Little Ducks Childcare

Annerley Newsletter

July / August 2022

News & Features

From your Centre Manager

Page 1

Educator information for families & recommended reading / blogs

Page 2

From the classroom & Reconciliation Action Plan Update

Page 3-6

Physical Skills & Play with purpose!

Page 7

Centre Events, Policy Review & Sustainability

Page 8

Family Dinners & Healthy Habits

Page 9

From your Centre Manager

At the end of the last newsletter term, we were beginning to explore our journey through the Abecedarian Approach Australia (3a) and our first focus of Enriched Caregiving. Enriched Caregiving is underpinned by the 3 C's - Care - Connect - Content. It explores how educators provide high quality care to every child in the environment, connect with each child one on one, everyday, and enrich interactions with content to build children's knowledge and skills. It is underpinned by the foundation of relationships, and puts an overarching language priority on all interactions.

Enriched caregiving interactions can happen at any time of the day, but we have been focusing on the interactions during the 'regular routine' times of the day, such as meal times, packing away toys, toileting and nappy changing. Changing these interactions from a 'follow my lead' or surface level questioning that only requires the child to respond with a yes/no answer, to a richer, deeper interaction that prompts children to engage in conversation (whether verbal or non-verbal) builds connection, developing vocabulary and has seen children with language focused term goals work towards reaching their milestones faster.

You can extend on these interactions in the home environment by rethinking some of the questions we all ask and find ourselves asking during our everyday busy lives. Instead of asking "Did you have a good day today?" ask a question that your child cant respond to with a yes/no answer, such as "What happened today that made you smile or laugh?", "Which friends did you play with in the morning?" or "What was your favourite food on the menu today?". These questions will prompt children to stop and think about their day, recall information and respond with a lot more words that a yes or no. Another way you can enrich a routine experience is by giving a child an important role in the routine. An example of this would be cleaning up after a meal. Children assisting with wiping down tables, sweep floors, wash dishes and take out bins. Instead of just giving children these tasks, talk about why they are important, and get them to recall that information back to you at a later date. They will love helping and learning!

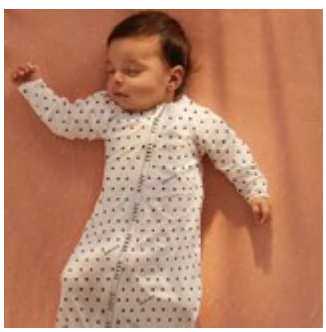
Safe Sleeping

Overheating is one of the major risk factors for SUDI(sudden unexpected death of an infant, previously known as SIDS), but how do you know how much or what sort of bedding to use to keep baby both warm and safer while sleeping?

This information can help.

Key points on how much bedding should be placed on baby in a sleeping environment;

- Dress baby and use layers as you would dress or use layers yourself: to be comfortable, neither too hot nor too cold.
- Research has shown that baby's risk of dying suddenly and unexpectedly is increased if baby is sleeping on the tummy and that risk is even further increased if baby is sleeping on the tummy under heavy bedding or if baby's head becomes covered by bedding in any position. Babies manage heat loss very efficiently when placed on the back to sleep with the head uncovered.
- Sleep baby on the back and keep baby's head uncovered during sleep to reduce baby's risk of sudden unexpected death.
- Make up baby's bed so baby sleeps at the bottom of the cot and the blankets can only reach as far as baby's chest, ensuring baby cannot move down during sleep and get his/her head covered by bedding.
- Consider using a safe baby sleeping bag (one with fitted neck, armholes or sleeves and no hood).
- Dress baby for sleep and add/remove lightweight blankets to ensure baby's back or tummy feels comfortably warm to the touch.
- Remove hats, bonnets, beanies and hooded clothing from baby's head as soon as baby is indoors.



More information can be found at:

https://rednose.org.au/article/bedding-amount-recommended-for-safe-sleep

Educator Spotlight



Miss Erin!

