Little Ducks Childcare

Wilston Newsletter

May / June 2022

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From your Centre Manager

Can you believe we are already a quarter way through the year? Over the past couple of months we have been focusing on training and implementing the Abecedarian approach into our daily routine and practices.

The Abecedarian approach was led by Craig Ramey and Joseph Sparling and centred on an intervention that involved intensive learning and social-emotional supports – starting in infancy and continuing until at least kindergarten entry – for children and their families.

The project sought to determine whether the provision of theory-based, active learning experiences could produce significant benefits in language and learning for children from highly impoverished, multi-risk families (who were known to be at risk for poor school achievement).

The intervention goals were:

1. to support families, and
2. to improve children's early development and their school achievement.

The broad program included playful interactions, enriched care, and stable relationships among children and adults. Rich language interactions were individualised, frequent and intentional throughout the day, and took place through all the common events of living and caregiving. The intention was to have a broad-spectrum educational approach, because much of the day for children under two years of age included eating, dressing, exploration, play, and dynamic interactions with adults. The Approach emphasised the role of young children as active learners and the value of response-contingent feedback from the environment, and was devised into four key elements:

Language Priority -

Learning Games, Conversational Reading and Enriched Caregiving .Over the next couple of weeks information on the 4 key elements will be sent out for you to read and have a better understanding of the 3A approach. If you would like more information or suggestions on how you can implement these techniques at home please feel free to ask your child's educator or myself for further information.



Enza Carpenzano

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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



This Month we welcomed our Assistant Centre Manager Miss Christy to the team.
Miss Christy has over 14 years experience in the child care industry and prides herself on nurturing and developing children's skills in the early years.
Lets all make her feel welcomed to the Little Ducks family.

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 nursery children have shown an interest in expanding their self-help skills when it comes to feeding time and wanting to use their own spoon/fork to feed themselves. To further this interest, we had various activities set up for the children to enhance these skills. For example, a rice scooping, pouring and transferring activity as well as a water play activity of scooping, pouring and transferring. These two activities catered for each child's interests, as some children weren't interested in the rice, however loved the water and visa versa.

The babies explore their environment showing curiosity and engaging in these certain activities. The children were eager to splash in the water and feel the cool texture of the rice. The children were able to express their ideas whilst being involved in sensory activities.



This links to certain well-known theorists in this field such as, Piaget and Vygotsky, whom have researched the links between learning and play and the significance for children's development. Piaget's main theory was that play should encourage further psychological development as children mature. Furthermore, it is important to be able to understand that the child is an active learning and must be provided with the opportunities to explore, discover, research and experiment within their learning environments.

Senior Nursery learning



In Senior Nursery over the past few months, we have been connecting to our roots by spending time outside, in nature, by playing in our mud kitchen and tending to our garden. Engaging in this unstructured nature play allows the children to confidently explore their world and create their own learning through play. I have seen this as the children have spontaneously added diggers and trucks to the mud kitchen and pots and pans to the garden. Supporting their creativity in this way supports the children to bring new meanings and purposes to different objects, nurturing their natural sense of investigation and curiosity.

After spending lots of time in nature, we decided to invite some other little guests to our garden: bugs! By creating bug hotels and setting up our worm farm, the children have gained an understanding of the interconnectedness of living things and strengthened their natural sense of connectedness to the world around them. The children have achieved this amazing learning simply by playing in the natural world. All of this only illustrates for us how important it is for children to experience *being* in the here and now and feeling that sense of *belonging* to their environment. To put it simply, allowing kids to be kids: by getting all messy, muddy and sticky, they are playing, exploring and learning.





Toddler learning

Toddler learning and development

It's been a busy few months here in the Toddlers studio and already we have shared some amazing experiences and journey together.

The introduction of our quarterly program brought forth the importance of children's goals. Meaningful experiences and planning were the core essentials to ensure best chance for children to be challenged and achieve this in their own way, so naturally or learning was based around what's most important to the children.



We focused on Communication and building the language bridge of emotion, purpose and understanding. Many of our children's language was stimulated and encouraged through songs, story books and our daily group times. The importance our interactions played in supporting children to be confident and engaged learners is evident in our connections and ability to engage our friends. We explored our creativity in many experiences to broaden ways we see literacy, our use of imagination emerging as we dove into re- creating popular story books with animals, visuals, natural and processed materials and our door space. We went on bear hunts and look behind trees for the green sheep all the while banking our new words and sounds to extend our language. This is still on going and remains a favourite of our Toddler friends.

