



FEBRUARY  
2020

# ON *this* MONTH

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## Director Update

The new term is now well underway, and we would like to welcome all the new families to the centres who have started over the past few weeks. For those families that moved from the ITC to the ELC we hope that your child enjoyed the transition over the holidays and are settling in well to their new space and new teachers. In this edition of the newsletter there is an article on helping children settle into a new centre so please take the time to read this especially if your child is just starting their journey with us.

We are also excited to be nearly finished with our upgrades to the back yard at the ITC, this space will partially open this week with the full space open by the end of the month. This space has not had any major works to it since we moved here almost 6 years ago so it is exciting to see how the children will engage with this space and the new features in it. When you are next in the centre please take the time to go and have a look and we are looking forward to being able to access the cottage backyard from the main backyard.

As always we welcome your feedback or are happy to discuss with you any issues or concerns you have regarding the service, so please do not hesitate to contact either Melanie for the ELC or myself.

Happy Reading,  
Carman Wilson - Director





**SUSTAINABLE LIVING FESTIVAL (SLF) – FEBRUARY 1-29**

Everything we care about is now under threat. To enable a sustainable world, we must urgently address the climate emergency. In 2020, SLF explores the impacts of the climate emergency and

will pitch new social, economic and political responses essential for creating the transition to a safe climate.

**Find out more at [www.slf2020.org](http://www.slf2020.org)**

**WORLD WETLANDS DAY – FEBRUARY 2**

Wetlands are rich with biodiversity and are a habitat for a dense variety of plant and animal species. Latest estimates show a global decline of biodiversity, while wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests. This year’s theme is ‘Wetlands and Biodiversity’ it’s a unique opportunity to highlight wetland biodiversity its status, why it matters and promote actions to reverse its loss. **Find out more at [worldwetlandsday.org](http://worldwetlandsday.org)**

**SPICED SWEET POTATO & CHICKPEA FRITTERS WITH HARD BOILED EGGS**



**PREP 15 min | COOK 15 MINS | SERVES 6**

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 x 400 g can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed thoroughly
- 500 g sweet potato, peeled and grated
- ¼ cup chives, finely chopped
- 100 g feta, crumbled
- 1 heaped tbsps tikka masala spice blend
- 2 eggs

- 1/3 cup (50 g) plain flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- Sea salt and pepper, to season
- Olive oil, to fry in

**Soft boiled egg and salad:**

- 6 eggs
- Salad greens

**METHOD:**

**To make fritters**

1. Place the chickpeas into a large bowl and mash slightly using a fork. Add the grated sweet potato, chives, feta, tikka masala spice blend, 2 eggs, flour, baking powder, salt and pepper and mix thoroughly to combine.
2. Heat a fry pan to medium heat. Cover the base of the fry pan with a thin layer of olive oil. Gently place tbs of the mix into pan and cook for 4 mins or until golden and the fritter is holding together.
3. Gently flip each fritter and cook for another 3 mins or until golden and cooked through.
4. Place the fritters on a plate lined with kitchen paper and continue frying until no batter remains. Set aside.

**To make soft boiled eggs**

1. Prepare an ice bath. Set aside.
2. Bring a large pot of water to the boil then reduce heat to simmer. Carefully add 6 eggs to the pot of simmering water and cook for 7 minutes.
3. Carefully remove eggs and place into ice bath until cool enough to handle. Peel eggs and slice in half.

*Recipe and Image from 'australianeggs.org.au'.*

**Book reviews**

*Beautiful books full of heart and fun.*



**TOMORROW I'LL BE KIND**

**JESSICA HISCHE**

*In a follow-up to Tomorrow I'll Be Brave, award-winning illustrator Jessica Hische brings to life another series of inspirational words and scenes with her lovely hand-lettering and adorable illustrations. This uplifting and positive book encourages kids to promise that tomorrow, they will be grateful, helpful, and kind. It's a reminder to all readers, young and old, that the smallest kind gesture can make the biggest difference in the world—we just have to remember to be kind to one another.*

