



JULY
2020

ON *this* MONTH

WATERFORD WEST EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRE

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Letter from the Director

Welcome to our Newsletter for July 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our centre families for their continued support and understanding during the COVID-19 crisis. As restrictions ease we are excited to recommence our extra-curricular activities this month, including Bush Kindy and Swimming Lessons. As well as prepare for some mid-year events, including school photos, dental visits and of course our much anticipated parent teacher interviews, where families will be given the opportunity to speak to their child/ren's Educators one on one and develop goals for the second half of the year.

Reminder to all families that fees recommence from Monday, 6th July 2020, as previously mentioned fees will be reset up from your preferred payment option for the same amount as prior to COVID/-19. Once all families have reconciled their income with Centrelink over the next few weeks, we will then contact our families individually and advise if any adjustments need to be made to payments. We would also like to remind families with an overdue account to please ensure that this is finalised this week, to avoid going into the second half of the year with ongoing debt.

Please LIKE us on Facebook and Instagram to keep up to date with upcoming centre events.



Room News

Early Learners Room

Early Learners have been engaged in Learning Games which are part of the Abecedarian Approach. If you have noticed your child jumping a lot more at home, they are extending their own learning from our game "Low Jump". This game helps strengthen the children's physical development in gross motor skills, coordination and balance. Helping to develop confidence in trying new things as well as extends their social and communication skills.

"Talking about our Feelings" is a game introduced at the beginning of the month and will be ongoing in the children's learning, so we can help children understand the emotions they are feeling. Children began to look closely at their reflections in the mirrors, as we demonstrated how emotions look on our faces and scaffold their learning into the game "Touch your Toes". This game teaches children to connect names to parts of their bodies. They have been enjoying singing "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" and learning new words as they point to different parts of their bodies.

Early Learners welcomed Jeryko into our room this month. Jeryko showed a sense of Belonging as he joined his new friends in play and explored the environment around him.

Dante has been learning about the words "Stop and Go" at home and children have shown an increase in their interest in playing with trucks. To extend on these interests throughout July we will learn about vehicles from construction to emergency, through sensory play and stories. If your child is learning something new at home, please let us know so we can incorporate it into our program.

Junior Early Years Room

This month has been one of the busiest months so far, with all of our friends returning following the easing of restrictions with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Back in the full swing of things, the Junior Early Years children have been busy learning about 'Fire Safety', what to do, and who to call if there is a fire, recognising numbers '000', and role playing 'Stop, drop and roll'. We have also extended children's feelings of safety and security as we talked about other important emergency people that help to keep us safe, Introducing Police officers, and teachers, allowing the children dramatic play opportunities to interact and engage more in their learning.

Dramatic play provides an insight into what the children's interests are as well as helps to extend all areas of learning and development. Using the children's interest in building things and manipulating objects to create their own masterpieces, this month we will be moving on to Construction. We can not wait to see where the children's imaginations take them and see that they build/make next!



Room News

Early Years Room

Who would believe that we are already at the middle of the year, during the last few months and the COVID-19 pandemic our numbers inside the centre saw a decrease, and as such our Early Years children were combined with our Pre-Prep children, this month, however has seen us re-open our Early Years classroom doors and re-establish routines and transitions as well relationships with our educators, helping to provide children with a sense of belonging.

We have spent a lot of time this month connecting with the environment, with children showing particular interest in our vegetable garden, we hope to extend this interest next month, with some planter boxes inside and outside of the classroom.

Please remember that the weather is getting cooler now, so please send your child with appropriate clothes, socks, enclosed shoes and jumpers. Our centre is a "sun safe" environment and as such we will be embracing this by providing centre hats for the children from here forth.

Thanks for all your help and understanding during the last couple of weeks, remember if you have any questions, concerns or comments please come and see us.

Pre Prep Room

Pre-Prep had a busy month in June. The letters in our names have been an important aspect of this month, we have looked at and compared who has the same letters in each other's names, counting letters, comparing the length of some of our names compared to others. Our names are the most important word to us and the children have been fascinated with concentrating on them.

