

State of Play

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF PLAYGROUP SA

ISSUE 2 2013

AUTUMN
CRAFT
ACTIVITIES

FUN
FROM
**THE
ZOO!**

THE MAGIC OF
MOVEMENT

FLIP
OVER
FOR
SA KIDS

Fun at Playgroup at the Zoo! For more photos see pages 8 and 9.



LETTER FROM PGSA EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Welcome to another edition of *State of Play*! We hope you are enjoying our new Playgroup magazine. It's been a busy start to the year with Easter Playgroup, Playgroup @ the Zoo and the Pregnancy, Babies and Children's Expo! We would like to thank all who attended these events and made them fabulous. We would particularly like to thank our volunteers, stall holders, staff and the Adelaide Zoo for their contributions to a very successful Playgroup @ the Zoo – have a browse through some of the photos included in this edition.

Don't forget to keep an eye on our What's On page for future Playgroup events, workshops and accredited courses so that you can join in the fun. You can also like us on facebook at www.facebook.com/playgroupsa.

Playgroup SA staff have been busy visiting various

Playgroups. Some of which include Old Cottage, Elizabeth and Parafield Gardens Playgroups. We would like to remind our members that we thoroughly enjoy getting out to visit groups. Looking for more activity ideas? Want someone to run group time? Need your Playgroup questions answered? You can arrange a visit from one of the Playgroup SA staff for all of these reasons and more, just give us a call on 1800 171 882.

Playgroup in SA is so wonderful and unique! I would like to thank all of our Volunteer Playgroup Coordinators for the time, commitment and tireless effort that you give week after week to make this so. And my grateful thanks to the volunteer Board of Management for your continued support of Playgroup SA. ●

Carley Jones



State of Play is the official magazine of Playgroup SA

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THE MAGIC OF MOVEMENT

We all love to see our little ones on the move. Without us even knowing, each movement our child makes from birth is a stepping stone in their development.

Here we discuss suggestions on how to have fun with such movements.

RACHAEL STROUD, PLAYGROUP SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Being a parent can sometimes feel a little overwhelming, with terms such as skill and key competencies thrown around. But rest assured that once you break these terms down, you'll find you are already encouraging your child to enjoy and develop these 'skills' in everyday life and activities.

Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) are movement patterns that involve different parts of the body and they include skills such as walking, running, hopping, skipping and catching. These skills are important because they are the building blocks or foundation movements for more complex and specialised skills required by children, throughout their lives, to competently and confidently play different games, sports and recreational activities offered at school and in the community, even fun activities such as riding a scooter or bike.

Each child develops at different stages. The more we use words of encouragement for our little ones as they take part in fun activities, the more they will look forward to taking part in the future.

Here are some fundamental movement skill suggestions. These suggestions are a guideline for children aged three years and over, in a safe environment:

A breakdown of Fundamental Movement Skills

Locomotor Skills (transport the body from A to B):

- Walking
- Running
- Jumping
- Skipping
- Climbing
- Hopping
- Crawling
- Marching
- Leaping
- Galloping
- Rolling/spinning
- Sliding

Core Stability Skills (lower body still, upper body moves):

- Bending
- Twisting
- Pulling
- Pushing
- Swaying
- Rolling
- Balancing
- Stretching

Manipulative Skills (moving objects with the body)

- Throwing
- Catching
- Kicking
- Hitting
- Striking
- Rolling (a ball)

What children could be enjoying at three

Three year olds can still be developing the basic skills required for play. They may be able to enjoy:

- Climbing jungle gyms and ladders;
- Throwing bean bags or rolled up socks into a laundry basket;

- Running on their toes playing chasey;
- Balancing on one leg for a short time;
- Kicking a ball towards a target; and
- Crawling through tunnels, pushing/pulling cars or trains.

What children could be enjoying at four

Four year olds are developing quickly and learn a lot from their experiences and from their play environment. They may be able to enjoy:

- Gallop, hop forward – fun to do to music, such as 'Old Macdonald' – imitate animals (horse, rabbit);
- Skipping games; and
- Throwing a ball overhand, kicking a large rolling ball.

What children could be enjoying at five

Five year olds begin to display a variety of styles of play, including copying others, creative play, and making up their own games or activities. They may be able to enjoy:

- Running through an obstacle course avoiding objects;
- Skipping forward;
- Maintaining balance on a moveable platform; and
- Throwing a ball with direction and force.

