

# BallymoreBulletin



+think + play + learn + grow =



Ballymore Kindy



Term 4 2020

## Desley's Dialogue



In this final bulletin of the year I would like to extend many thanks to many people:

- To all our families for choosing to send your child to our small community kindy. We hope we have played a positive role in your child's, and your family's, life.
- To everyone for their contributions throughout 2020, in whatever form they took – helping at working bees and on mowing roster, letter box dropping information for our Open Day, joining in social functions when possible, picking up and returning museum loans, donating to our book library, gathering collage materials, sharing with us the delights (and dilemmas) of your child's development and learning, sharing news of our kindy with others, etc, etc. Every interaction has played a part in maintaining our identity as a **community centre**.
- To our management committee for running our small business via online meetings. Our tech skills have certainly grown! Thank you everyone for the support you have given to the staff and families of Ballymore.
- To the fabulous people that I have the pleasure to work with - Yvonne (Mrs Matthews), Karen (Mrs Curling) and Chris (Mrs Nicoll) in the office – we are a great team!

*Desley*



### END OF YEAR REMINDERS

**Library Books:** Both our children's and parent's libraries will close from the week beginning 30 November. Please return any books you may have at home by this time.

**Kindy sheets:** If you no longer require yours, please feel free to leave with us! They will come in handy as spare sets!!

### LAST DAYS OF KINDY FOR 2020

**Tuesday – 8 December**

**Friday – 11 December**

# From the Office



**2020 has been a year like no other!** We very much thank the management committee for their efforts throughout what has been a challenging time.

It has been fantastic to finish the year with so many projects completed:

- 2 new sheds
- A facelift for our sandpit
- New flooring and lighting in our playroom
- Work underway for projects in 2021 which will see a rebuild of our forts and other outdoor areas, and
- Full enrolments for 2021!



**And a most exciting achievement this year was our centre being rated as Exceeding National Quality Standards – congratulations to the staff!!**



# The changes ahead:

The changes (and excitement and activity) brought about by the end of one year and the beginning of a new year can be stressful for everyone, including young children. Sometimes they experience emotions – both positive and negative – that they can neither name nor understand. Even children who seem very mature and ready for the changes may suddenly be impacted by the experiences.

Sometimes we will be surprised to see some regression in behaviour where we least expect it. However we should remind ourselves that for young children, leaving one group and joining another, is no different to an adult leaving one workplace and joining another (much bigger, noisier and less familiar) one. As adults, we can understand and name our reactions to this change, but this is very hard for young children to do and such reactions may then be displayed in other ways.

## How can we help:

- Give children time to adapt
- Keep our expectations realistic and undemanding
- Provide downtime at home rather than more busy time
- Limit extra curricula activities initially – they will be exhausted physically and emotionally
- Make time to rest and regroup on the weekends – for children and adults alike
- Use kindy as a reference point – building on past experiences



## With this change in mind, I am including the following short articles:

- ***Young Children and Stress*** - strategies for helping young children to manage stress. You may recognise it as I previously sent it in the first weeks of COVID restrictions, and
- ***Moving On ... Kindy to Prep***

During our final weeks at kindy we will be cognisant of emotions that the children may be experiencing and our focus will be on:

- maintaining our predictable routine,
- being available to support children in social interactions,
- planning plenty of time for play,
- structuring activities so that children are inclined to cooperate rather than compete,
- being mindful of individual differences as children respond to situations and activities,
- providing guidance and/or direction when needed and
- enjoying music, stories and relaxation together as much as possible.

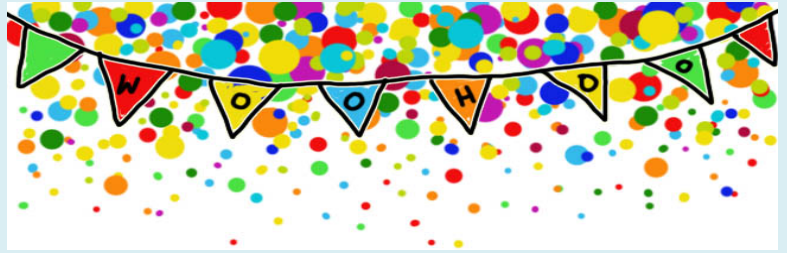


Thank you again everyone and we wish all our families a safe and restful holiday break in anticipation of all that 2021 will bring!

