



AUGUST
2025

ON *this* MONTH

AT HIGHLAND GROVE

Red Nose Disco ----- 7th

AROUND THE COUNTRY

World Breastfeeding Week ----- 1-7
National Aboriginal
& Torres Islander Children's Day ----- 4
Jeans for Genes Day ----- 7
Dental Health Week ----- 5-11
International Day of the World's
Indigenous People ----- 9
National Science Week ----- 9-17
International Youth Day ----- 12
World Elephant Day ----- 12
Children's Book Week ----- 16-23
Daffodil Day ----- 21
Red Nose Day ----- 28


Events at Highland Grove in August:

RED NOSE DISCO

Our Red Nose Disco will be held here at Highland Grove on the evening of **Thursday 7th of August from 6.00pm until 7.30pm**. We will have a 'DJ' here with lots of fun dancing with friends, teachers and families. **Everyone is welcome.**

It is worth noting that due to how late, loud and busy these nights are, we will also be holding a little 'Red Nose Disco' with the 'Sunshiners' each preschool day during that week. This will ensure that if these families decide not to attend this year, the children still have the 'disco' experience.

*This is a S.I.D.S fundraiser and the cost is **\$5.00 per child or \$10.00 for a family**, paid on the night. **PLEASE BRING ALONG CASH.** There will also be a limited amount of merchandise here on the evening. A cool drink will be provided on the night.*

PICTURE PLATES: These lovely plates will be completed by the children in August (if you choose) and sent away on Mon. 1st of September to return by Christmas. The cost is \$33.00 (inc GST) and will be included on accounts. Lists are next to the iPads 



National Aboriginal & Torres Islander Children's Day – AUGUST 4

Children's Day is a special time to celebrate the strengths, culture and future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The 2025 theme "Little Footsteps, Big Future" recognises the path our children walk as they grow, guided by culture, supported by family, and surrounded by community. **Find out more here**

RED NOSE DAY – AUGUST 28

Every August Australians everywhere get silly for a serious cause to help stop little lives being cut short and support grieving families. Every day across Australia, 9 babies and young children die suddenly and unexpectedly. We're losing them to SIDS and stillbirth, among other things. This devastating loss is indescribable. Support families in need by hosting a community fundraiser, make a donation or even taking part in a fitness challenge. Over \$18 million has been raised for vital research, saving 12,069 babies and reducing sudden infant deaths by 80%. Help continue to reduce this number! **Find out more here.**

BEST BLOGS

PLAY + LEARN TOGETHER

www.playandlearntogether.com.au

Children from birth engage in discovery as they wonder, investigate and explore the world around them. Play is the driving force for learning and as children engage in play they learn to make sense of their world.

On the Play + Learn together website you will find play experiences that have been developed particularly with the home environment in mind. Early childhood experts set you up for success with a wide range of activities that are informed by educational frameworks and research on physical, emotional and cognitive well-being for children. Activities are available for babies right up to pre-school children. Many activities can be slightly adapted to suit older children as well.

GOOD PLAY GUIDE

goodplayguide.com

Dr Gummer's Good Play Guide is an independent, expert organisation, dedicated to ensuring every child can develop the skills they need to thrive during a happy healthy childhood. The team's mission is to help make the world a more playful place.

In the "play ideas" tab you will find fun, engaging and educational activities to keep kids entertained for hours. There are play ideas for kids of all ages that will keep them learning, exploring and having a blast.

*Activities are broken up into 4 themes, **indoor games, outdoor games, learning games and arts & crafts.** Pick one and get started!*

BANANA CHOC CHIP MUFFINS

TOTAL TIME 35 min | MAKES 12



INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup (190 ml) **butter**
- 2 1/2 cups (375 grams) **plain flour**
- 1 1/4 cups (260 grams) **dark brown sugar**
- 1 teaspoon **cinnamon, ground**
- 1/2 teaspoon **baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon **bicarb soda**
- pinch of **salt**
- 2 **eggs**
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) **greek (or natural) yoghurt**
- 2 tablespoons **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)
- 2 **bananas, mashed**

- 1 1/2 cups (260 grams) **dark chocolate chips**
- 3 tablespoons **caster sugar** (or demerara sugar)
- 1 tablespoon **cinnamon, ground**

METHOD:

- 1. Preheat** oven to 200 C and line a muffin tin with 12 papers. Set aside.
- 2. Place** the butter in a small saucepan over medium heat and cook until the butter is melted, foaming and turned brown and smells nutty. Set aside to cool slightly.
- 3. Place** the flour, sugar, cinnamon, baking powder, bicarb soda and salt into a bowl and whisk to combine creating a well in the centre. Set aside.
- 4. In** a separate bowl place the brown butter, eggs, yoghurt, vanilla and mashed bananas and whisk to combine.
- 5. Pour** the wet ingredients into the well of the dry and using a wooden spoon stir until just combined. Do not over mix.
- 6. Gently** fold through the chocolate chips.
- 7. Evenly** divide the mixture between the prepared muffin tins.
- 8. Place** the caster sugar and cinnamon into a small bowl and stir to combine.
- 9. Sprinkle** each muffin with a little cinnamon sugar.
- 10. Bake** muffins for 15-20 minutes or until golden and when a skewer inserted removes cleanly. Enjoy x

Recipe and image from mylovelylittlelunchbox.com.

