



Australian Camp Connect Association Inc.

www.campconnect.org.au

Ensuring Contact Time is Quality Time

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November 2004 Newsletter

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August – September 2004 Programs in Review.

The Fathers Day Weekend, 2004 programs conducted over two weekends were a huge success.

The Dads Workshop Day was held on the 28th August at the Mountain Valley Centre, Boronia. It was the first time that we attempted to run one in conjunction with the Dads & Kids weekend. We had three people conduct workshops for us over the day.

Workshop 1. Presenter: Peter Leech - Dad Talk

This looked at the barriers that we face in the parenting of our children and how we can overcome them.

Workshop II. Presenter: Joy Van Neuron - Bayswater Parentzone. Dealt with the relationship that we have with our ex partners and the impact this has on our children and what we can do about trying to improve it. Another component of it was listening with feeling and is about recognising the feelings that children may be expressing behind what they are saying.

Workshop III. Presenter: Julian Browne

Looked at the things that we can do with our parenting that will produce positive long-long term development outcomes with our children.

All three workshops were very well received. We had 10 dads in total register into that program, 5 of who had attended last years Dads & Kids Weekend Camp at Mt Evelyn. Here is what Louis, one of the dads who attended, had to say regarding the workshop day. "The workshop day was really engrossing and illuminating. It was wonderful to see committed fathers who were willing to share their experiences and emotions about what is obviously a very difficult transition in life-that of separation and all that it entails. Of particular comfort was the fact that there is support and services out there, that we can share common concerns about many major issues, not least of all the impact separation has on our children and ourselves".

August – September 2004 Programs in Review cont.

The second ACCA Dads & Kids program took place over the Father's Day Weekend 3rd - 5th September 2004 at the Wombat Corner Camp at Emerald, Victoria. We had 10 dads and 15 kids attend for the full weekend and another 2 dads with 2 children join us on the Sunday for the Fathers Day Mini program.

As for the Dads Workshop Day, there was a good mixture of families who attended last years program together with dads & kids new to the camp connect experience. There were 6 dads & 8 kids for who this was their second Dads & kids Weekend program. For the other 5 dads & 10 kids it was all a new experience for them.

There were three workshops held over the weekend.

Workshop 1. Presenter: Richard Yiap – Australian Fatherhood Foundation. Looked at our 5 love languages and those of our children. This was for dads & kids.

Workshop II. Presenter: Hunter Dean & Edwin - Human Performance Specialists. Dealt with breaking down the barriers between dads & their kids.

Workshop III. . Presenter: Richard Yiap – Australian Fatherhood Foundation. This was a dad's only workshop that looked at how we could be creative with our parenting.

Apart from the workshops there was plenty of activities to keep the dads and their kids out of trouble over the weekend. The most popular of all being the trampolines, closely followed by the flying fox and the games room.

For the children who attended, it was an opportunity for them to try out new activities, to challenge themselves, to catch up with old friends [if the attended the previous program] as well as making new friends. More importantly it provided an opportunity for the children to spend quality time with their dads. As Antony, one of the dads who attended said, "I believe the 2 1/2 days at the camp created an environment to reinforce our relationship through some close and special moments, and so for me it was the best fathers day I've ever had. I'm sure this weekend will be remembered by my children for a very long time as it will by me". That is what Camp Connect Programs are all about achieving.

The dads also benefited from the programs, not just through attending the workshops but also by the networking with other dads. There was a lot of sharing of stories amongst the group. The programs provided a safe, supportive, trusting environment for the dads to talk with others about what life was dealing them as separated dads. Again it reinforced that they are not alone in what they are feeling and going through and that others have either been there and done that or at various stages of traveling down the same road as them.

Camp Connect is a Victorian based organisation but our reputation is spreading. We had John and his three children drive down from Queensland to attend the weekend camp. As John commented, "*For me, I was hoping to connect with guys who had learnt how to avoid the traps on this rocky road we call "Family Breakdown". To see other blokes getting on with their lives and how they relate to their kids was important to me". John could see that by attending the weekend camp that he and his children could get something positive out of it. We acknowledge John for trusting us as an organisation to deliver a program that would meet his needs and for the commitment that he has demonstrated to being the best father he can be to his children. Well done John!*

August – September 2004 Programs in Review cont.

