

YOUR TIME AND ENERGY ARE NOT WELL SPENT DWELLING IN THE PAST OR BEING ANXIOUS OF THE FUTURE. INSTEAD, LIFE IS BEST SPENT BEING FULLY PRESENT TODAY – DENAYE BARAHONA



# ON *this* MONTH

WATERFORD WEST EDUCATION AND CARE  
CENTRE

Bush Kindy ----- 8<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>  
Nursing Home Visit ----- 4<sup>th</sup>

## AROUND THE COUNTRY

Clean Up Australia Day ----- 3  
St Patrick's Day ----- 17  
International Day of Happiness ----- 20  
World Poetry Day ----- 21  
Harmony Day ----- 21  
International Day of Forests ----- 21  
World Water Day ----- 22  
National Ride 2 School Day ----- 22  
Earth Hour ----- 30  
Neighbour Day ----- 31

## Letter from the Director

Welcome to the March edition of our centre newsletter for 2019.

This month, we are embracing sustainable practices within our centre, and using what we know to revamp our indoor and outdoor environments. We are excited to receive your feedback in the upcoming weeks about the visual changes we are making, and encourage parents to share their trades and everyday materials to help us create environments that stimulate children's learning and development

Reminder to all families: Please remember to sign in and out electronically, every day, when you are dropping your child off and collecting them from our service. Please note that this is a legal requirement from the government, that needs to be completed on your child's scheduled days to ensure that you receive your centrelink entitlements, failure to sign in and or out daily can result in extra charges to your account.



# Room News

## Junior Early Years Room

We've had such a busy month in the Junior Early Years room! I would like to take the opportunity to welcome our new children and families into our room. We are so excited to have you all here and cannot wait to see all of the amazing things that you will all learn and achieve this year.

Over the past month, our focus has been assisting the children to develop a sense of belonging into our room and also to extend on their ability to recognise and identify colours. Each day the children have had the opportunity to participate in experiences to assist this learning such as; Self-portraits, colour sorting, singing songs, reading stories, and taking the opportunity to develop this knowledge through intentional teaching strategies, such as role modelling.

Over the upcoming month, we will continue on with extending the children's colour knowledge, but will also incorporate shapes and extend on the children's current interests in the Fairy Cave and Construction.

## Early Years Room

The children are becoming more familiar with the routines in the Early Years Room, welcoming our friends daily each morning, singing our good morning song and the Bee Bee Bumble Bee song. This routine helps the children to settle into a new day and also develops their communication skills and sense of identity by belonging to our classroom.

This month we have been focusing on our communication and fine motor skills in addition to parent input into our program about introducing "letter of the week". The children enjoyed many hands on activities that helped to provide them with more purposeful meaning to new learnings.

## Junior Early Years Room



## Early Years Room



We have stimulated sustainable practices into our classroom, taking the children to the library to introduce them to different picture books about gardening, composting and recycling, we will continue to take what we have learnt and develop our own sustainable practices in our classroom this month and next.

### **Pre Prep Room**

This month, we have been talking about class rules which encourage everyone to keep themselves, their friends, the classroom resources and the environment safe. The children have all contributed their ideas in discussions and we will revisit these rules throughout the year.

We are sure that the children have been going home and talking about their Bush Walk experiences. There have been various learning moments each week during these times. We encourage risk taking, imagination, conflict resolution, gross and fine development though exploring the park. We have recognised significant advances across outcomes in terms of their learning and development and plan to extend their understandings through interests in the outdoor environment in the coming months, introducing a variety of sustainable practices.

### **Schoolies Room**

The Schoolies children are embracing STEM activities in the afternoons at the centre, this month focusing on science experiments to extend their learning and development. The children are having a great time, hypothesizing, predicting outcomes and then testing their theories, e.g. can we make an egg bounce. Lots of laughs are being had and it is so great to see children really enjoy their time with us in the afternoons.

