



The Community Place Kindergarten Newsletter September 2016

PREPARING FOR PREP

With only one more term before many of our children head off to Prep, schools are having interviews with all new children. This gives them a very general idea about the child, including the ability to communicate and complete tasks with pen and paper.

But what is really important for children to know and to be able to do to have a successful start at school? Counting to 20? Writing their name? Saying the alphabet? Identifying colours? Drawing shapes?

Research shows that these are not as important as other basic issues, such as sleep, food, organisation and social interactions.

Let's start with the night before school. Children need a good night's sleep to be able to cope with the demands of a day at school.

The length and type of sleep that children have can impact on their IQ¹. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that five year olds have **11 hours sleep**². It also links insufficient sleep and poor sleeping habits with health problems such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, moodiness or

irritability, reduced memory function and delayed reaction time.

In the morning, a well-rested child is more likely to be active, cooperative and happy. Once awake, what a child eats is crucial for educational and social success and for short- and long-term health.

In the 1990s, the University of Bristol commenced a longitudinal study of over 4,000 children. Known as *The Children of the 90s Study*, it has provided data on an incredible range of health, social, educational and family issues. Two papers have reported on a link between junk food diets in early childhood and lower IQ.

In 2008, *What Three-Year-Olds Eat Affects their School Performance Many Years Later* defined 'junk food' as 'highly processed foods, take-aways, and foods high in fat and sugar such as crisps, sweets and fizzy drinks'³.

In 2011, *Junk Food Diets in Early Childhood May Lower IQ* further looked at the link between the higher IQ of well-nourished children and that of those who had a diet high in processed foods.

The results showed that, after taking account of potentially influential factors, a predominantly processed food diet at the age

¹<http://www.bumc.bu.edu/pulmonary/files/PDFs/Faculty/gottlieb3.pdf>

²

<http://www.aasmnet.org/articles.aspx?id=1839>

³

<http://bristol.ac.uk/alspac/news/2008/31.html>

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of 3 was associated with a lower IQ at the age of 8.⁴

More recently, in August 2012, the University of Adelaide published *Dietary patterns at 6, 15 and 24 months of age are associated with IQ at 8 years of age*⁵. Studying over 7,000 children, it looked at the link between eating habits of very young children and their IQ at age eight. The results showed a higher IQ was more likely in children with a healthy diet than those who had a junk food diet.

But diet does not just affect IQ: in the short-term, food affects behaviour. In the long-term, it affects overall health.

The Australian National Health and Medical Research Institute (NHMRI) provides the following recommendations for a healthy diet for children. It also encourages water as a drink for children.

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/n30.pdf>.

In 2012, Brisbane dietician, Joan Breakey, summarized her many years of work with children and the effect of diet on their behaviour⁶.

The next area where parents can assist their child in having success in school is by providing an organised environment and one in which children take responsibility for their own belongings and actions.

The morning routine is busy in most households. I write this from the experience of being a sole parent who worked full-time from when my children were aged five, seven and nine years. It's also easy to be wise in hindsight.

The mornings can be frustrating, stressful and rushed for all concerned. Many of us fall into patterns of behaviour. A parent says something, the child doesn't respond; the parent keeps saying the same thing (with

increased tension/threats) until the child complies (or the parent does the task). The next morning, it's the same again. Sound familiar?

Time for a family conference. Look at the big picture. What does everyone want/need? To get out of the house in a timely and calm manner every day. How can this be achieved? Involve children in seeking solutions and making decisions about the morning routine. As active participants, they're more likely to comply. List all the jobs that need to occur in the morning, approximate time frames and who does what task. For children who need reminders about routine tasks, take photos of the sequence and put them on the fridge.

One of the biggest tension makers in the morning is having on the TV/computer/iPad. Turn them off.

After a couple of weeks, review how things are going. Praise positives, discuss negatives. The hormone released in stressful situations, cortisol, affects how children (and adults) manage internal and external difficulties. Stress impairs cognition, particularly memory. Starting the school day calm and alert can only help children's success in the classroom.

To reduce the anxieties that may occur during the day, talk to your children about events that could be stressful

Where will they meet you? What to do if you are late? What if they leave their lunch box/hat/water bottle at home? What if someone is mean to them? By discussing these matters calmly, children can be empowered to cope with situations.

