

DON'T LET WHAT YOU CAN'T DO, STOP YOU FROM DOING WHAT YOU CAN DO – JOHN WOODEN

Waterford West
Education and Care
Centre



ON *this* MONTH

AT

WATERFORD WEST EDUCATION
AND CARE CENTRE

AND

AROUND THE COUNTRY

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Letter from the Director

Welcome to our Newsletter for May 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our centre families for their support and understanding during the current COVID-19 crisis. Your thoughtfulness, kindness and generosity has helped to keep us positive as we continue to provide the upmost of quality care during this time.

From the 18th May 2020, we will start to invite children back into our centre, who are ready and wanting to recommence their enrolment. Reminder to parents who are wanting to recommence enrolment, please ensure that you check your emails for how to recommence enrolment letter issued last week, this letter outlines that we are asking parents for one weeks' notice to return to allow for us to arrange staffing according to departmental ratios. This email also contains a priority list of access of care during the pandemic and states that we may ask you to decrease and/or change your days to allow access according to this list of priority. If you have not received this email, please let our office know ASAP so that we can forward this information onto you in order to save any confusion.

From next week, we will also see our Early Learners and Early Years reopen, and assure you that as we continue to embrace the new "Normal" that we will endeavour to communicate any changes and/or updates regarding the impending coronavirus, and /or government's stance on child care centres, in an accurate and timely matter.



Room News

Early Learners and Junior Early Years Room

Last month saw our Early Learners and Junior Early Years room combine, and as such as a group we have focused on extending children's learnings and understandings about colours, by making play spaces for their exploration. The children had so much fun identifying colours in everyday objects and experimenting with liquid substances; such as oil, water and foam to make and mix new colours.

This month, as we begin to separate the two classrooms into smaller groups we will have more opportunities to embrace the Abecedarian reading strategies into our program. So far, we have been focusing on the 3S Strategy which centres on 'See, Show, Say'. We encourage families, if you have not had a chance to see our facebook posts, to please jump online and have a look, as this is a fantastic and different way of reading with children, which helps to develop and extend their language and literacy skills.

Both of our younger rooms are excited this month, to continue to explore all the Abecedarian strategies and will be including these in daily reflections with links to things that you can do at home if you are wanting to extend further with your child.

Early Years and Pre-Prep Room

What a busy month Pre-Prep and Early Years children have had in the pre-prep classroom. We have welcomed back some of our friends and stayed connected to many more through social media. We hope that our friends currently not attending have enjoyed watching our science experiments, and listening to our songs and story times.

Last month, we celebrated Easter and held our Easter Bonnet parade live for everyone at home to watch. We have also extended our learnings and understandings about "rainbows" making our very own rainbow trail and completing a variety of rainbow science experiments

Last month, also saw us continue to take care of our gardens and watch and observe our little grass heads grow, as well as explore the storybook "Who sank the boat?", this extended our mathematical understandings as we made predictions on different things in our classroom and whether or not these items would sink or float.

We were able to extend our new found learnings through discussions about force and motion and used expressive art to demonstrate these understandings. This month, we will continue to extend our mathematical understandings by moving onto learning how a Volcano works and growing crystals this month.





NATIONAL FAMILIES WEEK – MAY 15-21

The aim of National Families Week is to celebrate the vital role that families play in Australian society. The enduring theme '*Stronger families, stronger communities*', highlights the important role that families play as the central building block of our communities and

that community wellbeing is enhanced by family wellbeing. Celebrate families week this year by focusing on the wellbeing of your family. The following link will provide you with helpful tips and ideas to support you. **Find our more here.**

NATIONAL SORRY DAY – MAY 26

National Sorry Day is an Australia-wide observance held on May 26 each year. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities. The first National Sorry Day was held on 26 May 1998 – one year after the tabling of the report *Bringing them Home, May 1997*. **Find out more here**

BANANA CAKE



PREP 20 min | COOK 30 min | SERVES 16

INGREDIENTS

3 overripe **bananas**, *mashed*
 2 **eggs**
 3/4 cup **olive oil** (or vegetable oil)
 1 cup Greek or natural **yoghurt** (or sour cream or buttermilk)
 1/2 cup **brown sugar** (or coconut sugar)
 1/3 cup **pure maple syrup** (or brown sugar)
 1 tablespoon **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)
 1 cup **buckwheat flour** (or plain flour)
 1 cup **plain flour**
 1 1/2 teaspoons **baking powder**
 1 teaspoon **cinnamon**, *ground*
 1/2 teaspoon **nutmeg**, *ground*
 1/4 teaspoon **ginger**, *ground*
 pinch of **salt**