HEALTH & SAFETY: Bum worms ...



What Every Parent Should Know (Yes, Even You, Bandit!)

Let's talk about something a little bit itchy and a whole lot wriggly worms. Not the kind Bluey might dig up in the backyard, but the kind that can make little bottoms super itchy—especially at night. These are threadworms (also known as pinworms), and they love to sneak into preschool-aged kids' tummies... and sometimes the whole families, too.

What are the signs?

If your child has threadworms, you might notice them:

- Scratching their bottom
- Feeling a bit cranky or not themselves
- Not sleeping well
- Eating less than usual

Girls might also complain about itchiness in the vaginal area. You might even spot the little worms at night with a torch.

How do they spread?

Threadworms are tiny white worms, about 1 cm long, that live in the lower intestine. At night, the female worms sneak out to lay their eggs around the bottom area. That's when the itching starts.

Kids scratch, eggs get on their fingers, and—yep—they can swallow the eggs again. Worms are great at hide-and-seek too—they can hang around on toys, bedding, door handles, and even float around in household dust. The eggs can survive for up to two weeks outside the body (almost as persistent as a Bluey dance party).

Treatment: no feather wand needed: Thankfully, worm treatments from the chemist (like Combantrin or Vermox) are safe and easy to use. Treat *everyone* in the house at the same time—even if they're not itchy. A shower on the night of treatment, and again in the morning, helps wash away eggs.

Worms are sneaky, so you might need to repeat the treatment after 2 weeks.

Keeping worms away:

Here's how to stop those pesky worms from coming back:

- Trim and clean fingernails
- Wash hands thoroughly after toilet time and before eating
- Try to stop thumb-sucking and nail-biting (we know, easier said than done!)
- Hot wash bed linen, towels, clothes, and soft toys
- Vacuum floors often
- Wipe down surfaces and door handles
- And sorry kids... that cracker that landed on the floor? Let's give it a pass

When to see your GP If your child's still itchy after treatment, or if you notice big worms, a sore tummy, vomiting, or they're feeling extra tired, it's time to visit your doctor.

Remember:

- Threadworms are common in young children (you're not alone!)
- They can be treated easily with the right medication.
- Good hygiene helps stop worms from spreading.
- And yes sometimes parenting really is full of surprises

Just one of the many adventures of life with little ones!



More information available via the QR code.

Source: The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. (2020) **Worms**. Retrieved from www.rch.org.au

CLASSIC EYE SPY

"I Spy" is a valuable game for developing children's literacy skills because it enhances various aspects of language and cognitive development, such as vocabulary, phonological awareness, observation, and social skills. By encouraging children to identify objects based on clues, it helps them develop their descriptive language, practice phonics, and learn to discriminate between visual details. Everyone has played eye spy before but here is a little refresher.

Choose a Spy: One player is designated as the Spy, and they choose an object they can see. **Provide Clues:** The Spy gives a clue, often starting with the phrase "I spy with my little eye something...", and may describe the object by its colour, shape, or the first letter of its name. **Guessing:** Other players take turns guessing the object based on the clues. **Turn Taking:** When a player correctly guesses the object, they become the new Spy.



FOCUS: When We Scroll, They Watch: How Parent Screen Time Shapes Childhood

We all do it—check our phones while waiting for dinner, scroll through emails on the couch, or sneak a quick glance at a message during story time. Technology has become part of everyday life, but new research reminds us that our children are watching—and learning—how we use it.

In 2025, Australians are spending an average of over 6 hours per day in front of screens. While this includes work and essential online tasks, much of it overlaps with family time. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, more than one in five children aged 5–14 are spending 20 hours or more per week on screen-based activities. And it's not just about kids on iPads, the average Aussie parent clocks around 5.8 hours of screen time daily, often during hours their children are present.

But here's the key: children, particularly those under 10, don't just watch screens—they watch us. Whether it's checking the weather or scrolling through social media, our digital habits teach children what is "normal" in everyday life.

What the Research Shows

In a recent Telethon Kids Institute study, researchers found that excessive parent screen time, referred to as "technoference"—can reduce the quality of adult-child interactions by as much as 1,100 words a day. For toddlers and preschoolers, that's a significant drop in language exposure, and over time, it can lead to slower vocabulary development, behavioural issues, and reduced attention spans.