Movement and activity time

- Gross motor skills: larger movements of arms, legs, feet, or the entire body (crawling, running and jumping);
- Fine motor skills: smaller actions, such as grasping an object between the thumb and a finger or using the lips and tongue to taste objects. Motor skills usually develop together since many activities depend on the coordination of gross and fine motor skills.

Research suggests that children aged three to five years should be active for around three hours a day to nurture their gross motor development.

Children would benefit from opportunities to practise FMS as part of their daily routines. These activities are also a great form of physical exercise.

Children can spread out their physical activities and do not need to do this all at once. Children under five years of age tend to have a natural tendency to be active in sporadic bouts and accumulating physical activity throughout the day suits their natural movement behaviour and protects against long periods of inactivity. We all have days when we feel we have more energy than others though, as do children.

Here at Playgroup SA we have many resources and activities to help support our members with fun activities and playtime. Please contact us if you would like us to provide you with some of these fun-filled suggestions. ●

PHYSICAL PLAY IDEAS FOR TODDLERS

MARTINA BUTTON



Playgroup is sometimes the only opportunity children have to explore new skills – including physical play. Playing and being physically active is fundamental to children and the early stages of their development.

What is physical play?

Physical play involves children being active with their bodies, their whole bodies – arms, legs, trunks, upper and lower body from the fingertips down to the tips of their toes.

Physical activity can involve unplanned ‘free’ play, walking or pedalling to and from a destination, or even helping around the house, helping with dusting, sweeping and in the garden.

Active play gives children the freedom to move at their own pace, and in their natural stop-start pattern.

Benefits of children being physically active:

- Help achieve and maintain a healthy weight;
- Build strong bones and muscles;
- Improve balance, movement and coordination skills;
- Develop new movement skills and imagination;
- Teaches children about their bodies (head, toes, fingers, elbows, knees, etc) and special awareness;
- Promote social skills through interactions (especially turn taking);
- Encourages self-confidence and independence; and
- Supports brain development.

Physical play ideas for babies

(0 to 1 years) at Playgroup

Babies are able to practise movements such as reaching, grasping, pulling, pushing and playing with people, objects and toys. Ideas include:

- Feeling grass, sand and the wind on their face;

- Grasping leaves;
- Hearing cars and birds;
- Looking at the sky;
- Sitting secured in a parent’s lap/arms on a swing;
- Rolling a ball;
- Sensory mats for lying and crawling on;
- Mobiles that infants can look at and grasp;
- Textured fabric and books, fabric balls/cubes;
- Push and pull along toys; and
- For newborns and infants who haven’t started walking yet, physical activity involves tummy time and safe floor play.

Physical play ideas for toddlers

(1 to 3 years) at Playgroup

Toddlers are energised and keen to get into everything! They are great at exploring their environment and what the world and the objects in it have to offer. Ideas include:

- Select active toys and play materials that encourage movement and help develop skills such as: balls, hula hoops, tricycles, parachute, doll prams and pull along carts;
- Let children explore and make up their own activities;
- Sing and play to action songs such as: ‘Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes’, ‘Hokey Pokey’ and ‘Everybody Clap’;
- Build and create: ideas include cubby houses, sandpit play, blocks and craft exploration;
- Explore the dress-ups box – learning to dress oneself is a great way for toddlers to have fun and learn about their bodies; and
- Use play kits (doctor/vet/nurse kit, hairdresser, builder and day at the beach, teacher, office worker and safari – the list of play kits is limited only by your imagination).

Physical play ideas for pre-schoolers (3 to 5 years) at Playgroup

Preschoolers have similar active play needs to toddlers. It is often only their size, skills and developmental needs that separate them. Ideas include:

- Play with different sized balls;
- Twirl and run with streamers/scarves and ribbons;
- Blow bubbles and chase them through the air;
- Create an obstacle course; and
- Dance and pretend to move like animals.



Other ideas for Playgroup

- Create an obstacle course made from everyday objects; such as: pillows and cushions to climb over, a parent controlled broom handle to limbo under, chair legs to tunnel under;
- Play balance games: lie a skipping rope on the ground and practice walking on it – add a bell or cup of water for increased difficulty. You can also use masking tape or chalk;
- Play bean bag toss and pass the bean bag games; and
- Sing active partner songs and games, such as 'Row, row, row your boat'.