ICING

2 cups **fresh ricotta** (deli-style) **cheese**
 1/2 cup **pure maple syrup**
 2 teaspoons **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)
 1/2 cup **cocoa powder**

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 180 C and line a 20 cm x 20 cm brownie pan with baking paper. Set aside. **Place** the mashed bananas, eggs, olive oil, yoghurt, sugar, syrup and vanilla and whisk to combine. **Sift** the buckwheat flour, plain flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and salt into the bowl and stir using a wooden spoon until just combined. **Pour** the batter into the prepared tin. **Bake** for 30-40 minutes or until a skewer inserted removes cleanly. **Allow** the cake to cool completely.

To make the whipped ricotta maple and chocolate frosting:

Place the ricotta into the bowl of a food processor and blitz for 1-2 minutes or until smooth. **Add** the maple syrup, vanilla and cocoa powder and blitz for 2-3 minutes (scraping down the sides of the bowl) or until the frosting is smooth and luscious. **Smother** the cooled cake with a thick layer of frosting. **Cut** into 9 or 16 squares. Enjoy x

Recipe and Image from '*mylovelylittlelunchbox.com*'

App reviews

Educational pre-schooler apps that will engage and challenge.



BEE-BOT

TTS Group | Ages: 4+

The Bee-Bot® App from TTS is based on the well-loved and award winning Bee-Bot® floor robot. The App makes use of Bee-Bot's key functionality and enables children to improve their skills in directional language, programming sequences of forwards, backwards, left and right 90 degree turns.

GOODNESS SHAPES

Little 10 Robot | Ages: 3+

Goodness Shapes is a playful, learning adventure for pre-schoolers and toddlers. Your kids will get familiar with shapes, colours and patterns through unique challenges that involve matching, sorting and other fun games. This is a relaxed experience with endless play that keeps children engaged, entertained and challenged.

MONTESSORIUM: INTRO TO COLOURS

HIGHER GROUND EDUCATION INC | Ages: 3+

Learn the foundations of colour, including primary colours, secondary colours and gradients. Inspired by the famous Montessori colour tablets! Your child will learn: The basic foundations of colour, Primary & Secondary Colours, Colour Shades & Gradients, to identify, match and name colours, to mix, paint and create colours, to seek, find and select colours and fine motor skills.



FOCUS: Continuing social connection for children during social-distancing

As social-distancing rules continue and confirmed cases and deaths rise, children's daily rhythms and routines have been obliterated. Some are struggling with this brave new world in which they must remain six feet apart from the people they love. So parents are loosening strict limits on screen time, hoping virtual playdates will spare their house-bound children the anxiety and trauma the pandemic is spreading from coast to coast and restore a sense of community when they need it most.

Screen time in the time of coronavirus

Is all this screen time OK? The American Academy of Paediatrics normally recommends no screens before 18 months, one hour a day of quality programming for 2- to 5-year-olds and limits for older kids. But, of course, these are not normal times.

Jenny Radesky, assistant professor of paediatrics at the University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital and author of the American Academy of Paediatrics' 2016 screen time recommendations, has been getting a lot of questions from parents about screen time during the coronavirus. Radesky, a developmental behavioural paediatrician, tweeted some new recommendations last week.

"These social connections are incredibly important. Schooling offers children not only time to interact and play with their peers but also a larger community that they belong to, with its own culture and norms. Children are constantly practicing their social skills with each other – testing what sort of behaviour is appropriate, what goes too far, and what gets reciprocated by other children – and this dynamic process is hard to replicate at home," Radesky told USA TODAY in an email. "Using video chat to play games, catch up with each other, talk about boredom, or even just be ridiculous will help kids cope."

Screen time should still have limits. Make sure time is set aside for going outdoors, playing board games, drawing, or giving kids unstructured time to figure out what they'd like to do, Radesky advises.

Virtual playdates bridge social distancing

Almost anything kids used to do offline before COVID-19 can now be done online with a few clicks or taps and a little creativity, says Sierra Filucci, editorial director of Common Sense Media, an advocacy group for kids. Dance and homework parties. Birthday celebrations. Movie and game nights. Storytime and circle time. Virtual lunch hours with classmates. Scavenger hunts and charades. No matter what age, activities abound that ease the solitude of sheltering in place while keeping kids at a safe physical distance, Filucci says.

