

NEWSLETTER: December 2009



**BONDI BEACH
PLAYGROUPS**

Welcome to the summer 2009 edition of our newsletter. This time round I am lucky enough to be sharing duties with a fabulous new member, Vera Sprothen, who will be taking over the editorial reins. German-born Vera used to work full-time as a business journalist but with her now one-year-old son Leo demanding full attention she has decided to only do fun bits – like running the Friday 2 session and writing our newsletter.

Speaking of fun: ever wondered what your hubby really does when he takes the baby on tour? Find some answers in our new section **Dads day out**. Plus we give you the wrap-up on where to go for swimming classes now that Hakoah has closed.

Finally, our Coordinator Stephanie, deciphers our fee structure for 2010 and updates you on all playgroup happenings (and she does this all with a brand new baby - congratulations on baby Oscar, Steph!).

Have a wonderful summer!

Dianne Draganovic & Vera Sprothen



Christmas Party

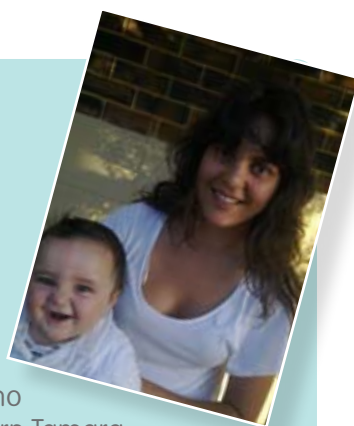
Our Christmas party is on at North Bondi Playgroup on Sunday 6 December from 9.30am till 12noon. You can meet Santa himself accompanied by African drummers, face painting, sausage sizzle and snacks.

Bring a \$5 gift for Santa to distribute (clearly label it with your child's name). Email your RSVP to Sarah-Jane Kurtini: sjkurtini@yahoo.co.uk (let her know how many people attending and whether anyone is vegetarian).

¿HABLA ESPAÑOL?

Do you speak Spanish and raise your child bilingually?

North Bondi Playgroup is now offering a session for Spanish-speakers on Thursdays from 12-2pm. Keep up your latino traditions Down Under and meet Spain-born Tamara Gomez with 8-month old son Aiden. Session highlights: Spanish fairytale reading, singing and dress-ups in traditional costumes. Contact Tamara: gomezhacha@hotmail.com or 0406 699 773.



Baby swimming



It's no secret: Bondi's Hakoah Club will be demolished and with it goes its popular kids' pool. But Hakoah's **Mega Swim School** owner and instructor Meg Amauchi has good news in store; she plans to open a brand new 20-metre pool at Fox Studios Entertainment Quarter by the end of January. In the meantime, her swim school for bubs from six months of age onwards will move to an indoor heated pool on Flood Street. More details: office@megaswim.com.au or 0410 501 230.

Ocean lovers prefer the Pacific anyway and with the outdoor water temperature climbing up to 20 degrees now – yes, almost cosy! – the Icebergs kiddy pool will become the place to be for tough tots. Joanna Kyriazakos who runs the pool's **Mermaid Swim Academy** is now taking enrolments for her baby swim classes which start at six months of age. More details: mermaid@mermaidswim.com.au or 0437 374 715.

Afraid that your little ones might chuck a tantrum when taking their first dip? "We use baby wetsuits to keep them warm," says Joanna. Besides, both salt water and the wetsuit increase the buoyancy in the water helping babies relax more. And that's what it's all about: "A relaxed body will float, a tense body will sink," says Meg from Mega Swim School. Bear in mind, though, that no



baby swim school will teach your one-year-old how to do the freestyle. Simple dog paddles or tadpole moves would be the call. So have your camera ready and enjoy some fun time in the water!

More baby swimming in the Eastern Suburbs:
Des Renford Aquatic Centre, Maroubra. Ph: 9349 1106
Maroubra Swimming School. Ph: 9344 5735
Platypus Swimming School, Rose Bay. Ph: 9371 4287
Bondi Rainbow Club. At Wairoa School, Brighton Blvd, Ph: 0418 963 087

RECIPES - Beating the heat



Here's some healthy ideas on how to keep your little ones cool this summer.

Minty peach and banana frozen yogurt

- 1 sliced banana
- 1 cup of pureed peaches
- 1 cup of whole milk yogurt
- 2-3 mint leaves

Chop mint leaves finely. Mash up banana. Combine with peach puree and yogurt. Chill in freezer for two hours. Churn and serve.

Try the same with pureed berries!

Surprise older kids with yogurt iceblocks by freezing the yogurt mix in moulds for at least six hours.

CRAFT - Flower Power



Have you ever noticed the fragrant lavender, frangipani, oleander and hibiscus when you pram-push your way up to playgroup?

Dried and pressed, they make excellent decorations on Christmas cards or as framed collages.

All you need is a heavy book, two sheets of blotting paper and some nice flowers. You can also pick herbs such as rosemary and dill.

Sounds old-fashioned? Try it out – it's fun!



