

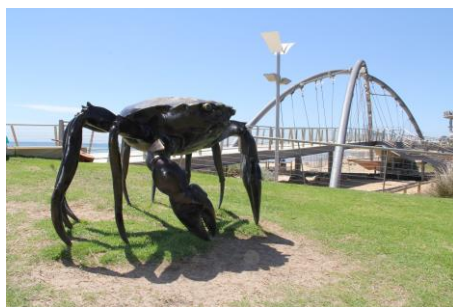
# Playgroup Newsletter

## February 2021



Lifestyle Capital of Victoria

Welcome to the monthly Playgroup Newsletter. Keep up to date with playgroup news, information about what is happening locally as well as play ideas and recipes.

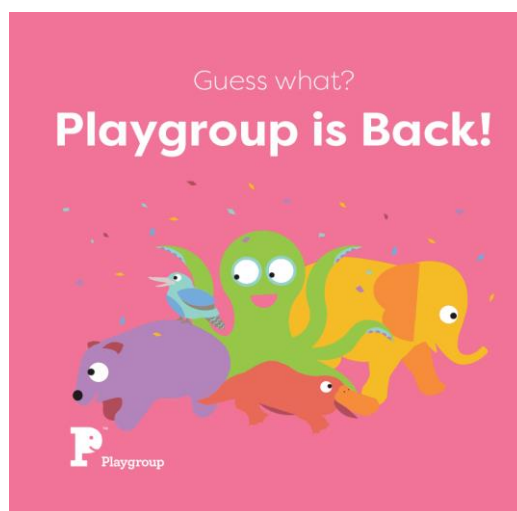


Welcome to the Playgroup Newsletter!

Many of you will have children starting playgroup, child care, kinder and school. It is a busy and exciting time for all in term 1.

This month we have articles on children learning independence skills, tips on how to organise our family to get into a routine, and we talk about returning to playgroup. And of course we have some yummy recipes that your children should enjoy.

For all playgroup inquiries you can contact the Playgroup Development Officer on 9293 7156 or email [playgroups@frankston.vic.gov.au](mailto:playgroups@frankston.vic.gov.au)



*Please contact your playgroup leader to discuss commencement dates and bookings.*

[https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/Our\\_Community/Family\\_Services/Playgroups](https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/Our_Community/Family_Services/Playgroups)

A new year, a new routine. Routines help your child when starting a new activity such as playgroup, child care or kinder.



Daily routines **help families organise themselves** so they can get daily tasks done. This gives families more time to spend doing fun things together.

Daily routines are good for children. An organised and predictable home environment **helps children feel safe, secure and looked after**. Routines also let children know what you expect of them, so they can sometimes help children cooperate. For example, your routine might cover when screen time starts and finishes, or when it's sleep time.

And when things are busy, routines can help you as a parent. For example, they can help you remember important things and **feel more in control**, so you might feel less stressed.

### Steps to a daily routine for your family

Every family has its own ways of doing things. So it's worth taking some time to think about what your family does regularly. This will help you set up a routine that reflects how your family works. Here's how.

- Write down what a typical day looks like for your family.
- What is important in your day?
- Write down a simple routine that lists regular activities and things you want to remember.
- Display your routine where you and your family can see it.

Here's an example of what a **morning routine** might look like:

- 7.30 am – Wake up and get dressed.
- 7.45 am – Breakfast.
- 8.00 am – Brush teeth and puts on her shoes.
- 8.15 am – Gets ready to go.
- 8.25 am – Leave for kindergarten, child care.



### Making daily routines work for children of different ages

Simple pictures can help **your younger child** understand what has to happen and in what order. You can even involve him in creating the routine – for example, 'Will you brush your teeth before the bath or after?'

You can change your routine as **your child gets older** to give her more responsibility for chores or to fit in with changes in your family life.



*You might want to think about a weekly routine that maps out where everyone is on certain days. This sort of routine can be useful in busy families with children who have lots of activities. It can make it easier to plan when you'll do things like grocery shopping or spending time together as a family.*

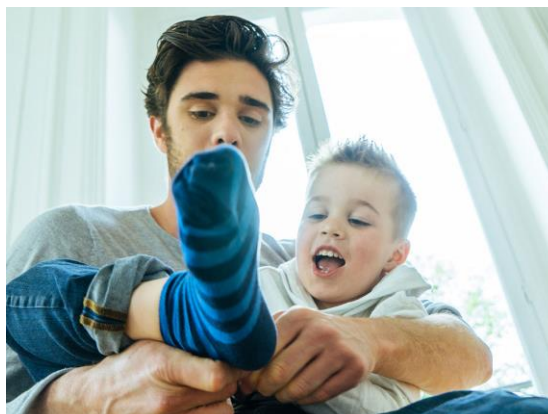
# Independence skills.

