



Firenze Mom's & Tots Playgroup Newsletter

www.firenzemoms4moms.net

Issue 1

June 2006

Thank you!!

Our playgroup has been running now for about a year and has tripled in size from the 8 or so mums that were initially using it to about 25 who regularly attend.

We just wanted to say thank you for continuing to support the group. We know personally how important it is to meet up with like minded moms and actually be able to communicate easily and share the same (or similar)

backgrounds! We hope it is meeting your needs. Any suggestions for improving the group would be welcomed.

This newsletter has information about what's happening in the summer and also has information about all sorts of things that Mom's might need whilst living in Florence!

Summer Plans

Many of you, I know, are going away at some point over the summer months (Lucky you!). So as you may already know we will not be holding the playgroup at the church due to the depleted numbers.

However we will be meeting for other activities throughout the summer.

Saturday 1st July 8pm

Couples night out - Venue TBA

Monday 3rd July

The park near the Scuderie (Art Institute?) and Porta Romana from 10 am.

Monday 10th July

Jo Westfoot's house in Fiesole from 10.30 a.m. If anyone would like to stay on for lunch, just let me know and I will organise some sort of bring and share lunch. Maps will be sent out by email. Tel. 334 375 0124



Thursday 13th July 8pm

Mom's Night Out

Santo Bevetori, Via Santo Spirito

Please sign up on the sheet on the noticeboard or let Barbara know by the 10th July if you plan to attend so she can make a reservation. Thanks!

Monday 17th July

The park on Via ai Monte Oliveto from 10 am.

Other dates to be advised by
email or check the website

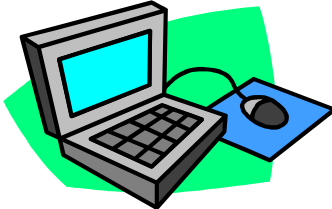
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New Website! www.firenzemoms4moms.net

Kim Vanzi designed our original website which was great. She has now had a fabulous idea to expand on the current website and make it into one for all english speaking expat Moms living in Florence, not just those using the playgroup. All our kids will grow up soon enough and it would be awful to lose touch!

The new website is called www.firenzemoms4moms.net.



www.firenzemoms4moms.net

Very easy to remember! It will incorporate our information about the playgroup but will also include other useful information for Moms of older kids too. Kim is busy putting all that together so it is still under construction.

It will include:

- Nights Out info (Moms and Couples)
- Development Information for Kids
- English Speaking Doctors
- Firenze Schools & English Speaking Daycare
- Travel Information
- Spa & Wellness
- Entertainment & Organisations
- Day Events
- Fun Crafts for Kids

Kim is now looking for someone to volunteer to run the playgroup section of the website. This will involve answering emails, sending emails out about Mom's nights out etc, updating the sign up sheet and Mom's nights out details. Interested? Please contact Kim.

Useful Information

Moving to a new city is hard enough, but moving to a new country where you don't speak the language can be more than a little daunting!

One of the purposes of the group is to share information that will make life easier for the other members! So in the following sections I have put some information that you may or may not already know, but

would be useful to people new to Florence or new to Motherhood!

This list is by no way exhaustive and if you think of anything to add please tell one of the leaders

"One of the purposes of the group is to share information that will make life easier for the other members!"

Bus Services

ATAF run the buses in and around Florence and they have a website that is also in English.

The bus maps are better than the regular maps given out at the tourist information centre. You can get them at the tourist information centres and also direct from ATAF, the little hut outside the east entrance of the train station.

You can buy single tickets, a four trip ticket and Carta Agile. These tickets are all available from Tabacchi.

The single and four trip tickets need to be stamped in the bottom section of the ticket machine when you get

on the bus, these are then valid for 60 minutes no matter how many buses you go on.

The Carta Agile can be bought either for €10 (12 tickets) or €20 (25 tickets). This card also needs to be validated when you board the bus by placing it against the top section of the ticket machine and waiting for it to beep. The machine will also then display how many tickets you have remaining on the card.

SITA run the regional bus services and they are based near to the train station on Via S. Caterina Da Siena.



www.ataf.net

English Book Stores



There are several book stores in Florence selling English books, some specialising in them.

- Paperback Exchange Via delle Oche 4R www.papex.it/

- MacRae Books via de' Neri, 32 R www.mcraebooks.com/shop
- BM Books Via Ognissanti
- Libreria Martelli (Italian - some English) Via Martelli, 22 R

Baby Equipment Stores

Whether you are new to motherhood or just new to Florence you will need to know where to get all your baby & Toddler equipment from. Here are a list of some of the stores we use.

