Dear Families,

On Thursday 11th June Anne and I attended a workshop run by Nature Play SA on ‘Planning Your Natural Playspace’. This was held in the beautiful grounds of the Botanical Gardens in Adelaide. It was brilliant to learn from the expertise of others, sharing stories from other preschools and schools, and to reflect on how we can continue to improve our physical environment at our Centre. One of our afternoon activities was geocaching! Have you done this before? It was my first time and I thought it was fantastic. I can imagine children and families really enjoying the experience of ‘an outdoor treasure hunt’!

Sarah Sutter, CEO of Nature Play SA, Simon Hutchinson, Jason Tyndall, Matt Cattanach and Kylie Harris were all highly engaging speakers. They were passionate and enthusiastic as they shared their vision to provide opportunities for children to explore, create and reconnect with nature.

In Sarah’s introduction she mentioned that

- Our children spend less than 2 hours outside
- 87% of children spend more time playing indoors than outdoors.
- In South Australia, children spend an average of 4.5 hours a day in front of a screen, exceeding the national average by half an hour!
- “The Average Australian child spends less time outside than a maximum security prisoner” (Griffin Longley, CEO, Nature Play WA)
- 1 in 4 children have climbed a tree!

Sarah spoke of some reasons behind the statistics; these included children leading lives that are very structured, parents are time poor and over protective. Environments are more urbanised than ever and technology has a greater pull, and at a younger age.

Sarah also shared what the research tells us.

- Children who play regularly in natural settings are sick less often
- Mud, sand, water, leaves, sticks, pine cones and gum nuts can help to stimulate children’s immune system as well as their imagination
- Children who play in natural settings play in more diverse, imaginative and creative ways and show improved language and collaboration skills
- Symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder are reduced after contact with nature.

Over the next few weeks I want to work with our children and families to research our outdoor environment. I want to review our Centre’s philosophy statement during term 3 and will involve all families in this process. I will be actively writing grant applications to fund project works from Betty Fox’s visit to the Centre in April 2014, so that further improvements can be made to our physical environment.

Have a great week everyone!

Karena Wilson
**Attendance**
Our term 2 average attendance is 92.1%. The DECD attendance target for preschools is 93%. Thank you to families for supporting our Centre with your child attending regularly.

**Camp fire at Kindy**
Tomorrow we are going to have a kindy camp fire and cook damper and marshmallows. This will be the second time we've done this at kindy! It's a wonderful activity for the children to participate in and we carry out a full risk / benefit assessment prior. We put a safety fence around the fire as part of minimising potential hazards. This activity will occur Tuesday morning (and afternoon) so Occasional Care children can experience it too. If you have any concerns, please contact myself (Karena) to discuss.

**Four year old health checks**
Four year old health checks are scheduled for Tuesday 23rd June from 9.45 am onwards until 2.30pm (last appointment time). I have contacted families of children who are scheduled.

**Grandparents and Special Visitors Day**
Thank you to our nearest and dearest who attended Grandparents and Special Friends Day, and to those who travelled. So many visitors to our Kindy told me they wouldn't have missed it! An afternoon of fun activities, including the popular photo booth, planting flowers, painting, scoop and throw, trampolining, threading was shared. We sung 'Family fingers', 'I'm a little tea pot' and 'Johnny works with one hammer' to our guests, and enjoyed our Grandparent's PowerPoint. We raised $108.55 for Cancer Council. Thank you for contributing to a lovely afternoon tea with plates of food also. We hope your children enjoyed today too!

**New resources at the Centre**
Thank you to Tony Griffin (Macy's Papa), David Nicol (Adeline and Max's Dad) and Ashley Redden (Isabel's Dad) for kindly offering (and agreeing!) to put together four new bikes and two little tikes cars for our children. We are excited to be upgrading our outdoor equipment with some new bikes, balls, rectangle trampoline, scoop and throw game! We have also purchased some new musical jigsaw puzzles, games and new mats for fruit time. All this made possible by the fantastic efforts of our fundraising committee, families and staff for their support of activities and events to raise funds for our Centre.

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**Contact Details**
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**Important Dates**
16th June
*Camp fire at Kindy*
22nd June
*Pyjama Day & Starlight Cafe*
23rd June
*4 year old health checks*
29th June
*Mud Day at Kindy*
30th June
Last day of term 2!
Loose parts (taken from Imagine Education)

In a kindergarten, loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. They are materials with no specific set of directions that can be used alone or combined with other materials.

Loose parts can be natural or synthetic. In a kindergarten outdoor environment we can provide an array of loose parts for use in play. Loose parts may include stones, stumps, sand, gravel, fabric, sticks, wood, pallets, balls, buckets, baskets, crates, boxes, logs, rope, tyres, shells and sea pods etc.

Loose parts = imagination + creativity

Why loose parts?
- Loose parts can be used anyway children choose
- Loose parts can be adapted and manipulated in many ways
- Loose parts encourage creativity and imagination
- Loose parts develop more skill and competence than most modern plastic toys
- Loose parts can be used in many different ways
- Loose parts can be used in combination with other materials to support imagination
- Loose parts encourage open ended learning
- Children choose loose parts over fancy toys

Children never stop creating and constructing using loose parts. We want to set up a loose parts play space to allow children the time and freedom to move things around.

If you can contribute any loose part items, please talk with Anne or Karena.

Staffing

In term 3 we welcome Loretta Carey back from six months of Long Service Leave! Through our Universal Access funding we have been able to offer Anne Jones 0.4 until the end of the year. As a staff team, we are excited to be able to continue to work together and build on the great programs and experiences that are offered to children and families.

In week 7 of term 3 we will commence our third consecutive day of Kindy. We will operate from 8.45am until 3.15pm on Monday, Tuesday AND Wednesday. We are really looking forward to this transition for the children, as they move towards school transition visits in term 4.