

MARCH
2023



ON *this* MONTH

AT HIGHLAND GROVE

S.T.E.P.S Vision Screening for 4-yr-olds – 21st to 24th

AROUND THE COUNTRY

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Further Highland Grove information is on the final page of this Newsletter.....

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HGP?

NSW Health 'S.T.E.P.S Vision Screening' will be held for 4-year-olds at Highland Grove from Tuesday 21st until Friday 24th of March. Please return the note in your child's pocket by 10th of March if your child is age eligible.

We ask for children to be at preschool by 10.00am on these days wherever possible. Thank you.

PUMPKIN PATCH!



There are so many beautiful babies in the HGP patch this month!

Welcome to new baby Rose, little sister for Emily (in the M/B Room) and Alice. Congratulations Adam and Cassie.

So much joy also for Jane and Cail, who welcome the much-awaited arrival of Birdie, little sister for Otis. Congratulations!





CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY – MARCH 5

Australia has a plastics problem. Australia now produces 2.5 million tonnes of plastic waste each year, equating to 100 kg per person. Of this, only 13% of plastic is recovered and 84% is sent to landfill.

More concerning, around 130,000 tonnes of the plastic we consume leaks into the marine environment each year. By 2025 it is predicted that 99% of seabirds worldwide will have ingested plastic. **JOIN YOUR LOCAL CLEAN UP AND HELP THE PLASTIC PROBLEM.**

NATIONAL RIDE '2' SCHOOL DAY – MARCH 24

National Ride2School Day is held around Australia in March every year. It provides an opportunity for students, parents and teachers to try riding, walking, skating or scooting to school as well as celebrating the regular walkers and riders. **JOIN 370,777 AUSTRALIANS AND RIDE TO SCHOOL THIS RIDE '2' SCHOOL DAY.**

HOT CHICKEN CAKES



PREP 10 MIN | COOK 10 MIN | SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 70g fresh breadcrumbs
- 500g chicken mince
- 6 slices prosciutto, finely chopped
- zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1/2 cup fresh herbs, chopped (I used mint and basil)
- 3 heaped tablespoons grated parmesan
- 2 tbs olive oil

Yoghurt Dipping Sauce:

- 1/2 cup Greek yoghurt
- 2 tbs fresh mint, roughly chopped
- juice of 1 lemon

Salad:

- 1 zucchini, 1 punnet of cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil, juice of 1 lemon

METHOD:

Place the breadcrumbs, mince, prosciutto, zest and lemon juice, fresh herbs and parmesan and mix until thoroughly combined. Using damp hands take heaped tablespoon amounts of the mince and shape into patties. Heat a fry pan to medium-high heat, add a little olive oil and fry the cakes for 4-5 minutes until golden and crisp on all sides. Reduce heat to low, cover with lid and cook for 3-4 minutes or until the chicken cakes are cooked through. To check, simply slice a cake in half to check. Remove from fry pan and place on a plate lined with paper towel to remove any excess oil. For the dipping sauce place the yoghurt, mint and lemon juice in a small bowl and mix to combine. For the salad use a vegetable peeler to slice the zucchini into ribbons. Place the zucchini, cherry tomatoes, extra virgin olive oil and lemon juice in a small bowl and toss to combine. Serve the chicken cakes with a lovely dollop of the dipping sauce and zucchini salad.

Images and recipe from mylovelylittlelunchbox.com



RUNNING ON REAL FOOD

runningonrealfood.com

Running on Real Food means fuelling your “engine” with real food. It’s all about using whole foods to fuel a healthy, balanced lifestyle. All the recipes on Running on Real Food are plant-based, they are simple and use everyday, easy to find ingredients.

DAMN DELICIOUS

damndelicious.net

Damn Delicious provides step-by-step tutorials, and videos that focus on quick and easy meals for the everyday home cook to show you that it really doesn’t take much to make a homemade meal completely from scratch.

RECIPE TIN EATS

recipetineats.com

Cost conscious recipes made using everyday ingredients that are (pretty) healthy. Nagi the genius behind *Recipe Tin Eats* creates fast, creative, clever and fresh!



FOCUS: The beautiful reason why Danish schools teach empathy to kids

If you're wondering what you can do to make sure your kids grow up happy and well-adjusted, you might want to look to Danish schools. Since 1993, students in Denmark have studied empathy as part of their curriculum. Starting in kindergarten, Danish students learn about emotions, how to articulate their feelings and how to support their classmates. In the book *The Danish Way of Parenting* by Iben Sandahl and Jessica Alexander, the authors assert that the Danes raise empathetic, capable kids who grow into confident, happy adults. It's a winning cycle that starts with how they teach their children empathy.

For the past seven years in a row, Denmark has consistently ranked as one of the happiest nations in the world. Maybe the way they raise their children is the reason why. Danish students participate in the Step by Step program. Students are shown cards that feature kids who are experiencing different emotions, like sadness, anger, and happiness. The students are asked to not just identify the emotion, but to explain what it means to them. They learn how to interpret others' emotions and how they make them feel. Perhaps most tellingly, the students don't judge the emotions. They simply recognize and respect them.

