

# BallymoreBulletin



+think + play + learn + grow =



Ballymore Kindy



ISSUE 4 August 2014

## DESLEY'S DIALOGUE



By the time you read this newsletter we will be entering the final weeks of Term 3. It will have been another busy time for all of us and hopefully we are all surviving, as best we can, the ills and chills of winter. Spring is round the corner and at kindy we are especially looking forward to seeing the new growth on the trees and bushes we have planted near the shed and enjoying outside play on warmer mornings!!

Over the past two months I have been invited to make presentations to teachers on fostering children's self regulation in kindergarten and child care settings. Part of these presentations also required me to write an article for the Queensland-based journal: Educating Young Children. I have included the article in this edition of our kindy newsletter so that parents can also share in understanding why we do what we do at kindy. I hope you find it interesting reading and I welcome any feedback or questions.

I had hoped to arrange evenings in August to offer one-on-one

meeting times with parents. I have to apologise though and say that these last weeks before I commence leave on 5 September have just become too full with meetings and more. However, if you would like to talk before the September holidays, please don't hesitate to let me know. We will be able to find times during the day when we can get together or arrange phone calls. In the first weeks of Term 4, I will again schedule evenings to offer meetings with everyone.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Karen (Mrs Curling), Yvonne (Mrs Matthews), Julie Kordic and Chrissy Warner for taking care of the groups for me while I have been involved with the QCAA (Qld Curriculum and Assessment Authority). Assisting in developing curriculum resources for kindergarten teachers has been a really worthwhile experience both for myself and for kindy. It has certainly tested my abilities to look more deeply at curriculum and teaching practice and to write resources for teachers that describe and account for intentional teaching decisions. For teachers, to access resources prepared by "practising teachers" also gives much more power, and credibility to the material. This work has also allowed me the opportunity to articulate the value of play in teaching and learning with a State education organisation. The resources developed (including our filming of group 1) will be used throughout Queensland with acknowledgement given to our

centre – good advertising!!

Just in case I haven't talked enough about the value of the children's make believe play (??!!), and particularly at this time of year when people may expect us to change our practice, you might like to take a look at this link:

Kaufman, S. B. (2013). The Need for Pretend Play. Retrieved from:

<http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/beautiful-minds/2013/11/11/the-need-for-pretend-play-in-child-development/> (25 July, 2014).

This type of play is too important for children to miss out on and our Ballymore kids will have the opportunity to benefit from it right up until their last day at kindy!!

Bye for now,  
**Desley**

## Friendly Reminders



We still have vacancies for both groups in 2015. We would ask parents to pass on the word to anyone they may know with a child turning 4 before 30 June in 2015.



Ballymore Kindy is back on Facebook  
- Read more inside....

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As we begin to look forward to next year's jump to Prep, there are a bunch of children looking forward to starting Kindy at Ballymore in 2015! Places have now been offered and accepted but we are a little behind in our numbers as at the same time last year.

As a Committee and wider Kindy community, it is our job to make sure everything is in order for the years to come, just as they were for us.

With your help, we are going to get the word out there that we have places available for next year.

Unfortunately, under new funding arrangements, we do not receive the Queensland Government subsidy for taking younger children, making it important we have maximum age eligible children from 2015 onwards.

We'll have some A4 & A3 posters available at Kindy, along with some DL flyers. It would be great if you would consider a letterbox drop in your street, or take a poster to put up in good spot for preschoolers or parents of pre-schoolers to see, such as:

- your local library
- your doctors waiting room
- swimming pool (it will be warm again soon!) PCYC/ YMCA/ballet/gymnastics/ sporting centres your work place.

Katherine Napier (Sammy's Mum, Gp 1) has set up a Facebook page for the Kindy, as another way to spread the word. Please take a moment to 'like' it. It is called 'Ballymore Kindy'.

The Gowrie have offered to run an ad in the local newspaper as well, so keep an eye out for that, in the next few weeks.

We will see how our numbers go over the next term, and if we're still short, we may hire a stall at the Kelvin Grove Urban Village Saturday Markets.

Thanks in advance for your help and see you soon at one of the many social events organised by Lisa Higson (Kate's Mum, Gp 1)!

