Enjoying Autumn at Preschool

CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD
Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

- I demonstrate an increasing knowledge of, and respect for, natural and constructed environments
- I show growing appreciation and care for natural and constructed environments
- I explore relationships with other living and non-living things and observe, notice and respond to change

The children became very active in the Autumn months by raking up the fallen leaves from our majestic deciduous tree. A group of children expended great energy in one experience that involved raking, collecting and tossing leaves into the green recycling bin. Although leaves make a wonderful mulch for our flowering gardens, we needed to remove this vast quantity of this yellow carpet of leaves very quickly off our lawn so that new grass can grow in the Spring. Throughout the experience the children discovered the value of leaves as well as the need for protecting the lawn. The children also learned about seasons and what happens in the Autumn and in the Spring. The children discovered that not all trees loose their leaves but only deciduous trees. The children worked cooperatively by sharing the tools and helping one another.

We watched children using the Autumn leaves for their creative play. One of the children decided to collect the stepping logs and use it as a base for their leaf design. Unfortunately every time the leaves were arranged on the log the wind picked them up and blew them away. Another child suggested using the logs as wheels so that he can build a car. The child laid the “wheels” across the lawn and started to rake up the leaves to form a car shape. He used another log as a steering wheel. The child sat amongst the leaves and pretended to drive the car. The child then suggested putting a boundary using the large blocks around the car to stop the wind from lifting the leaves. The child and peers happily supported the suggestion. One by one the children commenced building a surround for the car.

Many more children contributed their level of creativity and imagination in their use of Autumn leaves. One group of children enjoyed collecting leaves and using them to make necklaces.
Children and their fascination with Insects

Entomology at Kindy

I AM A CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNER

- I use my senses to explore the natural environment
- I can resource my own learning to represent my thinking, knowledge and experience

Spending time talking to children about insects can be quite exciting. They are not afraid to dig up insects or pick them up. When they do find an insect in the garden they become curious and enthusiastic.

Children already bring a wealth of knowledge about insects and enjoy sharing what they know about these incredible small creatures. Some children find them disgusting, others are in awe of them.

Insects are accessible and children are delighted to view them under a magnifying glass or in a bug catcher.

The children have been enjoying the experience of searching and discovering insects in the gardens. Photographs of their discoveries were taken and later the images were shared on the interactive Screen.

Here are examples of insects found in the garden. The children watched ants moving quickly in their nest and a butterfly fluttering in the veggie patch. The children also discovered Slater beetles, black beetles and earwigs in the garden.

The educators recognized this fascination and decided to take the children on a journey exploring insects by borrowing insects and a kit from the Nature Education Centre.

The children were delighted to see the arrival of insect kits, caterpillars and beetles.

Witnessing the life cycle of the butterfly fascinated the children. Each day the children would spend some of their play time observing the caterpillars feeding and preparing to make their cocoons. Many children recorded their knowledge and observations by creating detailed drawings of their observations.

Many other children were busy watching the Cellar Beetles feeding, digging and moving about in their aquarium. Many observations were recorded on the ‘Bug Observation Form’.

Outdoors, the children have been accessing many adjuncts for their insect environment while others viewed numerous kits containing a variety of pinned insects. A group of children took their interest further by researching at home with their family discovering new knowledge about insects.
Gardening at Preschool

CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD
Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
I show growing appreciation and care for natural environments

Gardening in preschool supports children’s natural curiosity about the natural world and teaches them the true source of their food, as well as giving them the skills of gardening as well as the responsibility to care for the natural environment.

Children are born naturalists. They explore the world with all their senses, experiment in the environment, and communicate their discoveries to those around them. Gardening in preschool supports children’s curiosity and their natural affinity towards nature. Dirt, water, plants, and small animals attract and hold children’s attention for hours, days, even a lifetime.