**ONE THOUSAND THINGS**

**ANNA KOVECSES**

*A visual encyclopedia of things to spot and say with a difference. Find out what one thousand really looks like. Search-and-find Little Mouse on every page and discover new words with every turn of the page. Compulsive and instructional fun, minimal and modern.*

**GRANDMA'S GARDENS**

**HILLARY CLINTON AND CHELSEA CLINTON**

*From mother-daughter team Hillary Clinton and Chelsea Clinton comes a celebration of family, tradition and discovery, and an ode to mothers, grandmothers and the children they love. Grandma Dorothy shared her love of gardens with her daughter, Hillary, and her granddaughter, Chelsea. She taught them that gardens are magical places to learn, exciting spaces for discovery, quiet spots to spend time with family and beautiful areas to share stories and celebrate special occasions. But most of all, she taught them that in her gardens, her love grew and blossomed.*



# FOCUS: How can you help your child settle into an Early Learning Centre?

**Starting or resuming care at an Early Learning Centre can be an emotional experience for both you and your child. Children especially can often experience some difficulty settling into a new environment, particularly if they find it hard to separate from family or familiar caregivers. This is part of an information sheet from [startingblocks.com.au](http://startingblocks.com.au) that offers some suggestions that can help you support your child during the settling in period. You will of course need to be patient because they may cry, be grumpy or throw tantrums for an initial time as they get used to the new environment.**

## Prepare them for separation

- Talk about child care with your child and let them know that you are happy and confident that they will have a good time and will be cared for.
- If possible, start with shorter or fewer days then gradually increase their time spent at the centre. Once they develop a settling routine, they should be more comfortable.
- Don't let your emotions or anxieties affect your child. Try and hold back your tears when you drop them off.
- Say 'goodbye' confidently and reassure them when you leave that you (or someone else) will be back later to collect them.
- Give your child sufficient time to say their goodbyes in the morning. Reach the centre early so you have time to prepare your child for a good day.

## Comfort them

- Ask your child if they would like to take their favourite toy or book to the centre.
- Find a preferred staff member that your child can be left with when you drop them off for the day.
- Spend some time settling your child into a favourite activity before you leave.
- Inform the service about what comforts your child and discuss how you manage activities or times of the day they find unsettling. For example, does your child have a toy or blanket that helps them to settle?
- Show empathy – in the morning when you see your child upset on your way to the centre, talk to them. It is advised not to share your own worries but tell your child that they'll be okay. Ask them to share their feelings with you. Listen to them and tell them what they are feeling is normal and it's a big step for them as they are growing up.
- Where possible, organise play dates outside of the centre. This will help your child be more comfortable with the other children at the centre.

## Encourage Them

- Every time you go to pick up your child from their centre, tell them they did great that day.

- Encourage your little one to pack their bag with essentials they will need for the day. If they are too young to pack their bag themselves, ask them if they would like to take a toy/book with them. Pack a comforter – a toy or blanket that is something familiar from home for them.
- Take the time to have a nice conversation at the breakfast table. Tell them the time at what you'll be picking them up, and perhaps offer them a reward if they behave well at their care centre.
- Talking with children and encouraging them to voice any concerns or anxieties they may have is a helpful strategy.
- For your peace of mind, it can be helpful to call the service later to see how your child settled. Children who become very upset when they are left often settle very quickly and happily once the actual separation is over. The service should enable you to contact them throughout the day.
- You may also want to speak to the educators at the centre about how you can better support your child's transition.

## How you can reconnect with your child after a day at a centre:

It's not only a new experience for your child, it's also important for you to know how they feel about going to their early childhood education and care service. This will help you connect and build a strong relationship with your child. After you pick them up from their centre, give them your undivided attention. They might be grumpy because they haven't seen you the whole day, so shower them with all the love you can. Create a meaningful conversation with them after their day at a service.

