



Growing Up Strong Birrali and Gundanoo



PLEASE
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THE GATE

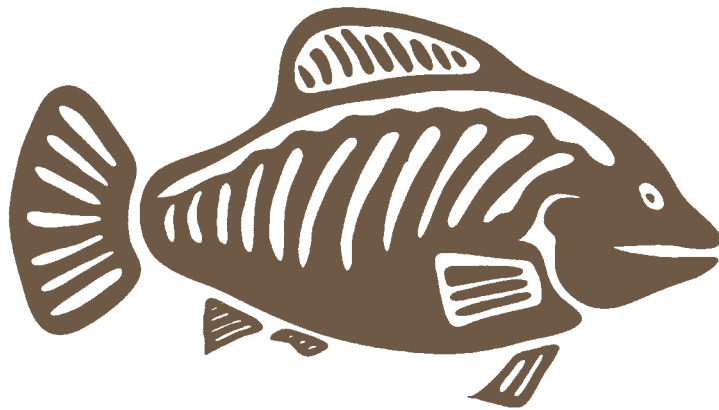


*This book is dedicated to all Elders, past and present,
for their valuable knowledge, wisdom and
loving care passed on to our birrali and gundanoo.*





Growing Up Strong
Birrali and Gundanoo



Acknowledgements

This book was adapted from the Far North Coast Aboriginal parenting book, *Doordarnbee Muggy Jarjums*.

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Special thanks also to Warren Mason who beautifully represented the local totems: animals, fish, birds and googars (lizards) found in Murrwarri and Yuwaalaraay country.

Our appreciation to Contact Inc for their parenting resources which have been invaluable in the development of this book. For more information about Contact Inc call 02 9251 4431.

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**Aboriginal
Child, Youth
and Family
Strategy**



Proud communities
Strong families

Introduction

This book is a resource for Aboriginal and Family Workers in the Far West region of NSW: Goodooga and surrounding districts.

Birrali means 'baby' in Yuwaalaraay language and gundanoo is 'child' in Murrwarri. The Yuwaalaraay tribe from the south of the Bokhara river and the Murrwarri from the north inhabit the area of Goodooga and surrounds. The River has always been a source of life for families and fishing for boogalies.

Between the ages of 0 and 5 our birrali and gundanoo's brains and bodies are developing and growing fast. This first stage of life is the most important time for parents to spend with their birrali and gundanoo's and make sure that they get a good start in life.

Our birrali and gundanoo's need us to love them and to help them feel safe and secure.

This book talks about how we can help birrali and gundanoo's to grow up strong by spending time with them—cuddling, playing, singing, reading, listening, telling stories and talking.

The book includes:

- information about what birrali and gundanoo's do at different stages
- ideas about things we can do with our birrali and gundanoo's
- games and activities
- contacts to help with parenting

Birrali and gundanoo's are important to the whole community. We need to make sure that our birrali and gundanoo's grow up healthy, strong and proud.

Being a parent can be hard at times. Don't be shame to ask for help. There is a contact list in the back of this book with important phone numbers for people you can call if you need help or support.

This book has been developed as part of the Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy which is a NSW Government initiative.



Newborn birrali 0-3 months

In the first few weeks of life birrali will spend a lot of time sleeping and feeding.

All babies like to be held close, cuddled and rocked.

Birrali like to look at faces and listen to voices. They are curious about what they see and hear.

Newborns like to feel secure. They will get to know you very quickly and rely on you for food and love. Being close to mum is very important for a new birrali.

Newborns do not cry to 'get attention' or 'get at' their parents. They cry because they are hungry, wet, need a cuddle or need to sleep. You will get to know what your birrali wants by the kind of cry it makes.

You can't spoil birrali by giving them too much attention.

Birrali will be upset by loud noises, sudden movement and angry voices.



No matter how tired, angry or frustrated you feel—NEVER shake a birrali. If you feel upset tell someone else and get some help.