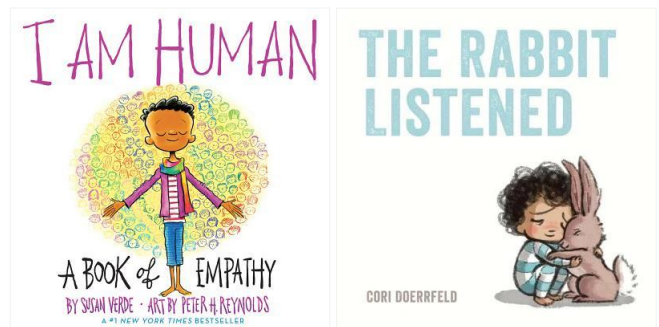
Students also participate in the CAT-kit program, which focuses on identifying and articulating emotions. It was originally designed as a tool for children on the autism spectrum and has since been picked up by educators and parents worldwide. It uses visual pictures to help students learn how to name their thoughts and feelings.

In an essay in *The Atlantic*, Jessica Alexander, one of the co-authors of *The Danish Way of Parenting*, explains that teachers also subtly mix children of different strengths and weaknesses together. "The goal is for the students to see that everyone has positive qualities and to support each other in their efforts reach the next level," she writes. "The math whiz may be terrible at soccer, and vice versa. This system fosters collaboration, teamwork, and respect."

Yet another program that Danish schools utilize comes from The Mary Foundation, established by HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark in 2007. The anti-bullying program is taught to elementary-aged children and encourages them to be more caring towards each other. According to The Foundation's [website](#), "Everyone has the right to belong. The Mary Foundation works for the many people who are alone."

It's not just a one-off lesson or a conversation held on World Kindness Day. Students learn about empathy, kindness and respect from the time that they enter the school system. Danish teachers place equal emphasis on academics as well as emotions. And it's not just about making a grade—it's about raising kind, understanding children. That's something we definitely support.

Source: Motherly. (2020). The beautiful reason why Danish schools teach empathy to kids. Retrieved from <https://www.mother.ly/life/why-danish-schools-teach-empathy/>



If you would like to bring more empathy and kindness teaching into your home books are a great way to do it.

'I AM HUMAN – A book of empathy'

Susan Verde, illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds

This *New York Times* bestseller has inspired kids everywhere to learn empathy. Parents will love the messages of teaching kids to find common ground, connectedness, and empathy in this big wide world.

'THE RABBIT LISTENED'

Cori Doerrfeld

Taylor feels sad and needs help. Thankfully, a cast of animal characters are there to offer up lots of advice, but none of it feels quite right until a rabbit shows Taylor the power of listening. Teaching kids to listen is a hugely important aspect of teaching empathy, and this book nails it on the head.

'BE KIND'

Pat Zietlow Miller

When Tanisha accidentally spills juice on her new clothes, her classmate tries to step in and help as she wonders what it means to be kind. *The New York Times Book Review* wrote, "These days, it seems more important than ever for books to show young people how to act with thoughtfulness, civility, and kindness."

'Have you filled a bucket today'

Carol McCloud

An absolute essential for early education! This story gives children powerful imagery and effective metaphors to understand how to be kind to others. Follow on discussions could include types of positive behaviours, daily kindness rituals, appreciation and gratitude.

"When you fill someone's bucket, you fill your own bucket too! You feel good when you help others feel good".

SHAPE HUNT: You will need: Post-its, paper, painters' tape and a marker. **Set-up:** on Post-it's draw a bunch of different shapes that you want to work on. On construction paper, draw a big version of each shape that you drew on the post-it notes. Tape all the pieces of construction paper on the wall near each other. Place the post-it's all-around your home! **Activity:** Have your kids search the house to find the post-its. Once they find one, have them take it over to the wall where the construction paper pieces are. Have them match the shape that they found on their post-it to the paper on the wall! In the end, see how many of each shape there are! *Find out more here.*



HEALTH & SAFETY: Understanding UV and how to protect your family

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before age 70. This makes sun protection very important for all Australians. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. Skin cancer is one of the most preventable cancers. You can protect your child from the sun by teaching them to become SunSmart and always using sun protection when UV levels are 3 or higher. It is also important to model good sun protection habits, as children learn by observing their parents' and caregivers' behaviour.

WHAT IS UV

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a type of energy produced by the sun and some artificial sources, such as arc welders and solariums. The sun's UV is the main cause of skin cancer. Too much UV exposure also causes sunburn, tanning, premature ageing and eye damage. You can see the sun's light. You can feel the sun's heat. But you can't see or feel the sun's UV radiation. UV can reach you directly from the sun. It can also be reflected off different surfaces and scattered by particles in the air. Your senses cannot detect UV radiation, so you won't notice it is all around you and you won't notice any skin damage until it has been done.

THE UV INDEX

The World Health Organization's Global Solar UV Index measures UV levels on a scale from 0 (Low) to 11+ (Extreme). Sun protection is recommended when UV levels are 3 (Moderate) or higher. The UV level is affected by a number of factors including the time of day, time of year, cloud cover, altitude, location and surrounding surfaces.