Our talk time last month focused on what we did on the weekend and the children enjoyed sharing special moments with their friends. Moving forward this month our talk time theme is our favourite superhero (or character) and why they are our favourite. Take home buddy fluffy the slothy has been visiting friends too and we are loving the adventures he is having. The children have shown a strong interest in cars and vehicles and we have used this interest to explore numbers and sorting/classifying, we researched and graphed how each of us gets to kindy each morning (walking, driving, bus).

Thank you to all the families for supporting our art show, the children enjoyed creating their own pieces and participating in the group project. We are Excited that this next term will see us returning to bush kindy and swimming lessons. Please remember to pack spare clothes and a water bottle for pre-prep every day and keep labelling all items as the cooler weather has meant layers are coming off and going on with potential for things to be lost.





NATIONAL PYJAMA DAY – JULY 17

National Pyjama Day is all about wearing your favourite and comfiest Pyjamas or onesie to work or school to help raise funds and awareness for children in foster care. The aim of the day is to raise vital funds for The Pyjama Foundation's Love of Learning Program

which is offered to children in foster care. You can help by attending or hosting a PJ party! You can also take part in **#inmypjs** by completing a challenge in your PJ's to raise awareness and funds for kids in care. **Find our more here.**

SCHOOLS TREE DAY – JULY 31

Each year, around 3,000 preschools, kindergarten, primary and high schools across Australia take part in Schools Tree Day. Students nation-wide have learnt how to plant, and care for the seedlings they grow. Schools Tree Day 2020 will be on Friday July 31, although events can be held at any time during the year.

National Tree Day will be held on August 2. **Find out more here**

PUMPKIN MAC AND CHEESE



PREP 25 min | COOK 25 min | SERVES 12

INGREDIENTS

Pasta: 500 grams orecchiette pasta

Pumpkin cheese sauce:

4 tablespoons **butter**
 4 tablespoons **plain flour**
 2 cups (500 ml) **milk**
 1 can (400 grams) **pumpkin puree**
 1 teaspoon **granulated garlic**
 1 teaspoon **dry mustard**
 1/4 teaspoon **cayenne**
white pepper, to season
 grating of fresh **nutmeg**
 125 grams **mozzarella**, *grated*
 100 grams **parmesan**, *grated*

Panko topping:

1 1/4 cups **panko style breadcrumbs**
 100 grams **mozzarella**, *grated*

METHOD:

Cook pasta according to packet instructions, **Drain** and set aside.

To make the pumpkin cheese sauce: **Place** the butter into a large saucepan over medium heat and melt. **Add** flour and **whisk** to create a smooth paste. **Slowly add** milk, whisking continuously. Continue to **whisk** until slightly thickened, approx. 3 minutes or until the mixture coats the back of a spoon. **Reduce** the heat to low and whisk in the pumpkin puree, garlic, mustard, cayenne and pepper. **Add** the cheeses and stir until melted. **Take** off the heat. **Add** cooked pasta to the pumpkin mac and cheese sauce and mix thoroughly to combine. **Pour** the pasta mixture into a large baking dish (approx. 45cm x 45cm).

To make the panko topping: **Sprinkle** the panko breadcrumbs and mozzarella cheese evenly over the pasta. **Bake** for 20-25 minutes or until the cheese is melted and breadcrumbs are golden.

Recipe and Image from 'mylovelylittlelunchbox.com'

App reviews

Creative apps that encourage learning through imagination and play.



ARTIE'S MAGIC PENCIL

Minilab Ltd \$4.49 | AGE 3-6

There's a monster on the loose and it's destroying everything in its way! Save the day and help Artie to rebuild his world, using a very special magic pencil. In a land where basic shapes are the building blocks, children can be the hero whilst learning how simple triangles, squares and circles come together to create everything they see around them, from a butterfly to a building, and a car to an ice cream shop.

A PARCEL OF COURAGE BOOK FOR KIDS WITH PUZZLES

Mariya Stavinskaya Lite FREE or full \$4.49 | AGE 4-7

Parcel of Courage is a highly interactive graphic book app filled with robust learning activities and unique educational games based on two proven teaching methods: Montessori method and Shichida method. Many interactive activities within the heart warming story are paired to reinforce the storyline so that kids can better comprehend the content and improve their spatial orientation, listening skills, and visual-motor skills.

