



SEPTEMBER
2026

ON *this* MONTH

AT HIGHLAND GROVE

Service event/item ----- 0

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Early Childhood Educators' Day ----- 2
National Flag Day ----- 3
Father's Day ----- 6
National Child Protection Week ----- 6 - 12
International Literacy Day ----- 8

Coming Events at HGP:

September:

Monday 31st of Aug. onwards - *Photo Week*

Wednesday 2nd of September 6.30 until 8pm
- *Transition to School Night*

Friday 4th – *Re-Enrolment Confirmation*
Letters out.

Monday 28th - *School Holidays begin*- Where possible, please let us know if your child will be away from preschool.

October:

Monday 19th – *Hatching Experience*

Monday 26th – *4 Year Old 'Developmental Health Checks'.*

December:

Tuesday 8th and Thursday 10th *Twilight Christmas Evenings. (More info to come)*

Final day of HGP for 2026 – Friday 18th

January 2027:

First day of HGP for 2026- Wednesday 13th of January. 



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS' DAY – SEP 2

Early Childhood Educators' Day recognises and celebrates the important work of Australia's early childhood educators and the vital role they play in supporting children's wellbeing, learning and development during the early years.

The theme for this year is 'The future starts with us'. It is a special opportunity for children, families and service providers to show their appreciation and say thank you to the dedicated educators who make a meaningful difference in children's lives every day.

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK – SEP 6-12

National Child Protection Week raises awareness of child abuse and neglect and encourages everyone to help create safe, supportive environments where children can grow, learn and thrive. The 2026 theme, "Every Conversation Matters: Shifting Conversation to Action," reminds us that conversations can raise awareness and challenge harmful attitudes, but meaningful change happens when we turn our words into action. Together, we can help create communities in which every child is heard, valued and safe.

NO-BAKE BROWNIES

TOTAL TIME: 1hr 15 min | SERVES 16



NO BAKE BROWNIES

1 cup **rolled traditional oats**
1 cup desiccated **coconut**
1 cup **pecans***
1 cup cacao powder
pinch of **sea salt**
10 **medjool dates**, pit removed
1/4 cup **pure maple syrup**
1 teaspoon **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)

FROSTING

100 g **dark chocolate**
1/4 cup **milk**
1 tbs **coconut oil**
1 tsp **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)
pinch of **sea salt**
to decorate: dried rose petals (optional)

METHOD: Line a 20cm x 20cm square tray with baking paper. **Place** the oats, coconut, pecans, cacao powder and sea salt into the large bowl of a food processor. **Blitz** for 2-3 minutes or until very finely chopped. **Add** the dates, maple syrup and vanilla and blitz again for 2-3 minutes, or until lusciously combined and smooth. **Place** mixture into prepared tray and spread evenly. **Pop** in the fridge for an hour or to 'set'.

TO MAKE THE FROSTING: **Place** the dark chocolate, milk, coconut oil, vanilla and salt into a small saucepan and place over low heat, whisking continuously until melted. **Pour** the mixture into a bowl and pop into the fridge. Every 5 minutes or so remove the bowl from the fridge and give it a good whisk (this whisking creates a gloriously smooth and luscious frosting). Once **cool**, spread the frosting over the brownies. **Cut** into 12 or 16 bars and serve.

*For a **NUT FREE VERSION**: replace pecans with an extra 1/2 cup oats and 1/2 cup coconut). **Enjoy x**

Find this recipe and more at *My Lovely Lunch Box*

Podcast Reviews

Parenting is tricky, these listens may just help you along the way!



Emerging Minds Families | Emerging Minds

Each fortnight, Emerging Minds chat with parents, family members and practitioners from all over Australia. They generously share with us their experiences and the knowledge, strength and the skills they've developed while navigating the ups and downs of parenting, raising a family and the tricky things that life can sometimes throw at us. We discuss a range of topics close to families hearts and always with a mind to supporting children's mental health and wellbeing.



Beyond the Bump | Sophie Pearce and Jayde Couldwell

This is a place for real conversations and honest questions, no matter how hard, about the parts of motherhood that often go unspoken. The mental load that changes shape rather than easing. The identity shifts. The stage where life doesn't suddenly feel simpler. Wherever you are in it, the aim is the same: to leave you feeling lighter, more understood and a little less alone after every listen.



Words Grow Minds | Amelia Mulcahy and Kate Ellis

Connection, connection, connection. If there's one thing that parent educator Genevieve Muir wants us to take from her, it's that it all comes back to connecting with our child. With her trademark good humour and keeping it real, Gen talks to Kate and Amelia about surviving and thriving in today's parenting world of information overload. Gen shares practical tips for cutting through the noise, the advice you can ignore, setting loving boundaries... and why watching more cat videos might just help!



