

PEAK HILL PRESCHOOL KINDERGARTEN INC.

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Hi families and friends of PHPS.

We are half-way through the year already with just over one week to go!

Next week we will be having a Teddy Bears Picnic on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday with some special treats to share with everyone. Children can bring their favourite teddy on each of these days. This idea has come from the children's play throughout the week, making 'meals' and serving each other, and educators 'drinks' as well. It is also a nice way to end the term.

A big Thank You to everyone that contributed recipes and photos to our 60th Anniversary Community Cookbook. Over 200 recipes have been received. The management committee are now sorting through the recipes, categorising them and looking at photos to include in the cookbook. There will be some photos included of the children and consent forms were sent home last week. Please return your consent form by the end of this week if you haven't already. If a consent form is not received, your child will not have any photos taken for the cookbook.

At the beginning of Term 2 the preschool's AGM was held. The committee is as follows:

- President – Skye Westcott
- Vice president – Mikaela Hando
- Secretary – Courtney Westcott
- Treasurer – Clare Blackwell
- Elected general member – Alice Brewin

The management committee is what is known as the Approved Provider in the Education and Care Service National Law and Regulations and all early childhood services must have an Approved Provider to operate. These members must also be approved by the regulatory authority (NSW Early Learning Commission) to be on the management committee. Thank you to our committee members for volunteering your time and skills to ensure the continuing operation of our preschool.

Some exciting news....

Just last week we learnt that we are finalists in the Excellence in Early Childhood Education Awards. These awards are the largest early childhood awards in NSW and Australia.

Over 850 nominations were received, and we have been selected as finalists in 2 categories - *Regional/Rural/Remote Service (39 places or less)* (7 finalists) and *Excellence in Educational Program and Practice* (18 finalists). Winners will be announced at the Awards Gala Night in Sydney on 12 September.

We are also very happy with the outcome of our Assessment and Rating visit earlier in the year which was conducted by the NSW Early Learning Commission. During the visit 4 of the 7 Quality Areas of the National Quality Standard were assessed. We were rating EXCEEDING in the National Quality Standard in 3 areas:

- QA1 – Education program and practice
- QA 5 – Relationships with children
- QA 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and children

Being finalists in the Awards and receiving Exceeding ratings in 3 out of 4 quality areas assessed is a fantastic accomplishment for our preschool and reflects the strong commitment to high quality early childhood education at Peak Hill Preschool.

In line with our *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online environments policy*, **parents, families and visitors to our preschool will NOT be permitted to use personal electronic devices.** Staff, educators or visitors must not use their personal device to take images or videos of children while working with children and will only use service devices when taking photos or videos.

Cool weather

As the weather cools down, we would like to remind families to pack a jumper or a jacket for your child as we have a very limited number of spare jackets and clothing at preschool. Also, please remember to have a spare change of clothes in your child's bag. Sometimes they have toileting accidents, or they get wet or dirty playing and want to get changed.

All items – jackets, jumpers, clothes, drink bottles and lunch boxes, should be labelled with your child's name to ensure any lost items can be promptly returned.

ON *this* MONTH

@PEAK HILL PRESCHOOL

National Reconciliation Week -----27/05 to 03/06
Last day Term 2-----03/07
First day Term 3 -----20/07

AROUND THE COUNTRY

NAIDOC Week -----5-12/07
National Pyjama Day ----- 24/07

Absence from preschool

Although preschool is not compulsory, regular attendance helps children build confidence, develop friendships, and strengthen important learning skills. Consistent attendance also helps children and families establish routines and develop the habits needed for a smooth transition to primary school, where attendance is compulsory. We now have a waiting list for children wanting a place at the preschool. I will be contacting families whose children are often away from preschool for more than a week at a time and with no apparent reason to see how we can best support them for their child to attend regularly, and if they still require a place at Peak Hill Preschool. Please let us know if your child will be absent via the OWNA app or SMS to assist with our planning and our record keeping.

