

FAMILY News...

BAYSIDE EARLY YEARS ADVISORY GROUP NEWSLETTER
For families with young children



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“Hi neighbour”

A reflection, by Petina Lanigan (BEYAG member)

My new baby has opened my eyes. Sure, in a romantic, some would say predictable way, he has opened my eyes to what's really important in life, but that's not what I'm writing about today. Through my new baby I am discovering what a great neighbourhood I live in.

Before I'd even ventured out of the house with my babe, I was meeting new people. Home visits from a Sandringham Hospital midwife and our Maternal and Child Health Nurse connected me with two valuable local resources. More than that, I was establishing a local support network.

Fast forward a couple of months and my trusty Maternal and Child Health nurse invites me to be part of a new parents' group. And so my neighbourhood expands. I now know eight other parents experiencing the same excitement and fears, and who I can catch up with for coffee or a walk.

It is through my energising walks that I am really learning to love my bayside home. How wonderful to have a free afternoon on a sunny day, when you live within walking distance of beautiful Bayside beaches

complete with walking paths and ramps. And if the wind's whipping or the sun is too harsh, we've fantastic shopping strips to trawl.

Thanks to my baby, I have a natural conversation starter at every pedestrian crossing and shop counter. "Boy or girl?" "What beautiful eyes!" "I have a grandson about this age." While the conversations are brief, they are important to community life (and the mental health of a new mum!) and I realise this is a lovely place to raise a child.

So if you're spending more time close to home thanks to your new babe, make the most of it. Get to know your neighbourhood. Become involved in the community. Smile at passers-by. Help to create the ideal environment for your child to grow up in. And mine.

For more information about your neighbourhood add www.bayside.vic.gov.au to your favourites.



Bayside Early Years Advisory Group is a committee of community representatives, Bayside Councillors and Bayside Council officers established to pro-actively discuss policy, services and community building opportunity provided to our residents with young children.





Tips for building healthy families

By
Renate Hoffmann
former BEYAG
member

- Be aware of your own family's way of doing things and those of your partner's. Consider things like values, rules and what was expected of you as a child
- Have conversations with your partner about how you want to raise your children and how to achieve this together. Do this regularly, away from the children and not in the heat of family life and conflict
- Sometimes it becomes important to have conversations with your parents about their lives, their goals and what was important to them as they parented you, and how they see their role as grandparents
- Develop a co-parenting approach with your partner, or the parent of your children
- Make the time to get to know each family member, if you have a blended family, and allow them to contribute to family life
- Have family conversations
- Eat together without the television on
- Develop family rituals and experiences
- Develop shared interests as a family
- Make time as a family to have fun together – it will make a big difference!
- Take time out for yourself!

Parenting toddlers confidently

By Janet Little, Maternal and Child Health Nurse

Toddlerhood, that sometimes explosive stage somewhere between one and three years, is a period that many parents find bewildering.

After the first twelve months most parents are feeling comfortable with their children and the day-to-day parenting strategies they have developed. Their confidence has built steadily by successfully dealing with the problems presented throughout the different stages of babyhood.

But then toddlerhood strikes.

When changes happen they may occur with bewildering speed. In toddlerhood the child becomes highly mobile and vocal. Emotional fragility coupled with an intense drive for independence can lead to behaviour fluctuations - sunny and agreeable one minute and frantically upset the next.

Temper tantrums may become a real issue. The child is stronger, which means

his outbursts will be more violent. He (or she) may begin to resist sleep and may also be experiencing lingering separation anxiety. As his knowledge of the world increases, so may his fears. With a growing imagination, an expanding memory, but a lack of life experience, even the ordinary can seem terrifying. Common fears among two and three year olds include toilets, the dark, people in costume (particularly clowns and Santa), imaginary creatures, baths and strangers. Most of these issues will diminish as the toddler matures.

Parenting strategies need to change rapidly to keep pace. If a mismatch develops between the child's developmental stage and the parents' care-giving strategies, attempts at problem solving may become unproductive. This in turn can lead to parents feeling bruised and ineffectual, their confidence as effective parents diminished.





