



BALLYMORE KINDY Term 1, 2018

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Desley's dialogue

by Desley Jones, Director

Our first term at kindy is rushing to an end! No doubt you have found your child a little weary. This has been a time of enormous change and adaptation for all the children as they settle into the expectations of life at kindy. While we like to think there is a strong connection between kindy and home, the reality is that group life can be **very different** from life at home. The greatest learning curve for the children has been the acceptance of the reality of being one of 22 (or 25) children with only 3 adults at your disposal. Needless to say, this means that for many there has had to be a major adjustment in their levels of self regulation, patience, turn taking, listening and consideration of others. Over the past few weeks we have all witnessed a significant level of development in all of these areas as we settle into life together.

I would like to thank those parents who were able to attend our discussion night on "So...what is going on at kindy?" We hope the evening helped in knowing a little more about what happens in our early education program. Research is consistently highlighting that these early years of education have a crucial impact on children's later learning.

I am also attaching an article that sheds a little more light on the reasoning underpinning our curriculum's focus on children's make believe play. Our games are of great importance to the children as you have probably noticed. Please feel free to speak with any of the staff if you have any comments or queries.

I am also including a short article on the place of rest time in our kindy program. Over the first few weeks it can be difficult to account for everyone's needs. Thank you parents for your patience and communications with us. Rest time serves many important purposes in a child's day. Our goal is NOT for the children to sleep. Hopefully this article will shed more light on why resting on our beds is a valued time of day.

I have set aside two days in the second last week of term for individual discussions with parents. These are important opportunities to share information about your child in the group setting. Sharing knowledge between home and kindy helps us to know, and to plan for your child in the most appropriate way. Please remember if none of the available dates is suitable we can make alternative arrangements.



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Useful information provided by Desley regarding our children's rest time.

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President's Report

by Catherine Bonifant, President 2018

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to Ballymore Kindy. I hope that you and your kindy kid have had a wonderful start to the year. We are so fortunate to have such a beautiful space and community of families at Ballymore, and a team of kind and talented staff. It is my third year at Ballymore and it just keeps getting better and better.

The 2018 committee held our first meeting at the end of February, and due to the diligence, commitment, and organisation of the 2017 committee, we have well and truly hit the ground running. The 2018 committee are: Catherine Bonifant, President (Charlotte, Group 1), Jenny Ramsay, Secretary (Dylan, Group 2), Marty Platz, Treasurer (Finn, Group 2), Roland Nicholson, Maintenance (Layla, Group 1), Matthew Anish, Promotions (Joshua, Group 1), Gerald Arends, Grants/WHS (Magdalena, Group 2), and Juliet Hoey, Social (Isla, Group 2). If you would like to know more about what the committee does, or would like to be more involved, you are so very welcome to contact any one of us at any time.

Term 1 is a busy time for the kindy, with the first of our Working Bees taking place on the 3rd of March. There were 9 parents in attendance, and the work rate was phenomenal! The sandpit, mud pit, and outdoor equipment all received a makeover, and the trees and gardens were trimmed and tidied. Roland was exceptional at keeping the crew on task. A huge thank you to all involved, and for those who have volunteered for future Working Bees.



The annual Ballymore Kindy alumni catch up also took place in March, with the largest number of families in attendance on record! This is a testament to how highly regarded the kindy and staff are to all past and present families. Thank you to all who attended. It was wonderful to catch up with so many new and old friends.

Be sure to note the dates for coffee catch-ups and playdates in the park in your diary, as well as one of the highlights of the kindy calendar, the Wine and Cheese night, which is being held at the kindy on the 11th of May. This is a fabulous opportunity to catch up with other parents in a relaxed environment, and the kindy always looks so gorgeous by night, with tea lights glowing and music playing. Juliet will keep us informed of all the social events happening in the kindy throughout the year.

I would also like to extend an enormous thank you to Agatha McAndrew (Jack, Group 2) for kindly volunteering to prepare the kindy's newsletter each term this year. This is

her third year undertaking this job and we are so very grateful for her time and effort.

And finally, if you enjoy social media, you can like and follow Ballymore on Facebook (Ballymore Kindy) and Instagram (ballymorekindy). And while you're there, it would be wonderful if you could take some time to write a Google Review for the kindy – just google Ballymore Kindy, and on the pop-up box on the right of the screen, click the **Write Review** tab. Positive reviews help maintain Ballymore's exceptional reputation.

