



Teachers February 2023

Womindjeka to Balnarring Family Night

Thank you to everyone who joined us at kinder for the Welcome to Country on Valentines Day. We were excited to see so many of our families and it was a lovely opportunity for new and returning families to connect with each other and the teaching teams.

We were fortunate to have Jaeden, a Yalukit Willam man of the Boon Wurrung, welcome us and share his culture and stories from with us. Jaeden had the whole crowd up and moving as he taught us the creation story of the BoonWurrung people, including the significance and roles of both Bundjil the creator and Waang the protector. Jaeden shared language with us through his stories and songs and highlighted the importance of caring for the biik (land), waters, creatures and each other. Urging us all to remember to connect, care and respect just like the BoonWurrung people have for thousands and thousands of years.

This was a great way for families to begin to develop an understanding of BoonWurrung Culture and an appreciation of First Nations Peoples long connection with the biik for over 80,000 years. We hope this evening has inspired you to learn more, ask more and understand more about First Nations Culture in Australia, particularly that of the BoonWurrung lands on which we all live.



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.



Balnarring Preschool & Infant Welfare Association

Learning and Living with nature



Transitioning to kinder We appreciate families understanding and support through the orientation process in each kinder group over the past few weeks. It takes time for all children to adjust to their new class routines. The orientation period is vital and allows the teachers and educators to get to know the children and begin to build a strong relationship with them all as we help them to settle in. Most children will have started to adjust by now and are beginning to feel more confident and comfortable in the routines within the program. Speak to your teacher if you have any concerns but some things to remember that may help your child(ren) settle and manage through the longer sessions are:

- Have a clear bedroom routine and make sure children are in bed early so they are ready and refreshed for kinder the next day. 3-5 year olds need a minimum of 10-13 hours per night.
- Morning routines are important too - get things ready the night before including lunches, so you can keep the morning fun and less stressful for all and don't forget breakfast.
- Keep your talk about kinder positive
- Be consistent, keep your promise, don't leave without saying goodbye.
- When you say goodbye give your child your full attention and use a quick loving good-bye ritual e.g. 5 kisses, a bear hug, a butterfly kiss, a heart on each of your hands etc then leave. Teachers and educators will support your child through their emotions and will call you if we can't settle your child.
- Practice asking for help - model to your child and support them to ask you for help too rather than just doing things automatically for them. Always encourage them to give self-help skills a go (e.g. wiping their own bottom, dressing, washing hands, applying sunscreen). This helps them to feel more confident at kinder.
- Encourage your child to care, pack and carry their own bag
- Pack a small special item if needed.

Play dates are beneficial for your child's development. Getting to know the families in your kinder groups and organising little playdates with families / children is a great way to help build your child's social and language skills as well as build their confidence and support their wellbeing and belonging within the kinder group. You don't have to do anything extravagant there are many simple ideas such as

- Meet up or just pop over to the park opposite kinder to see who is there for half an hour or an hour before or after kinder. You could even mention on your group WhatsApp that you will be there if anyone is free.



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- Go for a walk - while the kids bike and scoot
- Meet up at Coolart Wetlands and let the children run and explore
- Organise a coffee and play at home - have a few simple activities / toys out like pretend café, cars, trains, dolls, dress ups.

Stay and Play Thank you to all the families who have joined us at kinder and Ngarnga biik during the sessions. The rosters are up for families and you can also sign up to other dates. Your help and support is really important and improves the program we can deliver. We always have a job we can give you if you want so please ask if you are feeling unsure about what to do 😊. If you can't make a Ngarnga biik session remember to swap with someone in the group on WhatsApp.

Please remember that families are NOT allowed to enter the children's bathroom at kinder. Please let a staff member know if your child needs support

Written by Jill Grafton-White on behalf of the teaching team



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