



ON *this* MONTH

WATERFORD WEST EDUCATION
AND CARE CENTRE

Are You Ok Day ----- 10

AROUND THE COUNTRY

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| Wattle Day ----- | 1 |
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Letter from the Director

Welcome to our Newsletter for September 2020. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome new families into our centre. It is so great to see all of our classrooms full and all of our staff back to working full time hours. Thank you to all our families and friends for their ongoing support this year during COVID-19, I know that sometimes we are restricted by the guidelines issued by the QLD government, however, we are doing our best to ensure that all special events are celebrated.

If you have not already, please be sure to LIKE our Instagram and Facebook pages. Please also ensure that your email address is current with our office. These forums are our biggest communication platforms during this period of time, especially now with our own centre restrictions in place, we are encouraging our families and friends to check electronically daily for updates and information about what is happening in the centre this month.

Reminder to all families to please ensure that your account is in advance two weeks as per our centre policy, and that it is being paid regularly according to your allocated cycle. If you are having ongoing issues with your account, please see our Centre Director for support.



Room News

Early Learners Room

The month of August, saw our Early Learners children learning about the importance of looking after our teeth. We used experiments to see how plaque develops on our teeth and how to keep it away by cleaning our teeth with our toothbrushes. We also learnt about how drinking certain drinks, such as juices and sodas can harm our teeth. We discussed healthy eating, good foods and bad foods, and explored the story "Dr Rabbit meets the Brushalotamus", which is all about visiting the dentist.

Children enjoyed exploring science week, creating fireworks in a jar, forming rainbows in water and milk, volcanos erupting, making ice-cream and tasting edible slime. All of these activities helped to develop children's fine motor skills, senses, and understanding about liquids and solids.

This month, we will explore learning activities based on the Seaside and Ocean. Who Lives there? What can be found? Engaging Early Learners in language skills and learning about the world around them.

Junior Early Years Room

Using STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) children engaged in different activities this month designed to extend their learning and development in major centre events, including Dental and Science week and the Premiers Reading Challenge.

This month we will continue to focus on 3A conversational reading, learning games and open ended conversations with the children, using their interests in their favourite books 'Where's the Green Sheep and The Wombat Stew' to extend cognitive and language skills.

Children's interests in home corner and cooking will also provide opportunities for children to explore different recipes, sizes and quantities, as our centre chef joins in our program this month, helping the children make their own afternoon tea.



Early Years Room

Another month has passed, but the fun and energy is still carrying over from last month, where we focused on incorporating many of the children's interests into the program, to ensure inclusiveness of all children and create a wider sense of belonging.

We have discussed our Superhero powers in the room, and we all agreed that being helpful, using our words and being kind to yourself, other people and the environment are our strengths. Last month also saw us encourage Early Years children to ignite their curiosity, planning and predicting skills during science week with some simple but intriguing experiments.

This month, has seen the development of our hair and beauty salon, extending social skills; like taking turns, communication, listening and showing respect. We cannot wait to see where the children's interests take us now.

Pre-Prep Room

August in Pre-Prep was a busy month for us. We started the month with dental health week and the children explored activities around what foods keep our teeth healthy and strong, tooth brushing techniques and experiments to find out what drinks are healthier for our teeth and which ones can cause decay.

We welcomed Talia into our classroom, Talia is our friendly travel buddy platypus that has come from Marsden State School. Talia will be traveling between our Pre-Prep classroom and a Prep classroom at Marsden state school and we will document our time with Talia in a folder and send all our questions and share our learnings with Marsden Prep students and vice versa. This will help to support connections between our early learning centre and school and give the children insight in to what they can expect next year.

Last month, also saw us engaged in science week. We explored various chemical reactions through hands-on exploration, including; baking soda and vinegar and related it back to our learnings about space in the way that they react with each other because they exchange atoms.

This month, we will continued to learn about space and will spend some time designing our own planets, exploring our writing station as we learn to write key space words, make galaxy slime and explore space themed books.





EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS' DAY – SEPTEMBER 2

Early Childhood Educators' Day recognises and celebrates the work of Australia's educators in early learning services for their wonderful contribution to the wellbeing and healthy development of the young children in their care.

It's a chance to say thank you to Australia's early childhood educators on a very personal level by service operators, families and their children, as well as collectively at the national level.

Find our more here.

