



Hello from the Editor

Hi everyone and welcome to your Winter Issue of the NBPG Newsletter.

I'm thrilled to be putting together my first newsletter for you — particularly as it's come at a time when I'm all flush with a renewed love for the our little haven in Wairoa Avenue. Despite having baby number three in February (and an early panic that this would render me useless in any activity requiring more than five steps from my front door) the North Bondi Playgroup has once again come into its own.

NBPG has continued to be the locale that allows me to regularly catch up with all the mums from my original mothers group (that's 3+ years now), meet all the new mums coming through and importantly has continued to be an environment that my children can grow, socialise and thrive in. And all without a washing basket in sight.

Looks like I'm not the only one who has cottoned on to the wonderful environment fostered in our playgroups — many of our sessions are now bursting at the seams. The continued success of all our sessions is, of course, due in no small part to the wonderful work and skills of our Session Leaders, so we introduce a few of them to you in this newsletter.

It is also the time of year to rug up at night whilst finding ways to amuse the babies and children during the day, so in this edition we've included a few activities, remedies, kid-friendly spots and other bits and bobs to help get you through the winter months relatively unscathed. There is, of course, only so much 'Bananas in Pyjamas' a mum can take. Enjoy!

Dianne Draganovic

USEFUL WEBSITES

Playgroups are a wonderful opportunity to meet up with other parents and seek out or exchange info on topics varying from settling techniques to teething signs to toddler tantrums... well, anything! But since you can't be onsite 24/7 (and if you were, you'd be alone so that wouldn't work), we've collated a few Australian sites to keep you informed, or keep you amused, in between playgroup sessions.

www.essentialbaby.com.au with enough forums and topics to keep you occupied for days.

<http://www.webchild.com.au/index.php/Blogs.html> real life experiences of real life parents.

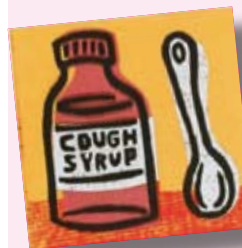
www.parentbriefings.com.au including information on developmental milestones, safety tips, activities to promote creative development, enewsletters.

<http://www.taste.com.au> last minute recipes in grams (not ounces) at the click of a mouse.

www.simplesavings.com.au one of our own playgroup alumni (Melissa Burkett) swears by the money-saving tips here.

COUGH, COUGH

Is your child's cough keeping you both up at night? Dana Geisweid (Wed 1) has offered up the perfect remedy and not least because it's all natural, easy peasy and safe for the kiddies.



Dana's All Natural Cough Remedy

250ml water
100g onion, finely chopped
100g brown sugar
2 teaspoons sage
2 teaspoons thyme

1. Boil all ingredients together in a saucepan until the sugar dissolves.
2. Strain the solids out and discard.
3. Allow the liquid to cool.

Dosage:

Under threes = 1 teaspoon morning, noon and night

Over threes = 1 tablespoon morning, noon and night

It will keep in the fridge for one week.

NEWS FROM NORTH BONDI PLAYGROUP

Shade sail grant and fundraising

The big news is that we got a small grant from the council for the shade sail, which will cover about half of the cost. So if all goes well with getting a DA, we hope to have it up in time for the summer. **We are planning a Sausage Sizzle in November** to make up the rest of the cost, so watch out for details. We'll only require a couple of hours from yourself/partner.

Green Thumbs

Rebecca Skilbeck (Thurs 1 Session Leader) has been doing a magnificent job **gardening** (with a little bit of help – hee, hee – from the tykes) in what is neither a particularly well-protected or rich soil. Keep an eye out for anything that you can pick from the next round of planting.

Glamorous new website

Belinda Johnstone (Fri 1 Session Leader) has updated our website and done a fab job. I've had lots of positive feedback already. So if you haven't checked it out yet, next time you're online have a little peek. Take the time to follow the links to **members business sites**. Personally I have been pleasantly surprised by the enterprise amongst our little community. If you want to link your business to the site let either Belinda or me know and we will arrange it.