Junior Kindy learning

One of the Early Years Learning Framework outcomes is that 'Children have a strong sense of identity' and this is proven whenever children take a considered risk during play, display being open to new challenges and persist when they engage in challenging activities. During the past few weeks the Junior Kindy children have been engaging in challenging play such as developing their sense of balance as they negotiate the see-saw while standing on it. Some of the children have watched their friends completing this challenge and have decided to try it for themselves (peer scaffolding) thus taking a considered risk during play and exercising their sense of autonomy.





Similarly, while indoors, the children have been learning how to use safety scissors while cutting and while some children have found using scissors to be tricky, they have persevered and have thus acquired a new skill.

3 Photos

Kindergarten learning

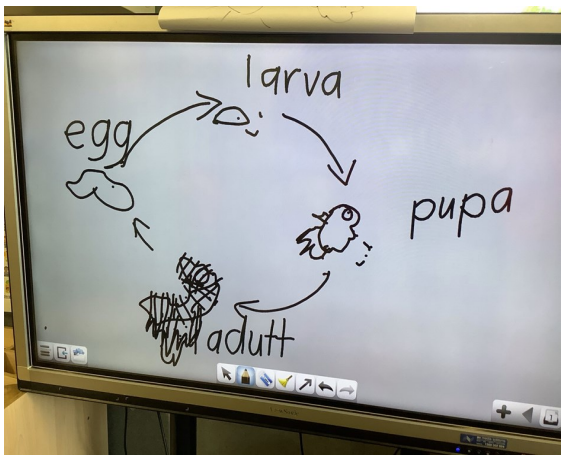
During Term 2 we will be investigating Living Things as part of our STEAM studies. I introduced the children to the concept and symbolism of a lifecycle, using the compost worms as a focus. I modelled how to use the arrows to show the direction of growth. We also discussed vocabulary, like egg, child and adult to describe various stages.

Following a question from the children, we set out to construct the lifecycle of a bee.

The intent of this activity was to determine if the children could transfer their knowledge of a lifecycle to a new animal and expand their internal vocabulary for different life stages. We performed this as a group to give us the opportunity to learn from our peers through discussion and sharing our knowledge.

We watched a short video and I stopped at each stage to ask the children to make observations. We noted that the eggs were an unusual shape, being long and skinny rather than like a chicken egg. Some of the children commented that the larva stage looked like a caterpillar. We noticed that in the pupa stage we could start to see legs and eyes. The video displayed the name for each stage in the lifecycle and I drew the children's attention to each word. Afterwards, we co-constructed the lifecycle by drawing it on the interactive board, including the vocabulary we had learned.

The children demonstrated they could use their prior knowledge of the symbols and concepts of a lifecycle for one animal and transfer that to a new animal (bee). They were able to recall important information from a media source and relate that to the correct stage. Most of the children could recall the vocabulary for the egg and adult phases. A couple of children remembered the new vocabulary for larva and pupa. Oral language is an important part of our early literacy and is addressed in such programs as the 3a Abecedarian approach. It builds inner vocabulary, the capacity for two way communication and the ability to follow simple instructions. It also lays the foundation for reading in later schooling.



To follow from this learning, I plan to create a vocabulary wall, using words and symbols, to help develop our oral language as well as encouraging the use of consistent scientific terms.

Reconciliation Action Plan

Implement a daily Welcome to Country for educators and children and ensure that children and educators not only perform this, but have a true understanding of what this means through consistent reflective discussions.

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

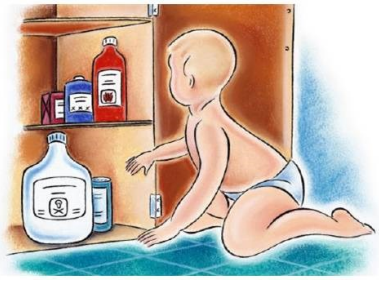
Poisoning

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.

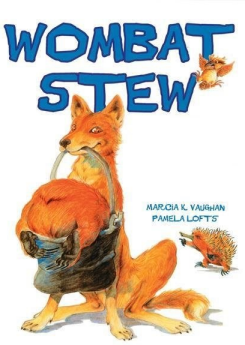


Book of the month!

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

Thursday 26th – National Sorry Day

Friday 27th – 3rd June – Reconciliation Week

Thursday 19th Australia's Biggest Morning Tea.



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