



Balnarring Preschool & Infant Welfare Association



Learning and Living with nature

Teachers July Newsletter

Hi everyone

In an attempt to reduce the teacher's workload, the newsletter format is going to be a bit different for the second half of the year. Each month one of the teachers will lead the topic we present to the families. The other teachers will contribute a paragraph or two. You will not be receiving news about each group through the newsletter as we believe this information is already being shared with the families through text messages, kinder books, emails, reflection books and of course by the children. The committee will continue to share news and highlight important dates each month.

This month will focus on the program delivery. As you are all aware almost the entire program has been delivered outdoors. When we developed this concept, we were aware that the learning would be accessed a bit differently than when an indoor program is offered. The teaching team have been very mindful of the learning opportunities and experiences that are available and the importance of each child accessing a wide variety of experiences. Intentional teaching continues to be an integral part of each day and is being delivered the same way as if we were inside. The team have specific goals that they work on for the whole group and for individual children. They also have learning areas and focuses that they believe are important to include in the program such as embedding First Peoples perspectives, connecting with nature, the importance of relationships, social development, managing emotions

Each experience develops and consolidates different skills and furthers development. While the children are given lots of autonomy to be the leaders of their play choices and play content, they are also being challenged and encouraged to try the new experiences. They might be directed to do a sit-down experience or an under the roof experience. The team are very aware that there are children who always choose big physical play experiences, resulting in them being highly skilled in these areas and less confident in other areas. There are also children who only do quiet creative experiences. It is the teaching team's role to introduce new experiences and possibilities to every child in order for them to learn and grow in all areas of development. We acknowledge that there are some concerns from families about how their children will manage at school with so much of the program being delivered outdoors. We have discussed this and believe that the program the children are receiving continues to be of excellence and that what we are offering is invaluable and still provides rich learning and the opportunity to develop many important skills and dispositions in each child. Some of the learnings and skill acquisition is not easily identified but is crucial for laying the foundations for more formal learning. Learning areas and skills such as First Peoples knowledges, adaptability, resilience, wonder, stamina, independence, and interdependence, how to develop relationships, problem solving, connection, responsibility, caring for the environment, physical strength and coordination, and being an important member of a group.



Balnarring Pre-school acknowledge that our children and families play on and learn with Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this Land. We express our gratitude to First Peoples who have for thousands of years cared for the Land, sky and waterways and who are now sharing those teachings with the preschool community. We honour and celebrate their sharing of knowledge and stories within our learning environments. We pay respects to all First Peoples and Elders: past and present



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Only yesterday as I was at the fire with the children, we were talking about how amazing it was that they got to cook their own toast on the fire, as we were chatting the university student, who is on placement, came to the fire and stated she had never cooked toast on a fire before – how lucky are these children? They were calm, competent, challenged, encouraging of each other, learning about fire and sharing special moments being together while they cooked, added spreads to their toast and ate. Then as an added bonus the chooks got fed the scraps which nourishes them, so they lay eggs for the next cooking experience.

Over the break three new blinds were installed, so the verandah area is more protected from the elements, and we can leave experiences set up overnight. The teachers also discussed accessing the inside area as another alternative area. We are still focusing most of the learning outdoors however we have set up the indoor space for children to interact with in small numbers. It is not our intention that all the children will be playing indoors at the same time but in small groups. The children may eat or have group time inside if the weather calls for this. Being outdoors has had great benefit to everyone. Not only have we reduced the spreading of germs, but the children are calmer and more engaged than in any previous years. Visitors comment on how calm the children are - which is an important environment to be learning in, especially as our lives become busy again.

Please speak with the teachers if you have any concerns or would like to discuss further anything presented on this newsletter

Karen Anderson on behalf of the teaching team



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