A reminder for adults

Role model play, including physical play, focusing on what children can do, not on what they haven't yet mastered. Play is the creative way in which children begin to learn. Play gives children the freedom to move at their own pace and decide how they will play, what they will do and where it will take place. ●

Martina Button is a Playgroup Support and Development Officer at Playgroup SA.



AUTUMN IS A TIME TO... **PLAY!**

MARTINA BUTTON

Autumn is one of my favourite seasons of the year. The autumn leaves are falling from the trees in backyards, in playgrounds and in the suburbs.

On our way home from a busy day of work and school, my three children and I often look up at the trees to see which tree is losing its leaves the quickest. The beautiful orange and brown leaves gently float from side to side as they make their way to the ground and in the morning when we open the front door to hop in the car for the school run, there they are, waiting at our doorstep to greet us.

We all hop in the car but not before we stomp on the leaves first – just to hear the *crunch* under our feet!

Oh, the sounds and senses of autumn – a season of fun activities and adventures for everyone. Try this easy autumn tree activity at Playgroup.

Autumn Tissue Paper Tree

You will need

- A4 white or coloured paper;
- Green and brown coloured pencils;
- Brown, yellow and orange tissue paper;
- Scissors; and
- Glue Stick.

What to do

1. Colour some green grass on the bottom of the A4 paper and with the brown pencil draw a tree trunk and some branches.
2. Tear or cut up with scissors the coloured tissue paper. Do this roughly to make small autumn leaf shapes.
3. Stick tissue paper on the branches of your tree and on the grass to look like fallen autumn leaves

Now you have a beautiful autumn tree collage to stick on the fridge or display around the playroom at Playgroup. Here's another fun idea for Playgroup.

Autumn nature walk

Autumn is a wonderful time to take Playgroup families on a nature walk around the Playgroup grounds or down to the local park, or down a quiet side street that has trees shedding their leaves. Children will be amazed by all the nature treasures they will find along the way.

You will need

- Plan ahead and arrange for each child to bring their own recycled shopping bag;
- Crayon or pencil;
- Plastic spade for digging up worms, twigs and leaves (digging without harming the natural environment);
- Magnifying glass or binoculars (ask children to bring them from home if they are child friendly. Some shops and supermarkets sell plastic toy binoculars and magnifying glasses, ideal for a nature walk with children); and
- Print off a little nature check list for the children to look for on their Playgroup Nature Walk. The children can add objects to their bags or tick if off on their checklist if they find a particular object. Here's an example:

Playgroup Nature Walk Checklist

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Autumn Leaf | <input type="checkbox"/> Stone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gumnut | <input type="checkbox"/> Pinecone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird | |

What to do

Set out on your autumn nature walk, look for insects and worms, autumn leaves and pinecones; make it fun, relaxing, talk about the things you see. When the children arrive back to Playgroup they can make a collage with their findings, or pop them in a special shoe box as treasure. ●

Martina Button is a Playgroup Support and Development Officer at Playgroup SA.



WINTER WARMERS ACTIVITY

What better way to keep warm in winter than to go outside and jump in puddles? Plan ahead at Playgroup: tell your families you will be jumping in puddles next week so be sure to bring to Playgroup:

- Raincoat (if families don't have a wet weather raincoat buy a roll of garbage bags and cut out two arms and a head hole);
- Umbrella;
- Scarf/gloves/hat/beanie;
- Water-proof boots;
- A towel; and
- And a change of clothes, especially dry socks.

Take the children outside to some puddles and let them jump and splash! Mums, dads, grandparents, carers and friends can all join in too – you will be in fits of laughter within seconds and it will go down as one of the best days in your child's life.

Fun you can have outside in the rain and puddles

- Play follow the leader;
- Skip (try to) around the puddles, walk (or hop) through the puddles, splash in the puddles and twirl umbrellas 'Singing in the Rain' style.

Songs you can sing in the rain

- 'It's Raining, It's Pouring';
- 'Singing in the Rain'; and
- 'My Favourite Things'

After all the puddle jumping, go inside dry off and put some dry socks on. Sit down on the mat in a circle for a story. The children will be so tired from jumping puddles there might even be some sleepy eyes on the mat.