For families with young children.

The resulting loss of self esteem and confidence may lead, in turn, to less consistent parenting practices that confuse the child. The parent may spend more time trying to control their child's behaviour than enjoying his company, and the child may give up trying to get attention for positive behaviour.

The City of Bayside has a new initiative, the Parenting Toddlers Confidently course, to help guide parents through the storms of toddlerhood. Its aim is to help parents gain confidence in dealing with their toddlers by using positive strategies.

The Parenting Toddlers Confidently course is a set of four one and a half hour group sessions for caregivers and parents of toddlers aged from 18 months to three years of age. Developmental expectations are discussed and practical issues involved in caring for toddlers are talked about in a friendly and informal setting. Positive parenting principles are presented to enable parents to tackle normal behaviours such as tantrums, hurting others and wandering away. Strategies are shared for coping with routines such as eating, sleeping and toilet training.

This is also a good opportunity to have fun and meet new friends. Please arrange for your toddlers to be minded so that you are free to enjoy the sessions.

Courses starts on the first Thursday of the month from 10.30 to 12 noon, at Brighton Maternal and Child Health Centre, 145A Cochrane Street, Brighton

Bookings are essential as places are limited.

Bookings and enquiries:
Maternal and Child Health
appointment line – 9599 4755



Holiday ideas - “I’m bored! What can we do?”

By Renate Hoffman, former BEYAG member

Hey, to think that the school holidays will soon be upon us again! Most parents greet the children's school holidays with mixed feelings. Some of us see it as a break for ourselves and the children, where the rhythm and structure of term is left behind, and the kids can have some downtime. For others, we can't wait for them to go back to their normal routine – whether that be playgroup, kinder or school. As parents, we all know the feeling of being cooped up with kids whose behaviour or words say a loud “I'm bored”.

Here are some ideas that may help everyone breathe a sigh of relief:

- 1 Local libraries and community groups often have no cost or low cost activities for children of all ages. Check Council and library websites, local papers, community notice-boards and school and kinder newsletters.
- 2 Museums, such as the Immigration Museum and ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image), often have low cost or free children's activities in the school holidays.
- 3 Free and low cost events, such as those that have taken place in the past at Federation Square, are often promoted in the “Wot's on” section of local papers, *Melbourne's Child* and *The Age* and *Herald Sun* newspapers.
- 4 Get each child to choose an activity that they would like to do in the school holidays. Don't forget to specify guidelines for this, eg. where, how much the activity should cost and that it should be something involving the whole family.
- 5 Take some time out as a family to prepare a snack or a lunch together.
- 6 Make paint, playdough or bubble mixture with the kids.
- 7 Have an afternoon or a morning where you invite someone else's children over for a play and then swap with that friend. This gives the children something to look forward to and you a break.
- 8 Allow their imagination to run free, let them build cubbies, make up plays with puppets, dolls etc and create their own dance routines and moves.
- 9 Have a morning or afternoon tea picnic, inside or outside your house.
- 10 If you belong to your local toy library or library, let them borrow something special.
- 11 Go for a family bike ride, walk or play in the park.
- 12 Make sure that you spend some time outside, even in cold or wet weather, to burn off energy and clear cobwebs.
- 13 Watch a DVD and microwave some popcorn for movie time at home.
- 14 Have a special box of fun, low-cost activities, eg. bubbles, stickers, activity sheets for the children to do when they get bored. Only bring this box out occasionally.
- 15 Trade ideas with other parents.



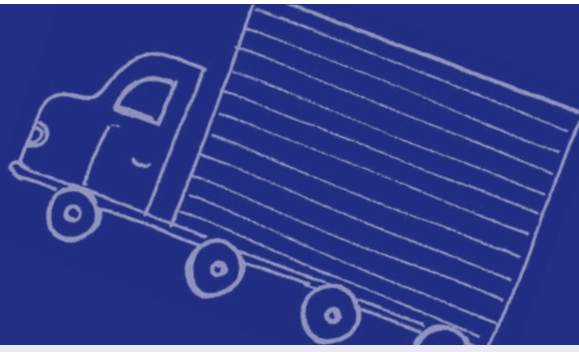
Circuit breakers for managing day-to-day difficulties

By Renate Hoffmann, BEYAG member

Sometimes in the business of day-to-day family life it can feel that it is all getting too much! Here are some ideas about how we can redress the balance in our lives.