## Here are some suggestions:

- Ask them about their favourite activities of the day.
- Talk to them about the friends they have made. Ask them to name a few children who you know your child is friendly with or spends time playing with.
- If the centre provided food, ask your child how it was and who did they have it with.
- Talk to them about their favourite educator at the centre and what they like about them.
- Ask them if their educator read them any story, which one was it, and what they liked about it.
- Mention some items that your child would see or play with at the service, as this helps them recall situations. For instance, ask them what they and their friends made with the blocks.
- Ask them if they learned anything new.
- Use images or notes from the educators at the centre for conversation. For example, "Look at this lovely photo of you at the sandpit. What did sand feel like in your toes?"

Starting Blocks (2020, January 15). How can you help your child settle into care? Retrieved from [startingblocks.gov.au/other-resources/factsheets/how-can-you-help-your-child-settle-into-child-](http://startingblocks.gov.au/other-resources/factsheets/how-can-you-help-your-child-settle-into-child-)

## Noisy letter Jump

**Supplies: Chalk.** Choose a safe concrete space and write large letters your child is familiar with there. You could choose letters from their name, small groups of letters, or sight words they are learning. When you call out a letter have your child say its name/sound in a funny way: yell it, say it slowly, say it quickly and then ask them to find the letter and jump on it. Repeat the activity until all the letters have been jumped on.

Image and activity from: [theimaginationtree.com/noisy-letter-jump-phonics-game/](http://theimaginationtree.com/noisy-letter-jump-phonics-game/)



# HEALTH & SAFETY: Internet Safety for Pre-schoolers

Pre-schoolers like going online to look at videos or to play games. They can do this using computers, mobile phones, tablets, TVs and other devices. There are safety risks for pre-schoolers online, although pre-schoolers won't usually be exposed to as many risks as older children because they're less likely to be using the internet independently. When you take some practical internet safety precautions, you protect your child from risky or inappropriate content and activities. And your child gets to make the most of her online experience, with its potential for learning, exploring, being creative and connecting with family and friends.

## Internet safety risks for pre-schoolers

There are three main kinds of internet safety risks for children:

**Content risks:** these risks include content that children might find upsetting, disgusting or otherwise uncomfortable. Examples are pornography, violence, images of cruelty to animals or programs meant for older children.

**Contact risks:** these risks include children coming into contact with people they don't know. For example, a child might use a communication app and talk to a stranger.

**Conduct risks:** these risks include children acting in ways that might hurt others. For example, a child might destroy a game his friend or sibling has created. Accidentally making in-app purchases is another conduct risk.

## Protecting your child from internet safety risks: tips

You play a key role in reducing the risks that your child is exposed to on the internet. There are many practical things you can do to help your pre-schooler stay safe while she's online.

Here are some ideas:

- Use digital media and the internet with your child or make sure you're close by and aware of what your child is doing online. This way you can act quickly if your child is concerned or upset by something he's seen.
- Create a family media plan. Your plan could cover things like screen-free areas in your house, internet safety rules like not giving out personal information, and the programs, games and apps that are OK for your child to use.
- Use child-friendly search engines like Kiddle, or content providers like ABC Kids, CBeebies, YouTube Kids or KIDOZ.



- Check that games, websites and TV programs are appropriate for your child. For example, you can look at reviews on Common Sense Media.
- Make sure older siblings follow your internet safety rules when they go online with your pre-schooler. Rules might include watching only age-appropriate programs.
- Set up a folder with bookmarks for your child's favourite apps or websites so that she can easily find them. You can set up folders and bookmarks on all the devices that your child uses.
- Check privacy settings, use parental controls, block in-app purchases, and disable one-click payment options and location services on your devices.

## Teaching safe and responsible online behaviour

You can help your child learn how to use digital media and the internet safely, responsibly and enjoyably. If you teach your child how to manage internet safety risks and worrying experiences for himself, he'll build digital resilience. This is the ability to deal with and respond positively to any risks he encounters online. You can do this by: going online with your child, being a good role model, teaching your child about good and bad content and teaching your child about in-app purchases.

**February 11 is 'Safer Internet Day'.** Use this day to start a conversation with your child about internet safety. Got to [esafety.gov.au/safer-internet-day/families](https://esafety.gov.au/safer-internet-day/families) to find a wide range of resources to assist your family's internet use and register your support for 'Safer Internet Day' while you're there.