A reminder that this year Peak Hill Preschool is using the NSW Government Fee Relief funding through the 2026 Start Strong for Community Preschools program to cover the full cost of fees for each child to attend preschool for 2026 for up to 600 hours per year (15 hours per week) for families who opted to receive the subsidy at Peak Hill Preschool. The program also covers the cost of morning tea each day, ambulance cover for the children while at preschool, excursions or any visiting incursions to the preschool.

When we return in Term 3, we will begin preparations for the annual show which is being held on 25th and 26th August. We also have a busy term ahead with events such as Aboriginal Children's Day, Father's Day, NAIDOC celebrations, our 60th anniversary, just to name a few anniversary celebrations.

Miss Leanne, our early childhood teacher and educational leader, will be contacting families early in Term 3 to conduct parent interviews.

The last day of Term 2 is Friday 3rd July.
First day of Term 3 is Monday 20 July.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask one of our educators or myself.

Cheers,
Narelle Elias, Director



Podcast Reviews

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



Pop Culture Parenting | Dr Billy Garvey, Nick McCormack

This podcast is about finding the sweet spot between the textbooks and real life when it comes to parenting. Dr Billy (a developmental paediatrician) and Nick (a developing parent) are a couple of dads having honest discussions about parenting day to day.



Parenting and Personalities | Kate Mason

One thing about being a parent – there's no shortage of personalities to be surrounded by. Our kids, our partners, our family, our friends. They keep us laughing, growing, loving, and crying. Kate Mason is an author, wife, and mother who has spent her career studying personality and relationships. In this podcast she looks at why relationships work, and why some don't. She also looks at how our personalities impact our relationships and examines what compels our children, husbands, wives and others to behave the way they do.



The Easy Feed | Karina Savage

With over two decades of experience in feeding kids, Karina Savage has uncovered all the tricks to help get your children eat better and boost their nutrition while saving you precious time in the kitchen. This podcast is your go-to guide, packed with tips, advice, and practical 'doable' solutions to make your life easier.



Stretch & Breathe

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

Yoga is a calming activity that encourages children and adults to slow down, stretch and connect with their bodies. Through simple movements, breathing and mindfulness, yoga can help support balance, flexibility, concentration and emotional wellbeing. For young children, yoga can also be a fun way to build body awareness, confidence and relaxation through playful poses and movement.

Give Cosmic Kids a go together
youtube.com/@CosmicKidsYoga

When to Keep Children Home: A Parent Guide to Illness Exclusion

It can be hard to know whether your child is well enough to attend preschool, especially when symptoms seem mild or they say they feel fine. However, keeping children home when they are unwell is one of the best ways to help them recover and prevent illness spreading to other children, educators and families.

As a general guide, children should stay home if they have a fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, an unexplained rash, red or sticky eyes, ongoing coughing, trouble breathing or symptoms of a contagious illness such as gastro, influenza, COVID-19 or hand, foot and mouth disease.

Even if symptoms seem mild, children may still need to stay home if they are very tired, unsettled, not eating or drinking well, or need more one-on-one care and comfort than educators can reasonably provide in a busy environment.

A helpful question for families to ask is: *“Can my child comfortably take part in the normal day?”* If the answer is no, it is usually best to keep them home.

Common illnesses recommended exclusion periods:

Children should stay home for at least 24 hours after the last episode of **vomiting or diarrhoea**. If norovirus is suspected or confirmed, many services require a 48-hour exclusion period after symptoms stop because it is highly contagious.

Children with **conjunctivitis** should remain home until discharge from the eyes has stopped unless a doctor confirms it is a non-infectious cause.

Children with **hand, foot and mouth disease** should stay home until all blisters have dried, any rash has settled and they are feeling well enough to participate in normal activities. This is usually around 5-7 days.

Children with **chickenpox** should remain home until all blisters have dried and crusted over, which is usually at least 5 days after the rash first appears in unimmunised children. Any remaining blisters should be completely dry before returning to care.

If your child becomes unwell during the day, you may be contacted to collect them. Having a back-up emergency contact available can make this much easier.

Keeping unwell children home is not only about protecting others. It also gives children the chance to rest, recover and return to care feeling happier, healthier and ready to participate in the day.

