



BALLYMORE KINDY

Term 2, 2018

June 2018

NEWSLETTER, EDITION 2 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

Hello everyone and welcome to the Term 2 edition of our Ballymore Bulletin. We hope the information herein will be of interest and value to your family.

It's hard to believe that we are almost half way through your child's kindy year and in the next 2 months our enrolment process will begin for 2019!!

I know at this stage of the year, many schools are already beginning their enrolment process for Prep.

Please feel free to contact me if you have queries regarding your child's transition onto Prep. The state government has guaranteed funding for any child having a second year at kindy and this can be very beneficial for some children, allowing additional time to develop in a less formalized educational environments. When we commence enrolments for 2019, Chris and I will send an email asking parents to let us know if they are considering giving their child extra time before Prep. We will want to reserve a space in your preferred group.

I have included two articles in this newsletter:

1. All S/he Ever Does is Play: What About the Three R's?. With all the talk about play-based learning and our 'games' of pretend at Ballymore, I know many parents will wonder how this approach contributes to children literacy and numeracy learning and

development. I hope this article will assure you that these areas of development are well supported in our program.

2. Strategies to Support Self-regulation of Emotions and Behaviour. Chris has recently posted this article on our website but I think it is always worth sharing. We talk a lot about children's self-regulation!! That is because the preschool years are an important time in which to scaffold this development. Self-regulation requires practice and support from significant adults in a child's life. This article shares some strategies that we use at kindy and that can easily be adapted to home life.

Happy reading everyone.



Strategies relating to self-regulation

Desley An informative and important piece of work written by Desley regarding how we can help promote self-regulation within our children.

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Extra Information

Some important reminders and information for all.

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President's Report

by Catherine Bonifant, President 2018

Welcome to Term 2! The children have enjoyed another action-packed program, which highlights including their first excursion, library borrowing, and the Reef Experience visit from Kevin. The committee, too, has been busy, working with parents and staff to support and promote the kindy.

The kindy hosted its annual wine and cheese evening on Friday the 11th of May. The playground looked magical bathed in tea lights and everyone enjoyed a drink and some snacks and a lovely catch up in a relaxed environment. Thanks to all the families who came along.

Our open day was held on Saturday the 19th of May, with 39 families visiting the kindy throughout the morning. The staff and helpful volunteer parents spoke with each family about the kindy, and the children were able to participate in activities just like a kindy kid. It was a wonderful showcase of the opportunities children are afforded at Ballymore. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time to help out – in delivering flyers, setting up, and their attendance on the day.

A huge thank you must go to the parents who attended the working bee on the 5th of May, and to those on the weekend mowing and gardening roster. Your time and clearly enormous effort in keeping the kindy looking so neat and tidy is greatly appreciated.

Works on the kindy playground will commence during the June/July holidays. An exciting new play space has been designed and will be ready for the children at the start of term 3. The children (and staff!) are



already excited about what they will see after the break.

Be sure to mark the 14th of September in your diaries for the annual parent dinner. This is another great opportunity to catch up with other parents in a relaxed environment. Details will be confirmed closer to the date.

Thank you to all the families who have purchased books during the kindy's annual Book Fair. Your generous contributions help keep the kindy library well-stocked and modern, and the children love seeing their names, and their friends names, on the inside cover.

A reminder for all families to take care when exiting the car park. On such a busy road, coupled with the bus stop, visibility can be tricky. The committee made contact with the Brisbane City Council about making the kindy are a school zone, or a 40km/hour zone, but we were unsuccessful in our application. Also take care when parking, and for safety, reverse your car when you arrive. Thank you for your continued attention to this.

Finally, on behalf of the committee, I would like to congratulate Desley on her successful submission of 2 papers that she will present at the Organisation Mondiale de l'Éducation Prescolaire (World Organisation for Early Childhood Education and Care) in Prague in June. Desley's first presentation is titled "Playful thinking: Building executive functioning capacity through children's play ideas", and then she will present a second paper on inclusive environments, titled "Creating a Caring Community of Learners...for All". This is a wonderful achievement, and a recognition of the exceptionally high quality service and care provided by Desley and the team at Ballymore. We wish Desley all the very best with her presentations, safe travels, and look forward to hearing highlights from this international meeting of experts on her return.

I hope to see you at Bellbird Grove for the Ballymore Kindy Bushwalk on the 17th of June. As always, please let me know if you have questions or suggestions about how the committee can best support you and your family whilst at Ballymore.

Catherine Bonifant

IMPORTANT KINDY EVENTS TO ADD TO YOUR DIARY!

17 JUNE	Family Bushwalk (a detailed invitation will be emailed to everyone)
17 JULY	Group 1 Class Photo
19 JULY	Group 2 Class Photo

Strategies to Support Self-regulation of Emotions and Behaviour

by Desley Jones, Director

For young children, being able to adapt to the expectations of a social world requires the development of both emotional and behavioural regulation.