Understanding the importance of a work and life balance, we have started up a homework club on Mondays and Tuesday's to ease parents stress at home. The feedback from parents has been fantastic and it's great to see children scaffold each other's learning and development.

Don't forget April school holidays are coming up, Please see Miss Peta TODAY if you have not received and or returned your vacation care booking form, spaces are limited for excursions so please be quick to secure your spot



**Pre Prep Room**



**Schoolies Room**





**CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY – 3 MARCH**

In 1989 an 'average Australian bloke' - Ian Kiernan, had a simple idea to make a difference in his own backyard - Sydney Harbour. *Clean Up Australia Day* is the nation's largest community mobilisation event. 2019 is the perfect time to band together in Ian's honour, celebrate what has been

achieved, show your support and continue his dream to Clean Up Australia. [www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au](http://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au)

**EARTH HOUR – 30 MARCH**

Every year hundreds of millions of people around the world in more than 7,000 cities in over 180 countries take part in this amazing global conservation movement. People do a wide range of things around the hour to show they care about our planet's future. Millions choose to mark Earth Hour by going 'lights out' for 60 minutes at 8.30pm – a symbolic show of solidarity. #Connect2Earth Find out more at [www.earthhour.org.au](http://www.earthhour.org.au).

LEARN, RELAX AND PLAY WITH THESE NEW EDUCATIONAL APPS



**HOPSTER**  
FREE WITH IN APP PURCHASES



*Hopster provides a safe place for young children to access educational and entertaining media.*

Hopster provides video, music, books, simple games and creative activities specifically chosen for young children. Famous characters, actors, and writers all feature in its superb content.

**STOP BREATHE & THINK KIDS**  
FREE WITH IN APP PURCHASES



*Meditation and mindfulness made easy and fun for children, to help them discover and develop their superpowers of sleep, being calm, learning to breathe or to resolve conflicts.*

Children can check into how they are feeling using fun emojis and try recommended mindful missions and meditations tuned to those emotions. Stickers reward their progress and keep the mindful activities



**TONGO MUSIC FOR KIDS**  
\$4.49

*Tongo Music is a fun, engaging educational app about music for children and the whole family. No ads, and no in-app purchases.*

Children will discover excerpts of famous works by, Wolfgang, Mozart, Beethoven and many more while uncovering seemingly endless activities.



PREP 5 min | COOK 30 min | SERVES 4

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 chicken breasts
- 500 grams short pasta
- 250 grams frozen peas
- A bunch of asparagus, woody ends trimmed and sliced into 3
- 1 cup fresh mint leaves, roughly torn
- 1 cup ricotta
- 1 cup shredded tasty cheese
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon

**METHOD:**

Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Place the chicken breasts onto an oven tray, drizzle with a little olive oil and bake for 18 minutes or until cooked through. Shred the chicken breasts using a couple of forks. Set aside.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to the boil, add pasta and cook according to packet instructions. Add the peas and asparagus half way through the pasta cooking time (they need 3-4 minutes in the water to cook). Drain and set aside.

Place the pasta, peas and asparagus into a large bowl along with the shredded chicken, mint, ricotta, tasty cheese, lemon zest and juice and stir to combine. Serve immediately. Enjoy x

*Enjoy x Remember to always supervise kids in the kitchen.*

Source: Recipe and images belong to [mylovelittlelunchbox.com](http://mylovelittlelunchbox.com)



## FOCUS ARTICLE: This is why your child can't actually 'calm down' during a tantrum



We are constantly absorbing emotions from those around us. That's part of the reason being around kids and teens, with their roller coasters of emotion, can be so exhausting. And when our own hearts and minds are clouded by emotion, we are not showing up and responding with our wisest mind and most open heart.

