



# ParentZone @ Home

## November 2021

By ParentZone Gippsland

Information for Parents and Carers Across  
Gippsland

**PARENTZONE**

**BETTER  
TOMORROWS**

# What does ParentZone offer?



Parenting challenges everyone.

At ParentZone we offer all parents and carers a chance to develop and strengthen their parenting skills. We provide free parenting groups, workshops, and resources for parents, carers, and the professionals who work with them.

The programs cater to all ages and stages, from newborns to teenagers. Program content responds to the needs of our communities. Our skilled and experienced facilitators will tailor the sessions to meet the interests of each group. Meet other parents in person or online.

ParentZone can help you to:

- Improve communication and understanding between parents/carers and children.
- Feel more prepared for the different ages and stages of childhood.
- Learn new ideas and strategies to shape children's behaviour positively and develop their potential.
- Strengthen relationships within the whole family.
- Foster stronger relationships while dealing with loss, disability, trauma, separation or divorce.
- Empower children to deal with their emotions.
- Build a more resilient family that can grow together.

**ParentZone Gippsland is the Regional Parenting Service for Gippsland and supports families within the local government areas of Bass Coast, Baw Baw, East Gippsland, Latrobe, South Gippsland, and Wellington.**

**For more information please contact ParentZone  
Gippsland on (03) 5135 9555 or email  
[parentzone.gippsland@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:parentzone.gippsland@anglicarevic.org.au)**

**PARENTZONE**

# What's on in Term 4

## Learning Through Play - Supported Playgroup

Connect with your child through fun activities, songs and stories. Walking groups and Indoors.

**When:** During school terms on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesday and Fridays

**Where:** Morwell and Churchill

**Time:** 10.00am - 12.00pm

## Let's Talk About Parenting

Come along to five sessions to learn strategies, understand what is normal children's behaviour, communicate better with your child and stay connected to your child.

**When:** Wednesdays 17th November - 15th December

**Where:** Online

**Time:** 5.30pm - 7.30pm

## Tuning Into Kids

Tuning into Kids teaches parents skills to help their young children to begin to understand and regulate their emotions.

**When:** Thursdays 4th November - 9th December

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Time:** 10.30am - 12.30pm

## Kinship Support Group

For Grandparents and carers raising their grandchildren or family members or grandparents separated from grandchildren through divorce, family conflict or loss.

**When:** 1st September, 6th October, 3rd November, 1st December

**Where:** Anglicare Morwell

**Time:** 10.00am - 12.00pm

**Interested in a program not listed? We offer a range of programs each term. Contact us to go on the waitlist for next term.**

## Dealing with your Child's Anger

A program for parents of children and preteens with challenging behaviour. Learn how to help your child with their big feelings, build a positive relationship with your child, talk so they will listen, create rules and consequences that your children will respect.

**When:** Mondays 1st November - 29th November

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Time:** 10.30am - 12.30pm

## Bullying: Building a Toolkit to help your Child

Do you want to understand what bullying is? Recognise the signs your child is being bullied, know how to support your child, help your child build resilience and learn protective behaviours.

**When:** Thursday 9th December

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Time:** 1.00pm - 3.00pm

## Making time for self-care

Do you want to feel less overwhelmed and deal with anxious feelings? Want to improve your confidence and self esteem? Build resilience for yourself and your family? Talk time out for yourself?

**When:** Friday 10th December

**Where:** Online via Zoom

**Time:** 10.30am - 12.30pm

***Bookings are essential.  
Programs are FREE***

**To make a booking OR for more information please contact ParentZone Gippsland on (03) 5135 9555 or email [parentzone.gippsland@anglicarevic.org.au](mailto:parentzone.gippsland@anglicarevic.org.au)**

# Pretend and Imaginary Play

From Therapies For Kids <https://therapiesforkids.com.au/benefits-of-pretend-imaginary-play/>

## Five reasons to encourage pretend play:

### 1. To encourage imagination and creativity:

- Builds a child's ability for flexibility and then creativity.
- How to think for themselves.
- Helps children understand another point of view.



### 2. Supports social and emotional development:

- As they pretend to be different people or control objects, they are practicing social and emotional roles of life.
- They learn how to walk in someone else's shoes - often mum or dad.
- Develop self-esteem and self-awareness.
- Learn how to recognise and respond to others feelings when involved in group imaginary activities.

### 3. Improves language and communication skills:

- They learn new language that they might not encounter every day.
- It's fun and provides opportunities for discussion.
- Gives them control and can help decrease anxiety as language becomes more familiar.
- They have to communicate their thoughts to others - an essential social skill.

### 4. Develops thinking, learning, and problem-solving abilities:

- By the nature of pretend play, children are presented with problems and scenarios to solve or plan.
- How to cope/change when something doesn't go to plan in a game.
- Develop their memory.
- Abstract thinking - when an object/person takes on a different meaning.

