

Playgroup Newsletter

January 2021



Lifestyle Capital of Victoria

Welcome to the fifth edition of the Frankston City Council Playgroup Newsletter. A newsletter will be published each month and contain information on fun activities including craft ideas, recipes as well as what is happening in your local community.



Welcome to 2021!!

We have missed playgroups during 2020. Playgroups are ready to welcome families back in 2021. There may be some extra rules that apply to playgroups, but this won't stop us from enjoying the social and fun aspect of attending a playgroup.

Please refer to the Frankston City Council website for a list of playgroups that are available in the Frankston Municipality.

https://www.frankston.vic.gov.au/Our_Community/Family_Services/Playgroups/Community_Playgroups



For playgroup inquiries please contact 9293 7156

Email playgroups@frankston.vic.gov.au

Summer fun activities.

Water Play builds the foundation for understanding various scientific and maths concepts. It will introduce children to terms such as full, empty, half and less.

At home, don't hesitate to take buckets, cups, sifters and/or empty bottles into a shaded area out in the garden or on the balcony. Participate with your children in their pretend play, they are learning as well as enjoying your participation! And remember to never leave children unattended during Water Play.



A bucket of water and an old paint brush can give hours of entertainment for your child. Ask your child to paint the back fence, cubby house or a concrete path.



Obstacle course

Utilise available items - a hoola hoop, a cardboard box, empty plant pots, balls; find something to walk around, something to step into, something to climb over or under. An obstacle course is great for developing balance, problem solving and gross motor skills.



Sensory tray

Use straw, soil, chip bark, water, sand, stones or leaves. Add plastic animals. This activity promotes sensory exploration, imagination and creativity.



New baby: preparing your other children

- When you're having a new baby, your other children might feel excited – and a bit anxious too.
- It helps to introduce your children to the idea of a new baby at least 3-4 months before the baby is born.
- You can prepare other children by talking, reading books about babies, listening to their worries, and giving them lots of love and attention.

Toddlers don't really understand time, so when you're explaining to your child that a new baby is coming, try relating it to a familiar event. You could say that the new baby will arrive soon after a special person's birthday.



- Read your children stories about babies. Look at pictures and talk about how your family is growing.
- Show them pictures of themselves when they were very young.
- Let them touch mum's tummy to feel the new baby moving and kicking inside. You could even let them listen to the baby's heartbeat at a visit to the doctor or midwife.
- Involve them in the practical business of getting ready for the new baby. Let them help you get your home ready, buy baby items and decorate.

- Talk with your children about what they're most looking forward to when the new baby comes.
- If your children are worried about the new baby, talk with them about their worries and reassure them. Give them lots of love and cuddles, and focus on the positives – for example, they'll have a new brother or sister to love.

Helping toddlers and preschoolers adjust.

When a new baby comes, children (especially toddlers) might feel you're giving all your attention and love to the new baby. If you can be sensitive to these feelings, listen and show lots of affection, it shows your other children you're still there for them. It also helps them feel secure.

Even though you'll be busy with the new baby, try to **spend some one-on-one time with your other children.**

You could **involve your children in caring for the baby.** At bath time, for example, they could get some bath things ready or help dry the baby afterwards.

Most children will be curious about the new baby, so **let them gently touch their new sibling** – but always be there to supervise. Young children often don't know their own strength or understand how they can hurt someone else.

TIP!

To encourage your children to get along, give them all lots of positive attention. By doing this, you're showing them how you'd like them to treat each other – and they'll do as you do.

Play Dough

No cook play dough

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- 2 cups plain flour (all purpose)
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 tablespoons cream of tartar
- (up to) 1.5 cups of boiling water (added gradually until it is right)

DIRECTIONS

- a. Mix all of the dry ingredients into a bowl.
- b. Add the oil
- c. Stir in the boiling water and allow to cool briefly
- d. Knead it into a workable dough on a floured surface using your hands
- e. After a few minutes it should be soft and smooth and none should come off on your fingers.
- f. If it's still a little sticky then add more flour, one tablespoon at a time until it's just right!

Store playdough in a sealed container and keep it in the fridge.



Play dough is a wonderful activity.

- It develops fine motor skills...
- It's calming for children...
- It encourages creativity...
- It enhances hand-eye coordination...
- It improves social skills...
- It supports literacy and numeracy...
- It promotes playtime.

Get your child involved in play dough making.

It helps with developing math's and language concepts as well as small and large motor skills. Talk about the number of cups you need, pouring, mixing, lumpy, smooth and sticky.



GET READY FOR FREE KINDER IN 2021

The Victorian Government is investing up to \$169.6 million to offer **Free Kinder in 2021**, to give our kids the best start in life.

This means more children will have access to quality early childhood education before they start school. Your service is participating in this program and your family will benefit in 2021.

What does this mean for your family?

Free Kinder will save Victorian families **around \$2,000** per child if they are enrolled in a participating funded kindergarten program in 2021. This means:

- **Sessional (standalone) kindergarten:** can offer a free 15-hour kindergarten program each week
- **Long day care:** can provide a reduction in fees of around \$2,000 over the year.

If your child attends both a sessional kindergarten and a long day care service, you can only access kindergarten funding and the Free Kinder initiative at one service. You must nominate which service will receive your funded kindergarten program and Free Kinder payment. You cannot receive the benefit twice for the same child.

Is my family eligible?

All families with a child enrolled in a funded participating kindergarten program are eligible for Free Kinder, in either sessional or long day care services.

If you have received this handout from your service, it means you are eligible.



How do I access funding for Free Kinder?

Payments will be made directly to participating kindergarten service providers.

The saving will be passed on to families through reduced fees. You will not receive a lump sum payment or allowance.

