

"YOU'RE BRAVER THAN YOU BELIEVE, AND STRONGER THAN YOU SEEM, AND SMARTER THAN YOU THINK." — A.A. MINE

HIGHLAND GROVE PRESCHOOL



JUNE
2023

ON *this* MONTH

AT HIGHLAND GROVE

School Transition Evening	-----	Thur. 8 th
Public Holiday (closed)	-----	Mon. 12 th
'Girri Girra' Visit	-----	Wed. 14 th
Scholastics Book Club Due	-----	Thur. 15 th

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Mabo Day	-----	3
World Environment Day	-----	5
World Oceans Day	-----	8
Global Wind Day	-----	15
National Refugee Week	-----	19-25

WHAT'S GOING ON AT HGP?

STAFFING UPDATE:

We are delighted that our regular casual teacher, Pip will be returning to Highland Grove to work in the Moonbeam Room on Mondays and Tuesdays. She will begin this position from early August and will cover Hayley's days when she goes on her extended holiday.

This new development means that Tarn can now remain in the Starlight Room (when Kim returns later in June). Ali and Sharyn will remain on their new days (Monday and Tuesday respectively) and the outcome is a strong and experienced team working with our 3-4-year-olds.

Elyse completes her Certificate 3 in Early Childhood Education and care in the middle of July this year. Congratulations! Elyse will then work casually until heading off to Europe in September for a wonderful extended holiday.

We continue to have a traineeship available at Highland Grove for someone who would like to begin a career in Early Learning.





WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY – JUNE 5

World Environment Day 2023 is a reminder that people's actions on plastic pollution matters. This year's theme is 'Solutions to plastic pollution.' The steps governments and businesses are taking to tackle plastic pollution are the consequence of this action.

It is time to accelerate this action and transition to a circular economy. It is time to #BeatPlasticPollution. [Find out more here](#)

WORLD OCEANS DAY – JUNE 8

On World Ocean Day, people everywhere can unite to celebrate and take action for our shared blue planet, with one ocean and one climate, which connect us all. Get together with your family, community, and join with millions of others around our blue planet to create a better future. The theme for World Ocean Day is **Planet Ocean: Tides are Changing.** We need to conserve our wonderful marine resources for future generations. [Find out more](#)

BANANA BLUEBERRY & COCONUT LOAF



PREP 15 min | COOK 1 Hour | SERVES 24

INGREDIENTS

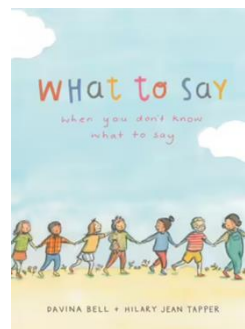
- 2 1/4 cups (340 grams) **wholemeal (wholewheat) flour**
- 2 teaspoons **baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon **cinnamon, ground**
- pinch **salt**
- 1 cup (170 grams) **brown sugar**
- 2/3 cup (170 ml) **sour cream**
- 1/2 cup (125 grams) **butter**
- 1 teaspoon **vanilla extract**
- 3 **eggs**
- 3 **bananas, mashed** (approx. 2 1/4 cups) PLUS 1 **banana sliced, to decorate**
- 1 cup (125 grams) **blueberries** (fresh or frozen)
- 3/4 cup (70 grams) **shredded unsweetened coconut**

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 170c and line a large loaf tin with baking paper. **Set aside.** Sift flour, baking powder, salt and cinnamon into a large bowl. **Set aside.** Using an electric mixer on medium-high speed, beat brown sugar, sour cream and butter in a large bowl until light and fluffy (approx. 4 minutes). **Add** vanilla and beat for 1 minute. **Add eggs**, one at a time. Beating well after each addition. **Reduce speed to low**, add flour mixture and mix until just combined. **Add** mashed banana, blueberries and coconut and mix until just combined. **Pour batter** into prepared tin and top with sliced banana. **Bake** for 1 hour or until a skewer inserted removes cleanly. If your loaf is browning too quickly before cooking through, simply pull the loaf out of the oven, cover with aluminium foil and return to the oven for the remaining cooking time. Allow loaf to cool for 15 minutes before placing on a wire rack to cool completely. Enjoy x

Book reviews

Books that help give children the tools for tricky situations.



