



CHILDREN HAVE NEVER BEEN VERY GOOD AT LISTENING TO THEIR ELDERS, BUT THEY HAVE NEVER FAILED TO IMITATE THEM. – James Baldwin

Star Kids Long Day
Care & Preschool

JANUARY
2024



ON *this* MONTH

At
Star Kids Long Day Care & Preschool

Preschool Graduation Ceremony
Australia Day
International Lego Day
Aboriginal Cultural Showcase



Preschool Graduation Ceremony, 2023

Star Kids Preschool celebrated its 9th Graduation ceremony on 20th January 2024. The ceremony was presided by the Managing Director and owner of the Preschool Md Khairul Islam. Hon Tony Burke MP (Leader of the House, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations and Minister for the Arts) was the Chief Guest of the ceremony who handed over the certificates to our graduating children. He also presented Awards to the Star Kids staff and educators for their excellent performance. We cherish and thank you all so much for being able to manage time and attend the ceremony. We express our gratitude to all parents, community members, families, and friends for making the day very special for all our graduating children. From Star Kids Team, we wish our Graduates a joyous, successful, and prosperous learning journey.

Please have a look on to next pages to see more images.











Australia Day



Australia Day is a day to reflect, respect and celebrate the Australian spirit and the best of this country – our mateship, our sense of community and our resilience. We find optimism and hope as we look to the future. Australians, and we celebrate our achievements by coming together and connecting with family, friends, and the community.



ABORIGINAL CULTURAL SHOWCASE

Australia's the largest gathering of Indigenous country musicians are gearing up to take Tamworth by storm at the seventh Annual Cultural Showcase. Held as part of the iconic Tamworth Country Music Festival, the Annual Cultural Showcase brings together some of the best and brightest Indigenous musicians this side of the Black Stump.

International Lego Day



International LEGO day is celebrated annually on 28th January, which marks the day the first patent for the Lego brick was submitted in Denmark. Children must figure out how to translate a two-dimensional image into a three-dimensional structure. This process nurtures problem-solving skills and creativity. Unlimited Possibilities: LEGO bricks are versatile and open-ended. This encourages children to use their imagination to create whatever they desire. In our centre, our children celebrated this day by taking part in various learning experiences. They showed their learning dispositions such as: creativity and were involved in their own development.



FOCUS: How to create an inviting play space

“EEEEKK! My kids are running around like crazy people and there is STUFF everywhere!
Been here?

Yep! I have too. WAYYYY too often. It seems like no matter what you say the entire house becomes a playground full of kids toys, craft and stuff!

I don't know about you but I find this so challenging and frustrating, and frankly having a mess everywhere stresses me out.

So, I went on a mission to find a solution, and today I'm sharing my 6 top tips that helped create a play space that saved my sanity and will hopefully save yours!

OK, are you ready? Here goes.

STEP 1: Choose a location that works for you. There are countless areas where you can set up a play space, but think about a convenient place that works for you, and gives your kids a chance to play independently, a space where you can perhaps read a book or keep an eye on your children whilst making dinner. For me it was the corner of the lounge room.

STEP 2: Designate the space with a rug or play mat and make it cosy Knowing that this is a space for play, mess and toys will help keep your stress levels down and all the “stuff” in one area.

Placing a rug or play mat down helps show your little one the boundaries without the need to put up a gate. Adding soft cushions or a tent can make the space feel safe and cosy. I used a rug and a single arm-chair so I could sit but not necessarily be part of the play.

STEP 3: Set up shelves and storage tubs at their level

When you are selecting items to put out for your little one, put them at a level at which they can independently retrieve them. You want to minimise their need to rely on you, thus fostering their independent choice and child-led play. Keep things on the floor or on low, open shelves. Then, at the end of an activity, (if they are old enough) get them to help you put everything away in the storage tubs. By having a place for everything, your little one knows where to find it and where to replace it. Tubs and baskets without lids seemed to work best for me.

