



OCTOBER  
2023

## ON *this* MONTH

### AT HIGHLAND GROVE

**Photo Dates** ----- Fri. 13<sup>th</sup>, Mon. 16<sup>th</sup>, Tue 17<sup>th</sup>,  
Wed, 18<sup>th</sup> and Thur. 19<sup>th</sup>

**Parent Evening featuring Guest Speaker Heather Irvine-  
Rundle**----- Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> of November.

### AROUND THE COUNTRY

National Nutrition Week -----	15-23
World Animal Day -----	4
World Teachers' Day -----	27
Aussie Backyard Bird Count -----	16-22
Loud Shirt Day -----	20
Day for Daniel -----	27

### What's coming up at Highland Grove:

#### PHOTO DATES:

A professional photographer (Sandpit Photos) will come to take photos of the children individually and in their groups across 5 days.

This year the Friday is the first day, and then the following Monday through to Thursday.

The dates are Fri. 13<sup>th</sup> of October until Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> of October. A flyer is in pockets.

#### PARENT EVENING - *with special guest speaker Heather Irvine-Rundle.*

Highland Grove is excited to be holding an evening for our families and staff on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> of November from 7.00 until 8.30pm.

**Heather Irvine-Rundle** (Senior Clinical Psychologist & Director at the READ Clinic) will speak with us on the topic: '*Creating resilient children and healthy relationships for all the family*'.

We will provide further information about how to RSVP for this wonderful night but be sure to put the date in your diary.





**WORLD TEACHERS DAY – OCTOBER 27**  
 World Teachers' Day Australia is an opportunity to celebrate, acknowledge and thank educators for the important role they play inside our classrooms and in the community.

This year's theme **Teaching – where the future begins** applauds the innovative and inspirational practices teachers use to help create better futures for their students. [Find out more here](#)

**AUSSIE BACKYARD BIRD COUNT – OCTOBER 16-22**  
 The Aussie Backyard Bird Count is celebrating 10 years in 2023. Whether you're in your garden, the local park, a beach or even your town centre be a part of the Aussie Backyard Bird Count by observing and counting the birds that live near you. By telling us about the birds you've seen within a 20-minute period, you will help Birdlife Australia develop an understanding of local birds, whilst getting to know the wildlife on your doorstep! [Find out more here.](#)



## PEACH COCONUT & VANILLA POPSICLES

PREP 10 mins | FREEZE TIME | SERVES 10

### INGREDIENTS

- 350 g coconut yoghurt (or natural or Greek yoghurt)
- 1/4 cup (90 grams) rice syrup (or any other liquid sweetener like honey or maple syrup)
- 1 tbs vanilla bean paste
- 3 peaches, stones removed, chopped into small wedges

### METHOD

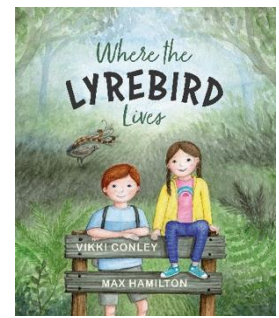
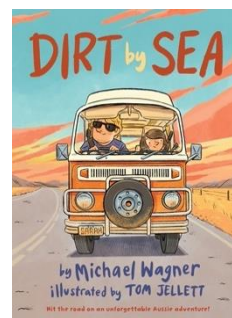
1. Place the coconut yoghurt, rice syrup and vanilla bean paste into a small bowl and stir to combine. Set aside.
2. Place the peaches into the jug of a blender along with 1/3 cup of the coconut yoghurt mixture – blitz until smooth.
3. Alternate layers of coconut yoghurt and peach to fill each popsicle mould.
4. Use a skewer to swirl the layers and pop into the deep freeze overnight.
6. **To serve** – run mould under hot water to loosen the popsicles.

