

# Elder Street Herald

## The Importance of Hand Washing

So far this year we have already had some nasty viruses and tummy bugs going around the community, so it is timely that we reflect on the ways that we can work together to help stop the spread of infection. We always include an article in our newsletter at this time of year suggesting ways to stay healthy, what to do if your little one is sick and how long they will need to stay away from school.

We have a great publication called *Staying Healthy—preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*. This publication by the Government's NHMRC is our guide to advising families and each other of what is considered best practice regarding illness in care and education settings.

It is really an interesting read and is available for everyone to download online. The link is:

[https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/\\_files\\_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55\\_staying\\_healthy\\_5th\\_edition\\_150602.pdf](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_5th_edition_150602.pdf)

What I am going to share from the publication is focused mainly on how our community can work together to try to prevent the spread of illness via hand washing.

We have long had the policy of children's hands being washed with soap and water on arrival by parents/carers and then also before leaving the service. This is an attempt in trying to break the cycle of germs entering and leaving the service.

### Soap and Water

The most effective method of hand hygiene is using soap and water. Washing your hands with soap and running water loosens, dilutes and flushes off dirt and germs. Soap alone cannot remove dirt or kill germs—it is a combination of running water, rubbing your hands and the detergent in the soap that helps loosen the dirt, remove the germs and rinse them off your skin.

### Alcohol based hand rubs

It is important to remember that soap and water are the best option when your hands are visibly dirty.

However, alcohol-based hand rubs have been proven to increase hand hygiene in healthcare settings, and it makes sense to have them in education and care services. Alcohol-based hand rubs are also known as antiseptic hand rubs, waterless hand cleaners, gels or hand sanitisers. They can be a fast and effective way to remove germs that may have been picked up by touching contaminated surfaces. Alcohol based hand rubs reduce the number of germs on your hands; they do not remove dirt from your hands. Alcohol based hand rubs are useful when performing multiple tasks in which hands can potentially become contaminated; for example, when assisting children with eating,

when on excursions, in the playground or in other situations where soap and water are not always available.

It is a good idea to place an alcohol based hand rub at the entrance to the service. This can help remind parents, carers and children (as well as educators and other staff) to have clean hands when they enter the service.

### WHAT WE WOULD LIKE FAMILIES TO DO.....

Please ensure that your child's hands are washed with soap and running water on arrival each day. On leaving the centre at the end of the day, please do the same. The children are all very familiar with washing their hands, holding their hands up to get some soap, singing a song while they rub and wash and then getting some paper towel, rubbing to dry and putting it in the bin. You will be surprised at how efficient they are at this.

We have alcohol hand rub in the foyer of the centre and would like parents to use this on arrival also. In the near future we will be attaching a bottle of alcohol hand rub in a dispenser on the wall near the door bell. We figure that this is another point at which the germs can be further eliminated before entering the centre. This is predominantly for adults, however older siblings/children can use it if supervised by an adult. Anyone entering the service is welcome to use it to help reduce the introduction of germs in the centre. Here's to a happy and healthy season!

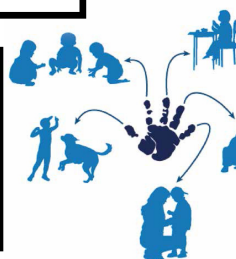
Germs can be present on the skin, hair, feathers and scales of animals, and in their faeces, urine, saliva

