

ePlayNEWS

Practical Playgroup Support & Information...

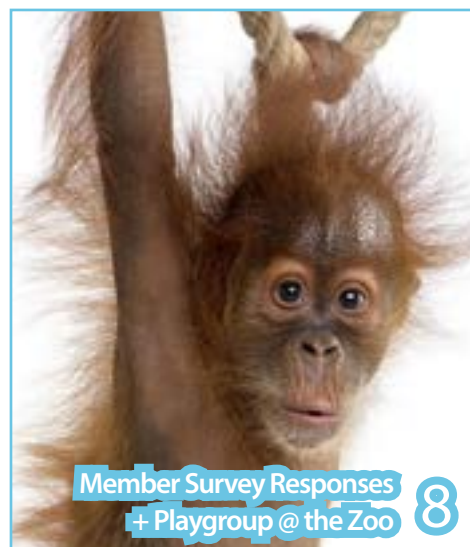
PLAYGROUP SA 1800 171 882 WWW.PLAYGROUPEAUSTRALIA.COM.AU/SA



Fun Communication Games with Children **3**



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From the Playgroup SA Executive Officer...

Welcome, welcome, welcome to another edition of ePlay News. The winter months are now upon us, so in this edition we have included some great ideas you can do at Playgroup to keep hands constructively busy on those days when outside play is just not possible. Here at Playgroup SA, we'd love it if Playgroups sent in photos or ideas on how they beat the winter blues.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members who took the time to participate in our Annual Member Survey. We appreciate your feedback and it will help guide our future services. There's quite a lengthy collation of our survey findings at the end of this edition as we attempt to address many of the common queries, comments and feedback.

I must also express my thanks to the number of Playgroups that I have visited (formally and informally) over the last month or so - including (but not limited to) Maitland Playgroup, Riverton Playgroup, Aldinga Playgroup and Old Cottage Playgroup. It never ceases to amaze me how wonderful, vibrant and strong the Playgroup movement is in South Australia.

Lastly, I'd like to remind our members to give us a call here at Playgroup SA any time you have questions relating to Playgroup, our workshops or any other member benefit or service that we offer.

Carley Jones
Executive Officer, Playgroup SA

Parents need to check their child's immunisations are up to date

To receive family assistance from the Australian Government, parents may need to immunise their children or get an exemption. Now is a great time for parents to check their child's immunisations are up to date.

Children need to be fully immunised, on a catch up schedule or have an approved exemption for parents to get:

- [Child Care Benefit](#) and [Child Care Rebate](#)
- the Family Tax Benefit Part A supplement in the financial years their child turns 1, 2 and 5.

Parents can keep track of their child's immunisations with the [Australian Childhood Immunisation Register](#). It holds records for children under 7 years old.

For more information, go to humanservices.gov.au/immunisation



Playgroup SA have recently visited the following Playgroups...

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Aldinga Community Playgroup | • School |
| • Burton Primary School | • Lockleys North Primary School |
| • Cambrai Area School | • Mallala Primary School |
| • Elizabeth Park Primary School | • Mannum Primary School |
| • Elizabeth Vale Primary School | • Mawson Lakes Toddler Playgroup |
| • Fishtails Playgroup, Mount Gambier | • Mt Gambier PlayConnect |
| • Georgetown Primary School | • Playford Primary School |
| • Ingle Farm East Primary School | • Pt Lincoln Playgroup |
| • Koolunga Primary | • Riverton Playgroup |
| | • Tarlee Primary School |
| | • Waikerie Playgroup |
| | • Waikerie Primary School |

Good & Bad...

In our house, we call this 'Suck and Sweet' but it's understandable if you'd like to change the name of the game.

At the dinner table every night (or elsewhere, if you prefer), engage your child(ren) in conversation by doing a round table about the best thing that happened in each family members day (Good/Sweet) and the worst thing that happened in each family members day (Bad/Suck).

For example: Mum says "My sweet/good thing was the painting I was gifted from Frankie at Playgroup this morning. My suck/bad thing was that my favourite mug broke today."

This game is fun for all, promotes communication and assists children to express their emotions and recognise their feelings.

Try out these **fun word and communication game ideas** with your Playgroupers. The responses you receive and the level of understanding will depend on the child's age but most children, particularly preschoolers, will love to participate and will increase their understanding as you play more. It's amazing to have a preview inside the mind of your creative little one...

