



families working together
with fun and free activities



HIPPY Operations guide

Your guide to holding a
successful **HIPPY Gathering**

Acknowledgment of Country

The Brotherhood of St. Laurence acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways on which our organisation operates. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, and present.

Here is the land

(touch the ground)

Here is the sky

(raise hands to the sky)

**Here is my family,
hand in hand**

(join hands)

**To acknowledge the traditional
custodians of this land**

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HIPPY Gatherings

Welcome to the HIPPY Gatherings Handbook. This guide is designed to help you efficiently plan and execute HIPPY Gatherings for Age 3 and Age 4 families. Our goal is to provide you with clear instructions and essential information to support you in your role as Coordinators and Tutors.

The guidelines in this handbook support you in delivering successful and impactful HIPPY Gatherings.

What is a HIPPY Gathering?

HIPPY Gatherings are an essential part of the HIPPY program. Gatherings bring HIPPY families together to have fun and learn through play-based activities, with the support of HIPPY Coordinators and Tutors. Parents and carers also have the opportunity to engage in learning that supports them in parenting. Gatherings are intended to be flexible and relaxed experiences for families and children.

HIPPY Gatherings are held for **2-3 hours**, with **1.5-2 hours** of contact time with the families, and additional time set aside for set up, pack up, and reflection. Gatherings are held every month (at a minimum) across the HIPPY year. If your Site would benefit from a more flexible format, such as a Combined Gathering, please speak with your Site Advisor.

Focus areas of HIPPY Gatherings

This section outlines the key areas of focus for Age 3 and Age 4 Gatherings. Aligning efforts with these focus areas ensures that each Gathering is purposeful, supportive, and enriching for all participants.

Age 3

- Promote a sense of belonging within the HIPPY community.
- Support social engagement and community connections for parents and carers and their child.
- Build positive relationships between parents or carers and their child through play-based learning.
- Promote the importance of play and play-based learning in children's development.
- Reinforce and model to parents and carers how to engage their child in learning activities.
- Support parents and carers as their child's first teacher.
- Reinforce to parents and carers the importance of shared reading with their child.
- Provide opportunities for children to learn in a group setting and among peers.

Age 4

- Promote a sense of belonging the HIPPY community.
- Support social engagement and community connections for parents and carers and their child.
- Share and learn from each other's parenting experiences.
- Role play and discuss the week's activities.
- Participate in enrichment activities through guest speakers and community groups.

HIPPY Gathering outline

The **HIPPY Gathering outline** (below) provides a simple overview of what happens during Age 3 and Age 4 Gatherings.

Family contact hours for an Age 3 Gathering is 2-3 hrs, whereas it is 1.5 to 2 hrs for an Age 4 Gathering.

Importantly, you also need to factor in time to **set up and pack up** the Gathering space.

We want you to know exactly what to expect and what you need to do for each gathering. By understanding this, you'll be better prepared to organise a successful event that children and families will enjoy.

Table: HIPPY Gathering outline for Age 3 and Age 4

Age 3	
<i>Prior to family contact time</i>	<i>Set up space</i>
Welcome	
Free play Independently or with minimal support from an adult	
'Learning together' activities	
Snack time Child-focussed	
Parent and carer enrichment Dedicated or Integrated	
Farewell	
Feedback from families	
<i>After families leave</i>	<i>Pack-up space</i>

Age 4	
<i>Prior to family contact time</i>	<i>Set up space</i>
Welcome	
Free play Supervision from Tutors/child-minding staff recommended	
Activity pack delivery	
Sharing food Parent and carer-focussed	
Parent and carer enrichment Dedicated or Integrated	
Farewell	
Feedback from families	
<i>After families leave</i>	<i>Pack-up space</i>

When planning the delivery of the HIPPY Gatherings, you should consider:

- Creating a welcoming, inclusive, and family-friendly environment that celebrates diversity
- Ensuring the safety of families at all times
- Acknowledging and responding to First Nations cultural connection to Country
- Reinforcing the learning in the Activity packs for children and parents or carers through repetition and extension to consolidate and deepen learning
- The developmental implications of working with three- and four-year-old children. For example, children in this age group may find it difficult to share toys or to sit still for a long period of time
- How to include the voices and agency of families and children in the structure, activities, and enrichment on offer
- How Coordinators and Tutors model language and engage children in learning for the families
- The unique learning and support needs of your families when planning and delivering enrichment.