**Our capacity for calm in the midst of a kid's emotional storm offers hope, because it signals that calm is possible in the midst of chaos.**

Neuroscientist Dan Siegel and parenting expert Tina Bryson creatively describe "downstairs" and "upstairs" aspects of the brain. Our primitive brains—the limbic system and amygdala—are reactive and emotional, driven by impulsive, short-term interests, and primitive drives. This childlike, impulsive, instinctual system lives downstairs. Meanwhile, the outer cortices of our brains, which enable us to inhibit impulses, slow down, gain perspective, process emotional stimuli, and articulate these stimuli into thought and action, live upstairs. This upstairs area helps us plan, think before we act, take perspective, make moral decisions, and form relationships. The "wise mind" integrates both our emotional and our rational minds, according to Marsha Linehan, the creator of dialectical behaviour therapy. The four aspects of our brains—left, right, upstairs, downstairs—need strong connections to work together to build wise, healthy brains.

**During a tantrum, when the amygdala and emotions flare up, it's almost impossible for logic to penetrate our kids' closed-off outer cortices. Helping them settle down from a tantrum to engage their wise mind takes wisdom, compassion, and plenty of patience on our part.**

Our children are not miniature adults—their growing brains are actually incapable of taking an adult perspective on a situation and using that knowledge to calm down.

Remembering this can help us see that tantrums are not methodically manufactured manipulations. A child's tantrum operates at an instinctual level that simply won't respond to reason. Once we recognise this, we can make more effective choices about responding. Yes, sometimes challenging behaviours are premeditated, and in those cases, we should respond with intention, logic, and clear boundaries or consequences.

However, when our kids are experiencing a limbic system meltdown, what they need is connection and calming. When children descend into lower-brain chaos, parents need to work overtime to first calm our own prefrontal cortex (PFC), which is associated with planning and thinking and is located just behind the forehead—so we can view the situation clearly. When we show that we've regulated our own emotions, it signals to kids that it's safe for them to calm down. It also models and mirrors to them (often literally, through what are called mirror neurons) how to calm down. Thus, the quickest way to cultivate calm in a child is to practice being calm yourself.

As one meme I recently saw on Twitter says, "**Never in the history of calming down has anyone ever calmed down by being told to calm down.**"

Telling kids to relax doesn't work nearly as well as a soft voice or a gentle touch, both of which turn on the "attend and befriend" response, shut off fight or flight, thin out cortisol, and boost oxytocin, the so-called love hormone. Once we establish that fundamental connection with our child (or anyone, for that matter), we can open our hearts and minds to each other, see each other's perspective, and move on together.

**Once your child calms down, you can move toward processing and planning verbally. Here are some things to try:** Continue to engage the prefrontal cortex (PFC), don't forget your kid's basic needs, sometimes you have to get creative and throw your kid a curveball. Try to jump-start their PFC with a seemingly random question. Decrease the dominance of the amygdala with games.

When we interrupt tantrums like this, it's vital that, once things calm down, we address what triggered the tantrum. You don't have to rehash the details of every conflict, but remember that consistency is always key to raising resilient and healthy kids. So if you say you are going to come back to something later, come back to it. This lets kids integrate the experience with their whole brain once it's fully back online.

Source: Motherly; Christopher Willard (2019, January 22). This is why your child can't actually 'calm down' during a tantrum. Retrieved from <https://www.mother.ly/child/this-is-why-your-child-cant-actually-calm-down-during-a-tantrum>

## ALPHABET ROCKS

**YOU NEED:** 52 rocks (these may be collected or purchased) Choose rocks that are smooth and big enough to not be a choking hazard. Permanent Marker.

Using a black permanent marker, carefully print an upper case letter on one side of a rock and the corresponding lowercase letter on the other side. This is an easy way to help children gain practice in connecting uppercase with lowercase letters. These rocks will become a reusable learning resource in your home, with so many activities possible. (This will ensure you have 2 sets of letters for

activities).

**1. Upper case, lower case match** - This activity is simple; children search the rocks and match the letters.

**2. My name** – Write your child's name on a piece of paper for your child to copy with the rocks. Model the activity by spelling your name using capitals and lower case letters.