Some germs can survive on surface such as bench tops, door knobs, taps and toys

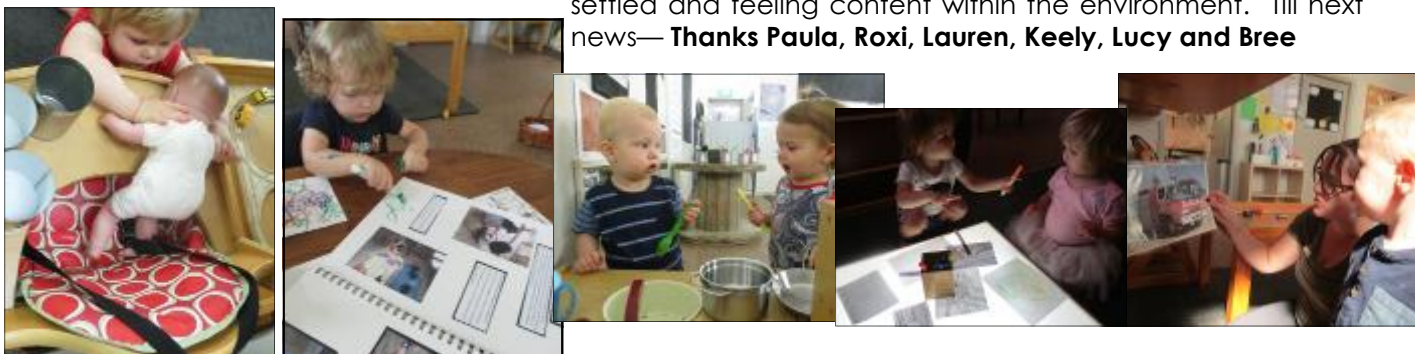
Food is an excellent place for germs to grow or be passed from one person to

Germs are spread to the hands by sneezing, coughing or rubbing the eyes, and then transferred to other people and

Bodily fluids including blood, faeces, urine, vomit and saliva may contain

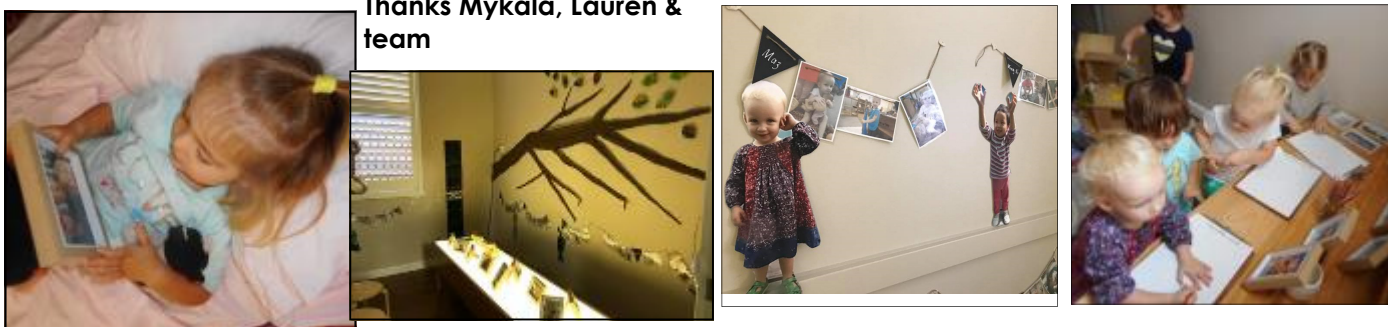


**Possum News..... Hello families!!** Our little cohort of learners are really showing us what they know and want to know more about from their play and interactions. From our previous observations on construction we have encouraged the use of different materials into our block area. Our older friends have built a building relationship with our younger friends. Our older Possums build with the materials and then the younger friends wait and then destruct the building—causing laughter from all. This tells us that relationships and understandings of ability and interest are forming strongly. We have also included a comprehensive dramatic play area where we are seeing role play, conversations, sharing and negotiating between the children as they play with the baby dolls and the very popular kitchen with plastic cutlery—who knew some coloured knives and forks would be so appealing? We have begun our learning project on mark making which is all about experiencing the joy of creating a mark that wasn't there before. Zoey our university student from Charles Sturt Uni has been providing some wonderful experiences within this project and the children have loved exploring different patterns as provocations, lighted boxes to highlight their marks and language and literacy experiences that discuss colour. Zoey has created a wonderful documentation book of the work in progress that can be found on the wooden spool in the Possum room. Please contribute your ideas and thoughts in the book. We have also asked for family involvement by finding out what type of mark making your children see at home—in other words, writing, drawing any kind of mark making. Many thanks to all the new families who have returned their Settling In questionnaires with such wonderful and supportive feedback. We feel confident that the children are settled and feeling content within the environment. Till next news— **Thanks Paula, Roxi, Lauren, Keely, Lucy and Bree**