TEACH YOUR MONSTER TO READ

Learn to Read & Phonics Games \$4.99 | AGE 3-6

Teach Your Monster to Read is an award-winning phonics and reading game that's helped millions of children learn to read. Children create a monster and take it on a magical journey over three extensive games - meeting a host of colourful characters along the way and improving their reading skills as they progress.



FOCUS: How a kid's brain works. The meltdown explained.

How different is a kid's brain from an adult's? The short answer: extremely. We've always known that a child's brain spends its early years absorbing and processing information, but it's only recently that we've begun to understand what exactly it is about a kid's brain that allows it to be so receptive to new stimuli.

First, a quick overview of the brain. Most of us grew up with a pretty simplistic model of the human brain – left-side logical, right-side emotional. There's a kernel of truth to this, but we're discovering that the reality of the brain is far more complex than we could have ever imagined. Only last year*, scientists with the Human Connectome Project announced that they had created the most detailed map of the brain yet, and in doing so had discovered almost 100 previously unknown regions, taking the total to around 180, each with their own unique function. The great miracle of life is that somehow, we've managed to get all these zones working in unison to produce what we know as our own minds. What we're now realising is that in children a lot of these zones aren't yet talking to one another. They're all functioning independently, but they don't quite know how to sync themselves up.

What occurs as a kid's brain develops? The epic journey from birth to full brain maturity occurs via a gradual and ongoing process called integration, which stretches from the moment a child is born through to their mid-twenties. But to understand why your four-year-old just threw a rock at their brother and now both of them are crying you first need to come to grips with exactly how dis-integrated kids' brains are. Under the whole-brain model, the brain is carved up into four basic sections: the left and the right sides; and the upstairs and the downstairs. As noted, there is a kernel of truth to the left-right brain split, although the idea that someone can be "right-brained" or "left-brained" is a total furphy. Instead, it's more about the fact that a lot of the functions pertaining to logic, language and order occur in the left hemisphere of the brain, while the right hemisphere deals more with images, emotions and memories. The left is very narrowly focussed, while the right tends to deal in more holistic, intuitive stuff. Together they balance one another out and allow us to see both the specifics of something and the big picture. Then there's the downstairs-upstairs split. The area around our brain stem is often called the primitive brain because it deals with instinctual reactions and basic functions. When you're startled by a loud noise, or even when you breathe or blink, it's your downstairs brain in action. Meanwhile, the area of the brain just behind your forehead handles all the higher order functions that we might consider unique to humanity – thinking, imagining and planning for the future. When we talk about a child's epic journey to maturity, this is what we're talking about – the cerebral cortex doesn't fully settle down until around the age of twenty-five. Indeed, it goes through major renovations each time a child passes from infancy to childhood to adolescence to adulthood. So, when your children – whether they're age 2 or 22 – make terrible decisions, or when they take absurd risks, or when they became inexplicably emotional about small things, or when they



become affixed to a certain schedule, this occurs because one part of their yet-to-be-fully-integrated brain has taken charge of a situation and isn't letting the other parts have their say. (And yes, this can also be applied to some adult behaviour too.) Fortunately, a child's brain is primed to unify these different components of the brain, thanks to a phenomenon called neuroplasticity.

What is neuroplasticity? Another of the game-changing discoveries neuroscience has made in the past decade has been the concept of neuroplasticity. Basically, neuroplasticity refers to the fact that the brain is always evolving and changing in response to its environment and the tasks required of it. For a simple example of how this works, think about how you lived before you owned a smartphone. Now think about how easy you find it to navigate and use that phone, how simple it is to move between apps, to find information, to like something on Facebook. Your fingers and mind are working in remarkable harmony, yet when you first held the phone in your hand you would have been clumsy and confused. Everything took conscious, considered thought. Through the creation and reinforcement of new neural pathways, you have literally rewired your brain to adapt to the presence of the smartphone, to the point where using it is next best thing to instinctual. But adult brains take a lot more rewiring than a kid's brain. The mere fact of full integration means that any change in function requires considerably more architectural rearrangement of your neurons. It is literally harder to teach an old dog new tricks. Kids' brains, on the other hand, are springy and mouldable, like Play-Doh. They're just working out how A connects to B, or perhaps why A should connect to C instead. That's why every interaction a child has with the world becomes meaningful, no matter how banal it might seem to the parental observer. They're constantly primed to make new connections – just look at how quickly a three-year-old learns how to use an iPad. But the malleability of these connections also means that they're inherently fragile. They can be easily rewired – hence how easily children adapt to new circumstances – or the connection can become fuzzy or weak. It's this latter phenomenon that *The Whole-Brain Child* is concerned with: the way a child's lack of neural integration can lead to difficult and outlandish behaviour and, perhaps more importantly, how to deal with it.