Would you RATHER?

A great game to increase vocabulary and speech and especially good on lengthy journey's in the car or when you're having chill out time inside and away from bad weather.

Think up some questions for your child(ren) and encourage them to ask you questions in return. When your child responds, ask them why they've selected their chosen answers because the responses they give are the most amusing part of the game!

For example, 'Would you rather be a rabbit or a bird?', 'Would you rather have a purple house or a green car?', 'Would you rather have vegetables for breakfast or cereal for dinner?'

What would you do?

Nurture your children's imagination and have fun encouraging them to expand their creative minds in participating in this funny and creative game and relish in their answers.

Ask questions like 'What would you do if the family dog started singing and dancing to the hokey pokey?', 'What would you do if your hair was made of marshmallows?', 'What would you do if a kangaroo wearing gumboots came to have fun at Playgroup?' and 'What would you do if the bathtub was full of jelly?'



Kids in the Kitchen

Given that the cooler months are upon us and we're anticipating more time indoors (both at home and at Playgroup), we're dedicating this spread to a Cooking Special.

Cooking activities can be enjoyed from a young age. Toddlers enjoy helping with rolling out dough, sifting flour, and stirring mixtures. As they get older, children can take on more responsibility and enjoy setting the table, serving food and cleaning up.

When preparing a cooking activity at playgroup, it is important to plan well and set up everything in advance. It can be a time for sharing, tasting, experimenting, learning, communicating, and enjoyment.

* Be aware of any allergies in advance and avoid preparing anything with nuts or eggs.

Biscuit Decorating

- 2 cups icing sugar
- Warm water
- Food colouring
- Packet plain biscuits (eg. Milk Arrowroot / YoYo's, etc)
- Chocolate sprinkles, 100s and 1000s, smarties, jellybeans, licorice, sultanas, etc for decoration

Method

Mix icing sugar with a little warm water (let the children take turns stirring until the mixture is of spreading consistency). Add a drop of food colouring or a few colours to make a marble effect. Give each child a blunt knife or plastic spatula to spread the icing mixture onto biscuits and then let them decorate creatively (however they wish) with sprinkles, sweets and sultanas.



Weetbix Chocolate Balls (such messy great fun)

- 8 Weetbix, crushed
- 3 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 1 tin condensed milk
- ½ cup shredded/dessiccated coconut
- Sultanas (optional)

Method

Children will love crunching up the Weetbix with their hands (you can do this so that the mixture is as chunky or fine as you like). Combine all of the ingredients in a large bowl with a wooden spoon (don't forget to encourage them to lick their spoons one complete). Separate the mixture with your hands into 20 cent sized pieces and roll into balls like you would play dough. Place the balls onto a baking sheet or put into a glad bag to take home and place into the fridge for at least 1 hour to firm up before eating.

You can refrigerate the mixture before putting into balls if you prefer (but this will mean a wait between tasks at Playgroup). And you may wish to roll the finished product in coconut.

Fruit Kebabs

(a fun alternative to the normal fruit time)

- Various Pieces of Fruit
- Icing sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg or coloured sugar (optional)

Method

Cut fruit into small pieces pre Playgroup Session / Home Preparation. Children can carefully place fruit pieces on wooden skewers and then roll in icing sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg or coloured sugar. It's preferable to chill slightly before eating.

Extension Ideas

- Choose a particular colour for a Playgroup session - eg. a green day with all the children wearing green, and making green food!
- Encourage Playgroup families to use recipes from their own culture in cooking activities - this is a wonderful way for children to learn more about cultures different to their own.
- Try icing a cake (perhaps on someone's birthday) with creative mixtures such as pudding, melted chocolate (white and brown or marble), ice cream, yoghurt and custard.

Did your playgroup have fun preparing any of these recipes?
We'd love to hear your feedback and/or see pictures!

Cookie Recipe (no egg - FIVE variations)

- 300g Plain Flour (2.5 cups)
- 200g Butter (1.75 sticks of butter) – at room temperature
- 100g Sugar (0.5 cups)

Method

Mix your ingredients. Leave in fridge for 10 minutes or so. Roll out and use any of the method variations below. Bake for 10-15min at 180C. Let cool on a rack.