Roles and Responsibilities

In this section, we outline the specific roles and responsibilities of each team member involved in planning and executing HIPPY Gatherings. Understanding your role and how it fits into the larger team effort is crucial for ensuring smooth and successful events. Clear definitions of responsibilities help foster collaboration, streamline operations, and ensure that all aspects of the gatherings are effectively managed.

Role of the Coordinator

The Coordinator is responsible for the day-to-day operations of HIPPY at the HIPPY site and supervises the Tutors.

- Planning all elements of the Gathering with their team.
- Planning purposeful and timely enrichment.
- Arranging childcare options, such as paying Tutors to work extra hours or engaging an external childcare provider.
- Organising and preparing for Gatherings, including venue hire, purchasing equipment, decisions regarding food or snacks, record keeping and providing information to parents and carers.
- Training Tutors on specific roles at Gatherings, [See Role of the Tutors](#)
- Managing Gatherings and responding to any issues that arise.
- Using the Gathering planning tool on page [21](#) to prepare and set up the Gathering space with the support of Tutors.
- Welcoming parents, carers and children while being considerate of safety requirements for all.
- Modelling positive interactions and engagement strategies to support both parents and carer and children's learning.
- Evaluating Gatherings after each session, allowing for discussion with Tutors and feedback from families (including children).

Role of the Tutors

Tutors require additional knowledge, skills, and confidence-building to support children and family engagement at Gatherings compared to delivering HIPPY at home visits. This means Tutors require separate and dedicated training for Gatherings.

- Participating in the planning of all elements of the Gathering, whilst being supported by the Coordinator.
- Using the Gathering Plan to set up and pack up the Gathering space with the support of the Coordinator.
- Welcoming families and helping them settle into the Gatherings routine.
- Modelling positive interactions and engagement strategies to support both parents and carers and children's learning.
- Encouraging and supporting a positive group dynamic.
- Responding to challenges that arise with support from the Coordinator.
- Providing input into the evaluation of each Gathering.

Operational Considerations

Safety matters

Safety is of utmost importance at Gatherings. HIPPY providers will have their own procedures to follow. Refer to policies and procedures currently used within your organisation.

These may include:

- Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policies and procedures, including for setting up and packing up
- SunSmart policy and practices if the children will be outdoors
- Food safety policies and practices
- Child safety and supervision policies

Engaging Subcontractors

To support the delivery of HIPPY, we know Providers contract third-party organisations ('subcontractors') to deliver services that enhance the HIPPY experience for both HIPPY staff and families.

As part of the HIPPY Sublicence and Funding Agreement, any child-related personnel –meaning officers, employees, contractors (including subcontractors), agents, and volunteers who take part in your HIPPY program – must have their relevant safeguarding checks. This includes a **cleared and valid National Coordinated Criminal History Check** (NCCCCHC) and **Working with Children Check** (WWCC).

For further information, please refer to the Engaging Subcontractors Guidelines on the [LMS](#).

Holding Gatherings at non-HIPPY Provider locations

Some HIPPY Providers may choose alternative sites to hold their Gatherings if they do not have a suitable space at their HIPPY offices. Some Providers will have an agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU) with another service or organisation that outlines a mutual agreement between both parties on any requirements and responsibilities to which both parties will adhere. This includes processes, policies, and/or procedures you will need to follow while accessing the external site facilities. This will include any safety requirements, such as in the event of fire protocols, location of first aid kits and defibrillator machines, housekeeping items, etc.

Please refer to your HIPPY Provider policies when engaging in an agreement with any third-party services and or organisations.

Planning a Gathering

Planning as a team

PLANNING FOR A GATHERING

Planning is a cycle which includes:



Having clear aims for your HIPPY Gathering.



Designing activities and learning opportunities that support your aims.



Reflecting on, and evaluating, the effectiveness of the gathering.



Planning and improving the following gathering based on your reflection and evaluation.



