



## Learning and Living with nature

*Djeembana story boards January 2021*



### Djeembana news for March

Firstly, special thanks to everyone who assisted with and attended the festival. The day exceeded all expectations. I hope that you found it to be a welcoming and informative day. We have had some interesting conversations with the children who attended especially around their food choices. The Welcome to Country was overwhelming and I am sure if you were able to see it you would have felt the significance of this part of the festival. The Welcome to Country at Kinder will be delivered by Steve Parker (the man who did the smoking ceremony). It will be a great experience so I hope you can attend.

Working bee – thank you to the families for tidying up the yard on Sunday. I realise not all families were in a position to attend, but thank those who could. (Also, thank you to the families who helped on the Bunnings BBQ, well done Kimberly.)



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The group have settled in well, especially when we have welcomed two student teachers into the mix. The children have welcomed the students and happily assisted them to learn how to be teachers. Celeste completes her placement with us on Tuesday but has offered to volunteer on Tuesdays so she can continue her learning.

We welcomed parents back into the program last week. It is so nice to have parents be part of the session observing their children's interactions while assisting us to deliver the program. While we have allocated a day for parents to come along please know you can join us at any time.

When a new group of children comes together, they begin to learn about diversity. Some children know each other well some didn't know anyone when they started. We are focusing on connecting all the children, demonstrating the importance of respecting differences. Each child brings to the group their strengths and individual qualities. As a team we are very conscious of learning about each child and celebrating and catering for who they are. The children are also learning this. While we don't feel it is necessary for all children to be friends, we do encourage children to be respectful, show understanding and kindness towards each other. This learning will occur in a variety of ways, through stories, discussions, intentional teaching and experiences.

The displayed self-portraits in the room are a visual representation of the different ways children draw. The diversity in the drawings indicates the diversity in children's ability to drawing people and put their knowledge of body parts into a two-dimensional form. The teaching team will be supporting the children to increase the details in their drawings as a way of progressing their skills.

We are encouraging every child to try new experiences and begin to step away from the experiences they feel most comfortable with. Each experience we present requires different skills and cognitive functions. When children access a variety of experiences they consolidate, expand and progress their skills.



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Last week a rainbow lorikeet was brought in for us to look at. While at first it may seem strange to look at a dead animal, getting up close to creatures can teach the children many things. I always emphasis that even though the bird was dead it was important that we were respectful when handling it. I invited the children to look carefully at the details of the bird in order to appreciate its patterns and structure. The children were very interested in observing the many different coloured and sized feathers. We looked at the way the

wings worked, and the shape of the beak. We had a great discussion about why it might have died. Several children then had a turn at drawing the bird while looking at the details – these are displayed in the centre for all to see.



Our time at the beach and bush has presented new learning to the children. They are being shown possibilities by the teaching team on how to play with and learn from nature in a respectful way. We have all started building relationships with nature. I told the children that nature tells us stories and when we observe things we support the children to wonder what story is being told. For example when the waves crash onto the sand what are we learning? What is the story? ..... Is the tide coming in? What moon phase are we in? Is the water shallow? Is there oxygen trapped in the water? .....

Last week a child was carrying a stick around and looking very thoughtful. When asked what they were thinking the reply was 'I wonder what the story of this stick is.' First Peoples teach us that the landscape has a story – when next you are walking with your child take some time to wonder what is the story of the place you are walking.



Last week on the rock platforms the children worked in small groups sharing their discoveries and learning from each other. They found crabs, sea stars, a flat worm and many different sea snails. The rocks also provide an art palate, the colours which are used to paint skin, hats, and nails.



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The children are now taking the lead in telling stories. Each week we will choose four children to be the story tellers. They are required to collect things to create a story scene then share their story with a small group of their peers. At first the children may be a little unsure of what to do but with support they soon gain confidence. Stories may at first be short but after a few turns the content and length of the story increases. The children are beginning to include Boon Wurrung language in their stories such as bubups (children)

PMP – thankyou to the parents who have assisted with PMP. Participating in PMP exposes the children to many skills: listening to instructions from a variety of adults; comprehending instructions; following visual cues; performing a variety of gross motor skills; working in a team; being responsible as a leader; achieving and celebrating individual success and having fun.



**Kinder books** – these books will be sent home on the last day of term. Inside will be photos of your child's engagement in the program and a task to complete during the break. When the children return, they will share their holiday adventures with the group.

Please return them within the first week.



*Pattern by Savannah and Vivienne*



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### Coming events

24<sup>th</sup> March - Jill is teaching for me as I am running training in Beechworth for a group of teachers who are wanting to establish a nature program.

25<sup>th</sup> March - Welcome to Country. Unfortunately, I won't be able to join you. I look forward to hearing your reflections about the experience.

26<sup>th</sup> March All the teaching team are attending a conference so there will be no session.

24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> PMP. Please write your names down if you are able to assist.

30<sup>th</sup> March – we will be developing the 2021 Quality improvement plan. This plan requires input from teaching team, committee and families. If you are able please join us 7-9pm

31<sup>st</sup> March – luncheon at 12:00. We will be cooking sausages for lunch however if you prefer other food please bring your own. Surprise for children will be an egg hunt (please keep this to yourself)

31<sup>st</sup> Last day for term one

1<sup>st</sup> April – Good Friday No session

19<sup>th</sup> April – Start of term two

I am having a knee scope during the break so I will be away the first week of term two.

If you have any questions please ask me

Until next month, thanks for your support this term

Karen Anderson



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