Variations

- **Chocolate Chip** - use the basic recipe, add some chocolate chips... roll into a sausage, slice AND DONE.
- **Rainbow Cookies** - take the basic recipe... add some food colouring. Layer and slice. DONE!
- **Cookie Pops** - again, the same basic recipe... add a cake pop stick and shape the cookies however you wish - make Cookie Fairy Wands, Heart Cookie Pops or Easter Cookie Pops... your imagination is the limit!
- **Party Cookies** - same simple Cookie Recipe... Use cookie cutters to cut shapes to fit with your party theme (ie. cars) and then let the kids decorate away.
- **Cookie Hearts** - shape your dough into hearts and once cooked, dip them in chocolate!
- Lastly... don't forget that you can use this basic cookie recipe and add food flavourings... such as orange, vanilla or rose water! Genius.

Source: lifeatthetoo.com



indoor rainy day activities

for

Kids



Clean Painting

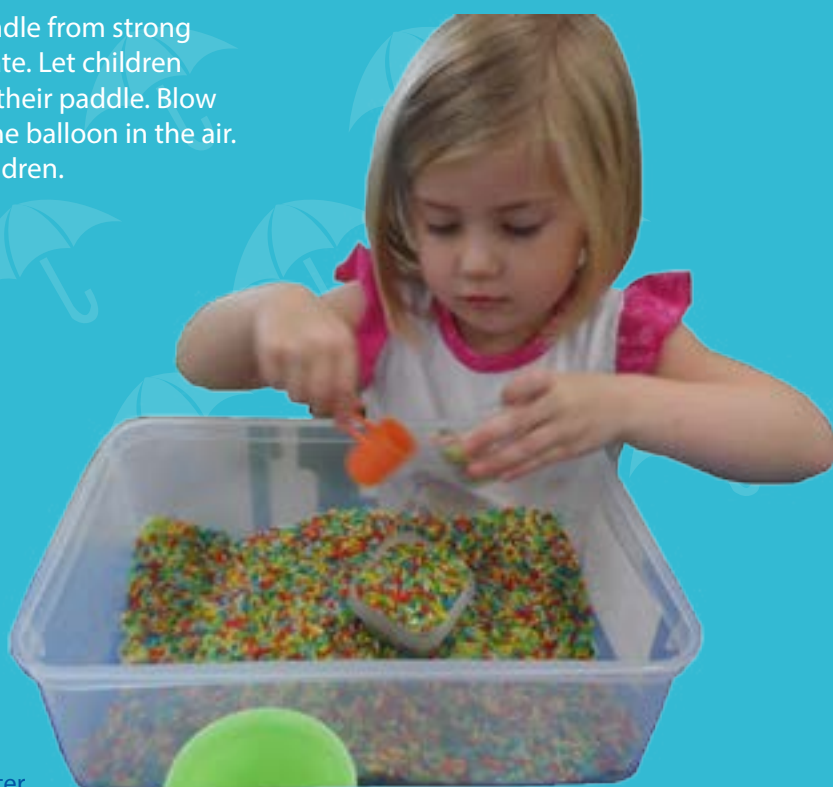
Put paint in a snaplock bag and ensure there is minimal air inside. Tape the bag to the table. Try a couple of different colours in each bag. Use fingers or cotton buds to move the paint around from the outside of the bag and create pictures and colour mixes, etc. You can even add glitter into the mix.

Balloon Paddle Game

Attach a large pop-stick (or cut a 20cm handle from strong cardboard) to the back of a small paper plate. Let children colour, draw and decorate the pictures on their paddle. Blow up a balloon and use the paddle to keep the balloon in the air. A great game to play with two or more children.

Rice Play

Add a couple of drops of food colouring to dry rice and stir the colour through. Make as many colours as you like and leave them to dry separately. Once dry you can mix the colours. Use rice play with small containers, funnels, scoops (formula scoops work well), plastic tea set cups, spoons etc.



Nature Walk

Wet weather approaching? Dress warm, grab a bucket and go on a nature walk to collect many different leaves, bark, seedpods, pinecones, feathers, etc. Keep them handy to make the following activities on a rainy day...

Nature Tray

Put all your collected nature treasures into a tray. You can add plastic insects or small animals for creative play.

