

TRIKKI KIDZ EARLY LEARNING GROUP

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world”
— Anne Frank

DECEMBER
2022

ON *this* MONTH

AT TRIKKI KIDZ

Barooga Preschool Graduation (6pm Tues) ----- 6
Cobram Kindergarten Graduation (6pm Wed) ----- 7

AROUND THE COUNTRY

Christmas Appeal ----- 1-24
International Day of Persons with Disabilities ----- 3
Human Rights Day ----- 10
International Mountain Day ----- 11
International Migrants Day ----- 18

Christmas Eve ----- 24
Christmas Day ----- 25
New Year's Eve ----- 31

STAFFING CHANGES FOR 2023

At this time of year, it is usual to have a few staff changes as some staff depart for new adventures and new faces join our team.

In Cobram, we will farewell Kerry Vitullo at the end of the year as she makes the move to teaching in a stand-alone kindergarten service. We will miss her so much and wish her well. She has been a valued member of our Cobram team for a few years now. In her place, we welcome Vanessa Baunton, a highly skilled Bachelor qualified Early Childhood Teacher who will be job-sharing the role of teaching our 3 year old kindergarten program with long term team member Grace Muckenthaler.

In Cobram, we have also farewelled Jono to take on a career in the building industry, quite a change for him! We wish him well and will miss his humour and masculinity with a whole female team now in Cobram!

In Barooga, Kelly has commenced maternity leave. We wish her well and hope to see her back in the months ahead. Tara has also departed this week to take on a position outside of the early childhood education and care sector and we wish her well with the change of pace.

See the last page for full staffing allocations for 2023.





INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY – DECEMBER 18

Throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of the individual's will to overcome adversity and to live a better life.

Migration draws increasing attention in the world nowadays. Mixed with elements of un-foreseeability, emergency, and complexity, the challenges and difficulties of international migration require enhanced cooperation and collective action among countries and regions.

[Find out more here](#)

KMART WISHING TREE APPEAL – DECEMBER 1 - 24

Kmart and The Salvation Army are coming together to help support those doing it tough. Prior to the pandemic, more than 3 million Australians were living under the poverty line and The Salvation Army have seen a continual increase in need. That's why we encourage you to embrace the spirit of giving this year by supporting the Kmart Wishing Tree Appeal. [Find out more here.](#)



STRAWBERRY BARS

PREP 15 min | COOK 35 min | SERVES 12

INGREDIENTS

BISCUIT BASE

- 1 1/2 cups (190 grams) plain whole meal flour
- 1 1/2 cups (135 grams) rolled (traditional) oats
- 1/2 cup (75 grams) brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon, ground
- 125 grams butter, melted and slightly cooled
- 1 egg, pinch salt
- 1 tbs honey
- 1 tsp vanilla bean paste (or extract)

STRAWBERRY LAYER

- 2 cups (300 grams) fresh strawberries, hulled and

- 1 tbs brown sugar
- 2 tbs tapioca flour (or corn flour)
- 2/3 cup (170 ml) store-bought strawberry jam

CRUMBLE LAYER

- 1 tbs poppy seeds, 1 tbs flax seeds, 1 tbs chia seeds

METHOD

Preheat oven to 180 C (350 F) and line a square 20 cm x 20 cm tin with baking paper. Set aside.

TO MAKE THE BISCUIT BASE

Place the flour, oats, sugar, cinnamon and salt into a large bowl and mix to combine.

Add the butter, egg, honey and vanilla and stir thoroughly to combine. **Set** aside 1 cup of the mixture (for the crumble topping). **Press** the remaining mixture into an even layer in the bottom of the prepared tin. Set aside in the fridge.

TO MAKE THE STRAWBERRY LAYER

Place the strawberries, sugar and tapioca into a large bowl and gently mix to combine.

Retrieve the base from the fridge. **Cover** the base with an even layer of strawberry jam, top with prepared strawberries.

TO MAKE THE CRUMBLE TOPPING

To the reserved crumble, add the poppy seeds, flax seeds and chia seeds and mix thoroughly to combine. **Sprinkle** the crumble topping over the strawberry layer. **Bake** for 35-40 minutes or until the jam is bubbling and the crumble topping is a deep golden brown. **Allow** the bars to cool completely before cutting into 9-12 bars. Enjoy x

Recipe and image from mylovelylittlelunchbox.com

Podcast Reviews

Family get togethers mean time in the car, check out these family podcasts!