- Relaxation techniques such as baths and breathing exercises, eg. breathing in the calm and breathing out the bad 10 times for 10 seconds.
- Journaling - write down your feelings.
- Phoning a friend.
- Having a coffee, either by yourself or with some friends.
- Taking a break.
- Set aside a worry time - defer thinking about your problem until then. Allocate yourself 15 minutes at a suitable time in the day when you can worry at the problem. Once this is over, be strict with yourself, until your next set aside time. In the meantime work out a strategy, either by journaling (see above), talking to trusted friends or advisors, going to the gym or for a walk, to deal with whatever is troubling you. Then put it into action.
- Hobbies and interests.
- Being with like-minded people.
- Solitude - sometimes spending some time alone.
- Exercise, e.g. going for a walk, yoga, swimming - whatever suits you and your lifestyle and health.
- Participate in a team sport.
- Find out about aromatherapy and then use fragrances that calm, relax and refresh you.
- Remember to do things for yourself that will replenish you and how you feel about yourself (your self-esteem).
- If you think of your energy levels as being like a box of a dozen eggs - remember you only have twelve. So if you are feeling overwhelmed allocate the amount of energy to each task that you have. If you find that you don't have enough eggs of energy, reprioritise, delegate or realise that something will have to either be left undone or wait until later.
- Use your imagination to help you shut down things that are worrying, eg visualise yourself putting a folder in a filing cabinet and shutting the drawer. If the thought pops up again, just shut the drawer again.
- Self talk - eg. affirmations, be kind in what you say to yourself.
- Repairing things that have gone wrong in relationships, eg. saying I am sorry.
- Music, make, listen or remember.
- Meditate.
- Challenge the way you think about things - your attitudes, values or beliefs.
- Read.
- Pursue a creative interest.
- Have a massage, or give a massage.
- Hug someone.
- Share your burden with someone - talk about it.
- Learn new skills.
- Practice letting go of hurt.
- Learn to be self-ful not selfish.





Taming the 'NO' monster

By Janet Little,
Maternal and Child Health Nurse

Evan (24 months) spends most of each day screaming, shouting and protesting. Everything is "no". Both he and his parents look anxious and exhausted, and life isn't much fun. Eloise, his mother, wonders where her cooperative, happy child has gone.

With toddlers like Evan, militant independence can strike like a bolt from the blue. Uncontrolled, afraid to go out anywhere for fear of social embarrassment. The focus of every day becomes behaviour management rather than having fun.

Although tantrums are a normal toddler reaction to frustration, the way they are handled may greatly influence their strength and duration. It took several weeks of trying different strategies before Eloise worked out how to cope with her toddler's tantrums.

"I really didn't know what to do. He was in such distress. I tried to hold him and talk to him but that just made it worse. I tried giving him what he wanted to calm him but it just made him do it all over again. In the end I decided to sit quietly beside him, pretend to ignore him until the tantrum was over, and then act as if it had never happened."

Once parents have developed strategies to reduce confrontation and encourage cooperation, tantrums are likely to be less frequent or extreme.

Such tactics may include:

- Building self-confidence by putting as much success into each day as possible, and praising small achievements and effort.
- Turning chores into games, like competing to pick up toys or helping to find things to put in the shopping trolley. This has the double reward of getting the job done and building quality parent/child interaction into the day.



- Encouraging children to do as much for themselves as they can – like helping them climb into the car seat themselves.
- Ignoring minor mistakes. Enforcing important issues quickly and consistently then moving on.
- Offering limited choice rather than giving orders. eg "Do you want to climb or be lifted into your chair? Do you want to clean your teeth yourself or shall I help you?"
- Avoid letting your child establish the habit of saying "no" to everything. Rephrasing any question that could be answered by the child with "no" and avoiding using the word yourself.