Enjoying the vegetable soup the children have made from the vegetables harvested from the veggie patch.
Exploring our Community
Being a Florist

This term the children took part in a flower arrangement workshop with a florist working in our local community. The florist provided some information about her role as a florist and presented the tools that she uses when constructing a flower arrangement. She instructed the children on how to make an arrangement. Following the presentation, the children made their way to the tables. Each table contained florist bricks wrapped in cellophane and tied with a ribbon, scissors, flowers and greenery. Each child had a go at preparing the flowers and arranging them to form a magnificent floral box.
Children find dinosaurs extremely fascinating and why is that? Most probably because they are extinct and that we cannot have close encounters with them like we do with many other animals, being a domestic animal or an animal seen at the zoo. Dinosaurs are seen as safe for children because they cannot fear them. Children’s imagination flourishes in their play with dinosaurs. Dinosaurs represent many different things such as power and strength. Their bristling teeth, sharp claws, or armour plating appeal to children because it allows them to live out their own fantasies of being in power or being able to defend themselves. Dinosaurs allow children a form of escapism where they can be whatever they want to be.

Due to a number of children showing interest in dinosaurs, a dinosaur kit was also borrowed from the Nature Education Centre. The block area was transferred into a Jurassic Park filled with dinosaurs, reference books and fossils.

Exploring the skeletal system of a dinosaur fascinated a number of children in the yellow group and a small group of children spent an afternoon recreating the skeletal system of a dinosaur using twigs and bark chips.

Opportunities were presented to children to share their knowledge about dinosaurs. One child brought along his special dinosaurs to show the children.
CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

- I use language and engage in play to imagine and create roles, scripts and ideas
- I share the stories and symbols of my own culture and re-enact well-known stories
- I use the creative arts such as drawing, painting, sculpture, drama, dance, movement, music and storytelling to express ideas and make meaning
- I experiment with ways of expressing ideas and meaning using a range of media

A group of children this term became very interested in the story “We’re going on a Bear Hunt”. The children embarked on a journey exploring the concepts in the story including the five senses, descriptive words, rhythm and repeating pattern, directions, sequencing and order, as well as facing fears. Props were also used to retell the story.

The children also looked at the six settings in the story that the family of the four children and their father went through. They looked at how they crossed a field of tall, wavy grass (“Swishy swashy!”), waded through a deep, cold river (“Splash splash!”), struggled through thick oozy mud (“Squelch squerch!”), found their way through a big, dark forest (“Stumble trip!”), fought through a swirling whirling snowstorm (“Hoooo woooo!”), and entered a narrow, gloomy cave.

Some of children helped recreate the story using a power point presentation, while other children created drawings for the power point to tell their story.

We’re going on a bear hunt.
We’re going to catch a big one.
I’m not scared.
What a beautiful day.

We’re going on a bear hunt.
We’re going to catch a big one.
I’m not scared.
What a beautiful day.
‘Premier’s Be Active Challenge’
Obstacle-a-thon

CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING

- I engage in increasingly complex sensory motor skills and movement patterns
- I combine gross and fine motor movement and balance to achieve increasingly complex patterns of activity, including dance, creative movement and drama
- I use my sensory capabilities and dispositions with increasing integration, skill and purpose to explore and respond to my world
- I demonstrate spatial awareness and orient myself, moving around and through my environment confidently and safely
- I am able to manipulate equipment and manage tools with increasing competence and skill
- I show enthusiasm for participating in physical play and negotiate play spaces to ensure the safety and wellbeing of myself and others

The ‘Premier’s Be Active Challenge’ is an incentive-based physical activity program that encourages all children to be more active or, in those cases where the children are already active, simply being very conscientious and recording what physical activity they have been doing. The Challenge is about achieving and recording 60 minutes a day of physical activity over four weeks. At the end of the challenge the children each receive a medallion.

The children were keen to participate in the daily activities at preschool. Many children were eager to show their physical competencies to their peers and maintained active throughout the sessions. The program helped spark conversations about the importance of physical activity and good nutrition to fuel the body and the brain. At the end of the ‘Premier’s Be Active Challenge’ the children participated in the popular obstacle-a-thon, a fundraiser for the preschool. An obstacle course was arranged with various activities that required children to balance, jump, crawl under/over and through objects, climb, slide, , balance an egg on a spoon and jump in sacks. The children were very eager to complete their 10 laps. At the conclusion of the obstacle-a-thon the children and family members enjoyed a shared morning tea. Prior to this event, all the children collected sponsors and the money raised went towards new resources and equipment to support children’s learning.