**3. Sight words** – Use these rocks to make basic sight words from familiar books.

This activity was adapted from [homegrownfriends.com](http://homegrownfriends.com)

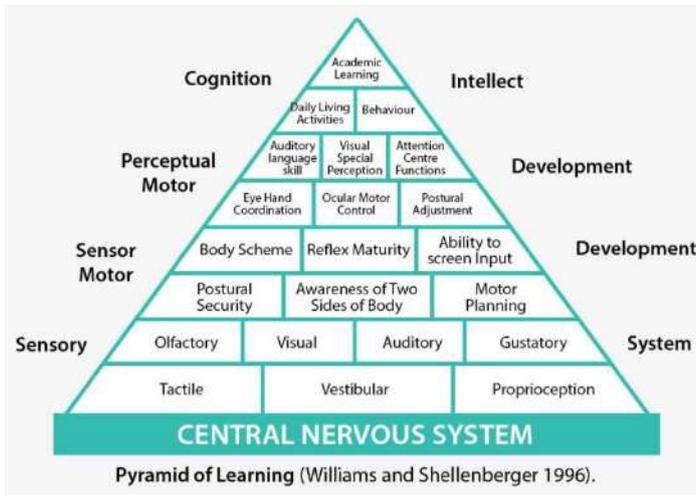


# HEALTH & SAFETY: Core strength is more important than you know

This article was written by Nicole Rowan, a mother of three children and a paediatric Occupational Therapist.

For children, their “occupations” are play and school. This is how they learn, grow, and develop. Once I had my own children, my perspective and practice as an OT changed for the better. Likewise, my knowledge of development has enhanced my parenting.

The first thing I wish every parent knew about child development is the importance of core strength and position as the foundation for fine and gross motor skills, speech and language, and academic skills.



Often, parents seek support because they recognise that their child is having difficulty communicating. It is relatively easy to spot and critically important. However, speech and language skills are near the top of the “pyramid of development” (as pictured above) and intervention aimed there, while disregarding the foundation, will not be as effective. OTs along with our Physical Therapist colleagues (if we’re lucky enough to have one) look at a child’s sensory-motor function as a basis for growth and development.

Our bodies get information from our environments by moving and sensing which then gets processed for a physical response. This happens unconsciously all day long, but if there is a glitch in the loop, everything gets thrown off. Glitches happen for a number of reasons, many which are beyond your control. What you can do is ensure your child has plenty of opportunities to develop core strength, and pay attention to their position and movements.

### Here are my top recommendations for working on Core Strength:

**Starting with tummy time** in infancy and continuing until they graduate high school, encourage your child to play in different positions. Lying on tummy propped on elbows, kneeling on haunches, tall kneeling, kneeling on all-fours, standing, criss-cross

sitting, side-sitting, and sitting on a child-sized chair to name some. Change it up! Many kids are comfortable in an upright position because that’s where they’ve spent their whole lives (in car seat, baby chair, swing, sling, etc.) but kids need other positions to develop balanced muscles and stability in their hips and chest, not to mention their visual system. Good core strength and stability allows us to have good movements and control with our limbs, hands and fingers.

**Remember wheelbarrow walks from your childhood?!** They are an oldie-but-goodie that improve core strength. Have some fun with your kids with daily wheelbarrow races, and throw in some animal walks too. Think, bear walks, crawling, slithering like a snake, leap frogs, bunny hops – all of these tap into the foundation skills in a playful, fun way.

**Go to the park** to climb, swing, slide, walk along a balance beam. In the midst of structured organized sports and recreation activities, don’t miss the chance to let your kids freely explore movement in the park environment. Can’t get to the park? Consider how you can replicate those moves indoors. Tape a “balance beam” on the floor, crawl up and down the stairs. Set some safety rules, then get moving. Even better, set up an indoor obstacle course using your household furniture and objects.