WORLD RIVERS DAY – SEPTEMBER 27

World Rivers Day is a celebration of the world's waterways. It highlights the many values of our rivers, strives to increase public awareness, and encourages the improved stewardship of all rivers around the world. **Where is your local river? Find out more here.**

STRAWBERRY MUFFINS WITH CITRUS HONEY GLAZE



INGREDIENTS

Muffins

- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup (180 ml) lightly flavoured olive oil
- 1 cup Greek (or natural) yoghurt
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste (OR extract)
- 1 cup buckwheat flour (OR 1 cup plain wholemeal flour)
- 1 cup plain wholemeal flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- pinch of salt
- 1 cup (fresh or frozen) strawberries, PLUS extra strawberries sliced, to decorate
- zest and juice of 1 orange

Glaze

- 1 tablespoon honey
- Juice and zest 1 orange
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla bean paste (or extract)
- 1/2 cup icing sugar, sifted

METHOD: Muffins Preheat oven to 180 C, line a 12-hole muffin tin with papers. Set aside. Place the eggs, oil, yoghurt, sugar and vanilla into a large bowl and whisk to combine. Add the buckwheat flour, plain flour, baking powder and salt and using a wooden spoon gently stir to combine. Do not over mix. Gently fold through the strawberries and orange zest and juice. Evenly divide the mixture between the prepared tin. Top each muffin with a slice of strawberry. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until a skewer inserted removes cleanly. Cool for 5-10 minutes before placing on a wire rack to cool completely.

Glaze - Place the honey, orange juice, zest and vanilla into a small bowl and whisk to combine. Add the icing sugar and stir until smooth. Drizzle glaze over the cooled muffins. Serve immediately.

Recipe and Image from 'mylovelylittlelunchbox.com'

App reviews

A mixed bag of apps to keep pre-schoolers entertained and learning.



THE LORAX

Oceanhouse Media | AGE 4+ | \$9.99

If you care about the environment and want your child to care too, then the Lorax App is a no-brainer. The classic Dr. Seuss book comes to life with this app thanks to its interactive activities and exquisite animation. The app has won the Academic Choice "Smart Choice Media" award as well as the Parents' Choice Award Silver Honour award. The story is about how industrialisation destroys environments and this app teaches environmental awareness in a very approachable way.

BANDIMAL

YATATOY | AGE 3 to Adult | \$5.99

BANDIMAL is a fun and intuitive music composer that lets kids discover the creative world of making music. Set up a drum loop, swipe through animals to change instruments, compose melodies, change loop speeds and add a quirky effect on top. Amusing animals animate in hilarious ways as you perfect your song.

WORLD OF PEPPA PIG

Entertainment One | AGE 3 – 5 | FREE

The World of Peppa Pig app offers your family a safe and ad-free environment, filled with lots of learning and fun!

Tailored towards the development of pre-schoolers, there are plenty of games, videos and activities for your little ones to enjoy and grow with.



FOCUS: This year isn't ideal, but let's make the best of it!

My father has helped me around many twists in life's road with his saying, "What's real isn't always what's ideal, and what's ideal is rarely real." I've never felt it more applicable or helpful than while parenting and educating during COVID-19. Things are not ideal in many, fundamental ways, and yet here we are. Though hopefully not forever, this is our reality, and probably will be for a while.

This begs big questions for parents and educators alike—do we anchor on what is ideal or on what is real as we support our kids during such a wild time? Do we hold kids precious and protect them from this reality, or do we help them to navigate within and adapt to it? Which will help them to thrive more in the long term?

My vote: Let go of 'ideal' and parent for real.

In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or to step back into safety. —Abraham Maslow

Kids will roll with it if you let them.

Humans—especially wee ones—are naturally quite resilient, adaptable and hopeful. Kids don't rage against reality like we adults often do—they tend to roll with things, especially if we give them the okay and support to do so.

Kids don't suffer the loss of the ideal

Many of us are torn between the ideal and real—between taking and foregoing chances to help kids adjust to this moment. It's a hard balance to strike. Many people are leaning into this new normal and bringing their children along, showing them how to learn new ways of doing things and make this new reality work. On the other hand, I have heard equally caring adults grow fiercely attached to an ideal view of life for kids.

For example, I've heard people say that it would be psychologically damaging to ask a child to keep social distance from a friend or loved one. For sure, it feels neither natural nor easy for kids to hold back from being close and even embracing one another or their elders. Again, as an early childhood educator, I would certainly not advise it under normal circumstances. That desire to touch is a sweet feature of our early days on the planet. It is also understandable that educators and parents alike find it easier *not* to ask kids to even try, especially if you live in a place where you may be judged when your child needs reminders or practice.