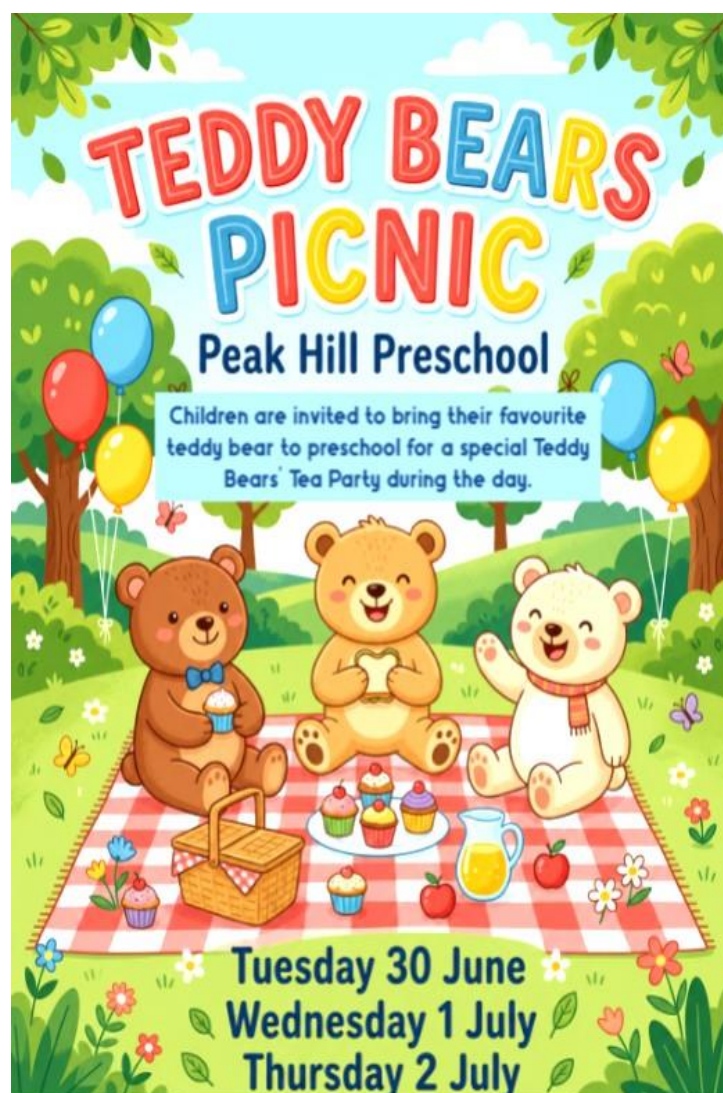
We understand that bouts of illness can be difficult to manage, and we really appreciate your support and understanding. By working together, we can help reduce the spread of illness and support a healthier winter season for



More information available via the QR code.

See link via QR code

Retrieved from <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au>



NUMERACY SONGS

Numeracy songs support children to learn counting, sequencing and early mathematical concepts through repetition, rhythm and predictable patterns. Popular examples include counting forwards songs such as *The Ants Go Marching* and *One, Two, Buckle My Shoe*, counting backwards songs such as *Ten in the Bed* and *Five Little Monkeys*, and number recognition songs like *“How Many Fingers?”*.

These songs also help children build memory, listening and language skills while strengthening their understanding of number patterns and one-to-one correspondence. When paired with actions, props or visual supports, numeracy songs can make abstract mathematical concepts more concrete and engaging. Repeating songs regularly throughout the day can also help children build confidence and develop positive attitudes towards early mathematics.



HEALTH AND SAFETY: Helping Children Manage Big Feelings

Big feelings are a normal part of childhood. Young children are still learning how to manage frustration, disappointment, excitement, anger and overwhelm. While adults have years of experience regulating emotions, children are only just beginning to understand what they are feeling and how to respond appropriately.

Sometimes those feelings come out in big ways, crying, yelling, throwing toys, refusing instructions, or even hitting. Although these moments can feel stressful for families, they are often a sign that a child needs support, connection and guidance rather than punishment alone.