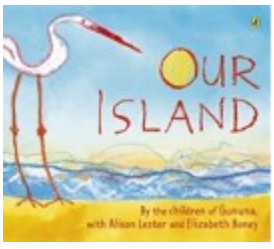
Miss Erin is our Nursery Lead Educator and is such an asset to the Annerley team! Not only is she an amazing educator (and mother), she is also very knowledgeable about babies and their developing brains. She is passionate about the arts, psychology and brain development and if she doesn't know the answer to something, you can be sure that she will find it! Stop by the Nursery and say Hi to Miss Erin.

Recommended readings / Blogs

OUR ISLAND | Children of Gununa, with Alison Lester and Elizabeth Honey

"Our island lies beneath a big blue sky, surrounded by the turquoise sea. Turtles glide through the clear saltwater, and dugongs graze on banks of seagrass."

In this lyrical celebration of place, the children of Mornington Island explore their home in words and pictures.



Nursery learning

In the Nursery our learning focus has centred around emotional wellbeing: learning about feelings and concentrating on building trusting relationships. Building emotional wellbeing helps our children feel safe, happy and supported as they take the first little steps into their learning journey.

Emotional wellbeing is the **developing capacity of children** to: experience, regulate, and express emotion; form close, secure, interpersonal relationships; and explore the environment and learn – all in the cultural context of family and community. Infant mental health awareness week is held in June, and we use it each year to spread awareness, information and support, refamiliarize ourselves with information and explore new findings, and remind ourselves how vital the emotional effects we have on the little ones in our care are, and how we can guide them through the start of this journey, along with the vital importance of the emotional wellbeing of ourselves as parents and carers.

We facilitate this learning this by helping our babies develop the toolbox they need to tackle emotional challenges faced daily, through enriched caregiving, scaffolding, role-modelling, narrating and direct intentional teaching. These intentional teaching experiences and environment design will focus on safe, trusting and reciprocal relationships and bonds with our children, relationships between educators and children, children with their peers, and partnerships with families.

“THE TRUE DIRECTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THINKING IS NOT FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE SOCIAL, BUT FROM THE SOCIAL TO THE INDIVIDUAL”. Lev Vygotsky

Senior Nursery learning

From birth to early childhood, children use their five senses to explore and try to make sense of the world around them. It’s an important part of early childhood development, and providing opportunities for children to actively use their senses as they explore their world through ‘sensory play’ is crucial to brain development. Learning through sensory exploration comes naturally to babies and young children, which makes sense when you consider that the skills they’ll come to rely on to build an understanding of objects, spaces, people and interactions are yet to be fully developed. As adults, our senses provide us with vital information that we use to inform decision making thousands of times a day. We may take this ability for granted and barely notice it, but it’s for this reason that helping children to learn about their own senses is so important.

The Senior Nursery children has been learning more about sensory play over the last few months. These types of play let the children learn more about the feelings of touch within their fingertips but also stimulate their sense of hearing, smell, taste and sight. Sensory play is important for the children since it helps them collect their thoughts and lets the brain create a stronger connection to sensory information.

Sensory play for babies ideas – watching bubbles float and feeling them land on their skin, or scrunching coloured paper to hear the noise, feel the contours and see the shapes change. These simple things can also be done at home. Give them a try!

Toddler learning

With many of the children in the toddler room having language development goals, over the past couple of months there has been a focus on building language rich environments within the toddler room. One of the ways to expose Toddlers to a vast range of language in a play based way is through singing!

Listening to music and singing with young children is not only fun but can play a powerful role in helping to support their early brain and language development. Music introduces children to new words, sound patterns, and more, which helps develop listening and comprehension skills.

Over the past few months we have been singing many songs with many benefits! We have sung 'row, row, row your boat' that teaches us repetition and social interactions, 'where is thumbkin?' that teaches us fine motor skills, 'taba naba' that teaches us respect for cultural diversity, and '5 little ducks' where we are introduced to early numeracy, and fun because we are all Little Ducks!

Through implementing music and singing into our daily routine, we have been able to see the children develop many new words and reach their developmental goals.

Let us know what songs you sing at home and we will add them into our musical rotation and educational curriculum! We look forward to your input and feedback.