Raisingchildren.net.au (2020, January 11). Internet Safety: Children 3-5 Retrieved from <https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning/screen-time-healthy-screen-use/internet-safety-3-5-years>



## AIR QUALITY

Prior to our recent bushfires air quality was never really a concern for most Australians. We are lucky, generally we look outside and the skies are clear and the air is fresh and breathable. Bushfire air pollution has changed that so much so that some days it is actually dangerous to be outside. So how do you check air quality and how can you prevent adding to the problem.

To check air quality in your area go to:  
<https://www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/air-quality/current-air-quality>

You may need to change your planned activities when considering your families risk factors and the current reading.

## Prevent air pollution:

**In your home:** Do not smoke, ensure your oven ventilates properly, use non-toxic cleaning product, Use a dehumidifier or/and air conditioner to reduce dampness, reconsider your use of any aerosol sprays. Dust regularly, keep lids on scented candles.

**Outside:** Drive less, ensures engines run properly, reduce fireplace use, don't burn rubbish, use environmentally safe paints.

<https://www.consumerreports.org/health-wellness/avoid-the-negative-health-effects-of-air-pollution/>





## STEM

**STEM** is an acronym for science, technology, engineering, and math. Skills developed by students through STEM provide them with the foundation to succeed at school and beyond. young children learn through active exploration—and the drive to observe, interact, discover, and explore is inherent in their development.

During the earliest years, infants and toddlers develop 700 neural connections every second,” Buchter said. “These biologically driven neurological processes and natural curiosity of how the world works make early childhood an optimal time to introduce children to scientific inquiry.”

### What does STEM look like in Early Learning Settings?

- Cooking activities
- Nature walks
- Challenging building activities
- Grocery store exploring
- Water play

### National Quality Framework | Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice

**1.1 The educational program enhances each child's learning and development.**

**1.2 Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.**

University of Nevada. (2020, January 15). The Issues: Why STEM Education Must Begin in Early Childhood Education  
Retrieved from <https://www.unlv.edu/news/article/issues-why-stem-education-must-begin-early-childhood-education>

## COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

As we start the new year, we thought it would be good to let our families know of the different forms of communication we have with our families over the year so you can keep up to date with what is happening. As stated in our philosophy, we value the importance of the exchange of ideas between the children, staff and families and these communication means assist us in achieving this.

**The Ranges Newsletter** – this newsletter is sent by email at the beginning of each month and covers the general information that affects both centres. Previous editions can be found on our website

**Fortnightly Updates** – these are provided to you by your child's group Teacher and will be either sent via email or accessed via My Family Lounge. These provide information about your child's group and their Inquiry Project as well as other specific information for the group.

**Daily Journal** – each day the staff in each group post a brief summary of the day's activities along with photos in My Family Lounge. These are great way to start a conversation with your child about their day by asking about the experiences they participated in.

**Developmental Reports** – these are prepared by your child's Teacher twice a year and posted to their portfolio on My Family Lounge. These reports provide a snapshot of your child's development against the appropriate age developmental checklists and highlight if there are any areas of concern which your Teacher will discuss with you.

**Parent Teacher Interviews** – held twice a year as an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher on an individual basis to discuss your child's development and learning. Your child's Teacher will let you know via their fortnightly updates when these are coming up for you to book a time.

**Facebook Page** – the Ranges have a public Facebook page where we update families and the community with recent and upcoming events as well and other important information. We recommend that you like our page to keep up to date with what is happening across the two centres. The link to our page is:  
<https://www.facebook.com/TheRanges/>



### Simon Says

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

This is a very simple fitness activity using the basic 'Simon Says' framework. Take turns being Simon and setting the fitness challenges. Here are a few examples to get you started:

Simon Says: Shake your whole body, jump up and down, spin around, walk like a bear on all 4s to the clothes line, hop like a frog, pretend to sit on an invisible chair 5 times, Hop on your left foot, Jump as far forwards as you can then jump back again.