



# NEWSLETTER

Term 3 2021

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## Welcome to Term 3 2021

These school holidays were packed with fun activities such as a treasure hunt at Cocora beach, Geocaching in Pambula, a bike ride from Tathra to Kalaru and a scavenger hunt in Merimbula. Although all the activities were super fun, the treasure hunt and geocaching were definitely a hit! The treasure hunt involved the children following clues which lead them on an adventure around Cocora Beach, down the Bundian Way and eventually onto the beach where X marked the spot of the buried treasure. Geocaching was similar, however this activity involved following a map to find hidden treasure and objects called 'caches' around the local community. These were extremely well hidden and some were even in disguise! Geocaching is a fun way to get outside and into nature, you can download the free app onto any smart phone and find 'caches' all over the world.



## Our Services

- ◆ Early Intervention and Therapy Supports for children aged 0-young adult with an NDIS plan.
- ◆ Advice and referral service for families with questions or concerns about their child's development.
- ◆ Supported playgroups for families with children aged 0-school aged in the Bega Valley.
- ◆ Indigenous family support and supported play sessions, service/support linking and transport assistance.
- ◆ Mobile Toy and Parenting Resource Service.

### How to use alcohol-based hand rub



NHMRC



Dear families,

The Covid 19 crisis has changed all our lives and the ways in which we interact as people and will continue to have an impact in the years to come. At PlayAbility we recognise that we work with many of the most vulnerable in the community and have a responsibility to manage risk and provide our services as safely as possible within the guidelines set by the health authorities.

We would like to remind everyone that it is mandatory for every person entering our facilities at playability to check in using the Service NSW QR code provided.

It is also mandatory that all adults are wearing face masks and are social distancing.

We would like to thank you for your cooperation during this difficult time. For more information please visit our website:

<https://www.playability.com.au/>



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Don't forget to check our website. You can access all our timetables or send us a message from your computer, tablet or phone.

We wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and waters of the Bega Valley and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.



# Welcome to PlayAbility Family Support



## Who we are:

PlayAbility Family Support is an all-inclusive service. Our aim is to **empower** children and their families to set and **achieve** real and measurable goals in **education**, **development** (**wellbeing**, **social** & **emotional**) and **health**. These family-centred goals are achieved through strength-based programs focused on creating a world where children feel connected to their **identity**, **community** and **culture**.

## What we do:

Mobile Toy and Parenting Resource Service  
School transition programs and school collaboration  
Navigating the NDIS and access  
Supported Playgroups (Outdoor reconnect play session)  
Supported Community groups  
Referrals to other services  
Internal referrals to Early Intervention Specialists  
Paperwork and support letters for housing, Centrelink, care and education.  
Home visits  
Connecting families to parenting groups  
Transport assistance  
Attending appointments (Dr, Dentist, EYAT, CIFTs, EACH)  
Development and implementing collaborative Family Planning

Kylie Eldridge-Spires, Family Support Manager Phone: 0427 677 066

## Playgroup Update...

Welcome back to Term 3, to all families we hope you have stayed happy, healthy and deadly over the school holiday break.

Over Term 2 Staff enjoyed returning to normal Playgroups at indoor locations across Yuin Country. It disappoints us to share that with the current COVID-19 restrictions in place, we have decided it is safest for us as a community to hold off on returning to indoor Playgroups until further notice.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PLAYGROUPS...

**\*First of all**, we will miss seeing all of our families attending Playgroups each week but we are just a phone call away and welcome any feedback or suggestions

**\*Virtual Playgroups** will be making a come back with a weekly Story Time with Sarah and other PlayAbility Staff  
If you would like to find out how to tune into our online Virtual Playgroups

**join our Facebook group- PlayAbility Virtual Playgroup**

**Check out our website [www.playability.com.au](http://www.playability.com.au) and click the tab Virtual Playgroup  
or Contact Sarah: 0437 075 215**

**\*Activity Packs** will be delivered fortnightly to all families who have attended Playgroups during Term 2 2021 these will include, art and craft activities, cooking activities and song and rhyme times. For those families who attended Playgroup during that time, we will be in touch to see if you would like to receive an Activity Pack

**For further information your welcome to contact**

**Sarah: 0437 075 215**



## Health Message...

To keep everyone safe it is required by our organisation that you do not attend any of our services if you have recently travelled to a Covid-19 Hotspot, have been in contact with someone who is awaiting Covid-19 Test results or have any of the symptoms of Covid-19.

Our Team will follow the same requirements and will not visit your home or attend the work space if they meet any of the above.

Let's work together to keep each other healthy and safe!