NUMBER TUNNELS

Supplies: A4 Coloured card, markers, balls (plastic ball pit ones are great), tape.

To set up, choose an open space in your home. Cut card in half long ways. Add a number or spots to illustrate each number (like a dice) to each strip. Stick one edge of the paper to the ground and then the other, so it creates an arch and you're ready to roll.

Play: Ask your child to roll the same amount of balls as the number on top of each tunnel. Find this activity and many more toddler and pre-schooler activities at [@kristinatoddlerapproved](#) on Instagram.



So, it's possible to avoid this kind of behaviour? Well, no. Some degree of day-to-day insanity is part and parcel of being a child. That's what happens when the brain isn't sufficiently integrated. Kids can't provide enough context for their feelings or thoughts, so they spin out of control, hence the tantrums, sulking, fights and meltdowns. Instead what Siegel and Bryson are interested in is how you can use this knowledge to rethink the way you approach your child's crazier episodes. The fundamental philosophy of *The Whole-Brain Child* is that rather than seeing these crisis points simply as necessary obstacles to be endured – though they are certainly that – they're actually opportunities to connect with your child and to conjure something consequential out of the turmoil. They believe that by identifying and then responding from the same intellectual or emotional position as your child, you can start on to the same page and then help bridge the divide, thus helping them reinforce the connections between the different sections of their brain.

For instance, if a child falls over and starts crying uncontrollably, our first instinct is to try and soothe them: "It's alright. You're fine." They are fine, and we can see that, but kids aren't operating like us. At that moment, the child is consumed by the right side of their brain. The powerful emotions of fear and pain are holding court, so they can't put the trauma in perspective. Siegel and Bryson argue that a more productive way of responding to the eruption is to acknowledge the emotion, and then to try and activate that left side by helping the child to talk about it – to tell the story of what happened and why it made them feel like they do. That way, you're helping them wed

together those right and left aspects of their brains and giving them better tools with which to react when something similar happens again.

Strategies like these aren't intended as a cure-all panacea for behavioural excess, but rather a way of reframing the moments that challenge you most as a parent, and to find in them a new opportunity for connection. There's so much focus on providing children with "meaningful" experiences these days that it's easy to lose sight of the fact that, for a child, every moment is filled with meaning. That's simply how their brains are wired. Give them enough food, sleep and stimulation and these developing brains will build themselves.

But by the same token, this isn't to say that parents themselves need to be in a state of constant hyper-vigilance, making sure that every interaction with their kids is productive. Quite the opposite: by understanding the fundamental principles on which a child's brain operates, you can better offer your energy where it's needed, rather than running yourself ragged trying to put out spot fires before they arise and creating some mythical "perfect" nurturing environment for your young ones. Most of the time, simply being present with your child, listening to where they're coming from and responding in kind, is more than enough. Their remarkable brains – maturing, mysterious and kind of magical – will take care of the rest.

Follow the link for more of this article and useful links How a kid's brain works, The meltdown explanation. (2019, July 18). Hello Lunch Lady Issue 5 From <https://hellolunchlady.com.au/parenting/kids-brain-works/>

HEALTH & SAFETY: Dental Care

It is important to look after your child's teeth from the moment they start teething. Keeping your child's teeth and gums clean will protect against infection, cavities and pain. Decayed baby teeth can damage the permanent teeth underneath.

Brush your child's teeth twice a day, using small circular motions. Their teeth should be cleaned after eating and before bed using toothpaste with fluoride that is suitable for children. This can help to strengthen the outside of the teeth and prevent decay. Make sure they brush for at least 2 minutes and remind them not to swallow the toothpaste.

Help your child to brush their teeth from the time they get their first tooth until they are 7 or 8. After that, supervising them is still important.

