



Play is the beginning of knowledge – GEORGE DORSEY

Star Kids LDC &
Preschool



ON *this* MONTH

AT

Star Kids Long Day Care & Preschool

National Aboriginal & Torres Islander Children's Day

Dental Health Week

National Science Week

Children's Book Week

Community Engagement

Red Nose Day



National Aboriginal & Torres Islander Children's Day – AUGUST 4

Children's Day is a special time to celebrate the strengths, culture and future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

The 2025 theme "Little Footsteps, Big Future" recognises the path our children walk as they grow, guided by culture, supported by family, and surrounded by community.

Kids in the kitchen



At Star Kids, we place a strong emphasis on healthy eating and believe it is an essential part of children's overall wellbeing and learning. To extend this understanding in a meaningful and playful way, the children engaged in a kitchen dramatic role play where they pretended to prepare healthy meals. This activity encouraged them to explore the concept of nutritious food in a fun and imaginative setting, while also developing their social and communication skills. The children took on different roles such as chefs, customers, and helpers, which allowed them to collaborate, negotiate, and share responsibilities. They worked together to plan and "cook" their meals, discussing which foods were healthy and why, while also expressing their ideas confidently through verbal communication. This experience not only supported their creativity and role play but also reinforced their awareness of healthy eating habits, teamwork, and problem-solving in a hands-on and interactive way.



What Every Parent Should Know (Yes, Even You, Bandit!)

Let's talk about something a little bit itchy and a whole lot wriggly worms. Not the kind Bluey might dig up in the backyard, but the kind that can make little bottoms super itchy—especially at night. These are threadworms (also known as pinworms), and they love to sneak into preschool-aged kids' tummies... and sometimes the whole families, too.

What are the signs?

If your child has threadworms, you might notice them:

- Scratching their bottom
- Feeling a bit cranky or not themselves
- Not sleeping well
- Eating less than usual

Girls might also complain about itchiness in the vaginal area. You might even spot the little worms at night with a torch.

How do they spread?

Threadworms are tiny white worms, about 1 cm long, that live in the lower intestine. At night, the female worms sneak out to lay their eggs around the bottom area. That's when the itching starts.

Kids scratch, eggs get on their fingers, and—yep—they can swallow the eggs again. Worms are great at hide-and-seek too—they can hang around on toys, bedding, door handles, and even float around in household dust. The eggs can survive for up to two weeks outside the body (almost as persistent as a Bluey dance party).

Treatment: no feather wand needed: Thankfully, worm treatments from the chemist (like Combantrin or Vermox) are safe and easy to use. Treat *everyone* in the house at the same time—even if they're not itchy. A shower on the night of treatment, and again in the morning, helps wash away eggs.

Worms are sneaky, so you might need to repeat the treatment after 2 weeks.

Keeping worms away:

Here's how to stop those pesky worms from coming back:

- Trim and clean fingernails
- Wash hands thoroughly after toilet time and before eating
- Try to stop thumb-sucking and nail-biting (we know, easier said than done!)
- Hot wash bed linen, towels, clothes, and soft toys
- Vacuum floors often
- Wipe down surfaces and door handles
- And sorry kids... that cracker that landed on the floor? Let's give it a pass

When to see your GP If your child's still itchy after treatment, or if you notice big worms, a sore tummy, vomiting, or they're feeling extra tired, it's time to visit your doctor.

Remember:

- Threadworms are common in young children (you're not alone!)
- They can be treated easily with the right medication.
- Good hygiene helps stop worms from spreading.
- And yes sometimes parenting really is full of surprises

Just one of the many adventures of life with little ones!



More information available via the QR code.

Source: The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. (2020) **Worms**. Retrieved from www.rch.org.au

CLASSIC EYE SPY

"I Spy" is a valuable game for developing children's literacy skills because it enhances various aspects of language and cognitive development, such as vocabulary, phonological awareness, observation, and social skills. By encouraging children to identify objects based on clues, it helps them develop their descriptive language, practice phonics, and learn to discriminate between visual details. Everyone has played eye spy before but here is a little refresher.

