

Manager's update

Welcome to our term 4 newsletter. We have been working with schools on healthy canteens, kindergarten orientations and a range of other projects.

This newsletter includes ideas and suggestions on loose parts play, waste-free lunches, increasing water intake and festive games. We acknowledge that term 4 is a busy time for schools. We hope the holidays allow you to rest and spend time with family and friends.

Please reach out to your local support officer for assistance with implementing healthy eating and physical activity initiatives. We look forward to continuing our work with you next year.

Best wishes
Avigdor Zask

Manager Healthy Eating Active Living Team Health Promotion – NNSWLHD 0437 761 842



What's coming up?

National Nutrition Week 15 - 23 October:

Inspire your students to 'try for 5' vegetables. Explore veg from farm to plate. Access recipes, live cooking events, virtual farm tours, resources, veg tips and hacks.



National Water Week 16 – 22 October:

The theme for 2023 is 'united by water'. Use water week to promote the importance of drinking water with students. Explore wise water usage, water cycles and water sources. Access fact sheets, kids activities and teaching resources.



Outdoor Classroom Day 2 November:

Take students outdoors to play and learn. Use nature's loose parts for a variety of activities. Access lesson plans and teaching resources on the website.

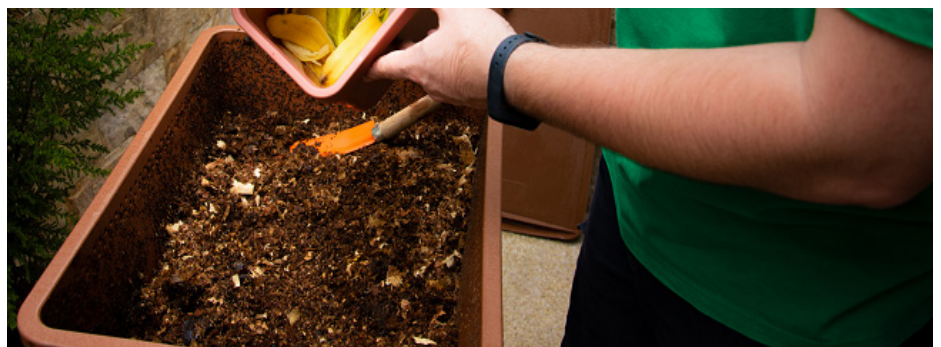


Schools Recycle Right Challenge 9 - 17 November:

This challenge offers a wide range of activities, lesson plans and event ideas for schools. It's also a great time to promote waste free lunches.



To access a list of links from this newsletter, scan the QR code



Loose parts play encourages active and creative learners

Loose parts are materials that can be moved, combined, redesigned, lined up, taken apart and put back together. Loose parts have no set purpose and thus allow children's creativity to flow when they engage with them. They provide a playful way for children to form associations between learning and pleasure¹.

Architect Simon Nicholson developed the theory of loose parts in 1971. His theory states that 'in any environment, both the degree of inventiveness and creativity, and the possibility of discovery, are directly proportional to the number and kind of variables in it'¹. One Australian study² found an increase in physical activity when primary schools introduced loose parts play during recess and lunchtime. Loose parts play also improves social skills and problem-solving skills.

Loose Parts Play offers free or affordable, environmentally sustainable activities for children. Parts can include both natural and man-made recycled scrap materials. Natural materials such as pine cones, sticks and leaves can help children to develop fine motor skills. Larger loose parts such as tyres and barrels encourage children to use skills like lifting, pushing, stretching, crawling and climbing.



"My favourite part is that you are allowed to tie stuff to trees and hang; just do what you want if it is safe. It's just fun and something you are not usually able to do."
Year 6 student³

Loose parts play has many benefits and fosters;

- creative and imaginative play
- teamwork and collaboration
- increased active play
- measured risk taking
- problem solving
- physical literacy.

The list of possible loose parts is endless and includes;

- natural resources – such as straw, mud, bark, pine cones
- building materials and tools e.g. pipes
- scrap materials – tyres, barrels, milk crates, pallets
- household materials - laundry baskets, plant pots,
- buckets, boxes, rope, fabric.

Tips for setting up loose parts play at your school

- make loose parts available to students during recess and lunchtime
- use loose parts play for maths, art, science or literacy lessons
- encourage parents to source loose parts from their work, home or community
- source free or low-cost items from garage sales, op shops and waste recycling centres
- add reminders for loose parts in newsletters, on websites and social media
- implement procedures for the management and use of loose parts, including storage.
- check loose parts regularly to ensure they are safe for students to use.
- remove any hazardous or worn parts and ensure children can

access them independently

- regularly replenish, change and add to your loose parts collection to maintain student interest.

Further information and resources can be found at:

- [Loose parts play webinar 2023](#) presented by Reverse Garbage and Play Australia
- [ABC Science Loose Parts in Play in action video](#)
- [Play Australia's – Loose Parts toolkit](#)
- [NatureplayQLD](#)

1. Houser NE, Roach L, Stone MR, Turner J, Kirk SFL (2016) *Let the Children Play: Scoping Review on the Implementation and Use of Loose Parts for Promoting Physical Activity Participation*. *AIMS Public Health*. Sep 26;3(4):781-799 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29546195/>
2. Hyndman, B P, Benson, A C, Ullah, S, Telford, A. (2014) *Evaluating the effects of the Lunchtime Enjoyment Activity and Play (LEAP) school playground intervention on children's quality of life, enjoyment and participation in physical activity*. *BMC Public Health*; 14 (1). <https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws:20308>
3. *Nature Play WA (2023) West Greenwood Primary School Loose Parts Play* <https://www.natureplaywa.org.au/west-greenwood-ps-loose-parts-play>



"I see the joy from the children; collaborating, busy, using their imagination. Each time you look out there is something different. It is lovely to watch it unfold."
Teacher³

Summer thirst – quench with water

National Water Week promotes the importance of water for life and the wise use of water. The majority of Australians have access to good quality drinking water. Tap water can also be a good source of fluoride which helps to protect teeth and prevent tooth decay.