STEP 4: Display 6-8 toys at a time, and rotate the rest each month Keep a few toys and books in your play space and a few more in your storage tubs. Then hide the rest away. Having only a few toys to choose from will help your little one focus as they play. An uncluttered environment helps them build an internal sense of order and calm. With the

burden of overstimulation lifted, they are free to learn from and appreciate each toy they endeavour to engage with. This really was the key to success and it made pack up so easy.

STEP 5: DO A CLEAN OUT and aim for open-ended toys

This is really the big one. We get given so much stuff, especially when our babies are just born or for their birthdays. Once a year, aim to do a clean out. When surveying toys, consider whether they inherently provide opportunities for your baby to use their imaginations, creativity or problem-solving skills — or if, conversely, they essentially do the “work” for them. Many toys capture kids’ attention at first because they are flashy and make noise, but after just a few minutes, they’ll get tossed aside because there is not much else to do with them. Let these ones go.

Blocks and stacking toys, kitchen play, dolls, arts and crafts, nature-based toys, and puzzles are some examples of open-ended toys that tend to provide for more learning experiences and extended periods of quality play. I literally donated 3 bags of toys to our local Toy Library of plastics and what I call “quick fix” toys - those that do the work for them. Providing my kids with only open-ended toys has made play much deeper and more creative.

STEP 6: Set up invitations to play

Whenever possible, set up invitations to play in your play space. You could do this when your little one is having a nap or ready for when they first wake up in the morning.

This gives them something to look forward to and also fosters some time for independent play. I still play our play every morning even though my kids are older. It is a saving grace as I know I am giving them the 10 minutes of undivided attention they need each day to feel loved, valued and seen.

Creating this designated play space was a real game changer for me and my family. I found the kids soon got the hang of packing away at the end of the day and they enjoyed feeling responsible and proud of their space. They also knew where to find everything so there was a lot less “MUM, Help!”



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: Gualtieri, Bianca. (2021, September 25). **How to Create an Inviting Play Space**. Retrieved from <https://happylittlepeople.co/blogs/resources/how-to-create-an-inviting-play-space>

CALENDARS



Learning about calendars with your child helps toddlers learn and become familiar with temporal concepts, new vocabulary, number sequencing and patterns.

You can talk about each month in the year, which are summer months, which are Winter. When is your birthday, when is your sibling's birthdays? Write in special dates and count-down to big events. You might even like to create your own, you can use a WORD template or create one.



HEALTH & SAFETY: 5 Ways to Practice Gratitude with Your Kids

This time of year, we're frequently reminded to give thanks for the good things in our lives. But when decorations come down and school starts back up, the prompts to practice gratitude fade away. So, how can we rewire our brains to recognize goodness year-round? To find out, we collected tips from gratitude guru and fellow parent Maryam Abdullah.

1. Discover what gratitude means for your family.

Gratitude can be a difficult concept for adults to grasp — let alone little ones. Maryam says **gratitude is really about recognizing goodness outside of ourselves**. Goodness can be big things, like happiness, love, family, and health. It can also be small things, like hugs, green lights, and ice cream. It's up to you to decide the goodness you want to recognize. Once you understand how gratitude aligns with your own values, you can start talking about it with your kids.

2. Share how goodness makes you feel. Practicing gratitude doesn't always have to be a formal act of recognition. It can be as simple or easy as thanking your child for a hug or kiss. Maryam says since children aren't necessarily able to verbalize things, parents should show their kids how to practice gratitude by doing it themselves.

"Parents can start demonstrating gratitude with babies before they speak their first word. And then once they become verbal, I think it's important to practice saying thanks to one another as a family. And not just saying thanks but actually describing how you feel."

Talking about how goodness makes us feel can help us better understand and manage our emotions. Maryam shared a simple example of how parents can show gratitude after a moment of goodness.

Goodness: Your neighbour came by and dropped off some tomatoes.

Recognition: I feel so thankful that she's our neighbour and that she's someone who shares with us. I feel so happy to be able to receive these gifts from her.