But is it really damaging to ask kids to learn to keep close to family while keeping a 6-foot bubble from others? Really? The alternative to asking kids to learn to keep social distance can mean isolation from friends and family, lost chances to be among other people and feel part of a community. For many families, that would also mean not seeing grandparents who are at risk. Is that a better option? And what lesson does avoiding these social encounters teach our kids?

Let's put ideal in our back pocket and parent for real

"Challenges are gifts that force us to search for a new centre of gravity. Don't fight them. Just find a new way to stand." —Oprah Winfrey

So much of how our kids adapt to new challenges is how we present and respond to those challenges. That has never been more true than it is now.

Let's never lose sight of what is ideal. Let's agree to look forward to days when it's easier, more natural and more free to let our kids be and play like kids have long been able to do. But, let's not let the ideal be the enemy of all of the good lessons and good chances to be together that are real in this moment.

(This article was edited to fit into the constraints of this newsletter. To read the article in full follow the link below. Fitzgerald, Meghan. (2020). *Motherly: To families starting school: This year isn't ideal, but let's make the best of it.* Retrieved from <https://www.motherly.com/child/how-to-model-resilience-during-pandemic>



SHAPE HOUSES

Children begin to recognise and name shapes around 2 years old. Simply naming shapes you see around your home or out and about is a great way to build their understanding. These houses are a really easy and low-prep shape activity. You can easily put them together with supplies that you most likely already have at home. Simply cut out a range of shapes from different coloured paper. Include a big rectangle or square for the main part of the house, and a large triangle for the roof. (Of course, like with all art activities there is no right or wrong way to do it, a triangle house is just as perfect as a square one.) As your child/ren create their homes ask them which shape they have decided to use for a roof, the windows. Make real world connections by asking them 'What shape are our windows in this house?' Use glue to stick the shape house together. **Find more early literacy activities here**



HEALTH & SAFETY: Immune Health

Immune health and the technical terms that go along with it, are being spoken about and referred to now more than ever. But what do they exactly mean and why is it so important?

What Is the Immune System? The immune system is the body's defence against infections. The immune (ih-MYOOON) system attacks germs and helps keep us healthy.

What Are the Parts of the Immune System? Many cells and organs work together to protect the body. White blood cells, also called **leukocytes** (LOO-kuh-sytes), play an important role in the immune system. Some types of white blood cells, called **phagocytes** (FAH-guh-sytes), chew up invading organisms. Others, called **lymphocytes** (LIM-fuh-sytes), help the body remember the invaders and destroy them. One type of phagocyte is the **neutrophil** (NOO-truh-fil), which fights bacteria. When someone might have bacterial infection, doctors can order a blood test to see if it caused the body to have lots of neutrophils. Other types of phagocytes do their own jobs to make sure that the body responds to invaders. The two kinds of lymphocytes are **B lymphocytes** and **T lymphocytes**. Lymphocytes start out in the bone marrow and either stay there and mature into B cells, or go to the thymus gland to mature into T cells. B lymphocytes are like the body's military intelligence system — they find their targets and send defences to lock onto them. T cells are like the soldiers — they destroy the invaders that the intelligence system finds.

How Does the Immune System Work? When the body senses foreign substances (called antigens), the immune system works to recognise the antigens and get rid of them. B lymphocytes are triggered to make **antibodies** (also called **immunoglobulins**). These proteins lock onto specific antigens. After they're made, antibodies usually stay in our bodies in case we have to fight the same germ again. That's why someone who gets sick with a disease, like chickenpox, usually won't get sick from it again.

This is also how immunisations (vaccines) prevent some diseases. An immunisation introduces the body to an antigen in a way that doesn't make someone sick. But it does let the body make antibodies that will protect the person from future attack by the germ.

Although antibodies can recognize an antigen and lock onto it, they can't destroy it without help. That's the job of the T cells. They destroy antigens tagged by antibodies or cells that are infected or somehow changed. (Some T cells are actually called



"killer cells.") T cells also help signal other cells (like phagocytes) to do their jobs.

Antibodies also can: **Neutralise toxins** (poisonous or damaging substances) produced by different organisms. **Activate a group of proteins** called complement that are part of the immune system. Complement helps kill bacteria, viruses, or infected cells.

These specialised cells and parts of the immune system offer the body protection against disease. This protection is called immunity. Humans have three types of immunity — **innate, adaptive, and passive:**

Innate immunity: Everyone is born with innate (or natural) immunity, a type of general protection. For example, the skin acts as a barrier to block germs from entering the body. And the immune system recognizes when certain invaders are foreign and could be dangerous.