## Why your child needs to learn how to get dressed

Learning to get dressed builds your child's confidence and independence and gives your child a sense of achievement. And once your child can dress himself, helping him get dressed is one less thing for you to do.

Also, getting dressed **helps your child develop many other skills**, including:

- **Fine motor skills** as she learns to fasten buttons and zips.
- **Gross motor skills** as she stands on one leg to pull on a pair of pants.
- **Cognitive skills** as she remembers which bits of clothing go on first, and builds the patience and attention to finish the task.
- **Language** as she names types of clothes, colours and sizes.
- **Awareness** of time and space as she learns to dress for certain occasions and weather conditions.



## Getting started with getting dressed

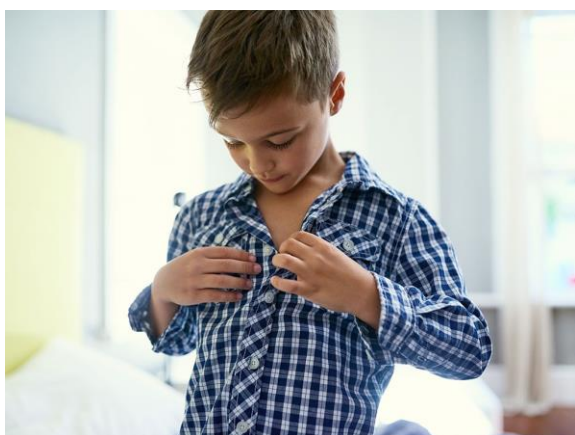
Often very young children start to be aware of clothing by pulling off easy-to-remove things like socks, shoes or hats. Sometimes they try to put them on again. You can build on this early awareness by **naming the clothes** your child has taken off and the body parts they go on.

You can start to include your older baby or toddler in getting dressed by **giving him a limited choice of clothes**, and naming them as you put them on him. When you decide it's time for your child to really start learning this skill, it can help to **have some easy clothes on hand**. These might include:

- Loose, elastic-waisted pants.
- Clothes with velcro or large buttons and button holes.
- Jumpers, t-shirts and underwear with pictures on the front to help your child work out front from back.
- Clothes that are easy and comfortable for your child to move in.

## TIPS!

- Face shorts the right way.
- Hold onto the front of the waistband.
- Push one leg at a time through the leg holes while also holding pants.
- Pull the shorts up.



# Surprise Boxes for Babies

## What's in the Box?

Babies love to explore and learn through play. This activity provides an opportunity for babies to practice their skills as they reach for the end of the material and pull it out and then post it back into the box for another turn.

Playing with surprise boxes introduces your baby to concepts such as in and out and push and pull. The item may be out of sight, but the baby knows that it's there and loves to find it again! Surprise boxes are a great way for babies to practice their hand and eye coordination and enjoy sensory play.



Hand and eye coordination is an important step in your baby's development. When our eyes track our hand movements, they send important messages to the brain about what the hands are doing.

## What you need...

- + A container/box that has a small opening at the top such as a tissue box or a baby wipes container
- + Several pieces of material or one long scarf
- + A range of objects that your baby/toddler could discover in the box such as soft toys
- + Glue



Learn how to make a surprise box for your baby on the next page! →



 Playgroup  
Victoria  
[www.playgroup.org.au](http://www.playgroup.org.au)

# Surprise Boxes for Babies

## What to do:

1. If using small pieces of material or hankies or scarves, tie these together in a row so that you have one long piece (like a snake)
2. Place some glue at the bottom of your box/container and attach one end of the material to the bottom
3. Let the glue dry
4. Place all the material into box, leaving the very end out for your baby to grasp and begin pulling out

Alternatively, you can simply place your objects in the box for your baby to discover and play with

This activity is appropriate for babies from four months of age and upwards.



## Inspiration

Fill a few different boxes with different sensory items for your baby to find and play with. Include some soft items, some squishy items, some shiny items, some items that jingle and items of different colours.



 Playgroup  
Victoria  
[www.playgroup.org.au](http://www.playgroup.org.au)



Returning to playgroup things may look a bit different... Here is what you can anticipate.

First of all contact the playgroup that you wish to attend prior to arrival. Each venue will hold a different number of people.

New procedures on arrival - this includes using the QR code or manual sign in. Sanitize your hands and supervise sanitizing/washing your child's hands.



You will enter through one door and exit through another.

Fewer toys and equipment will be available. We want to make it as easy for everyone and fewer toys means less cleaning.

More activities will be held outside. Playgroups will take advantage of the fresh air when the weather allows.