While the Coordinator is ultimately responsible for all aspects of Gatherings and executing Gatherings on the day, Tutors play a significant role in the planning stages and supporting the Coordinator.

It is important to document your planning. A **'Gathering plan'** guides Coordinators and Tutors on how to set up the Gathering space and support families to positively engage and learn at Gatherings.

Gathering spaces

As the space is set up and packed away for each Gathering, the key is to keep it simple! Ideally, Gathering spaces include an indoor space with different zones, such as 'wet' and 'dry' areas, and a fenced outdoor space. Ensure there is clear access to toilets, basins, nappy-changing facilities, and a designated space for food preparation and washing up. The Gathering space should be large enough to accommodate the number of children, siblings who may be attending, as well as parents and carers.

It is important that there are not too many different activities, as an overly busy environment with lots of choices can be overwhelming for three- and four-year-old children.

YOUR GATHERING SPACE SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Enough floor space large for the group to come together for the welcome and farewell.
- Ideally, child-sized tables and chairs for some play-based activities and snack time.
- Enough floor space for several children and parents and carers to participate in play-based activities at once.

Equipment and resources

The equipment and resources required for each Gathering relate to the activities planned. However, there are some recommended standard resources below. Borrowing these from a local book or toy library or preschool is a more affordable option, particularly if purchasing and/or storing Gathering resources is challenging.

Standard equipment

- Low tables and small chairs for children's activities
(Two - three tables and up to four child-sized chairs per table)
- Adult-sized chairs
- Cushions
- Rug, mat, or picnic rug
- Baskets and containers to store and display resources
- HIPPY storybooks
- Art and craft supplies, including smocks or old shirts to protect clothing
- Home or dramatic play resources
(Such as dolls, teddies and simple dress-ups)
- Imaginative play resources
(Such as small animals, dress-ups, or cars)
- Age-appropriate puzzles
- Construction blocks or sets
- Containers and items for water and sand play
- Outdoor equipment
(Such as balls, large boxes, a tunnel or parachute)
- Utensils for snack time
(Such as plates, cups, platters, bowls tongs, spoons etc)
- Sunscreen and spare hats
- Highchairs
(If required for younger siblings)

TIPS FOR EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES:

- Borrow Instead of Buy
Borrow from book or toy libraries
- Keep it Organised
Use baskets as storage making setup and cleanup easier
- Document Your Plans
Use the provided templates to plan your Gatherings

Planning resources for Gatherings

There are many resources available to help you plan a successful Gathering. These resources can assist in selecting activities that are developmentally appropriate for 3 and 4-year-olds, and can also be enjoyed by younger siblings.

Activity Ideas: An internet search for play-based activities will provide many options

Planning Templates: At the end of this handbook, you will find examples of Gathering planning documentation, and a template to help with your planning. Feel free to use these templates as they are, or adapt them to better suit your specific needs.

By using these resources, you can ensure your Gatherings are well-organized and engaging for all participants.

Feedback from families

Collecting feedback from families supports ongoing Gathering planning. How sites decide to capture family feedback is up to them.

A few ways to collect feedback:

- Printed or online surveys
- Group discussion at Gathering farewell
- Feedback box at each Gathering
- Discussion with Tutors at Home Visits

HIPPY Gathering Structure

In this section, we outline the fundamental structure of HIPPY Gatherings for both Age 3 and Age 4 families.

The Gathering structure is designed to create a consistent and supportive environment that promotes the developmental and learning needs of children, while fostering strong connections among families and the community.

While each age group has specific needs and tailored activities, the overall structure remains consistent to provide familiarity and routine.

This overview provides a general guide to structuring a gathering, explaining the purpose and importance of each step, while allowing staff to adapt based on specific age group requirements and feedback from families.

Structure flexibility

While this schedule provides a general framework for HIPPY Gatherings, it is important to remain flexible and responsive to the unique needs of families.

Tutors should feel confident to adjust the timing and content of activities based on the developmental stages, interests, and feedback of the children and families.

Flexibility is crucial to effectively support the diverse needs of families and to make each Gathering as beneficial and engaging as possible.



Welcome

Sets a positive tone, helps children transition, establishes a routine, and makes everyone feel comfortable and ready to participate.