Between 0 and 3 months
biralali will start to:

- smile
- watch faces
- listen to your voice
- lift up their head
when lying on belly
- kick their legs
by 2 months
- laugh by 3 months.



What you can do:

Give birrali lots of attention. Cuddle your birrali.

Talk, sing and hum to your birrali. Play music to them.


When birrali makes a sound, smile and talk back and say their name.

Carry birrali in a sling close to your body.

Birrali like to be touched gently. Play with birrali, gently pat and stroke them and move their arms and legs up, down and around.

Birrali need time on their belly to make their arms and neck strong. Place them on the belly and hold a toy in front of their face. Lift it up slowly so birrali needs to raise their head to see the toy.

Tie a rattle to the end of the bassinet to encourage birrali to move their legs and kick.

 *Developing a routine will help—try to do some things like bathing, sleeping and feeding birrali at the same time every day.*



Your birrali 3-9 months

Birrali is growing and you are learning about each other every day.

Birrali loves to be with you and is learning that you are the person who provides care and love.

Birrali will start to move around more. Playing and moving will help birrali grow stronger.

Birrali loves to smile and feels safe and happy when the people around are happy.

Never leave birrali alone on a bed where they could fall off.



From 6 months birrali will start to eat mashed food. Birrali needs healthy food to grow strong. Get advice from a Family Worker or Health Centre.

Between 3 and 9 months
birrali will start to:

- smile a lot
- make gurgling noises
- reach out to grab things
- hold and shake a rattle
- make sounds and 'talk'
- roll over from front to back
- push up and then sit up
- play with toes
- be interested in animals
- talk in 'baby language' and say short words like "mama", "dada", "no"
- pull up to a standing position.



What you can do:

Talk to birrali all the time and tell them about what you are doing.

Repeat simple sounds like “maa” and “daa”.

Make faces and blow raspberries on birrali’s belly.

Sing and play music.

Give birrali lots of cuddles and hold birrali close.

Give birrali time on the floor without a nappy so birrali can kick and move about.

Put birrali on the tummy to make the back strong and help birrali to start crawling.

Birrali love to hold things—give birrali a rattle, a small toy or a plastic or wooden spoon to play with. Make sure it’s smooth and too large to swallow.



Birrali are happy and settled when life is predictable—try to have a routine for feeding and sleeping. Birrali will need regular sleeps throughout the day.

Playtime with birrali 3-6 months

Peek-a-boo

Cover your face with your hands or a scarf and then show your face and say “peek-a-boo”. Birrali are happy to do this over and over again.

Mirror game

Let the birrali look in the mirror. Talk about what you can see—birrali, nose, eyes, ears.

Lost & found

Let birrali play with a cup or toy and then cover it with a towel or hanky. Birrali will look for the missing object. You may need to help birrali find it.



If you're worried about birrali's hearing, get their ears checked by a nurse or doctor.

Playtime with birrali 6-9 months

Chasing

Give birrali a head start and then crawl after birrali. When you catch up, give them a cuddle. You can also help birrali to chase balls or rolling toys.

Hide and seek

You can hide under a table or behind a door and call out to birrali—can they find you?

Copying games

Birrali love to copy you—laugh, cough, clap your hands and move your arms and watch birrali try to do the same.

Round and round the garden

Trace a path on the birrali's palm as you sing:

Round and round the garden, like a teddy bear,

One step, ...two steps

(walk your fingers up birrali's arm)

...Tickle under there.

(and tickle birrali's armpit)



Older birrali 9-18 months



Birrali will be curious about everything—sounds, music, books, household objects.

Birrali will start to explore—first by crawling and then by walking.

Once birrali starts crawling everything on the floor will end up in the mouth. Make sure there are no small objects around that birrali can swallow. Keep things clean.

Being safe is a big issue when birrali start to move around. You need to make sure all poisons, sharp objects and dangerous items are locked away up high. Put anything that birrali may break out of reach.

Birrali may have sudden mood changes and will test their will against others by wanting to get their own way. Birrali will also start to learn simple rules.