WHAT TO SAY WHEN YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY | DAVINA BELL

A warm and whimsical guide to negotiating life's little moments and big emotions with empathy, kindness and words from the heart. Each page presents a situation that might be alarming, scary or confusing to a child: a new home, a hospital visit, a dark night, a death, a room full of strangers. Alongside each situation is an accompanying phrase that may help, for example, 'I don't know anybody, what's your name?'

It's a simple concept and the execution is lovely. The pictures are gentle and the words are a balm that will genuinely help children and parents navigate tricky situations and feelings

THE NOT-SO-FRIENDLY FRIEND | CHRISTINA FURNIVAL

How can I help my child deal with a bully? What do I teach them about handling an on-again-off-again, not-so-friendly friend? My advice to "just be kind" isn't helping, and my child is still hurting.

Christina Furnival, a licensed mental health therapist and mum, helps answer these questions in this charming and engaging rhyming story about a young child who successfully navigates the complexities of an unkind peer relationship. In *The Not-So-Friendly Friend*, children will learn an easy and practical lesson about how to firmly and assertively - yet kindly - stand up for themselves in the face of a bully.



FOCUS: Types of play as your child grows

Children love to play because it's fun—but it's also vital to a child's healthy development. In fact, during play, children learn and practice key social, cognitive, organisational, physical, and emotional skills, including creativity, imagination, and problem-solving. The benefits of play are progressive in nature, meaning that the skills kids develop during their fun and games build upon each other.

Seemingly simple activities like rolling a ball back and forth with a sibling or putting on a costume hone skills like learning to take turns, fine motor skills, proprioception (awareness of the body in space), and getting along with others. Influential sociologist Mildred Parten was an early advocate for the benefits of play. Her work described six essential types of play that kids take part in, depending on their age, mood, and social setting, and explained the ways that children learn and interact with each other during play.

Descriptions and typical ages that each stage of play emerge are included below. However, every child develops at their own pace and may engage in these types of play earlier or later. Plus, while these stages are progressive, they often occur simultaneously and stick around while new stages come about.

Unoccupied Play - Unoccupied play primarily occurs in infants, from birth to three months. This is the first stage of play, and to the untrained eye, likely doesn't look like play at all. However, infant activity of observing their surroundings and/or displaying random movements with seemingly no objective is actually unoccupied play. Despite appearances, this definitely is play and sets the stage for future play exploration.

Solitary (Independent) Play - Solitary play is just what it sounds like—your child playing alone. This type of play is important because it teaches a child how to keep themselves entertained, eventually setting the path to being self-sufficient. Toys for independent play can be anything that babies, toddlers, or pre-schoolers play can play with on their own, such as stuffed animals, blocks, toy figures, dress-up costumes, noisemakers, play "tools," dolls, push toys, and books.

Onlooker Play - Onlooker play is when a child simply observes other children playing and doesn't partake in the action. Your child may watch what you or other adults are doing as well. Onlooker play is typical for children between two and three years old and is especially common for younger children who are working on their developing vocabulary. Don't dismiss the importance of this stage, which builds on the previous ones. It's a healthy form of learning through play and part of your child's play journey. It could be that the child feels tentative, needs to learn the rules, and/or maybe is the youngest and wants just to take a step back for a while

to watch before joining in play with others. Watching helps them gain confidence and learn the framework for future stages of play. During onlooker play, by observing and possibly mimicking the play of others, your child is building their own skills.

Parallel Play - Put two 3-year-olds in a room together and this is what you are likely to see: the two children having fun, playing side by side in their own little worlds. It doesn't mean that they don't like one another, they are just engaging in parallel play. This type of play begins around age two and differs from playing together in that neither child tries to influence the play of the other.

Associative Play - Slightly different from parallel play, associative play, which commonly begins between ages three or four, also features children playing separately from one another. But in this mode of play, they are involved with what the other is doing—think children building a city with blocks. As they build their individual buildings, they are talking to one another and engaging each other but primarily working on their own. Typically, this form of play phases out by age five.