- Using routines to avoid the need to negotiate every detail of the day.
- Children tend to be more cooperative if they have warning before activity changes and enough time so transitions don't have to be rushed
- Using distraction. Changing the location or focus can help children move on from confrontation.
- Correcting physical or emotional stress by ensuring physical comfort.
- Simplifying the daily routine can reduce tantrums by reducing a child's background stress levels.

Handled confidently, and as toddlers get more language, tantrums should decrease in frequency and ferocity. If this progression is not apparent further assessment and advice can be gained from your Maternal and Health nurse or your family doctor.

*Bookings and enquiries:
Maternal and Child Health
appointment line – 9599 4755*





Support, friendship and activity groups

Allergy Playgroup

The group runs on a fortnightly basis on Mondays from 3pm to 5pm at the Hampton Playhouse. For more information please contact Stella on 9533 5018

Bayside Allergy Kids Network

Contact Amber on 9502 4425 or email amberscanlon@optusnet.com.au

Beaumaris Baptist Church Playgroup

Meet Thursday and Friday from 9.30am to 11.30am in Church Hall, 223-225 Balcombe Road, Beaumaris. Indoor and outdoor activities. Contact 9583 1265

Beaumaris Beach Playgroup

Meet Wednesday and Friday from 10am to 12noon at Cath Wilder Guide Hall, Martin Street, Beaumaris. Contact Helen on 9512 0047

Children with Disabilities

Interchange Southern is a community based, not-for-profit organisation that provides support to families who have a child with a disability. Interchange provides respite and social support, through the help of carefully selected volunteers and trained staff, through recreation and host programs. Contact Program Manager on 8552 2222 or email ics@moira.org.au

Gifted Support Network

Support group for families with gifted children. Playgroups, information sessions and group activities. For information contact Carolyn on 9576 5137 or visit www.giftedsupport.org

Japanese Playgroup

For children with a Japanese-speaking background. Meet Monday at 11am at Hampton Baptist Community Church. Contact Yukari on 9597 0747

Pelvic Instability Association

Support group run by volunteers for mothers, families and medical practitioners dealing with pelvic instability as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. Contact 9539 3217 or visit www.pelvicinstability.org.au

Pioneer Presbyterian Playgroup

For children from birth to five years old. Meet Tuesday from 9.30am to 11.30am at Pioneer Presbyterian Church, 8 Park Road, Cheltenham. Contact Kelly on 9570 9923

SANDS

(Stillbirth and neonatal death support)

Support for families affected by miscarriage, stillbirths or neo-natal loss. Monthly support group held in Bayside. For more information, please contact 9899 0218 or visit www.sandsvic.org.au

Sandringham Uniting Playgroup

Meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 10am to 11.45am, Sandringham Uniting Church, 17 Trentham Street, Sandringham. Join us for a coffee, chat and play in a warm and caring environment with a small friendly group. Singing follows free play for children. Places are available. For more information contact Eileen Ray on 9521 9446 (wk) or 0410 775 277 and leave a message.

Soft Pathway Self Support Group

For sufferers of depression and anxiety. Open-age groups and one under 30's group. Contact 0431 523 058 or email support@softpathway.com.au

South East Multiple Birth Association (SEMBA)

For parents or expectant parents of twins or more, interested in information about multiple births and in meeting other local multiple birth families. Playgroups meet regularly in Hampton, Beaumaris and Bentleigh. Contact Carolyn Piggott on 9568 0379 or 0418 543 726 or email sembanewparent@hotmail.com

St Michael's Anglican Church Playgroup

Meet Mondays from 10am to 12noon in Church Hall, 32 Dalgetty Road, Beaumaris (enter from car park). Community members assist with morning tea, children's activities. Please call in and see Geoff and Glenice or call on 9589 3710.

Toy Library

The library operates Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 9.30am to 11.30am and Wednesday 7pm to 8pm. Contact Frank Hajncl on 9598 5253 or 0447 985 221, email hajncl@bigpond.net.au or pop in at 212 Dendy Street, Brighton.