### 5. Enhances physical development:

- Often physical - e.g. being an aeroplane, climbing ladders as a fire fighter, etc.
- Fine motor skills developed while feeding and dressing a doll.
- Learning about rough and tumble and limits.

## Benefits of pretend play:

- Allows you new ways to connect with your child.
- You can follow their lead and join in with their interests.
- Motivating and connecting for all involved.
- Helps your child think symbolically.
- Develops critical thinking.



# Pretend and Imaginary Play

## How to encourage pretend play:

- Play together face to face so your child can copy your gestures/pretend actions.
- Follow your child's lead – play with things your child is interested in.
- Keep it simple – repetition is fun.
- Take turns – the play becomes a “conversation.”
- Choose the right toys.
- Introduce new ideas when they can link ideas together – e.g. if they like to play with cars, take them to the mechanic.
- Take trips to new places (e.g. the zoo) and this then can become a game for home.

## Toys for pretend play:

- Vehicles (not just for boys!)
  - Common in children's lives – so good for simple pretend.
  - They can put a driver in and go to the mechanic.
  - Use a shoe box to make a car/bus.
- Playdough – In early play, make simple/familiar objects. Later, make food for the tea set, make roads, etc.
- Costumes and props – old hats/shoes/scarves/coats. Bags/briefcase/boxes for store/shop, etc.
- Favourite stuffed animal or doll – great for feeding and pretending real life situations.
- Puppets – moving parts help them come to “life.” Encourages joint/peer play in older children.
- Blocks and lego – initially might build simple and familiar objects (e.g. house/car). Later might “pretend” that individual blocks are something real (e.g. a bed/food for animals, etc.).
- Toy food/dishes/groceries – initially feed the animal, later then a restaurant, have a tea party.



All children differ in their thinking and learning styles that they can build on. Often you can play with their strengths and slowly build on their variety of play. If you are concerned about your child's play, speak to your preschool teacher/other carers, GP, paediatrician, or an occupational therapist or speech pathologist.

Pretend play should be fun. When children let their imaginations take over and play together there are no limits to where their minds will go and the enjoyment they will have.

# Cardboard Box Creativity

## What you need for playing with cardboard boxes

- Boxes of any size! You might be able to get cardboard boxes from local supermarkets and other shops.
- scissors (adult use only)
- tape and glue
- paints, marker pens or thick crayons, stickers.
- colourful paper, foil, cellophane or fabric to decorate the box
- paper plates to use as the wheels of a car, bus, truck or train
- puppets and a bit of fabric for a curtain to make a puppet theatre.



# Cardboard Box Creativity

## How to play with cardboard boxes

From Raising Children <https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/play-learning/low-cost-play-ideas/playing-with-cardboard-boxes>

There's no 'right' way to play with a cardboard box, so let your child decide what they want to do and follow their lead. You could start by just talking about the box together. For example, ask, 'How big is it? Can you fit inside?' or 'What does it remind you of? A house? A car?'

If your child needs suggestions to get started, you could try these ideas:

- Make a house. Cut open a window and a door and let your child add cushions and other 'furniture'. Your child could bring in some toys for a tea party.
- Make a plane or a car. Use paper plates for wheels and steering wheels. Cut off the box flaps and stick them back on as the wings and tail of a plane. Let your child draw or paste markings and racing stripes.
- Make a robot costume. Cut out a head hole and armholes and let your child decorate the box with foil and coloured markers.
- Make a puppet theatre. Cut a doorway and a window on opposite sides of the box. Hang a curtain over the window and let your child put on a show for the family from inside the box.
- Decorate the box. Cut holes for your child to stick colourful cellophane over. Let your child draw or paint on it, and stick paper or scraps of fabric of different textures inside and outside for a sensory experience.
- Use the box to encourage active play. For example, turn it sideways to make a tunnel. Or your child could be a jack-in-the-box – crouching low inside the box and then jumping up like they're on a spring.



# Flat Bread Pizzas



## Ingredients

- 1 cup Chunky Tomato Sauce
- 1 carrot (grated)
- 1/2 can red canned kidney beans (drained)
- 1/2 head broccoli (finely chopped)
- 1/2 cup frozen peas
- 1 cup mozzarella
- 6 pack Lebanese bread

## Method

1. Preheat oven on fan forced grill.
2. Toast one side of the bread under the grill lightly. Remove from oven
3. Top uncooked side with 2 tablespoons of sauce per bread.
4. Sprinkle ingredients of choice on bread and add mozzarella cheese.
5. Repeat with remaining flat breads.
6. Bake on a tray in the oven until cheese has melted.

Recipe from kidspot kitchen:  
<https://www.kidspot.com.au/kitchen/recipes/flat-bread-pizza-recipe/fpe7qjbw>