HEALTH AND SAFETY: Spring is here; is it hay fever or asthma?

Spring brings warmer days, more outdoor play and plenty of new growth. But for some children, it can also bring sneezing, coughing, itchy eyes and breathing difficulties. When these symptoms appear, it isn't always easy to tell whether your child is experiencing hay fever, asthma, or perhaps a little of both.

Is it hay fever? Hay fever, also known as allergic rhinitis, is an allergic reaction to triggers such as pollen, grasses, dust mites or animal dander. Common symptoms include a runny or blocked nose, frequent sneezing, itchy or watery eyes, and an itchy nose or throat.

Unlike a cold, hay fever is caused by an allergic reaction rather than an infection. Symptoms may come and go depending on what your child has been exposed to and can become more noticeable during pollen seasons.

Or could it be asthma? Asthma affects the airways in the lungs. Symptoms can include coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and chest tightness. Night-time coughing or breathing symptoms that interfere with normal activity can also be signs that asthma isn't well controlled.

The tricky part is that hay fever and asthma can occur together. Pollen can trigger the itchy eyes and runny nose associated with hay fever, but it can also trigger asthma symptoms in some people. That's why it is important not to assume that a springtime cough is simply "allergies", particularly if your child is wheezing, having difficulty breathing, waking because of their symptoms or struggling more than usual during active play.

Look for patterns Pay attention to when your child's symptoms appear. Do they become worse after playing outside, around freshly cut grass, during windy weather or at a particular time of year? Keeping track of these patterns can provide helpful information to discuss with your child's doctor. For children with pollen allergies, reducing exposure can also help. Health direct recommends strategies such as avoiding outdoor activities during windy or stormy weather when possible, showering after coming home and avoiding mowing grass. A doctor or pharmacist can advise you about appropriate treatments for your child.



If your child has asthma, make sure their **Asthma Action Plan is current** and that your education and care service has an up-to-date copy. An Asthma Action Plan helps families and educators recognise when asthma is getting worse and provides clear instructions about what action to take.

Don't forget thunderstorm asthma. Spring is also a good time to be aware of **thunderstorm asthma**. Under certain conditions, thunderstorms and high grass-pollen levels can combine to trigger sudden asthma symptoms in susceptible people, including some people who experience hay fever.

Seek medical advice if your child develops recurring coughing, wheezing or breathlessness, or if you are concerned about their symptoms. If your child has **severe difficulty breathing, cannot speak comfortably, becomes rapidly worse or receives little or no relief from their reliever medication, call Triple Zero (000).**

Asthma Week runs from 1–7 September each year, making September a timely reminder to check in on your family's respiratory health. Knowing what to look for and recognising when hay fever and asthma may be connected can help children breathe easier and enjoy everything spring has to offer.



Find more information on this topic via the QR code.

Source: <https://asthma.org.au/kids/> (2026).
Attack Asthma. Retrieved from asthma.org.au

Which One Holds More?

Preschoolers love pouring, scooping and experimenting, making this a simple way to explore **measurement, volume, comparison and estimation** through play **You will need:** A large tub or container, water, sand or dry rice, a collection of different-sized cups, bowls, jugs and containers, a scoop or small jug.

What to do: Choose two containers and ask your child to predict which one they think will hold more. Fill one container, then pour its contents into the other. Was your prediction, right? Try different combinations and encourage your child to compare the containers using words such as **more, less, full, empty, half-full, bigger and smaller**. You can extend the activity by choosing one small cup as your measuring tool. Ask, *"How many cups do you think it will take to fill this jug?"* Count each scoop together as you fill it and then compare your prediction with the result.

Why it's great for learning: Experiences like this help children begin to understand measurement and quantity while developing mathematical language, problem-solving and early estimation skills.



FOCUS ARTICLE: Why Children Need Family Rituals



Family rituals may seem like small parts of everyday life, but they can play an important role in children's emotional and social development.

A family ritual is something that happens regularly and carries meaning for the people involved. It might be a bedtime story, Sunday pancakes, a special goodbye before childcare, Friday movie night, a song you always sing in the car or simply talking about the best part of the day over dinner.

For young children, these repeated experiences help make life feel more predictable. Children are still learning how the world works, and routines and rituals give them clues about what to expect. This sense of predictability can support feelings of safety and help children manage transitions, particularly when other parts of life feel unfamiliar or changeable.

