

State of Play

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF PLAYGROUP SA

ISSUE 4 2015

LET'S PLAY!
TEN INSPIRING
TRAY PLAY IDEAS

CRAFT ON A PLATE
SIMPLE PROJECTS
YOUR KIDS WILL LOVE

FACES, PLACES
LOOKING BACK
ON A BUSY YEAR

FLIP OVER FOR
YOUR KIDS
PLAYGROUP SA

LETTER FROM STATE OF PLAY ❖

Welcome to our final edition of
State of Play for 2015.

What a year it has been at Playgroup SA. In this issue, we hear from our coordinators about the year that was. Playgroup Support and Development Officer Melanie Baker tells us how volunteering at her local playgroup led to a new career pathway.

As the end of the year draws near, we've included an article about tips and tricks to ensure the transition from one year to the next at Playgroup is made smoothly. If you are changing coordinator at your playgroup, don't forget to let Playgroup SA

know so we can ensure all information is sent to the correct person.

A big thank you to everyone who attended events and workshops this year. It's always wonderful to meet members and see families enjoy what Playgroup SA has to offer.

Our *State of Play* magazine will have a whole new look in 2016, so keep an eye out!

Wishing all our members and families a wonderful holiday period and fabulous New Year. ❖

Carley Jones, Executive Officer,
Playgroup SA



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CHRISTMAS ON A PLATE ❖

WORDS PLAYGROUP SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER MELANIE BAKER

ENJOY THE
LEAD-UP TO
THE FESTIVE
SEASON
WITH YOUR
KIDS WITH
THESE FUN
PROJECTS
THAT WILL
LOOK GREAT
ON THE TREE.
ALL YOU
NEED ARE
SOME PAPER
PLATES!

To make these decorations, use whatever craft bits and pieces you have available. Try crayons instead of paint and add pieces of tinsel or glitter for a sparkly 'wow' factor (don't mind the mess!). Adding photos of your child or family creates a personal touch and can transform your project into an inexpensive, meaningful Christmas gift.

Christmas tree bunting

Paint paper plates with green paint. Once dry, cut each plate into quarters. Use your fingertip to dot different colours of paint for 'baubles'. Add a star to the point of each quarter. Tape string or ribbon behind the top of each tree to hang your bunting.

Wreath

Cut out the centre of a paper plate and discard. Paint the wreath shape green and decorate. You could use some ribbon to make a bow and add some pom-poms.

Star

Draw two large overlapping triangles on the back of a paper plate to make a six-point star. Cut out the pieces between the points of the star. Turn the plate over and paint it with yellow paint. You may like to add some glitter and a photo to the middle of the star.

Angel

Fold two sides of a paper plate in to make an upside-down cone shape. Staple the point together. Cut out a circle, draw on a face and tape it to the point. Trace around a child's hands, cut out and tape to the back of the angel. Decorate with paint and/or glitter.

Bells

Paint a paper plate yellow on both sides. Once dry, use a hole punch to make a hole at the top of the paper plate. Tie two bells to two pieces of string. Tape the top of the strings just underneath the hole. Fold in the two sides on either side of the hole and staple together. Add some paper holly leaves and berries and a thread and tie a piece of string to the top.

Santa

Lightly colour in or glue on a circle of light-coloured paper to the middle of the paper plate for Santa's face. Draw on eyes and glue on a pom-pom for a nose. Add a red paper Santa hat and glue a cotton ball to the tip. Glue on two rows of cotton balls around the edge to make your Santa face.

Reindeer

Paint a paper plate and two pop sticks with brown paint. Once dry, tape pop sticks to the top of the paper plate and tie some pieces of pipe cleaner around them to make antlers. Add ears, eyes and a nose to complete your reindeer. ❖





A NEW START ❖

MOTHER-OF-THREE MELANIE BAKER SHARES THE STORY OF HOW PLAYGROUP OPENED UP A NEW CAREER.

WORDS PLAYGROUP SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER MELANIE BAKER

I love Playgroup! This was how I felt after attending my first Playgroup session with my one-year-old daughter and where my Playgroup journey began.

After a few different full-time jobs I was happy and content with being a stay-at-home mum.

But I did feel lonely at times, and wanted more adult interaction.

Our local country Playgroup at Mallala, north of Adelaide, provided all of this and more, and I looked forward to our local two-hour weekly Playgroup session.

