



# The Village News

A CAFS newsletter with news for grandparents, relatives or friends caring for children.

## Message from Pauline Sullivan Team Leader—Kinship Care.

Welcome to the first issue of our Kinship Care Newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Kinship Caregivers across the region who have given of themselves to improve the lives of the children in their care- you are a very special group of people and I admire the dedication and support you give to this vulnerable group. I went to a workshop recently which reminded me of the importance of self care:

### My 5 Top Tips:

1. Value yourself, because we do (to feel good about your relationship with the children you are caring for).
2. Seek out a support network if you don't have

one already, find someone you can confide in, this could be a friend, family member or a professional.

3. Find ways to reduce the isolation which often accompanies being a caregiver.

4. Spend time looking after yourself (have a bath or meet up with a friend for coffee) and keeping up your interests which can help to keep your life in balance. Enjoy hobbies or learn a new skill.

5. Remember - your Kinship Care Worker is there to support you - talk to them, identify and explain your needs.

I am proud to lead a team of dedicated staff who have all shown professional commitment and are extremely hard working. Thankyou all and I will take this opportunity

to name my team.

Cherie - Information and Advice Worker

Ann - Family Services worker

Kerryne - Placement and Support worker

Angela - Placement and Support worker

Sarah - Placement and Support worker

Jeneice - Co-ordinator of Kinship, Adoption and Permanent Care.

I hope you find this issue of Village News informative and useful. We look forward to providing you with more news and articles in our next issue.

Yours Faithfully

**Pauline Sullivan**

**Team Leader Kinship Care Program.**

## CAFS—Kinship Care

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**Pauline & Jeneice**

# Why the Village?

In 1996 Hilary Clinton made famous the ancient African Proverb "It takes a village to raise a child"

The proverb is from Igbo and Yoruba regions of Nigeria and the basic meaning is that raising a child is a communal effort. It is to be taken to mean that the responsibility lies not only with the parents, but also with the extended family and in some cases the community.

The Village was chosen to be the name of the Newsletter because Kinship Care reflects the notion of The Village. This being grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, kindergartens, schools, maternal health,

local GP, sporting clubs, its whoever is involved in providing a nurturing, caring environment that supports a child to reach their full potential.

The aim of The Village is to provide information about what is available to you out in the community, parenting ideas, information about government changes as well as useful contact phone numbers and website.

Enjoy the read and feel free to forward any comments or if you would like to contribute any articles please contact us in Kinship Care.

**Cherie Salmon**

**Kinship Care**

**Information & Advice Worker**

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## Grandparents Playgroup is coming!

The City of Ballarat are working towards developing a playgroup for Grandparents. Watch this space for further information in future issues.

### What is Playgroup?

Playgroup is for babies, toddlers and preschoolers and their parents or caregivers. Around 50,000 children from 40,000 families go to playgroup in all corners of Victoria at community venues such as maternal and child health centres, kindergartens, halls, community centres, primary schools and aged care facilities.

Playgroups are informal, low cost and run by the parents and caregivers in them.

Adults stay with their children at playgroup. This gives them the chance to meet other people going through similar experiences and ease the isolation that can come with caring for young children. Families can be gently introduced to community, health and support services while they are at playgroup.

### Why children go?

Playgroup aged children are going through a stage of rapid brain and skill development.

Babies are offered play experiences to stimulate their senses. Toddlers practise using their hands, problem solve and use their emerging language skills. Preschool children practise social skills - an important preparation for kindergarten and school.

At playgroup children can:

- make new friends
- have new experiences
- gain self confidence
- develop physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually
- develop their skills of cooperation through music, group singing, free play and snack time
- develop verbal and non verbal communication skills through their contact with other children and adults
- develop fine and gross motor skills
- gain better body control, hand to

eye coordination, spatial awareness and balance when they play with balls, sand, blocks, puzzles, play dough, paint and paste

- discover shape, size, texture, quantity and consistency when they play with dough and clay
- learn to recognise colours, develop fine motor skills and express emotions by experimenting with paint, collage, chalk, crayons and stamps.

### How parents/caregivers benefit

Playgroup can be a lifeline to parents with babies, toddlers and preschoolers who might not have any other opportunity to get to know local caregivers going through similar experiences.

**For more information about Playgroup or to find your nearest Playgroup contact Playgroup Victoria on toll free: 1800 171 882**

# Child Restraint Laws explained

Children need different restraints as they grow. The restraint must match the age, size and weight of your child. It must be correctly installed in your car and the straps must be adjusted so that your child is held in snugly.

When using a restraint, follow the manufacturer's instructions exactly or go to a [Restraint Fitting Station](#) - their operators have been specially trained to install approved infant and child restraints in a wide variety of vehicles.

If the inbuilt harness is loose or the restraint is not attached securely to the vehicle, it will not protect your child properly in a crash.