Rituals can also strengthen children's sense of belonging and identity. When children participate in repeated family traditions, they begin to develop an understanding of what makes their family unique. They learn, *this is something we do together*. Over time, these shared experiences can become part of the stories children tell about their family and themselves.

There is also an important relationship component. Many family rituals create regular opportunities for connection. A bedtime routine may provide a quiet moment for a child to talk about their day. A weekly walk may create uninterrupted time together. Even very short rituals, such as a particular hug or phrase at drop-off, can reinforce a child's sense that their relationship with a parent or caregiver is dependable.

This can be particularly valuable during periods of change. Starting childcare or school, moving house, family separation, welcoming a new sibling or experiencing changes in everyday routines can all create uncertainty. Maintaining familiar rituals can provide continuity and give children something reassuring to hold onto while they adjust.

Importantly, family rituals don't need to be expensive, elaborate or perfectly maintained. Their value comes from **consistency, connection and meaning**, rather than how impressive the activity is.

Rituals can also change as children grow. Inviting children to help create new family traditions gives them a sense of participation and ownership while creating opportunities for connection.

In a busy world, these small, repeated moments can have a powerful message for children: **you belong, our relationship is important, and there are things in your world you can rely on.**



Find more information on this article via the QR code.

Source: Family traditions and rituals: why they're important (2025). Retrieved from raisingchildren.net.au



A Greener Spring Clean

Spring is the perfect time to open the windows, clear out the cupboards and give your home a fresh start. But before filling the bin with unwanted items or stocking up on new cleaning products, there are plenty of simple ways to make your spring clean a little more sustainable.

- Start by using what you already have. Old towels and worn-out clothes can become cleaning cloths, while containers and baskets you already own can be reused for storage and organisation.
- When decluttering, think twice before throwing things away. Clothes, toys, books and household items that are still in good condition could be donated, sold, swapped with another family or

passed on to someone who can use them.

- You can also reduce waste by choosing reusable cleaning cloths, washable mop pads and refillable products instead of disposable alternatives. Before buying a different cleaning product for every surface, check whether one multipurpose product can do several jobs.
- Get children involved too! They can sort toys they've outgrown, sort items for recycling or help wiping down surfaces.
- A sustainable spring clean isn't about doing everything perfectly. It's about pausing before we throw something away, using what we have and making small choices that create less waste.





Big Art, No Rules

Sometimes the best art experiences are the simplest. Instead of reaching for a small sheet of paper, flatten out a large cardboard box and turn it into a giant canvas.

Add some paint, brushes, rollers, sponges or even use hands and fingers, then let children explore. There is no picture to copy, no “right” way to paint and no finished product they need to create.

A large painting space gives preschoolers the freedom to use their whole bodies as they create. They can stretch, reach, move around the cardboard, make long sweeping lines, giant circles, tiny marks and experiment with mixing colours. This kind of large-scale painting can support creativity, coordination, spatial awareness and confidence.

It also encourages children to make their own decisions. Which colour will they use next? What happens when two colours mix? How can they fill a large empty space?

For an extra challenge, try painting with unusual tools such as toy cars, leaves, sticks, kitchen sponges or cardboard tubes.

Place the cardboard outside or on an easy-to-clean surface, add a few materials and step back to let the artwork unfold.

The goal isn't to create something perfect. It's to experiment, move, explore and enjoy the process of creating something completely their own.

What's been going on at Highland Grove?

Importantly, the team is continuing to work on our commitment to Child Safety.

Best practice regarding no personal devices in the rooms and regular Child Protection Training is already in place at HGP, however we are now about to participate in the second round of Child Safety Training which has been mandated by the Federal Government.

The Resilience Project Update:

We have been delighted how our families have embraced this excellent Program. At our recent team meeting, we reflected on how this program, and its resources are particularly relevant to the Starlight and Moonbeam Room. Taking ‘Cozy’, the koala home has been a hit, and we look forward to participating in the project again in 2027.

Staffing at Highland Grove

We continue to be committed to high ratios, well qualified and experienced staff.

We are very pleased that when there are saddening staff changes at HGP, we are able to source such enthusiastic and inspiring professionals to be included on our team. We will continue to provide you with thorough knowledge of the HGP staff. Please ask if you have questions.



Floor is lava

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

Place cushions, towels or pieces of cardboard on the floor to create stepping stones. The challenge is to move across the room without touching the floor!

Try jumping, balancing, taking giant steps or moving backwards. It's a fun way to build balance, coordination and problem-solving while getting everyone moving.

Keep the course low and make sure the area is clear and safe.