Playing in the rain is a wonderful, fun outdoor activity to do during winter. As long as everyone is dressed for the weather there is nothing to fear, and so much laughter and fun to be had.

PLAYGROUP AT THE ZOO!

Playgroup @ the Zoo took place on 20 March in celebration of National Playgroup Week. This event was introduced by Amanda Blair and included performances by The Amazing Drumming Monkeys and Sue Harris Puppets as well as face painting, a jumping castle and Playgroup information and activities. Photos were taken by Marta Russell Photography.





EASTER PLAYGROUP



PLAYGROUP IN SCHOOLS

MARTINA BUTTON



The Australian Government Initiative Universal Access is in full swing. As you know pre-schoolers are now receiving a minimum of 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year of quality early learning education in kindergartens throughout Australia.

This initiative is creating positive future outcomes for education and children. But there is a slight downside to Universal Access – some weekly Playgroup sessions in Kindergartens have had to pack up their toys, books, paints and playdough and go home, due to losing access to their kindergarten locations for Playgroup.

This is a solution to this – Playgroups in Schools!

Playgroup SA is approaching public and private schools to open their doors to families in their local communities to provide access to OHSC (out of hours school care) rooms, gyms and halls on a weekly basis for a two hour Playgroup session.

Playgroup is a strong link into a life-long chain of learning – Playgroups in schools offer an exciting opportunity to support parents and carers in the preparation for transitioning their children successfully towards school.

What are the benefits of Playgroups in schools to children and parents/carers?

- Familiarity of environment and surroundings;
- Familiarity of staff, parents, carers, volunteers, students and friends;
- Opportunities to visit the school library, art room, science room, gym, music room, school canteen, etc;
- Decreased levels of worry or anxiety from the parent/carers and children when the time comes to transition to school;
- Early learning exposure and awareness to the school environment (children understanding and relating to 'When you go to school you will...');
- Older siblings already at school and the convenience

of staying in the one location to take a younger child to Playgroup;

- Parent and carers feel more connected to the school community before their child has started school;
- Possibility for parents/carers to volunteer and support in both Playgroup and the school;
- Older school students mentoring/budding up with pre-schoolers preparing them for starting school; and
- School community connectedness and connections for children, parents and carers.

Playgroup provides opportunities for children, parents and carers to learn through play, to develop skills in preparation for school, and to provide a time and a place for parents/carers to spend quality time with their special little people.

Playgroup is a time to:

- Socialise, share parenting stories and services and supports within the community;
- Be creative with paint, play-dough, glitter and glue;
- Practise being physically active in the sand pit sifting sand, water painting the outside fence, stacking blocks, zooming pretend cars around, cooking up a feast in the home corner and sitting quietly on soft cushions and sharing a book with some friends on the playroom floor; and
- Share laughter and smiles, praise and pride – It is a time to engage, have fun and play!

If your school is interested in starting a Playgroup and being a part of an incredible community connection, contact Playgroup SA for further information about Affiliation, Benefits and Support. Playgroup SA Free Call: 1800 171 882. ●

Martina Button is a Playgroup Support & Development Officer with Playgroup SA.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS & ACCREDITED COURSES

WORKSHOPS

PLAY AND PLAYGROUP WORKSHOP

Find out the value and benefits of play and Playgroup, gain age appropriate play ideas that will assist in children's development and overall, have fun.

When: Thursday 11 April

Time: 9.30am to 12pm

Cost: Playgroup SA Coordinators & Members: \$10 (including GST)
Non-members: \$35 (including GST)

COORDINATORS WORKSHOP

Are you a new coordinator, or thinking about starting a Playgroup? Then this course will provide you with all the information that you need. This course includes tips on how to effectively run a Playgroup, it will provide you with play ideas and will show you the value and benefits of play. This is a perfect opportunity to start building a network of Playgroup support with both the Playgroup SA staff and other coordinators attending the workshop.

When: Thursday 20 June

Time: 9.30am to 12pm

Cost: Playgroup SA Coordinators & Members: \$10 (including GST) Non-members: \$35 (including GST)

PHYSICAL PLAY WORKSHOP

Find out the value and benefits of physical play, gain age appropriate play ideas that will assist with children's development and overall, have fun.

