a decline in volunteers of 596,000 between 2018 and 2021. Despite the declining volunteer figures, charities themselves remain robust and closely connected to the community. Registered charities, like Hands Up 4 Kids are in a unique position to respond to the community connection and work towards growing our volunteer numbers.

ACNC News.gov.au, June 22, 2023

HU4K has received some wonderful feedback from teachers recently, which we are so pleased to share with you all:

"Thank you so much for a wonderful program that my student's look forward to each week and absolutely benefit from, not only just reading focused time but also a positive interaction with an adult and some time away from the busy classroom each week- just to really be in the moment." and another:

"Please pass on to your volunteers our heartfelt thanks for the time, support and friendship that they provide the students at Harvey PS, through giving up their time to help others. Community connection and spirit, begins here. Some of these students will never forget the connection they have made with a volunteer from your organisation."

This is really lovely and positive feedback.

International Assessment of Reading Skills

A recent international assessment of year 4 reading comprehension skills called the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study revealed Australia's score was slightly higher than average. In Australia 281 schools and 5,487 students participated. Of the Australian students tested, approximately 80% met or exceeded the previous proficiency standard. However, it is important to note that 42% of students in remote schools, 40% of First Nations students and 31% of students in disadvantaged schools did not meet the proficiency standard.

The PIRLS measure is conducted every five years since 2001. The test is conducted during year 4 as it is deemed that most children would have acquired the reading skills necessary to facilitate their learning skills and is a gauge of where Australian education sits within the international realm.

Hillman, Kylie, Australia's Year 4 students have not lost ground on reading, despite pandemic disruptions, *The Conversation*, 16th May 2023

“A childhood without books –
that would be no childhood.
That would be like being shut
out from the enchanted place
where you can go and find the
rarest kind of joy”

Astrid Lindgren

Astrid Lindgren is a Swedish author (1907-2002) and is one of the most widely translated authors of our time. She is the creator of *Pippi Longstocking*

Those who bring sunshine to the lives
of others cannot keep it from
themselves.

JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE

DID
YOU
KNOW?



The world's oldest continually operating library was established in AD 565. It is housed in Saint Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt, and has the second largest collection of ancient manuscripts after the Vatican City.

Decoding NAPLAN Results

Shortly, NAPLAN results will be released. The report will look different from previous years. It will give parents a guide as to where their child's abilities rank within the new proficient benchmark. The four categories are exceeding (being the highest), strong, developing and needs additional support (being the lowest). But within each category is a broad range, so a child could sit at the top or bottom of a particular category. Care needs to be taken when reading the results so, that if a child sits within the “strong” band, they could actually be at the bottom of “strong” and be borderline “needs additional support”.

The previous model was set so low that very few students fell below par. This then made parents and teachers unaware of those children that required help to succeed. They were lured into a false sense of security that a child was managing. This new way of reporting the NAPLAN results provides parents and teachers with a more accurate representation of where a particular child is at.

Hunter, Dr. Jordana, Parkinson, Nick, Grattan Institute, *The West Australian*, 8 July 2023



Reminder: To all volunteers – please check your WWCC (Working With Children Card) is still valid

Working with Children check – changes have now been applied. Amendments to the law have come into effect July 1st 2023. If you require any assistance or advice, please contact your Zone Coordinator or Jan Akaczonok.

Renewal of your WWCC can be made online via their website : workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au Please note, after **two** consecutive online renewals, your next renewal requires you to lodge a WWC Check application form at an authorised Australia Post outlet and have an updated photo taken.

WISHING EVERYONE A SAFE AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS (I KNOW IT IS A LITTLE BIT EARLY, BUT THIS IS OUR LAST FOCUS FOR 2023)