3. Ask your kids about their gratitude. Kids aren't always great at describing their feelings, so Maryam recommends sparking conversations based on four parts that make up the gratitude experience:

What we **NOTICE** in our lives for which we can be grateful
How we **THINK** about why we have been given those things

How we **FEEL** about the things we have been given
What we **DO** to express appreciation in turn

Maryam says asking Notice-Think-Feel-Do questions is a simple way to scaffold your child's understanding or perception of something that's good in their life.

NOTICE: I noticed that grandma brought you this new book.

THINK: What do you think about that?

FEEL: How does that make you feel?

DO: Is there something you want to do, to show them how you feel about receiving this new book?

4. Encourage your kids to document their gratitude. Along with prompting conversations, Maryam tells us parents can encourage their children to practice gratitude on their own through activities or rituals. Here are some easy ideas:

Gratitude Journal "Recognizing goodness in writing can be a ritual in the morning when they wake up or in the evening as a reflection about how the day went." **Photo Essay** "If writing isn't the right activity for your child, they could take pictures of things that they're grateful for and build up a library of photos of the good things and gifts in their lives."

5. Practice turning gratitude into a habit. Each time you demonstrate and talk about gratitude with your kids, you're helping them build valuable skills for their emotional toolbox. Maryam suggests trying to work gratitude into your family's daily rituals with activities.

"At the dinner table, have each family member talk about three good things they experienced that day. This can spark conversation between parents and children in ways that may be just really sweet and tender. It also could be a way for parents to get a glimpse of what's meaningful to their child."

Creating good habits is easier said than done. So be kind to yourself through the process!

"Sometimes, as parents we may feel like our kids haven't figured out all of those steps and that's okay. I think that's something we as parents need help, remembering too. This is something that they're still learning, and the more they practice that that skill will get stronger."



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: Bradley, Cailyn. (2021, October 27).
5 Ways to Practice Gratitude with Your Kids.
Retrieved from <https://www.kiwico.com/blog/parent-tips/5-ways-to-practice-gratitude-with-your-kids>



Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity surrounds us. Diverse cultures in early learning is a tremendous opportunity. We value and respect our families and staff's cultural background and enjoy participating in the wider community to share authentic cultural activities with children and families.

Ways we share cultural diversity

Sing and tell stories together. We read stories from a wide range of authors with diverse characters and storylines. We ask families to share stories that are special to them, support Home Languages, retell oral stories, encourage children to participate in oral storytelling.

Invite families to share Cultural celebrations happen throughout the year. These are opportunities for communicating and interacting across cultures. We encourage families to share important cultural holidays or celebrations in authentic ways. We organise inclusive activities that children share in together.

Use a range of media to share, learn and challenge stereotypes and discrimination.

IF THE WORLD WERE 100 PEOPLE

50 would be female | 50 would be male

26 would be children. There would be 75 adults, 8 of whom would be 65 and older.

There would be:

60 Asians

15 Africans

14 people from the Americas

11 Europeans

12 would speak Chinese, 5 Spanish, 5 English, 3 Arabic, 3 Hindi, 3 Bengali, 3 Portuguese, 2 Russian, 2 Japanese, 62 would speak other languages.

83 would be able to read and write. 17 would not.

Source: <https://www.geteduca.com/blog/sharing-diverse-cultures-early-learning/>

National Quality Framework | Quality Area 6:
Collaborative partnerships with families and communities



PLANK RACE

Short simple activities to get some active minutes in the day.

Plank Race. Everyone gets in a plank position along a horizontal line. On the "GO" command, the person in the back stands up and runs to the front of the line. As soon as this person gets back in a plank position, he screams "GO," and the next person in the back of the line gets up and runs to the front. Since it's a race, you have to mark the time at the first "go." Then you mark it again, the time when you covered the whole distance, and someone's head touches the farthest wall. Whatever time you've got, make sure that the next time you do this race, you beat it! A fun variation is when the person who moved from the back of the line gives the front person a high five before getting in a plank. So that would be a one-hand-plank for a few moments? Yep, but you can do it!