

VACATION CARE
RECAP

STRAWBERRY AND
MANDARINE MUFFINS –
BREAKFAST OR
MORNING TEA SORTED

BALANCING SCREEN
TIME WITH GREEN
TIME
BY DR KRISTY
GOODWIN



1 On this month

Metella Road Out Of School Hours Child Care Inc.

Management Committee Meeting..... 3rd

AROUND THE COUNTRY

International Star Wars Day-----4th
Play Outside Day -----6th
Int'l Composting Awareness Week ---7th – 13th
World Migratory Bird Day -----7th
Mother's Day -----14th
National Families Week -----15th – 21st
National Sorry Day-----26th
Ramadan -----25th



Welcome back to term 2!!

Hello fabulous OOSH families, welcome to term 2! As the air gets colder our team are busy ensuring all our children are well and truly settled into 2017, and preparing for an exciting term ahead!

Our newsletter is jam packed with information about Vacation Care, our program, tips and tricks so please read carefully and as always, please chat to myself or any of Educators if you have any questions, concerns or comments! The year is flying by and we are observing so many different interests develop. Our Educators are looking forward to extending on current interests and providing some fantastic play opportunities. Term 2 will also bring project "Film Making" exclusive to our children who are in year 5 and 6. This project will run on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon and presented by one of our talented parents.

We know that many of our parents have different interests and skills which could be of assistance to our OOSH program. If you have a skill or interest and would like to come and run an activity or teach our children something in 2017 please let us know. We also understand that some parents have other commitments so we encourage you to send us your idea for our talented staff to implement into our program.

Please don't forget we are now on Facebook.....Keep updated and join our 'Metella Road OOSH' closed group.

David Martin
Centre Manager



NATIONAL FAMILIES WEEK – 15TH - 21ST

National Families Week is a time to celebrate with your family, make contact with your extended family and friends, and share in the enjoyment of family activities within the wider community. Go to nfw.org.au for more information.

NATIONAL SORRY DAY - 26TH

National Sorry Day is an Australia-wide observance held on May 26 each year. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.

Find out more at reconciliation.org.au

INT'L COMPOSTING AWARENESS WEEK – 7TH - 13TH

We can compost to help scrap carbon pollution by avoiding landfilling organic materials and helping to build healthier soils.

Go to compostweek.com.au



STRAWBERRY MANDARINE MUFFINS

PREP 10 min | COOK 15 min | SERVES 12

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- Zest of 3 large mandarins
- 1-cup buttermilk
- 3/4-cup vegetable oil (any lightly flavoured oil is fine)
- 2 eggs
- 1-teaspoon vanilla essence
- 2 cups wholemeal plain flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 punnet strawberries, hulled and diced PLUS 4 strawberries hulled and quartered for decoration

METHOD - Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Place the brown sugar and mandarin zest into a large bowl and mix to combine. Add the buttermilk, vegetable oil, eggs and vanilla and whisk to combine. Add the flour and baking powder and lightly mix until just combined. Gently fold through the diced strawberries. Use a 1/4 measuring cup to ladle the muffin batter into a 12-hole muffin tin lined with papers. Gently press a piece of strawberries into each muffin. Bake for 15 minutes or until golden and cooked. www.mylovelylittlelunchbox.com

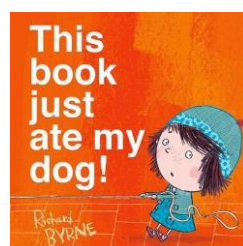
SAFETY – Remember to always supervise kids in the kitchen.



Source: Recipe and images belong to mylovelylittlelunchbox

Book reviews

A few books to add some laughter to your day



This book just ate my dog!

Richard Byrne

A great book for sharing

In this wonderfully inventive book, Bella is taking her dog for a stroll across the page but halfway across, he disappears! Unable to quite believe what's just happened Bella watches, transfixed, with changing emotions.

This book just ate my dog! is inventive, ingenious, and just pure kid-friendly fun! Enjoy with the whole family.

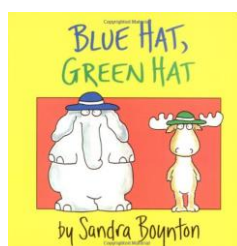
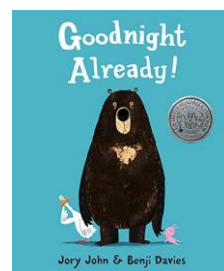
Goodnight already

Benji Davies

Giggles at bedtime

Meet Bear. He's exhausted. All he wants is to go to sleep. Meet Duck, Bear's persistent next-door neighbour. All he wants is to hang out . . . with Bear.

