



*Time spent playing with children is never time  
wasted - Don Lantero*

Star Kids LDC  
& Preschool

MAY  
2024



# ON *this* MONTH

AT

Star Kids Long Day Care & Preschool

World Migratory Bird Day  
National Families Week  
World Bee Day  
Simultaneous story time  
Mother's Day  
Heart Week  
National Sorry Day  
Food Allergy Week  
Good Morning Bangladesh, Lakemba





### NATIONAL FAMILIES WEEK – MAY 13-19

Each year, over a hundred thousand people and hundreds of organisations celebrate National Families Week – Australia's annual celebration of families. The aim of National Families Week is to celebrate the vital role that families play in Australian society.

The theme of the National Families Week 2024 is **Celebrating Family Diversity & Connections**. Celebrating family diversity involves recognising and embracing the unique circumstances, backgrounds, and dynamics that make each family special.

### NATIONAL SORRY DAY – MAY 26

National Sorry Day is an Australia-wide observance held on May 26 each year. This day gives people the chance to come together and share the steps towards healing for the Stolen Generations, their families and communities.

## World Bee Day



We celebrated World Bee Day with a buzzing burst of creativity! Our children transformed the classroom into a hive of activity as they crafted a beautiful bee-themed display board. Through vibrant art and imaginative crafts, they highlighted the importance of bees in our ecosystem. From hand-painted honeycombs to adorable paper bees, every piece showcased their talent and enthusiasm. This delightful display not only brightened our space but also educated us on the crucial role bees play in pollination and biodiversity. A big round of applause to our young artists for their fantastic work in honoring these tiny, yet mighty, pollinators!



**Heart Week:** Our preschoolers joyfully celebrated Heart Health Awareness Week with a series of fun and educational activities! They engaged in heart-themed crafts, creating vibrant decorations that adorned our classroom. Through stories, songs, and games, they learned about the importance of maintaining a healthy heart and ways to achieve it. From painting heart shapes to assembling puzzles, every activity was designed to be both enjoyable and informative. Our little ones showed immense enthusiasm and creativity, making Heart Health Awareness Week a memorable and impactful event. Kudos to our preschoolers for their wonderful participation and for raising awareness about heart health in such a delightful way!



# Mother's Day



We celebrated Mother's Day at our centre with a heartwarming colouring activity. The children invited their mothers to join them in creating beautiful artwork together. It was a delightful day filled with creativity, laughter, and quality time, making memories that will be cherished forever. Happy Mother's Day to all the amazing moms!



## Good Morning Bangladesh, Lakemba



The Star Kids Team recently participated in the Cancer Council NSW's "Good Morning Bangladesh, Lakemba" community event. This vibrant gathering aimed to raise awareness about cancer prevention and support within the Bangladeshi community in Lakemba. The Star Kids Team engaged with attendees through various activities, providing valuable information and resources. Their presence highlighted the importance of community involvement in health initiatives, fostering a sense of solidarity and support among participants. The event was a resounding success, showcasing the power of community collaboration in the fight against cancer.

## Home Corner

The educators at our preschool recently revamped the home corner in the preschool room, creating an inviting and imaginative space for the children. The new setup includes a cozy seating, and various household items that spark creativity and role-playing. The children were immediately drawn to the new home corner, engaging enthusiastically in pretend play and exploring the new elements with joy. This change has not only enhanced their playtime experience but also encouraged social interaction and imaginative development. The excitement and enjoyment on their faces are a testament to the success of this thoughtful update.







Our preschoolers are enthusiastically engaged in our current project-based learning initiative. They are exploring the wonders of gardening and healthy eating through hands-on activities and fun learning experiences. The children are planting seeds, tending to plants, and learning about the nutritional benefits of fresh produce. They are also creating their own project books, which serve as a delightful way to document and revisit their work in the future. This immersive approach not only makes learning enjoyable but also instills valuable life skills and a love for healthy living.

# HEALTH & SAFETY: Discussing distressing news events with children

From time to time children are exposed to distressing news coverage via the radio, TV, social media and other sources. Coverage of upsetting news such as war, terrorist attacks or natural disasters may leave children feeling confused or frightened.

Even if a child isn't exposed to the news, they could learn about an event by overhearing conversations, talking with peers or online. It is helpful to discuss what they have seen and heard with a parent or caregiver to avoid misunderstandings and provide reassurance.

## How distressing news can impact children

Often the distress children feel when they are exposed to news coverage is driven by a fear that these events may happen to them and the people they love. A child's response may vary depending on age, past experiences, temperament, proximity of the event and the coverage they see. It can also be impacted by the response adults and caregivers have, for example if a parent is distressed a child may have the same response.

## Signs and symptoms to look for include:

Difficulty soothing and calming down, Trouble sleeping and increased nightmares, Change in appetite, 'clingy' behaviour regression to old behaviours (e.g., bedwetting), withdrawal from social activities, difficulty focusing at school, recurring physical complaints - (e.g., headaches, tummy aches).