Free Play

Encourages creativity, independence, and social interaction among children as they engage in activities at their own pace.



Activity / Pack delivery

Supports child developmental milestones, reinforces learning concepts, and builds parents' skills and confidence.



Snack Time / Sharing Food

Promotes healthy eating habits, offers informal socialisation, and reinforces the communal aspect of Gatherings.



Parent and Carer Enrichment

Builds capacity, confidence, skills, and fosters social connections. Enrichment also aims to enhance parent and carer engagement in their child's learning and the HIPPY community.



Farewell

Ensures families leave with a clear understanding of what was accomplished, provides continuity, and reinforces learning objectives.

Welcome

Families come together as a whole group to participate in a welcome activity. **This always includes an Acknowledgement of Country.**

Welcome time needs to be an appropriate length, taking into consideration the shorter attention span of 3 and 4-year-olds.

Play-based learning

Children who engage in quality play experiences are more likely to have well-developed memory skills and language development and are able to regulate their behaviour – leading to enhanced school adjustment and academic learning¹.

Young children learn best through play with the support of others such as parents, carers and older siblings. When children play, they use different senses and build on different skills to explore and learn about themselves and their world. For example, when two children play together with toys, they are using their sense of touch, hearing, and sight. Additionally, they are using their cognitive (thinking and talking about what they are doing and what is happening with their toys), physical (as they move the toys using their hands and body), social (as they share the experience with each other) and emotional (feeling happy or pleased about the shared experience with the toys).

Play-based learning encourages children to explore, create, imagine, solve problems, work with others, and develop new understandings over time. Through play, children experience a deep sense of enjoyment and engagement, which, when combined with motivation, form important foundations for learning. Gatherings incorporate two different kinds of play-based activities: 'learning together' and 'free play'.

OTHER WELCOME ACTIVITIES COULD INCLUDE:

- Introducing everyone
- Sharing something about Age 3 and Age 4
- Reading a HIPPY storybook
- Connecting with families
- Sharing the agenda
- Going over expectations, housekeeping, and child-minding arrangements
- Practising a song or rhyme from an activity pack

¹ E, Bodrova & D, Leong. (2005). The Importance of Play: Why Children need to Play. *Early Childhood Today*, 20(1), 6-7.



LEARNING TOGETHER

Learning together includes play-based activities designed to facilitate parents and carers and children playing and learning together by doing the same activity at the same time. Careful planning ensures that learning together activities are genuinely interactive and collaborative.

It is recommended that Gatherings include a balance of both repeated and extension learning together activities that support a range of developmental areas.

Learning together activities

- **Repeated activity**

A repeated activity from a previous pack(s) that was enjoyable, confusing or hard to do at home.

Repeated activities provide opportunities for children and parents and carers to have 'another go' at an activity or do an activity for a first time, and to develop a better understanding of the learnings, skills, and concepts at the heart of an activity².

- **Extension activity**

An extension activity that builds on learning from a previous pack or packs. Through extension activities, children and their parents and carers experience previous learning in new and/or different ways. Additionally, parents and carers could also develop ideas for Everywhere Learning to use at home and in the community.

FREE PLAY

Free play differs from learning together by offering open-ended activities that children can do independently or with minimal support from an adult. Free play is important for children because they make choices and guide their own play and learning.

Free play activities do not need to have a direct connection back to activity packs. They are designed to be open-ended and child-led rather than being set up in a particular way or for a particular purpose. However, there may be opportunities to make connections between pack activities and free play. For example, setting up water play as a free play activity links to 'water play' Koala 1

FREE PLAY TIPS:

'Free play' time is a good opportunity to have parent and carer enrichment.

Tutors and child-minding staff will already be supervising children during this time.

²Queensland Government. (2023, August 28). The power of repetition. <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/early-years/early-learning-at-home/read-and-count/the-power-of-repetition>

Pack delivery

The pack delivery phase of Gatherings is geared towards parents and carers. This creates a space for them to have in-depth discussions about the activity packs.