When children hit, kick or lash out, it is important to respond calmly and safely. Start by stopping the behaviour immediately and clearly: *"I won't let you hit."*

Keeping language short and calm helps children feel safe, even when they are upset. If needed, gently move younger children away from others or remove unsafe objects nearby.

Once everyone is safe, try to focus on helping your child regulate before trying to reason or lecture. Children who are overwhelmed often cannot process long explanations in the heat of the moment. Some children may need a cuddle, quiet space, deep breaths, sensory play, or simply a calm adult nearby while they settle.

As emotions begin to calm, help your child name what they were feeling:

- "You felt really angry."
- "You were disappointed."
- "You wanted another turn."
- "That felt unfair to you."

Naming emotions helps children build emotional awareness and slowly develop the skills needed to manage those feelings more appropriately over time.

It is also important to teach children what they *can* do instead of hitting. Practise calm strategies during peaceful moments, not just during meltdowns.



You might encourage children to:

- use words to ask for help
- stomp feet on the ground instead of hitting
- squeeze a cushion
- take deep breaths
- ask for space
- draw or talk about feelings

Remember that learning emotional regulation takes years of practice and support. Children will make mistakes as they learn. Staying calm and consistent helps them feel secure while also teaching important boundaries.

Families can also help reduce emotional overload by maintaining predictable routines, ensuring children get enough sleep, allowing time for outdoor play and movement, and creating opportunities for connection throughout the day.

Big feelings are not "bad" feelings, they are part of growing up. With patience, support and guidance, children gradually learn that all feelings are okay, but not all behaviours are.



Find more information on this article via the QR code.

Source: Raisingchildren.net.au (2024). **Helping children calm down: 3-8 years.** Retrieved from raisingchildren.net.au

Community Events

NAIDOC WEEK – JULY 5 - 12

This is a special time to celebrate and recognise the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The 2026 theme, "50 Years of Deadly", marks five decades of NAIDOC Week and celebrates the powerful legacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, stories and leadership.

NATIONAL TREE DAY – JULY 26

Over the past 30 years, millions of Australians have volunteered their time to do something good for the environment and their community by planting a tree. Planet Ark's National Tree Day started in 1996 and has grown into



Australia's largest community tree planting and nature care event. It is a wonderful opportunity for children, families, schools and communities to connect with nature and learn about the importance of caring for our environment. By planting trees and caring for green spaces, we can help create shade, support wildlife, improve local habitats and grow a healthier future for everyone.

FOCUS ARTICLE: Teaching Children About Safe Boundaries



Learning about safe boundaries is an important part of helping children build confidence, emotional awareness and personal safety skills. From a young age, children can begin learning that their body belongs to them and that they have the right to feel safe, respected and listened to.

Teaching children about boundaries does not need to feel frightening or overwhelming. In fact, the most effective conversations are often calm, simple and woven naturally into everyday life. Talking openly about feelings, personal space and respectful relationships helps children develop the confidence to communicate when something does not feel right.

One important message for children is that it is okay to say “no” to unwanted touch or interactions, even during play. While good manners are important, children should also learn that they do not have to hug, kiss or physically interact with others if they feel uncomfortable. Offering alternatives such as waving, high fives or verbal greetings can help children feel more in control of their own boundaries.

Families can support children to understand safe boundaries by:

- asking permission before hugs, tickling or rough play
- encouraging children to respect other people’s personal space
- teaching children to use clear words such as “Stop”, “I don’t like that” or “Please move back.”

- helping children identify trusted adults they can talk to if they feel worried or unsafe
- discussing the difference between “safe surprises” and “unsafe secrets”
- encouraging open conversations about emotions and feelings

It is also important for children to understand that boundaries work both ways. Just as they have the right to feel safe and respected, they also need to listen when others say “stop” or ask for space. These early lessons help children develop empathy, respectful relationships and positive social skills.

