

THE COMMUNITY PLACE  
KINDERGARTEN NEWS  
APRIL 2016

**Welcome to Term 2** and to our new playmate, Evan, and his family. I trust everyone had a great break and is ready for a busy term.

In the first week, I visited my son in Canberra and had a very exciting time at Questacon (<http://www.questacon.edu.au/>), the National Science and Technology Centre. I spent a great afternoon immersed in the many hands-on experiences there and getting ideas to implement into our program.

Last week, Saya and I were busy reorganising and cataloguing the library. It was a big task, but now our books are easily accessible and documented. Some cupboards were reorganised to make equipment and resources more accessible, but like any big tidy up, it is a work in progress!

**QIP:**

I was also able to update centre's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). I have forwarded this draft document to management and the committee for their comment and input. Every early childhood centre in Australia is required to have a QIP to recognise strengths, identify areas for improvement and develop plans for achieving these goals. The best managed centres have a QIP that

- Has input from all stakeholders
- Is considered a 'living' document
- Uses data gathered from self-assessment tools
- Provides information on all Quality Areas to guide practice

This term I will be seeking input from parents so that the QIP is truly reflective of all parties. Attached with this newsletter is a survey seeking parents' comments on each of the seven Quality Areas. Data from the survey will be used to

acknowledge what we do well and guide future plans and direction at the kindergarten.

Part of this process is also reviewing the service's philosophy. Such a document is only useful if it truly reflects the values of those who contribute to the service and is used to guide practice. The current philosophy is attached for your perusal. Please feel free to honestly comment on it and suggest amendments for what may not be covered or needs change/rewording.

Daily Roster for Ridge Community (1-11-16)

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Monday							
Tuesday							
Wednesday							
Thursday							
Friday							
Saturday							
Sunday							

**PARENT ROSTER:**

If you want to spend time with us, please put your name down on the Parent Roster beside the sign-in book. Please remember to bring your hat and morning tea/ lunch. If you would like to share some of your talents with us, please let me know so we can plan for these.



**VISITORS:**

This term we will follow on from the children's interests in emergency workers with visits from the fire engine and police. Ollie's dad, a paramedic, is also going to show us the equipment he uses at his work.



**HAT:**

Don't forget to bring your child's hat back!

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## WEATHER:

While it is still warm we will continue to have our outdoor play first. When the weather cools a little we will be able to enjoy music and morning tea outdoors as well.

## CALENDAR:

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Apr 11 Term 2 start	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25 Anzac Day	26	27	28	29
May 2 Labour Day	3	4	5	6



## LEARNING TO BECOME RESILIENT:

What is resilience and what are the benefits of being resilient?

The American Psychological Association describes resilience as

the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of [stress](#) — such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or [workplace](#) and financial stressors.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst young children may not face all the issues as described above, they certainly have constant challenges learning about how society functions; understanding and regulating their emotions; and how to successfully connect and engage with peers, family and others.

Those who can cope with the challenges that arise in any day are going to engage more positively and fully with learning and their world than those who are fearful, anxious or worried about what is happening around them.

Resilience is a suite of skills that develop; it is not innate. The foundations for good mental health are laid in early childhood. Parents and early childhood educators play a vital role in supporting children to learn strategies that will provide them with resilience that can be a

strength throughout their lives. Through intentional teaching, we can support children to learn skills that foster resilience and be aware of the role our interactions play in this learning.

At kindergarten, we implement the National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)<sup>2</sup> which consists of three core elements:

- Belonging
- Being
- Becoming

Each of these elements provides opportunities for developing good mental health skills. They focus on developing relationships, children's sense of connectedness and belonging and a growing sense of identity and self-awareness.

Learning to solve problems; to share; to collaborate and participate in small and large groups; and to adjust to change are some of the skills we support children with each day.

How do we do this? We talk about problems being something that happen all the time. Our aim is to help children to accept that they will face problems of one kind or another each day (they can't find their toy, someone was mean to them, their parent yells/rushes them/ doesn't listen), but that they can work towards a solution.

Children have options when things don't work out: they can cry/hit out/withdraw/seek help/solve. We talk about how we can solve problems as they arise during the day. 'Oh no, the water spilled, what can we do?' 'I don't have a pen to mark the roll. What can I use?' 'There are a few big clouds coming over, what should we do?'

We also support children to articulate what the problem is. By being able to say, 'I can't find my water bottle,' or 'There are no paper towels,' the problem is half solved.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/road-resilience.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2009), [Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia](#).

After many years of teaching, I have discovered the 'secret' to enabling children to become good at sharing. As you can imagine, with 20 young children and a place full of toys, there are always plenty of opportunities for disputes should one child snatch a toy from another.

When angry voices arise, we could turn to the children and tell them to share/take the toy away/ask them 'How many times do I have to tell you two to share?'. What would children learn from the above? Well, certainly nothing about Sharing 101.

Instead, we go to the children, get down to their level and calmly ask, 'Is there a problem?' Usually, Child A says 'I had it first!' and Child B says 'He won't share!'. (Heard this before??)

We then ask Child B, 'Do you want a turn?' and the obvious answer is 'Yes'. The next question is harder to answer, 'Was A finished playing?' We then help B to ask, 'A, can I have a turn when you're finished?'. It is an empowering question and often the child with the toy happily gives it to the other child. We encourage the receiver to say thank you so a culture that values sharing and cooperation is established.

We model this behaviour during group times so children get to 'hear the script'. Often by about halfway through the year, it is wonderful to hear children say on their own initiative, 'Can I have a turn when you're finished?'

Communication is key to becoming resilient. We strive to work with families so that an issues can be identified and addressed. If we observe any behaviours of concern in a child, we talk to the parents to see if the issue needs further monitoring. Early intervention plays a significant role in achieving long-term positive outcomes for children. If you have any concerns about your child, please feel free to make a time so we can talk further.

To support centres and families, KidsMatter (<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/>) is an Australian government initiative set in early childhood services and primary schools to provide a framework to support children's mental health by

- Creating positive school and early childhood communities
- Teaching children skills for good social and emotional development
- Working together with families
- Recognising and getting help for children with mental health problems.

It has resources available for parents to access on a range of issues.

#### **POLICY FOCUS: *Child Protection***

Under legislation, staff in early childhood centres have certain responsibilities to ensure that children are protected from harm. There are mechanisms in place for the reporting of suspected abuse, neglect and harm. Staff complete training in this area each year.

The centre follows C&K's policies in this area. These are available on the website for your reference at any time

(<http://www.thecommunityplace.com.au/kindy-policies-procedures/>).

#### **ABUSED CHILD TRUST:**



The ongoing Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse continues to highlight the lifelong impact that childhood trauma can have.

<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/>

Our neighbour here is the Abused Child Trust (<https://www.actforkids.com.au/>). It provides programs for prevention and treatment as well as resources for informing the community about issues around this topic. Parents can contact the organisation for confidential support if required.

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