## Child restraint & booster seat road rules

The type of restraint will depend on the age of the child as follows:

- Children aged under six months must wear a properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward facing child restraint.
- Children aged between six months and under four years must wear a properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward facing child restraint OR a forward facing child restraint with an in-built harness.
- Children aged four years to under seven must wear a properly fastened and adjusted approved forward facing child restraint with an in-built harness OR an approved booster seat with a properly fastened and adjusted seatbelt or child safety harness.

**Always wait until your child has outgrown their current restraint before changing to the next size.**

Article taken from the VicRoads website <http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/SafetyAndRules/SaferVehiclesChildRestraints/ChooseTheRightChildRestraint.htm>



## Child Development 0-12 months

(As taken from the Child Development & Trauma guide 2008)

The following information needs to be understood in the context of the overview statement on the child's development:

### 0-2 weeks

- Anticipates in relationship with caregivers through facial expression, gazing, fussing, crying
- Is unable to support head unaided
- Hands closed involuntarily in the grasp reflex
- Startles at sudden loud noises
- Reflexively asks for a break by looking away arching back, frowning and crying

### By 4 weeks

- Focuses on a face
- Follows an object moved in an arc about 15cm above face until straight ahead
- Changes vocalisation to com-

municate hunger, boredom and tiredness.

### By 6-8 weeks

- Participates in and initiates interactions with caregivers through vocalization, eye contact, fussing and crying
- May start to smile at familiar faces
- May start to 'coo'
- Turns in the direction of a voice

### By 3-4 months

- Increasing initiation of interaction with caregivers
- Begins to regulate emotions and self soothe through attachment to primary caregiver

- Can lie on tummy with head held up to 90 degrees, looking around
- Can wave a rattle, starts to play with own fingers and toes
- May reach for things to try and hold them
- Learns by looking at, holding, and mouthing different objects
- Laughs out loud
- Follows an object in an arc about 15cm above the face for 180 degrees (from one side to the other)
- Notices strangers

# Child Development 0-12 months continued

## May even be able to:

- Voice sounds such as "ah" "goo".
- Blow raspberries
- Bear some weight on legs when held upright
- Object if you try to take a toy away

## By six months

- Uses caregiver for comfort and security as attachment increases
- Is likely to be wary of strangers
- Keeps head level with body when pulled to sitting
- Says "ah", "goo" or similar vowel consonants combinations
- Sits without support
- Makes associations between what is heard, tasted and felt
- May even be able to roll both ways and help to feed himself
- Learns and grows by touching and tasting different foods

## By 9 months

- Strongly participates in, and initiates interactions with, caregivers
- Lets you know when help is wanted & communicates with facial expressions, gestures, sounds or one or two words like "dada" and "mamma"
- Watches reactions to emotions and by seeing you express your feelings, starts to recognize and imitates happy, sad, excited or fearful emotions

- Unusually high anxiety when separated from parents/ caregivers
- Is likely to be wary of and anxious with strangers
- Expresses positive and negative emotions
- Learns to trust that basic needs will be met
- Works to get to a toy out of reach
- Looks for a dropped object
- May even be able to bottom shuffle, crawl, stand
- Knows that a hidden object exists
- Waves goodbye, plays peek-a-boo.

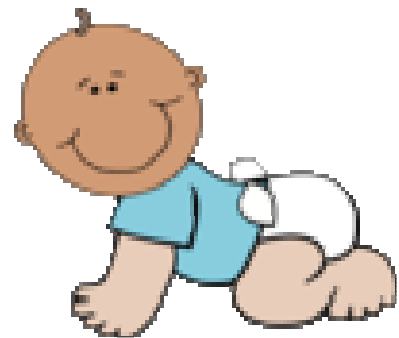
## By 12 months

- Enjoys communicating with family & other familiar people
- Seeks comfort, and reassurance from familiar objects, family, caregivers, and is able to be soothed by them
- Begins to self soothe when distressed
- Understands a lot more than s/he can say
- Expresses more intense emotions & moods
- Does not like to be separated from familiar people
- Moves away from things that upset or annoy
- Can walk with assistance holding on to furniture or hands
- Pulls up to standing position
- Gets into a sitting position
- Claps hands

- Indicates wants in ways other than crying
- Learns and grows in confidence by doing things repeatedly and exploring
- Picks up objects using thumb & forefinger in pincer grasp
- Is sensitive to approval & disapproval

## May even be able to:

- Understand cause and effect
- Understand that when you leave, you still exist
- Crawl, stand, walk
- Follow a one step instruction—"go get your shoes"
- Respond to music.



# Healthy Eating

Trying to come up with something different every night that is tasty, cheap and nutritious to eat is a hard task.