Nature Art

Cut out leaf shapes and decorate. Extend this idea by drawing a large tree onto paper or cardboard to glue the leaves onto.

Playdough Nature Play

Add bits and pieces from your nature tray to playdough. Use pinecones to roll and make patterns in the playdough. Stand up leaves, bark and sticks to make a jungle and add small plastic animals or dinosaurs.

Glitter Leaves

Paint large autumn leaves. Add glitter and sequins if desired.

Pinecone Owls

Find which side of the pinecone sits most stable. Cut out some feet and glue under this side. Glue on eyes (you can use either wobbly eyes or draw eyes on paper and cut them out). Dip the ends of feathers (store bought or collected) into the glue and poke into the pine cone.

Pinecone Echidnas

Glue on eyes. Use a small piece of pipe cleaner or rolled up paper (or maybe there is a couple of centimetres of branch on the end of the pinecone still attached) for a nose. Dip pine needles or leaves into glue and poke them into the pinecone to make spines.

Nature Trees

Draw a picture of a tree on a piece of paper. Children may want to colour the tree in first before gluing on pieces of bark, leaves etc.



WIN

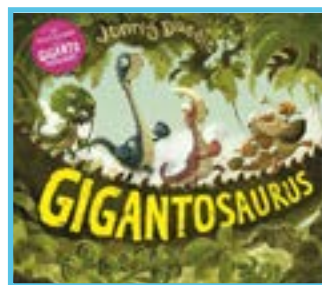
a copy
of each book
reviewed here...

HOW...?
Email your
NAME + PLAYGROUP +
CONTACT DETAILS
and the word 'BOOK PACK' to
competitions@playgroupsa.com.au
by Friday 18 July, 2014
for your chance to WIN!

These books have been donated,
courtesy of SCHOLASTIC



Congrats TIM POOLE (and family) from Springton Playgroup
for winning the Edition #2 Book Pack!



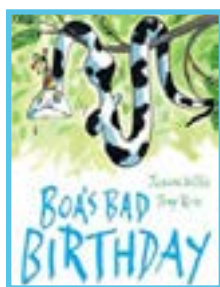
Gigantosaurus
by Jonny Duddle

A great book for preschoolers!

Bonehead volunteers to be the
dinokids lookout for the dreaded
Gigantosaurus. Unfortunately,
Bonehead is the original boy-
dinosaur who cried wolf, or in this
case, Gigantosaurus!

Bonehead's friends eventually
refuse to believe his warnings and
the Gigantosaurus really turns up!

What does this mean for
Bonehead?



Boa's Bad Birthday
by Jeanne Willis & Tony Ross

CUTE!

A hilarious story about the
unwanted birthday gifts received
by Boa on what, he thought, was
going to be the best birthday
ever.



Karana: The Story of the
Father Emu
by Uncle Joe Kirk

A great read aloud story with a
lively rhyme that is full of playful
illustrations of Karana and his
chicks and vivid Aussie bush
scenes.

An Indigenous Australian story
of the father emu who cares
for his chicks and teaches them
everything they need to know
about surviving in the bush.



Snail and Turtle are Friends
by Stephen Michael King

A very simple and short book with
beautiful illustrations about Snail
and Turtle - friends that love to
spend time together.

A good book for reading with
toddlers!



playgroup Workshops 2014

Coordinators Workshop

Are you a new coordinator, or thinking about starting a Playgroup? Then this course will provide you with all the info you need. Including tips on how to effectively run a Playgroup, play ideas and the value and benefits of play. This is a perfect opportunity to start building Playgroup support network with both Playgroup SA staff and other coordinators attending the workshop.

10am - 12:30pm
Wed 13 August | Thurs 16 October

Messy Play Workshop

Find out the value and benefits of messy (sensory) play, gain age appropriate play ideas that will assist with children's development and overall, have fun.

10am - 12:30pm
Thursday 7 August, 2014

Make & Play Workshop

An opportunity for fun to MAKE and PLAY, create and share ideas and activities using homemade, recycled and inexpensive materials - for the Playgroup and the home. This workshop will explore the developmental process of creating your own play resources and will feature discussions about the types and categories of play, tips on how to create interactive play environments and hands on fun making toys!

10am - 12:30pm
Thursday 4 September, 2014

Christmas Craft Workshops

Find out the value and benefits of messy (sensory) play, gain age appropriate play ideas that will assist with children's development and overall, have fun.