Our website is www.northbondiplaygroup.org.au

Deck the halls



Megan Bisson (Wed 1) has kindly agreed to take on the organisation of the **Christmas Party**, which will be held on **Sunday December 7**. It might seem a long way off but we need to think about bookings etc now, so if you have any requests/suggestions let Megan know. Either catch her at Wed 1 or you can email me and I will forward to Megan.

Clean as a whistle

Playgroup is looking fantastic and I've noticed that everyone has been putting in **extra effort** to keep the place spick and span since the Clean-Up Day. Keep up the great work! Again a big thank you to all who turned up to the Clean-Up Day and helped not just clean up, but raise some money for the shade sail as well.

Elegant editor

Thank you in advance to Dianne Draganovic (Wed 1) for this newsletter. With three kids, mentoring, helping Playgroup and who knows what else, we don't know how she manages it. (note from Ed – kids? What kids?!)

A big Thank You to Michelle Butterley (Wed and Fri 1) for turning out a first class newsletter in record time in March (ditto from Ed) and generally keeping us all ticking over. Playgroup would not function without the amazing amount of work that she puts in so if you get a chance to buy her a coffee or a drink please do – she deserves it!

Finally if you're interested in getting more involved in Playgroup activities or have an idea that you think might improve Playgroup please flick me an email or give me a call.

See you at Playgroup.

Nicole Ash
Co-ordinator
(with Isaac)

e: balanced@bigpond.net.au



SUPER MUM

Looking for something fun for the kids with the added benefit of appreciation for your time spent in the kitchen? Here it is.

If your kids are old enough, why not get them involved too!

Playdough Recipe

2 cups plain flour
4 tablespoons cream of tartar
1 cup salt
2 teaspoons cream of tartar
2 cups water
2 tablespoons cooking oil
Food colouring

Mix all ingredients in a saucepan and stir over medium heat for 3–5 minutes or until the mixture congeals (goes smooth).

Cool.

Cover in plastic wrap and store in the fridge.

Play away!



TIME OUT

If you thought a quiet Sunday morning coffee and paper was a bygone experience then think again. There are some wonderful child-friendly cafes out there that will allow you some respite for at least a few minutes. Here we review two – one a local winner and the other a bit further out.

BONDI TUCKER 80 Hall St, Bondi Beach

Reviewer Sarah Barton-Hills
(Wed 1)

With a toy box, coloured pencils and paper on hand, our busy and boisterous three year old boy had plenty to keep him occupied for an hour – and we managed to teach him some ‘eating out manners’ along the way.

They serve up a great healthy kids menu (\$5) that actually gets eaten, have high chairs on hand and there is room to park the pram. After 18 months of patronage we’ve found the food to be consistently yummy for breakfast, lunch and dinner (albeit a very unromantic 6pm affair with our little boy playing head of the table). And the coffee’s good too. Worth checking out.

Rounding out their good deeds towards us frazzled folk with children, is a free coffee on presentation of this newsletter (limit 1 per newsletter).

BONDI TUCKER OFFER:
1 FREE COFFEE
PER PLAYGROUP
FAMILY

MARTINI 529 King St, Newtown

Reviewer Jette Dessales
(Wed 1)

A great café and worth the drive. It’s in an old terrace house and has a café downstairs (with a courtyard out the back for summer). It also has, and this is the clincher, two great rooms for kids upstairs. There are tables and lounges and lots of toys. Best of all, your kids won’t be the least bit annoying to anyone since it’s all set up for parents and kids.

The menu is delicious and includes an extra kids menu from \$4.50-\$6. To burn a few more dollars or for some kiddie window shopping, you’ll find Shorties just a few doors away.

PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE

It’s raining outside, Play School has been on rotation for far too many hours and you’ve already notched up your fourth day in a row at North Bondi Playgroup. Oh what to do? Fear not, there is plenty on offer that both you and your children can embrace with fervour. We’ve listed a good cross section below and have included some contact numbers, though its always wise to check online for further details before planning your outing.

Aquatic Centres

One of the cheaper fun activities on offer.

