

Benefits of Risky Play

When you think back to your own childhood, do you remember how you played? Did you spend lots of time indoors, watching tv? Or were you outside, climbing trees and exploring the nearby bush and creeks of the neighbourhood?

What is meant by 'risky play'?

Risk is a natural part of growing up and being human, and risky play provides children with opportunities to experiment, explore and challenge themselves, often in natural environments. According to a Norwegian study, risky play can be split into six categories:

- Play at great heights, e.g. climbing trees or playground equipment;
- Play with high speed, e.g. swinging fast or riding down a big hill on a scooter;
- Play with dangerous tools, e.g. cutting with knives or using tools for carpentry, under a high level of supervision;
- Play with dangerous elements, e.g. lighting fires or playing in water;
- Play rough and tumble, e.g. children wrestling/playing with impact or slamming into crash mats; and
- Lost/disappear play, where children feel like they're not being watched, even though adults are surreptitiously supervising them, e.g. children hiding in bushes

Risky play draws upon the idea that children are 'innate risk-based learners who need to experience risk to know how to manage it,' and this kind of play is empowering, educational and enjoyable for youngsters.

What are the benefits of risky play?

Provided that children are supervised and supported, risky play opens up many opportunities for children under five to learn life skills. Risky play helps children to:

- Build resilience and persistence;
- Develop balance and coordination;
- Gain awareness of their physical capabilities and limits;
- Handle tools safely and with purpose;
- Understand the consequences of actions;
- Gain confidence and independence;
- Become more resourceful;
- Think creatively and inventively;
- Solve problems; and
- Be curious.

How can you help your child engage in risky play?

- Visit playgrounds that don't have the standard slides and swings. Or when you do, is there an opportunity to climb the slide? Swing from monkey bars? Climb trees?
- Let them help you cook, using knives (supervised), stirring food etc. This teaches your child that they also have to be aware of safety.
- Are there jobs needing done around the house that involve tools? Children are often very capable using tools such as screwdrivers so let them help.
- Challenge your ideas on children picking up sticks at the park. Instead of asking children to put them down, talk to them about how to play with them safely and see where their imagination takes them.

As always, chat with your child about safety, boundaries etc and let them share their thoughts around their play experiences.



October in Review 2024

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- ♥ Holiday Programme
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Some recent risky play challenges at preschool!



Our Preschool Programme in Review

Sweetpeas and Bluebells:

As the Sweetpeas and Bluebells prepare to move into the Bluebells or Schoolies groups next year, we have been implementing a range of strategies to support the development of their self-help skills. To support them in this area we will often break tasks down into smaller parts to allow children to work their way up to being able to complete the whole task. For example, placing children's socks over their toes for them to pull up, then once this has been mastered over time, encouraging children to put their socks on independently. This strategy is beneficial for helping children accomplish a range of self-help tasks including partially opening food packets for them to finish opening, helping children put their shoes on for them to secure the Velcro straps and partially rubbing in sunscreen for the child to complete independently. Allowing children to participate in self-help tasks, no matter how small the role, supports their sense of agency while also building their confidence. We also encourage problem solving by asking children to brain storm options instead of providing them with answers immediately. For example if asked "Which bin does this go in?" we might ask "What is it made of?" to support thinking that will allow children to make these decisions for themselves in the future. We encourage you to use these strategies at home to help further your child's independence and self help skills.

Schoolies: Our Schoolies often enjoy being in the outdoors, including regularly heading up to the church Community Garden. The outdoor environment allows the children to explore their natural world by employing all of their five senses as well as building developmental skills. Our mud kitchen, vegetable gardens and sandpit encourages the children to engage in sensory play. As the children touch, smell, hear, see and taste in their environment, they begin to classify objects based on different characteristics, which is an important part of learning. The Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcome 4.1 explains that children use their senses to play, explore and try new things.

The children are also regularly provided with opportunities to care for the environment and other living things. Our gardening experiences including planting new plants, harvesting fruits and vegetables and watering the garden attract so many children, allowing them to explore the basic needs of living things and how to protect them. This is in line with the Learning Outcome 2.4—Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.