The benefits of attending Playgroup, both for me and for my daughter, became clear very quickly.

The social interaction especially helped my little girl with her shyness and as time passed it helped with her transition into kindergarten. We enjoyed craft together, inside and outside play, playdough, painting and group time. It inspired me to start doing more craft activities with my child at home – just as I had done with my own mother and sister when I was young.

I was elected to become a part of the Volunteer Playgroup Committee of my local Playgroup – a role that I relished and was part of for four years. I gained new skills, including confidence when speaking to a group, and my Playgroup experiences started me on a new, exciting and rewarding career path – one that I had not considered before. I was offered a job at Playgroup SA as a support and

development worker and I was in my element, with a passion to assist children to learn through play and provide a place where every family is welcome.

Now, after nine years of attending and being involved in Playgroup, my three daughters have moved on from and transitioned well into school and kindy and I will always have fond memories of attending Playgroup with them. I am delighted to continue to share those valued experiences with many other families through my work.

I still thoroughly enjoy running a Playgroup and my part time work at Playgroup SA's head office. Amongst the many great aspects of the job, I get to visit and support other Playgroups across South Australia and I look forward to more involvement in the area of early childhood.

This year we are pleased to offer all Volunteer Coordinators of a Playgroup SA Affiliated Playgroups a Certificate of Appreciation for the time, effort and dedication they have given to the Playgroup movement. Please contact Playgroup SA to receive your certificate on freecall 1800 171 882. ❖

If you are interested in starting a Playgroup or discovering your local Playgroup, you can search groups in your area and/or enrol for our Coordinator Workshop on the Playgroup SA website at www.playgroupsa.com.au





HAPPY FACES ❖

WORDS SIOBHAN EVANS



Playgroup is fun! The team at Playgroup SA has had another busy year of supporting and visiting Playgroups across the state, from Roxby Downs to Mount Gambier. There are over 120 Playgroups outside the metropolitan area, and we love getting out to meet families and enjoy messy play workshops. We held many well-attended family events in 2015 – look at the smiles to prove it. Stay in touch with what's on in 2016 at www.playgroupsa.com.au ❖





TRAY PLAY

MELANIE BAKER
SHARES A SIMPLE
IDEA THAT WILL
ENCOURAGE KIDS
TO PLAY AND FIND
NEW WAYS TO
RECYCLE TOYS AND
OBJECTS AROUND
THE HOME.

WORDS PLAYGROUP SUPPORT
AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICER
MELANIE BAKER

Making a 'play tray' is a fun and easy way to spend time with your kids at home during the Christmas break.

Start with a shallow tray and enjoy spending the time to collect all the bits and pieces to create your little box of fun. You can use whatever you find around your home and outside.

Talk with your kids about what they would like to add. You might have some small toys or figurines from your favourite movie or TV show that you could include.

If you don't have any small plastic animals, print some pictures from a computer or cut out some pictures from magazines. Sometimes putting it all together can be as much fun as actually playing with it. We've compiled 10 tray ideas for you – what else can you come up with?

Garden scene

Items could include sand, flowers, leaves, fairy figurines, battery-operated tea lights or small plastic insects.

Hen house fun

Use straw, feathers, a small cardboard box for the hen house, plastic eggs or clean egg shells, fluffy chickens and grass for chicken feed.

A day at the farm

Use a small plastic container to make some mud and add grass, straw, boxes for animal pens or fences, plastic animals and grass for food.

Seaside rock pool

You'll need a small plastic container to hold some water, smooth rocks, sand, shells and small sea creatures.

Pond life

Include a small plastic container to hold water, rocks, round leaves for lily pads, small flowers to float with the lily pads, reed-like leaves and plastic frogs.

Dinosaur dig

Fill the tray with dirt and bury plastic dinosaurs. Use brushes to move the dirt and dig them up.

Arctic fun

Scrunch up white paper to make icebergs and add cotton balls for snow, blue paper or material for water and arctic animals.

Construction site

Build the site with sand, rocks, bark chips, sticks, small blocks and toy trucks.

Treasure hunt

Bury 'treasure' in sand or dry rice (you can colour dry rice by adding a few drops of

food colouring). Treasure could be plastic coins, necklaces and rings. Foil sealed chocolates could be added as a treat. Try making some newspaper pirate hats, a map and make a treasure box using a plastic strawberry container.