**Joey News—Hi everyone...** We have been really productive and engaged in the Joey's room in the last few months. We have listened to the children and their responses to the program and reassessed our routines and rituals over the last few months. This was with a view to creating a more fluid and relaxed environment where play could continue if flowing well or could be wrapped up and focused on other areas if the mood of the day was going in that direction. We understand the importance of belonging, a sense of security and predictability within the children's day and we believe this is being reflected in our programs now. Related to this notion is our first project for the year being "All About Me" and whilst learning about ourselves we will also be learning about each other. This will be a long term project that runs for many months and the children are responding well to the slow and steady learning that is taking place. We have utilized our Atelier space to create a hub of learning on ourselves. You will see there are family photos on display on our light box and large photo persona images of each child around the room, along with photos of each child engaged in play and learning. We will add documentation and the children's explanation of who they see themselves as, their likes, interests, ideas and personal stories. We also have a large family tree on one wall that represents the connectedness of growth and branches of our lives all coming together. We also have a very tangible experience of the children's heights measured on the wall and we will use this as a touchstone of showing how much we have grown over time. We envisage that this space will be an interactive and participatory space for children, families and educators. We hope that families will come into the space with their child and talk about the experiences that have been documented in there. We would really love families to contribute thoughts, stories or more information about your child to the space also. The more involved and invested we are in the children's learning about themselves now will show them that learning is valued by the important people in their lives and embed in their thinking that they are capable and competent people and learners.

**Thanks Mykala, Lauren & team**





**Wallaby News.....** Well hello to everyone from the Wallabies! In our last news

we outlined the areas of learning we were focusing on and noticing that the children were gravitating towards. Since then we have received lots of input from our families for individual learning outcomes they would like to see their child working towards. With all of this information at hand we have a very busy and productive program taking place. Our planned units of learning on Aboriginal Culture and Sustainability are really beginning to take shape. We are beginning our learning about Aboriginal Culture firstly by looking at how other children around Australia that are Aboriginal go to child care. We have watched some online vignettes of child care centres in remote areas of Australia and discussed with the children the similarities and differences that they could see and understand about the Aboriginal children in these settings. We have been discussing and incorporating the Aboriginal flag and talking about the Awabakal people for quite a few years, however we have begun to introduce what it means to acknowledge these people and the country by Acknowledgement of Country experiences. We have also watched some other children at services carry out an Acknowledgement of Country at their centre. We had Tony from Speaking In Colour come to the centre in March to talk to the children about dance, dreaming stories and communication in the Aboriginal culture. He reminded the children about the Awabakal people and introduced some lovely stories about native animals and dreaming stories which the children really enjoyed. Our learning around sustainable living continues also. We have been involving our community in our project by inviting families to bring in lots and lots of plastic bottle tops and also visiting our local shops to collect their plastic lids too. Last week, our long awaited excursion to the Merewether Surfhouse Café to see the recycled lid sculpture and visit to Newcastle Art Gallery took place. We have been creating our own recycled sculpture work with Carley in our outdoor Atelier. A small group of very invested artists worked hard to design, plan and build their works which eventuated in a "City Sculpture" of houses, streets and buildings. This is on display in our walkway to the back playground. Our big excursion will connect all this learning together as we will see how some of Newcastle citizens created some beautiful art and helped save the planet. The artist who worked on the project Claire met us at the sculpture at the Surfhouse and talked to the children about the sculpture and the people who helped create it. We then headed off to the Newcastle Art Gallery to look at their sculpture garden and beautiful art on exhibition. We are very excited and eager to see what the children will come up with in the planning of our own Centre plastic lid recycle sculpture after having all of these rich and meaningful experiences to guide their thinking. A quick whip around to share some of the other areas of learning we have been engaged in include; understanding what empathy means and encouraging acts of kindness, not just saying nice things, but carrying out a thoughtful act for someone else. Exploring gender roles and emotions via dramatic play including acting out stories such as Billy Goat's Gruff. Focusing on deep thinking in process art—encouraging the children to slow down and think about what they are creating before they begin their work. We have been fostering this slow creation by engaging a two step process to the art involving a fine felt tip pen for initial mark making and then adding colour in the next stage. This has been followed up with Carley again working in the Atelier with the children drawing on a large piece of transparent acetate and coming back to the work each day to discuss the work and ideas and really draw out the thinking behind the work. Slow learning, is deep and embedded learning. We also have some excellent contributions from families to our learning. The children loved learning about Eleanor's bees at their home and were fascinated