**Desley**

## End-of-Kindy Celebrations

We look forward to celebrating our End-of-Kindy with all our families and hope you have marked your diaries: **Thursday 26 November** for Group 1 and **Thursday 3 December** for Group 2. Both evenings will be from 6.30 til 7.30pm.



In case you are wondering: As in previous years, this celebration will **not** be a performance by the children, nor a Christmas celebration. Instead it is a time for parents and children to share some of what has made our year together so special. Hope you can make it!

*More details will follow closer to the time as we consider restrictions and health and safety protocols that we need to follow.*

## Spread the Word about Ballymore Kindy!

Do you know of anyone who is looking for the right Kindy for their child to attend in **2022 or beyond**? Our beautiful, not-for-profit, community kindergarten might just be the place for them. Ballymore Kindy now has their enrolment list open right up to 2025, and we would love you to help us **get the word out!**

### **You could do this by:**

- ✓ liking us on Facebook (Ballymore Kindy)
- ✓ sharing Ballymore Kindy Facebook posts to Groups or Business Pages you may be involved in (such as Mother's groups, playgroups or schools)
- ✓ collecting some Ballymore Kindy brochures from Desley's office to leave at workplace receptions, on front counters of shops, or with any interested parents you may know
- ✓ simply talking about Ballymore Kindy at school pick-up/drop-off or playgroups/mothers' groups and directing interested parents to our website: [www.ballymorekindy.com.au](http://www.ballymorekindy.com.au)

To attend Ballymore Kindy, children must be 4 years old by June 30 of the year they wish to attend, in order to satisfy the Approved Kindergarten Program requirements.

Please encourage all parents who are interested in enrolling their child at Ballymore to contact Desley or Chris by email at [admin@ballymorekindy.com.au](mailto:admin@ballymorekindy.com.au) or by phone on **3252 3732**.

### RECYCLING YOUR COFFEE CAPSULES

**Please keep dropping in your coffee capsules to the bin near the sign on book.**

**We are regularly sending boxes full to Terracycle and collecting points which are transferred to \$\$ which are then donated to the Ronald McDonald House!**

**Ask your friends and family to collect as well!**

### Parent Survey

Every year the staff seek our parent's feedback about their experiences at Ballymore Kindy. We value your feedback and hope you can find 2 -3 minutes to use this link and answer a few questions – Thank You!

[2020 Parent Survey](#)

# Thinking about and representing our world!

Our jacaranda trees have inspired artwork throughout October.



Thank you again to all the parents who went out of their way to drop off and pick up museum specimens.

The past two terms have been filled with engaged conversations and wonderings about our natural world, as our "museum gallery" demonstrates.



# Young Children and Stress

Stress is a normal, unavoidable part of life. It affects everyone, even babies and young children. Some stress is useful: it keeps us motivated, wanting to do things and change things. However, too much stress can cause a number of difficulties.

Children, as well as adults, face stress from time to time, and stress can result from situations that incur both negative, and positive, emotions. Each child will react individually to different stress factors depending on their personalities, their own needs, and family and cultural reactions. Events which may cause stress for one child may not affect another child at all.

Some examples of situations that are likely to cause stress for children include:

- Loss of a loved one
- Moving house or major changes in routine
- Birth of a new baby
- Beginning or changing school
- Learning difficulties
- Excessive expectations from families
- Social difficulties
- Managing intense situations particularly when hot or tired.

At this time of year, with children leaving a familiar environment, anticipating their beginning at prep or in a new kindy group, facing the excitement of celebrations, holidays away from home and its routines together with the vagaries of Queensland weather, it is reasonable to expect that most children will experience some level of stress in the next few months.



Children show stress in many different ways. Some of these are:

Accident proneness	Hitting
Aggressiveness	Kicking
Anger	Indigestion
Anxiety	insomnia
Appetite loss	Stuttering
Baby talk	Thumb sucking
Bedwetting	Pounding heart
Biting	Grinding teeth
Crying spells	Fingernail biting
Detachment	Tattling
Extreme laziness	Illness

**Helping children manage stress.** If we can teach stress management skills to children at an early age, we can give them a life-long ability to cope with anxiety and tension. We can teach young children helpful techniques for handling stress – and they may quickly generalise these ideas to helping to manage other problems in their lives.

