



JULY
2021

ON *this* MONTH

AT WATERFORD WEST EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRE

Bush Kindy Springwood Conservation Park-- Term 3 Fridays
Swimming Program -----Term 3 Tuesdays
Uncle Boomerang -----Term 3 Thursdays
Prep Transition Days, St Francis ----- 21

AROUND THE COUNTRY

NAIDOC Week ----- 4 - 11
World Population Day----- 11
Eid al-Adha -----19 - 23
National Pyjama Day -----23
Asalha Puja Day ----- 24
International Day of Friendship ----- 30
Schools Tree Day -----30 – Aug 1

Letter from the Director

Welcome to the July edition of our centre newsletter for 2021.

This month, our centre educators are working hard to develop a reconciliation plan for 2021 and were excited to kick off the month by sharing some of their ideas throughout NADIOC Week.

The core of our reconciliation plan is to help young children, educators and families to develop a broader understanding and appreciation of Australian Aboriginal culture. With support from The *Yugambah* language people, in addition to mentoring and fortnightly incursions from Uncle Boomerang from Burragun Aboriginal Cultural Services, we seek to embed our ongoing learnings, in the second half of the year, into not only our centre daily program and practices, but also our centre philosophy.

Reminder to families . . . As the end of financial year has now finalised and families incomes and assessments are being adjusted, we would like to take this opportunity to remind parents to be aware of any child care subsidy changes, and to notify the office of these ASAP to avoid any debt occurring.



Room News

Early Learners Room

The month of June, saw insects, including; Bees, Beetles, Spiders, Butterflies and other creepy crawlies investigated in the Early Learners Room. In addition, new learning games; including a sensory box, where children were enthusiastic to participate in sensory play, as they looked for bugs in goop and advanced their fine motor skills using tongs to pick them up, as well as movement games; where children had lots of fun demonstrating the different ways insects move, were just a few of many things that the children enjoyed this month.

Cooking with Miss Shannon was introduced at the end of the June, giving our little ones an opportunity to make healthy foods for morning or afternoon tea.

Early Learners will continue to explore our Insect world into July and incorporate the insects our Indigenous people eat throughout NAIDOC WEEK. We are all excited to extend our littlest learners understandings about the traditional owners of our land, and look forward to sharing their learning journey with you this month.

Junior Early Years Room

Last month, we investigated 'Under the sea' and as such children had the opportunity to learn about the animals that live in our ocean, and how important it is to engage in sustainable practices to keep these animals safe. Links to our embedded Abecedarian Approach through conventional reading and learning Games was evident throughout the program the month as children were exposed to more language as they made connections with what they were learning in their classroom.

This month, we will extend on children's interest in sustainable practices and introduce the R's "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle". We aim to tie this in with NADIOC week and explore how the traditional owners of our land, used the three R's to make our land a beautiful place.

Early Learners Room



Junior Early Years Room



Room News

Early Years Room

The month of June, saw children in the early Years continue to investigate their interest in space, creating a space station and flying to the moon, to see all of the different planets.

This month, children have been exploring the different planets in our solar system, and the environments that they are made up of. Discussions about whether or not human life would survive in these planets has been interesting with lots of dramatic play ideas to extend on next month about aliens.

Pre-Prep Room

We have had another amazing month of learning about identity and celebrating different cultures of our wonderful world. We have continued to explore the Samoan culture through song and dance; the Chinese culture through cooking chicken fried rice with our cook, Miss Shannon; tasted new foods from the Afghanistan culture; and exploring with music and counting in Italian. We are excited to be able to continue our journey in term 3 as we continue to explore many more cultures of the wider world around us. Our children are developing a strong sense of respect and genuine interest for other cultures.

The last few weeks of Bush Kindy has led us to an interest in koala's. It just so happens that we have a new koala friend who has recently joined us here at Waterford West Early Childcare Centre. Our koala friend would love the opportunity to venture out to your home environment for a weekend. All that we ask, is that you take our special koala friend to your favourite outdoor spot in your community and take photos of your adventures together. You can send these through OWNA where we will print them out and create a boon about the wonderful things our koala does each weekend. This experience promotes self-confidence, storytelling and communication skills, as we develop sound social skills amongst friends. We will have a booking sheet on top of the lockers for those who are interested.

Other interests that have emerged, are yoga; sensory exploration; and doctors role play. We will continue our sensory journey throughout the next month with as we explore our sense of smell, touch and taste. Pretend play promotes language skills and social skills as they engage with role play.

We will continue to develop our fine motor skills as we prepare our children for school through encouraging name recognition and writing our names.