**Deanna  
President 2014**

## Ballymore Kindy on FACEBOOK



Dear Ballymore Families,

I am writing to let you know that Ballymore Kindy is back on Facebook after a small break! We think it will be a great tool for us to communicate with our past and present families and also spread the word about our wonderful kindy.

We are therefore requesting

anyone interested to 'Like' us on Facebook. To do this, you will need to log onto your personal Facebook page, search for Ballymore Kindy and select 'Like'. This means you will automatically follow the Kindy and receive posts (we promise not to bombard you with posts. In fact, it will never be more than two per week). The types of posts we intend to make include:

- Notices and updates of social occasions/plays in the park
- Interesting updates on what the children have been doing at kindy (e.g. puppet show, hatching chicks, milk carton gardening)
- Interesting articles/links/pages that I think would be beneficial reading
- Notices that we would like

to communicate to a wider audience. For example, we still have a few vacancies for 2015 and would be grateful for your support in sharing this news.

As Facebook is largely a photo-based form of communication, we may occasionally post photos of children at the kindy. We are already aware of some families who do not wish their child to appear on our website and we will carry this action across to Facebook. However, if you have previously given approval for the website but DO NOT wish your child to appear on Facebook, please let me know as soon as possible.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to seeing you on Facebook.

Desley



# SOME PREVIOUS EVENTS

## Ballymore Bushwalk



It was wonderful to see so many families at our Inaugural Family Bushwalk – what a beautiful morning! and what good fun we had! This is sure to become an annual event on our kindy calendar and we will keep our alumni families informed so that even when you have moved on from Ballymore, you are still more than welcome to come along.

## Cheese and Wine



Thank you so much to Lisa Higson and Marissa Allen for organising our Wine and Cheese Night on Friday 13 June – what a delightful evening it was!! Our backyard looked captivating with candles all around the forts. (The children would have loved it!! – but parents are allowed their own fun at kindy too!!) It was a really enjoyable way to catch up with other parents.

## Book Fair



We hope parents enjoyed the opportunity to peruse books from Riverbend Books at Bulimba during our Book Fair. If, like me, you just can't resist buying books, I hope you enjoy them and thank you everyone for the donations to our children's lending library. From the commission made on sales, we will buy additional books for our parent library. Special thanks are also sent to our past mum, Julie Kordic, for giving up her time to be available at the Book Fair and for sharing her love of books with the children, parents and staff



## SELF-REGULATION: THE WHAT, THE WHY AND

### Self-regulation: what is it?

"Children experience ups and downs when they are trying to manage their feelings and behaviours...helping them to find ways to balance this is called self-regulation". (KidsMatter, 2014)

Berk (2001) describes self-regulation as the capacity to use thought to guide behaviour. She asserts that the self-regulated child follows rules, makes deliberate decisions, well reasoned choices and decisions and takes responsibility for his or her own learning and behaviour. Early childhood is a crucial period for its development. It is a time when children learn to overcome impulses by thinking before they act.

Self regulation is one of many terms used to refer to emotional regulation. Others include: emotional regulation, emotional control, affect regulation, effortful control and emotion management. According to Nagel (2012) the various terms are a reflection of research approaches to the same topic and illustrate the links between cognition and emotion. "...emotional regulation ...is the process where children increasingly gain greater control of the behaviours that allow them to achieve functional goals." (p 153-4)

Nagel also identifies that the neural mechanisms that underlie emotional regulation may be the same as many that underlie cognitive processes including higher-order thinking processes such as sustained attention and working memory.

The importance of these higher order thinking skills and their relation to self regulation is also highlighted by a Working Paper produced by the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2001) in which the executive functioning skills of working memory (the capacity to hold and manipulate information over short periods of time), inhibitory control (the skill of

mastering and filtering thoughts and impulses to resist temptations, distractions and habits, and to pause and think before acting) and cognitive or mental flexibility (the capacity to nimbly switch gears and adjust to changed demands, priorities, or perspectives, and to apply different rules in different settings) are investigated, together with their impact on social emotional development and learning.