Here is another comment from Louis, one of the fathers who was attending the weekend camp for the first time." The Fathers Day Weekend camp at Emerald will be an experience that my son, Andrew, age 9 and I will always remember and treasure. Since this was our first camp, I was not sure what to expect. By the Sunday afternoon Andrew did not want to leave and asked when we were coming back again. The organised activities enabled real bonding to occur, and many happy and wonderful memories will remain of the fun times. Andrew and I will also value the friendships we made at camp and can't wait for the next event. A big thank you to Camp Connect Organisers for making the idea a reality".

It is clear that for many of the dads who have attended our programs that attending the Fathers Day Camp Connect Weekend already has become or will become a tradition. If you are a separated dad and want to experience what our programs are like please go to website and find out about our upcoming programs.

Annual General Meeting

Venue: The Men's Workshop, 15 Alpine Street, Ferntree Gully.

Date: Tuesday 30 November, 2004

Time: 7:00PM

As an incorporated not for profit organisation, we are required to hold an annual general meeting. It is on the evening that a committee will be elected. If you are interested in becoming involved in the organisation and having some input into its direction, please nominate yourself or get someone to nominate you on your behalf. For further details please email us at info@campconnect.org.au

The meeting is open to anyone to attend. Please show your support for the organisation by being there on the night. We do ask for a gold coin donation to help cover venue hire.

Back to Emerald Christmas Get Together

Venue: Wombat Corner Camp,

Date: Saturday 18 December, 2004

Time: 9:00 AM – 5:00PM

The Australian Camp Connect Association and the Australian Family Support Services Association are holding a Family Fun Day back at Wombat Corner camp, the venue of our last Camp Connect Program.

This day is open to all supporters of these two organisations. The cost covers the use of all facilities as well as food and drink for the day.

Available activities include;

Trampolines

The Flying Fox

Archery

The Low Ropes Course

Mini Golf

The Games Room

Basketball, Volleyball

If it is a hot day you can take the kids across the road to Emerald Park Lake for a swim or a paddle boats ride [extra cost applies].

This will be a great opportunity for those who have attended Camp Connect programs to catch-up with each other.

Costs:

Previous participants of Camp Connect Program	– \$22.50 / Adult & \$ 17.50 / Child [under 14 years]
Financial members of ACCA or AFFSA	- \$20.00 / Adult & \$ 17.50 / Child [under 14 years]
General Admission	- \$27.50 / Adult & \$ 22.50 / Child [under 14 years]

Registrations forms can be downloaded from www.campconnect.org.au.

Registrations close: Monday 13 December 2004.

First Program - 2005

The first program for 2005 is being scheduled for the weekend, 4 – 6 March. All details including the venue are in the process of being confirmed. Keep an eye on the website for full details which will be available prior to Christmas.

Community Calendar

On our website we have added a new page titled Community Calendar. This page is available for individuals or organisations that are planning on running a program or event that would be of interest to separated dads and or their children. These events can be publicized on our site for free. All we ask is that you provide us with the details of the event at least one month prior to the event-taking place. Please email all the necessary details or a copy of the flyer to info@campconnect.org.au.

Memberships

ACCA is like most non-profit organisations in that it receives no financial support from the government. To be able to continue with the work that we do we rely upon the support of sponsors and of members.

There are two membership options.

1. Membership of ACCA. Cost \$55.00 per annum.

This will provide you with 10 - 20% discounted price for all Camp Connect programs within the 12 months of membership. It also entitles you to special offers that are limited to members only. These offers are listed in the "Benefits of Membership" page on our website.

Please note that the discount price ONLY applies to the program cost of the Dad and does not apply to children's program costs.

2. Membership of ACCA and Australian Family Support Services Association. Cost \$110.00 per annum. This will provide you with all the entitlements that you receive as a member of ACCA plus the membership benefits that AFSSA offer. For further details of AFSSA go to www.afssa.org.au