Meanwhile, almost half (49%) of Australian children under 2 are already interacting with smartphones. As these early years are vital for brain development and emotional regulation, our digital choices at home have lasting effects.

Even older children aged 5 to 12 are heavily influenced by the example set by adults. If a child sees a parent reach for their phone in every quiet moment, they quickly internalise that boredom must be filled with a screen. This can reduce opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, and independent play.

Why It Matters: Children learn far more from what we do than what we say.

If we ask our children to put down their devices while we're glued to our phones, the message is mixed. But if we model balance, intentionality, and moments of screen-free connection, our children are more likely to do the same.

The good news is that even small shifts in our digital behaviour can make a big impact. You don't have to go tech-free just more tech-aware.

What You Can Do

Here are some simple ways to reduce technoference and create stronger connections at home:

- Create phone-free moments during the day, like mealtimes, school pickups, or bedtime routines. These pockets of connection become meaningful rituals for children.
- Use "Do Not Disturb" features or app timers to limit interruptions during quality time with your child.
- Narrate your own screen use. If you're checking the weather or replying to a message, say so. "I'm just checking the weather for tomorrow's picnic, then I'll be right with you." It helps children distinguish between purposeful and passive screen time.
- Designate a screen spot. Try to keep screens in one area of the house instead of having them everywhere—this reinforces the idea that not all moments need digital company.
- Engage with your child's screen time. If they're watching something, watch with them when you can, ask questions, and turn it into a conversation. Shared viewing can still be connecting.

A Lasting Message

Technology isn't going away—and that's not a bad thing. Screens can connect, educate, and entertain. But when they begin to replace conversation, reduce play, or interrupt presence, it's worth reassessing our habits.

By modelling balanced screen use, we give our children a roadmap to follow. We show them how to be present, how to manage boredom, and how to engage with the real world.

So next time you reach for your phone, ask yourself—*is this moment better spent being here?* Chances are, the answer will be yes—and your child will notice.



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: *Fuller, Perkins. (2024). How does screen time affect kids' health? Retrieved from edu.au*

Source: *Grace, Asia. (2025). Parents' obsessive technology use may have serious long-term effects on babies and toddlers: study. Retrieved from nypost.com*



THINK TWICE BEFORE SHOPPING

Before hitting "add to cart" or heading to the shops, take a moment to pause and think twice—do you really need something new? Sustainable living starts with mindful choices, and that includes resisting the urge to buy out of habit or convenience. Instead, consider borrowing, swapping,

repairing, or repurposing what you already have. Every item we choose not to purchase helps reduce waste, save resources, and lessen our environmental impact. Small changes in how we shop can lead to big shifts for a healthier planet. Choosing quality over quantity and supporting second-hand or local options when you do need something can also make a meaningful difference. Let's rethink our habits and embrace a more conscious way to consume.





SQUEEGEE ART

Squeegee art is a fun painting activity for all ages. Create unique works of art through this experimental process.

You will need:

Paints - (Small squeeze bottles you can get these at most cheap stores)
Squeegee
Paper

How to create

Lay down some newspaper or a paint matt under where you will be creating. Fill each small squeeze bottle with paint. Squeeze the bottle to make a few dots and dashes on the page. Then scrape the squeegee across the marks to reveal your creation.

You can even draw pictures or write names on plain paper first with a permanent marker before squeegeeing to create more unique artworks.

Tips:

Paint: You need 2 different colours minimum. You can go wild and let your child pick their colours or you can choose primary colours or cool/warm colours and see what colours you can create.

Squeezing paint from a bottle can be tricky. Sometimes slightly watering down paint can make squeezing easier.

Squeegee: You can pick up squeegees from a supermarkets or small plastic scrapers from bunnings that work well too.

Restraint is the trick. The more you scrape the more patterns but scrape too much and you may get a little mess.

COMING EVENTS AT H.G.P:

Staff Training:

Our team has been busy continuing their commitment to training. We recently all completed our annual CPR onsite at HGP. Ella and Kylie will be attending a day in Sydney on 'Educational Leadership'; to support the work Ella does in this important role.

School Readiness Evening:

On Thursday 11th of September we will be holding a 'Transition to School Information Evening'. The night will run from 6.30 until 8.00pm in the Moonbeam Room.

Our Early Childhood teachers will be facilitating this night. It is an excellent opportunity to find out more information about your child's next big step. An RSVP list will be available soon.

4-Year-Old Check:

NSW Health is providing 4-year-old checks to preschoolers. They will visit Highland Grove in November again this year. More information to come.



Jo Wicks Activate

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

Activate is an exciting, high-energy animation for kids – starring Joe Wicks and his brilliant Activators – designed to get children moving and having fun. Each episode is 5 minutes long and available via youtube.com.

Watch here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClA9ltX7mvs