The morning routine at home is also a great opportunity to encourage children to become independent and to take responsibility for their belongings. If children pack their own bags, they know that they have items such as their pencil case, lunch box, homework, water bottle and library bag. Accepting responsibility for these things ensures a greater chance that they'll all come home again.

But make it easy for children, too. Can he/she open containers and wrapping? Can he/she open/close the water bottle? How much mess is made? Provide a napkin, if necessary. How long does it take to eat? At school, children often only have about ten minutes to eat. Does the lunch box easily fit into the bag?

As many items look the same, how will your child know his/her own belongings? Apart from naming EVERYTHING, let them decorate their pencil case, tie coloured fabric on the school

bag, draw a smiley face inside the hat and have a marker on the library bag and track top.

Children have to manage their own clothing. Let them dress themselves so they know how to put things on and take them off. Dads might take their sons to a public toilet so they are familiar with the boys' toilets at school.

Starting Prep is a big event for children and their families. However, a successful time at school is not about knowing letters, numbers, colours, shapes and staying between the lines. The best support parents can give their children is to ensure that they have

- a good night's sleep
- fresh, nutritious food
- water to drink
- an active role in an organised morning routine
- opportunities to take responsibility for their own belongings
- manageable food and clothing
- easily identifiable items

As your children approach their Prep year at school, perhaps your family can consider its role in preparation not just for your child's education, but for a healthy life.



Transition Statements

Next term, I will be writing *Transition Statements* for children going to school. These are a summary of children's progression during the year in key developmental areas. Parents are welcome to discuss their child's statement with me and can choose to give a copy to the school.

The format I use is from the Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority (QCAA). For more information on Transition Statements, please visit https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/qklg_pd_transition_info_parents.pdf.

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<http://bristol.ac.uk/alspac/news/2011/7.html>

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/news/news55161.html>

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/ockhamsrazor/diet-and-adhd/4255016>

Assessment and Rating

The centre has received its draft rating after our Assessment visit from our Authorised Officer, Damon Gwinnell from the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care (OECEC).

The kindergarten was assessed as 'Meeting' the National Quality Standard (NQS) in

- QA1 Educational Program and Practice
- QA2 Children's Health and Safety
- QA3 Physical Environment
- QA4 Staffing Arrangements
- QA6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities and
- QA7 Leadership and Governance

The kindergarten was assessed as 'Exceeding' the NQS in

- QA 5 Relationships with Children.

The kindergarten now has two weeks if it wants to appeal against the decision and to provide more evidence to support a different rating.

After that, the rating becomes final and is registered on the ACECQA website and displayed within the centre.

ACECQA **How National Quality Standard ratings work**

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a new benchmark for the quality of children's education and care services in Australia. The NQS covers most long day care, family day care, preschool/kindergarten and outside school hours care services. Services are assessed and rated using the seven quality areas, 18 standards and 58 elements that make up the NQS.

58 Elements are assessed when Regulatory Authority Officers visit your child's service
Elements are assessed as being met or not met.

18 Standards are rated
 If all elements are met, the standard will be rated Meeting National Quality Standard or Exceeding National Quality Standard.
 If one or more elements are not met, the standard will be rated Working Towards National Quality Standard.

Seven Quality Areas are rated
 The quality areas will be rated by calculating the rating of all the standards within the quality area.

- If a quality area or regulation is not met and poses an unacceptable risk to the health, wellbeing or safety of children the service will be given Significant Improvement Required for the quality area and overall rating. This will usually mean that urgent action is needed to fix the problem.
- If one or more standards are rated Working Towards National Quality Standard, the quality area will be Working Towards National Quality Standard.
- If all standards are met, the quality area will be Meeting National Quality Standard.
- If at least two of the standards are rated Exceeding National Quality Standard, and any other standards are met, the quality area will be rated Exceeding National Quality Standard. *Additional criteria for QA1 may apply to preschool programs

Your service receives the overall rating

More information is available from ACECQA • www.acecqa.gov.au • 1300 4 ACECQA (1300 422 327)

National Quality Standard quality areas:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

ACECQA **National Quality Standard Ratings**

Most services will receive one of these middle three ratings. A service's overall rating is calculated from its results in the seven quality areas.