During these discussions, parents and carers can express their thoughts on the previous pack and the delivery of the following activity packs. Coordinators and Tutors can use this time to reflect on the previous pack, or deliver the current pack

Snack time / Sharing food

Both Age 3 and Age 4 Gatherings include a food-sharing component, designed to support social and emotional development. This time is also an opportunity for families to connect and socialise. This component may vary in form, but it consistently serves as a valuable time for community building and learning through everyday routines.

PACK DELIVERY: Reflection and delivery

REFLECT: Reflect on previous packs

- Gather feedback on the activities from parents and carers.
- Discuss how their child found the activity and if any modifications were required.
- Review the child feedback section.

DELIVER: Deliver the current pack

- Role-play the activities as a group.
- Discuss community modifications including translations.
- Discuss areas where children may require modifications.
- Brainstorm Everywhere Learning ideas.

Parent and carer enrichment

Enrichment provides planned, relevant, and timely learning opportunities for parents and carers to support positive outcomes for HIPPY families.

There are two main ways to deliver enrichment, although sites are encouraged to think creatively about how enrichment could be delivered to best reflect and meet the local context. Seek feedback from parents and carers about what topics they would like to learn about and ensure that this is considered when planning enrichment throughout the year.

Dedicated enrichment

Dedicated enrichment includes child-free time for parent and carer learning. For example, parents and carers listen to a guest speaker while children are supervised by Tutors and/or child-minding staff. Planning for dedicated enrichment depends on factors such as the size and amenities of a Gathering space, the number of children and siblings attending, and supervision options.

Integrated enrichment

Integrated enrichment is where enrichment is built into Gathering routines. For example, a guided discussion could happen at snack time as families sit at tables and the Coordinator and Tutors talk about a planned topic.

Another example could be enrichment delivered individually or to small groups of parents and carers as they engage in play-based activities.

Sites may use a combination of dedicated and integrated enrichment at Gatherings throughout Age 3 and identify other innovative ways to deliver enrichment. However, no matter how enrichment is delivered, it needs to be planned, purposeful, and timely, and takes into account things like:

- each parent or carer's support needs, including where they are in their parenting journey
- each child's support needs, including where they are in their learning journey.
- what resources are available to support enrichment.
- the type of Gathering space.

PARENT AND CARER ENRICHMENT INCLUDES THINGS LIKE:



Child Development
Learning about how young children grow and develop



Accessing Support Services
Hearing about local family support services and how to access them



Kindergarten information
How to select and enrol children in kindergarten



Connecting with service providers
Meeting local service providers, such as child and family health nurses or preschool teachers

- the number of families attending each Gathering.

Farewell

The group farewell is an example of a transition that marks the end of a Gathering. It may include a group activity such as a farewell song or story relevant for families and children.

Time schedule

Family contact hours for Gatherings depend on the age group (Age 3 is 2-3hrs and Age 4 is 1.5 to 2hrs), with additional time scheduled for HIPPY staff to set up and pack up.

Timing for Gatherings will depend on a range of factors, including:

- The Gathering space, such as:
 - Availability (that is, it may only be available for a maximum of two hours)
 - Size (that is, a small space may not be suitable for a longer Gathering)
 - Access to indoor/outdoor areas (that is, a Gathering with only indoor access may be shorter than one where children can move between inside and outside)
- How long families are available for; they may need to collect other children from school, or younger children may need a rest
- The age of HIPPY children and siblings attending, as younger children may not manage a longer Gathering.

Example Gathering schedule

The following example provides a guide to Gathering timing and can be adapted to suit each site as needed.

Remember that not all families will arrive at the designated start time. It is important to factor this into your timing so that families who arrive later still feel welcome and part of the group.

Time spent waiting for all families to arrive can be used by the HIPPY team to build relationships with families, introduce families to each other and spend time with families who are anxious about attending.

This time can also be used to support children to feel comfortable and familiarise themselves with the Gathering space and activities.

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

9:00 - 9:30 :	Set up
9:30 - 9:45 :	Families arrive
9:45 - 9:50 :	Group activity
9:55 - 10:25 :	Play-based learning or pack delivery
10:25 - 10:35 :	Snack time
10:35 - 11:05 :	Parent enrichment and free play
11:05 - 11:15 :	Group farewell
11:15 - 11:20 :	Families leave
11:20 - 12:00 :	Pack up

Age 3 Gatherings

The Age 3 HIPPY Gatherings are designed to create a supportive, engaging, and educational environment that supports parents as their child's first teacher while promoting the importance of play-based learning.