Our Community Garden playground offers a great challenge for our Schoolies and allows them to engage in more risky play. They have the opportunity to conquer challenging obstacles and further develop their coordination, stamina and gross motor strength. Risky play encourages the children to assess risks, make decisions and be more responsible for their own safety. As the Schoolies prepare for school, these skills are important for them to obtain as they will be faced with more decision making and their independence will increase as they enter kindergarten.



Holiday Programme!

Our final Holiday Programme of the year was a huge success. We had a creative, engaging, hands on and most importantly FUN two weeks. **Thank you to every family helper that came along to help, your contribution was very much appreciated.**



Spring Day was a highlight of the Holiday Programme. We were lucky enough to have Sam's family come in to teach us all about their bee hives. The children were able to learn about the process of making honey and squeezed the honeycomb to produce the honey. We also learnt about the importance of bees and the role they play in pollinating food crops.



Holiday Programme!



FRESHKIDS[®]



Fresh for Kids

Fresh for Kids is an engaging way to get kids to eat more fresh fruit and vegetables.

They focus on teaching kids the importance of the Central Market system, food education, and healthy lifelong habits. Through this experience, the children were able to explore different vegetables, discuss the benefits of 'eating the rainbow' and participate in preparing their very own fresh coleslaw salad tortilla with a healthy dressing.

For more healthy kid friendly recipe ideas, click the link below:

<https://www.freshforkids.com.au/all-recipes/summer-recipes.html>



Winter coleslaw

Serves 6



This uses yoghurt instead of mayonnaise to bind the vegetables because it not only tastes better, but it's also healthier. Feel free to add other winter veggies, such as radishes or fennel, if you've got them - just remember, the more interesting crunchy vegetables you can get shredded into this, the better!

Ingredients

- 1 red onion
- 3 carrots
- 2 parsnips
- 200g red cabbage
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 250g natural yoghurt
- 1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- a couple of sprigs of fresh, soft herbs such as mint, flat-leaf parsley, dill

Equipment list

- Y-shaper peeler
- Knife
- Weighing scales
- Box grater
- Chopping board
- Mixing bowl
- Measuring spoons
- Empty jam jar with lid
- Serving spoons



Here's how to make it

- 1 Peel the onion, carrots and parsnips.
- 2 Remove any tatty outer leaves from the cabbage.
- 3 On a chopping board, either coarsely grate the vegetables using a box grater or use good knife skills to slice them as finely as you can by hand, then place in a bowl.
- 4 Add the extra virgin olive oil, yoghurt and mustard to the jar with a tiny pinch of salt and pepper.
- 5 Pick and finely chop the herbs, discarding the stalks, then add to the jar.
- 6 Cut the lemon in half.
- 7 Squeeze the juice into the jar, using your fingers to catch any pips.
- 8 Put the lid securely on the jar and shake well.
- 9 Have a taste and see whether you think it needs a bit more lemon juice or oil - you want it to be slightly too acidic, so that it's still nice and zingy once you've dressed the vegetables.
- 10 Drizzle over the dressing, then toss to coat.
- 11 Check and adjust the seasoning again, then serve.



INSECTS WEEK

14th October



Spring is definitely in the air and as we spend more of our day outside, the children have been discovering lots of insects hiding in our garden! With the children sharing their insect discoveries, and following on from the experience with the bees during Spring Day, we revisited this interest with the children, encouraging them to share what they most wanted to learn about. There was a strong interest in spiders, and although we discovered these are not actually insects, this was a great opportunity to discuss spider safety in and around preschool. The children asked questions such as 'How many wings do insects have?' and 'How do stink bugs get their stink out?', and using books and technology, we researched together to find the answers. During a visit to the community garden, we participated in a bug hunt, looking for butterflies, ants, bees and centipedes. On our return to preschool, we even found a frog! The children learned a song that reiterated the parts of an insect "Head, thorax, abdomen" and you can see the children singing this if you scan the QR code in the Floorbook. Our growing silkworms were a valuable visual accessory in discussing insects, and the children are able to observe these changing every day. This was a great week of discovery in our natural environment, and the children showed great interest in this, confidently sharing their knowledge and interests.





