



## Djeembana Story Board



Welcome to the first newsletter for 2022. We have had a very smooth start to the year, I can't help but reflect that this is due to us being outside. The outdoor space is quieter, there is room to spread out and the children appear very comfortable being outdoors.

We welcome Brooke into the team as an additional educator employed through Yooralla. Brooke will be working with us all session Monday, four hours Tuesday and Three hours Wednesday.

We have Emma – student from Monash with us until 29<sup>th</sup> April. Emma will have increased responsibilities over that time that will involve observing the group and planning experiences. The final days she will be solely responsible for the session. Please help us in welcoming her.

Thankyou for your patience with the slow start this also makes a huge difference to the smooth start providing us with time to begin developing relationships with each child.

Each day the team are observing the children settled into the space at a deeper level and exploring all the experiences that are on offer. As you will be aware I was wondering how we would ensure that each child accessed a variety of experiences requiring a variety of skills but I had nothing to worry about. The children are naturally being drawn to the experiences. Each day we are observing the children explore physical play areas and also the sit-down quieter areas.



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## Learning and Living with nature embedding First Peoples perspectives

The teaching team is beginning to gain insights into each child's skill development strengths and areas of interest. Our observations are used to inform the program development. We have learnt some of the children's interested include: bugs and creepy crawlies, dressing up, soft animals, construction, craft area, messy play, singing, dinosaurs, the chickens and Easton.

Each day the children arrive there will be a variety of experiences that support learning styles and interests. I have broken the outdoor space into three areas for purposes of my planning – under the verandah, under the marquee and the yard. We have also been exploring different ways to break up the days, so the program remains accessible and interesting to all, as the children's stamina decreases across the day. Planning eating times is crucial to ensuring the children's energy levels are maintained while also being aware of not filling the day with transitions. Limiting transitions allows the children to have extended periods of times to delve deeper into their play and the learning.

At the beach each week the children's play is more settled and more exploratory. New discoveries are made and new spaces discovered. Last week we spent most of the time at the rock platforms and scrambling the rock wall – so much excitement as risks were taken. From the risks involved in picking up a crab to those involved in scrambling to great heights. Each child given the opportunity to explore at their own pace and according to their skill level.



Working with nature provides many opportunities to tell stories, so far the stories we have explored involve setting a story scene using items collected in nature and then telling a story. The teaching team have demonstrated story telling skills up until now. The children are keen to have a turn.

Next week children will be selected to set the scene and tell a story to a small group of children. When the story is finished, the listeners are asked to share what their favourite parts where.



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Last week there was some festival preparation with the children creating bunting using the colours of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. This provided a great opportunity for us to talk about what the colours represented.



Design by Harold Thomas in 1970

The black represents to people

The yellow the sun – the giver of life

The red – the earth and the peoples relationship with the land. Also the colour of ochre, which has ceremonial significance. It also can be a reminder of the blood that was shed when colonisation occurred.

Designed by the late Bernard Namok in 1992. The colours of the flag represent the Torres Strait Islander people's connection to the land, sea and sky.

Green represents the land

Blue represents the sea

In the centre the white dhari (dancer's headdress) represents Torres Strait Islander culture. Underneath the dhari is a white five-pointed star. The star is an important symbol for navigating the sea. The points of the star represent the five island groups in the Torres Strait and the white symbolises peace.

Black represents the people

While we are on the festival please bring with you a stick to place into Bundjil's nest. The stick can be decorated and needs to contain a message of hope and inspiration to the bubups (children) and the biik (land). Please involve your child in creating the stick. There will also be sticks available on the day.

We have introduced the children to some new Boon wurrung language with a hello song. The words are marram biik ngurra (pronounced n -oor-a) – what is your name? Marram biik Karen – my name is Karen. It always surprises me how quickly the children pick up the new words.



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## Murnongs (Yam daisy)

These plants once grew all over Victoria and across the plains where Port Phillip Bay now resides. Colonisation saw the introduction of hooved animals which destroyed many of the murnong crops. Today there is lots of work going on to increase the growth of murnongs. We planted seeds in 2020 and this year have harvested the first crop. Last week we cooked them up – most children had a taste and many came back for seconds.



## Staffing

A big thanks to Beth and Cath for filling in for the first weeks of the term. Emily will be with us for the remainder of term one. Emily is studying her Bachelor of education and was a student with us last year. We hope to introduce a new educator to Djeembana at the commencement of term two. Thanks for your understanding over this time.

**Pick up and drop off** – in order to reduce congestions around the gate and have some distance between each other please come right into the yard. If you have the time please explore the learning experiences on offer.

**Play and Stay days** It was great welcoming parents back into the program last week and it was strange after so long not having that assistance and support. If you can't come on your day – no problems- just let us know or swap. If you miss your date please just come in whenever it suits you.



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## Coming events

- Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March – Womindjeka Balnarring Ngargee (festival)
- Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March – three educators from other services will be spending the day with us to see a nature program in action. This is part of a training package I am involved in running.
- Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> March, Minister Stitt is visiting to see how we embed First Peoples perspectives.
- Perceptual Motor Program is quite a structured program that builds children's confidence and develops their gross motor skills. This program requires 8 adults for it to run smoothly and positively. If you can spare an hour please let us know the day. The dates for this term are Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> March, and 6<sup>th</sup> April
- Harmony day Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. During this week diversity and harmony are celebrated with the message 'Everyone Belongs'. Families will be invited to a luncheon – more details to follow
- Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April – Last day of term one. Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April term two commences.

If you have any questions, please never hesitate to ask

Regards

Karen Anderson



**Ask your child what type of crab this is?**



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