## Mobile TOY Van Update...

**We apologise to all our Toy Van Fans, at this stage the Toy Van will not operate until current COVID-19 restrictions have eased.  
We will keep you up dated with any changes!**





# Welcome to PlayAbility Family Support



**PLAYABILITY**

## NAIDOC CELEBRATIONS 2021

With recent changes in NSW Covid-19 restrictions, many of the local NAIDOC events have been cancelled - We brainstormed ways of bringing our families together to celebrate, learn and have a deadly week!

We have come together to reflect and share our thoughts of this years theme HEAL COUNTRY.

We encourage you to think deeply about what Heal Country means to you and how we can instill this in our children and future generations.

*Country who we speak of as a person is more than the sacred land we stand on. For thousands of years country has provided for us in every aspect of our lives.*

*Healing is acknowledging history by telling the truth, sharing knowledge and educating ourselves and each other.*

*It is our shared responsibility to preserve, protect and heal our sacred lands and waters, for ourselves, our children and future generations.*

*To heal the land is to heal ourselves - our mind, heart and spirit.*

*We must listen deeply to our Elders, observing and learning the traditional ways of healing from our First Nations people to ensure a sustainable future for us all.*

*We need to understand and embrace our own identity, country and mob, through the spiritual connections we have to our ancestors and ancient landscapes.*

*"We are part of this land and the land is part of us. This is where we come from."*

A quote from a beautiful book to teach our children about the significance of Country - Welcome to Country written by Auntie Joy Murphy and illustrated by Lisa Kennedy.

**HEAL COUNTRY, HEAL OUR NATION.**

We will be sharing Stories, Cooking and Nature videos along with a message to the young ones from Uncle Darren Mongta on our Virtual Playgroup!

**NAIDOC GIVEAWAY**

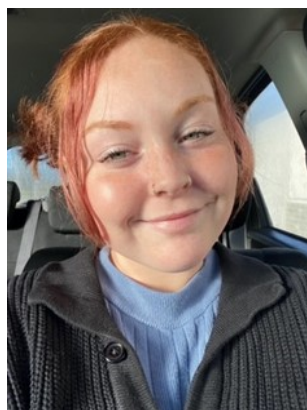
- Rainbow serpent Handmade by a local Elder
- Indigenous book + symbol game
- Ethically sourced basket weaving kit
- Local Ochre and Canvas
- NAIDOC Stencil and Pencils

*All items are locally, ethically or Indigenous made.*

## NEW STAFF

### WELCOME MYA

Playability would like to welcome and introduce Mya. Mya is our new Therapy Assistant who will be facilitating our playgroup activities with Brooke as well as supporting both Early Intervention and Family Support teams. We are very pleased to have Mya as part of our team!



### Referrals—

for service providers, NDIS plan managers/coordinators please use the referral form on our website.

[www.playability.com.au/referrals-forms](http://www.playability.com.au/referrals-forms)

We can also link you up with our family support team. Please see pages 2 & 3 for details about their services or ring our office on 64961918 and we can put you in touch with Kylie Eldridge-Spires the Family Support Manager.

## PlayAbility Virtual Playgroup

Check our page for weekly posts of Nature play, cooking and stories from our home to yours.



Please contact Makayla for further information on our Reconnect Play Sessions or Mobile Toy Library van on: **0428 083 039**



# Early Intervention & Therapy Supports



## Newsletter term 3.

### School Holiday Fun!

Brooke, Mya and Catherine organised some fabulous school holiday fun – Treasure Hunts, Geocaching, Scavenger hunts and bike rides. Our school holiday program is aimed at kids at of all ages with a focus on fun, socialising and getting out and about in our local area. We are in the process of planning for next holidays, so if you have any suggestions please let Brooke or Mya know.



### Activity Groups

Once again this term we are running some fantastic after school activities, our aim is to provide our participants with the opportunity to try new activities and develop their confidence in a supportive, fun and social environment.

All group activities are billed to your NDIS plan (\$44.40/hr) some groups also have an additional charge for travel or resources (\$7.40).

For term 3 we have decided to have a break from soccer as it is getting too cold, instead we will be offering an art group in Eden and a board games group in Bega.



## What's on for term 3



Day	activity	Staff	Where
Monday	Craft group	Phil, Mya, Sarah	Bega Centre 4-5pm
Tuesday	Art Group	Catherine, Brooke	Eden Centre 4-5pm
Wednesday	Board Games	Brooke, Mya	Seventh Day Adventist Hall Bega 3.45-4.45pm
Thursday	Yoga	Katrina, Mya	CWA Hall Bega 4.00– 4.45pm

We are always keen for suggestions, so if your child has a particular interest let us know and we will see what we can do.

If you would like to join any of our groups please give Brooke a call on 0428 045 907 or email [brookeh@playability.com.au](mailto:brookeh@playability.com.au)





# Early Intervention & Therapy Supports

## Welcome to Term 3

Our Early Intervention Team is continuing to grow!