Hampton Community Centre

Contact 9598 2977 for details about the following:

• **Messy Mornings**

An open group for regular or casual attendance. A volunteer supervises activities and ensures you are introduced to other parents. On Wednesday from 10am to 12noon. Cost is \$4 per child or \$6 per family.

• **French Playgroup**

French Playgroup invites all French speaking parents to this facilitated group. French stories, songs and other activities to strengthen your child's language skills. Tuesdays 10.00-11.30am. Facilitator, Nathalie Foos. Cost is \$6 for one child and \$10 for two children.

• **German Playgroup**

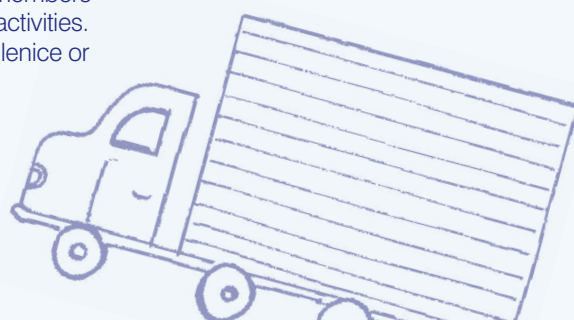
Meets Friday at 10am to 12noon. Cost is \$4 per visit.

• **UK Playgroup**

Do you hail from England, Ireland, Scotland or Wales, with children from birth to four years old? Come and meet up with other expatriates. Wednesday 10am to 12noon. Cost is \$6 per session. Children's activities are led by a facilitator.

Start your own playgroup

Get together with a group of friends and convene with your own playgroup. Phone Hampton Community Centre on 9598 2977 to arrange a time. New mums groups welcome





For families with young children.

Immunisation for life

(taken from DHS Immunisation Newsletter, Issue 18, April 2009)

Dr John Carnie
Chief Health Officer, DHS



Pertussis (Whooping Cough) alert

The number of notified cases of pertussis (whooping cough) has increased sharply in Victoria, with a 48% increase occurring between December 2007 and December 2008. There was a notable increase in the number of cases aged less than 12 months, with 55 cases in 2008 compared with 25 in 2007. This increase is continuing in 2009. Pertussis is most serious in babies under 12 months of age, often requiring admission to hospital.

Pertussis booster vaccine

The current vaccine for pertussis is combined with diphtheria and tetanus. The following groups are encouraged to have this vaccine, to reduce risk of passing pertussis on to newborn infants or those who are not fully immunised:

- Adults before planning pregnancy or for both parents as soon as possible after birth
- Adults working with or caring for very young babies, especially health-care workers and child-care workers
- Any adult wishing to protect themselves against whooping cough

Transmission of pertussis

Pertussis can be caught through coughs and sneezes from an infected person. Parents and family members are the main source of infection for babies.

Clinical features of pertussis

Pertussis is a highly contagious disease that affects the air passages and breathing. The disease causes severe coughing spasms. Between these spasms, the patient gasps for breath. Coughing spasms are often followed by vomiting and the cough can last for months. It can lead to complications such as haemorrhage, convulsions, pneumonia, coma, inflammation of the brain, permanent brain damage, long term lung damage, and death.

Childhood pertussis immunisation

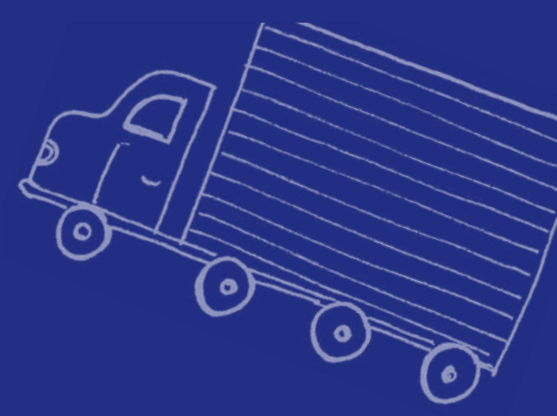
Babies are at risk from birth, as no pertussis protection is passed from the mother to the newborn infant. Complete immunisation of children remains the most effective measure to control pertussis. Pertussis vaccination is offered as part of the National Immunisation Program for children at 2, 4 and 6 months, at 4 years and in year 10 of secondary school (or 15 years of age). A child who has received less than three doses of a pertussis containing vaccine should be considered at risk of pertussis.