## Ways of helping children manage stress:

- Most importantly help children to distinguish between a major problem and an inconvenience. You will know your child best – how can you empower them rather than building a victim mentality.
- Consider physical management of stress: through diet, sleep, exercise
- Relaxation techniques: Relaxation can be therapeutic and beneficial. Learning how to relax is one of the most useful ways for children to manage stress.
- Deep breathing
- Progressive muscle relaxation (sequentially tensing and releasing muscles – fingers, toes, eyes, teeth, shoulders, tummy muscles)

- Doing an activity that they identify as calming (eg warm bath, read a book, listen to music)
- Creative visualisation: Relaxation exercises which use visual imagery or stories ( eg floating on a cloud or lying on a beach) paint a picture of calm and peace, helping some children to relax more deeply.
- Teach children to identify stressful situations, talk about them and name emotions (“That would make you feel disappointed, frustrated, embarrassed...”). Boys especially find this difficult and their expression of emotions is often only through anger.
- Get into the habit of talking to children about their day. Share good things or funny things that have happened to you, as well as examples of how you solved problems in your day.
- Children need to know that it is ok to make mistakes. Adults can model that mistakes are a great way to learn how to do things.
- Teach positive self statements to help them cope in challenging situations (eg “I can do this” “I will be ok” “I can be brave”)
- Help your child to identify GREEN thoughts (helpful thoughts that lead to pleasant feelings) and RED thoughts (unhelpful thoughts that lead to unpleasant feelings). Encourage them to let the RED thoughts slide away and the GREEN thoughts to stick.
- When children are in a stressful or hard situation encourage them to take a deep breath and think what to do. ‘Even when we are scared we can still think.’
- Allow periods of ‘quiet time’ when children can learn to relax. A rest after lunch, a regular period of listening to music or family rest time when everyone is quiet, will encourage this useful skill.
- Use humour as a model to manage stress. A child who learns to use humour will be better able to keep things in perspective.
- Develop personal mantras: “I can be brave, mum will be back at the end of the day”
- Acknowledge feelings: “I know you find it hard/feel sad when it is time to say goodbye, but...” (follow it with a positive message about their capabilities) – “...you know you can be brave. You have done that before.”
- Engage children in problem solving about the situation “What do you think might make it easier to say goodbye without crying?” eg car pooling with a friend



***You might like to practice the breathing exercises we do at kindy too!***

- **Flower breathing** – holding our hands together at chest height in the shape of a flower. As we breathe in, the flower opens and as we breathe out, it closes.
- **Hand breathing** – holding one hand stretched out, we trace along each finger, breathing in as we go up the first finger (thumb) and then breathing out as we go down the other side.
- **Counting breaths** – as we breathe in we lift each finger of one hand one by one (ie breathing to the count of 5) and then close each finger one by one as we breathe out.
- **Snake breaths** – we inhale a large breath and then exhale with a long drawn out hiss, emptying our lungs. Our next breath in is a deeper, fresher one to refill the lungs.
- **Rocket breaths** – with hands held together in front of our body, we shoot them into the air as we breathe in quickly, and then exhale loudly and forcefully as they come back down to the sides of our body.
- **Balloon breathing** – imagine your tummy is a balloon and make it grow bigger as you breathe in.
- **Alternate nostrils** – use a finger to hold one nostril closed. Alternate nostrils as you breathe in and out.
- **Cooling breath** – with teeth together and tongue pressed at the back of teeth, breathe in through the mouth and out through the nose. Can you feel the cool air?

# Moving on ...from Kindy to Prep

The move from kindy to prep can be both an exciting, and daunting, prospect for children and parents. This next step in education offers so many possibilities, experiences, dilemmas and delights.

From the close confines of a small kindergarten group and setting, the “preppie” moves into a busy world of hundreds of children, many different teachers and support personnel, an enormous and initially confusing physical environment, and timetables and regulations. Those first weeks and months of prep will potentially be the hardest as both children and parents come to terms with a new environment and new relationships.

Gone are the days of close adult supervision whereby parents could be reasonably assured that their child had eaten at least enough to keep body and soul together, that they remembered to wash their hands after visiting the toilet (or even that they remembered to go to the toilet), that playground problems of “who can I play with” were met with “Let’s go over together and ask...”, that belongings remained at least in the same space if not always the same bag. And gone too, may be the days of being able to check-in each afternoon to ask “How was his/her day?”