Between 9 and 18 months
birrali will start to:

- crawl
- stand up
- climb
- find out about objects
by pushing, pulling and
banging
- take their first steps
- look up when you call
their name
- imitate sounds
- say a few words
- shake their head and
say "no"
- smile and laugh to attract
your attention
- play with everything they
can get their hands on.

*Birrali will practice these
new skills over and over.
All birrali are different
and develop at their own
pace.*



What you can do:

Birralli always needs lots of cuddles and attention.

Play, talk, laugh and sing with birralli.

Give birralli pots and spoons to bang.

Cuddle and roll on the floor together.

Take birralli outside, point to trees and animals and say their names.

Hold birralli on your lap and show them books, pictures, photo albums. Point at the pictures and talk about what's happening in them.

Read simple picture books to birralli.

Give birralli non-toxic pens and crayons and lots of paper to scribble on.

Fill plastic containers that have lids with stones or rice and help birralli to shake them and make noises.



Birralli don't need toys that cost a lot— they will learn and have lots of fun playing with cardboard boxes, saucepans, pegs... and you!



Playtime with birrali 9-18 months

Through the tunnel

Cut the ends off 2 cardboard boxes, line them up and tape them together. You can also use 2 chairs with a blanket. Ask birrali to crawl through the tunnel to you.

Fill it up

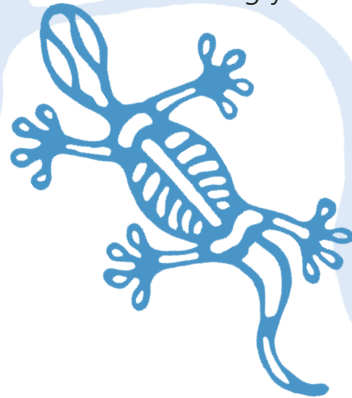
Put objects like pegs, balls or blocks into a box or saucepan. Show birrali how to take the objects out and put them in again.

Peg play

Pegs make great toys. Peg them to the top of a saucepan or box and show birrali how to take them off.

Singing

You might have a favourite song you like to sing to birrali.





Gundanoos

1¹/₂-2¹/₂ years

Birrali is growing into a gundanoo now. Gundanoos like to explore and will sometimes fall. They are watching and learning all the time.

They can understand many more words than they can say.

Gundanoos like to make a noise. They are learning to talk. You can help by talking, playing and singing with them.

Gundanoos do not understand 'sharing' or 'waiting'. Now is the time to start helping them to understand how to take turns and how to share.

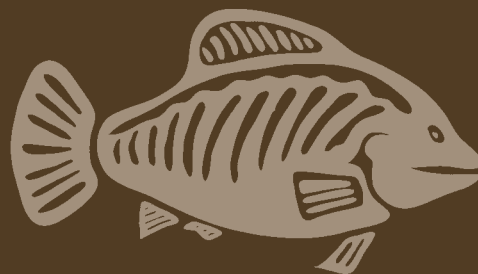
Gundanoos will enjoy being with older kids, cousins and grandparents who have time to spend playing. Gundanoos still need someone to play with and someone to keep an eye on them.

Start encouraging gundanoos to use a potty or big toilet.



Between 18 months and 2½ years gundanoo will start to:

- kick and throw a ball
- hold objects
- imitate sounds
- use simple words like "mum", "milk", "sore"
- name foods and body parts
- understand questions
- help with simple tasks
- use pencils and crayons
- play alone
- repeat games and words
- feed themselves
- turn knobs and push buttons.



What you can do:

Gundanoos love music—sing, play music and dance with them.

Take gundanoo exploring—a garden or a park can be an exciting place.

Sit them on your lap to look at books. Help them point at the pictures and name things: “look—a big brown dog”. Let them turn the pages.

At this age, gundanoos love to pretend and imagine—a box of old clothes and shoes, towels and hats can be hours of fun. A sheet over a couple of chairs can be a place to hide.