to see and smell the honeycomb the bees produced. Also Jacob shared with us information about his trip to the Return and Earn Bottle and Can recycle centre. Great learning guys!!



**Kate, Carley, Donna and Jena**





## Working Bee...for the Possum Playground

We are hoping to hold a working bee to complete some renovations to our Baby playground in July of this year. We would like to install a creek bed similar to the ones in these images and also similar to the one in our large backyard, for our Nursery playground. This work would involve the cutting and removal of rubber softfall and then some concreting and positioning of larger rocks and smaller rocks. It would be wonderful to have some help from families if they are available. Mel and Tony our handyman will head up the project and there will be a delicious snag sandwich and bevvie for lunch for whoever joins us on the day. The date at this stage will be the weekend in June.

Tony and Mel will prep on the Saturday and have the work area ready for all hands on deck on **Sunday 1 July**.

**If you are interested in joining in our working bee please email the centre on [director@elderstreetchc.com](mailto:director@elderstreetchc.com) and let us know that you are available.**

If you have any great skills that you think we could utilise, please let us know so we can consult with you on the lead up to the job. A few weeks before the event I will put a reminder in our front foyer and a list for people to register to join the work crew. Thanks in advance Mel, Tony and the Elder St team and kids :)



## Family Day at The Edgeworth Miniature Trains :)

It's almost time for another wonderful Family Day event!! This year we have planned a great day at the Lake Macquarie Miniature Trains at Edgeworth. We have been very lucky to be able to secure a booking of the trains on **Sunday 20 May, 2018** just for our Elder St group. The train crew will start the trains running at 11am and then stop for a break from 12-1pm and then start up again till 3pm. So much fun!! As usual all our families are welcome and the cost of the event will be covered by Elder St. We will also provide some yummy morning tea snacks to share. From what I understand families are welcome to bring along a bbq if they want to have a cooked lunch and

there is plenty of room for picnics and playing. The Elder St team will be at the event to have a lovely relaxing morning with the families from 10.30am to 12.30pm, but families are welcome to stay as long as they wish. I will be sending out an email with an attached invitation to the event with all the details listed. I will also be asking for an RSVP so we can know how many adults and children will be attending.

This will be our 14th year of family day events. They are always a fabulous morning and a great opportunity to meet other families and get to know our team better in a relaxed and fun environment.

We really hope to see you all there this year. If you have any questions about the event, please let us know.

Thanks Mel and the team



**Team Staffing update...** We waved Kirily off to full time university study in March and welcomed Bec to the team. Bec has completed her Diploma of Children's Services and has 12 years experience working in the education and care field. She is very excited to join our team and gain some fantastic experience with us. Bec will be supporting all 3 of the rooms within the service. She will work with the Joey 2-3 yrs with Lauren on Tuesdays, the Wallaby team with Kate and Jenna on Wednesdays and the Possum Nursery team with Paula and Roxi on Thursday and Fridays. Lauren will be working in the Joeys room everyday with Mykala. All our other team members days of work will remain the same.