## How to talk to children about distressing news events

**Prepare for the discussion** These conversations often happen without warning, but if you have time to prepare, wait until a moment when you feel calm and ready to talk about the topic. It's best to pick a time and place to talk where you will not be interrupted and where your child feels safe and comfortable.

**Talking with your child about what they know** Open the discussion by asking your child what they know about the news event. This is a good opportunity to correct false information and provide context. Remember to use age-appropriate language. Check your child's understanding throughout the conversation and allow them to ask questions. Often their knowledge is disjointed or incomplete.

**Validate their feelings** Encourage your child to talk about how the news makes them feel, but don't force them to discuss it if they are not ready. It's important your child knows it's normal to feel upset and talking about feelings can help. It is often useful to discuss your own reactions, to show these feelings are common. Take this opportunity to demonstrate how you use healthy coping strategies to feel better and provide suggestions that might help your child (e.g., playing with friends, taking the dog for a walk or doing something creative).

**Reassure your child** Ultimately, it's important that you help your child feel safe and loved. For example, you might provide reassurance that these events are rare and that the situation is being handled by experts who can help.

Remind your child about good news stories to shift the balance of negative media coverage and redirect their focus.

**Keep the conversation open** Let your child know that they can come to you at any time with additional questions or to talk about how they are feeling later.

## How to tailor a discussion for different age groups

**Pre-school aged children** | Pre-school aged children are often more impacted by graphic video footage of traumatic events, even when they don't understand the details of the news story. They often require less detail of the event itself and more general reassurance to feel safe. When discussing your child's feelings, you might find it helpful to talk about where you feel your emotions (e.g., "I feel a heaviness in my chest") to help your child recognise and describe the physical symptoms of stress.

## Primary school aged children

Primary school aged children may be particularly concerned that the distressing news event may reoccur or spread, making them or their family unsafe. To help them feel safe you may need to provide more information on the event to help them understand that they are not at risk. If suitable, turn the conversation to ways you might be able to help or take action, for example by donating to disaster relief. You could ask whether the news event has been talked about at school and address any confusion about what other people have said.

**Tips for supporting children** While it may not be possible or appropriate to shield your child from all media reporting, monitor how much they are watching and try to minimise exposure to avoid your child becoming overwhelmed.

- Where possible, watch coverage of news with your child. This way you can give context to help them understand the event and provide reassurance.
- Try to move on to a new activity that your child enjoys to distract them from dwelling on the bad news story.
- Keep to your family's daily routine, make sure your child continues to eat well, get plenty of sleep and exercise regularly, as children feel more secure in predictable surroundings.
- Some children will feel reassured by the creation of a family safety plan, especially in regions exposed to recurring natural disasters.

**Sesame Street** has some great resources too, find them [here](#)



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne. (2023, April). **Discussing distressing news events with children**. Retrieved from [www.rch.org.au](http://www.rch.org.au)



## FOCUS: A Golden Rule of Parenting – *Stop Thinking Everything You Do Is Wrong.*

Parenting is hard, we are inundated with parenting advice from every man and their dog daily... in the news, on social media, from other parents, or from overheard conversations in the grocery line. It's no wonder that seeking out parenting advice, in general, can be a very overwhelming experience. So, an article in *The New York Times* brings up a single, inspiring piece of advice that can be universal to all concerned parents: **Stop thinking everything you do is wrong.**

A survey conducted in the United States this year found that many adults feel that young people today face more hardships than they did when they were young. Particularly in terms of stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health issues. This is an interesting reversal of the traditional dynamic, in which adults 'recall the hardships and dangers of the old days and conclude that kids these days have it easy', says paediatrician Dr Matthew M. Davis.

**And yet the paradox is understandable...**On the one hand, children are 'cushioned, shielded [and] protected from the literal and figurative bumps and bruises of the real-world playground'. But on the other, kids are overscheduled, overstressed, and increasingly anxious. These challenges are often a result of trying to succeed in an increasingly competitive academic climate, with the hopes of gaining employment in an increasingly oversaturated job market. This contrast leads to a confusion of which parenting approach is best, and an inevitable and ongoing confusion of what kind of parenting style we should adopt.

*Do you hover like helicopter parents to protect your children from the difficulties they face, so they can focus on their studies? Or do you leave them to deal with everything on their own, in the hopes they'll rise up to the challenge?*

Most parents — including yourselves — rightly sit somewhere in the middle. But there's always going to be times when unexpected challenges throw your parenting style off course. This is not a reflection of your parenting as much as a reflection of being human!