Early Years Room



Pre-Prep Room





NAIDOC WEEK – JULY 4-11

NAIDOC Week celebrations are traditionally held across Australia each July to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. ‘Heal country’ is the theme for NAIDOC Week 2021.

Heal country! – calls for stronger measures to recognise, protect, and maintain all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage. Find out more about [NAIDOC WEEK here](#)

NATIONAL PYJAMA DAY – JULY 23

Support Little People with BIG Dreams! National Pyjama Day is all about wearing your favourite pair of PJ’s to school to help The Pyjama Foundation raise funds for children in foster care. Funds help to run a program called *The Love of Learning Program* where volunteers called Pyjama Angels are matched with a child in care and spend an hour a week focusing on learning-based activities. Find out more [HERE](#)

PROTEIN PANCAKES



PREP 10 min | COOK & SERVE as needed

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups milk (or use coconut or almond milk)
- 2 cups flour (either do 2 cups spelt or 1 cup tapioca and 1 cup oat flour, but you could play around with different options)
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 4 eggs
- 6 tbsp protein powder*
- 2 tbsp hemp or chia seeds
- * optional- use Nutra organics vanilla

METHOD:

Simply blend all of the ingredients together and store in a jar! I cook ours in butter in a cast iron pan and they never stick. Serve with berries, banana, Greek or coconut yoghurt, pure maple syrup or raw honey, cinnamon etc! Or as one of my kids loves - peanut butter!

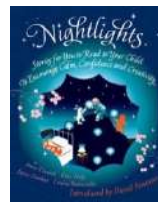
SO, WHAT ARE THEY GETTING?

Good fats, fibre, protein, omega 3’s, calcium, iron and fresh fruit, all before they leave the house for the day!

*Love this recipe and want more? Go to [Jo Kate Nutrition](#) Jo’s course *The Nourished Family* provides you with a realistic approach to nutrition, health and cooking and will teach you foundational principles to use for the rest of your life. Find out more here.*

Book reviews

Big feelings, major meltdowns, trouble sleeping, sound familiar?



NIGHTLIGHTS

ANNE CHIVARDI, JOYCE DUNBAR, KATE PETTY, LOUISA SOMERVILLE | 4-8 year olds

Nightlights is a book of stories to read to children, but stories with a difference. It’s a collection of twenty interactive meditation stories that have been specially written to calm and relax your child at bedtime, while at the same time engaging and stimulating his or her imagination.

HAPPY

NICOLA EDWARDS | AUS

We breathe deep and expand like the galaxy. We breathe out many thousands of stars, and if ever we start to feel panicky, this reminds us of just who we are. The perfect soothing read for quiet time, Happy gently encourages young readers to explore their emotions and the beautiful world around them, with stunning illustrations and thought-provoking rhymes on every page.

THE BOY WITH BIG, BIG FEELINGS

BRITNEY WINN LEE AND JACOB SOUVA

Meet a boy with feelings so big that they glow from his cheeks, spill out of his eyes, and jump up and down on his chest. The Boy with Big, Big Feelings is relatable for any child, but especially for children experiencing anxiety and extreme emotions, or who have been diagnosed with autism or as a Highly Sensitive Person.



FOCUS: A “million-word gap” for children who aren’t read to at home

Young children whose parents read them five books a day enter kindergarten having heard about 1.4 million more words than kids who were never read to.

This “million-word gap” could be one key in explaining differences in vocabulary and reading development, said Jessica Logan, lead author of the study and assistant professor of educational studies at The Ohio State University. Even kids who are read only one book a day will hear about 290,000 more words by age 5 than those who don’t regularly read books with a parent or caregiver. “Kids who hear more vocabulary words are going to be better prepared to see those words in print when they enter school,” said Logan, a member of Ohio State’s Crane Centre for Early Childhood Research and Policy. “They are likely to pick up reading skills more quickly and easily.” The study appears online in the *Journal of Developmental and Behavioural Paediatrics* and will be published in a future print edition.

Logan said the idea for this research came from one of her earlier studies, which found that about one-fourth of children in a national sample were never read to and another fourth were seldom read to (once or twice weekly). “The fact that we had so many parents who said they never or seldom read to their kids was pretty shocking to us. We wanted to figure out what that might mean for their kids,” Logan said.

The researchers collaborated with the Columbus Metropolitan Library, which identified the 100 most circulated books for both board books (targeting infants and toddlers) and picture books (targeting pre-schoolers). Logan and her colleagues randomly selected 30 books from both lists and counted how many words were in each book. They found that board books contained an average of 140 words, while picture books contained an average of 228 words. With that information, the researchers calculated how many words a child would hear from birth through his or her 5th birthday at different levels of reading. They assumed that kids would be read board books through their 3rd birthday and picture books the next two years, and that every reading session (except for one category) would include one book. They also assumed that parents who reported never reading to their kids actually read one book to their children every other month.