BRAINS ON | APM STUDIOS

Brains On! is an award-winning audio show for kids and families. Each week, a different kid co-host joins Molly Bloom to find answers to fascinating questions about the world. THE mission is to encourage kids' natural curiosity and wonder using science and history...but there's no age limit on curiosity and episodes of Brains On can be enjoyed by anyone.

SMASH BOOM BEST | APM STUDIOS

Smash Boom Best is a debate show for kids and families from the makers of the award-winning podcast, Brains On! Every episode takes two cool things, smashes them together and lets you decide which is best. Our debaters use facts and passion to make their case -- teaching listeners how to defend their own opinions along the way.



FOCUS: Make Your New Year's Resolutions a Family Affair

It's that time of year again, when many of us make New Year's resolutions that we have the best intentions of keeping. But despite our initial efforts, we often don't follow through. A lot of us fail because we either make unrealistic goals or we lack a support system that will help keep us honest. If you want to keep this year's resolutions, make a realistic goal. Your goal should be specific, measurable, and doable within a reasonable period of time. Being supported and held accountable by others will further help you reach your goal, so consider making resolutions as a family.

Families Who Make Goals Together Keep Goals Together

While making a family resolution may seem as sensible as herding cats, it's worth the effort. But setting family resolutions will only work if each member of the family feels invested. And for everyone to feel invested, shared goals need to be recognized and treated equally within the family. If everyone feels they have a stake, then you have created the foundation for achieving your shared goals. Making goals as a family has a distinct advantage over making a personal goal as an individual. For example, if you go running every day with a friend, you're more likely to continue making progress because you will feel supported. Making goals public to your family and working together to achieve them provides the outside encouragement we all need to keep resolutions.

Alone You Will Struggle; Together You Will Thrive

Many of our routines are built around work and family, but your autonomy and ability to make personal changes to your life can be undermined by your greater responsibilities. So, if you want to exercise more or eat healthier, you are more likely to do so if your other family members exercise with you and eat the same things you do. But if you are the only one in your family that is actively working towards a goal, constantly removing yourself from your other family members' habits (e.g., eating a salad during family pizza night) will eventually erode your desire to keep your resolutions. You might stick with eating salads for a while, but that pepperoni pizza will be more tempting when everyone else is enjoying it but you. You shouldn't force your family to do what you're doing, especially if they don't want or need to, but you can easily find ways for you and your family to work together and achieve a common goal.

8 Resolutions That Are Easier Kept as a Family

Some habits are truly personal and require individual accountability, but many common resolutions can be adopted by the entire family with a little planning and coordination. Maybe you're the only one who needs to lose weight or create a better diet, but there are other ways to encourage your whole family to work together.

1. Eat Meals Together The best way to cultivate better eating habits and to introduce new or healthier foods to your diet is to eat together. If possible, you should eat breakfast and dinner together with your partner and children. Not only will you get to enjoy good food (especially if you cook together), but this is also a great way to create time for daily connection as a family. You can even coach your kids' sports teams as a way to be present and involved in their physical activities, and even if you can't, you can still go to their games and offer support by cheering them on.

To make this year the year you actually follow through with your goals, make it a family affair. This way, everyone wins. You can share the sense of accomplishment together, which not only helps in achieving your shared goals, but can bring you closer together as a family.

2. Go to Bed at the Same Time Getting enough sleep is important for every age group, children and adults alike. But for some families, bedtimes are considered a guideline and not a rule, and if they are a rule, they only apply to young children. This year, make a mandatory lights-out time for everyone, yourself included. You may need to collect and shut down electronic devices from kids to ensure everyone in the family goes to bed at the same time.

3. Unplug Devices A great way to help everyone decompress from a stressful day and wind down toward bedtime is to create "unplugged" time, or time where electronic devices are shut off and everyone can read or relax in a way that doesn't include electronics. Most sleep experts recommend unplugging from electronics an hour or so before bed.

4. Create Reading Time If your resolution is to read more often, make it a family routine to go to the library once a week. Saturday is a great day to visit the library for most families. Once everyone has books they want to read, create "electronics-free" spaces in your home and designate a time when everyone will read. You can even take it a step further: during meals or other times when your family is together, discuss what you're reading and share what you've learned.

