

# Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



## What is 'midline' and why is 'crossing the midline' important for your child's brain development?

Imagine a line that starts from the top of your head and draws straight down to the point between your two feet. This figurative line splits your body into left and right halves and is known as the midline. The term 'crossing the midline'

depicts the movement of a body part over the midline from one side to the other side of the body to complete a task.

Lack of midline crossing could result in poor communication between the left and right sides of the brain. Crossing the midline requires communication between both sides of the brain and midline activities therefore fully engage your brain which can cause mental fatigue. It is recommended that children regularly complete activities that cross the midline to strengthen the neural networks to coordinate movement and learning. Physiologically, crossing the midline can assist strengthening the dominant hand's ability to complete fine motor skills. The dominant hand needs to reach over the body to complete most fine motor tasks. If both hands are being used equally then the development of a dominant hand can be delayed consequently delaying fine motor skills. As your child gets better at reach over and understanding where their body is in space, their co-ordination and confidence improves. Crossing the midline also requires an adequate level of core support and strength to allow your child to reach over to their other side when completing a task.

Crossing the midline activities also develop a child's gross motor skills such as co-ordination and balance. A child's poor gross motor skills can also negatively impact their attention and working memory. A child can be too preoccupied co-ordinating themselves that they are not retaining the information they need in their working memory. Attention and working memory are necessary for completing the more complex activities of daily living such as dressing or writing (knowing the sequences of dressing themselves or having enough attention to complete a writing task). Therefore, therapists incorporate crossing the midline activities to address numerous avenues of up-skilling and learning for children.

### Activities for home

**Reaching to the Opposite side:** Ask your child to reach to the opposite side to pass you materials ie, pen, spoon, food by setting these items up on their non preferred side.

**Reaching for Balls:** Place a basket of balls on one side and an empty basket on the other. Ask your child to reach across with the opposite hand to pick up the balls and place in the empty basket. You can increase the challenge by asking them to complete the task as fast as possible.

**Maze:** Create a large maze on cardboard that runs across from left to right side in front of your child and ask them to trace the maze with their finger on their dominant hand.



July  
2021

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## Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

**Sweetpeas:** We can't believe the end of the semester is upon us. With many social goals the children have all come such a long way with new friendships as children learn to share and co-operate with each other. The Sweetpeas have moved away from parallel play, where friends play side-by-side, to social play, where friends are beginning to interact and share ideas with one another. After reading a book, 'In My Heart' we have explored emotions, what they look and feel like. The children have demonstrated a good understanding of why and what triggers these emotions. By participating in group games, activities and singing 'If you're Happy and you Know it' we have learned to name feelings which is the first step in understanding and identifying how we feel to help children regulate their responses. It is important to understand that it is okay to feel angry, sad, or scared at times. By supporting and helping the children through these confusing and frustrating times they are beginning to understand the importance of interacting appropriately with those we meet in our journey through life. *'Emotions heal once children know they are being heard and validated'* - Jill Bolte Taylor

**Bluebells:** The Bluebells have had a month full of experiences such as learning about Reconciliation Week and learning how to keep our bodies healthy. We have also been working on our colour and shape recognition as well as practicing our fine motor skills through activities such as drawing, threading, construction building and cutting. We have been using scissors to cut out pictures from magazines to create our own collage work as well as following lines of balloons and kites and this has been supporting us to become more confident in our cutting skills. Learning to cut with scissors helps a child learn to do so much more than just cut. It builds hand strength as the opening and closing motion of scissors helps children build up the small muscles in their hands. These muscles are important for everyday activities such as drawing, using cutlery, brushing your teeth and getting dressed. You can easily encourage cutting skills at home by giving your child an old magazine and scissors and work together to create a collage. Draw some lines on a piece of paper and ask your child to cut along these, trying to stay on the lines. Please feel free to come and talk to us if you would like to discuss your child's fine motor skills further.

