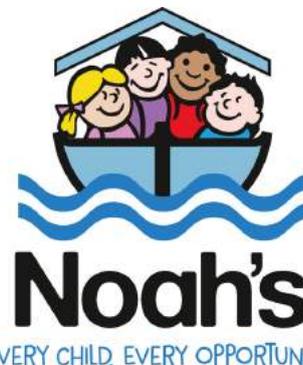


# NOAH'S NEWSLETTER



All families are invited to our 2018 Christmas Party

Thursday 13 December  
 5pm-7pm  
 Café, University of  
 Wollongong Shoalhaven  
 Campus  
 (near Noah's HQ)

**RSVP by 10 December by phoning (02) 4423 5022**



## NOAH'S GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS

We know how hard it can be to find that perfect present for your child so we've put together the ultimate guide for Christmas with our top picks that are both fun AND help kids reach those important developmental milestones.

### Games and puzzles

Games and puzzles are always fantastic presents that will be played with long after the Christmas tree has been packed away. They help develop fine motor skills and encourage problem-solving, coordination and turn-taking as well as being lots of fun. Some of our favourites are Super Sorting Pie, Bugs Building and Shopping List.



Why not give the gift that keeps on giving this Christmas? A donation to Noah's on your loved one's behalf is the perfect gift

### Art & Craft

Craft supplies are always a great gift and are loved by kids of all ages. Younger kids enjoy playdough which is great for developing hand strength and lets their imagination go wild. Bubbles and stickers are also great, inexpensive gifts that keep kids entertained for hours and encourage fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.

### Outside Play

One of the best investments you can make if you have young children is a water table or trough. You can buy ones with lots of fancy attachments or something basic can be just as fun using household items like cups, funnels, straws and watering cans. Remember to ALWAYS supervise your kids around water and empty water tables or troughs when not in use.

Another great gift is a swing or even a cool skateboard swing like this one from Bunnings. It helps with balance and building confidence. Inflatable hopper balls are great fun and help to build up leg strength and burn off energy.





## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

We are continuing to hear some fantastic stories about the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and how funding through the scheme has been able to help children and their families in reaching their goals. However, like many others around NSW, we continue to have some struggles as a provider working under the new NDIA framework.

While Noah's is totally supportive of the philosophy of the scheme and the changes, we have found it extremely challenging to continue to provide services the way we always have. The true costs of running the services are not covered by the NDIS individual funding model and this has meant shortfalls in many of our programs and challenges such as waiting lists and service bookings.

As we continue to work on ways to achieve long-term sustainability under the NDIS, we are very grateful for our community and member support and for the patience of our families in this transition time.

The past few months have seen us rollout some programs funded by the Department of Education. These include our Little Steps Program, Aboriginal Families as Teachers Program and our Young Yarns Program.

We are about to commence an inclusion and disability sector capacity-building program within early childhood education centres in the Shoalhaven and surrounds. This is a great way to continue with community preschools in our area and support the great work they do.

Many of our children are heading off to school next year and some are transitioning to high school. We wish them a smooth transition and all the very best for these important milestones. We hope to see many of you at our end-of-year celebration on 13 December to catch-up and reflect on the year gone by.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all our children and families a very happy and enjoyable summer holiday break and look forward to seeing you all in 2019.

Alice Lans, CEO

We recently held our Annual General Meeting and our Board Members have been re-elected. They are:

Colin Waller (Chair)  
Richard Liu (Secretary)  
Lee Hopperton (Treasurer)  
Lorraine Montgomery  
William Price  
John McEwen  
Ian Patrick

These individuals bring a wide range of experience to our organisation with backgrounds in higher education, early childhood education, finance, business and health as well as bringing parent expertise. As a Board, they are committed, passionate, informed and wise and have provided incredible wisdom, stability and guidance through this very challenging period. I would like to thank our Board members for their input and look forward to working with them again in the year ahead.

October saw the Noah's Challenge event for the second time in 'Amazing Race' format. What a great day it was! After some of the concerns we had about the weather disappeared, I was thrilled to see nearly 150 people turn up to take on the challenges.

It was particularly exciting to see Abbey Teal, aged 14, become the highest fundraiser. Well done Abbey! The event raised \$14,000 overall which is going directly to services we are provided this term, particularly our Start-Up Assessment Program.



## CONTACT US

Have feedback for us on our newsletter? Or want to get in touch with us about something you have read?

**P: (02) 4423 5022**

**E: [Nowra@noahsark.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Nowra@noahsark.nsw.edu.au)**

**F: [Facebook/noahsAUS](https://www.facebook.com/noahsAUS)**

## EARLY LANGUAGE & LITERACY



Language and literacy skills are a vital part of a child's development. Children are constantly learning about language and literacy from a very young age.

The words 'reading' and 'writing' usually conjure up images of children learning in a classroom, so parents of young children mistakenly think they'll wait for their child's school teacher to lead the way. But there are many skills that a child needs to learn before they learn to read and write.

One of the best ways you can build early literacy skills in your child is to start reading to them from a young age. Just a book per day means when they start school they will have had about 2000 books read to them! Starting early is best but it's never too late to start reading to your child and it's an enjoyable and calming activity.

Some of the key early literacy skills that are shown to help children when it comes time to read and write are:

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**Vocabulary:** The more words a child knows, the easier it is to learn new words and gain meaning from stories.

**Story comprehension:** Experience listening to stories makes it much easier for a child to one day read and write their own stories.

**Print knowledge:** Before a child can read and write they must have an understanding of how print works, such as familiarity with the alphabet, knowing how a book opens and that words are read left to right.

**Sound awareness:** Children must learn that words can be broken down into sounds and that letters correspond to certain sounds.