### Meet our new staff:

**Katrina Hansen** is a physiotherapist and yoga teacher who is running our Yoga groups on a Thursday.

**Sophie Revington** is a therapy assistant working alongside Rowan in the delivery of Speech supports. Sophie is currently studying for a Masters of Speech from Charles Sturt University.

**Mya Grantham** is a therapy assistant who will be facilitating our group activities with Brooke as well as supporting both the Early Intervention and family support teams.

**Sonia Evans** is a therapy assistant who will be working alongside our Physio James.

**Bronwyn Gallagher** is a specialist teacher/keyworker who has recently moved to the Bega Valley from Newcastle.

**Anastasia Geale** is a physiotherapist who will be based in Eden.

### We will also be welcoming back this term:

**Karyn Thomas** who has spent the last 6 months working in the outback oasis of Pooncarie which is situated 150km north of Mildura, Victoria and 117km north of Wentworth, NSW along the Darling River.

**Jamie Goodman** who will return from her travelling adventure in August.

I am excited to welcome our newest team members and look forward to seeing all our early intervention and therapy supports programs continue to grow and adapt to the needs of children, families and the community.

### Feedback

**PlayAbility welcomes and values your feedback. It is a vital component of our monitoring and review process and enables our service to evolve and improve.**

If you are unhappy with any part of your service, you have the right to make a complaint. Talk to your key worker, email, text or write a letter to us or complete a feedback form and place it in the feedback box at either our Bega or Eden centres.

Feedback can be anonymous and you are welcome to have an advocate during any part of the process. Please ask any staff member for a copy of the Feedback and Complaints policy or you can find it on our website.

Scan the QR to complete a Feedback, Complaints and Compliments Form Online.



### NDIS Plan renewal

If your child has a NDIS Plan review coming up, get in touch with us early so we can prepare any reports you may need to take along to your child's planning meeting. If you would like additional support preparing for the meeting or at the meeting please speak to your keyworker or Suzie.

There have been some changes to plan renewals due to COVID-19 contact us, EACH 1300 003224 or have a look at the NDIS website for more info . COVID-19 contact us, EACH 1300 003224 or have a look at the NDIS website for more info .

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/coronavirus>

### Our Team

**Suzie Eruera**—Manager/Teacher  
**Karyn Thomas**—Specialist Teacher  
**Karin Champagne**—Specialist Teacher

**Louissa McPherson**—Specialist Teacher

**Bronwyn Gallagher**—Specialist Teacher

**Fran Bowery**—Preschool Inclusion Support Officer

**Rowan Cox**—Speech Pathologist

**Jamie Goodman**—Physiotherapist

**James Dedman**—Physiotherapist

**Anastasia Geale**—Physiotherapist

**Katrina Hansen**—Physiotherapist and yoga teacher

**Catherine Brown**—Allied Health Assistant

**Phil Power**—Allied Health Assistant

**Brooke Hansen**—Allied Health Assistant

**Sophie Revington**—Therapy Assistant

**Sonia Evans**—Therapy Assistant

**Mya Grantham**—Therapy Assistant

### Policy Review

We are currently reviewing Confidentiality and Privacy policy. If you would like to participate in our policy review please email [admin@playability.com.au](mailto:admin@playability.com.au) to receive a copy or ask any of our staff.

# Once upon a Time

## The importance of reading to children

By Karin Champagne

‘There once was a girl who lived with her mother at the top of a very tall house.’

These are simple words, yet they draw us in and invite us to come somewhere new and meet this girl and her mother who live at the top of a very tall house. Each time we read aloud to our children, we teach them more about their world, we surround them in language, we begin to build strong literacy foundations and we create a space to bond and share enjoyment and pleasure with our children. We know that babies learn spoken language from hearing language and being spoken to every day. Reading aloud to a child provides a perfect time to engage in spoken language.

When we read to children the most important thing for us to remember is that the experience is warm, fun and loving. Getting to the end of the book is not always the aim. The book provides a catalyst for conversation, there are pictures to look at, characters to imitate, stories to discuss and feelings to explore, vocabulary is built, the rhythm of phrases and sentences are experienced, rhyme and alliteration are recognised and enjoyed and most importantly, relationships are built and strengthened through the shared experience of a book as natural and meaningful conversations happen.

Some books are better than others when reading aloud. What we need to look for when reading to young children is books that have the three R's, rhyme rhythm and repetition. Here is a beautiful example of the three R's, an extract from Mem Fox's book, 'Tough Boris'.

...He was fearless. All pirates are fearless. He was scary. All pirates are scary. But when his parrot died, he cried and cried. All pirates cry and so do I.

A simple book that is fun, repetitious, has rhyme and rhythm and at the same time has an important, age appropriate comment about grieving the loss of a loved pet.