Cooperative Play - Co-operative play is where all the stages come together and children truly start playing together. Typically occurring between four and five years of age, this is the predominant type of play seen in groups of older pre-schoolers on up or in younger pre-schoolers who have older siblings or have been around a lot of children. However, the earlier stages of play will still be used to varying degrees by these children at other times as well. Co-operative play uses all of the social skills your child has been working on and puts them into action.

Other Types of Play - While the above stages are important and vital to your child's social development, there are other key types of play that also contribute to a child's development. These kinds of play usually show up once a child begins to engage in cooperative play and include the following: *Competitive Play, Constructive Play, Dramatic/ Fantasy Play, Physical Play and Symbolic Play.*

Read the full article for greater explanations of each type of play by following the link [here](#).

Rock, Amanda (2021). *11 Important Types of Play As Your Child Grows* Retrieved from [verywellfamily.com/types-of-play-2764587](https://www.verywellfamily.com/types-of-play-2764587)



FLOUR AND SPRINKLE WRITING

This fun, sensory activity will help your little ones to form their letters and learn lowercase and uppercase letters. You will need a cookie sheet, sprinkles, alphabet cards, and flour. Give your child a letter card and have them write their letters in flour. Source.



HEALTH & SAFETY: It's Germ Season

Stopping the spread of germs Good hygiene is important to prevent the spread of illness. Many germs (bacterial and viral) are spread from person to person simply through touch (e.g., germs are on your hands after you touch a toy a sick child has been playing with). It is important to regularly wash hands thoroughly, especially when caring for children who are unwell.

What are germs?

There are many different types of germs, including viruses and bacteria. Germs can make people sick.

- You can get germs on your hands when you touch objects and when you touch other people.
- Once germs are on your hands, they can get inside your body through a wound or when you touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- You can also spread germs on your hands to objects or people you touch. Most common infections, such as colds or gastroenteritis (gastro), are spread through touching.
- Germs can also spread through the air when an unwell person coughs and sneezes.

How to stop the spread of germs

Washing hands Washing your hands and your children's hands is the best thing you can do to stop the spread of germs. It is particularly important to wash your hands, and teach your child to wash their hands and do it correctly. We all got pretty good at washing our hands during the peak of the Covid pandemic, it may be time for a refresher.

How to wash your hands:

1. Wet your hands.
2. Apply soap or hand wash and rub your hands for 15–20 seconds – you can tell children this is as long as it takes to sing 'Happy Birthday' twice.
3. Make sure you wash the back of the hands, wrists, between the fingers and under fingernails.
4. Rinse and dry with a clean towel.

Antibacterial soaps are not required and do not reduce the chance of getting an infection – ordinary soaps are

Other good hygiene habits

Good hygiene reduces the chance of catching illnesses or passing them onto others. Good hygiene includes:

- not sharing cups, cutlery or personal items like toothbrushes
- encouraging children to cough or sneeze into their elbow
- using tissues instead of hankies – teach your child to throw tissues into the bin as soon as they have used them and to wash their hands afterwards.

You have COVID-19 symptoms. It is especially important to get a test if you are at higher risk of severe illness. This is so that you can access early treatment including antiviral medicines. **You live with someone who has COVID-19. Test regularly for at least 7 days,** even if you do not develop symptoms. This is very important if you are at higher risk of severe illness or are in contact with people at higher risk of severe illness launch. See advice for people exposed to COVID-19 for more information about what to do.

If you are at higher risk of severe illness and have any new symptoms within 4 weeks of recovering from COVID-19, talk to your doctor. Your doctor may recommend further testing including for other viruses such as influenza.

Key points to remember

- It is important to regularly wash hands thoroughly to prevent the spread of illness.
- Wash hands for 15–20 seconds or as long as it takes to sing 'Happy Birthday' twice.
- Encourage children to cough or sneeze into their elbow, and to use tissues instead of hankies.
- If your child is unwell with a virus or bacterial illness, keep them home from childcare, kindergarten or school until they are well again. Use hot, soapy water to wash items (e.g., toys, teething rings) that a sick child has been in contact with during their illness.

