Little Ducks Childcare New Farm Newsletter

May / June 2022

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From your Centre Manager

At Little Ducks New Farm we are excited to announce a new initiative we have begun to embed into our service. As a Centre Manager I have searched for many years to find a philosophy that could be embedded across the service providing a consistent set of strategies, beliefs and language that educators could use in their pedagogy and interactions with children and finally have found it in The Abecedarian Approach Australia.

Abecedarian Approach or 3A's is one of the few evidence-based, proven programs that integrates basic principles of human learning and development into a fun, affordable, and effective approach to early childhood education. Evidence shows that outcomes for children are significantly improved when this approach is followed particularly in the ages of 6 weeks to 3 years. Studies measured improvements in Social and emotional outcomes and IQ with improved outcomes evident from 18 months to adulthood.

The intention of the 3A's is a broad spectrum educational approach, because much of the day for children under 3 years of age includes eating, dressing, exploration, play, and dynamic interactions with adults. The Approach emphasizes the role of young children as active learners and the value of response-contingent feedback from the environment. Abecedarian Approach can be found in Education Information in this newsletter.

As we embed this approach with our educators we will also be providing information for families and our community on how to follow the approach in all interactions with children and the benefits of this approach. As we often talk about—it takes a Village to raise a child and we are excited to share on our knowledge to our families giving them the opportunity to also explore this proven approach.



Michele

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

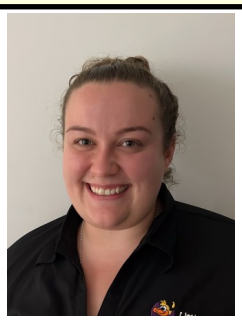
Conversational Reading: individual and pair reading that emphasises back and forth communication
https://education.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/3545331/3A-Conversational-Reading-Booklet.pdf

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

HI, I'm Hannah. I'm the Assistant Centre Manager at Little Ducks Childcare New Farm. I have been working in Early Education for 6 years with 3 years of that in Melbourne until December last year. I love getting to know people and love a good chat, whatever it may be.
I look forward to meeting those of you I haven't yet. Feel free to come and see me for a chat .

Recommended readings / Blogs

Janet Lansbury
Unruffled Podcast

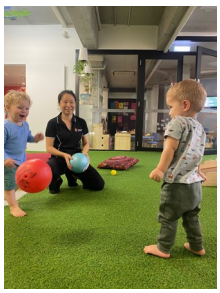
"Unruffled is the podcast I wish I had had when my kids were toddlers. Janet Lansbury is a parenting expert and the author of two books on babies and toddlers, and her soothing, reassuring advice makes you feel as if you really can be a calm, confident parent even in the face of toddler meltdowns and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







Over the past couple of weeks in the Nursery space, we have been settling in and creating a sense of belonging within our learning environments. Creating an environment in our nursery space that is inviting, calm and welcoming is an important structure in our nursery routines as it creates an environment for our babies to feel settled, relaxed and a sense of belonging.

Babies develop their first attachments with family first – mum, dad, siblings and their primary caregivers. With time, babies begin to become attached to other familiar caregivers such as their educators in their learning environments. When babies begin to feel comfortable and a sense of belonging, you will see your baby:

- Smile, make eye contact, cry and gesture
- Be playful with other babies
- Look for familiar adults and children and want to be close to them.

At Little Ducks we value our stay and play visits to help create a sense of belonging with children and then continue to build positive relationships to build connections and the child's sense of belonging.

Senior Nursery learning

Our focus in Snr Nursery over the past few month was to refine our fine motor skills by providing interesting resources each day to strengthen their little fingers.

Fine Motor Skills involve the small muscles of the body that enable functions such as grasping small objects, feeding ourselves, holding things and fastening clothing. They involve a combination of strength and fine motor control. When a child develops their fine motor skills, they're also mastering their coordination and leading to bigger accomplishments like playing a musical instrument.

The children have participated in activities like:

Painting using pegs, branches and popsicles, practising scooping and pouring pom poms or rice using resources like spoons and lids, Learning to stack blocks and wooden rings, colouring, gluing and sticking activities to boost their confidence.

You can encourage your toddler to participate in fine motor activities to strengthen their little fingers and develop hand-eye coordination at home by:

Pinching pegs onto a basket, Wrap rubber bands around a can, Gardening and planting, Stacking paper cups and playdough which really gives the fingers a workout!







Toddler learning







These past few weeks in Toddlers we have introduced a Book of the Week as part of our program. Each week, Miss Lainey or I choose a book with the children that we read on the following Monday and then revisit again throughout the week. Our selections will often be based on what the children are learning about or showing interest in at the time.