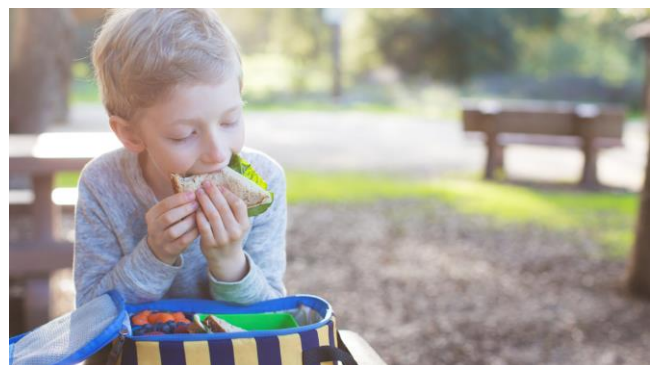
Bring your own snack, drink, sunscreen, hat, sanitizer and art smock.

Talk with your playgroup facilitator about how your playgroup will run. Everyone contributes at playgroup; ask what role you can play.

Jobs to be done at playgroup include sweeping the floor, wiping tables and packing up toys. Everyone has a turn.



Toys will need to be cleaned after use.



Bring your own snack.

Playgroup is for everyone! Enjoy meeting other families in your community. Your children will have fun socializing with other children and learning new skills.

## Activity and play ideas:

### Outdoors-

- Treasure hunt
- Obstacle course
- Adventure walk around the playground
- Sand pit
- Outdoor play equipment
- Bubble blowing
- I spy



- Chalk drawing on concrete paths
- Buckets and large paint brushes to paint with water
- Washing up the tea sets
- Washing plastic dollies
- Singing stories



### Indoors-

- Duplo blocks
- Drawing with textas, crayons
- Painting (child uses own smock)
- Home corner
- Indoor obstacle course
- Hopscotch using masking tape
- Car track using masking tape and plastic cars



- Stories and songs



- Craft at the tables- fewer people at each table



# HIPPY program.

The HIPPY program has some vacancies available for families that have a child who turns 3 by April 30.

Contact Neika on 0491 690 298



**Frankston North**

Do you live in Frankston North, Karingal, Frankston Central or Seaford?

Are you the parent or carer of a child who will turn 3 by 30th April?

HIPPY is a fully funded, free home-based program to help you support your child's learning and development.  
\*Some priority of access criteria apply.



## Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters

[www.hippyaustralia.bsl.org.au](http://www.hippyaustralia.bsl.org.au)

**Contact us for more info and to enrol:**

Louise - 0429861118  
Neika - 0491690298

LMackinnon@bsl.org.au  
Neika.Huss@bsl.org.au



**Brotherhood of St Laurence**  
Working for an Australia free of poverty  
ABN 24 603 467 024

The Brotherhood of St Laurence holds the licence to operate HIPPY in Australia.

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

## Lunch box and snack ideas

### Grape & Celery Bugs

Ingredients can include: celery stalks, peanut butter or cream cheese, sliced apple, sliced Orange, sliced kiwi fruit, sliced cucumber, sliced tomato, almond spread, grapes, blueberries, cashews, sultanas.

#### Method

1. Thinly slice apple, orange and cucumber (with skin on).
2. Cut different lengths of celery
3. Fill the celery lengths with either cream cheese, almond spread or peanut butter.
4. Stand up either a slice of apple, orange, cucumber or tomato in the filling to make the shell.
5. Pop in a green grape or 2 blueberries, to form the snail's head.
6. Dot with 2 spots of cream cheese and stick on 2 tiny sultanas to form the eyes.
7. Slice the leftover celery into matchsticks to form antennae.



### Avocado & Cucumber Bugs

#### Method

1. Hard boil the egg for 5 minutes.
2. Halve the avocados and carefully scoop out the flesh.
3. Lightly toast the chia seeds in a dry pan, until golden.
4. Toast the bread (or bagels, then halve) and spread with cream cheese.
5. Assemble your bugs!

#### Ingredients:

- Avocados
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Boiled eggs
- Chia seeds
- Lebanese cucumber
- Sultanas
- Blueberries
- Olives
- Rolls, bagels or muffins.



### Cauliflower Crust Pizza

#### Ingredients

Pizza Base; 650g cauliflower trimmed and chopped.  
1 egg lightly whisked. 50g grated parmesan.  
Toppings; passata sauce, mozzarella, sliced tomato, mushrooms, basil or any other toppings you desire.

#### Method

1. Process the cauliflower in a food processor until finely chopped. Place into a microwave-safe bowl, cover and microwave on high for 8-10 minutes or until very tender. Drain through a fine sieve, pressing down well with a spoon to remove excess liquid. Combine the cauliflower, egg and parmesan in a bowl.
2. Preheat oven to 230°C. Line a 30cm round pizza tray with baking paper. Press cauliflower mixture into the tray. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden.
3. Spread tomato paste over the base and sprinkle with mozzarella, sliced tomatoes and mushrooms. Bake until cheese is fully melted and tomatoes are blistered, then remove from oven and add basil leaves.