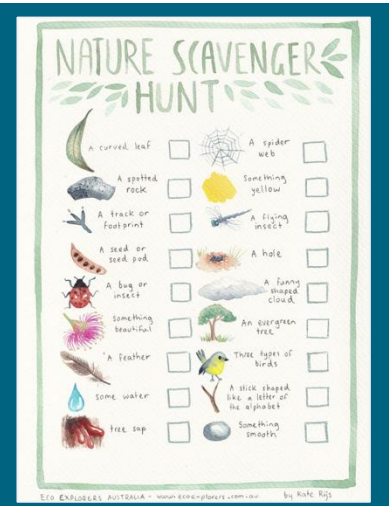


GO ON A NATURE SCAVENGER HUNT

We know that children learn through play, and learning to be more sustainable and caring for the environment follows that same trend. Then add in the fact that spending time in nature can help children develop a connection to the environment, making them more aware of the beauty, diversity and interdependence of natural systems, and a nature scavenger hunt is a great way to get kids thinking more sustainably.

Connecting kids to nature can foster a sense of stewardship for the natural world, leading our students to think more carefully about how their actions impact the environment. Create a scavenger hunt for your children by drawing pictures of things you may see within your area or search online for a pre-made option like this one here from ecoexplorers.com.au Then go for your hunt and see what you can see.

[FIND MORE IDEAS FOR CONNECTING WITH NATURE HERE](#)





NATURE WALK

Going on a nature walk and deliberately noticing things encourages children to observe with all their senses. Children can learn to focus their attention and take in the details of things around them. It can be a peaceful, reflective experience for you and your children.

All you need is somewhere to walk – You can simply venture out your front door, walk around your local area, a local park or nature reserve. You could also plan a longer excursion and head to a beach or national park.

Remove barriers – A nature walk can happen in all weather, just be prepared! Always wear appropriate shoes for your environment. If it's sunny remember hats, sun smart clothing, sunscreen and bug spray. If it's raining bring raincoats and chuck a towel in the car just in case there is puddle splashing along the way.

Don't over plan – Don't rush. Try to let your children lead you where it is safe to do so. Watch them discover and show you things.

Noticing nature walk - Encourage your child to pay attention to the environment with all their senses. You can do this by asking questions as you go. For example:

- **Seeing questions:** what can you see? Look all around you, up at the sky and down at the ground.
- **Smelling questions:** what can you smell? Can you describe the smell? Leafy? Like mud?
- **Hearing questions:** what can you hear? Birds? The wind? Other people?
- **Feeling and touching questions:** what can you feel? Is the sun warm? Is the ground rough or smooth?

Raisingchildrennetwork.com (2022). *Noticing nature walk: activity for children 3-6 years* Retrieved from <https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/activity-guides/sensory-play/noticing-nature-walk-activity-for-children-3-6-years>

DID YOU KNOW?

- Re-enrolments for next year at Highland Grove begins (for attending children) in July. Enrolments for new children, including siblings, begins in August.
- Our whole team of permanent educators participate in CPR Training one evening every year onsite.
- Ali has received her first 'Distinction' as part of her Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood). Congratulations Ali!
- Ella is collecting money for the Palliative Care Unit in Gosford Hospital. Her plan is to purchase and fit-out a lovely doll house.
- Ebony and Jade have now started to work through their Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care. We wish them all the best.
- Highland Grove has a Smith Family Sponsor child, who we support to have the best opportunities for their education. His name is Emerson, and he is 7 years old.

Thank you to families for sending in their CWA Forms signed and back into the office. Much appreciated.

Keep an eye out for our Parent Surveys. They will be emailed to families again soon.



PUMPKIN PATCH!

Welcome to new baby Eva Joy. Little sister for Hugo and Ari (in the Sunshine Room). Congratulations to Laura and Che on this delightful addition to your family.



NINJA WARRIOR

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

Create a Ninja Warrior obstacle course in your backyard! Your home is full of objects you can use for the course, buckets, ladders, play equipment, heavy cans, ropes, hula hoops. You can also mix the obstacle race with a treasure hunt. Include obstacles that involve agility, jumping, balancing, climbing, crawling, strength, and teamwork. Check for safety and have fun!