Enjoy x

Recipe and image from [mylovelylittlelunchbox.com](http://mylovelylittlelunchbox.com)

## Book reviews

A FEW OF THIS YEARS THE CHILDREN'S BOOK COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA WINNERS



### DIRT & SEA | MICHAEL WAGNER

*Explore our wonderful coastline and the joy of a family road-trip with Dad and Daisy! Daisy lives in inland Australia with her dad and her grandparents. It's home, and she loves the red dirt land around her. But when her dad realises that she's never seen the beach he sets off to show her the ocean in a once-in-a-lifetime father-daughter trip.*

### WHERE THE LYREBIRD LIVES | VIKKI CONLOEY

*High in the mountains through the sleepy clouds. Deep in the forest past the chiming birds. Will we see the lyrebird? I don't know. Tip-toe, tip-toe. The beauty of the Australian rainforest and the magic of family-time come together in this lyrical and delightful story of intergenerational connection, habitat and adventure.*



## NUMBER LINE

You will need a number line (you can print it or draw one up yourself), magnetic numbers and a magnetic surface or your fridge. This activity involves children **sorting numbers** along the number line. It is a great way for children to learn numbers, counting and also develop early graphing skills. Sort each number to match the correct number on the number line. Point and counting each number on the number line. Talk about which numbers have the most numbers matching. Find the activity [here](#)



# FOCUS: Stand back and avoid saying ‘be careful!’: how to help your child take risks at the park.

There is ongoing concern about the impact of “helicopter parenting” on children’s growth and development. Keen to ensure the best outcomes for their children, helicopter parents tend to hover over their kids, constantly trying to prevent misadventure or harm. But child experts say this can lead to a lack of resilience and tenacity in children. Children can also struggle with problem-solving and initiative.

**How can we overcome this?** We are educators who study risky environments. Our new research looks at parent’s perceptions of an outdoor play park. It shows how outdoor parks provide opportunities for children to engage in risky play and develop independence and problem-solving skills.

## The importance of risk

Risk taking means engaging in any behaviour or activity with an uncertain physical, social, emotional or financial outcome. Risk is an everyday part of life, from driving a car to buying a house at auction or climbing a ladder.

We cannot eliminate risk, so we need to learn how to navigate it. This means taking responsibility for assessing potential consequences and taking necessary precautions. For example, crossing the road carries risk, but we learn how to look for cars or cross at traffic lights if the road is very busy.

Recognising and appropriately responding to risk taking is an integral aspect of children’s growth and development. In 1998, US educator and wilderness guide Jeff Little observed risk was instrumental to lifelong learning.

Outdoor experiences are particularly good places to develop skills around risk because they are not a controlled environment. For example, no two trees are the same to climb and conditions can vary depending on the weather.

## Our study

In a new study we surveyed parents and caregivers about children’s risk taking in the Boongaree nature play park in Berry, New South Wales.

The park includes fixed equipment such as slides and climbing ropes as well as natural elements such as water, stone, timber, sand and greenery. We chose Boongaree after it became the focus of media and social media debate due to a spate of injuries, including broken bones. The Daily Mail suggested it was Australia’s “most dangerous playground”. Following community concerns, the park’s tunnel slide was replaced in May this year with another slide with less “momentum”.

Over multiple visits to the park in June 2023, we recruited 302 adults to complete a survey about their children’s park use. We then followed up with a closed Facebook group of 56 parents from the same group.

## The benefits of risk

We asked parents to share their views about the park and they told us risky park play had many benefits. These included allowing children to:

*be challenged and solve problems, connect to the outdoors, direct their own play, be physically active, be creative and curious, demonstrate confidence and independence and, build social capacity, by sharing equipment and taking turns.*

## How to support your child in outdoor, risky play

So next time you go to the park, how can you support your child to take appropriate risks? Here are some tips, based on our work on children, risk and outdoor play:

**Start with a positive mindset:** playgrounds are designed to develop physical and social skills. So be prepared for your child to try new things at the park (rather than just play it safe with the same old equipment).