Here are two recipe ideas that are quick and easy. Let me know what you think? Or how about letting me know your family favorite & I will publish it in the next newsletter.

## Main Meal

### Porcupine Meatballs with Rice

Weird name I know, but this is what my mum used to call this meal and it has always stuck with me. The Porcupine reference is to the dry rice that you add to the meatballs, which then make little spikes come out around the ball.

#### **Ingredients:**

- 750 grams minced beef
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- Approx 4 tablespoons Tomato sauce (I do this by eye, but I think this is about right. You don't want the mixture too runny as the balls will not hold together.)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup white rice (uncooked)
- Olive Oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup beef stock
- 800 gram tin of tomato soup
- Additional rice to cook and serve with the meatballs.

#### **Instructions:**

1. In a large bowl mix the minced beef, onion, parsley, sauces and rice.
2. Once well combined, roll a tablespoon of mixture into a ball. I usually sit them on a chopping board and wait until I have enough for to cook a large batch.
3. Pour oil in to a large pan, so that the surface of the pan is well covered then place at a medium heat.
4. Add a large number of meatballs to the pan, turning every few minutes to ensure that the balls are browned all over.
5. Place cooked balls into a large saucepan and cook another batch of meat balls.
6. Repeat this process until all meat mixture is cooked.
7. Add beef stock and tomato soup to the saucepan stirring gently to combine the ingredients.
8. Cook on a high heat for a few minutes, then reduce heat and allow to simmer for approx 15 minutes.
9. Whilst this is simmering cook the rice and serve into bowls. Top with meatballs and enjoy.

### Lunch Box Favorite

This easy muffin recipe is also very versatile and can provide a base for many other types of muffins, for example:

- omit the white choc chips and include berries of your choice
- add orange juice and rind instead of vanilla essence, then poppy seeds instead of white choc chips
- add banana and choc chips and so on.

### White Chocolate Chip Muffins

#### **Ingredients:**

- 2 cups self raising flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup caster sugar (I think it was actually  $\frac{3}{4}$  but I always reduce it to about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup)
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup canola oil
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup white choc chips (if large chips chop roughly first)

#### **Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees
2. Sift flour and sugar into a bowl. Mix and make a well in the middle.
3. In a separate bowl mix the remaining ingredients (except choc chips).
4. Pour the liquid ingredients into well and mix with a wooden spoon. Muffins are best when made quickly and not over mixed.
5. Add choc chips and mix lightly through.
6. Spoon into well greased muffin pans or patty pans in muffin tray
7. Cooking time depends on the size and oven, but 12 -15 minutes is about average for the standard patty pan size.

Double the mixture and make two batches. One for the cupboard and one for the freezer.



# Mobile Phone Safety:

## Tips for Kids & Teens

- ⇒ **Never post your number or other personal details** on the internet or share it with anybody you don't know. The more private your number is, the less likely you are to be contacted by strangers.
- ⇒ **Be wary** of anyone who asks to borrow your phone in public-even if it's for a supposed emergency. If it is a genuine emergency, dial 000 for them and pass on the phone. **Do not leave a stranger alone with your phone.**
- ⇒ **If you receive** a text message from an unknown source, don't reply. It could contain a virus or be an attempt to sign you up to an expensive subscription.
- ⇒ **SAY NO!** Don't accept any offers that seem too good to be true, like a free mobile phone. Check with a responsible adult first.
- ⇒ **Stay aware** of what's going on around you and protect your privacy. **Remember,** if you take picture of everything and everybody with your phone, so can others...and you may not want to be the subject of their photos!
- ⇒ **Be considerate** - only send the kinds of messages and photos you would be happy to receive.

- ⇒ **Tell a trusted adult** if someone sends you unkind or bullying messages, or asks you to do something that makes you feel uncomfortable. Make a note of the number it came from, the date and time of the call, or save the message. It may need to be followed up by your school, Internet Service Provider (ISP), mobile phone carrier or the police.



## Tips for Caregivers

- ⇒ **Stay involved** with your child's use of new technologies. Ask your child to show you how their phone works and what they are using it for.
- ⇒ **Find out** how access to the internet and other service can be managed. This information is usually available on the carrier's website.
- ⇒ **Help you child** to understand that their phone is like a wallet and every text message, phone call or download service costs money.
- ⇒ **Remind your child** that they shouldn't let anyone borrow their phone.

- ⇒ **Talk with your child** about their experiences with their mobile phone. Let them know it's OK to tell you if they come across something that worries them.
- ⇒ **Teach your child** that there are ways they can deal with disturbing material-they should not respond if they receive something inappropriate, and they should immediately hang up if they feel uncomfortable or worried.

