



Balnarring Preschool & Infant Welfare Association

Learning and Living with nature



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by ACECQA



Gareeal Reflection Term 1 2022

It has been a lovely start to term 2 in Gareeal group with lots of warm weather. The children have returned settled and enthusiastic after the holidays and have been reconnecting with the team and their peers. As a team we will continue to support and model positive interactions and play skills and we will spend time in small groups working on friendship skills together throughout this term.

I hope you all had a lovely Mother's Day on Sunday with your child. It was great to engage with the children in discussions about mums and other important women in their lives. We hope you enjoyed the cards and soap balls they made you. It was a great opportunity to extend children's interests in sensory play with the soap flakes as well as to build fine motor skills as we moulded and shaped the balls and cut the herbs and plants. It also offered a wonderful opportunity to engage children in higher order thinking by encouraging them to reflect and think about the amazing women in their life. We posed many questions over the last few weeks to get children to think about their mums and what and why they are important and how we can show our love and gratitude for others. This helps children to build understanding and empathy for others which, helps them to begin to realise and understand others' points of view. This is an essential life skill as we all have to work with others to accomplish things and be successful.



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



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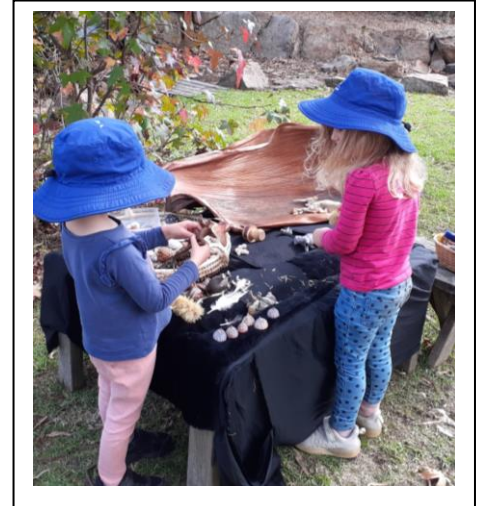
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We have continued to encourage children in oral storytelling, something First Peoples have been doing for eighty thousand years. Oral storytelling is a wonderful way for children to practice literacy skills. They are building language and listening skills as well as engaging in reflective practices. Whilst telling stories, children also develop creative thinking skills and activate their imagination, they make sense of the world around them and learn to share their ideas. Having modelled oral storytelling in term 1, we are now encouraging and supporting children to co-construct stories with us. We often reflect on the things we have done and seen in the sessions and encourage them to share ideas and thoughts. The children listening are also learning as they build their understanding and skills as an audience member.



At kinder the children have been exploring their knowledge and understanding of bundjil the eagle and waang the crow. We often speak about bundjils laws as spoken by First People; these being that we need to look after the biik (land), waterways and bubups (children). Some children built nests with the blocks to care for the bundjil and waang, others have created stories and another group placed sticks and leaves in bundjils nest at kinder and gave messages to the earth to care for it and look after the trees, animals and biik.



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As you will be aware this term we have begun exploring the bottom end to C-Reserve or the 'creek end' as we refer to it. It has offered many opportunities for the children to explore and to see, hear, smell and feel many different things at bush kinder. Yet again, the children have amazed us with how quickly and adaptable they have been to the change in the nature space as well as exploring within nature's boundaries and without the cones. This adaptability helps children learn to become flexible in their future learning. Children have been eager to explore and try new challenges. We have found new climbing and balancing beams, looked at different trees and our old favourites like 'old man banksia' and we have found new discoveries like fungus and slaters. We have spent time remembering how to care for mother earth and all her treasures like bark, leaves on trees and rotting logs that are homes and food to many creatures. We have also enjoyed noticing the changes now that we are in the season the BoonWurrung people refer to as Manameet (Autumn). The different coloured leaves on some trees, less golden banksia flowers and birds and more grasses growing on the floor have been some of our observations.



As we begin to build up our confidence, we have been curious about exploring the different terrain at the creek end and noticing different landmarks to help us explore by the creek safely. We have begun to learn about the different types of mud and firmness of the ground



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and even enjoyed getting a little stuck in the soft mud at times. One of our favourite things was noticing the hundreds of crabs there. We are learning to be careful when walking, to pick up the crabs with care and move our hands so the crabs don't fall off. We have compared their size and looked closely at them. There is still lots more to discover about our tiny new friends at bush camp and we are looking forward to the rest of the term to see what will happen to there. We will continue to meet at C-Reserve toilets / picnic area until the work at the toilets starts at which time you will see us in the car park of C-Reserve in front of the yacht club.



We have many wonderful and exciting things happening this term and I will put out a term date list shortly for families. In the meantime, I am looking forward to our mums and female VIPs celebration at kinder next Monday 16th May. Please remember that we do need families to still sign up to the Bush Kinder roster for this term. We ask that each family choose one day at bush to join us that suits you. If you cannot make a bush kinder session then please organise for someone to fill your place over the what's app group. I would also like to thank all those who are keeping their children with any signs of fever, coughs and runny noses at home to help protect others. As per the education guidelines children are still required to stay at home if they are displaying any of these signs.

THANKS, JILL 😊



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