- Try to get into a regular tooth brushing routine, and give your child plenty of praise when they brush their teeth well.
- Replace toothbrushes or toothbrush heads every 3 months.
- Children should floss as soon as they have 2 teeth that are in contact with each other. You should supervise flossing until they are about 10.
- To develop strong teeth, make sure your child eats a healthy, balanced diet and avoids foods with a lot of added sugar, such as lollies, biscuits and soft drinks. Always choose fluoridated tap water.

Source: www.healthdirect.gov.au/dental-care-for-children



LET'S RE-FOCUS ON REDUCING

Has COVID-19 changed your sustainable focus? Amid understandable concern over health and hygiene during the pandemic, the problem of disposable plastics has taken a back seat. Demand for products such as disposable wipes, cleaning agents, hand sanitiser, disposable gloves and masks is at a record high. Unfortunately, they're also being thrown out in unprecedented volumes.

So what can you do now that the immediate threat is beginning to subside? reuse what you have, and try to store rather than throw out items for donation or recycling.



Try to re-engage your old routines.

- Remember your reusable coffee cups (if your local café allows it).
- Use your own shopping bags, if need be wash them or use bags on rotation allowing 3 days between uses.
- Purchase bulk fruit and vegetables from local growers.

<https://theconversation.com/using-lots-of-plastic-packaging-during-the-coronavirus-crisis-youre-not-alone-135553>



Caring for your child's dental needs
DENTAL CHECK UP, CLEAN & TREATMENT
FOR CHILDREN AT OUR CENTRE on 22nd and 23rd July 2020

Your child will have the opportunity to have a "FREE" dental check-up and treatment at our Centre provided by Dental2You. Dental2you provides preventative services such as a comprehensive oral examination, clean to remove built up plaque and calcium application. Dental report, invoice and dental gift pack will be delivered to the centre the following week. The services provided are **conveniently carried out at our Centre** making it **easy for you** to access this program and make your child's dental experience positive and comfortable in a familiar environment having their educators and friends close by as support.

Under the Federal Government's Child Dental Benefit Scheme if you receive Family Tax benefit A, your child will be eligible for the \$1000 of funding for dental services every two years and there will be no cost involved. **Funding is available for children aged 2 – 17 years of age. As of 1st of July 2019 children are NOT eligible when the total household income exceeds \$98,988.** If your child is not eligible for treatment under the CDBS, Dental2You will contact you to discuss alternative options and our \$69 capped fee, to receive all the same services listed above which can be claimed through your private health fund provider if you have one.

Maintaining your child's oral hygiene is important to us and as such we recommend this program to you and your family and urge you to **contact your Centre Director today for more information**

5 Minute MOVES

Sock Wrestling

Short simple activities to get some active minutes in the day.

Try sock wrestling for a fun and physical challenge either indoors or outdoors. Trying to remove one another's sock isn't as easy as it sounds – it can be energetic and at times hilarious.

Mark out the wrestling area using soft items. Explain to your child that play is to be kept within the ring to keep everyone safe. You also need to agree how to stop the wrestling match at any time, e.g. by using a clear command word such as 'stop'. Explain the rules to your child – that the object of the game is to remove the other person's socks. Wrestlers must try to stay on their knees and not stand up at any time. The winner is the first person to get the other person's socks off. Sit opposite each other and put on your socks. Once ready, say: 'On your marks, get set, go!'

Source: www.grapevine.org.nz/articles/teacher-talk-sock-wrestling



CAPTURE ORGANIC MOMENTS

"Time moves quickly. Beauty, love and sacred moments are intertwined with pain, change, and loss. It is undeniably hard but this imperfect woven tapestry of instants and emotions empower us to savour life at its fullest. I believe in telling honest stories to pass down to our kids, as a legacy. It grounds them and hopefully, give them a sense of belonging.

I think that a series of pictures that tell a unique story of a perfectly imperfect life is far more engaging than a posed portrait. The ability to freeze time on a particular day will transport you back to that year and show your unique personalities and lifestyle that are evolving throughout time. The walk to your neighbourhood playground might seem ordinary today but will become a treasured memory in a while." - Photographer *Juliette Fradin* shares her perspective of family photography.

We are lucky today that our phone can take spectacular photos, and though a burden at times they don't leave our side often. Start capturing the imperfect moments that will later remind you of all the little moments that are so special.

Source: milkbooks.com/blog/family/spotlight-on-a-photographer-juliette-fradin/



Feedback 
is always welcome

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