Age 3 Gatherings bring HIPPY families and children together to have fun and learn through structured, play-based activities. These Gatherings are intended to be informal and relaxed, making them enjoyable and accessible for everyone. By participating in these Gatherings, parents and caregivers will gain valuable skills and confidence to support their child's learning at home and in everyday life.

Age 3 key messaging:

- HIPPY gives you the skills to learn at home with your child.
- Build learning into your everyday life.
- HIPPY supports you as your child's first teacher.



Welcome

- Engage families with a welcoming activity, including an Acknowledgement of Country.
- Establish a positive tone and routine for the Gathering.

Welcome tips:

- Keep it brief and engaging to suit the short attention spans of three-year-olds.
- Use this time to make all families feel included and comfortable.

Play-Based Learning

- Incorporate both '**learning together**' activities and '**free play**' to support a range of developmental areas.
- Ensure activities are interactive, collaborative, and designed to be enjoyable for both children and parents.

Play-Based Learning tips:

- Plan a balance of repeated and new activities to reinforce and extend learning.

Snack Time

- Facilitate a break for food sharing and socialising.
- Use this time to model healthy eating habits and reinforce the communal aspect of gatherings.

Snack time tips:

- Consider involving children in snack preparation to incorporate Everywhere Learning.
- Create a relaxed environment to encourage informal socialisation.

Parent and Carer Enrichment

- Offer planned learning opportunities for parents and carers to support their role as primary educators.
- Include both dedicated enrichment sessions and integrated enrichment within the gathering.

Parent and Carer enrichment tips:

- Seek feedback from parents to tailor enrichment topics to their needs and interests.
- Be creative and flexible in delivering enrichment to best reflect the local context.

Farewell

- Helps children and parents' transition smoothly from the gathering environment back to their regular routine.
- Signals the end of the structured activities, creating a clear end point for the session.

Farewell tips:

- Summarise the session's activities and reinforce key points.
- Include a group activity such as a farewell song or story relevant for families and children.

Time Schedule and Flexibility

- Age 3 Gatherings usually run around **90 minutes** long.

Schedule and flexibility tips:

- Use arrival times to build relationships and support children and families feel comfortable in the space.
- Be flexible and responsive to the unique needs of each family.
- Ensure the gathering space is safe, welcoming, and conducive to both indoor and outdoor activities (if available).

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE: AGE 3

9:30 - 10:00
Allow 30 mins

Set up

10:00 - 10:15
Allow 15 mins

Families arrive

10:15 - 10:25
Allow 10 mins

Welcome and group activity

10:25 - 10:35
Allow 10 mins

Free play

10:35 - 11:05
Allow 30+ mins

Learning together activities

11:05 - 11:20
Allow 15 mins

Snack time

11:20 - 11:50
Allow 30+ mins

Enrichment and free play

11:50 - 12:00
Allow 10 mins

Group farewell

12:00 - 12:15
Allow 15 mins

Families leave

12:15 - 12:45
Allow 35 mins

Pack up and reflection

Age 4 Gatherings

The main difference between Age 3 and Age 4 Gatherings is that Age 3 is family-focussed whereas Age 4 is adult-focussed.

Age 4 Gatherings provide parents and carers the opportunity to connect with their peers and engage with a variety of learning and enrichment opportunities. The adult-focussed environment provides sites the opportunity to offer more dedicated enrichment topics. We therefore encourage sites to organise childcare options for HIPPY children and siblings. This could be through a childcare service provider or added to Tutor hours. As they are designed to be open-ended and child-led, children's activities during this time are often based on free play and do not need to have a direct connection to the activity packs.

Age 4 HIPPY Gatherings bring families and children together for structured yet flexible sessions that are both educational and enjoyable.