"... while most caregivers recognise children need help in organising their external world (or their behaviour), for many the idea that children need help organising their internal world (or feelings) is a new one." (Dolby, 2007)

As educators we believe that how we assist children in organising both their internal and their external worlds can have significant impacts on their sense of worth and competency. The decisions that we make in this regard are some of the most fundamental of our intentional teaching.

Just as we help children to learn to read and write, so we must also help them to learn how to control emotions and be social. **It is about empowering children to face a range of situations, to recognise emotions in themselves and others, and to develop the emotional and social competencies to respond appropriately.** When adults approach this task in a calm, quiet but focused manner and with an underlying goal to empower children, rather than diminish them, then we set a concrete model of respect and empathy for others.

Strategies:

With so many personalities and situations to address, having a range of strategies at hand provides educators with a sense of capability in what can be challenging times, and the same can apply to parents.

Some basic reflection can be a good starting point. Consider the environment (kindy or home) from the child's perspective: Is the environment interesting, inviting, over-stimulating, unmanageable? Are children able to access toys for themselves? Are they able to be independent or do they have to rely on adult assistance to engage in any activities? Do they have a space that can be their own to play in? Is there adequate adult help to assist with social dilemmas? Is the daily routine predictable and logical for children? Are demanding times in the day lengthy and tedious? Do children have enough time to explore ideas and play and to spend in the company of interested adults?

Keeping a daily diary to record the most demanding times, for children and educators/parents, provides useful information in analysing what is happening and how to offset any issues. Sometimes, small changes to the daily routine can make a big difference, e.g. dinner before the bath rather than afterwards.

When challenging situations arise there are many positive responses that can be employed and which respect and empathise with children while encouraging them to begin to understand, and take responsibility for their own emotions and behaviour.

- Acknowledge, and label children's emotions and experiences as an important starting point: "I can see you were really frustrated when Jock took your car away. I would feel that way too but hitting him won't help. What other things can we do?"
- Label our own emotions too and then show children how we calm ourselves when things get too much. Talk with them about breathing deeply, thinking calm thoughts, making our bodies calm and peaceful. Demonstrate what we do to relax – take a bath, read a story, go for a walk. Involve them when you can!
- Discuss expectations and the reasons underlying them with children and, where feasible, converse with children about how expectations may be met. "We will have to wait at the post office for a little while today. I know that can be hard to do. What could you take to play with, to make it easier?"
- Bring children in close to help them in self-managing (rather than pushing them away): "I can see it is hard for you to sit beside your brother at the table today. Let's put your chair by me. I'll help you out." This strategy tells them that you do understand the difficulty involved but that you are prepared to help rather than just be annoyed.

- Take care with the words we use. When there is no choice be sure to say: "I want you to..." rather than "Would you like to..."
- Encourage appropriate use of the word "sorry". When children are hurt and cross, demanding that they say "sorry" is often unproductive. Coaching children to use the word when an inadvertent accident happens builds their social and emotional understanding: "Jenny, I noticed that you accidentally stepped on Sean's puzzle. It would be a good idea to look at him and say 'I'm sorry Sean.'"
- When children react to others out of anger, providing them with an opportunity to make reparation maintains their self worth and gives them a productive way to manage the situation: "Sarah, I want you to look at Maree and say 'Are you alright?'. Bring her over to me and I will give you an icepack to hand to her. And I want you to get her a drink of water."
- In conflicts, avoid identifying one child as the victim and one as the aggressor. Neither label is helpful to the children involved, and often conflicts may have arisen from previous incidents. It is more productive to manage the current situation in a calm, matter-of-fact way and acknowledge that probably both children could have made different, more appropriate, choices.
- Pre-empt positive behaviour. Even as a child is running through the house, commenting: "Thank you for remembering to walk." can be enough to avert an issue and provides a positive reminder of what is needed.
- Use descriptive feedback rather than overdoing praise. When we respond with comments such as "Good boy." Or "Well done" or "That's terrific" we limit the information we are giving children. Having a simplified focus on praise can also raise issues eg What does it mean if we didn't praise a child's painting, behaviour, climbing? Descriptive feedback, however, clearly tells a child what they did and why it was effective. "Bill when you moved away from Theresa, it told me that you remembered she doesn't like it when you tickle her." "Thanks for helping with tidy up everyone. Now we can have a longer time to play."
- Use problem solving when conflicts arise to provide children with a strong sense of capability in managing situations: stating the problem, thinking of possible solutions (brainstorming together), choosing one, implementing and evaluating.
- Allow children to have the control to make a limited choice with regard to natural consequences: "Bill if you choose to play safely with the truck than you will be able to stay in the sandpit. But if you choose to throw it again, then you will have to come to a different place to play. Which one will you choose?"