Most children do not stop to drink regularly and may only drink when they are very thirsty. By this time, they can already be mildly dehydrated.

Signs of mild dehydration can include:

- loss of concentration
- thirst
- dry mouth, lips and tongue
- dizziness or light-headedness
- headaches
- dark coloured urine and reduced urination. (see [urine colour chart](#)).

What you can do to encourage students to drink more water

- remind all students to bring a water bottle to school
- encourage students to sip water during Crunch&Sip and throughout the day
- remind students to refill their water bottle if it is empty
- teach students about the benefits of choosing water as a drink
- encourage students to drink more water when the weather is hot or when exercising

Find more resources below:

- [hydration and the active child](#)
- [choose tap](#)
- [sports dietitians Australia](#).



How much fluid should kids drink every day?



Waste free lunches and recycling food waste

The [Recycle Right Challenge](#) in November encourages schools to recycle and reuse waste. It also encourages parents and students to pack waste free lunches. Waste free lunches help to tackle environmental issues such as landfill. They also encourage students to eat more wholesome fresh unpackaged foods.

Ideas to promote waste free lunches

- hold a regular waste free lunch day or week and involve students in planning it
- make your waste free lunch day fun and combine it with other recycling and sustainability-related activities
- carry out a waste audit with your class or school before your waste free lunch day. This will help evaluate if there have been any changes to your school waste
- decide how you will communicate your waste free day to students and families
- promote the use of beeswax wraps or reusable containers in lunchboxes to parents and

students

- host a [beeswax wrap making workshop](#) at your school
- ask students to come up with their own ideas on how to reduce waste in lunchboxes and at school. Reducing food waste is also
- important
- make tasty unpackaged lunchbox snacks with your students.
- [find recipes here](#).

Recycling food waste

- composting and worm farms are a great way to recycle fruit and vegetable scraps at your school
- food scraps can also be taken home for composting, animal feed or worm farms
- encourage students to take home uneaten food so families can adjust the amount and types of food packed.

Other teaching resources and ideas

- [waste free lunch guide](#)
- [waste free lunch toolkit](#)
- [waste free lunchbox flyer](#)
- [northeast waste](#)
- [healthy lunchbox pamphlets](#).

An average student's lunch generates 3 kgs of waste per year



Festive season games



The festive season is a great time to have some fun active brain breaks and games with your students.

Below are some ideas:

Jingle bell toss

- glue ten recyclable cups in a 'bowling pin' triangle on a heavy piece of cardboard
- provide small jingle bells for students to toss into the cups
- increase the throwing distance for an extra challenge
- [play this video](#) of Jingle Bells in 20 different languages during play.

Christmas tree bowling

- have students decorate plastic bottles to make Christmas trees
- weight bottles by filling with sand or other reusable material
- students bowl a ball from a designated start line to knock over the 'Christmas trees'
- have some students by the bottles to stand them up as needed

- challenge students by increasing the bowling distance.

Musical reindeer statues game

- this game may suit younger students
- instruct students to prance around to music like a reindeer
- when the music stops, ask students to strike a pose and remain as still as they can
- challenge students with different poses such as simple balances.

Snowball scoop

- use cotton balls to represent snow balls
- students form a circle. Place cotton balls into the centre
- any number of players try to scoop up as many cotton balls with a plastic spoon and bowl as they can. Set a time limit eg one minute
- combine this game with duck duck goose. When the goose catches

- 'it', the goose enters the circle to scoop up as many snowballs as they can. Modify duck duck goose to have all players active
- record the number of snowballs each student collects.

Santa says

- play 'Santa says' instead of 'Simon says'
- use active instructions such as running on the spot, jumping, balancing on one leg to break up sitting.



Kindergarten orientation – healthy lunchbox information

To support your school's kindergarten orientation program, we offer:

- a brief healthy lunchbox presentation at one of your parent sessions
- a single flyer with [QR code](#) linking to our online healthy lunchbox information or
- information packs with hardcopy brochures.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you would like to book us to attend a parent session and/or receive lunchbox information. Contact your local support officer or NNSWLHD-eatmoveplay@health.nsw.gov.au.

Share these links with parents on your social media or school app:

- [lunchbox information](#)
- 5 minute [healthy lunchbox video](#).



Contact your local support officer

Clarence Valley	Kate Collins	(02) 6640 0154	kate.collins@health.nsw.gov.au
Ballina/Byron	Maxine Molyneux	(02) 6639 9142	maxine.molyneux@health.nsw.gov.au
Richmond Valley	Martina Pattinson/ Corinne Martin	(02) 6620 7668 (02) 6620 7447	martina.pattinson@health.nsw.gov.au corinne.martin@health.nsw.gov.au
Tweed Valley	Shelby Craig	(02) 6674 9506	shelby.craig@health.nsw.gov.au