Junior Kindy learning

Over the past few months in the Junior Kindy room we have had much focus on helping the children to recognise different emotions and feelings and finding ways in which they can self-regulate. Some of the experiences we have done during this time include songs and stories about emotions, our emotions cards, practicing ways in which we can try to calm ourselves down, eg. Breathing in and out, counting to ten, verbally expressing these feelings/emotions and also looking for why we are feeling this way. We also set up a calm down area in our room where the children can go if they are feeling overwhelmed or need some quiet time.

This is a very important learning unit for children as learning to identify and express feelings in a positive ways helps children to develop the skills they need to manage them effectively. Expanding emotional awareness in Children will nurture the development of their emotional intelligence. This in turn will build their capacity to relate to the world and the people in it with sensitivity, courage and honesty. Emotional intelligence fuels healthy friendships, leads to better decision making, increases the capacity for children to express themselves and have their needs met positively, and contributes to academic success.

Another major focus over the past few months has been building an environment whereby all of our children feel safe, secure and supported. Through this we have been working on building the children's confidence in sharing their own ideas in play and providing opportunities for the to be leaders in their own play concepts.

A child who is comfortable in his or her environment is more likely to participate in learning opportunities and advanced cooperative play, such as working with other to accomplish goals and tasks, role play and games with rules.

Kindy Powai learning

Our classroom has been through a few changes over the past couple of months with my (Miss Sidra's) unplanned absence following her accident, so firstly, we thank you for being so cooperative & understanding. But now that I am back we are getting back into the swing of things as the children have been enthusiastically sharing about what they have been doing & what they would like to do in term 3.

QKLG: Identity: Acting with independence and perseverance
EYLF: Children have a strong sense of identity
Our focus has been on 'self-help' skills which is an essential part of having a sense of accomplishment for our young learners and as per the Kindergarten's curriculum that is a skill that is highly valued. Self help skills includes (but it not limited to) looking after our own belongings (hats, jumpers, water bottles, making their own beds & putting it away, toileting, helping themselves at meal times and looking after the resources in their environment. This means that Powai children are being empowered to also look out for their room's and peer's resources and help each other building solid foundations as 'community of learners'.

"The theoretical approaches of Piaget, Dewey, and Erikson supports age appropriate self-help skills. Establishment of adaptive skills, such as dressing, feeding, or personal hygiene, comprises a large part of the young child's daily routine. If motor skills development is compromised, self-care may be impacted as well. Motor movements are prerequisite skills that are also necessary for many self-care tasks" (TATS, 2020)

QKLG: Well-being: Exploring ways to promote physical wellbeing
EYLF: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
Our children are also being encouraged to look after their well-being in terms of their physical development and their emotional regulation. Different ways we are approaching it is ensuring we have a physically stimulating environment which challenges them, encouraging calculated risk taking, doing yoga and meditation (story time yoga), doing lots of move & grove songs like 'Hokey & Pokey, Bear Hunt, A Tooty Ta' & so forth. Physical & mental health go hand in hand as a healthy body breeds a heathy mind and vice versa. Exploring these themes through books, songs, social games and spontaneous games help our Powai children build a life long love for active movement and mindfulness.
We also have 'Billy's buddies' a part of our Kindergarten program where the children engage in various sports activities like rugby, soccer, cricket, catch & kick and have a ball learning new physical skills, following instructions and most importantly having fun!

"Initiative versus guilt is the third stage of Erik Erikson's theory of development. This stage occurs during the preschool years, between the ages of 3 and 5. During the initiative versus guilt stage, children begin to assert their power and control over the world through directing play and other social interaction. During this time, children begin to control their environment in small ways. Trying new things poses the risk of failure. Guilt results and initiative diminishes when the child isn't taught resilience and persistence in the face of difficulty" (Very Well Mind, 2022)

Reconciliation Action Plan

On our journey through our reconciliation action plan, it has us reflecting on "With the uncertainty of COVID restrictions and limitations on our interaction with the external community, how can we strengthen and deepen our connections with community?"

At our June staff meeting, educators reflected on what we can do within our walls that can be seen by the greater community. Stay tuned for some exciting updates and we continue on our journey to reconciliation and relationships with community!