Choose a Spy: One player is designated as the Spy, and they choose an object they can see. **Provide Clues:** The Spy gives a clue, often starting with the phrase "I spy with my little eye something...", and may describe the object by its colour, shape, or the first letter of its name. **Guessing:** Other players take turns guessing the object based on the clues. **Turn Taking:** When a player correctly guesses the object, they become the new Spy.





FOCUS: When We Scroll, They Watch: How Parent Screen Time Shapes Childhood

We all do it—check our phones while waiting for dinner, scroll through emails on the couch, or sneak a quick glance at a message during story time. Technology has become part of everyday life, but new research reminds us that our children are watching—and learning—how we use it.

In 2025, Australians are spending an average of over 6 hours per day in front of screens. While this includes work and essential online tasks, much of it overlaps with family time. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, more than one in five children aged 5–14 are spending 20 hours or more per week on screen-based activities. And it's not just about kids on iPads, the average Aussie parent clocks around 5.8 hours of screen time daily, often during hours their children are present.

But here's the key: children, particularly those under 10, don't just watch screens—they watch us. Whether it's checking the weather or scrolling through social media, our digital habits teach children what is "normal" in everyday life.

What the Research Shows

In a recent Telethon Kids Institute study, researchers found that excessive parent screen time, referred to as "technoference"—can reduce the quality of adult-child interactions by as much as 1,100 words a day. For toddlers and preschoolers, that's a significant drop in language exposure, and over time, it can lead to slower vocabulary development, behavioural issues, and reduced attention spans.

Meanwhile, almost half (49%) of Australian children under 2 are already interacting with smartphones. As these early years are vital for brain development and emotional regulation, our digital choices at home have lasting effects.

Even older children aged 5 to 12 are heavily influenced by the example set by adults. If a child sees a parent reach for their phone in every quiet moment, they quickly internalise that boredom must be filled with a screen. This can reduce opportunities for creativity, problem-solving, and independent play.

Why It Matters: Children learn far more from what we do than what we say.

If we ask our children to put down their devices while we're glued to our phones, the message is mixed. But if we model balance, intentionality, and moments of screen-free connection, our children are more likely to do the same.

The good news is that even small shifts in our digital behaviour can make a big impact. You don't have to go tech-free just more tech-aware.

What You Can Do

Here are some simple ways to reduce technoference and create stronger connections at home:

- Create phone-free moments during the day, like mealtimes, school pickups, or bedtime routines. These pockets of connection become meaningful rituals for children.
- Use "Do Not Disturb" features or app timers to limit interruptions during quality time with your child.
- Narrate your own screen use. If you're checking the weather or replying to a message, say so. "I'm just checking the weather for tomorrow's picnic, then I'll be right with you." It helps children distinguish between purposeful and passive screen time.
- Designate a screen spot. Try to keep screens in one area of the house instead of having them everywhere—this reinforces the idea that not all moments need digital company.
- Engage with your child's screen time. If they're watching something, watch with them when you can, ask questions, and turn it into a conversation. Shared viewing can still be connecting.

A Lasting Message

Technology isn't going away—and that's not a bad thing. Screens can connect, educate, and entertain. But when they begin to replace conversation, reduce play, or interrupt presence, it's worth reassessing our habits.

By modelling balanced screen use, we give our children a roadmap to follow. We show them how to be present, how to manage boredom, and how to engage with the real world.

So next time you reach for your phone, ask yourself—*is this moment better spent being here?* Chances are, the answer will be yes—and your child will notice.



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: Fuller, Perkins. (2024). How does screen time affect kids' health? Retrieved from edu.au

Source: Grace, Asia. (2025). **Parents' obsessive technology use may have serious long-term effects on babies and toddlers: study.** Retrieved from nypost.com



THINK TWICE BEFORE SHOPPING

Before hitting "add to cart" or heading to the shops, take a moment to pause and think twice—do you really need something new? Sustainable living starts with mindful choices, and that includes resisting the urge to buy out of habit or convenience. Instead, consider borrowing, swapping,

repairing, or repurposing what you already have. Every item we choose not to purchase helps reduce waste, save resources, and lessen our environmental impact. Small changes in how we shop can lead to big shifts for a healthier planet. Choosing quality over quantity and supporting second-hand or local options when you do need something can also make a meaningful difference. Let's rethink our habits and embrace a more conscious way to consume.