10am - 12:30pm
Thursday 6 November, 2014

Playgroup Members
& Coordinators
\$10 inc GST

Non Playgroup SA
Members
\$35 inc GST

Crèche
Available

Enrolments / Enquiries:
Playgroup SA 1800 171 882

* Bookings essential to secure
your place. Registrations 15
minutes prior to course
commencement time



PLAYGROUP SA
Playing, learning, supporting families

Playgroup SA Member Survey 2014 *Summary*

In this survey summary, we aim to answer the common questions asked by participants who completed Playgroup SA's 2014 Annual Survey. We have also displayed snap shots of the results, which we feel may be of interest to our Members and Coordinators attending Playgroup.

We appreciate your time and effort in completing this survey - providing us with this valuable feedback that enables us to ensure we continue to provide services that meet member's needs.

Playgroup SA values your feedback...!

If you have a request, grievance or suggestions then please feel free to call us and discuss it with us at any time - there's no need to wait until survey time next year.
Playgroup SA freecall 1800 171 882

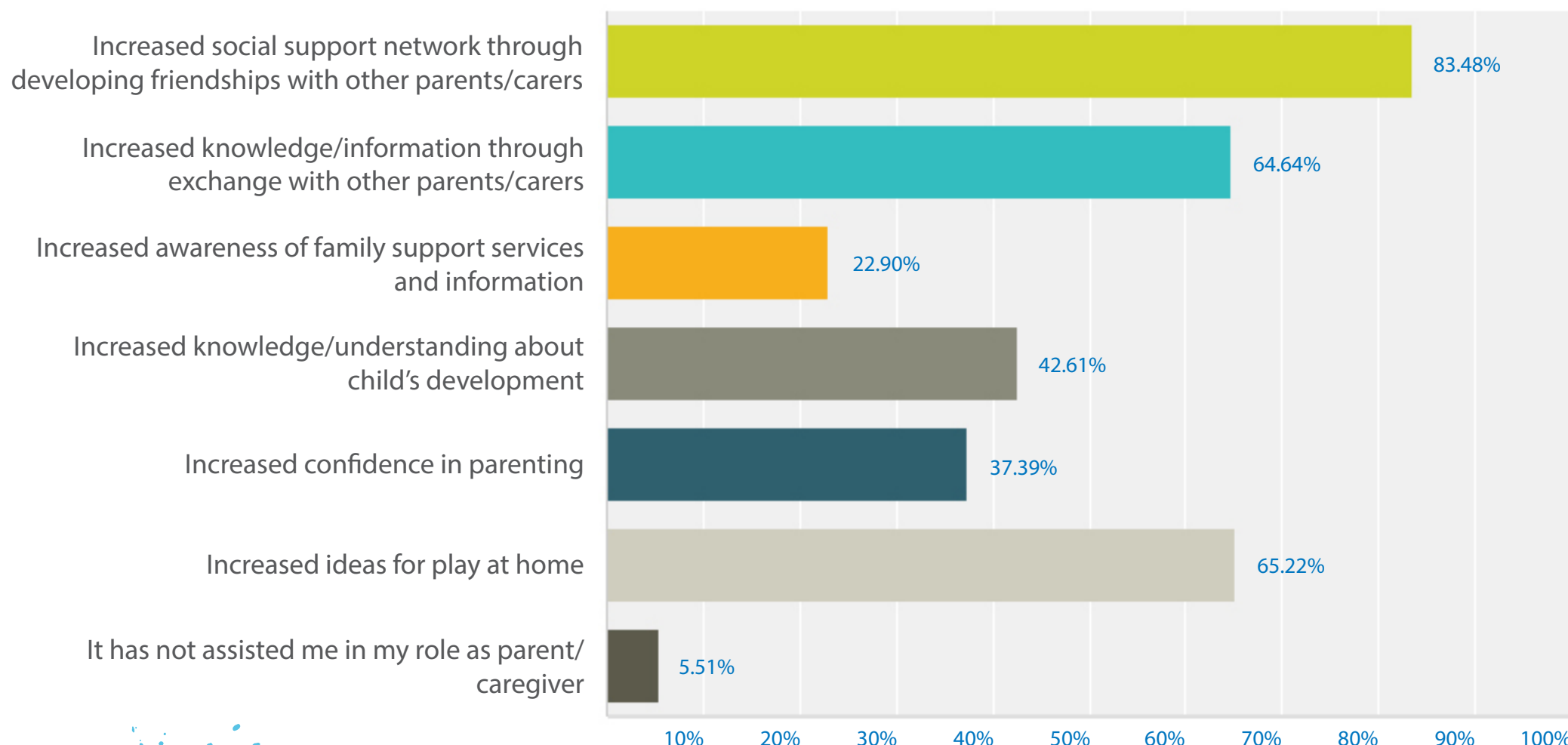
63% of participants said that their **CHILDS DEVELOPMENT** has gained or improved as a result of attending Playgroup.