Kindy Kubbi learning

Reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of all Australians. There are a number of significant events in the Indigenous calendar across the year, however reconciliation is an ongoing journey that spans not only across, but between these events.

We have been reading the book called "Sorry Sorry" recently, written by Anne Kerr. This book is a first step of informing young children of a significant aspect of Australian history, with age appropriate illustrations and dialogue. This book can be the introduction to understanding the journey of reconciliation with Australia's First Peoples. Through this literature we were able to start the conversation about the the history of our land, including the stolen generation.

The **first National Sorry Day was held on 26 May 1998**, one year after the *Bringing Them Home* report was tabled in Parliament. The *Bringing Them Home* report is a result of a Government Inquiry into the past policies which caused children to be removed from their families and communities in the 20th century. Education about this assists us on our journey towards reconciliation.

During reconciliation week and Aboriginal culture week, children explored from the range of activities such as the Aboriginal Symbol hunt, a sand activity where children explored and copied the Aboriginal symbols in colour sand, stick art and Australian Zoo making. This supported the children to learn about history, culture, and the achievements of the first people of the land (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island).

Everyday we pause at 9am with the service coming together and paying our respects, and acknowledging the land on which we work, learn and play before returning to our play based learning curriculum. During this time, teachers and educators consider the Indigenous perspectives and protocols of the experiences that we implement.

Exploring Reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community in early childhood education is an important part of becoming culturally competent. Just like other aspects of recognising and supporting diversity embedding Reconciliation in meaningful ways occurs over time, by our connection with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and through daily experiences with children and families in local neighbourhoods. It is as much about what we do every day, the actions we take and words we use for example, as it is about what we think, what we understand and what we believe about our own culture and Australia's rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. It is multilayered, interconnected and because it is so different across Australia, at times complex. Knowing about and putting the ideas of Reconciliation into practice can seem overwhelming and difficult to embed in our work with children and families. This resource aims to help educator teams talk about how we value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in our work and give you some practical ways to take action. The ideas you will hear about are just some examples of how educators have come to understand Reconciliation. Their stories illustrate the complexities and the benefits of becoming more culturally competent. It helps to build strong, inclusive communities where everyone enjoys a sense of being valued and belonging, which also supports positive mental health.

What are summative assessments anyway? The term summative describes assessment processes that 'sum up' what a child has learned by reviewing documentation gathered over time from a range of sources. These processes bring together information about what the child knows, understands and can do in relation to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Learning Outcomes. Summative assessment differs from analyses of learning that occur for individual pieces of documentation such as anecdotal records, photos or learning stories, as it involves reviewing a range of records in order to understand and document the 'distance travelled' by a child.

Physical skills development

Bubble Pop

You will need a bottle of bubbles and a bubble wand.

It doesn't matter what age you are bubbles are always enjoyable and a fun way to engage children. Begin this activity by blowing some bubbles and ask your child/ren to pop all the bubbles they see. They will have to run and jump to catch all the bubbles.

Once you think they have exhausted bubble catching, ask your children to lay down. Blow bubbles over them and ask them to pick a bubble and watch it drift and glide until it eventually pops all on its own.

PLAY WITH PURPOSE

Much of your child's day at our service revolves around playing fun games with educators and peers. While you may think these games your child is playing are just a way for them to enjoy their time away from home with their friends, many of those games are actually teaching them very important skills.

For most of us, our life consists of schedules and structure and running from one commitment to another. Between work and extracurricular activities, there often isn't a lot of time left for play or free time. Play becomes even more important for toddlers in a pre-school setting because they may not have a lot of time for play otherwise.

Toddlers are constantly asked to follow rules and adhere to schedules, so being able to play games with friends at pre-school allows them the opportunity to express themselves differently. Whether they are making up the game or expressing themselves and their emotions through games like role-playing, dress-up, or puppets, games help children learn how to solve problems and get creative. Playing games also helps toddlers develop social skills as well as their language and counting skills without feeling like work.