Based on these calculations, here’s how many words kids would have heard by the time they were 5 years old: Never read to, 4,662 words; 1-2 times per week, 63,570 words; 3-5 times per week, 169,520 words; daily, 296,660 words; and five books a day, 1,483,300 words.

“The word gap of more than 1 million words between children raised in a literacy-rich environment and those who were never read to is striking,” Logan said. The word gap examined in this research isn’t the only type kids may face. A controversial 1992 study suggested that children growing up in poverty hear about 30 million fewer words in conversation by age 3 than those from more privileged backgrounds. Other studies since then suggest this 30-million-word gap may be much smaller or even non-existent, Logan said.

The vocabulary word gap in this study is different from the conversational word gap and may have different implications for children, she said. “This isn’t about everyday communication. The words kids hear in books are going to be much more complex, difficult words than they hear just talking to their parents and others in the home,” she said. For instance, a children’s book may be about penguins in Antarctica – introducing words and concepts that are unlikely to come up in everyday conversation. “The words kids hear from books may have special importance in learning to read,” she said.

Logan said the million-word gap found in this study is likely to be conservative. Parents will often talk about the book they’re reading with their children or add elements if they have read the story many times. This “extra-textual” talk will reinforce new vocabulary words that kids are hearing and may introduce even more words. The results of this study highlight the importance of reading to children. “Exposure to vocabulary is good for all kids. Parents can get access to books that are appropriate for their children at the local library,” Logan said.

Source: news.osu.edu (2019, April 04). A ‘million-word gap’ Retrieved from <https://news.osu.edu/a-million-word-gap-for-children-who-arent-read-to-at-home/>

SIMPLE MATH ACTIVITIES USING MANIPULATIVES

Counting bears or counting animals are a wonderful tool to have in your home for use now but also as your children enter Primary School. You can use them to sort, count or use them with patterns. These multicoloured manipulatives can be purchased cheaply online or in most toy stores. You could also use the houses from monopoly or Lego blocks.

Patterns with bears: In word create some simple pattern cards to help get your child started, like the ones in this picture, or simply download these ones via the link. The first page is an AB pattern, meaning two colours alternate in the pattern. The second page is an ABC pattern, meaning three are three colours in the pattern. For this activity, your pre-schooler will set the coloured bear on top of the matching colour to create a pattern. On the ABC pattern cards, the last circle is left empty. That is for your child to tell you what colour it should be.



Sorting colours with bears: Another way to use these tools is for sorting activities. Sorting is a key mathematics skill and these activities provide the foundation for early numeracy learning. Children can sort the bears into colours, if you have different animals, they could sort them into types of animals too. You can download and print both activity cards via the link below.

Source: Teaching Mamma (2019, August 10). 15 Hands-On Math Activities for Preschoolers Retrieved from <https://teachingmama.org/15-hands-on-math-activities-preschoolers/>



HEALTH & SAFETY: The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise



How do you feel after a workout? Even when you're purple faced and desperate for a lie-down, you feel pretty pleased with yourself for giving it a go, right? Once the initial breathlessness subsides after a workout, it's common to feel like you have more energy and those troublesome problems might not seem quite so big as before. While they might seem intangible these benefits are as real as – and arguably more important than – the results you see around your waistline. "A prescription of exercise can help you have a healthy mind," says GP Dr Paul Stillman, from Media Medics. "Exercise stimulates positive endorphins, clears your head and lifts your mood. I think we'll see more and more people prescribed exercise as a mood-booster."

Healthy body = healthy mind

We're starting to realise just how vital exercise is for our wellbeing, both mental and physical. New research from the Department of Health published in October 2017, reported 12 per cent of cases of depression could be prevented with an hour of exercise each week. Up your workouts to three a week and you could reduce your risk of depression by 30 per cent.

Can exercise help you handle stress?

Sure thing. A team of neurologists at Stanford Medical School, U.S., studied brain scans and found regular exercisers have more grey matter in the prefrontal cortex, which governs stress-management. But when we feel down, everything can feel overwhelming. Time to crawl into a hole? In fact, the more stressed out you feel, the more you need to look after yourself – and a workout can be the happiest medicine. Research has shown that exercise is clinically proven to stimulate serotonin, your natural feel-good neurotransmitter.

Does exercise help anxiety? "Running gives me the headspace to focus on what I'm feeling when my anxiety gets really bad," says Cardiff student Seren Pritchard-Bland, 21, who ran the London Marathon for the mental health charity Heads Together. "I get panic attacks when I'm stressed out, but I find simply getting out of the house with my trainers on makes me feel like I've achieved something positive. Running is therapeutic – it's so much healthier than being alone at home with thoughts spinning around my head."