73% of participants said that they have gained valuable **PLAY IDEAS AND STRATEGIES** as a result of attending Playgroup.

84% of participants indicated that Playgroup has helped to **PROVIDE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND/OR CONNECTEDNESS**

Participants indicate how attending Playgroup has assisted in their roles as parents/caregivers...



SAVE THE DATE · SAVE THE DATE · SAVE THE DATE

Playgroup
@ the ZOO

Friday 7
November
2014



Playgroup @ the Zoo is Playgroup SA's main annual event...

A fun-filled family day featuring Live Children's Entertainment, Playgroup Information, Jumping Castle, Face Painting, Craft, Zoo Attractions and MORE!

PLAYGROUP SA MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS WELCOME!
Discounted rate for all Members!

This year we've organised Playgroup @ the Zoo the day before the SA Credit Union Christmas Pageant - in the hope that it's worth the trip for our Rural Members to attend and join in the metro fun!



Courses & Workshops

YES! We provide various Courses and Workshops (always featured in our ePlay News email blasts and in your Playgroups Affiliation Pack for display at Playgroup).

We've got a number of great ideas for new Workshops that you'd like to see and in 2014, we're looking at running these Training Sessions at various locations around Adelaide.

If you attend a RURAL PLAYGROUP and find it hard to attend these sessions, we can discuss coming to you!

Playgroup Visits

It is a Playgroup SA Affiliation Benefit that your Playgroup is entitled to Playgroup Support via phone, email and/or Playgroup visits with the Playgroup Support and Development Staff from Playgroup SA. Should you require a visit, please give us a call and request one - 1800 171 882.

We can attend your Playgroup to run a specific craft or themed activity, provide a workshop and/or training or discuss issues within your Playgroup and how to address them.

RURAL MEMBERS... THIS INCLUDES YOU! So, if you've been wanting to attend that Messy Play Workshop (or other) but struggle getting to Adelaide, please call us so we can discuss the possibility of coming to you!

Testimonials / Comments

My children and I LOVE Playgroup - I truly believe it does connect our community and enable us to gain strong friendships. I have met and am still close friends with many of the mums from the Playgroups I've attended.

Thank you to the Playgroup SA team for your support and guidance

We love Playgroup. My mother has been taken her grandchildren for over 17 years and will be attending still for another 5 years!

My 4 year old and I have enjoyed coming to Playgroup since he was a bub and now I'm pregnant again with bub number four. I look forward to attending much more!

We just moved to SA and we've been attending Playgroup. We're originally from the Philippines so it's a whole new environment and different experience. We've only attended three sessions so far but already I've noticed an improvement in my daughter's interaction with other kids. Everyone at our Playgroup is very nice and they make us feel welcome and provide a great experience. Thank you!

As a HeartKids SA mum, I am very appreciative of the facilities that are available for the Playgroup offered in Prospect. It is a great opportunity for mothers to group and the children play in a stimulating environment. Thank you!!

We've attended non-Playgroup SA Playgroups before but none attracted the child or satisfied myself like the Playgroup SA one we're attending now.

It's wonderful that Playgroup SA provide so many activities/events throughout the year.

We've met some lovely people through Playgroup and made some great friends.

Looking forward to attending my first Playgroup Course in May.

Great to get the kids out and about!