### Why is self-regulation important?

Early childhood professionals recognise why self regulation is important. It underpins children's cognitive and social development (Berk, 2001). "...children who demonstrate 'good' emotional regulation appear to do better across all aspects of 'schooling' and this association continues into middle schooling." (Nagel, 2012, p 155)

The executive functioning skills related to self regulation (ie working memory, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility) are essential to "the deliberate, in-

tentional, goal-directed behaviour that is required for daily life and success at work." (Harvard University, p1)

Acquiring these early building blocks of executive functioning are one of the most important, but challenging, tasks of early childhood. These skills assist children to learn to read and write, to remember the steps in mathematical problems, to take part in class discussions or group projects, to enter into and sustain play with others, to plan and act in ways that make them good students, class members and friends, and to establish a foundation to study, sustain friendships, hold a job and manage in a crisis. These underlying skills are "distinct from, but foundational to, school readiness and academic success." (Harvard, 2011, p4)

### How can we foster self-regulation?

Self regulation develops as a result of development and learning. It is linked to a range of cognitive abilities including lan-

guage capacity and it takes time to develop. In terms of brain development, Nagel (2012) highlights the interconnectedness between the cerebrum (the portion of the brain that plays a role in complex adaptive processes such as learning, perception and motivation) and the limbic system which is widely assumed to play a role in emotion. "This is one of the reasons why children may have temper tantrums in the first couple of years of their lives; increasing independence collides with emotional and verbal immaturity." (p154)

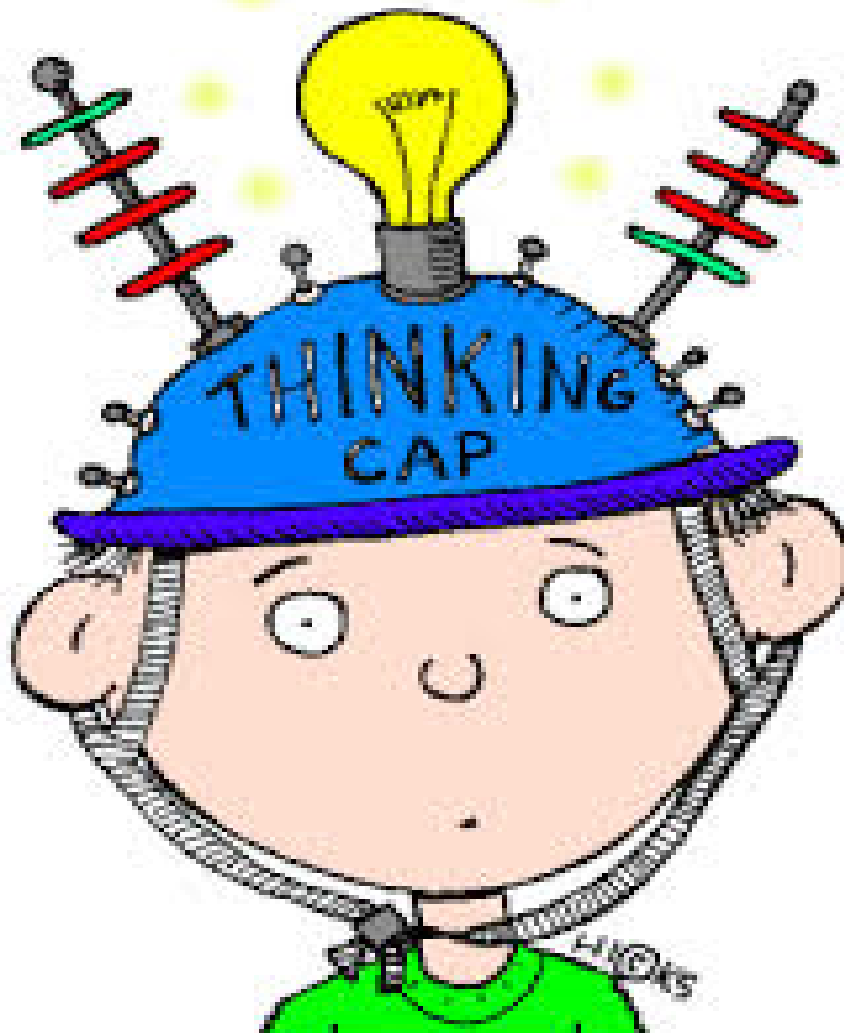
With this in mind, we need to consider various aspects of a child's development and learning in supporting the mix of physiological, behavioural and cognitive processes which impact on the growth of their self-regulation. Development of self-regulation depends on a child's individual neurobiological and temperamental characteristics along with their exposure to the types of social interactions that accompany attachment and relationship building (Nagel).