Some caregivers could read to their children all day long while others struggle with barriers that prevent them from enjoying this time with their children. Some barriers are lack of time or lack of confidence due to adult literacy issues or confidence with the English language. There are ways we can work around this to ensure our children are still getting rich language experiences.

How can we build daily reading into family life when we feel time is short and there's so much to be done? How do we find the time to sit quietly, cuddled up with our child to focus on a book, this is the ideal, but if we can't do this what can we do instead? We can begin to insert nursery rhymes, so important for language acquisition and speech development, into our daily habits. For example, we can recite, 'One, two buckle my shoe...' when putting shoes on or 'Twinkle Twinkle...' while carrying a child to bed or 'Jack and Jill...' when walking. If we add this language experience with its rhyme, rhythm and repetition we will give our children some of what they need for early literacy development.

Our own literacy difficulties or lack of confidence with a new language can impact on our ability to engage with children and books but it shouldn't keep us from the shared language experience. Learning with children is one way to build our own skills and this can be done through audio books. Listening to nursery rhymes with the written text provides both reading and speaking practice opportunities to speak and read with fluency and expression. Listening to audio stories with your child again provides rich ground for conversation, vocabulary development and rewarding social connection. We all know how much children enjoy hearing the same stories repeatedly, this provides an opportunity for us to practice reading



the same book again and again to build our own skill and fluency. We can also read and share books in our first language and tell our own childhood stories to our children which is what my mother did with me.

It's never too early to start reading to your child. Here are some great authors to look out for: Pamela Allen, Mem Fox, Dr. Seuss, Eric Hill, Eric Carle, Martin Waddell, Lynley Dodd, Pat Hutchins. One last thing, read books to your child that you love to read, like any of the fabulous Hairy Maclary books!

Happy Reading and listening.

## The Importance of Sleep for Kids' Emotional Well-being

We may take sleep for granted because we don't appreciate how important it actually is:

- **Our brains need sleep**

Brains process and consolidate our memories while we sleep. It helps our kids remember the important things in life. Sleep helps remove toxins from our brain that build up while we are awake. Without sleep, we can't form new pathways in the brain that help us learn new things.

- **Our bodies need sleep**

This is especially true for babies and younger children. Sleep is necessary for muscle growth and repair. Some growth hormones are secreted and synthesized during sleep. Poor sleep is associated with obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes. It also helps our immune system and we are more prone to colds when we are sleep deprived.

- **Sleep isn't just about quantity. Quality is important, too**

Poor sleep *quality* is associated with poorer school performance as measured by teacher ratings, grades, and neurocognitive functioning. It can make kids and adults be more moody, angry, and anxious.

### **Your kids probably need more sleep than they are getting**

Most kids need 10 to 11 hours per night but get far less than that (closer to 9 ½ hours on average). There are wide individual differences in terms of a child's sleep needs, but the [AAP recommends](#) the following guidelines:

- Under 1 year: 12 to 16 hours a day
- 1 to 2 years: 11 to 14 hours a day
- 3 to 5 years: 10 to 13 hours a day
- 6 to 12 years: 9 to 12 hours a day



### **There are significant benefits when we get enough sleep**

Good quality sleep is associated with greater ability to focus. Kids are better able to solve problems, are more creative, and do better socially when they are well-rested.

If you're reading this and feeling discouraged, you shouldn't. There are lots of things you can do to improve the quantity and quality of your children's (and your own!) sleep.

Studies have found the following strategies to be most effective:

1. **Know how much sleep they should be getting**

Take a look at the guidelines above. Set a goal to hit a goal somewhere within those parameters. There is a range for each age group, because kids do differ in their need for sleep. Figure out where in that range your child should fall.

2. **Limit screen time before bed**

Also, get the TV out of the room. Kids should not be exposed to the glow from electric screens for at least an hour before going to sleep. Some researchers would say that two hours before bed is an even better idea. (This applies to parents too!)

3. **Stick with the same bedtimes and awake times**

Yes, these can change a bit on the weekends or over the holidays, but they shouldn't change very much.

4. **Have a bedtime routine that includes non-stimulating activities**

These might include activities like a bath, stories, prayers or daily reflections, and snuggling.

5. **Provide a good environment for sleeping**

Dark, quiet, and cool are the three magic words when it comes to good sleep. Some kids like a nightlight and that's ok. Just be sure you get one that is as dim as possible. Same goes for noise. Some kids don't like the quiet. In that case, a noise machine can be a good idea.

**Finally, be on the lookout for signs a real sleep disorder. That can include symptoms such as:**

- Refusing to go to bed
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Difficulty staying asleep
- Sleepwalking
- Nightmares
- Sleepiness during the day

If you've tried the recommendations listed above and your child is still having difficulty sleeping, talk to your child's paediatrician. Don't feel discouraged. There are specialists that can help your child get a better night's sleep.