Little Ducks Childcare

Bardon Newsletter

May / June 2022

News & Features

From your Centre Manager

Page 1

Educator information & recommended reading / blogs

Page 2

From the classroom & Reconciliation Action Plan Update

Page 3-5

Physical Skills, Health and Safety & Book of the month!

Page 6

Centre Events, Policy Review & Sustainability

Page 7

Healthy Habits

Page 8

From your Centre Manager

Welcome back to the May/June edition of the newsletter!

For those of you who are new to our service, we wish you a warm welcome to our Little Ducks Bardon Community.

Last month our team of Educators participated in Professional Development on the Australian Abecedarian Approach. The Abecedarian Approach place priority on language acquisition and is supported by evidence-based research and has been proven to provide a positive increase in outcomes for children who have been part of this approach to children's learning. The Abecedarian Approach acknowledges the importance of purposeful, intentional, positive, individual interactions between children and adults and guides these interactions through intentional strategies around Enriched Caregiving, Conversational Reading and specific Learning Games. Over the next term, our team of Educators will be focussing on embedding Enriched Caregiving.

What is Enriched Caregiving? Enriched Caregiving focusses on intentional and frequent individual interactions with children. Through training and reflection our educators recognise that moments of learning can happen organically at any point throughout the day whether this be during routine tasks such as nappy changes, intentional teaching, or spontaneous play. Enriched Caregiving highlights the importance of having a genuine interest in what each child is doing, their interests and connecting in that moment using rich language and emotions. Through this approach your relationship with a child is strengthened.

What does enriched Caregiving look like? This approach aligns with our Centre Philosophy and the National Quality Standards beautifully as we value the importance of relationships with children and acknowledge how their sense of belonging can promote positive dispositions for life-long learning. Enriched Caregiving can be not only used within an early learning environment but also at home. Each routine or activity throughout the day can include care, emotion and learning and you are probably implementing some components of enriched caregiving already. Some examples of enriched caregiving can include discussing feeling and opinions, explaining steps in a process or routine, acknowledging children's choices, discussing different concepts relating to a task or activity. During interactions, you can discuss a variety of different concepts to support children's learning such as colours, shapes, emotions, cooperation, counting or rhyming just to name a few.



Through critical reflection and training our educators recognize the impact on children's development and wellbeing, positive interactions can make. We welcome continuous feedback and look forward to collaborating with you to best support children's learning outcomes!

Education Information

Last month, all educators across the company were trained in the Abecedarian Approach Australia. The Abecedarian Approach Australia theory is commonly referred to as 3a.

3a, the Abecedarian Approach Australia, is a set of evidence-based teaching and learning strategies that have been proven to maximise children's learning outcomes by enriching and enhancing educator practice.

The approach consists of only four elements, each which specifically promote intentional and meaningful adult-child interactions, and there are some great parent resources available that will help you be able to continue these high quality interactions in the home environment:

Language Priority: a commitment to make every experience an opportunity for talking, listening, and learning language
https://education.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/3545335/3A-Language-Priority-Booklet.pdf

Learning Games: 200 experiences or games played between an adult and one or two children
https://education.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/3545332/3A-LearningGames-Booklet.pdf

Conversational Reading: individual and pair reading that emphasises back and forth communication
https://education.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/3545331/3A-Conversational-Reading-Booklet.pdf

Enriched Caregiving: intentionally adding educational content to the daily, repeated routines of care
https://education.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/3545330/3A-Enriched-Care-Booklet.pdf



3*a* Family Booklets are aimed at parents, carers and families and provide an easy to understand introduction to using 3*a* strategies.

Educator Spotlight



Educator Spotlight

Miss Sascha is our amazing Kindergarten Teacher who runs our approved Kindy Program.

This month Miss Sascha finally got to attend her University Graduation for completing her Bachelor of Early Childhood Education, what an amazing achievement! Miss Sascha has a passion for play-based learning and brings creativity, inspiration, and a whole lot of fun to her classroom. Next time you visit the Centre please pop into our Kindergarten Room and say Hello!

Recommended readings / Blogs

Janet Lansbury
Unruffled Podcast

"Unruffled is the podcast I wish I had had when my kids were toddlers. Janet Lansbury is a parenting expert and the author of two books on babies and toddlers, and her soothing, reassuring advice makes you feel as if you really can be a calm, confident parent even in the face of toddler meltdowns and defiance.

Lansbury's approach focuses on respect for the child and acceptance of her emotions and development, but allows for firm parental limits as needed (for example, when a toddler is a hitter, Lansbury explains how to respectfully set a limit on this behaviour). Unruffled offers extremely practical and specific advice for common parenting situations."