Undoubtedly the best strategy we have is to model words and behaviour for children. They learn from the significant people around them. Helping children to manage the emotional and social milieu of childhood, and beyond, is an ongoing task for adults.

Calmness and control, patience, energy, a clear sense of direction, and teamwork are all essential for adults living and working with young children. In the heat of the moment it can be hard to always make the right decision. Being kind to yourself and accepting that we are "human" rather than "perfect", is an important message that we can model for children and other adults.



All S/He Ever Does Is Play – What About The Three R's?

by Desley Jones

Literacy and numeracy are fundamental aspects of our everyday lives. Our kindergarten curriculum provides experiences that enable children to develop the foundation skills that will underpin their later literacy and numeracy learning.

Literacy (ie reading and writing) encompasses a range of skills and attitudes, beyond knowing the alphabet.

These skills and attitudes include:

- Thinking and problem solving
- Listening
- Communicating with each other to share ideas
- Taking an interest in books
- Using books for a purpose
- Making inferences about stories from picture clues
- Being aware of environmental print
- Scribbling, drawing and writing about ideas
- Practising reading behaviour
- Recalling and telling stories to construct meaning
- Role playing writing
- Understanding that the written word has meaning – a shared symbol

Numeracy also involves many more skills and attitudes than counting and knowing numbers:

- Describing attributes
- Sorting and classifying
- Comparing
- Patterning
- Measuring
- Counting and one-to-one correspondence
- Being aware of numerals – the symbols for numbers
- Ordering – eg from biggest to smallest
- Understanding shape and space
- Thinking and problem solving with, and about, mathematical concepts
- Using numbers to communicate ideas

Our play curriculum provides a myriad of opportunities for children to explore, experiment, pose and solve problems, interact with others, manipulate materials and equipment and talk about what they are doing. Through these experiences children develop the foundations for literacy and numeracy.

Our pretend play gives children **real purposes** for using literacy and numeracy skills. For example – At the Boost Juice Bar, the players had to:

Count cups, making sure there was one for each customer

Sort juices into different types

Measure amounts of juice and compare colours

Solve problems such as how to manage a number of people in a small space

Listen and speak to each other to give and take orders

Make a sign for the bar in order to communicate a message to others

Write orders for drinks

Read orders back to the drink makers

In this one play scenario, a number of literacy and numeracy skills and attitudes were being employed and consolidated. Our games of fairies, firemen, doctors, dinosaurs etc can all be analysed in terms of the literacy and numeracy foundations that are incorporated into them.

As children play their “games” at kindy, they are initiating and developing their own ideas. This ownership of the activity means that they are stakeholders in the decision making process of the curriculum. As a result, they are often more motivated to complete tasks, to gain new information and to **stretch** their skills. In play, children are more likely to take risks, to have a go and to experiment with new ideas and skills.

The strong relationship between pretend play and the use of symbols, such as letters and numbers, has often been noted by researchers:

Pretend play allows children to develop their abilities to use symbols, to represent experience and to construct imaginary worlds. For example; it is the same process of symbolic representation whether a child uses a block (an object) to represent a cat, or letters (c-a-t) to represent the animal. In both reading and writing, as in pretend play, children become absorbed in a world and events that are divorced from present time and circumstances. When children read and write, it involves fluency in using words to call up experiences not present in the here and now. Pretend play, where children create imaginary texts through play, requires the same skills.” (Danby, S., 1998).

EXTRA INFORMATION

Cool Weather Considerations

This time of year invariably brings with it a number of ills and chills, particularly when young children are sharing a space together. Here are some health notes put together by one of our medical parents in an earlier Bulletin:

How can we reduce the spread of illness in our centre and to the rest of the family???

- Keep children **home** if they have **thick or green runny noses**
- Keep children **home** if they have a **temperature, sore throat, moist or persistent cough or sore ears**
- Keep children **home** for at least 24 hours after the last **vomit or diarrhoea**
- **Teach children to:**
 1. Sneeze, cough or blow noses into tissues and then dispose of in nearest bin
 2. Sneeze or cough into their upper sleeve or elbow
 3. Wash hands with soap and water after sneezing or coughing, after touching their nose or mouth when they are sick, before and after eating, after going to the toilet and before and after preschool.

Kevin's Puppet Show

Kevin Galland from Evergreen Children's Theatre visited both groups with this puppet show – Reef Experience. Kevin's shows are perfectly pitched to this age group. His 'set' is similar to the spaces that we build for our games, he encourages us to 'pretend' that we are diving under the sea, and involves the children in all aspects of his story telling. He also includes a conservation message. In this show it was about ensuring that rubbish is put into bins so that it does not find its way to the oceans and impact on our wonderful sea creatures.



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