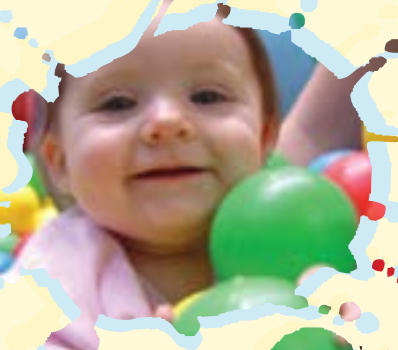
As a Child Care Worker, I have qualifications in Children's Services so I haven't gained extra knowledge but I have found Playgroup to provide my son and I with social interactions and friendships.

Country playgroups find it difficult to participate in city based training and activities.

Nora's Playgroup is best for my son and I. I have never felt out of place and my son enjoys attending every week.

It would be great to have access to download activity sheets that we can print.

Martine who runs Playgroup at Clarence Gardens is fantastic.



Communicating with YOU...

Some participants taking part in the 2014 Member Survey expressed their concern that they were unaware of the services and support that Playgroup SA can offer to individual Members and Affiliated Playgroups.

Majority of participants who were NOT aware of such information ticked 'No' to reading our main publications and/or ways in which we intend to communicate with you, which are:

SA Kids / State of Play MAGAZINE

Physical Copies of SA Kids/State of Play are delivered four times per year (within each school term) to Playgroup Coordinators for distribution to Members.

ePlay News ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

ePlay News is emailed directly to Members and Coordinators from our database (6 times per year). If you do not receive this publication direct to your email address, it could be due to one of the following reasons - the email address we have for you is incorrect / no email address was provided / you have previously unsubscribed from receiving PGSA emails / you are not a paid Playgroup SA Member.

SOCIAL MEDIA (ie. facebook, twitter)

Members and Non Members can follow us on social media to get reminders about upcoming courses, workshops and events, to keep up-to-date with items and/or activities of interest to your family and your playgroup and more.

COORDINATORS EMAIL (NEW)

In 2014, we introduced an interactive Coordinators Newsletter that includes Playgroup ideas and templates, fact sheets and a variety of resources and information. For now, this email is distributed on an 'as needs' basis averaging once per month. This email is intended to keep your valuable Playgroup Coordinator in the know and up-to-date with all Playgroup Matters, which will hopefully be fed through to you without us clogging up your inbox.

Playgroup SA WEBSITE

We know our Website is outdated and 'clunky'...

For this reason, we are focusing hard behind the scenes to develop a bright new, up-to-date and user friendly site.