**Schoolies:** As we get closer to the second semester and the Schoolies transitioning to a school environment, we have been encouraging the development of their self-help skills. Educators are helping the children become independent by allowing and encouraging them to take responsibility for themselves whenever possible. The Schoolies are being encouraged to pack their bags throughout the day, take care of their belongings and attempt to open packaging, lunch boxes at mealtimes and packing/tidying up after they have been at an activity. Self help skills act as precursors for many school related tasks as well as life skills. When children practice self-help skills such as feeding and dressing themselves, they practice their large and small motor skills, gain confidence in their ability to try new things and build their self-esteem and pride in their independence. There are many simple chores your child can do around the house that will not only lend you a hand but add to their growing independence and give them a feeling of accomplishment. At home you can further foster these skills by encouraging your child to dress themselves, pack their own bags prior to preschool, ensuring they have their hat, drink bottles, lunch. Even getting the children involved in making their morning tea and lunches for preschool. "In the final analysis it is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings"





## 2022 Enrolments

A friendly reminder to let you know that the returning enrolments form stating your requirements for next year is past due. *If you have not returned the form as yet, please do so as soon as possible.*

If you know of anyone who may be interested in attending Preschool next year, it would be wise to ask them to submit a Waiting List Form as soon as possible.



***Lara had a day off*** and some of the children had been asking where she was. Tyler asked Deon and when I said she had a day off, he asked what she was doing with her day off. I explained that she had breakfast with her mum then was going for a massage. Tyler looked at Deon a bit confused and said "Why is she doing that?" Deon replied because she wanted to. Tyler then said "Deon, why does Lara want to get a moustache? She doesn't need one!"

## Scholastic Book Club

Thank you for the orders received in the June issue. With the commission from this order, we bought a book called Australia which is full of pictures and descriptions of Australian animals. We also bought a book called Nursery Rhymes through STEM, bringing nursery rhymes to life through STEM based activities. The next issue of the magazine will be in your pockets early Term 3.



## July Birthdays

**A big Happy Birthday to all of our children and teachers having a birthday this month.**

Phoebe 4yrs

Lily 4yrs

Madeleine 4 yrs

Max 4yrs

Annabelle 4 yrs

Bianca 4yrs

Elaina 5yrs

Remi 4 yrs

Nyvah 4 yrs





## NSW "free preschool" for some but not all children.



*Early childhood education and care is delivered through different service types eg, centre based, family day care, community and mobile preschools. Please read this article published by the Australian Childcare Alliance (NSW) for understanding about the NSW Government's recent funding announcement for "free preschool"*

The NSW Budget 2021-2022 was formally announced today (22 June 2021) at the NSW Parliament House. And for the early childhood education and care sector, the divisive announcement was about the permanent funding "free preschool" for 2023 and beyond for the 45,000 or so children enrolled in NSW's 763 community and mobile preschools. This compares against the over 150,000 preschool children enrolled in NSW's long daycare services.

The NSW Government's original decision to introduce "free preschool" for community and mobile preschools was during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. That decision was completely understandable and supported considering the panic and uncertainties experienced by everyone, including parents.

Already the Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) NSW had been in talks with the NSW Department of Education (supported by the NSW Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning (the Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC)) in the attempt to fix the negative consequences of the NSW Government's decision then to extend the "free preschool" funding to December 2021.

Yet, this new decision of the NSW Government has inadvertently now created a permanent seismic chasm between two different groups of children, effected primarily by their parents' financial decisions and not what is best for their children in terms of educational and social well-being outcomes, as well as school readiness. ACA NSW has expressed its extreme disappointment of the NSW Government's "free preschool" decision, and will now ratchet up its engagements on both sides of politics seeking solutions.

Not that ACA NSW has ever sought, nor would ever seek funding reductions for NSW-based community and mobile preschools, the irony is a similar \$150 million annual preschool funding would achieve the same outcomes but with 3x more preschool children in long daycare services. ACA NSW had presented the NSW Government with more plausible win-win solutions through its submission - A State of Positive Possibilities 2021 - Volume 1: Immediate Solutions, including how more preschool aged children could be supported across long daycare as well as community and mobile preschools.