Ice cream parlour

For this you'll need large pop-poms and/or cotton balls, pop sticks, small spoons, ice cream scoops, patty pans, half circles of paper rolled up into cone shapes.

Wiggly worms

Cook some dry spaghetti pasta as per instructions on the pack, drain and cool, then add to dirt with plastic insects. ❖





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



24+ colors



36+ colors



12 colors





Together Time

crayola.com.au

WIND-DOWN TIME

CELEBRATE THE END OF ANOTHER FANTASTIC YEAR WITH A FUN THEMED ACTIVITY.



The end of the Playgroup year is a very special time for children, especially those that may be moving on to school the following year. Many of these children have been with their Playgroup family since they were small babies. It is a time to recognise and share how much they have accomplished, the friendships they have made and the next steps in their lives. Here are some ideas for your final weeks at Playgroup.

End of year party and presentation

Have a party and invite extended family or a special friend. Hold an awards presentation where each child gets an award for their special accomplishments, contributions, gifts and/or talents.

Get festive

You might like to invite a special visitor in red and white to celebrate Christmas.

Make memories

Make a special group memory book with photos and journals of each child's Playgroup journey. This can be a wonderful keepsake that kids will enjoy sharing together.

Enjoy a day out

Go on a special excursion to celebrate the end of the year. It doesn't have to be fancy – it could be simply to the local park.

End of year jobs

If you are no longer going to be the main contact, work out with your group who the new contact will be and refer them to the coordinators checklist.

Plan some Christmas craft activities for the upcoming weeks.

Organise a working bee to tidy up the Playgroup area, cupboard, room and sandpit or send equipment home to be washed and returned before the end of the year. Make sure that old play dough is thrown out as well as broken toys and other perishables. Wash paint smocks, dress ups, tea towels and disinfect baby toys and books.

Decide on the start date for Playgroup next year and advertise it to members and potential members.

Update your contact lists so that members of your group can get together during the school holidays, if they wish. This is a nice way to stay in touch throughout the lengthy Christmas or New Year break.

Organise a Parent Committee to get the 'okay' for continuation of your Playgroup next year.

If you are going to require a new venue, look into this now so that your whole group can agree on where they would like to meet in the New Year. ❖

Remember to call Playgroup SA on freecall 1800 171 882 if you have any questions about venues for next year, Certificates of Appreciation for coordinators or volunteers who are moving on from Playgroup, procedures, processes, forms or any other enquiries.

New coordinators checklist

Beginning a new Playgroup year needs careful planning. To help the new or existing coordinator get off to a good start, we've created the following guide to make the change as easy as possible:

- ☐ If the existing coordinator will not be staying on for 2016, organise a handover meeting to hand on the Playgroup Guide, financial records and attendance sheets to the new coordinator.
- ☐ Ensure your Playgroup Affiliation form is filled in and submitted to Playgroup SA for the 2016 Calendar year and make sure the new Playgroup coordinator is listed as the contact person on this form.
- ☐ Playgroup Affiliation can now be submitted and paid for online at www.playgroupsa.com.au
- ☐ Ensure all finances are in order. *If your Playgroup has a designated treasurer, this is their responsibility.*
- ☐ If your group has a bank account, arrange to change signatories if the coordinator is scheduled to change.
- ☐ List venue details, including key arrangements, contact names and numbers.
- ☐ Notify venue administration of new coordinator's details.
- ☐ Advise Playgroup SA of any other important changes.
- ☐ If your Playgroup is incorporated, make sure all the public officer tasks have been completed.



GRADUATION HAT ❖

Makes: 6 hats

You'll need: Cardboard, scissors, glue, paper fasteners, wool (for tassels).

Method:

1. Cut a piece of cardboard into six 15cm x 15cm squares and six 60cm x 8cm strips.
2. Cut out the v-shaped notches in the strip. Fold the strip in half.
3. Form the strip into a circle with the notched part facing into the circle. Adjust the size to fit the child's head. Glue the ends to form the hat band.
4. Glue the hat band to the square piece of cardboard.
5. Make a tassel by winding wool around a square piece of cardboard. Wind the



wool around the cardboard about five or six times.

6. Slip the tassel off the cardboard. Wrap a piece of wool around one end and tie it securely. Cut the long end of the tassel.
7. Attach the tassel to the hat using a paper fastener.

Note: You could use white or light coloured cardboard and get the Playgroup graduates to decorate their own hats.

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