**\*\*\* DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR \*\*\***

**Team Annual Leave Dates**

Mel— 2 April—16 April  
 Catherine—2 April—9 April  
 Kim—30 April—7 May  
 Paula—4 June—28 June  
 Carley—18 June—2 July

**Elder St Family Day**

Sunday, 20 May  
 10.30am to 3.00pm  
 @ Edgeworth Mini Trains

**Equipment Levy**

Applied to accounts the week of 2 April and due by week of 30 April

**Our Recycled Sculpture Project...do you have ideas???**

Thanks so much for all your support of supplying plastic lids for our Sculpture project. We would like to update you on the progress of this project and invite you to contribute your ideas. So far the children have been investigating recycling methods, collection of recycled goods from families and the broader community (our local cafés have been very supportive). We have also been discussing the concepts of design and sculpture with the children. Even though the majority of the work and thinking has been carried out by our Preschool children, we still do see this as a centre wide project and as our sculpture begins to materialise, we will involve the younger children in this process more. Also once the sculpture is finished it will be something that remains at the centre for many years and therefore it becomes part of our history and the legacy of this learning needs to be shared by all at the centre. For this reason, we would like input from all our families on ideas you may have about creating the sculpture out of lids. Our main brief is that we would like to create something that is reflective of our community philosophy, incorporating the voices of the children's ideas and also the wider community's ideas. We have been inspired by existing recycled sculptures and also gallery based sculptures; we have used other recycled materials (boxes, tubes, plastic cups etc) to create sculptures based on "the city" and are now asking the children for further ideas. Our latest research questions posed to the

children are:

**"What story do we want our sculpture to tell?" ;**

**"How do we want our sculpture to make us feel?"**

**"Should our sculpture be on a wall or free standing like a statue?"**

We will be setting up a display area in our very front foyer with these questions and some images for provocation. Please contribute to this forum so we can ensure that we include as many ideas as possible in the creative process. The value of community involvement in children's learning is very far reaching for children's developing identity as active and informed citizens who can make a difference to the world. Thanks for your involvement!





# REMINDERS FROM THE TEAM

- Please remember to check children's bags regularly. There may be items that have been mistakenly placed in your child's bag that need to be returned to the right family. Please ensure that only spare clothes are in bags and nothing else. Sometimes we have items such as asthma puffers and food that can be a danger to other children if accessed,
- Clothes! Please label your child's clothes (especially our little ones) and ensure that there is an extra set of clothes in the bag. It's time to include in the spare set of clothes some long sleeves and long pants and a jumper to go with the t-shirt and shorts,
- Please check your child's locker is empty when you leave for the day. Drawings, bed bags, drink bottles, socks, shoes can all be left behind on some days. Please also label drink bottles,
- Please remember to wash your child's hands on arrival and also before leaving—every bit of hand washing helps,
- If using the Joey's little toilet (very front bathroom), please ensure ONLY toilet paper goes into the toilet. This toilet is on a pump and easily blocks.
- If your child has had an updated immunisation, please remember to send us your updated Immunisation record for our files.
- Please leave toys at home— 1 small soft cuddle toy is acceptable. THANK YOU!!

## March

Sid turned 2

Emile turned 3

Axel turned 3

Emile turned 3

Audrey turned 3

Mia turned 4

Jacob turned 5

Isla turned 5

## April

Bowie turns 1

Jonny turns 1

Lucy turns 2

Penny turns 2

Frankie turns 3

Eleanor turns 4

Natalie turns 4

Annabelle turns 4

Charlotte turns 4

Charlie turns 5



**Happy  
Birthday  
to  
Everyone!**

## Use of Paracetamol—Beliefs vs Policy...

Your little person has had a rough night. You think teething— or maybe a temp is coming—who knows??? As a parent you want to know that they are at least not in any pain, so you give them some Paracetamol. I would, and have done for my children. Others I know who are parents would not give their child any Paracetamol as they believe that it is unnecessary and would prefer to let nature take its course. We respect all families beliefs and in most cases wouldn't dream of intervening. However, in the arena of a children's service setting and the possibility of sickness spreading, here is where beliefs and policy collide. With such a close community of children attending a space every day, we don't have any margin for guesswork to be able to see what may eventuate once a child's symptoms have been masked with pain relief. We hope you understand why we ask for no Paracetamol before attendance at child care and understand why we need to rely on policy to guide or decisions. We more than likely share the same personal beliefs on the subject as you, but need to lean on policy direction to ensure that we protect and care for the whole group every day. It really does take a village to keep everyone well!