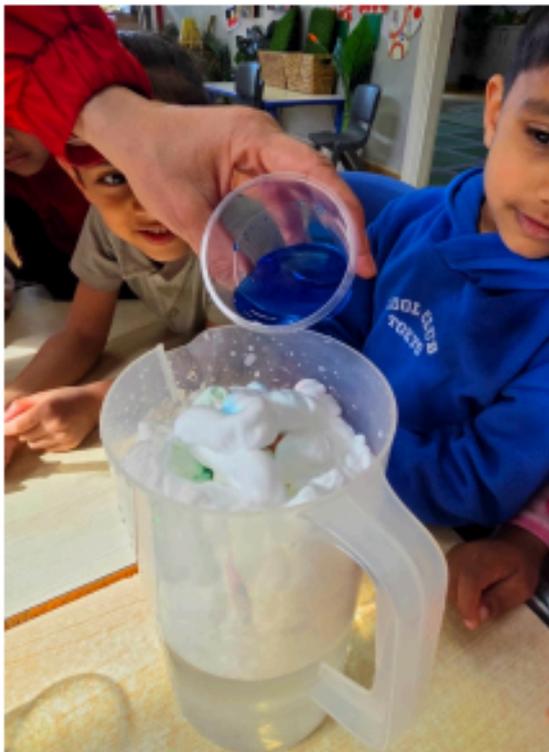
Dental Health Week



As part of Dental Health Week, our service welcomed Symla Dental, who kindly visited to provide free dental check-ups for the children. This visit created a valuable opportunity for children to learn about the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene and healthy habits from a young age. The dental team engaged with the children in a friendly and reassuring manner, making the experience positive and enjoyable. The check-ups helped promote awareness about the role of healthy eating, regular brushing, and dental care in keeping their teeth strong and clean. Families appreciated this initiative, as it supported both children's health and their overall wellbeing while also building a strong partnership between the service, healthcare professionals, and the wider community.

National Science Week





At Star Kids, we celebrated Science Week with a range of exciting and hands-on learning experiences designed to spark children's curiosity and creativity. The theme encouraged children to explore the wonders of science through play, investigation, and discovery. Throughout the week, they engaged in simple experiments such as mixing colours, exploring how objects sink or float, and observing reactions like vinegar and baking soda. These activities encouraged children to ask questions, make predictions, and share their observations with peers, helping them develop early scientific thinking skills. Educators extended the learning by linking the activities to everyday experiences, showing children how science is all around us in cooking, nature, and technology. The celebration also highlighted the importance of problem-solving, teamwork, and communication as children worked collaboratively to experiment and reflect on their findings. Science Week not only nurtured a love of exploration and discovery but also supported children's confidence in expressing ideas, testing possibilities, and understanding the world around them.

Children's Book Week



We celebrated Children's Book Week with a variety of engaging and meaningful activities that highlighted the joy of reading and storytelling. The theme for this year inspired children to explore their imagination, build a love for books, and connect with stories in creative ways. Throughout the week, educators read aloud from a wide range of children's books, sparking discussions and encouraging children to share their thoughts and favourite parts. The children also participated in dress-up days, coming as their favourite storybook characters, which brought stories to life and created excitement around reading. They enjoyed role play, puppet shows, and art activities inspired by their chosen books, giving them opportunities to express ideas and extend their literacy learning through play.



Community Engagement



We had a wonderful surprise when a policeman made a spontaneous visit to our centre, much to the excitement of the children. The children were eager to talk with our community hero, asking questions and listening attentively as he shared about his important role in keeping the community safe. This visit gave the children a valuable opportunity to learn about safety in a friendly and engaging way, while also building trust and respect for community helpers. The children enjoyed interacting with him, and many expressed their admiration through smiles and conversations, making the visit both educational and memorable.

Straight From Our Garden



Children excitedly collected cherry tomatoes from our outdoor garden, which they had planted from seeds. They were thrilled to see their plants grow and enjoyed tasting the fresh tomatoes.

Feedback 
is always welcome

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