Nursery learning





The babies have been showing interest in books and pulling themselves up to a standing position. To further the children's interest in standing we have been positioning animals, balls and shakers where they need to move their bodies to reach. To further the babies interest in books we have enjoyed small group times looking at the pictures and identifying by word and sound what it is. The babies have enjoyed looking at simple board books and extending on this with rhymes and puppets.

Reading books aloud to children stimulates their imagination and expands their understanding of the world. It helps them develop language and listening skills and prepares them to understand the written word . Reading aloud is an important pre literacy experience. Reading is also an important part of the Abecedarian Approach that we are currently embedding into the centre. One strategy in this approach is conversational reading. Conversational reading is when we explore books following the child's lead - creating back and forth conversation, intentionally creating connections with the child and using the 3C's strategy—See, Show, Say as we read together. We ask the child what they can *See*, ask them to *show* (point) it to us then ask them to *say* what it is. A very simple strategy to encourage connection and a love a reading.

Senior Nursery learning

These last few months in Senior Nursery we have been setting up activities based on the children's interest along with some community events and expanding on their problem-solving abilities.

Problem-solving skills build upon how children sense, think, and understand the world around them, making them vital for early childhood development. By being active participants in exploration, children learn to make connections they can apply to other areas of life through new experiences.

Curiosity and play-based activities come naturally to children, and you can encourage them to develop problem-solving skills by showing them exercises and activities that will inspire them to think creatively and critically.
Offering the children new and different opportunities, that involve open ended resources can help build the children's confidence, as they explore and create their own understanding of the items. They are also building their persistence skills, as they continue to explore the variety of play styles available to them through these resources.

Keeping this in mind, our Educators have set up a wide variety of play options including natural resources, such as leaves, flowers and twigs, to pompoms, containers and large tweezers. They were also offered the opportunity to explore a hide and seek style activity around Easter, to find some eggs within shredded paper, and encouraged to try and open the eggs to find the toy inside.
Within these play opportunities the children were supported by the educators, asking questions and making suggestions to assist the children within their journey.





Toddler learning





All the toddlers have been having a wonderful time in here with all their friends and educators learning new skills, strengthening their friendships, having fun and engaging in meaningful activities about their interests, individual goals, abilities and needs.

Nature play is any activity that gets children active or thinking actively outdoors, with the end goal of building skills and ability to play without the need for parental or adult control. We are focussing on nature play every day in the toddler room as it is playing a particularly important part of a child's development. Spending time in nature is essential for cognitive development as well as it stimulates creativity and critical thinking skills integral to executive function development, supply an opportunity to explore, discover and appreciate the natural world, as well as be active, strengthen fine and gross motor skills. A few times we encouraged the toddlers to go outside and collect the things that they found from the big yard. That was an amazing experience for them all as they collected leaves, twigs, feathers, rocks, sand, bark, and flowers. They then used them for collage activities. Another time we spent the time outside to listen to the nature. They found different bird tweeting sounds, clouds moving in the sky, wind blowing around and trees and leaves moving from the wind. Most of the time when raining the toddlers are having opportunity to go outside to touch and feel rain. These were all the activities to help children connect with the nature and induce open their curious mind to think about cause and effects, critical thinking skills.

The children have been learning about sustainability. Lots of creative activities were done by the toddlers with recyclable and natural resources that supported children to have an understanding and respect for the environment, promote a sense of responsibility, be active participants and bring enquiry and social change.

We are looking forward to doing many meaningful and fun filled activities with our little toddlers in the coming months.

Junior Kindy learning

The weeks are flying by at the moment, and it's hard to believe that we're nearly halfway through Term 2. It's been wonderful to watch how well the children have made friendships and how well they play together. Gardening in Junior kindy is embedded in our program, and it has become an essential part of our daily routine. We enjoy spending time in the garden growing herbs and flowers and using this space to take a deep breath and relax away from the business of the room. The children are always pleased to see our garden flourish, which instils a feeling of responsibility and respect. In addition to our garden, we have created a compost bin, and we utilise this as a soil fertiliser. The children have been finding these experiences both calming and enjoyable.



Children of all ages can benefit from gardening as it provides them with an excellent opportunity to learn. It teaches them valuable skills to apply to other aspects of their lives.



Children can improve all their senses by gardening as they touch the dirt, flowers, leaves, and seeds. They can see the bright colours and sizes of the plants. They can hear the leaves rustling and the sound of picking herbs and flowers. They can smell the fresh flowers and herbs. The best part is that they can eat the fruits of their hard work. By using all five senses, gardening can help children learn more about growing food and where it comes from.