Funded Four-Year-Old and Three-Year-Old Kindergarten

Sessional kindergarten: the Free Kinder allowance paid directly to your service is **\$2,122 per child** (or a pro rata amount for funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten that is less than 15 hours per week).

Long day care: the service will receive a payment of **\$2,000 per child** to directly offset the fees you pay. Your child must be in a funded kindergarten place in that service.

Unfunded three-year-old kindergarten

Sessional kindergarten services with an unfunded three-year-old program will be able to access a payment of **\$1,600 per child**, for each enrolment in a program of five or more hours per week. The payment will be paid directly to the kindergarten and mean lower fees for families. If the normal fee for the program is higher than \$1,600 your service may still charge you a 'gap' fee.

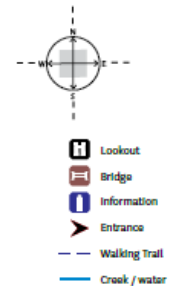
How do I enrol my child?

Enrolments are now open.

For more information about how to enrol, speak to your local participating service or visit education.vic.gov.au/freekinder



Discover nature in your local community



Frankston Nature Conservation Reserve

FACT BOX
Location: Frankston South
Melway Ref: 102 E9
Area: 5.3 ha
Special features: Creek, remnant woodland
Best flowering time: Spring
Birds: 30+ species
Walking tracks: 1.5 km
Walking time: 45 hour
pets: Dogs on lead permitted
Managed by: Frankston City Council and Melbourne Water
Information: ☎ 1300 322 322

Things to do
 Walk along the Main Track to the Circuit and return to the Heathland Track for a short side tour through the heathland vegetation. Two foot bridges provide access from Sycamore Road and Lawson Avenue, adding an interesting vantage point from which to view the creek.

It is a peaceful reserve in which to take a quiet walk, jog or just appreciate nature.
 Regular working bees are organised by the Friends of Upper Sweetwater Creek to clear invasive weeds and restore habitat by revegetating the reserve with indigenous plants.

Occupying 98 hectares in Frankston South, this reserve supports flora and fauna species which are designated as significant at regional, state and national levels. With more than 100 indigenous mammal, bird, reptile, frog and fish species recorded.

Reserved as Crown land this is a significant area of native vegetation and wildlife habitat.

Frankston Nature Conservation Reserve is not managed by Frankston City Council. Details at: parkweb.vic.gov.au or 13 19 63

FACT BOX
Location: Entrance via Jeremy Way, Frankston South
Pets: not allowed
Note: There are no toilet or rubbish facilities. Please take your rubbish with you

Upper Sweetwater Creek Reserve

Sweetwater Creek is a natural waterway running from above Frankston Nature Conservation Reserve to Port Phillip Bay. Upper Sweetwater Creek Reserve provides a bushland corridor along the upper section of the creek from the reservoir to Overport Road.

Enjoy the lovely views of the creek as you walk along the tracks through the remnant heathy woodland.

Things to see
Indigenous plants
 There is a large range of plant communities in the reserve, from the moisture and shade-loving plants found by the creek to those which prefer the dry, sandy upper slopes.

Along the creek, the vegetation is dominated by Swamp Paperbark with a



Native animals
 Although there are indigenous animals living in the reserve, they are shy and may be difficult to spot during the day. Most of the animals are nocturnal, including the Brushtail and Ringtail Possums and Sugar Gliders.

Occasionally during the day a Short-beaked Echidna or a Common Blue-tongue Lizard can be found searching for food on the ground. If you are lucky you may see a Tawny Frogmouth sitting in a eucalypt tree or a Swamp Rat by the creek.



canopy of Swamp Gums. On the upper slopes, Narrow-leaf Peppermint and Coast Manna Gums provide the canopy sheltering a wide diversity of plants.

In the remnant heathy areas, the thick middlestorey, containing mainly Prickly and Heath Tea-tree, is interspersed with



Tawny Frogmouth



Recipes

RAVIOLI SOUP

Ingredients:

½ packet beef or vegetable ravioli
1 can diced tomatoes
1.5L vegetable stock
2 carrots, diced
2 sticks of celery, diced
1 zucchini, diced
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
1/3 bunch shredded parsley
Cheese, grated to top
Olive oil

Method:

Fry off garlic and vegetables for 5 minutes. Add stock and tinned tomatoes. Cook on low-med for 45 minutes to an hour. Put in ravioli and cook for a further 5-7 minutes. Add fresh parsley and serve, top with cheese as preferred.



NO-BAKE APRICOT BITES

Ingredients:

1 cups chopped dried apricots
1/2 cup dried sultanas
1/2 cup dark chocolate chips
1/2 cup rolled oats
1/4 cup chia seeds
1 1/2 tbsps filtered water
1/4 cup tahini
1/2 cup shredded coconut

Method:

Soak chia seeds in water until they grow (1/4 cup of seeds to one cup of liquid, for about 20 minutes). Place all ingredients in a bowl and mix. Set the mix aside for 10 minutes, this allows the chia seeds to get a little bigger and turn into jelly. This will make the mix easier to roll into balls. Take a spoonful and roll into balls. Then roll the balls in coconut. Refrigerate and enjoy as you go!



SHAKE N BAKE QUICHE

Ingredients:

4 eggs
125g cheese grated
1/2 cup self-raising flour
125g sliced ham chopped
1 onion diced, partially cooked
1 ½ cup milk
1/2 cup zucchini grated
1/2 cup corn cob kernels *to taste

Method:

Brown onion in frying pan. Crack the eggs into a bowl and beat until mixed. Add all ingredients together in large ziplock bag or container with a lid. Shake until ingredients are mixed together. Pour mixture into a greased quiche or pie dish. Bake at 180C for approximately 40 minutes.