Enjoy the playful comic tension through the beautiful nocturnally toned images



Blue hat, Green Hat

Sandra Boynton

Three earnest animals and one misguided turkey learn colors and clothes in this Sandra Boynton classic. For more 'baby friendly' stories check out Sandra's large range of funny board books.

Balancing kids' screen-time with green-time

Many children today spend their idle time staring at screens and not at the sky. Kids today are tethered to technology and as a result, many children are experiencing a 'nature deficit'.

When kids are spending too much time with technology they're not spending enough time in nature and this has implications on their development and well-being.

Why is nature important for young children?

Time outdoors in nature is vital for optimal brain function. If children are constantly using devices their brains simply don't get 'down time'. They don't get to switch off. And their brains (and ours too) need time to switch off.

Children need white space for their minds to wander. Children need white space to help them to process the information they're consuming. Children need white space so they have the opportunity for creative expression.

But today's kids aren't getting enough white space. They don't get the opportunity for their minds to wander because they're often constantly processing information and input from screens and other gadgets.

Constant processing of information from digital devices is taking a toll on many of our children. We need to teach children how to unplug from technology and plug back into real life. And nature is the ideal way for them to plug back into 'real' life.

Green-time

Benefits of 'green-time'

1. Improved attention— the attention restoration theory* suggests that time in nature restores children's ability to direct attention and improve information processing. There's evidence that shows that children have improved attention after spending time in nature.
2. Depth of vision— there are anecdotal reports of increasing rates of myopia (nearsightedness) in young children, because of excessive time with digital devices. Nature provides the ideal conditions for children's vision to develop, especially their depth of vision.
3. Mind wandering time— Professor Daniel Levitin explains that the brain has an attentional mode called the "mind wandering mode" This mode allows thoughts to move seamlessly from one to another, and then to unrelated thoughts, without feeling like you need to direct or control the thoughts. This is brain state acts like a neural reset button, as it allows us to problem solve, come up with creative ideas and approach other tasks with a fresh perspective.

Time in nature switches off the prefrontal cortex of the brain where executive function takes place (this is where children's higher order thinking takes place like impulse control and working memory). When the prefrontal cortex switches off it allows our subconscious to work and creativity and new ideas to flourish.

Have you ever noticed that you often have your best ideas in the shower or when listening to music or exercising? This is because your brain has had some white space for mind-wandering.

4. Dopamine release- Time in nature also helps the brain to release dopamine, the feel-good neurotransmitter. So encourage your child to go for a walk, run or even jump on the trampoline. It's not only fun, but it's also a great incubation period for thinking and creativity.
5. Lowers stress- Being in nature, or even looking at images of nature has been shown to reduce stress levels (which can in turn reduce cortisol levels). The theories vary as to why and how nature reduces stress, but possible suggestions include that time in nature is often associated with physical activity and sometimes social interaction which can both reduce the stress hormone, cortisol.
6. Increased creativity and cognitive function— Research shows that children are more creative after they've been exposed to nature. Furthermore, this recent research has also highlighted that daily exposure to nature increases children's ability to focus and concentrate and, therefore, enhances their cognitive abilities (including problem-solving and other higher-order thinking skills).
7. Increased physical activity— Time in nature is usually associated with physical activity so there are obvious physical benefits too, such as lowering the likelihood of obesity (and reducing stress levels, as outlined above).
8. Better sleep habits— Time in nature, especially in the morning, exposes children to natural light. This exposure helps to regulate their circadian rhythms (so their body produces sufficient melatonin to fall asleep quickly). Time in nature helps to set children's body clocks required for sleep, as their bodies learn to produce the right amounts of melatonin around sleep time so that they can fall asleep quickly and easily at night (and we all want that). Time in nature provides sleep-inducing amounts of natural light.

What parents can do to ensure their child gets 'green-time'

1. Balance children's screen-time with their 'green time'— Children often want a daily dose of digital, but they also need a daily dose of nature too. Establish and enforce limits on your child's screen-time. Some children and some adults too can sacrifice some screen-time to ensure that they get enough green-time too.
2. Encourage nature-based and unstructured play— children need at least 30 minutes of time in nature every day.
3. Model healthy screen habits— children are much more inclined to have healthy screen-time habits if we do, as parents. So model healthy habits and show your child that you like spending time in nature.
4. Schedule 'green-time'— each week as a family activity (my boys have recently started going on a Gruffalo hunt in the local beach track and they love it).

Article by Dr. Kristy Goodwin

WHAT AN EXCITING VACATION CARE!!!