Age 4 HIPPY Gatherings emphasise the following key aspects:

- **Adult focussed:** Reinforcing the concept of parents as their child's first and most influential teacher, boosting their confidence in this role, and building social connections and support networks with other families.
- **Pack Delivery:** Engaging parents and carers in in-depth discussions about the activity packs, reflecting on previous activities, and preparing for new ones.
- **Parent and Carer Enrichment:** Providing targeted, relevant learning opportunities to support positive outcomes for HIPPY families, including dedicated and integrated enrichment activities.
- **Sharing Food:** Facilitating social interaction and community building through shared refreshments.



Welcome

- Helps establish a routine, makes everyone feel welcome, and ensures families understand the day's structure.

Welcome tips:

- Include an Acknowledgement of Country, connecting with other families, sharing the agenda, and going over housekeeping and child-minding arrangements.
- set a positive tone and engage families from the start.

Free Play

- Unstructured playtime with various toys and materials available.
- Encourages creativity, independence, and social interaction. Tutors and child-minding staff provide supervision to ensure safety and engagement.

Free Play tips:

- Allow children to explore and engage in activities at their own pace.

Pack Delivery

- Aimed at parents and carers, allowing for in-depth discussions on activity packs.

Pack delivery tips:

- Reflect on previous packs, gather feedback, and role-play current activities.
- Discuss community modifications, brainstorm ideas, and review child feedback sections.
- Organise child-minding options for HIPPY children and siblings.

Sharing Food

- Sharing food allows time for parents and carers to socialise and connect.
- Promotes healthy eating habits, offers a chance for informal socialisation, and reinforces the communal aspect of gatherings.

Food sharing tips:

- Set up a dedicated space for a shared snack time.
- Allow families to bring snacks for their child to eat when and where needed.

Parent and Carer Enrichment

- Enrichment supports positive outcomes for HIPPY families by providing knowledge on child development, local services, and educational strategies.
- Enrichment can be dedicated (child-free time) or integrated (within Gatherings routines).

Parent and Carer enrichment tips:

- **Dedicated:** Organise a guest speaker for parents and carers, while children are supervised by Tutors or child-minding staff.
- **Integrated:** Lead guided discussion with parents and carers during snack time, or as they engage in play-based activities.

Farewell

- Helps children and parents transition smoothly from the gathering environment back to their regular routine.
- Signals the end of the structured activities, creating a clear endpoint for the session. ,

Farewell tips:

- Summarise the session's activities and reinforce key points.
- Include a group activity such as a farewell song or story relevant for families and children.

Time Schedule and Flexibility

General Timing:

- Age 4 Gatherings usually run around 2 hours long

Scheduling and flexibility tips:

- Use arrival times to build relationships and support children and families feel comfortable in the space.
- Be flexible and responsive to the unique needs of each family.
- Ensure the gathering space is safe, welcoming, and conducive to both indoor and outdoor activities if available.

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE: AGE 4

9:30 - 10:00 <i>Allow 30 mins</i>	Set up
10:00 - 10:15 <i>Allow 15 mins</i>	Families arrive
10:15 - 10:25 <i>Allow 10 mins</i>	Welcome and group activity
10:25 - 10:35 <i>Allow 10 mins</i>	Free play
10:35 - 11:05 <i>Allow 30+ mins</i>	Pack Delivery
11:05 - 11:20 <i>Allow 15 mins</i>	Sharing food
11:20 - 11:50 <i>Allow 30+ mins</i>	Enrichment and free play
11:50 - 12:00 <i>Allow 10 mins</i>	Group farewell
12:00 - 12:15 <i>Allow 15 mins</i>	Families leave
12:15 - 12:45 <i>Allow 35 mins</i>	Pack up and reflection

Conclusion

You now have some information on what HIPPY Gatherings can look like for Age 3 and Age 4 families. We know that variations to this model may need to be considered to meet the needs of individual communities.

For more information, please go to the HIPPY library on the LMS or speak with your Site Advisor for support.