There is so much for our children to look forward to as part of the kindy program in the coming year, as well as lots of opportunities for learning, socialising and developing for us as parents and carers to enjoy and embrace. I look forward to spending time with you over the coming months.

Catherine Bonifant

IMPORTANT KINDY EVENTS TO ADD TO YOUR DIARY!

11 MAY

Wine and Cheese Night for parents

29 & 31 MAY

Reef experience Puppet Show

Wk beg. 16 JULY

School Photos (first week of Term 3)

Reconsidering Rest Time

by Desley Jones, Director

For many of us, adults and teachers alike, rest time at kindergarten and child care is often assumed to be focused on encouraging children to have a daytime sleep or at the very least to rest for a while. While service providers are required, under Federal Regulations, “to ensure that the needs for sleep and rest of children being educated and cared for are met”, a daily routine of rest and relaxation offers many other benefits for children’s wellbeing and development.

“Rest time” at Ballymore spans 30-40 minutes during our day – a little longer for those who may fall asleep (not a goal that we hold, unless some children show a high level of tiredness or over tiredness). And yes we readily acknowledge that not all children will enjoy “rest time” but that, as we know, does not mean that it is not an important experience to include in their day. What it does mean, though, is that we need to communicate to children why taking time out to rest and relax bodies and brains (at any age) is an important self-care activity to engage in.

KidsMatter, the mental health initiative for early childhood and primary schools, emphasizes the importance of learning to relax to a child’s mental health and wellbeing. Ensuring that rest is a consistent part of a child’s daily routine, together with meal times, bed times, play times and bath times, provides a security to young children that they know what to expect in their day and that certain activities are important for their health. Setting up routines at an early age can provide a lifelong approach to self-care. The notion that “being always busy” is a preferred state of being needs some challenging. “Busyness”, especially for young children, does not always equate with learning as over activity can also be a sign of over-tiredness and children moving past a point of being able to successfully manage without significant support.

With only one room at kindy, our options in meeting a diverse range of needs for rest are challenged. However, resting in a room with other children who provides the opportunity to support children in their developing awareness of considering the needs of others and inhibiting their own responses in meeting the needs of the group –

valuable self-development for fostering positive relationships and executive functioning.

This ability to inhibit responses for a period of time is foundational to children building self-regulation. As already discussed this year, self-regulation is now considered to be a crucial component to children’s future success both academically and socially. Self-regulation not only refers to children’s managing their emotions and behaviours. It also relates to the control of cognitive skills such as focus, attention and memory. When children are able to quieten their bodies for a period of time, focus their attention on the story being read during rest time, then we assist them to lay strong foundations for being able to sit quietly in a group at Prep and direct their attention to the teacher – this will be a very real demand on them next year.

At kindy, our rest times usually begin with some quiet music being played – providing a daily opportunity for children to experience a range of music from classical music, to World music to Indigenous music. Our rest time always concludes with a story being read to the children as they lay on their beds, offering a valuable opportunity for practicing listening skills and the self-regulation of auditory attention.

No doubt many people will consider that rest time is a “break” time for adults working with young children. It certainly does offer the opportunity to answer phone calls etc and to meet with parents and others such as local Principals. It is, however, important to us to strive to make our small space as calm as possible – if we want children to quiet their bodies and brains then we need to support this. Staff will use the time to sit with the children, to write up documentation, record play and observations from the day and work on plans for future days. More importantly, rest time also allows us the chance to sit beside individual children in a quiet calm environment, building connections in what can often be a busy noisy day.

I hope this short article sheds a little more light on a time of day that often may seem purposeless. In reality, it is a significant time for building both our groups’ sense of community as well individual children’s wellbeing.

Did you know? - Planning in Education

by Desley Jones

Early education programs such as kindergartens and child care centres are required to adhere to curriculum documents at both the national and state level.

At Ballymore Kindergarten, our planning is informed by:

- *Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework of Australia (EYLF)* and
- *The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG)*



The **EYLF** is part of the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) reform agenda for early childhood education and care, and is a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care. It underpins universal access to early childhood education and has been incorporated in the National Quality Standard (NQS) in order to ensure delivery of nationally consistent and quality early childhood education across sectors and jurisdictions.

The EYLF describes the principles, practices and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as it provides the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

The **QKLG** provides advice for planning, interacting with children, monitoring and assessing, and sharing information in kindergarten contexts (ie the year before children commence formal schooling).