Talk to them and repeat the words they have said. Tell them the name of objects and then ask “what’s that?”.

Gundanoos love to help—involve them in daily routines like hanging out the washing or washing the floor.



All gundanoos need cuddles and hugs so they know you care about them and that they are loved.

Playtime with gundanoos 1¹/₂-2¹/₂ years

Cardboard boxes

Cardboard boxes are great toys. They can be taped together, painted and decorated to become cars, towers and tunnels. Cut windows and a door into a large box and you have a house.

Chase me

Gundanoos will start to run and they will love to be chased and caught. They also like to hop 'like a kangaroo' or run 'like the wind'.

Sand or water play

Gundanoos love to play in sand and water. Give them some plastic containers like mugs, buckets, spades and a funnel with a tray of water or sand. Never leave a gundanoo alone with water.



Playtime with gundanoos 1¹/₂-2¹/₂ years



Word games

Touch and talk—say “this is your nose” and touch gundanoo’s nose, “this is your ear” and touch their ear. There are Murrwarri and Yuwaalaraay words for body parts at the back of this book.

While dressing—“where do your shoes go?”

As you cook—“what will I use to mix the cake?”

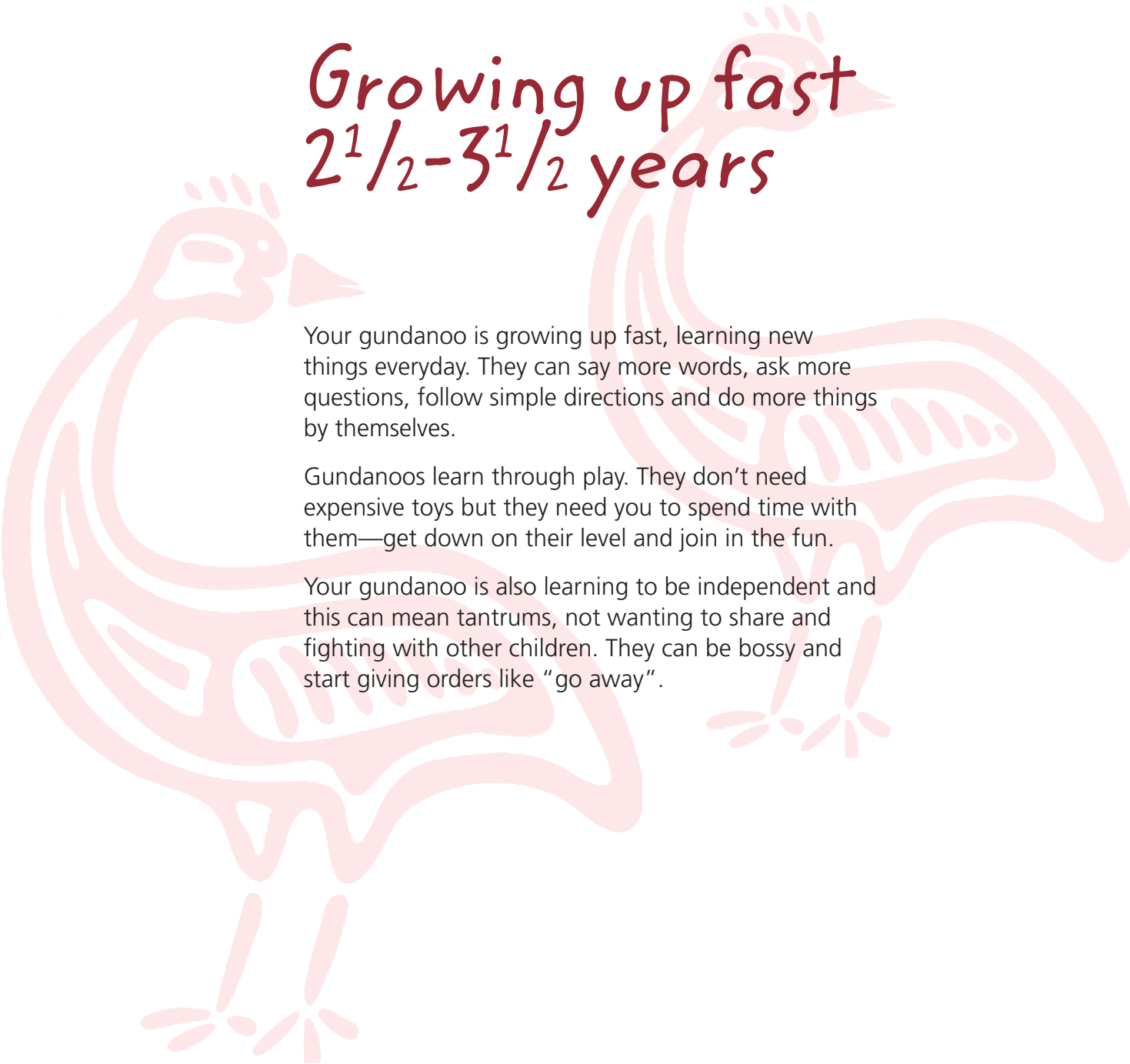
Toy and book library

Some libraries have toy libraries where you can borrow toys. Gundanoos love puzzles and any toys that link together like trains with carriages. Toys that can be pushed or pulled along are also very good. Talk to your Playgroup Coordinator or Family Worker about where you can borrow toys.

Playgroup

Playgroup is a great place for birrali and gundanoos to go to meet with other kids, learning through play and activities. They are also a great place for mums, dads, aunts, uncles and grandparents to talk to other parents or early childhood specialists for advice and support.





Growing up fast 2¹/₂-3¹/₂ years

Your gundanoo is growing up fast, learning new things everyday. They can say more words, ask more questions, follow simple directions and do more things by themselves.

Gundanoos learn through play. They don't need expensive toys but they need you to spend time with them—get down on their level and join in the fun.