**Be ready to support – and to stand back:** there are times when it is best to stand back and let children experience the equipment or the area for themselves. There are others where parents are needed. So, keep a monitoring eye on things. But don’t assume you will be helping all the time.

**Language matters:** try to steer away from language such as “be careful”. This can set children up to be afraid of a situation. Reframe your language to something more supportive, such as “is there a stronger piece of wood to put your foot on?” or “have you seen the hole over there?” You could also say something like, “look around, do you want to explore left or right?”. This prompts your child to think about the best approach for them and builds self-confidence and problem-solving skills.

**Give useful advice:** help children with specific guidance on how to use equipment safely. For example, when climbing you could say, “use three points of contact, two hands and one foot on that ladder”.

**Let the child decide:** allow your child to decide what pieces of equipment they use and how far they climb. Do not push them to complete activities they are not comfortable with. And by the same token, intervene only when the equipment is clearly above their skill development level.

**Have fun:** show excitement, join in the imaginative games and reinforce the message that it is acceptable to say no or yes to challenge – both choices are OK!



Read the article via the QR code.

The Conversation (2023). Stand back and avoid saying ‘be careful!’: how to help your child take risks at the park. Retrieved 15 September 2023



## HEALTH & SAFETY: Simplifying their world

The benefits of simplifying your child's world are many. And it can make *your* life more fulfilling, too. Children flourish when they have the time and space to explore their world without the constraints of "too much."

### The Problem with "Too Much"

"Too much" is overwhelming and stressful, whether it's too much stuff, too much information, too many activities, too many choices, or too much speed – always hurrying from one task to the next... with never a moment to relax or play.

Having and doing too much can overwhelm a kid and lead to unnecessary stress at home and in the classroom. It's not only stressful for kids. It can add to the already exhausting mental load for parents.

Simplifying a child's routine, surroundings, and reducing information- and activity-overload can help overstimulated kids become less argumentative and disruptive. When you simplify a child's world, you make space for positive growth, creativity, and relaxation.

"Many of today's behavioural issues come from children having too much stuff and living a life that is too fast," says Kim John Payne, author of *Simplicity Parenting: Using the Extraordinary Power of Less to Raise Calmer, Happier and More Secure Kids*.

Payne says that many American kids are experiencing sensory overload with "too many trinkets, too many choices and too much information." By approaching parenting using simplicity as a framework, parents may be able to significantly reduce a child's daily stress, which can lead to happier, more successful children.

"Children need time to become themselves—through play and social interaction. If you overwhelm a child with stuff – with choices and pseudo choices – before they are ready, they will only know one emotional gesture: More!"

The easiest way to get started is with your home environment. "As you decrease the quantity of your child's toys and clutter, you increase their attention and their capacity for deep play. Too much stuff leads to too little time and too little depth in the way kids see and explore their worlds," says Payne.

**Clear Away the Clutter** When clearing out or rotating toys focus on keeping a mix of toys that your kids consistently enjoy and that keep them entertained for long periods of time. Often, kids' favourite toys are simple, classic toys – stuffed animals, dolls, building toys such as LEGOs, trains and cars, dress-up clothes, and arts and crafts materials.

**Make Downtime a Priority** Along the same lines, simplifying your family's schedule can reduce the frantic feeling of always being on the go. Kids with a full plate of school work, extracurricular activities or sports each day may feel stressed and chaotic since they're lacking the free time children need for creative play and exploration. And when you set effective screen time limits, you'll keep your child distraction-free and help her learn to find joy in the present moment.

**But what if they're bored?** Boredom is a good thing! It's the great instigator and motivator of creativity. Payne says the frustration of having "nothing to do" is usually the start of something wonderful.