GATHERINGS PLANNING TOOL

AGE 3 AND 4

HIPPY Gatherings

PLANNING TOOL: AGE 3

Date: 01.01.25

Location: Community hall

Schedule

11:00	Welcome
11:15	Pack delivery
11:45	Morning / Afternoon tea
12:00	Enrichment
12:15	Farewell

Top Priorities

- ☐ Community building
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

To-Do list

- ☐ Organise guest speaker
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Welcome

- **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**
- **CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES:**
Time for families to network and connect at the start of the Gathering.
- **AGENDA:**
An overview of what is planned for the day's Gathering.
- **HOUSE KEEPING:**
Explanation of what to expect from the day's Gathering.
Any housekeeping, for eg, location of facilities such as bathroom and kitchen, childminding arrangements.

Learning together

- **2 Activities**

Snack time

Opportunity to take a break for refreshments and conversation.

SET UP EXAMPLES:

- Water jugs
- Water cups
- Plates
- Cutlery
- Food
- Tea and coffee facilities

Enrichment

- TOPIC:** Resume and interview skills
- WHAT:** Guided discussions about job interview questions and examples of effective resumes and templates.
- WHY:** To build parent and carers' employment knowledge and capacity.
To help prepare for future employment.
- WHO:** Registered training organization
- HOW:** Guided discussions led by Coordinator or guest speaker.
- WHEN:** After morning tea
- RESOURCES:**
- Child Health Nurse
 - NSW Blue book example

Free play

- **2 Activities**

Farewell

CLOSURE AND THANK YOU

Opportunity to inform parents and carers about the next Gathering, and to survey for future Enrichment topics, as well as feedback on the day's Enrichment topic.

Schedule

11:00	Welcome
11:15	Pack delivery
11:45	Morning / Afternoon tea
12:00	Enrichment
12:15	Farewell

Top Priorities

☐ Community building
☐
☐
☐
☐

To-Do list

☐ Organise guest speaker
☐
☐
☐
☐

Welcome

- **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**
- **CONNECTING WITH FAMILIES:**
Time for families to network and connect at the start of the Gathering.
- **AGENDA:**
An overview of what is planned for the day's Gathering.
- **HOUSE KEEPING:**
Explanation of what to expect from the day's Gathering.
Any housekeeping, for eg, location of facilities such as bathroom and kitchen, childminding arrangements.

Pack Delivery

ACTIVITY 1:
Reflection on previous pack.

ACTIVITY 2:
Delivery of the next pack including:

- Role-play
- Swapping roles
- Discussion of potential challenges
- Everywhere Learning opportunities

RESOURCES:
Activity packs and required resources in the 'What you will need' section.

Morning / Afternoon Tea

Opportunity to take a break for refreshments and conversation.

SET UP EXAMPLES:

- Water jugs
- Water cups
- Plates
- Cutlery
- Food
- Tea and coffee facilities

Enrichment

TOPIC: Resume and interview skills

WHAT: Guided discussions about job interview questions and examples of effective resumes and templates.

WHY: To build parent and carers' employment knowledge and capacity. To help prepare for future employment.

WHO: Registered training organization

HOW: Guided discussions led by Coordinator or guest speaker.

WHEN: After morning tea

RESOURCES:

- Child Health Nurse
- NSW Blue book example

Farewell

CLOSURE AND THANK YOU

Opportunity to let parents and carers know information about the next Gathering, and to survey for future Enrichment topics as well as feedback on the day's Enrichment topic.

Materials and resources

☐ Water jugs
☐ Water cups
☐ Plates
☐ Cutlery
☐ Food
☐ Tea
☐ Coffee
☐ Milk
☐ Mugs
☐ Chairs
☐
☐
☐
☐

HIPPY Gatherings
PLANNING TOOL: AGE 3

Date:

Location:

Schedule

Top Priorities

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To-Do list

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Welcome

Learning together

Snack time

Enrichment

Free play

Farewell

Location:

To-Do list

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HIPPY Gatherings
PLANNING TOOL:

Date:

Location:

Schedule	

Top Priorities	
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To-Do list	
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HIPPY Australia acknowledges Elders and Traditional Owners of the lands and seas across Australia.

HIPPY acknowledges artist Lena Smith for the use of her artworks in our new curriculum, and promotional materials.

Lena Smith is a Kamilaroi Yinarr woman from Moree, NSW.

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HIPPY was developed at the NCJW Research Institute for Innovation in Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the HIPPY Programs are affiliates of HIPPY International.

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