Your gundanoo is also learning to be independent and this can mean tantrums, not wanting to share and fighting with other children. They can be bossy and start giving orders like “go away”.



Between 2½ and 3½ your gundanoo will:

- use words together. For example: “go potty now”
- run around and fall over a lot
- walk up stairs
- jump with two feet
- help dress themselves
- ask lots of questions
- know their full name
- start to understand ‘sharing’
- copy words and actions
- make music, sing and dance
- like stories and books.

What you can do:

Spend time with your gundanoo—play and talk with them.

Yarnin' up (telling stories)

Share your stories and listen to gundanoo's stories. They are learning about you and the world around them.

Learning skills

Gundanoos are learning every day—show them how to put on clothes the right way, do up and undo buttons and zips. Try lacing up shoes and tying bows. Let them have a try at doing some of the things you do and encourage them when they have a go. Let them help with getting a feed.

Camping out

Make a fire together and cook Johnny Cakes. Fish for boogalies and yellowbelly. Cook fish on wire netting, on hot coals or coat fish in mud and cover in hot ash (it is ready when the mud cracks). Between March and August, point out the emu constellation in the Milky Way. This is when emus are laying and chicks are running around.



It's important that we keep our gundanoo safe. Make sure you know where they are and that there is always someone looking after them.

Learning about feelings

If your gundanoo is upset, angry or fighting with another child the best thing you can do is distract them. Take them away and do something else like reading a book or playing a chasing game. Help them understand their feelings. For example: say “you are really angry but you must not hit your brother”.

Chuckin’ a mickie

Little tantrums are best ignored. Make sure you notice and talk to your gundanoo when they stop their tantrum. Sometimes feelings get more and more out of control until you end up with a big tantrum. Try to step in before the tantrum gets out of control. Distract your gundanoo, help them relax and talk about why they are upset.

- It never helps to punish or hit a child when they are having a tantrum.
- Never use ‘put-downs’, bad names or swear at gundanoo.
- If you start to feel angry, WALK AWAY until you calm down.