When: Thursday 16 May

Time: 10am to 12pm

Cost: Playgroup SA Coordinators & Members: \$10 (including GST) Non-members: \$35 (including GST)

ACCREDITED COURSES

CHILD-SAFE ENVIRONMENTS COURSE

Learn about the issues of child protection and gain your certificate in Child-Safe Environments (CSE).

When: Thursday 6 June

Time: Registration: 8.45am

Course: 9am to 4.30pm

Cost: Playgroup SA Coordinators: FREE
Playgroup SA Members: \$25 (including GST)
General Public: \$75 (including GST)

Please Note: Playgroup SA Child-Safe Environments Course is suitable for teacher registration in South Australia.

ACCREDITED SENIOR FIRST AID COURSE

This nationally recognised one day practical course will provide you with everything you need to know to provide first aid response, life support and the management of casualty(s) until the arrival of medical or other assistance.

In preparation for the one day course, you will be required to complete an online workbook*. Once you have completed this, you will need to provide your certificate of completion at the practical day.

When: Thursday 11 July

Time: 9am to 4.30pm

Cost: Playgroup SA Members: \$100 (including GST)
Non Members: \$131 (including GST)

*Options available for those with no internet access

CPR COURSE

A three hour practical course that will teach you everything you need to know to perform CPR.

When: AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Contact Playgroup SA for more info

Cost: Playgroup SA members: \$40 (including GST)
Non-members: \$61 (including GST)

COMPETITION WINNERS!

Congratulations to the following Playgroup SA competition winners:

Prize: Deluxe 2 Bed Bungalow Accommodation
Two nights for two adults and two children
ADELAIDE SHORES

Winner: Deb Lane – Old Cottage Playgroup, Reynella

Competition: Playgroup @ the Zoo – PGSA Members Prize Draw

Prize: 3 nights accommodation in a 2 bedroom apartment
Modra's Apartments, Tumby Bay

Winner: Leanne Pridham, Kulpara Playgroup

Competition: Early Bird Family Membership, Playgroup SA

Winners & Prizes:

Cleve Aussie Sports Playgroup – Modern Teaching Aid prize pack
Coomandook Playgroup – \$200 Educational Experience Voucher
CYP Gym Jams, Ardrossan – \$100 Educational Experience Voucher
Fishtails Playgroup, Mount Gambier - \$50 Educational Experience
Competition: Early Bird Playgroup Affiliation, Playgroup SA

Member Benefits 2013

Ask Playgroup SA
about Professional
Memberships on
180 171 882



Playgroup SA Family Membership:

Why should I become a Playgroup SA Member?

Along with 4,500 other South Australian family members, enjoy the following Playgroup SA Membership benefits:

- A membership card that is also the Australian Baby Card (valued at \$30) offering you hundreds of discounts online and from numerous South Australian based businesses.
- An electronic version of *Totline*, the national member Magazine, four times a year. An excellent communication tool for activity ideas, upcoming events, competitions and general information for families and people working in the early childhood / children's services sector. As well as as a state based magazine.
- A copy of our state based publication, the 2-in-1 *State of Play / SA Kids Magazine*. This magazine includes practical, local information about raising children, as well as original articles by experienced journalists, childhood professionals and parents. The magazine covers all stages from pregnancy to the teenage years and *State of Play* is specifically targeted to families with 0-5 year olds.
- Subscription to *ePlayNEWS*, Playgroup SA's state based membership newsletter (if an email address is provided) which is distributed six times per year.
- Discounted entry to Playgroup SA events including Playgroup @ the Zoo.
- Discounted prices to courses including Senior Accredited First Aid and Child Safe Environments.
- Discounted Playgroup SA workshops including, Messy Play, Physical Play, Christmas craft and more. Comprehensive public liability & personal accident insurance whilst you and your children are attending an affiliated playgroup or playgroup activity anywhere in SA.
- FREE tickets to the Pregnancy, Baby & Children's Expo (distributed via playgroups).
- FREE upgrade to Full Association Membership; This level of membership entitles you to voting rights at Playgroup SA's Annual General Meeting and Special General Meetings and to stand for election on the Board of Management.
- The right to attend as many affiliated playgroups as you wish!

We hope to see you at Playgroup in 2013!



PLAYGROUP SA
Playing, learning, supporting families

**For more information
please contact
Playgroup SA on
Free Call 1800 171 882**