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Some things you can do with babies to promote these skills are:

- Speak to your infant in a nurturing and positive way
- Provide meaningful and varied interactions with different trusted adults
- Sing songs and encourage babbling

Some things you can do with toddlers to promote these skills are:

- Tell stories about these daily activities
- Point out words and signs around them
- Encourage lots of creative play

Some things you can do with pre-schoolers to promote these skills are:

- Engage in conversations about things in the past and future
- Practice spelling or writing 'as it sounds'
- Get your child to help with cooking and shopping
- Play games like i-spy, starting with colours and moving onto starting sounds



## WHAT IS THE PARENT ROOM?

The Parent Room is a place to connect with parents having similar experiences. You can learn and get practical, relevant information about local services, supports, the NDIS and how to navigate your way through the services and systems.

It is a great opportunity to talk things over with people who also have a child with a disability or additional needs but are outside your usual networks.

Stay tuned to our Facebook page for announcements of new sessions for 2019.

## WHAT IS 'MY TIME'?

My Time groups provide support for mothers, fathers, grandparents or anyone caring for a child with a disability or chronic medical condition.

These sessions are held during school terms and feature a range of activities and speakers as well as being a chance to have a cuppa and a chat.

Child minding is available. Booking are required for catering purposes and to organise child minding.



For more information about the Parent Room or My Time, please contact Debra Jefferis at [djefferis@noahs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:djefferis@noahs.nsw.edu.au) or phone (02) 4423 5022.

# NOAH'S CHALLENGE A HUGE SUCCESS

Thanks to everyone who got behind our 2018 Noah's Challenge Event! We are thrilled to announce that we raised \$14,000 through the amazing support and generosity of our sponsors and the participation and fundraising efforts of our 150 Challenge entrants.

Challenge participants navigated the 4km course in groups, enjoying fun activities at various checkpoints along the Shoalhaven River. There were many laughs over the day and it was great to see everyone getting into the spirit of fun and inclusion.

Very special thanks to our major sponsors Ray White South Coast and Commonwealth Bank Nowra and our checkpoint sponsors Macey Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd, Jetts Nowra, Nowra Flooring Xtra, Jervis Bay Holiday Park, CareSouth, No. 816 Squadron FAA, Shoebox Books Shoalhaven and Stormtech Architectural Drainage. Without their kindness and generosity this event simply would not have been possible.

The funds raised will be used to help fund our Start Up Assessment Program for pre-schoolers. This program helps around 70 families each year and does not currently receive any special funding, so simply cannot continue without community donations.

Thanks and we look forward to another successful Challenge event in 2019!



# NOAH'S BERRY CUP

Huge thanks to Mary Evans for once again organising the Noah's Berry Cup Race Day event in 2018.

Unfortunately bad weather forced the cancellation of the race but this didn't deter Mary's fundraising efforts, with \$27,000 still being raised for Noah's Inclusion Services.

It was still a great social event and a huge success, thanks to the support of our wonderful sponsors who still honoured their sponsorship, despite the race not going ahead.

Thanks to our generous sponsors Illawarra Turf Club, Illawarra Equine Centre, Regal Lodge Stables, Slingsby Holdings, Parrish Plumbing Broughton Landscapes, Rural Bitumen and Hisway Earthmoving.

## follow us on facebook

The best way to stay in touch with what's happening at Noah's is to follow us on Facebook. Here you'll find all our updates, news and links. Join us today!



## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

# LITTLE STEPS

Little Steps is our Early Education Supported Playgroup for any 0-5 year olds who don't attend a pre-school or long day care centre.

It includes all the fun of a normal playgroup and also gives parents and carers a chance to connect with other families. Little Steps sessions are supported by Early Childhood Educators, so they are a great chance to track your child's developmental milestones and give them enriching and engaging activities and experiences.

The program runs within school terms at the following locations:

Nowra - Tuesdays 10am-11.30am at Noah's Inclusion Services  
Ulladulla - Thursdays 1pm-2.30pm at Noah's Inclusion Services  
Sanctuary Point - Fridays 9.30am-11am at Sanctuary Point Connect

Thanks to the Department of Education for funding this fantastic program. Please call Nicki or Sue at Noah's Inclusion Services for more information.



# TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

Our Transition to School Program is another fantastic service which is for families with an NDIS Plan.

The Program consists of 10 x 2 hour sessions where your child is part of a small group focussed on preparing your child for school by enhancing:

- Social skills
- Communication skills
- Ability to follow instructions
- Fine motor skills, such as correct pencil grip
- Pre-literacy and numeracy skills

This Program is available at Nowra and Ulladulla – you can book in by calling Noah's on (02) 4423 5022.

# GET TO KNOW US



## By Taneeka Bettenay

I'm an Occupational Therapist in the Nowra Therapy Team. I started at Noah's around six months ago after I moved to the South Coast from Western Australia with my partner who was posted to HMAS Albatross.

I work closely with children, their families and teachers at Noah's clinic, in their homes and in preschools and schools. Some of my work includes developing strategies to help children remain regulated, calm and focused throughout their day and to overcome sensory sensitivities. A big focus is to also help them develop independence and tolerance for self-care tasks such as getting dressed and showering. Our team also helps children reach developmental milestones in fine and gross motor skills and enhances their play and social skills.

I really enjoy having the opportunity to develop strong relationships with children and to see them progress and shine to the best of their ability. This always makes me feel very lucky and privileged to have the job that I do.

I enjoy working at Noah's because everyone is so friendly, positive and passionate about what they do.

Outside work I compete competitively in CrossFit, training up to two hours every day. I also love anything outdoors - going to the beach, swimming, going for hikes and exploring the beautiful South Coast.

*Taneeka*

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS:



**Slingsby Holdings**