Numerous aspects of gardening introduce children to basic science and math principles. Counting seeds, gauging soil depth, and counting petals/leaves are examples of math ideas. We have been learning about the sprouting process with our broad bean experiments and learning how plants require sunlight and water for growth are examples of scientific ideas.



We will be replanting some of our garden beds in the next few months and would love some feedback on what we can grow in winter. If you have some old pots that you are throwing away, we would love them; we love recycling in Junior Kindy.

Kindergarten learning

This term in Kindy we have been participating in Raw Art, an amazing incursion where the children are able to create amazing artworks every Thursday. The children have been enjoying their visits from the lovely Miss Katie and so far we have created a door hanger, a seascape and last week the children created peacocks out of clay. Every week the Kindy children are offered the chance to work in a new medium; such as painting with brushes, sponges, gluing and moulding clay, and Miss Katie walks them through the different steps until we are left with the final work.

The art projects the children create are simultaneously complex and simple, challenging the children operate within their zone of proximal development and experiment with unfamiliar mediums but the creation process itself is broken down into very simple steps which the children are able to easily follow and complete. The children spend an hour focusing on creating their artworks, ensuring that everything was finished to their liking before moving to the next step. Art can be a therapeutic process for children as it allows them to shut out the hustle and bustle of the outside world and instead focus all their energy on creating their work of art. Last week when the children were creating peacocks there was a moment while they were using a sponge to apply the purple paint where everyone was silent. The children weren't worried about what the person next to them was doing or copying the person across from them. They were entirely focused and concentrated on their individual creative journey.

Artistic experiences, such as Raw Art, allows the children to further develop their fine motor skills through holding paintbrushes, applying glue using match sticks, using a pen or pencil. The children must work on engaging their fine motor muscles and develop their pincer grip to be able to successfully hold and manipulate the artistic tools they use when creating their works of art. The children are also offered the opportunity to engage in sensory play. The different mediums they use and the tools offer different sensory experiences for the children. There were different textures of paper for the children to touch and they would comment to Miss Katie, myself and each other how this paper felt rough or smooth or shiny. They talked about how the clay felt soft and sticky in some parts by hard and rough in others. When painting with sponges they compared the feeling of this sponge to other textures which were similar, "This is softer than my kitchen sponge at home".

The children are looking forward to exploring different creative processes over the next term. Next time you're in the Kindy room make sure to stop by our art area and check out our Raw Art Creations.









Reconciliation Action Plan

Over the past month our Educators have been looking into making community connections with our local Indigenous Community. Miss Trudy, Miss Sascha and Mr Tyler attended a Webinar and Networking Meeting which looked at embedding practices at a curriculum level, operational level and at a community outreach level. We can't wait to see these practices embedding in preparation for NAIDOC week at the end of this month.

Physical skills development

Chalk Obstacle Course

You will need chalk and a safe cement space (driveway, path).

Make a **start point** and work your way around your driveway (or wherever you are making the obstacle course) by drawing different activities. Include many different tasks such as *dancing, jumping, hopping, turning around, jumping on 1 foot, clapping, going backwards,* etc. You could even include rocks or other objects and create a task around it. It's a good idea to squeeze in some "break" activities such as *make a wish, give high five to the sky, say your name, empty your pockets, etc.* It makes the obstacle course more fun.

Source: playtivities.com/sidewalk-obstacle-course/

Health & Safety

Poisoning

In 2014/15, four Australian children aged 0-14 years died due to poisoning.

MOST ACCIDENTAL POISONINGS OCCUR IN CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE, WITH TODDLERS AT THE GREATEST RISK.

Why children are at risk Most accidental poisonings occur in children under greatest risk. As young children begin to develop skills, like walking and climbing, potentially poisonous products become easier for them to reach. Young children love to explore the world around them and part of this is often putting anything they can get into their mouths. At these ages they are curious, however can't always judge the hazards and are unable to read or understand warnings. They also like to imitate what others do, which can include behaviours like taking medications. Common causes – how and when The majority of hospitalisations due to poisoning in children are from pharmaceuticals. This can include prescription medications, over the counter medications and herbal or traditional products. One of the most common products involved in childhood poisoning is paracetamol, a common painkiller found in most households. Other common causes can include cleaning products, gardening products and plants. Child poisoning can occur at any time, however extra care should be taken during times where these products may be more accessible. For example, medicine may be more accessible when someone is sick or when grandparents who take medicine regularly are visiting, and cleaning products may be more accessible while they are being used.

THE MAJORITY OF CHILD HOSPITALISATIONS DUE TO POISONING ARE FROM PHARMACEUTICALS.