What better way to get out of the cold rainy days than to head to warmer waters.

The new Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre (9518 7220) has had great mum reviews and comes with easy pram access. You can also try the Des Renford Aquatic Centre in Maroubra for something on the beach side (9349 1106).

Libraries

With movie times, story times and plenty of books on offer, this is another winter winner. And FREE!

Check out the offerings at Waverley, Rose Bay and Paddington libraries.

Museums/Art Gallery

Can be a little more expensive, but doable.

The Powerhouse Museum (9217 0111) is Sydney’s largest Museum and has great stuff on for those in the 12-month-plus age group.

For a piece of natural history and fun toddler activities, the Australian Museum is also worth a shot (9320 6000).

But don’t stop there, the Art Gallery of NSW also has story times and other tot things to do (9225 1744).

Don’t forget you can go to ANY playgroup in NSW.

There’s a \$2-3 charge for each session.

Francis St is free for NBPG members. Easy!

Bookshops

Muffledux Books in Clovelly (9664 9644) has lots of daytime activities and reading times. Cost is completely dependent on how much you can hold yourself back, and with all those beautiful books lining the shelves and willing you to take them home, it may be best to leave the wallet at home.

Bondi Pavillion

Waverley Council has plenty of reasonably priced activities on at the Pavillion during the school holidays, from Ballet to music to live shows. But make sure you check details at the Pavillion office beforehand as we haven’t been able to find it online. You need to be quick though as they all book out fast!

SUPER SESSION LEADERS

It would be wonderful to think that each playgroup session could stop, start and function on their own, but alas, it takes an amazing person to actually have it working seamlessly, and that amazing person usually comes in the form of a session leader. Whilst the rest of us can breeze in and out on a whim, banter away to the next person whilst keeping a joyful eye on our little ones and basically pull up a spot on the grass and have a rest when needed, the truth is very different for these hard working and actively engaged members whose 'job description' includes key keepers (which means turning up rain, hail or shine), collector of all membership fees, day booker, injury report writer, new member welcomer, cleaning co-ordinator... and so much more. In fact their playgroup time with their kids is often spent helping everyone else with little real time to themselves.

So next time one of them calls out 'it's clean up time!', why not jump straight up to help. Because they deserve their five minutes on the grass too. A big thank you to all of them... here are just a few you may recognise.



Stephanie Sparke (Tues 1)

'I've only recently inherited the role as session leader and don't find it much work at all as the lovely folks at Tues 1 are so great at fruit-chopping, tidying and mopping that I feel very lucky indeed. Evie and I love coming to playgroup, in fact she is so keen she can usually be found banging the front door in protest from 8.30am onwards! In an area like Bondi where most of us live in poky flats, playgroup provides the next best thing to a big backyard with the huge bonus of a cornucopia of toys to play with and a group of fantastic adults to chat, whinge and laugh with'.

Jette Dessaules (Wed 1)

'Mila and I have been a part of Wed 1 playgroup for over 2 and half years now and have both loved attending since our very first visit. We have made some fantastic friends. Being a session leader has meant that I now have the perfect excuse to set aside everything else on a Wednesday morning, guilt free, and continue to enjoy the company of all the original members as well as greeting all the new members to this wonderful group'.



Naomi Rayner (Tues 3)

'We all find playgroup such a great resource, especially now our bubs are growing up and toddling around outside in the garden using the trikes and cars. It's great to get together every week and catch up on each others' news, while the children wear themselves out in such a safe, stimulating environment'.

Belinda Johnstone (Fri 1)

'I used to get my highs from dance parties, now I get them from a group of carers, babies and kids chatting, sharing morning tea and making craft. Being a session leader means I get to throw a great party once a week, and I really feel the love when everyone helps with the clean up'.



Rebecca Skilbeck (Thurs 1)

'Being session leader provides a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and make new friends. Most of us have two children (or another on the way), which means a lot of older kids and a lot of shared experience on the trials and tribulations of parenthood. It's a supportive group, (we even have a regular coffee run), with a sense of community'.