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.

Junior Kindy learning

Here in Junior Kindy we have been focusing on and exploring inquiry-based play, inquiry-based play is the exploration of concepts and ideas through scientific based learning. This allows the children to develop their ability to investigate, research, experiment, hypothesise and problem solve - these are skills that the children will continue to use as they progress through their stages of development throughout their schooling Journey. These skills and the exploration of inquiry based play link to the cognitive development.

Throughout our exploration we have explored an array of different inquiry based experiments such as exploring the concepts of float or sink, magnetic forces, exploring the S.T.E.A.M Optics module which had the children investigating colour and light and providing the children opportunities to investigate aspects of their natural and man-made world.

Inquiry based play encourages the development of curiosity and a love of learning, skills that are important to encourage them to continue to grow and learn throughout their lifetime.







Kindergarten learning

Similarly to our Snr Nursery peers, In Kindergarten, the children have been busy practicing and developing their fine motor skills through various experiences. By developing these skills children are able to access so many more things and increase their confidence and independence. The more I stimulate these skills in children, the more children feel that they have power over their surroundings, the more they grow in confidence. When children interact with fine motor games and experiences, they are continually improving the link between what their eyes see, and what they are trying to hold and touch. This is evident when they can carry out a task independently, children are acutely aware of this. For example, children are delighted when they can make a tall tower out of building blocks. They are ecstatic when they fill a geoboard with elastic bands.



Dressing by themselves is a state of mind for many children in the dress up area. There is a huge amount of finger strength and fine motor development that goes on during the dressing process. There is twisting, lifting, zipping, buttoning, and all sorts of manipulative skills. When they rely on adults less, the more self-assured they get.



Speech and language is powerfully linked to fine motor skills as well. There is a lot of research that demonstrates the key link between communication and fine motor development. Many speech and language experiences develop the fine motor muscles in the face, lips and tongue. This we practice through making silly rhyming words and sounds of letters. Being able to speak more clearly and be understood better develop more confidence and self-esteem.



Many arts and design based experience have fine motor as a core skill as well. This we provide through art and craft experiences. In these varied ways we have included fine motor skills in all areas of our Kindergarten Program and have seen the benefits in children's increased capacity and confidence—and the children thought they were just playing , we know better !

At Little Ducks Childcare New Farm we have recently, proudly reviewed and published our Reconciliation Action Plan for the third year in a row. It is important that we continue to embed the cultures of our original owners into our program through our displays, our daily acknowledgement of country, our connections with Miss Toni, our aspiring indigenous elder who visits our service regularly as well as celebrating our special days. As we move forward in the year we aim to share knowledge of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture into our everyday practices and care routines with the children.

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

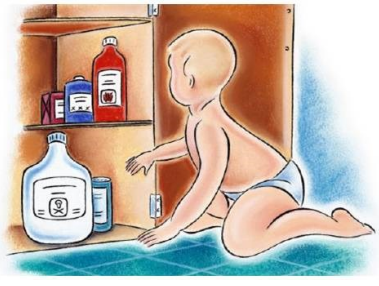
Poisoning

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.

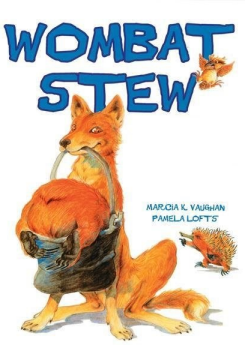


Book of the month!

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 - *join us for afternoon tea to celebrate the special people in the children's lives*

Sunday 15th – 21st – National Families Week - *Families are those that we connect and feel familiar with—we celebrate all versions of family*

Wednesday 25th – National Simultaneous Storytime—*how many people will read together today!*

Thursday 26th – National Sorry Day - *over these two days we will learn more about the original owners of the land we live in!*



Friday 27th – 3rd June – Reconciliation Week

Friday 27th – Australia's Biggest Morning Tea - *our children will prepare and enjoy a special morning tea together to acknowledge the work of the cancer council*

Monday 30th – National Reconciliation Day

June

Thursday 2nd – Mabo Day

Sunday 5th – World Environment Day—*Our Sustainablilty officer will lead the learning and appreciation of the World's environments and what we can do to protect it and be part of a more sustainable future.*



Wednesday 8th – World Ocean Day—*our oceans are an important eco system, know ledge of this importance and what we can do to protect it is an important step for a more sustainable future*

Tuesday 21st – International Day of Yoga

Policy review

May

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
Handwashing
Immunisation
Infectious ydisease



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