Coordinator's report



We'll be closing for a month over the festive season, our last day will be Friday 19 December and we'll start up again on Monday 18 January 2010.

Fees for 2010

In 2009 Playgroups NSW Inc. changed their fee structure so that memberships are valid for a year from the date of joining (rather than for the calendar year). This will have an impact on the way Bondi Beach Playgroups processes fees next year as we have traditionally charged members an annual lump sum (\$70 in 2009) which included membership to the Association (\$39) and session fees for our playgroup (\$31). This was paid directly to us and we forwarded the Association's membership fees to them after processing the membership.

In 2010 the Association will send renewal notices directly to members and you will pay the Association's annual membership fee (\$39) directly to the Association. This means that you will only pay Bondi Beach Playgroups for your annual session fees (\$30 for 2010). So once you have renewed your membership with the Association next year you'll receive an email from our Secretary explaining how to pay your session fees directly to us.

Wishing you all a wonderful festive season and looking forward to seeing you at the Christmas party.

Stephanie Sparke
stephnbpg@gmail.com

I've survived the first nine weeks in the life of my second child Oscar and thanks to Nanna staying I even have enough time to write the Coordinator's report for you!

We've had a very successful year at playgroup with every session time but one occupied and just over 200 members. Timely then to remind you that **Bondi Beach Playgroups is totally volunteer run**, all Committee Members and Session Leaders volunteer their time and skills to make our little community the wonderful place it is. **All members are expected to do their bit** by putting away toys, sweeping, mopping, chopping fruit, washing up etc. Things have gotten a little messy lately so every session will be helping out by sprucing a section of playgroup before the Christmas Party, talk to your Session Leader for details. Let's end the year on a high!

MEET THE SESSION LEADER

Kate Partington - Tuesday 1

How long have you been going to playgroup?

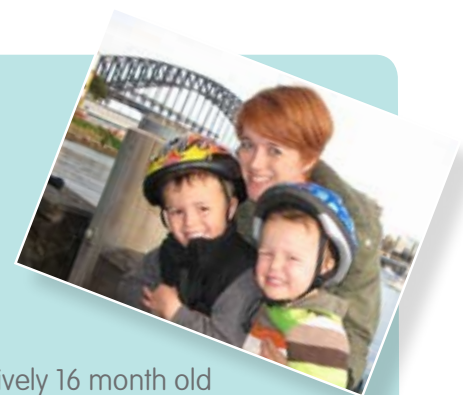
I joined when my second son, Monty, was born three years ago. When Steph became Coordinator in January I took over her role as session leader.

What do you like about playgroup?

I had my children very close together. At one point I had a newborn and a very lively 16 month old and finding a contained and safe environment for them to play in was important. I am from the UK so for me playgroup became a sort of family support. I've learnt a lot from the mothers I have met over the years and made some lifelong friends.

Any favourite play activities?

With two boys, the most important thing to do is wear them out, so I take them swimming whenever possible.





Dads Day Out

Stephen Gaffey, 33, and Freddy, 11 months
Session: Friday 2

Stephen looks after Freddy two full days a week while his wife Scarlett is working.

When we go out: I always try and take Freddy off on little adventures to help him explore different things. It could be in the backyard exploring the garden or around the block on his little tricycle.

Where we go to have a blast: Anywhere there is water he just loves it. Down the beach or the local pool or even in a bucket in the back yard.

What I always have in the pram: His snuzzle rag. Once you give him this bit of cloth with a knot tied at one end he knows it bedtime and off he goes to sleep. Never fails.

My emergency snack: You can't have just one, you always need to have an array of snacks like a banana, mango, peach, some yogurt...

My rescue remedy to master even the biggest chaos: The electric tooth brush!! Give this to Freddy and he becomes the most well behaved baby you've ever seen.

Since having Freddy my life has changed because: I am always late for work and I can't wait to get home after work to spend time with mum and bub. Family is the most important thing in my life now and I won't make sacrifices that take me away from that.



REVIEW By Dianne Draganovic

Luigi's Deli, Shop 1/154 Glenayr Ave, Bondi Beach

I have three kids under five. This is synonymous with noise, chaos and more noise. So when I find a café that allows me to find my zen again without needing to herd three kids at once, well, I love it. Luigi's Deli is such a place – and it's just at the bottom of my street!

Why I love Luigi's?

Chalk – This is so simple it almost makes you cry. A café that offers up buckets of chalk to children means you get to sip your coffee peacefully while the kids develop their fine motor skills courtesy of the pavement.

Coffee – There is good coffee in Bondi and 'oh-so-bad' coffee. Luigi's coffee rates in the 'oh so much better than good' category.

Yummy food – And at reasonable prices!

Hours – This one is a goodie for the early birds. If you're up with the sun, there will be someone waiting for you at Luigi's.

Staff – Some of the loveliest in Bondi. I'm not sure I've ever gone in without the waitress squishing my youngest one's cheeks. And frankly: if you love my kids (dirty faces and all), I love you back.

Give it a shot (or a double, if you need it).