According to both Nagel and the Harvard University Working paper, the most essential elements of environments that foster self-regulation are **positive relationships** and the **scaffolding** of children's development of their regulatory abilities.

"Enhancing the development of executive functioning skills (and subsequent self regulatory abilities) involves sensitive, responsive caregiving and individualized teaching in the context of situations that require making choices, opportunities for children to direct their own activities with decreasing adult supervision over time, effective support of early emotion regulation, promotion of sustained joint attention and the availability of adults who are not under such pressure that they cannot make time for children to practise their skills." (Harvard, 2011)

Particular attention needs to be given to:

- Security, structure and routine,



# THE HOW

- Adult-child relationships that demonstrate the principles of scaffolding - guiding children from complete dependence on adult support to a gradual assumption of the “executive” role for themselves,
- The establishment of a framework for scaffolding which includes routines, cues for behaviour, breaking big tasks into smaller chunks, thus helping children to use executive function skills to the best of their abilities, and
- The use of reasoning and explanations as a strategy for compliance rather than continuously reverting to power and control, which according to Nagel may derail emotional regulation (2012, p156-7).

Ballymore Kindergarten’s framework for positive relationships, Creating a Caring Community of Learners (developed from an ECTA presentation by educational psychologist Jillian Rodd, 1999) considers self-regulation has both impacting on, and being impacted by, the other 5 elements of the framework - respect and empathy, security and order (a supportive base), agency for young children, problem solving in all aspects of the curriculum and caring communication (talking and listening).

Because of the interrelatedness of the six elements of the framework, when all 6 are considered inherently important in intentional teaching decisions, self regulation is supported and issues around behaviour are seen to be reduced. When children feel respected, valued and acknowledged; when they experience a secure, supportive environment which encourages them to generate ideas, engage in personally meaningful experiences and see themselves as highly effective problem solvers; and when the communication in the centre is one of caring talking and listening then a substantial foundation is laid for the enhancement of young children’s self regulatory abilities.

In considering more specific strategies to enhance self reg-



Desley Jones 2013

ulation, preference needs to be given to those approaches which incorporate an understanding of children’s cognitive (ie executive functioning skills) and language development, and its role in emotional regulation.

Such strategies include, but are not limited to:

- Describing emotions and physiological responses
- Calming experiences
- Encouraging private speech or self talk
- Discussing expectations, reasons, consequences
- Pre-empting positive behaviour
- Providing descriptive feedback as an alternative to praise
- Problem solving and conflict resolution
- Reframing situations
- Making reparation

## Make Believe Play

Special mention should also be made of the role of make believe play in children’s development across all areas including

self regulation. “In social pretending, preschoolers engage in lengthier interactions, are more involved, draw more children into their activity, and are more cooperative. In view of these findings, it is not surprising that 4 and 5 year olds who spend more time at sociodramatic play are advanced in intellectual development and are judged more socially competent by their teachers. Furthermore, pretend play fosters a diverse array of specific cognitive and social skills, which contribute to these broad-based outcomes.” (Berk, 2001, p119)

Make believe play provides opportunities for encouraging:

- a strong sense of agency for young children
- social activity
- mental flexibility including switching gears and seeing different perspectives
- inhibitory control through natural consequences (if you want to be part of the game, you have to comply with the group rules of the game)
- problem solving and a focus on goals

- using working memory in the recall of details for the game
- language use in planning and playing
- sustained attention over hours, days and even weeks
- scaffolding as children operate above their usual level in purposeful activities

The development of self regulation is a complex interplay of several areas of development. In supporting self regulation, those working with young children require a holistic view of children’s development together with a strong understanding of the role of relationships and the importance of high quality environments in children’s development and learning.

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## OTHER

### Ice cream dough recipe



$\frac{3}{4}$  cup hair conditioner  
(basic super cheap kind from a dollar store..  
check the odour first though!)

2 cups cornflour

Mix together in a bowl.

If it looks "melted"...add more cornflour

Ice Cream Dough "Flavour" Ingredients:

Vanilla: Imitation Vanilla, no food colouring

Chocolate: Chocolate Extract and Cocoa Powder

Strawberry: A bit of red food colouring and Imitation Strawberry