**And from our point of view, the fact that you're reading this article, or any article, shows that you're not doing everything wrong.** Investing the time and energy into researching advice is a testament to your commitment to being the best parent you can be. **The point is:** *Congratulate yourself* on trying to be the best parent you can be. *Show your child* what you believe is right and wrong by example. And when you slip up in one way or another, *forgive yourself and move on*, because it's likely to happen again (and again and again).

Melbourne Child Psychology (2019) *A golden rule of parenting – Stop thinking everything you do is wrong.* Retrieved from <https://www.melbournechildpsychology.com.au/blog/a-golden-rule-of-parenting-stop-thinking-everything-you-do-is-wrong/>

### TAKE A MOMENT, TAKE A BREATH.

**Stress-Relief Mantra #3: All experiences are helping me grow.**

**How and when to recite this mantra:** Recite this mantra four times either out loud or quietly to yourself as often as needed.

**How this mantra can help you:** This mantra is perfect to use when you are searching for answers to challenges that have come your way. Life is a journey of growth, and by acknowledging this, you can see the higher purpose in everything that happens. It may not always be easy to see exactly how you'll grow from a particular situation, but understanding that all experiences are contributing to your growth and development can be reassuring and can help you tackle things from a place of curiosity rather than despair.

Viewing all experiences as opportunities to grow allows you to focus on the bigger picture and helps you avoid getting caught up in all the details. You'll be able to take a step back and not put so much pressure on yourself to have everything figured out. You are here to learn, and part of that process requires you to go through experiences that are indeed challenging and confusing—but also ultimately joyful. The more you can approach life as a learning experience that you simply cannot fail at, the freer you will feel to explore things with a sense of adventure.



Read the article via the QR code.

Source: Happify. (2021). 4 Mantras for Instant Stress Relief. Retrieved from [happify](https://happify.com).



### CREATING A BEE FRIENDLY GARDEN

European honey bees pollinate a third of our food crops, making a huge contribution to our food supply chain, our economy and the broader ecosystem, so the more we can help them do their thing, the better off everyone is. European honey bees will feast on a range of flowering plants, but they do have preferences.

#### Tips for bee-friendly gardening

- Plant flowering plants in bountiful clumps so bees don't have to search far for forage and can work more efficiently
- Avoid pesticides. Companion planting is the way to go if you want to control pests. Pesticides are one of the reasons bee populations are in decline
- Plant several species to ensure you have forage for every season
- Maintain multiple water sources around your garden
- Spread the word among your neighbours, family and friend



## Numeracy

“Being numerate is the capacity, confidence and disposition to use mathematics in daily life. All children bring new mathematical understandings through engaging with problem solving. It is essential that the mathematical ideas with which children interact are relevant and meaningful in the context of their current lives. Educators require a rich mathematical vocabulary to accurately describe and explain children’s mathematical ideas and support numeracy development.”

Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, V2.0.

Experiences in early childhood settings build on the range of experiences with language, literacy and numeracy that children have within their families and communities. Encouraging children’s positive attitudes and competencies in literacy and numeracy are essential for children’s successful learning. The foundations for these competencies are built in early childhood.

**Numeracy education within an Early Years setting looks like:** Conversations with peers and educators, sociodramatic play, dancing, creative arts, water play, gardening, puzzles, building, using technology, playdough and science experiments just to name a few ways your child is developing their numeracy skills.

If you would like more information on our Numeracy program, please speak to your child’s educator or the service’s educational leader.

**National Quality Framework | Quality Area 1:**  
**Educational Program and Practice 1.1 The educational program enhances each child’s learning and development.**

**1.2 Educators facilitate and extend each child’s learning and development.**

Australian Government Department of Education (2022). Belonging, Being and Becoming Framework. Retrieved from <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf>

## World Migratory Bird Day

Our preschoolers celebrated World Migratory Bird Day with enthusiasm and curiosity! They learned about the incredible journeys of migratory birds and the importance of protecting their habitats. The day was filled with fun activities, including bird-watching walks, crafting bird masks, and storytelling sessions about different bird species. Through these engaging experiences, our young learners developed a deeper appreciation for these amazing creatures and their vital role in our ecosystem. It was a memorable day that sparked a love for nature and conservation in our little ones!

## National Sorry Day

Our preschoolers observed National Sorry Day with heartfelt activities that fostered understanding and empathy. The children listened to age-appropriate stories about the Stolen Generations and discussed the importance of saying sorry and making amends. They created artwork and crafts to express their thoughts and feelings, and participated in a special ceremony where they planted a tree as a symbol of growth and reconciliation. Through these meaningful activities, our young learners gained a deeper appreciation for the history and culture of Indigenous Australians, and the importance of compassion and understanding in our community.

## Simultaneous story time

Our children gathered to listen to age-appropriate stories about the Stolen Generations, fostering understanding and empathy. Through these shared stories, the children learned about the importance of saying sorry and the value of reconciliation. The simultaneous story time helped our young learners connect with each other and with the history and culture of Indigenous Australians, creating a sense of community and compassion.