Playtime with gundanoos 2¹/₂-3¹/₂ years

Making music

Gundanoos can have lots of fun with home made instruments. Make clapping sticks from pieces of wood. Fill a tin or plastic container with rice or stones to shake. Nail bottle tops to a stick that you can rattle. Put paper over the top of a tin to make a drum. Don't be shy. Get up and dance with your gundanoos.

Painting

Paint with fingers, brushes, sponges, toothbrushes onto just about anything—paper, cloth, newspaper, wood, paper bags and plates, bark, rope. Do it outside because it will be messy. Children also love to paint with water—give them a brush and let them paint the outside doors, windows and walls.

Making a feed (cooking)

3-year-olds usually love cooking. Start with simple things like a Vegemite sandwich, pouring drinks, damper, biscuits and popcorn. Be very careful with things that are hot or sharp.

Collage

Cardboard, coloured paper, straws, string, leaves, wool, egg shells, sand and bark can all be used to make a collage. Stick on the materials using glue and see what interesting pictures you can make. Flour and water mixed together makes a good glue.



Your gundanoo

3¹/₂-5 years

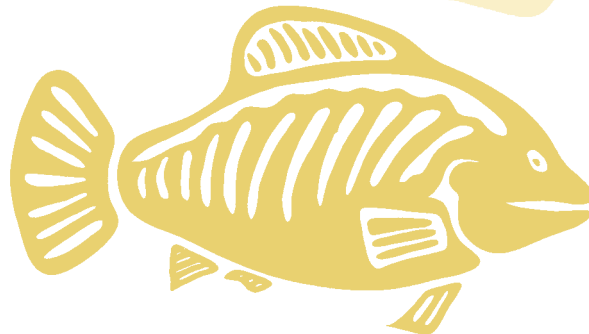
Gundanoos are learning so much—talking, playing, getting along with others, sharing and taking turns.

Gundanoos are more independent but they still need an adult around to care for them and keep them safe.

Gundanoos can understand problems, follow simple rules and will enjoy helping you. They will show affection and understand when someone has been hurt.

Pre-School

This is a good age for your gundanoo to attend pre-school as it helps them get ready for school.



Between 3½ and 5
your gundanoo will:

- have a longer attention span
- ask a lot of questions
- use words together to make sentences
- run smoothly and easily
- dress without help
- use paste, scissors, pencils and crayons
- climb ladders and trees
- tell stories
- sing and dance
- enjoy playing with other children
- enjoy jokes and rhymes.

If your gundanoo is not talking much, they may need their ears 'checked' by a nurse or doctor.



What you can do:

Proud Aboriginals

Gundanoos need to know they are loved. Even when they are naughty tell them: “I don’t like it when you do something wrong BUT I always love you.”

Let’s teach gundanoos to be proud of who they are and let them know they belong to one of the oldest surviving cultures in the world.

That’s deadly!

Gundanoos need to be told when they are doing the right thing. Let them know when they do something good. Tell them how deadly they are.

Read books together, tell stories and sing songs.

At this age, gundanoos love to tell stories and you can help them to make their own books. Let them draw the pictures and paste or staple the pages together.

Housework can be fun and children can learn skills by helping you—get them to help you with cooking, bringing in the washing or sweeping the floor.



Encourage gundanoo to help you and make it fun.

Games with gundanoos 3¹/₂-5 years

Masks

Paper bags or paper plates make great masks. Gundanoos can cut out the shapes for eyes, nose and mouth and decorate the mask with crayons or paint. Make masks for different characters or animals.

Gamin'

Gundanoos love to pretend—they can be wild animals, superheroes and fairies. These pretend games and stories help them learn and grow and are an important part of being a healthy gundanoo.

Growing tucker

If you have space for a vegetable garden you can grow simple foods like carrots, potatoes, beans and tomatoes. It's fun to plant and grow and makes eating healthy food fun too. You can also try growing flowers and sprouting seeds for salad.