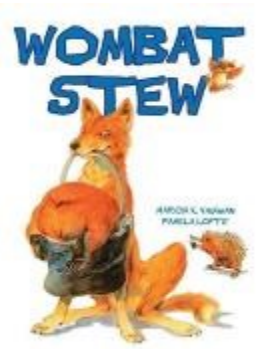


Book of the month!

This month we wanted to choose a great classic Australian book that our Little Ducks love, so we put it out to our teams for a vote.

The winner was … Wombat Stew.

One day, on the banks of a billabong, a very clever dingo caught a wombat... and decided to make...
Wombat stew,
Wombat stew,
Gooey, brewy,
Yummy, chewy,
Wombat stew!



One day, on the banks of a billabong, a very clever dingo caught a wombat and decided to make a gooey, brewy, yummy, chewy wombat stew! In this classic Australian picture book, a dingo catches a wombat and wants to cook him in a stew. But the other bush animals have a plan to save their friend. They trick the dingo into using mud, feathers, flies, bugs and gumnuts in his stew, and the result is something the dingo will never forget!

About the Author

Marcia Vaughan was born in the USA but lived in New Zealand's Cook Islands for a year before coming to Australia, where she worked as a school librarian. It was here that she began writing and being published. She wrote more than 85 well reviewed books, including fun activity and recipe books, and many in reader series such as Jellybean Readers, Celebrate Reading, Voyager and Literacy Links.

Centre Events

May



Sunday 8th – Mother's Day

Sunday 15th – 21st – National Families Week



Wednesday 25th –

National Simultaneous Storytime



Thursday 26th – National Sorry Day

Friday 27th – 3rd June – Reconciliation Week

Friday 27th – Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

Monday 30th – National Reconciliation Day

June

Thursday 2nd – Mabo Day

Sunday 5th – World Environment Day

Wednesday 8th – World Ocean Day



Tuesday 21st – International Day of Yoga

Policy review

May

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
Handwashing
Immunisation
Infectious disease



June

Emergency Lockdown
Emergency and Evacuation

Ways that you can provide feedback are:

- In person, or over the phone
- As a reply to an email
- On Storypark

Sustainability



How to Compost with Kids Children will get more from the experience if they have their own compost container. A garbage can or plastic bin that is at least 3 feet (1 m.) tall and 3 feet (1 m.) wide is large enough to make compost. Drill 20 to 30 large holes in the lid and in the bottom and sides of the container to allow air in and let excess water drain through. A good compost recipe includes three types of ingredients: Dead plant material from the garden, including dry leaves, twigs, and sticks. Household waste, including vegetable scraps, shredded newspaper, tea bags, coffee grounds, eggshells, etc. Don't use meat, fat, or dairy products or pet waste. A layer of soil adds earthworms and microorganisms that are necessary to break down the other materials. Add water now and then, and stir the container weekly with a shovel or large stick. Compost can be heavy, so little ones may need help with this.

Read more at Gardening Know How: Composting Ideas For Children: How To Compost With Kids

https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/special/children/composting-ideas-for-kids.htm

Healthy Habits

Building a healthy and balanced diet



Eating a variety of foods keeps our meals interesting and flavorful. It's also the key to a healthy and balanced diet because each food has a unique mix of nutrients—both mac-ronutrients (carbohydrate, protein, and fat) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). The Kid's Healthy Eating Plate provides a blueprint to help us make the best eating choices.

Along with filling half of our plate with colourful vegeta-bles and fruits (and choosing them as snacks), split the other half between whole grains and healthy protein.

Recipe

BANANA BLUEBERRY CINNAMON CRUNCH COOKIES



1 cup (160 grams) **mashed bananas** (approx. 3 bananas)

2 cups (240 grams) **almond meal** (ground almonds)

1/3 cup (80 ml) **pure maple syrup**

1 teaspoon **vanilla bean paste** (or extract)

pinch of **salt**

3/4 cup (75 grams) **blueberries** (fresh or frozen)

1 teaspoon **cinnamon**

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Line a cookie tray with baking paper and set aside.

Place the mashed bananas, almond meal, maple syrup, vanilla, cinnamon and salt into a large bowl and mix thor-oughly to combine.

Gently fold through the blueberries.

Take heaped tablespoons of the mixture and shape into cookies. Arrange cookies on prepared tray and flatten slight-ly.

In a small bowl, place the cinnamon and sugar and mix to combine.

Sprinkle the top of each cookie with a little cinnamon sugar.

Bake for 14-16 minutes or until golden. Allow the cookies to cool completely on the tray. Enjoy x