The Guideline:

- Is based on the EYLF
- Is an approved framework under the National Quality Standard (NQS)
- Helps services meet the criteria for an approved kindergarten program, in order to access state government funding.



Both documents are available at the kindy for parents to read.

Why do we play 'games' at kindy?

by Desley Jones

Why is make believe or pretend play such an important focus in our curriculum at Ballymore?

- This is such a natural way for children play. Do you remember building cubbies under the dining room table? Dressing up in mum's jewellery? Flying your cardboard box "aeroplane" around the backyard? As children we liked to "try on" different roles to see how it felt – children today are just the same!
- Children are not, as some may think, "empty vessels" waiting to be filled with appropriate knowledge by teachers. By the time children arrive at kindy they have already acquired a significant range of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Establishing make believe games provides children with reasons to access that knowledge, refine it and build on it.
- In this type of program, children are seen as active (not passive) learners whose ideas are valued and who are encouraged to be creative decision makers and problem solvers. This is so important for their sense of identity – for autonomy, independence and the confidence to face and deal with new situations and problems.
- By being able to act on their ideas, children are motivated to extend their development and learning. Motivation is derived from a sense of purpose. Children are more likely to be actively engaged and learning when the experience has personal relevance to them. For example: it's much more interesting to use pen and paper to draw a space map to use in your spaceship than because someone has told you to do a drawing!
- Language plays a major role in this program as children are encouraged to share ideas and communicate for a variety of purposes in their play. Language is vital to thinking and learning. Talking about ideas helps children to clarify their experiences and thoughts, and can help them to make connections between new and existing knowledge.
- By its very nature make believe play emphasises social relationships – focussing on children communicating and relating to one another in a variety of contexts. Children are encouraged to not only be independent in their efforts but also interdependent as the group identity is stressed – the need to be aware of others, and respectful of individual ideas and efforts.
- Make believe play supports research into brain development. Our play takes place in a climate of relaxed alertness. It involves content that engages the whole child in rich and complex problem solving, and allows opportunities for the child to bring to the surface, or represent, what is experienced or learned (Caine & Caine, 1994).
- Make believe play provides practice for developing executive function skills – remembering what is happening in the game, controlling responses so that the game will continue, and responding flexibly when aspects of the game change.
- Make believe play encourages the use of symbols - ie something representing something else. This symbolisation is the first step in developing literacy and numeracy, and the understanding that letters and numbers are symbols with meaning.
- Make believe play accommodates different learning styles and allows children to experience success as they play at their own level and stretch themselves to meet goals they have set. There is no "right" way to engage in make believe play. In addition, such play provides opportunities to interact in different ways. Quieter children can be seen to be a leader in play when their role requires it or when the game has relevance to them or has developed from their own idea.
- Make believe play is an effective strategy to assist children in meeting the 5 outcome areas of the Qld Kindergarten Learning Guidelines – Identity, Connectedness, Wellbeing, Active Learning and Communication and reflects the philosophy of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:

Belonging is the basis for a fulfilling life – relationships with family, community, culture and place are paramount,

Being is about living the here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be' – time to play, try new things, have fun, and

Becoming is about the learning and development that young children are capable of.

EXTRA INFORMATION

Friendly Reminders

- Under National Regulations, it is essential that your child is signed in, and out, each day. Our sign-in sheet is also used as our record of attendance when we hold our fire drills so having everyone recorded is imperative.
- To assist in maintaining health and safety of everyone at kindy, please remind your child to wash their hands as they arrive at, and leave the kindy each day. We know the children like to come to the carpet as soon as they arrive but it is really essential that we ensure all hands are washed on arrival before they join us.
- Parents, please remember to reverse your cars in when parking at kindy – and please let anyone else know who may be doing drop-off and/or pick-up. While we have no control over other people who may park in this area, reverse parking helps in keeping children safe as they move through the area. Please see you Parent Information Handbook for more details.

Donations of Paper

We are hoping parents may be able to assist in building up our supply of paper for painting and drawing. Any size, colour, thickness would be gratefully accepted. We are in **urgent need!!**

Playdough Recipe by Mrs Matthews and Mrs Curling

Ingredients

- 3 cups plain flour
- 1½ cups salt
- 6 tablespoons cream of tartar
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 3 cups water
- Colouring/food dye

Method

- Put all ingredients into large saucepan.
- Mix thoroughly and consistently, until it all comes together.



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