

Recommended Guidelines for a Community Playgroup

Playgroup is an opportunity for families to come together in their community, play, make friends and establish supportive connections. Every family can find a place to belong at playgroup.

Community playgroups are informal opportunities to come together to play and to socialise with the other families. In order for a group to run smoothly and to ensure everyone is aware of general expectation we have developed the following policies that you can customize to your group's needs.

Playgroup NSW Membership

After a visitor has attended two playgroup sessions they will need to hold valid Playgroup NSW membership to continue to attend. All members must ensure they have a current membership while participating in playgroup activities and events.

Playgroup membership includes:

- Insurance to cover all members of the family (up to 5 adults and 5 children) for attendance at playgroup, excursions and special events
- Access to information and support via our website, email and member helpline
- Support and resources for playgroups and playgroup volunteers
- Discounts and special offers selected partners

Inclusion and non-discrimination

All children and families are welcome at playgroup. Playgroups may not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, disability, religion, sexuality or gender identity. All children and adults who attend playgroup will be treated with respect and dignity.

Not every playgroup will match every family's interests and needs and there is a place for groups that have a particular focus. For example playgroups for dads, rainbow playgroups for LGBTQI families or bilingual/ culturally specific playgroups. These groups meet the needs of families looking for a specific type of playgroup.

There are many general playgroups, including groups for babies and groups for 0 – 6 year olds for families to attend and we encourage all members to find the playgroup that feels right or their family.

Welcoming new members

New members are important to ensure a playgroup continues to grow and thrive. All playgroup members are responsible to help make new families feel welcomed and included. To help people feel welcome, greet new members and help them settle their child into playgroup.



See our Playgroup Tool about [Welcoming Families to your Playgroup](#). Some playgroups allocate a member that has the special job of welcoming new members.

Smoking

All playgroups, playgroup venues and the surrounding areas are smoke-free environments. Please do not light up at playgroup.

Hot Drinks

Scalding can be a serious problem if babies and young children are exposed to hot liquids like tea and coffee. Hot drinks should only served in safe, insulated and securely lidded containers or limited to an area where children are not allowed, for example the kitchen.

Swearing and offensive language

Children learn behaviours by watching their parents and carers and often repeat what they hear and see. Please use respectful language at playgroup and refrain from using swearing and offensive language, even when talking with another adult.

Disciplining Children

Research has found that children respond to positive reinforcement far better than negative actions. Never strike a child or children in your care, and never attempt to discipline someone else's child.

If you notice behaviour that you are concerned about, have a quiet word with the parent in a non-judgmental, supportive manner. Remember your child may come to someone else's attention at another time.

If you think a child is at risk of harm from abuse or neglect, contact the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111.

Supervision of Children

The parent or carer who brings a child to playgroup is responsible for supervising children in their care while at playgroup.

Where a parent/carer cannot keep a child in their direct line of sight (eg while feeding a baby or accompanying another child to the bathroom), seek support from another member to make sure their child has an adult who is aware of their wellbeing and safety.

Baby Corner

Babies are small and some new parents may worry that boisterous and active older children may inadvertently injure their child. A dedicated baby corner where parents/carers with babies can interact with each other away from the older children. Playgroups can be certified as baby friendly. See Playgroup Tool: [Tips for a Baby Friendly Playgroup](#)



Help out and pitch in

Community playgroups are run by volunteer parents for other parents and carers. If everyone at playgroup helps out, no one person is burdened with an unacceptable workload.

If you have a passion or skill that you can bring to the group, discuss with the coordinator and see if it can be incorporated into the group activities.