Role play, books and everyday situations can all provide natural opportunities to talk about body safety and boundaries in age-appropriate ways. For example, if a child becomes upset during rough play, families can gently guide the conversation:

“It looks like your body needed some space.”

“How can we check if someone still wants to play?”

Children should also know that there are no “bad” feelings and that they can always talk to a trusted adult if something makes them feel confused, worried or uncomfortable. Creating a safe environment where children feel heard and supported encourages them to speak up when needed.

Most importantly, teaching boundaries is not about making children fearful it is about helping them build confidence, communication skills and a strong sense of safety and respect for themselves and others.



For more additional support regarding this topic and how to talk to your kids follow the QR code.



Repair, Reuse and Reimagine

Before throwing something away, encourage children to think creatively about how it could be reused or repurposed. Old jars can become craft containers, cardboard boxes can turn into cubbies or robots, and worn clothing can be transformed into dress-ups, cleaning cloths or textile crafts.

Teaching children to repair, reuse and reimagine everyday items helps build creativity while also reducing waste going to landfill. Small habits at home can help children develop lifelong sustainability skills and a greater appreciation for the resources we use every day.

If you need some inspiration try frugalandthriving.com.au



Take turns art

This simple art activity encourages creativity, communication and connection through shared drawing and mark making. Using any art materials you have at home, such as pencils, crayons, markers, paint, chalk or stamps, take turns adding marks, lines, shapes or drawings to the same piece of paper.

Begin by inviting your child to make the first mark. You then add something new, followed by your child again, continuing back and forth to create a collaborative artwork together. One person might draw a line, while the next adds a shape, colour, pattern or picture inspired by what was already created.

There are no rules or “right” outcomes — the fun comes from watching the artwork grow and change with each turn. Children often enjoy seeing how their ideas connect with someone else’s and may begin turning simple marks into imaginative pictures, stories or patterns.

This activity supports more than just creativity. Taking turns helps children practise patience, cooperation, listening and flexible thinking. Mark making also helps strengthen fine motor skills, hand control and early pre-writing development.

Most importantly, focus on enjoying the process together rather than the finished product. Shared creative experiences help children build confidence, strengthen relationships and develop a positive connection with art and self-expression.

No bake banana bars

TOTAL TIME 30 min | MAKES 16 – 20 bars



INGREDIENTS

No Bake Banana Bars:

3 cups (330 grams) **coconut flour**
 1 cup (90 grams) **rolled traditional oats**
 1/4 cup (40 grams) **brown sugar** (optional)
 1 teaspoon **cinnamon, ground**
 pinch of **salt**
 1/2 cup (125 ml) **tahini**
 400 ml can **coconut milk**
 1 cup (250 ml) **pure maple syrup**
 3 **bananas, mashed**
 1 tablespoon **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)

Cream Cheese Frosting (optional):

250 grams cream cheese
 1/4 cup (60 ml) coconut oil, melted
 1/4 cup (60 ml) pure maple syrup
 1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste (or extract)

METHOD:

Line a square 20 cm x 20 cm tin with baking paper. **Place** coconut flour, oats, brown sugar, cinnamon and salt into a bowl and whisk to combine. Set aside. **Place** the tahini, coconut milk and maple syrup into a saucepan over low-medium heat. **Cook** for 2-3 minute (stirring continuously) until warmed and melted together.

Add the mashed banana and vanilla to the saucepan, stir to combine. **Pour** the wet ingredients into the dry and stir to combine. **Press** mixture into prepared pan and smooth. **Chill** in the fridge for 10 minutes whilst you prepare the frosting.

To make the cream cheese frosting:

Place the cream cheese, coconut oil, maple syrup and vanilla into the bowl of a food processor, blitz for 1-2 minutes (scraping down the sides of the bowl, as necessary) or until the frosting is luscious and creamy. **Spread** frosting over the chilled bars. **Return** bars to the fridge for 4-5 hours or until firm. **Cut** into 12-16 bars.

Recipe and image from mylovelylittlelunchbox.com.

Feedback
is always welcome



How can we make our newsletter, or indeed the preschool itself, even better? What information would you like us to include?

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