You may think a rousing game of duck, duck, goose or musical chairs is just a way for kids to burn off some energy, and you're not wrong. However, these games are also teaching kids some pretty great life skills. These games can teach kids strategic skills, how to win and lose gracefully, how to practice self-control, and the importance of patience and taking turns. Games like Simon Says help children learn how to be leaders, while games like hide-and-seek teach children about problem-solving and critical thinking. Even though these games are a lot of fun for the children to participate in, they're also requiring your children to practice different skills and techniques as they play that they may not learn otherwise.



Playing games also helps your child with their memory, speech, and language abilities, as well as recognising words and letters.

Playing games like hide-and-seek, hopscotch, red light, green light and more at home can help your child build on these essential skills.

Catana, Kelli. (2022). Those silly day care games kids play are secretly getting them ready for school. Retrieved from www.newfolks.com/activities/day-care-games/

Centre Events

July events

Sunday 3rd – Sunday 10th	NAIDOC Week
Friday 22nd	National Pyjama Day
Thursday 22nd	Crazy Hair Day
Friday 29th	Schools Tree Day
Saturday 30th	International Day of Friendship

August events

Thursday 4th	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day
Tuesday 9th	International Day of Worlds Indigenous People
Saturday 13th	Science Week
Monday 15th	RSPCA Cupcake Day
Saturday 20th	Book Week

Policy review

July

Educator and Management
Responsible Person
Code of Ethics



August

Discrimination, harassment and bullying
Social Media
Staffing and Supervision
Child Protection

Ways that you can provide feedback are:

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

Sustainability

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY SCAVENGER HUNT

One of the best ways to celebrate the environment is to get outside and experience nature. While exploring complete a scavenger hunt. Below is an example. Customise your list for your own local environment. Write the items you're looking for on a piece of paper with bug check boxes to tick off when you find or do each item.



Scavenger hunt list:

1. Draw a picture of 3 different flowers or plants.
2. Spot a pelican or seagull.
3. Spot a bee.
4. Take a photo of an animal you see.
5. Safely collect any rubbish you see.
6. Hug a tree.
7. Find a smooth rock
8. Find something rough.

Remember to only observe, do not disturb or take things out of the environment.

Healthy Habits

Our belief in the “magic” of family dinners is grounded in research on the physical, mental and emotional benefits of regular family meals.
Over three decades of research have shown that regular family meals offer a wide variety of physical, social-emotional and academic benefits. While some of these benefits can be gained through other activities, eating together is the only single activity that is known to provide all of them at the same time.
We recommend combining food, fun and conversation at mealtimes because those three ingredients are the recipe for a warm, positive family dinner — the type of environment that makes these scientifically proven benefits possible.

Some of the specific benefits of family dinners are:
Better academic performance
Higher self-esteem
Greater sense of resilience
Lower risk of substance abuse
Lower risk of teen pregnancy
Lower risk of depression
Lower likelihood of developing eating disorders
Lower rates of obesity
Better cardiovascular health in teens
Bigger vocabulary in pre-schoolers
Healthier eating patterns in young adults



There are also benefits for adults, including:
Better nutrition, more fruits and vegetables and less fast food
Less dieting
Increased self-esteem
Lower risk of depression

The Family Dinner Project. (May 22, 2022). Science says: eat with your kids. *Retrieved from thefamilydinnerproject.org/about-us/benefits-of-family-dinners/*

Recipe

PARMESAN CRUSTED ZUCCHINI CHIPS

2 zucchini, sliced into thin rounds
1 cup panko breadcrumbs
1/2 cup parmesan, grated
2 egg whites
2 tablespoons olive oil

Preheat oven to 200 degrees Celsius. Place the panko breadcrumbs and parmesan in a shallow bowl and mix to combine. In a separate bowl place the egg whites along with a tablespoon of water and whisk to combine. Dunk each zucchini round into the egg white, letting excess run off before pressing them into the panko parmesan mixture. Line an oven tray with baking paper and drizzle with a little olive oil. Arrange the crusted zucchini rounds on the oven tray in a single layer.



Pop into the oven and bake for 20-25 minutes, flipping halfway. The zucchini parmesan chips are done when they are golden and crisp.