Working Towards
 National Quality Standard

The overall rating will be Working Towards if one or more quality areas is rated Working Towards.

HOW IT COULD LOOK

- Mix of quality areas rated Meeting and Exceeding, and at least one quality area rated Working Towards.
- OR
- All seven quality areas rated Working Towards.

Meeting
 National Quality Standard

The overall rating will be Meeting if all quality areas are rated Meeting or higher.

HOW IT COULD LOOK

- Mix of quality areas rated Meeting and Exceeding.
- OR
- All seven quality areas rated Meeting.

Exceeding
 National Quality Standard

The overall rating will be Exceeding if four or more quality areas are rated Exceeding, including two of the key quality areas, QA1, QA5, QA6, QA7.

HOW IT COULD LOOK

- Four or more quality areas rated Exceeding, including two of the key areas.
- OR
- All seven quality areas rated Exceeding.

Rated EXCELLENT
 by ACECQA

The Excellent rating is the highest possible rating and can only be awarded by ACECQA. Providers with a service rated Exceeding National Quality Standard can choose to apply.

National Quality Standard quality areas:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

Significant Improvement Required

Is given when a service fails to meet requirements in a way that poses an unacceptable risk to the health, wellbeing or safety of children.

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Sep 5 Non-contact day- Alison	6	7	8	9
12 Fire visit	13	14 Last day term	15	16
19 HO	20 LI	21 DA	22YS	23
26 HO	27 LI	28 DA	29YS	30
Oct 3 Queen's Birthday	4	5	6	7

Annual General Meeting of The Community Place Inc

On enrolment, one parent becomes a member of The Community Place Incorporated. This is the governing body and employer for the organisation. This year's AGM will be on 14/09.

As required by the *Incorporated Associations Act 1981*, it is required to hold its Annual General Meeting to attend to three items of business:

1. To elect a new committee
2. To receive the audited financial reports from the previous financial year and
3. To appoint an auditor for the following year.

Reports from the President, Manager, Facilities Manager and Kindergarten Director are also received.

Positions on the committee are:

- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Should you want more details about serving on the committee, attending the committee meeting or obtaining a proxy form for the night, please contact the Secretary, Michele Yamada, at the centre.

Boyer Lectures

Each year, an eminent Australian presents the Boyer Lectures. The lectures *showcase great minds examining key issues and values*. This year's lectures are delivered by Sir Michael Marmot, President of the World Medical Association, Director of the Institute of Health Equity and a leading researcher on health inequality issues. His second lecture focuses on early childhood and is entitled *Give Every Child the Best Start* – essential listening for us all.

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/boyerlectures/>

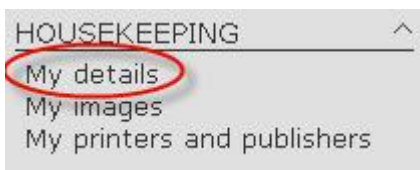
Stop Press

On September 1, the Premier and Minister for the Arts The Honourable Anastacia Palaszczuk and the Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism and Major Events The Honourable Kate Jones issues a joint media statement announcing that legislation had passed making Prep compulsory in Queensland schools. Please see this statement at

<http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2016/9/1/prep-year-now-compulsory-in-queensland>.

Change of details

Please remember that if any of your contact details change, you **MUST** inform me. If your child is unwell or hurt, we must have current contact details. Administrative staff also require current information. Thank you.



School Holiday Activities

With the school holidays coming up, the Brisbane City Council again offers many low- or no-cost activities for children of all ages in parks, libraries and other venues. Please visit

<https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/whats-on/featured/school-holiday-activities-for-kids>.



HAPPY... HOLIDAYS

Father's Day BBQ and Science Show

What a great event Kylie organised to celebrate Father's Day at kindy.

Mel from *Street Science* enthralled big and little people with her simple, but memorable science activities, including

- movement of air (with balloons, blowing cups off the children's heads and puffing smoke)
- making clouds (with liquid nitrogen) and
- making 'snow'.

Ray cooked the sausages to perfection on the BBQ and a good time was had by all. We hope all our dads had a lovely day.