Core strength is connected to attention, anxiety and behaviour. When kids hold their breath and brace themselves or take big belly breaths (for example, in an attempt at deep breathing), this can trigger the fight/fright/flight response and heighten their awareness of everything in their environment, making it appear as if they are distracted and inattentive. Instead, encourage your child to sit or lie in a comfortable position and take deep breaths to expand the lower ribs: which engages the core muscles. Also encourage kids to breathe throughout their movements.

There are many resources available today for parents, and activities such as yoga classes, indoor soccer, and skating lessons. All of these are good but they are not “required”. For most kids, if you get down on their level, follow their lead, play and have fun, they will naturally engage in activities and positions that will develop foundational core strength.

If you’re a parent struggling to get your baby to do tummy time, or wondering whether they really need to crawl, or trying to muster the energy to hit the park, press on and know that you are investing in their foundational skills and setting them up for success as they continue to grow and learn.

Source: This Birds Day (2019, February 16). What I wish every parent knew: Core Strength Retrieved from This Birds Day



## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS

Did you know that forests cover one third of all land on earth and are home to 80% of the planet’s land animal and plant species? Forests and trees make vital contributions to our lives and to the planet, bolstering livelihoods, providing clean air and water, conserving biodiversity and responding to climate change.

The theme for 2019 is ‘Forests for Education’, so this year

We challenge you to create something to educate others. As a family you may like to create a poster, a song or create a short video to educate others on the importance of forests.

Working together on a project promotes communication and provides a platform to discuss sustainability with your children.

**International Forests Day is March 21.** Go to <http://www.fao.org/international-day-of-forests/en/> to find out more.



## CIRCLE TIME



Circle time is a great way for Pre-schoolers to get a sense of community with other kids their age and enhance their social skills and improve their attention span.

We believe that starting with circle time helps to introduce the topics and plans for the day. Here are some benefits of a successful circle time for Pre-schoolers.

### What are the benefits of Preschool Circle Time?

**Establish Community** – My having circle time, or group time, our pre-schoolers greet each other and learn awareness of other children. This kind of interaction helps to enhance the social skills of toddlers. They learn that each child is valued as a member of the group.

**Plan it Out** – Use circle time to go over the day's plans and topics. With all the children in the class together, everyone will know what the class will be doing. Kids are always curious and circle time is a good opportunity for them to ask questions.

**Keep it Fun** – Getting toddlers and pre-schoolers to sit still for any amount of time can be tricky. Keeping circle time fun and interactive can help keep toddlers engaged and help to improve their attention span. Circle time becomes a fun activity rather than a chore.

**Make it a Routine** – When something becomes routine or familiar to young children, they respond to it better.

Source: <https://montessorirocks.org/importance-art-preschoolers/>

**National Quality Framework** | Quality Area 1:  
Element 1.1 – *Program*. The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.

## Waterford West Education and Care Centre Introduces



Would you like a night out with your loved one or just a night out with friends, but don't have anyone to look after your little ones?

Here is where we can help! Waterford West Education and Care Centre will be holding a date night on Friday 22/3/19 for you and your beloved. Imagine your child being cared for by Early Childhood professionals in a safe, exciting environment with lots of fun activities for them to enjoy whilst you are out celebrating.

The children will get to enjoy story time, arts and craft activities, movies, construction, WiFi and lots of fun games. Dinner and drinks will be provided also. For those that wish to have a rest beds and cots will be provided. Please bring along pillows and blankets.

For more information on pricing and to book your spot please contact Peta 3805 2092! Spots will be limited so get in quick.



**DANCE PARTY**

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

When was the last time you turned on some music and let loose on the dance floor? Or for this purpose the lounge room floor with your kids? For the next 5 minutes turn on some music and get down and boogie. Copy your kids moves and teach them some of your tried and true favourites!

**Feedback**   
is always welcome

How can we make our newsletter even better?

What information would you like us to include?

**Waterford West Education and Care Centre**

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