# Phonemic Awareness Programme

*The children enjoyed meeting our new Letterland friends, Lucy Lamp Light and Peter Puppy. The children really took pleasure in the hands on and sensory elements of the activities on offer and did a fantastic job practicing the focus sound and making connections*



## Lucy Lamp Light

Everybody loves Lucy Lamp Light. This is because she has a lovely smile that lights up everything around her in Letterland. In Letterland Lucy tends to both her lime and lemon tree which she shares with everyone in the land. That's why this week we decided to source an abundance of lemons from our community and look into the health benefits of lemons. Before Steph's departure she gifted us with a bunch of luscious yellow lemons from her Mums garden. These lemons lay in the literacy corner for the children to explore using their five senses. During Letterland we also explored our sense of taste, while enjoying a few lemon slices in our drink bottles for an added zesty essence to our water. The opportunities appeared endless with our lemon focus, later in the week Jo joined us and helped us make a lovely lavender lemonade, where she also sourced things from within the community.



## Peter Puppy

Peter Puppy loves playing in the park. He has lots of pals there and they often play games together and fly their paper planes right up the top of the playground equipment to see whose plane can fly through the sky the furthest. That is why we decided to learn about planes, how they fly and who flies. We also spend some time creating our very own paper planes to fly around preschool just like Peter Puppy does at the park. The children loved this interest area asking lots of questions, sharing their thinking, and making several planes using paper. The children particularly enjoyed the creative based element to this weeks exploration of Peter Puppy and all of them have successfully been pronouncing the 'P' sound while learning about and flying their paper planes around Preschool. Thank you to the families who have brought in books helping us to learn how to construct our planes.





# Little Endeavours



Another busy month has passed us by. The children have really enjoyed engaging in the hands on and sensory elements of our activities.



**Rainmakers** - During Reconciliation Week we made rainmakers. We talked about their history and why the Aboriginals used them, as we added rice to the painted tubes – concentration and great fine motor skills were needed so that the rice went in the tube and not on the floor, and then as we stapled and taped the tubes closed. More rather than less rice was needed to make the sound and we discovered that when some children added more rice than was suggested they found that there was no sound at all. A great learning experience.



## Lavender Lemonade -

Everyone loved our Lavender Lemonade and all were involved in the process with most preschoolers wanting to stay the whole time and help me. We read the recipe, cut lavender and squeezed lemons using our fine motor skills, measured ingredients and mixed everything together. Great collaboration and team work with the bonus of a tasty drink for afternoon tea.



**Peg and Paddlepop Stick Planes** – The preschoolers are great designers and we had some fantastic Peg and Paddlepop Planes, some with Propellors. Everyone thought hard about how they wanted their plane to look and we discovered lots more P words as we talked while they worked. They were so enthusiastic as they flew their planes around we had to do some running repairs.



# SUSTAINABILITY

**Vege Garden:** The children have watching our vegetable with keen interest and have taken so much pleasure at being able to pick the succulent lettuce which they have help grow. There was so much excitement as we picked lettuce and carrots. The children were surprised to find purple carrots as they were pulled out of the soil. There was so much that some of the children made a delivery truck by using one of the dump trucks to load all the vegetables to bring up to the kitchen. With so many eager little helpers the children always enjoy the job of watering them with rainwater collected in our water tub. Over the last couple of weeks, we have enjoyed fresh lettuce with cheese on crackers for afternoon tea. It is always so much better eating food which we have grown in our garden. The children have expressed wonder and interest in their environment and have shown and increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition.



**Book Exchange:** Our book basket has been popular with children developing a interest for books and reading. Our book basket is quite low on books and donations would be so much appreciated of any children's books no longer used so that someone else may enjoy them. The return basket is available in the mornings in the foyer. The book basket will be put out in the afternoons please feel free to browse you might find a book that you will enjoy at home.