People become immune either through pertussis immunisation or by catching the disease itself, but protection is not life long and begins to wane after six to ten years. Sometimes immunised people still contract pertussis, but they are likely to have a less severe illness.

Purchasing Pertussis vaccine

The vaccine can be provided by your GP or through the Bayside City Council immunisation program. If you wish to purchase through the Council you are required to pay for this in advance at the Corporate Centre and take your receipt to the community session. For more information, please talk with your Maternal and Child Health Nurse or phone 9599 4702 or email immunisation@bayside.vic.gov.au





Child Wise

Child Wise provide free resources for parents, carers and organisations. There are several free booklets which may be of interest to families with young children. These include:

Keeping Your Child Safe: Choosing safe organisations and activities for your children.

The aim of this booklet is to provide parents with a guide to understanding the important features of child safe organisations, and the regulations and legal obligations of children's services to protect children in their care.

The booklet includes information on:

- What is Child Safe
- Choosing safe services and activities for your children
- A Child Safe checklist
- Regulation of commonly used children's services such as childcare, kindergartens and sporting and recreational organisations
- Children travelling without parents.

Child Wise is an Australian charity specialising in child protection and the prevention of child sexual abuse and exploitation.

Another resource booklet is:

Speak up about child sexual abuse: How to recognise behaviour in your child and how to talk to your child.

To obtain a copy of these booklets, contact:

Child Wise
PO Box 451
South Melbourne, Vic 3205.
Phone (03) 9645 8911
Fax (03) 9645 8922
Email: office@childwise.net
Website: www.childwise.net



Calendar of events 2009

Tuesday 28 April 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **School readiness.**

This session will be presented by Kathy Walker and held at Elsternwick Primary School, Brickwood Street, Brighton.

Bookings open 30 March 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Wednesday 27 May 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **Parenting toddlers confidently**

Including food and fussy eating and sleep. This session will be presented by Janet Little and held at Sandringham Uniting Church,

17 Trentham Street, Sandringham.

Bookings open 27 April 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Wednesday 17 June 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **Resilience.** This session will be presented by Kathy Walker and held at St Leonard's Uniting Church, 50 New Street, Brighton.

Bookings open 18 May 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Tuesday 28 July 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **Parenting toddlers confidently**

including toilet training and behaviour guidance/temper tantrums. This session will be presented by Janet Little and held at Sandringham Uniting Church,

17 Trentham Street, Sandringham.

Bookings open 29 June 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Wednesday 26 August 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **Behaviour management.**

This session will be presented by Kathy Walker and held at Beaumaris Community Centre, 90 Reserve Road, Beaumaris.

Bookings open 27 July 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Thursday 17 September 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **Sibling rivalry.** This session will be presented by Jo Lange and held at Sandringham Uniting Church,

17 Trentham Street, Sandringham.

Bookings open 17 August 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Tuesday 27 October 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **How to choose a school/ preparation and transition to school.**

This session will be presented by Kathy Walker and held at St Martin's Uniting Church Beaumaris, Cnr Dalgetty Road and Gibbs Street, Beaumaris.

Bookings open 28 September 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Wednesday 25 November 2009

7.30pm to 9pm

Bayside City Council parent education seminar – **Raising boys.** The presenter for this session is still to be advised.

The session will be held at St Leonard's Uniting Church, 50 New Street, Brighton.

Bookings open 26 October 2009.

Contact Family Services on 9599 4744.

Wednesday 2 December 2009

10am to 12noon

Children's Christmas Picnic
Trevor Barker Oval, Sandringham

Contact Family Services on 9599 7444

Disclaimer

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