Why is exercise such a mood-booster? "Exercise is fantastic for releasing tension, reducing stress and giving joy," says Hayley Jarvis, programme manager for sport at the mental health charity Mind. "Being active is one of the best things you can do to help yourself bounce back in times of adversity. Getting out of your head and into your body can actually improve your ability to think clearly and break up your racing thoughts."

Find your mood-boosting workout If the thought of hauling yourself out of bed to jump around feels as impossible as climbing Everest, start slow. You can always stop if you're not feeling it, but all it takes is a few minutes of low-intensity exercise – even just walking – to trigger the release of pain-relieving endorphins. Every stretch releases tension and every movement makes oxygen flow a little faster. Look out for your tipping point, because the more aware you are of the moment your mood warms up, the better it feels.

Which workout will make you happy? *To build friendships...* try team sports like football and netball. "Social connectivity is incredibly important," says Hayley. "When we're struggling, we tend to isolate ourselves, but being with other people can motivate you to get out there. Playing team sports is great if you feel lonely."

To calm your mind... try yoga, pilates and t'ai chi. Hayley explains: "Exercise that works with your breath is particularly good for improving mindfulness, which can also calm a spinning head and improve your mood."

Source: thebodycoach.com (2018, November 29). The Mental Health Benefits of Exercise Retrieved from www.thebodycoach.com/blog/the-mental-health-benefits-of-exercise143.html?fbclid=IwAR2BvHmw8NQcUUvZOWtUqIXoR40_1E8CLo7dKCjNMxebYTawadhOVnKupPO

Sustainability CORNER

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AT HOME DURING WINTER

Now that you know the average Australian home uses about 40% of their energy on heating and cooling, you can put a plan in place to save this winter. Even small changes to the way you heat your home can lead to some helpful savings, so here are five handy tips:

There are a few different ways to conserve energy when temperatures become colder:

- **Keep curtains open during the day** for rays of sunlight to warm the room and close them at night to keep out chilly drafts.
- **Only heat the rooms you use most** – reduce the area you heat by closing doors to rooms you're not using, so you'll use less energy to heat the rest of the house.
- **Keep your thermostat between 18°C and 20°C** – every degree you reduce heat can save up to 10% on your energy use.
- **Use a draft stopper** – if cold air is getting in, warm air is getting out. Invest in door seals, draft-proofing strips and door snakes to stop heat escaping and reduce your heating costs by up to 25%.
- **Consider the old-fashioned way of bundling up** with an extra layer of clothing while at home before turning the heater up an extra degree.

Source: www.oriainenenergy.com.au/blog/smart-ways-to-save-this-winter/





Being Environmentally Responsible

Sustainability is more than gardening, worm farms or composting. As educators, we have to think beyond these green activities. Sustainability has shifted away from being just about environmental education to thinking about it as education for sustainability (Davis, 2010). Although both education threads are separate, they are certainly not isolated. Education for sustainability is about linking the 'about' with the 'doing'. - Yvonne Paujik Curriculum Lead Teacher Campus Kindergarten University of Queensland

Within our service children:

- **Connect with the natural world** Children use their senses to explore their surroundings through free play and guided discovery.
- **Learn to care for the environment through** Play and directed activities. This may be sorting items into their correct bins, caring for 'injured' wildlife, planting gardens, observing wildlife.
- **Observe sustainable practise** through modelling from our educators and daily practise.

Being environmentally responsible is neither a subject nor an 'add on', it is a way of thinking, a way of practice. Education for sustainability is interdisciplinary and involves different members of the community with different expertise and knowledge collaborating together to tackle issues that affect sustainability.

We hope children think of sustainability as being broader than the environment, to thinking about how people and change can influence every living thing. Encourage and support your child and the next generation at home by being environmentally responsible in every possible way.

National Quality Framework | Quality Area 3:
Physical Environment Element 3.2.3 Environmentally responsible

OWNA APP TIP OF THE MONTH!

Home Page

Once you have logged in you will automatically be on the home page.



OWNA

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5 Minute MOVES

SUPERMAN RACE

Short simple activities to get some active minutes in the day.

Lay in a line on your stomach and take flight – just like your favourite superhero! Once you're laying down, lift your arms up so that your upper chest comes off the ground too. Hold that position. Who can hold it the longest? Maybe you have to lean to one side to go around a building, over a bridge...

*Tip: Try lifting your legs or your arms and legs at the same time for an advanced workout. This exercise is perfect for strengthening the backside of one's core. It works to stabilize your back, glutes, hamstrings and even your shoulders.