### Simplifying with Kids

By simplifying, we can concentrate on what we really value, not just spend our days reacting to everything the world throws at us. Simplification is an ongoing process, not something that can be completed in an afternoon or weekend. It takes time to reduce possessions, change habits, and develop new rhythms. It's not easy to change directions when your whole family is moving at the speed of light and the chaos always feels like it's creeping in. Begin slowly, with small changes and an eye toward what you want your family life to look like.

*"In the tapestry of childhood, what stands out is not the splashy trips to Disneyland but the common threads that run throughout and repeat: the family dinners, nature walks, reading together at bedtime, Saturday morning pancakes."*

Kreps, Sandy. (2023). *Want happier, calmer kids? Simplify their world.* Retrieved [greenchildmagazine.com](https://www.greenchildmagazine.com)



To read in full and for additional advice follow the QR code link.



## PLAY OUTSIDE MORE

Talking about sustainability with kids is incredibly important to do. However, it can be really tricky to know where to start. First, we need to help our kids understand what sustainability is. While a broad concept, sustainability basically boils down to understanding the impact that we have on the earth, and what we leave for future generations. We know that sustainability can encompass a number of things, from recycling to gardening, and in being resourceful with products and items that we use. We can teach these to our children through hands-on activities and by involving them in acting sustainably as well!

This month its very simple, the weather is warming up and the days are getting longer. We challenge you to play outside more. This simple activity goes a long way in teaching sustainability. Sharing in and appreciating a love of the outdoors will inspire kids to care for the earth.





## Literacy

“Being literate is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use language in all its forms through written, oral, visual and auditory. Literacy incorporates a range of modes of communication including music, movement, dance, storytelling, visual arts, media and drama, as well as talking, listening, viewing, composing, reading and writing. Active listening and a strong foundation of oral language is a key to ongoing and lasting literacy learning. Children enjoy and learn from different texts. Contemporary texts include electronic and print-based media. In an increasingly technological world, the ability to critically analyse texts is a key component of literacy.” *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework.*

Experiences in early childhood settings build on the range of experiences with language, literacy and numeracy that children have within their families and communities.

**Literacy education within an Early Years setting looks like:** Conversations with peers and educators, sociodramatic play, reading a variety of books, singing and chanting rhymes, jingles and songs, creative arts, expressing feelings, using technology, pre-writing skills writing, play-dough and science experiments just to name a few.

If you would like more information on our literacy program, please speak to your child’s room leader.

**National Quality Framework | Quality Area 1:**  
*Educational Program and Practice 1.1 The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development.*

**1.2 Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development.**

Australian Government Department of Education (2022). [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework For Australia- V2.0](#)



## PUMPKIN PATCH!

Welcome to the HGP ‘Pumpkin Patch’ little Kye Walton. Congratulations to Elena (Sunshine Room), Sarah and Robert. How lovely for your family.

## WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN HAPPENING AT HGP?

- The staff have been involved in some **interesting training**, including Melissa attending ‘Understanding Mental Health Diagnosis in Young Children’ and Vicki and Tina beginning a certificate in ‘Food Safety’ to meet regulatory requirements.
- **Picture Plates** have arrived. Please pop your head into the office if you ordered a plate and you have not yet received it.
- We are currently **collaborating with local indigenous artist Grant Molony**, with plans for art works on our water tanks. We are thrilled by the way he has asked for the involvement from the Moonbeam children. We will keep you updated.



## Ball Throw

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

This one is very simple all you need is a ball for each person playing and a space outside. The ball can be any size (fun shaped balls work too). Mark a line as a starting point, everyone playing stands on the line with a ball. You say 1,2,3 throw. Everybody throws as far as they can, you run and pick up your ball and run back to the line. It’s a very simple game but it does encourage movement and throwing skills.

**For older children** mark a starting spot (A) and then mark a second spot 5m away (B). One person stands at spot (A) and throws the ball they then see how many runs they can get by running between spot (A) and (B) before the ball is returned to the starting spot. Rotate throwers and see who can get the most runs.