Adaptive immunity: Adaptive (or active) immunity develops throughout our lives. We develop adaptive immunity when we're exposed to diseases or when we're immunised against them with vaccines.

Passive immunity: Passive immunity is "borrowed" from another source and it lasts for a short time. For example, antibodies in a mother's breast milk give a baby temporary immunity to diseases the mother has been exposed to.

For more information on immune health see:

<https://drwillcole.com/functional-medicine/8-ways-to-naturally-boost-your-childs-immune-system>

<https://www.superhealthykids.com/recipes/top-10-immune-system-boosting-foods-kids-ideas-recipes/>

Hirsch, Larissa (2019). Kidshealth.com, Immune System, retrieved from <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/immune.html>



THE SEA | Did you know September 12 – 18 is 'Sea Week'? It is Australia's major national public awareness campaign to focus community awareness, provide information and encourage an appreciation of the sea. Here are a few activities you can do with your children to build their appreciation of the sea!

Do you live near the ocean? Visiting the sea provides endless opportunities for discovery. Next time you are at the beach take time to actually talk about: What lives in the ocean, what the animals in the ocean eat, whether the water is salty (taste it). Look in rock pools and talk about what you can see and what might live there.

Look closely at shells, who and what might use shells? Take a bag and collect rubbish safely. When you find old fishing line or plastic, explain to your children what these items can do to sea life.

Even if you don't live near the ocean you can still talk about all these points. You may have another waterway near you, you can visit. Or use YouTube to help children visualise the topics you're talking about.

There are some brilliant activities you can try [here](#)



Enhancing Children's Play using Loose Parts



Loose parts are materials that can be moved, designed and redesigned, tinkered with, taken apart, reassembled, and/or put together in a completely different way.

At Waterford West Education and Care Centre, we recognise the value of loose parts and promote different types of materials to ignite more opportunities for creative engagement of children. We want children to invent, re-invent, construct, deconstruct, be messy, but most importantly, be creative in their play while they interact, explore, and discover.

The great thing about loose parts is that they have no specific rules to follow, children do not feel pressured to achieve something, or scared that they are “not going to get it right”, rather they can explore the different materials alone or combined with other materials to create something new, something original, something they thought about and created all by themselves.

Loose parts can be natural or manmade. You will find many of the following in our classrooms at our centre, and/or even lying around your own home, including:

- Boxes of all sizes and shapes
- Seashells, Rocks
- Pine cones, sticks and leaves
- Seed pods/seeds
- Beads/Marbles
- Tubing—Plastic and cardboard
- Screws, bolts and washers
- Rope or Twine
- Lids and bottle tops
- Old sheets
- Planks/ pallets/ tyres
- Ribbons
- Buttons
- Pallets

Start collecting *stuff today*, and add it to your child's play spaces and see how they incorporate it. You may be surprised with just how creative and resourceful children can be if given the opportunity to explore.

Waterford West Education and Care Centre

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SNAILS TAKE THE LONGEST NAPS!

They can sleep for up to 3 years!

RANDOM FACTS THAT YOU WON'T BELIEVE ARE TRUE.

Do you have a child who absolutely loves random facts? These are some of the facts that our kids have thought were hilarious. They didn't believe they were true!

1. Kangaroos cannot walk backwards.
2. Sea Lions have rhythm. They are the only animal known to be able to clap in beat.
3. While you sleep you can't smell anything, even really, really bad or potent smells.
4. Your brain uses 10 watts of energy to think, and does not feel pain.
5. Glass balls can bounce higher than rubber ones.
6. The smallest country in the world takes up .2 square miles, it is the Vatican City.
7. Hippopotamus milk is pink.
8. Your fingernails grow faster when you are cold.
9. Applesauce was the first food eaten in space by astronauts.
10. The average person spends two weeks of their life waiting at traffic lights.
11. Don't like mosquitos? Get a bat. They eat 3,000 insects a night.
12. A typical cough is 60 mph, a sneeze is often faster than 100 mph.
13. There are 31,556,926 seconds in a year.
14. Cans of diet soft drink will float in water; regular soft drink cans will sink.
15. On Venus, the planet, it rains metal.
16. Baby koalas are fed poo by their parents after they are born, this helps them digest Eucalyptus leaves later in life.
17. Cows can walk upstairs, but not down them.

Source: kidsactivitiesblog.com/76701/50-random-facts/