5. Exercise as a Family Everyone can enjoy the health benefits of exercise, which are almost endless. In addition to the obvious physical benefits, exercising also helps to lower stress and lift your mood. While bringing everyone to the gym may not be realistic for your family, going for walks together, playing catch, shooting hoops, or joining amateur sports teams or clubs can make it easier to cultivate appreciation for exercise in your family.

6. Work Toward a Financial Goal As parents, you may feel it is inappropriate to talk about your finances with your children, especially if you have outstanding debt. But if you wish to help your children make good decisions about money, like smart spending habits and how to save, being open about family finances and creating financial goals as a family are surprisingly good ways to help prepare your children for adulthood.

7. Switch Out the Soda Your family doctor will thank you, and so will your wallet, if you stop stocking your home with your soda of choice. If you like carbonated drinks and the idea of going cold turkey seems unthinkable, try switching out your favourite soda with flavoured carbonated water instead. Not only will this prevent weight gain and overconsumption of sugar, but it will teach your kids to make healthier choices as well.

8. Go Meatless One Day a Week Reduce your meat consumption and eat more vegetables by cooking meatless meals one day a week. Eating less red meat is good for your health and wallet, and eating less meat overall is good for the environment. The sooner you can do this, the better. Children who try different kinds of foods at a young age tend to be less picky and to expand their palates, and by maintaining healthy eating habits, eating vegetarian may become your family's favourite way of eating.

Source: The Gottman Institute (2022). Make Your New Year's Resolutions a Family Affair. Retrieved from <https://www.gottman.com/blog/make-new-years-resolutions-family-affair/>



HEALTH & SAFETY: 4 Simple ways to declutter your child's play space

Simplifying the toys in your home will cut clutter, reduce stress, and improve how your kids play. You know that feeling of overwhelm and inability to focus when you have too many browser tabs open? That's how our kids feel in the presence of too many toys. When kids play, their brains are hard at work growing and learning. But when their environment is overrun with clutter, their brains go into overdrive. They have the same trouble focusing. The same stress of not knowing what to do next, or what it is they're even looking for. They jump from toy to toy, distracted and overwhelmed, just like we alternate between tabs, apps, and devices. Think of the opposite scenario though. When you have a single device in front of you with just one or two tabs or applications open. You're better able to focus and get your work done, right? The same goes for our kids.

Open-Ended Toys vs. Closed-Ended Toys

Open-ended toys (or open toys): These are toys that promote physical, creative, and/or imaginative play. Closed-ended toys (also referred to as closed or fixed toys): These are toys that usually only have one function, and often are toys that can be completed or mastered.

How to declutter your toys

Step 1: Watch & reflect. Watch your kids play for a week. Make notes of which toys are played with most frequently and for the longest periods. Note the toys that are being ignored.

Step 2: Sort your toys. It helps to declutter toys by category. Having everything visible in one space makes it easier to pick out the favourites and ones that add value, but also see the excess. Gather all toys in a specific category in one room. If you have a lot of toys or just want to break them up, tackle one category at a time.



Step 3: Declutter one category at a time. Now that your toys are sorted, it's time to purge!

Step 4: Organise & arrange. Toys that you are keeping and want your kids to play with should be easily accessible and visible. If we want kids to play with their toys, they need to be able to see and access them with ease.

Step 5: Get rid of your unwanted toys. The last step to decluttering your toys is to remove them from your home. I recommend doing this while you've got momentum — within a few days or so.

Decluttering is hard and it may take a few attempts. Read this article in full and enjoy the space it makes in yours and your children's mind.

Source: Modernminimalism (2022). How to declutter toys. Retrieved from <https://modernminimalism.com/how-to-declutter-toys/>

Shaving Cream Words

Shaving cream is such an amazing sensory activity! Your kids will be so excited to use shaving cream for a learning activity, it won't even feel like they are learning! **First**, spray foam shaving cream on an art tray. **Then** Spread it out so the shaving cream is all over the tray! Write their name or a sight word that you are working on in the shaving cream and ask your child if they know what the word says. Ask them to copy their name or the word in the shaving cream. Repeat this process over and over again! Let your child erase the words so they get a chance to play in the shaving cream! Find this and more activities [here](#).



REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLING CHRISTMAS

This year don't buy wrapping paper or Christmas cards make your own or better yet use art already created.

Collect your kids drawings and paintings – After your child's art has spent its time on the fridge, tuck it away ready to be used as wrapping paper or as a part of a Christmas card. Family friends and family will love receiving gifts and cards created with love.

If you do have to buy cards or wrapping paper – Choose cards and paper not wrapped in plastic. Check that items you are buying are made of recycled materials. You could even try sending e-cards this year.

D-eco-rations – Many of us reuse our decorations year after year already but if you are planning on buying new ones this year why not try making some instead. Turn off your lights at night and try to use LED ones instead.

Presents – Take a look around your home. How many things do you already have? Do you really need more stuff? Maybe instead of buying more things this year, you could try an 'experience' Christmas. Like, a **trip out to a theme park** with a friend. Or a **surfing lesson**! You can also ask your family to get all their gifts at **online eco-stores** this year!

We can all play a part in helping the earth this Christmas.

<https://www.natgeokids.com/au/kids-club/cool-kids/general-kids-club/eco-friendly-christmas/>



JOBS TOGETHER

Toddlers love to mimic those around them. They learn from watching others and doing what they are doing – most especially they love being like their parents. Give your little one a broom, or a mini-tool and get busy together. Spend some time sweeping the patio, or “fixing” the wooden blocks together. You will be surprised at how involved they become in these activities.

Try washing up:

Washing up is a fun activity to do together, there will be water everywhere and dishes may not actually get clean but there it will be fun.

Laundry:

Put the washing in the machine and let your child press the buttons and turn the machine on. When it comes to hanging it out why not do that together too. Using pegs is also a great fine motor skill too.

Gardening:

Rake the leaves, pull the weeds, hose the garden. There are so many gardening activities you can do with your child they may even invent some of their own.

Making the bed:

Yep, even the daily mundane activity of making the bed can be an activity your child will love being a part of. Pull up the sheets together, hide under the sheets, let your child lie under the sheet as you throw the sheet up and they watch it float down.

Preparing dinner:

Besides the huge range of benefits preparing meals together have it is also lots of fun.



BAROOGA TEAM 2023

Infant – Tash Menhennitt, Jenny Taylor, Delicia Smith, Michael Laver

Toddler – Sandy Heyen, Nicole Rhodes, Paula Coburn, Ellie Dunn

Junior – Kara Frigo, Brooke McMillan

Preschool – Kath Dunn, Mel Verducci, Ebony Loomes

Relief – Brenda Aksionov, Tay Bate, Amanda Mancini, Anna Newman, Mel Adamsson

Kitchen – Tanya Elder

Office – Kelly Lucas, Trudy Brooks

COBRAM TEAM 2023

Infant – Ash Xerri, Shyanne Cassise, Chantelle Cooper, Hayley Sneddon, Lilli Kettner

Toddler 1 – Mandy Bale, Tash Cummins, Hardeep Kaur, Claudia Lazar, Tiana Smith

Toddler 2 – Izzy Fotia, Sharron Neuwirth, Tiara Kelly, Teresa Demaio, Elle Pinzana, Katey Proctor, Lilli Kettner

3YO Kindergarten – Vanessa Baunton, Grace Muckenthaler, Kim Montgomery, Chantel Germon, Tracey Mueller, Bec Judge

4YO Kindergarten – Jayne Allemand, Tamika Dyson, Mikaela Mulvenna, Elle Drew, Caitlin Mills, Aisha Bahtiyar

Relief – Rochelle Ambrose, Georgina Baker, Rachael Russell, Danielle Sidebottom

Kitchen – Mel Mitchell, Sunta Demaio, Danielle Clifford

Office – Courtney Harris, Trudy Brooks, Jacinta Ciccone

Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas and we look forward to welcoming you back in 2023.



Rocking around the Christmas Tree

Short simple activities to get some active minutes in the day.

Ok so this is just old fashioned ‘statues’ jazzed up with some festive fun! Search ‘kids Christmas carols’, ‘dance Christmas carols’ or ‘upbeat Christmas carols’ on your favourite music platform. Take turns at being the music person. Everyone else starts frozen, press play, everyone dances and then press stop everyone freezes in their best Christmas tree pose. Switch the Christmas lights on and press play!