For first-time parents especially it is often a time for steeling nerves and crossing fingers.

Schools have many strategies in place to manage the demands of such a large number of children in any one place – from “buddy systems” to play ground monitors. They have to deal with these issues each day. It is perhaps fortunate that at heart most children love the structure that rules and timetables afford and in no time will have acclimatised to where they need to be and with whom.

It is worth being prepared though to accept that particularly in the first weeks, a 5 day week will be exhausting! And many parents will be met by tired, cranky and teary children at the end of the day.

Most experts agree that it is a good idea at this early stage to keep afternoons and weekends as relaxed and “unbusy” as possible. Encouraging children to have a rest time on weekends can be a sanity saver for both child and parent in the week ahead. This routine often has to be set by the parent - a very busy child who cannot slow themselves is often demonstrating overtiredness! Young children are not always great at reading their bodies’ needs and parents have to set the pace for them.

While many of us understandably think that knowing the alphabet and numbers will hold a child in good stead as they begin school, prep teachers will tell you that top of the list for what will help a child at Prep is their level of emotional and social competence. How do they go at:

- Getting along with others
- Taking turns
- Respecting themselves and others
- Being resilient when faced with disappointment
- Asking for help
- Not stressing over the little things eg dirt on their hands, a smudged page, a lost ball
- Accepting you don’t always win and you may not always even get a turn
- Accepting that things might seem hard or be hard!
- That there are challenges to be faced
- Are they reasonably able to:
  - Organise and be responsible for their belongings
  - Mentally plan, for themselves, what they need to do
  - Start and finish tasks
  - Process information and instructions in a busy space!!
  - Follow routines with limited supervision

It is hard not to make Prep sound overwhelming. The reality is that, with patient understanding, guidance and time, children will adapt to the demands of this new environment.

It is also worth remembering that what we have been doing at kindy is the best preparation for this next step. Our kindy experiences have been supporting the children's development in a range of skills and attitudes. Their increasing level of maturity means they are able to step into a new environment with a greater sense of competence and confidence.

As we near the end of Term 4, our discussions at kindy are focusing on reflecting with the children on the similarities, and differences, between kindy and prep. The children's visits to prep have been, and will continue to be, great discussion starters. Noting similarities can help with a sense of confidence and security, while thinking about the differences can instil a sense of excitement about what prep, and school, has to offer. In addition we know our kindy children are GREAT problem solvers – they have been doing this all year in their games. We will be using this strength in thinking about some of the experiences change will present – such as new classmates, new routines, new playgrounds, new rules – and how to deal with these.

As parents and children talk about moving onto prep, you may want to keep some of these similarities in mind:

Prep	Kindergarten
1. School days may be very organised, with timetables to follow.	At kindy we have followed our basic routine each day
2. Prep days will consist of teacher-planned activities and child initiated activities.	Our kindy days consist of group times & opportunities for child initiated play. While our group times are often driven by children's ideas, they are always teacher managed.
3. There may be more rules – class rules and school rules	Our kindy program relies on firm expectations in terms of behaviour, & regard for others and for equipment. Children accept these when they understand why they are needed.
4. Early learning experiences in prep will be hands on, manipulating equipment, exploring & experimenting.	Kindy & prep use similar materials - construction sets, dress-ups, art & craft, puzzles, books, and more
5. Children may not always be able to choose who they work/play with.	In Buzz Groups, transition times and routines such as tidy up, kindies are asked to communicate with and help children they do not usually play with.
6. Language – listening and talking – is a strong focus in learning	Talking about games requires kindy children to listen to one another & express ideas. The social nature of our play means that children are constantly required to talk & listen with others.
7. Children will increasingly use letters and numbers in their prep activities	Pretend play emphasizes using one thing to represent another – the basis of symbolization. Games allow children to use writing and numbers for “real” purposes. Letters and numbers are a natural part of our day.

These are just a few examples of the similarities between the kindergarten and prep environments. We hope they help in discussions with your child. Helping the children to see that they already do a lot of what they will do in prep next year will assist in building their (and their parents') confidence as they make this next step in their education journey.