Our April vacation care was jam packed with exciting events and activities!! We begin with our 'Rainbow of colour' day that put our Educators face painting skills to good use. It was fantastic to see all the children wear their bright colours and produce some fantastic colourful art pieces. I have to say our 'What's on stage' themed day was one of the highlights. All the kids were excited to dress up and pose in the photo booth. Our day was filled with a variety of old fashioned party games and challenges!!

Ever wondered what we could do with our old water bottles, pots, pans, a bucket...anything that can produce a sound??? Our visit from trash percussion explored core responses, sound, rhythm and beat using trash. It got the children thinking, exploring and making plenty of noise.

Being a short vacation period due to the Easter long weekend it was nice to spend time just chilling out, having a chat, creating with a wide range of craft media, cooking yummy food and consuming a little chocolate along the way.

Our 'Carnival Fever' Fun Sports Incursion is always a hit!! Matt and his team always produce a fun filled session for our children and as always it was a blast!!

Our cooking day in the April holidays came with a bit of a twist!! Staff had an extra challenge on top this time around. We set out to cook allergy free foods and didn't they come up with the goods....a delicious mixed berry crumble, avocado brownies and egg/gluten free cookies!

The children love bike and scooter day.... (me... not so much!!). As we sat on the edge of our seats watching the children take turns to ride around staff took the opportunity to talk to the children about road safety, bike and scooter safety and the importance of wearing a helmet. Unfortunately our Go Kart Wild Incursion was cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control. Apologies to all our families who were looking forward to the karts ☹ We look forward to having the opportunity to add it to our program at a later date.

It was a great end to our April holidays with our OOSH pajama, jumping castles and Eagle boy pizza lunch.

We have many of our local services who take their children out during pupil free days and during April we climbed on board with this idea. Our children's response "Best day ever!!" Many of the children who attended had never been to Ultimate Play Centre prior. We are always happy when we can provide all these new and exciting opportunities.

Now to start planning the next!!

BEDTIME STORIES

Materials: Favourite picture books

Children love to read the same stories night after night, why not challenge them to use their memory to predict and recall parts of the tale. **How to:** Read the first page, ask your child to predict what will happen next. 'Why?'. Ask them questions about individual characters, what would they like to see happen, you can even ask Simple questions about colours, activities and feelings.



Your Berry Special to Me

Need an idea for Mother's Day?? This year instead of buying that special woman in your life cut flowers why not buy her a strawberry plant! Strawberries are easy to grow and taste delicious!

Getting started - Buy virus-free stock from nurseries, as strawberries are prone to disease. Prior to planting - dig over the soil to remove weeds and add in plenty of compost, animal manure or blood and bone. Position your plants about 30cm apart, in full sun. Strawberries do best in well-drained soil, so plant them into soil that has been mounded up slightly.

Care and maintenance - Water well, especially when the young plants are establishing, and during dry summers. Surround each plant with a layer of straw mulch so the fruit does not spoil by touching the soil.

Harvesting - For the fullest flavour from homegrown fruit, pick the berries at the right degree of ripeness. They are at their best when each fruit is three-quarters red.



What's on this Month?

Week	Theme	Special Events
Week 1 Wednesday 26 th -28 th April	Blast from the past... Let your mind wonder! 	Pay it forward day 28 th April 
Week 2 1 st - 5 th May	Project Construction Crew!! 	May 4 th International Star Wars 
Week 3 8 th - 12 th May	Mother's Day 	May 6 th Play outside Day 
Week 4 15 th -19 th May	Super sports challenge 	Jump rope for heart 
Week 5 22 nd - 26 th May	When stories come to life!! 	National Sorry Day 

Kid's Corner

We asked...."What do you like best about OOSH?"

"I LIKE COMPUTER ROOM AND LIBRARY. I LIKE WE GET TO CHOOSE WHERE WE GO EACH DAY" (CHARLOTTE)

"I like playing on the iPad" (Kiah)
"It has good food" (Shreya)

"I get to just hang out with my friends" (Keira)

"I like building cars" (Krish)

"Building with magnetics" (Arsh)

"I love Hama beads" (Laya)
"I like that we just get to PLAY" (Lucinda)

"I like making different machines and set up areas with my friends" (Hitansh)

"the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts" (Article 31 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

STUDIO
PANS Digital

Exciting things are happening during term 2!!

During term 2 Studio Pans Digital will be presenting

'Script Writing and Film Making'

Children from years 5 and 6 will:

Learn how to write a script

How to shoot a film

Edit your film

Show a final production



Feedback
is always welcome



How can we make our newsletter even better?

What information would you like us to include?

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