Sea Animals

14th October



Following Water Play Day in the School Holiday Programme, the children shared their interest towards sea animals. This led to us deciding on a new Discovery topic. The children brought their pre-existing knowledge to the learning environment, sharing and learning from each other. Many children were curious about sharks, eager to discover what the most dangerous sharks are. We took part in craft experiences, engaged in sensory water trays, explored sea animals at Taronga Zoo and went on a virtual tour under the sea, using an application and goggles. The children had many inquisitive questions throughout the week, just see our Floorbook! This topic went on for two weeks due to the children's interest and



Little Endeavours with Jo

Baking and cooking have been such a hit with the preschoolers and as a result, I have been extending on their interest this month. Apart from the tasty product at the end there are so many learning experiences during the processes.



Jelly Cups – There was lots of communicating as we made our jelly cups and the preschoolers verbalised their sensory experiences through the activity, telling the other children and myself how ingredients smelt and looked. Using our child safe knives the children loved cutting up their fruit with most of them making the most of the experience and chopping the fruit into tiny pieces, showing how their fine motor skills have developed over the year. As they added water they predicted what colour the jelly would be after smelling it. We were amazed how the pale jelly crystals changed with hot water to a colourful liquid, which resulted in the children hypothesizing about how and why this happened and how long the jelly would take to set.



Little Endeavours with Jo



Banana Muffins – To cater to all our preschoolers we made both oat and gluten free muffins. As we read through the recipe before we started the preschoolers co-operated and worked collaboratively as they collected the ingredients from the basket and confirmed they were correct. We then read the recipe and the children showed an understanding of the connection between the written words and our actions as we used mathematical skills to weigh and measure the ingredients following the recipe instructions. The preschoolers were confident as they carried, poured and mixed the ingredients. They were also curious to smell the individual ingredients and often were able to name the ingredient by the smell alone. We all agreed at the end we had worked well as a team to make our muffins.





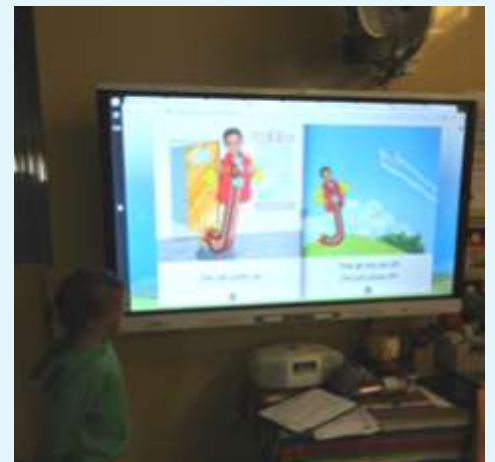
Phonemic Awareness Programme



As we explored the /k/ sound with Kicking King, the children took part in karate/martial arts lessons to practise their k k kicking! This included the push kick, side kick and roundhouse kick. We also made King/Queen crowns just like Kicking King! The children were excited to discover that Clever Cat and Kicking King make the same /k/ sound.



While learning about the /j/ sound with Jumping Jim, the children took part in multiple activities to encourage them to further produce the sound. This included making jelly with Jo, taking part in a jellybean experiment and participating in a /j/ word challenge requested by one of the children. Each day the children were eager to share the /j/ words they had discovered. The funniest aspect to our Jumping Jim fortnight was sharing hilarious j j jokes!



Mini Moves



Holiday Programme/Revision

The recent holiday programme provided endless opportunities for children to practice their fundamental movement skills while engaging in a range of fun physical activities. From throwing and catching water balloons on water play day and striking the pinata on party day. It's safe to say lots of fun was had by all!

Striking

This month the Sweetpeas and Bluebells have been introduced to the 'striking' skill. This skill supports the development of children's upper body strength and bilateral co-ordination while encouraging them to cross the midline as they rotate their body to build momentum. The 'striking' movement is a precursor for many sports including tennis, baseball and tee-ball. The children have particularly enjoyed participating in tee-ball which has also provided them with opportunities to revise their running, throwing and catching skills.

Next up (our final skill for the year) - Skipping!



**DON'T
FORGET!**

Kindifarm—Monday 4th November

Christmas Concert—Friday 29th November 9am

Big School Week (visits from local schools) — 2nd December

Schoolies Graduation—Tuesday 10th December 5pm

Last Day for 2024—Friday 20th December

First Day for 2025—Monday 20th January

November Birthdays

**A big Happy Birthday to our children
having a birthday this month!**



Millie—4 years

Gemma—4 years