- Nido - Viale de Mille
- Mondo Birbo - Gavinana
- 'Tutto' Baby & Toy shop Viale Giovan Battisia Morgagni (Near Piazza Dalmazia)
- Ipercoop - Sesto Fiorentino
- Prenatal Via d. Brunelleschi
- All Farmacia stock useful baby bits
- Dreoni - Via de Ginori (Toy Store)
- Cita dei Sole - Via dei Cimatori (Toy Store)
- Ikea Sesto Fiorentino - Via Francesco Redi, 1
www.ikea.com/ms/it_IT/local_home/local_firenze_sestofiorentino.html



Baby Equipment! Another minefield with brands we are just not familiar with!!

St James Church: Nursery, Children's & Adult's Library

St James is a great source of information in itself. They have a notice board in the basement which is well worth checking out if you need a babysitter! They also distribute The Florentine, these are usually in a pile in the entrance to the church itself.

The church operates two lending libraries, one for children and one for adults. The adult library is in a corner of the undercroft and you are welcome to use it without joining up. Just take a book and return it when finished.

The children's library is open Monday, Wednesday & Sunday mornings. You need to pay a registration fee. They have a great selection of books and videos (English & American systems).

There is a nursery/daycare that operates in the church from 9 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. on Tuesday - Friday. English is the main language spoken. A morning session costs €20, but there are also rates for weekly and monthly which are more cost effective. Several of the children who attend the playgroup are regulars at the nursery and they love it! And so do their Mom's!! The nursery will (sadly) be closing for the Summer but will re-open on the 5th September - contact Caterina for details: 333 27221144.

"Several of the children who attend the playgroup are regulars at the nursery and they love it! And so do their Mom's!!"

Ideas for Entertaining the Kids!

Here are some ideas for keeping your little ones entertained:

- Mondo Bimbo - great place to entertain the kids complete with ball pits, climbing frames and lots of bouncy castles. Entrance fee is €5 for each child - Via Mafalda di Savoia (near Piazza Liberta) - There is also a Mondo Bimbo at Pontassieve.
- Carousel (gone for the summer, back in November) Normally in Piazza della Repubblica
- Chasing the pigeons around a piazza!
- Parks: Porta Romana, Piazza Tasso, Lungarno Santa Rosa, Via ai Monte Oliveto
- Aquafan water park www.aquafan.it
- Pistoia Zoo www.zoodipistoia.it
- Mirabilandia www.mirabilandia.com
- Gardaland www.gardaland.it
- Kids size theme park www.cavallinomatto.it
- Pinocchio Park www.pinocchio.it
- Crafts for kids www.dltk-kids.com/
- Also check out the links page on the website



Ice creams always go down well!

Contact Information

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We're on the
web!
www.
firenzemoms4moms
.net

The Playgroup

Monday Mom's & Tot's Play Group has been organized to setup a network for English speaking mothers and their children in Florence and the surrounding area. We know how hard it is to move to another country, let alone with small children. This group is a great occasion for discussions between mothers about their different experiences while living in Florence. So, stop by and join in the fun, and get your life moving forward, while living in beautiful Italy.

We meet every Monday at St. James Church on Via B. Rucellai 9 in Florence. It starts at 10:00 am until 12:30 in the Undercroft (basement) of the church. We are a non-profit organization, but there is a nominal fee of €1.50 per mother for the rent of space. Please contact us if you are interested.

From September.....

When we reconvene in September there will be one or two changes to the group.

We will be introducing a Story / Song time at the end of the session which will have a number of purposes:

- It will hopefully calm the children down before they head home! And bring the session to a close
- Improve language development by learning nursery rhymes
- Improve motor skills by learning the actions to nursery rhymes
- Increase concentration levels by sitting for stories



In addition we will be introducing a New Subs Structure which will offer more flexibility depending on your personal situation. Those of you who prefer paying the weekly fee of €1.50 can continue to do so but there will also be some alternatives available for those who know you will be coming every week. You can choose to pay either by term or for the whole year.

- Price per Term: € TBA
 - * Term 1: September - Christmas
 - * Term 2: January - Easter
 - * Term 3 Easter - Summer break
- or
- Annual Fee : € TBA
- or
- Weekly Fee : €1.50

Anyone interested in leading any of these sessions please have a word with either, Barbara, Kim or Melanie.