**Return and Earn:** I am so pleased to report that with all the bottles everyone is bringing in we are making fortnightly trips to the Berowra Post Office collection point and our target continues to rise. We have close on \$70 towards sponsoring the care of a Koala. **Thank you for your ongoing collections.**

**Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:** It is always fun creating with Jo. The children have been using old CDs and have created unique and interesting CD people using a variety of recycled items. By participating in these craft experiences the children gain a better understanding of the importance of recycling and reducing landfill. We continue to set an example to recycle wherever possible by separating cardboard, paper and plastic into our recycling bins. It is wonderful to see how aware the children have become as they always make sure to put rubbish into the correct bins.





## Return and Earn Project

Thank you for your continued donations of bottles and containers. The children are really enjoying being part of this project and look forward to counting and categorising the items as they arrive. The children are having fun whilst learning about one of the many practical solutions in reducing landfill which has such a devastating effect on our precious planet. Thank you to everyone for your contributions. Please keep those bottles coming, it is so much appreciated. Thank you to Michael, at the Berowra Post Office for his continued support in processing your collections. Together we can make a significant difference, no matter how small.

**We would appreciate your help in collecting drink containers with the 10c deposit label on the bottle/cans to add to our collection and together we will help make a difference in reducing waste. You will find a big blue container undercover outside in which to deposit your bottles. Once a fortnight this will be taken to a collection point and redeemed for cash.**



### Eligible drink containers

Under Return and Earn, most empty 150-millilitre to 3-litre drink containers are eligible for a 10-cent refund when presented to an approved NSW collection point.

Container materials that are eligible for a refund include PET, HDPE, glass, aluminium, steel, liquid paperboard.

Containers should be empty, uncrushed, unbroken and have the original label attached.

Wine, spirits, cordial and plain milk containers are not eligible.

Throughout the year we discuss the importance of recycling, you may soon find your children sharing this information with you at home!

***Together we can make a significant difference, no matter how small.***





# Mission Australia Parenting Course



## **CIRCLE OF SECURITY**

### **Free Seven Session parenting program**

At times all parents feel lost or without a clue about what our child might need from us. Imagine what it might feel like if you were able to make sense of what your child was really asking from you. The Circle of Security® Parenting™ program is based on decades of research about how secure parent-child relationships can be supported and strengthened.

#### **Learning Objectives of the Training:**

- Understand your child's emotional world by learning to read the emotional needs
- Support your child's ability to successfully manage emotions
- Enhance the development of your child's self esteem
- Honor your innate wisdom and desire for your child to be secure

**Date:** 6 August – 17 September, Fridays

**Time:** 10am-12pm

**Address:** Mission Australia, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 1 Coronation Street, Hornsby

**Cost:** Free

**Please contact Jan to register: [hej@missionaustralia.com.au](mailto:hej@missionaustralia.com.au)**



## Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):

On Monday, May 31st the Preschool was visited by Department of Education Authorised Officers as we underwent the physical inspection of the Accreditation Process. The Authorised Officers (AO's) were

with us for most of the day and their job is to observe the Preschool in action, discuss all areas of our service and sight documentation and support material to authenticate the Self Assessment that we had submitted. Of course it is always a nerve wracking day however, the AO's were very personable and very interested in our service and educational programme. At the completion of the day they did give us some very positive feedback about the quality of our educators and educational programme which was pleasing to hear. It will take up to 6 weeks to be given our rating and so we wait expectantly for those results. Thank you to all our Preschool families for your ongoing support.

ASSESSMENT

## Dates to Remember!

June 28– July 8th	Holiday Programme
August 2nd –13th	Living Eggs
August 18th	Wednesday Schoolie's Excursion to the Park
August 23rd	Book Week
August 31st	Father's Day Breakfast



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