Games with gundanoos 3¹/₂-5 years

Sorting

Gundanoos at this age love to sort things into different groups. Try using coloured pegs, stones, shells, pasta, big buttons or food. Sort the pegs by colour, shells by size, buttons by shape or whatever way you decide. Pasta, shells and buttons can also be threaded onto string to make necklaces.

Going bush (bushwalking)

By this age you can take gundanoos on walks in the park or bush. Tell them stories about animals or birds or tales from the 'old days'.

Look for animal tracks. Show them the local area and tell gundanoos stories about people and places. Try to find some bush tucker such as snotty gobblers, bush spinach, naipan and quandongs. Look at the trees. Point out any scar trees. Listen for birds—maybe message birds.



Good tucker for birrali

Birrali need good food to grow healthy and strong.

Breast milk or formula is the most important food for birrali until they are 12 months.

When should I start feeding my birrali solids?

Around 6 months is the best time to start birrali on solid food.

Introducing solids too early can increase the risk of food allergies and choking.



What solids should I feed my birrali?

Birrali needs well mashed food. Start by mixing birrali rice cereal or mashed potato with breast milk or formula to make a smooth paste.

Then try mashed vegies—potato, pumpkin, carrots, peas and sweet potato.

Get birrali used to vegies and then try mashed fruit—ripe bananas, well cooked apples and pears.

Do not give adult or kids' breakfast cereals to birrali—these are harder to digest.

How much should I feed my birrali?

Start with a teaspoon and increase the amount slowly to a few tablespoons. The cereal or potato can be thickened as birrali eats more.

Birrali is learning how to eat so don't worry if birrali doesn't eat much at first.

Give birrali a breast milk or formula feed before solids.

Avoid pieces of raw vegetables or hard fruit as these can make birrali choke.

Good tucker for birrali 6-9 months

Start with rice cereal, mashed vegies and fruit.

Then try small servings of:

- rice and pasta
- tender well cooked meat
- fish without bones
- well cooked egg.

Birrali can start to drink from a cup with a lid.

Try boiled water that has been cooled, formula or breast milk.

As birrali gets used to eating solids, you can start to give solids first and then milk.

Make sure birrali's food is not too hot.

Test it on your own lips first.



Good tucker for birrali 9-12 months

Birrali can now eat mashed food from the family meal—meat, pasta, fish, beans, rice, noodles, vegies and fruit are all good foods for birrali and gundanoo.

Finger food will help birrali learn how to feed themselves.

Try:

- boiled pieces of carrot, potato and pumpkin
- ripe banana or pear
- cheese
- stewed or grated apple.

Don't add salt or sugar to birrali's food.

Birrali will still need 3-4 breastfeeds or bottles per day.

**Try to cook one meal for birrali every day.
Take-away is not a healthy food for birrali.**

Good tucker for birrali/gundanoos 12 months to 5 years

Birrali need a good mix of healthy fresh food.

Feed your birrali fresh fruit and vegies, meat, fish, eggs, beans, wholegrain bread, pasta and rice.

Meals made at home are cheaper and healthier.

Put limits on take-away meals and junk food like sweets, chips and soft drinks.

Drinks

The best drinks for birrali are breast milk, formula or water.

Cows milk is too strong for birrali to drink before they are 12 months old.

Do not give fizzy drinks or soft drinks to birrali.

Cordial and soft drinks are full of sugar and can cause weight gain and tooth decay.

Cola and other soft drinks also contain caffeine, which can make birrali hyper.

Encourage birrali to drink water or mix fruit juice with water.

Storing food

You can save time by cooking up a large amount of food for birrali and storing it.

Mashed baby food can be frozen in clean ice cube trays. Spoon it into the tray, put the tray in a clean plastic bag and freeze. Do not keep for more than 30 days.

You can reheat one or two ice cubes as you need them.

Once food has been warmed and given to birrali, throw out any left in the bowl.