Pre-school age children can draw together, Primary school-age kids can tackle marshmallow-and-toothpick building challenges with pals over video chat. Older kids can meet up in multiplayer online games.



"Any opportunity to keep up social contact between kids is good just overall for mental health," Filucci says. "For younger kids, social interaction can be a very important part of education, and for older kids, social interaction is an important part of their social development."

Here are some ideas for online activities to connect with friends and family from Filucci at Common Sense Media:

Pre-school/Primary aged children

Apps

Caribu

Social games

Mario

Maker 2

Roblox

Activities on video chat with supervision

Board games (Chutes & Ladders, Candyland, Sorry, Battleship)

Play-doh

Scavenger hunts

Marshmallow/toothpick building challenges

Story time

Show and tell

Charades

Circle time

Legos, Beyblades, other toys

Share songs and videos on YouTube

Guynn, Jessica. (2020, March 27). USA Today. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2020/03/27/coronavirus-covid-19-social-distancing-screen-time-parents-children-zoom-facetime-fortnite-minecraft/5084998002/>

UP, DOWN AND AROUND

Supplies: Toy cars, boxes or furniture.

Watch 'Up, down and around' <https://youtu.be/yY4ZNV3BQCw> and talk to your child about the positional words in the story. Use toy cars to demonstrate the words: Up, down, around, under, over. Once your child understands the concept take turns directing each others cars. For example, say to your child; "drive your car up the box, over the box, down the box, around the box..." Extend this activity by adding new positional words or different settings.

Find out more at https://mathathome.org/lessons/up-down-around__trashed/



HEALTH & SAFETY: Managing main meals and snack times

If we can take a positive out of this social isolation (if you are at home), it's that this certainly is a brilliant time to start having more family mealtimes together and reconnect as a family over food.

All too often we are rushing between work, sport, getting homework done, and very little time is given to sharing quality time together around the table. We also have the opportunity (albeit a messy one!) to cook more with our children, which is another great way to get them involved with food.

Before we get started, it would be remiss of me not to mention the most important safety precaution of all which is handwashing regularly throughout the day. Certainly, enforce hand washing before any food prep or meal/snack.

PLANNING – Avoid aimlessly wandering the grocery store for large periods of time by planning all meals and snacks as much as possible in advance. When you return from the supermarket wipe over foods and ensure you wash all fresh fruit and veggies.

BREAKFAST – A nutrient dense breakfast will help children stay fuller for longer and hopefully ask for snacks less often between main mealtimes. As the weather cools down involve them in making egg dishes together or oats. If you're in need of a quick breakfast, veggie/fruit smoothies are always a great option. If possible, eat breakfast together and set your intentions for the day and ask your children theirs.

SNACKS – Here are two snack strategies worth trialling in your home if you feel like you're constantly being asked, or the pantry is now a free for all.

The **"just have it all right now"** strategy. This idea comes to us from *Random Thoughts Uncensored* on Facebook. Each child gets their own basket. Each basket contains the day's snacks for that child. Want to eat it all before 9 a.m.? Fine, but that's all the snacks you get for the day, so you might want to think about how hungry you really are.

For older children **"Turn snack time into a maths lesson"** I wish I could attribute this genius to its rightful owner, but it was posted in the COVID-19 and Keeping Kids Busy Facebook group



last week. Want a snack? You have to pay for it— with money (or tokens for younger children) you earned by doing some jobs, academic work etc. And junk food is pricier than healthy snacks: "I don't know if anyone's shared this but I thought it was a great way to incorporate a math lesson in all of this as well as make the kids think "do I really want this?" Or "Am I really hungry?" Posted by Heather Robinson on Friday, March 20, 2020. I like this because they have to do some work anyway, they don't have to do much of it to earn a healthy snack but if they really want that lollipop, they can dig in and ramp up the learning.

LUNCH / DINNER – Children love being involved in 'adult' activities, so have them help you cook whenever possible. It's an activity you can't avoid and an activity they will enjoy doing with you. If you are busy trying to work from home and feeling guilty you aren't interacting with your child on a meaningful level, this is a perfect time.