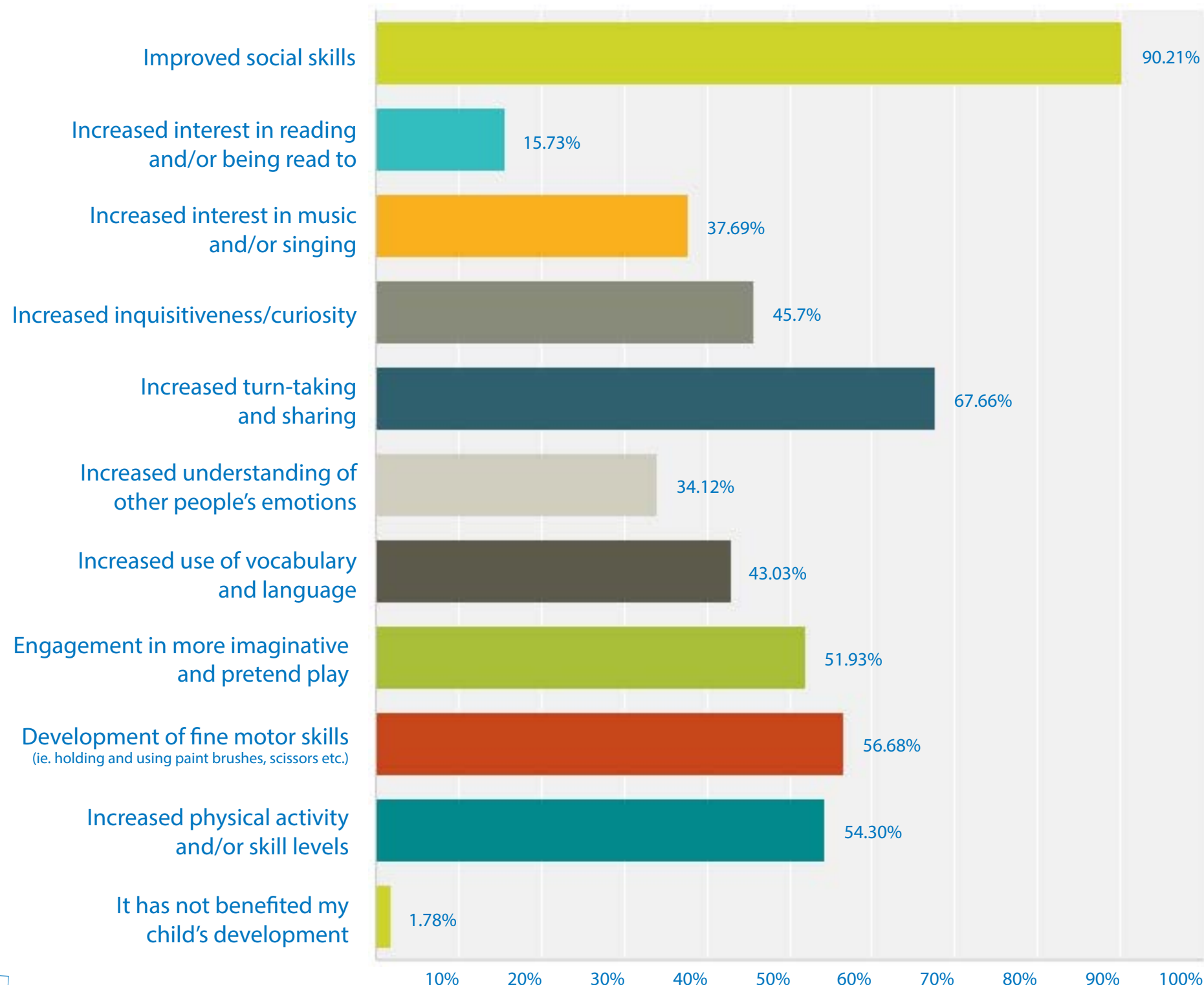
These things take time for our small team so please be patient and in the mean time we'll do our best to display upcoming events and relevant information on the existing website where possible (and in all of the other ways listed above).

WE ALWAYS WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK AND VALUE IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS OF WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE INCLUDED IN FUTURE PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES.

WE ALSO HAVE A NUMBER OF FACT SHEETS AND HANDOUTS AVAILABLE ON VARIOUS TOPICS OF PLAY, BEHAVIOUR AND OTHER RELATED PLAYGROUP RESOURCES. SO, IF YOU NEED SOMETHING, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO GIVE US A CALL!



Participants indicate how attending Playgroup has assisted their child(ren)'s development...



Starter Kits

When a NEW Playgroup Affiliates with Playgroup SA, we provide them with a pack of goodies (craft activities, Crayola resources, books and more) to get them started in resourcing their Group.

Starter Kits are distributed to the Playgroup, not to individual members and are provided free of charge.

Playgroup Guide

We're in the FINAL Stages of reproducing our Playgroup Guide...

The basis for this informative guide will still be the same (but has simply been updated) with the intention of providing you with information for getting the most out of the playgroup experience for children, adults and the community. The Playgroup Guide contains all you need to know about starting and running a successful playgroup.



When you **ignite** the spark of creativity early in life, children go on to do **magnificent** things!



crayola.com.au



Playgroup SA PLAYROOM

The Playroom is available for hire to Affiliated Playgroups during the school terms, between 9am and 4pm weekdays, excluding Thursdays. If you are interested in discussing session time availability please contact Playgroup SA on 1800 171 882.

The playroom is equipped with facilities such as outdoor play area including a sandpit, a well resourced carpeted indoor play area, physical play equipment, kitchen, wet area, baby feeding area, reading corner, home corner, craft supplies, air conditioning, parent toilet and baby change facilities, wheelchair and pram access. Playgroup SA is committed to introducing new toys/equipment to the playroom.

Playgroup SA Membership:

Membership is compulsory under the terms of affiliation for all Playgroups.

Please note that if there are families attending your group that are not current Playgroup SA members, your Playgroup is at risk. If an incident or accident occurs at your Playgroup, an insurance claim may be considered void for your entire group. Our friendly staff are happy to answer any questions regarding your Playgroups membership status or the membership process.

Call us on Free Call 1800 171 882 for more information or check out our website www.playgroupaustralia.com.au/sa