THE UV INDEX AND THE SUN PROTECTION TIMES

The sun protection times are issued when UV levels are forecast to be 3 or higher. At this level there is a risk of skin damage for most Australians. You can find the sun protection times for your location: Using the SunSmart Global UV app, via the SunSmart widget Or at Bureau of Meteorology website. During the sun protection times, protect your skin and eyes by using covering clothing, sunscreen, a hat, shade and sunglasses. Don't just wait for hot and sunny weather.

SUN PROTECTION and the UV INDEX										
Low		Moderate			High		Very High			Extreme
UV INDEX 1	UV INDEX 2	UV INDEX 3	UV INDEX 4	UV INDEX 5	UV INDEX 6	UV INDEX 7	UV INDEX 8	UV INDEX 9	UV INDEX 10	UV INDEX 11+
SUN PROTECTION NOT REQUIRED		SUN PROTECTION REQUIRED								
Unless outdoors for extended periods, or near reflective surfaces such as snow or water.		Wear sun-protective clothing, a broad-brimmed hat and sunglasses. Apply SPF30+ sunscreen to any unprotected skin. Seek shade.								

IS TEMPERATURE RELATED TO UV?

UV is not hot. It can't be felt and isn't connected to the temperature. UV levels can be damaging on cool, cloudy days and warm, sunny days. UV is always highest during the middle part of the day between 10am and 2pm (or 11am and 3pm daylight saving time). The temperature can peak in the afternoon when UV levels are less intense.

WHY IS THE UV SO HIGH IN AUSTRALIA?

Australia experiences some of the highest levels of UV in the world. Different factors affect our UV levels including:

- **Location:** UV levels are highest along the equator. Australia is near the equator so we experience high UV levels
- **Time of year:** our elliptical orbit around the sun and our axial tilt combine to ensure that we are closer to the sun in our summer than the northern hemisphere e.g., in summer the UK has UV Index 6–8, while Australia has UV Index 10–14.
- **Clear skies** and less air pollution.

HOW DOES UV ADD UP?

UV damage is accumulative. Your skin remembers and records all the UV exposure over the years which contributes to your long-term risk of skin cancer. The more UV you're exposed to, the greater your risk. That's why it's important for outdoor workers to protect their skin all year round. Even low UV levels can be harmful when exposed for long periods.

Try and get into the habit of checking the UV before outings and always remember to SLIP, SLOP, SLAP, SLIDE and protect your family from UV.

Source: Sun Smart. (2022). What is UV? Retrieved from <https://www.sunsmart.com.au/uv-radiation/what-is-uv>



NATIONAL RIDE '2' SCHOOL DAY

On March 24 why not ride, scoot or walk to school? National Ride '2' School Day is held annually each year to promote physical activity in children and remind parents and children that there are other fun options to driving. By not driving every trip we are also reducing pollution. If more children ride or walk to school it reduce the amount of cars on the road. The results are cleaner air and a healthier environment.

FIND OUT MORE HERE



PLAYDOUGH

Squishing, rolling, sculpting, modelling . . . young children love to play with playdough. Add some props from around the home and playdough play becomes a powerful way to support your child’s learning.

This simple preschool staple lets children use their imaginations and strengthen the small muscles in their fingers—the same muscles they will one day use to hold a pencil and write. Using playdough with you, a friend, or siblings supports your child’s social skills such as sharing, taking turns, and enjoying being with other people. Playdough also encourages children’s language and literacy, science, and math skills—all at the same time!

Around-the- house Playdough Props

- Birthday candles
- Blocks
- Bottle caps
- Combs
- Cookie cutters
- Feathers
- Leaves, twigs, pebbles
- Rolling pin or bottle
- Straws
- Small toy people and animals

When children use playdough, they explore ideas and try different approaches until they find one that works. They compare and contrast objects, actions and experiences. In their experimenting, children come up with their own ideas, satisfy their curiosity, and analyse and solve problems.

Source: Naeyc. (2023). Playdough Power. Retrieved from <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/playdough-power>



STAFFING NEWS

We are delighted to let families know that many of our team are taking on further study this year.

We are so impressed that **Ali**, who currently has a Diploma (S/R- Wed, Thur & Fri) is completing her teaching degree over the next 2 years.

Degree trained **Melissa** (M/B- Thur & Fri) is taking on a Post Graduate Certificate in Psychology.

Ebony and **Jade**, our dedicated Cert 3 educators in the Starlight and Sunshine Rooms, are taking on the challenge of completing their Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care. They will each be doing this via a traineeship, which means they will be well supported by the HGP team.

In other staffing news, we want to let families know that our lovely **Michelle H** (Mon. Tue & Wed, in the M/B Room) will be changing over to a casual educator as her family circumstances have changed.

Emma, who has been part of the HGP team for several years will be covering the 3 days in the Moonbeam Room and looks forward to this more permanent position.

5 Minute MOVES

KICK AND CATCH

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

Head out into your backyard or down to your local oval with a ball or two. Take turns kicking the balls as far as you can and then running to ‘catch’ them. Try to catch them before they stop rolling. Next try to kick to one another and catch the balls.