Savage, Karina. (2020, March 31). Kidspot.com.au. <https://www.kidspot.com.au/health/family-health/real-life/food-you-shouldnt-eat-during-isolation/news-story/a4620b0301dd59591f347342337e106b>

Moravcik Walbert, Meghan. (2020, March 28). MSN. <https://www.msn.com/en-au/lifestyle/foodanddrink/how-to-manage-snacks-while-the-kids-are-home-all-day/ar-BB11EJBC>

HOME COMPOSTING

Each year over half of our household garbage is made up of food and garden waste. Most of this organic waste can be recycled by composting it. By turning food scraps and organic garden waste into compost you are:

- Improving soil quality and garden vitality by releasing rich nutrients into the soil.
- Suppressing plant diseases and pests, this reduces or eliminates the need for chemical fertilisers and manures helping you save money.
- Reducing the amount of organic waste going to landfill therefore preventing greenhouse gas emissions and leachate.
- Helping soils retain moisture – you do not need to water that often.
- Helping absorb and filter runoff, protecting streams from erosion and pollution.

What to add in your compost bin:

Vegetable and fruit scraps, vegetable oil, pruning and lawn clippings, tea bags and coffee grounds, vacuum dust, shredded paper and cardboard, used potting mix, egg shells, flowers.

Setting up a compost bin:

The only resource you have to purchase is a compost bin of some kind. You can buy the traditional kind from your local hardware store or try a below ground version from companies like subpod.com or powerplanter.com.au/ Below ground composters boast a simpler and faster way to compost.

Image: Subpod compost.

Watch Costa's Guide to Home Composting here: <https://youtu.be/HngvowScx6g>





Filling the gaps

Currently your playgroups are cancelled, extra-curricular activities like Little Kickers, Gymnastics and Dance are suspended for now. You are not going on outings and staying away from friends and family where possible. So, what do you do with all that additional time?

PLAY IDEAS:

- Cooking with kids is one of those activities that is worth all the mess! Children love being involved and learn lifelong lessons simply taking part in cooking activities. mylovelittlelunchbox.com has a huge library of recipes of varying difficulties, perfect for all ages.
- **Theme Day:** Take a leaf out of the Bluey playbook. Choose a theme and fully commit for the day (or an hour). Dress up and transfer your room into a hotel, create a movie together, turn the lounge room into a hospital or allow the kids to control your every move...if you're game! You can find everything you need here <https://www.bluey.tv>

ONLINE ACTIVITY LINKS:

BABY KARAOKE – Enjoy singing well know children's songs together.

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/baby-karaoke>

ACTIVEFORLIFE.COM – Find 200+ activities to do with your family.

<https://activeforlife.com/200-activities-you-can-do-with-kids-at-home>

TORONGA TV – Taronga are bringing their two beautiful zoos directly into your living room!

<https://taronga.org.au/taronga-tv>

COVID-19 Restrictions are Easing

Queensland has a [roadmap](#) to a COVID-safe recovery allowing more travel, more activities and larger gatherings. From 11.59pm, Friday May 15, the following will be allowed:

- Gatherings of a maximum of 10 people together in a public space.
- Dining in at restaurants, pubs, clubs, RSLs and cafes for a maximum of 10 patrons at one time as part of a gradual re-opening (no bars or gaming).
- Recreational travel of a radius of up to 150km from your home for day trips.
- Some beauty therapies and nail salons for up to 10 people at one time.
- Reopening of libraries, playground equipment, skate parks and outdoor gyms (a maximum of 10 at one time).
- Wedding guests increased to 10 people and funeral attendance increased to 20 (30 outdoors).
- Open homes and auctions with a maximum of 10 people at one time.
- Re-opening public pools and lagoons (e.g. South Bank, Cairns, Airlie Beach) with a maximum of 10 people at a time or greater numbers with an approved plan.

For Outback Queensland, where there have been no COVID cases, two special concessions have been made:

- Dining in at pubs and cafes will be up to 20 for locals only, reflecting the important role these venues play in connecting small outback communities; and
- Recreational travel of a radius of up to 500 kilometres reflecting the long distances in the Outback.



Roll of the dice

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

You will need two die (different colours if possible). Assign each number on the die an exercise and write these down or draw a symbol for each one. Choose simple exercises everyone taking part can do. For example: Crab walk, squat, varied push ups, run, jumping jacks, leap, duck walk, skip...

One die will be your exercise dice and one your reps. Roll them together or if you only have one die, the first roll will choose the exercise, the second roll the reps.

How long you exercise for is completely up to you. Set a timer for 5 minutes or choose how many exercises you're going to do or simply go until you can't stop! Have fun.