Body parts:

MURRWARRI

Baby	Pipi
Child	Gundanoo/Kuthara
Hair	Pampu
Head	Pampu
Eye	Miil
Nose	Nguru
Tongue	Thalanj
Ear	Pina
Shoulder	Pangkal
Arm	Piki
Hand	Mara
Fingers	Thana
Chest	Thali
Legs	Thuntu (lower leg)
Knee	Thinkal
Ankle	Parranggal
Feet	Thina

YUWAALARAAY

Baby	Birrali
Child	Birrali-djuul
Hair	Balandharr
Head	Dhaygal
Eye	Mil
Nose	Muyu
Tongue	Dhalay
Ear	Bina
Shoulder	Walarr walarr
Arm	Bungun
Hand	Maa
Finger	Maa
Chest	Bii
Legs	Buyu
Knee	Dhinbirr
Ankle	Ngawurr
Feet	Dhina

Songs

Wombat Wobble by Johnny Huckle

(Make actions of each animal)

Do the Didgeridoo
And the wombat wobble
And the kangaroo
And the emu too
Jump in the air and turn around
And say to Mum & Dad and all your friends
in a big love heart
I love you!

Do the crocodile snap
And the cockatoo flap
And the penguin walk
And the little seal clap
Jump in the air and turn around
And say to Mum & Dad and all your friends
in a big love heart
I love you!

(Repeat as many times as you like;
sing it fast, slow, silly...)

Dhaygal, walarr (*Head, shoulders*)

Dhaygal, walarr, dhinbirr, dhina
Head, shoulders, knees, toes
Dhinbirr, dhina
Knees, toes
Dhaygal, walarr, dhinbirr, dhina
Head, shoulders, knees, toes
Dhinbirr, dhina
Knees, toes

Ngay mil, ngay bina, ngay ngaay, ngay muyu
My eye, my ears, my mouth, my nose
Dhaygal, walarr, dhinbirr, dhina
Head, shoulders, knees, toes
Dhinbirr, dhina
Knees, toes

Songs

Johnny Cakes & Googars

Down by the river where the green grass grows
Sits little (*insert your child's name here*) washing his/her clothes.
He/She sings, she sings a song so sweet
As she calls to her play mates up and down the street.
(*insert another child's name x 2*) won't you come to tea,
Come next Saturday at half past three.
Johnny cakes and Googars for you and me.
Won't we have a lovely time at half past three.



Contacts and support

Local Services

Goodooga Health Service	02 6829 6311
Goodoodooga Preschool	02 6829 6260
Goodooga Central School (Dhiyan Guumali Program offers play group, parenting programs, information, connections to services)	02 6829 6257
Lightning Ridge Community Health (Child & Family Health Nurse)	02 6829 9900
Brighter Futures (Mission Australia) (Support parents with voluntary parenting programs)	02 6829 4352
Reach (0-5) (Deliver therapist programs to 0-5 year olds)	02 6829 4736
Aboriginal Home Care (Lighting Ridge)	02 6829 0281
Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service	02 6828 1611
Aboriginal Legal Service Walgett Office	02 6828 2039
Goonimoo Mobile Play Group	02 6828 3369
Brewarrina Mobile Children's Service	02 6839 2555

Contacts and support

Helpline & Information Services

Parent Line	1300 130 052
Karitane Care Line	1300 227 464
Breastfeeding Helpline	1800 686 268
Tresillian Parent Helpline	1800 637 357
Kids Helpline	1800 55 1800
Early Childhood Intervention Info Line	1300 656 865
Women's Information & Referral	1800 817 227
Royal Far West	1800 500 061
Child Protection Helpline	132 111
Domestic Violence Line	1800 656 463
NSW Rape Crisis Centre	1800 424 017
Indigenous Victims Contact Line	1800 019 123
Homeless Person's Line	1800 234 566
Legal Aid Law Access of NSW	1300 888 529

Websites for parenting information:

www.community.nsw.gov.au

www.raisingchildren.net.au

www.families.nsw.gov.au