Article taken from the *acma* (Australian Communications & Media Authority) *cyber [Smart:] Mobile Phone Safety brochure.*



**You could cut this out and place it in an area to remind everyone of the importance of mobile phone safety.**

# Healthy Teeth

Good oral health benefits children's general health. Good oral health is important for young children, teenagers and adults as it helps us eat, talk, smile and develop self esteem. Children's first teeth are important as they guide the eruption and development of permanent teeth.

Here are some frequently asked questions of the Australian Dental Association taken from their website [www.ada.org.au](http://www.ada.org.au), and the *Oral Health Promotion: A Practical Guide for Children's Services (DHS) 2000*.

## Q. What technique should I use?

A. When brushing your teeth it is best to place your toothbrush at a 45-degree angle to your teeth, aiming the bristles of your brush toward the gum line. The join between the teeth and the gum is a nice spot for bacteria and plaque to accumulate, so it is important to get to this area.

Once you have the brush at the correct angle, all you need to do is jiggle the brush gently back and forward, only brushing one or two teeth at a time. Don't be excessively vigorous but also don't be too mild.

Remember you are trying to get the bristles of the toothbrush into the gaps between teeth to remove very soft plaque.

You need to be brushing all teeth in order, inside & outside - and you really should do it in front of a mirror so you can see what you are doing.

## Q. How long should I brush?

A. Proper brushing should take two to three minutes.

## Q. How often should I brush?

A. You should brush your teeth at least twice a day. Remember it is important to have the right brushing technique as poor brushing techniques can cause harm to the teeth and gums.

## Q. Is brushing alone enough?

A. NO. Good brushing is very important to help prevent dental decay and dental disease. It is also very important to floss to help get to places that a tooth brush can not get too.

## Q. How often should I floss?

A. You should floss everyday.

## Q. What is the correct way to floss?

A. Holding the floss is the key. You should have a decent length and make sure it is tightly wrapped around and locked onto the middle finger of each hand. Some companies also make small flossing aids. You should floss using a gentle sawing motion, against the sides of your teeth. If you find this tricky - speak to your dentist. They will be able to advise you on the best oral hygiene aids for you, and show you exactly how to use them.

**Remember - prevention is the aim!!**

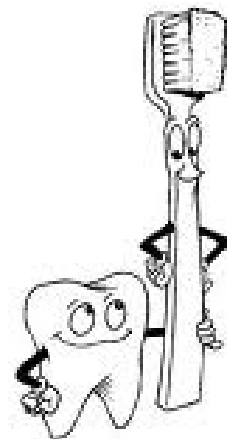
Q. What should I do if brushing or flossing makes my gums bleed?

A. If your gums bleed or become sore after brushing or flossing, don't panic. If you have not been flossing regularly then the gums will be inflamed and will bleed more easily. If the bleeding persists see your dentist.



## Q. Choosing a toothbrush

A. The best toothbrush is one with a small head and soft bristles. Electric toothbrushes can also be very good, particularly for people who find the proper brushing techniques difficult to master.



## Healthy Teeth cont.

### Q. Choosing toothpaste.

A. Always use a toothpaste containing fluoride. Fluoride combines with minerals in your saliva to toughen your tooth enamel and help stop decay.

The National Health and Medical Research Council suggest low fluoride toothpaste for use by young children. Smaller bodies need smaller amounts of fluoride. A low fluoride toothpaste (such as My First Colgate) is suitable for children under 7 years of age.

Some features of low fluoride toothpaste may include:

- ◆ Low foaming to allow young children to brush properly without gagging.
- ◆ A mild flavour to prevent a burning sensation in the children's mouths.

### Q. How much toothpaste should be used?

A. Smear a pea size amount of low fluoride toothpaste across the toothbrush.

- ◆ This will help to prevent children from eating the toothpaste.



## Useful websites

[www.annabelkarmel.com](http://www.annabelkarmel.com)

(Mother, baby & child nutrition, including tips & recipes)

[www.babycentre.com.au](http://www.babycentre.com.au)

[www.mothersite.com.au](http://www.mothersite.com.au)

[www.kidspot.com.au](http://www.kidspot.com.au)

[www.mychild.gov.au](http://www.mychild.gov.au)

[www.childhood.org.au](http://www.childhood.org.au)

Australian Childhood Foundation

[www.cwav.asn.au](http://www.cwav.asn.au)

Centre for Excellence in Child & Family Welfare

[www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)

[www.playgroup.org.au](http://www.playgroup.org.au)

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)

Comprehensive online health information & advice or to find your local health provider.

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**Our mission is to strengthen and empower individuals, families and communities, with particular concern for vulnerable and marginalized people and those in crisis.**

*CAFS (Child & Family Services Ballarat) is a community service organization providing support and service to children, young people, individuals and families from locations in Ballarat, Ararat, Daylesford and Bacchus Marsh. For more details on CAFS its history and programs, go to [www.cafs.org.au](http://www.cafs.org.au)*



Child & Family Services Ballarat Inc.