

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



Social Development in the Preschool Years

The preschool years are a magic time in development. Children move from being almost entirely dependent on their parents, to being somewhat independent beings in the world. In virtually every aspect of development, their knowledge base and competencies are exploding, not the least of which are their social and emotional skills.

In the preschool stage, children are learning to be self-sufficient in ways such as self-regulation, toileting, feeding, and dressing. Around the age of four, they enter another stage of psychosocial development: Over the course of this period, children learn to imagine, to become more independent, to broaden their skills through play, fantasy, and exploration, and to engage, participate, and cooperate with others, including peers. Theory* suggests if these goals are not accomplished, the child will become fearful, socially excluded, limited in his ability to play, and negatively dependent on adults.

While seeming lofty, these goals are achieved by most children through natural interactions with family and other caretakers. While preschoolers' are also learning how to relate to peers and interact with them, most of the social and emotional growth occurs in the relationship with caregivers. One of the challenges of this period is to learn to navigate maintaining the secure attachments accomplished during infancy and toddlerhood, while simultaneously differentiating oneself as an individual.

Individuation for children over the preschool years means developing a better understanding of who they are, as well as beginning to understand and relate to others. Creating this personal identity means exploring many fundamental aspects of themselves and gaining a sense of the stable characteristics that make them the unique person that they are.

We work with every child every day to help them learn more about themselves. Through interactions with their educators and their peers they are busy exploring who they are, what matters most to them, how they belong in our Preschool community and what makes them special.

It is magical!

**Erikson*



June 2019

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Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Sweetpeas: The Sweetpeas enjoyed a fun-filled holiday program with so many activities to participate in. With all the public holiday breaks, it was over in a flash. It is good to see everyone back from their holidays and ready for the new term. May started off with that very important, Mother's Day, celebration. The Sweetpeas gave very beautiful examples of how much they love their Mums, sharing how special they are and how much they do for them. Over the month we discussed communities and what it means to live within a group of people, working together and helping each other solve problems that are too big for one person. The children are understanding the importance of tolerance and that even though we may like different activities or have different ideas, working together we are strong. To make living in a community work we talked about the importance of following rules and how that helps us. The children talked about rules, in our schools and in the community that are there to keep us safe. This led on to talking about people in the community that help us and keep us safe. Most important are our families, then police officers, firemen, hospital staff, doctors and nurses, and SES volunteers. To help our hospital community, the children enthusiastically participated in the walkathon fundraiser, raising money for the children's hospital. The children cheered each other along with colourful shakers and holding up cards as laps were completed around the playground. This was a really good example of working together for our community. ***'If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together'*** - African Proverb

Bluebells: We have had a very busy and creative month of May! Autumn is upon us and we used this opportunity to talk about the beautiful colours all around us. The educators gathered a large amount of leaves of various colours and sizes and each child was invited to create a piece of artwork using the leaves. Some children were very mindful of where they placed the leaves, placing the glue on the paper and adding the leaves whereas other children used the opportunity to express themselves freely. Ivy made her leaves into the shape of a tree and searched for the right stick to add as a trunk, talking about a tree with red leaves near her house. The children were very proud of these pieces of art and we hope you loved them too. The children also used these leaves in an expressive art activity, painting and printing these on paper, painting their own version of these and painting some trees. You can see these on the board near the bathroom. ***"Before a child talks they sing. Before they write they draw. As soon as they stand they dance. Art is fundamental to human expression"***. (Phylicia Rashad)





Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Schoolies: This past month the children participated in a Walkathon to raise money for the children's ward at Hornsby Hospital. During music and movement we decided that it would be a good idea to do some stretches to get our muscles warm and moving before our big and important walk. The children all sat in a circle and came up with various stretches to focus on certain muscles that their friends had to copy. We warmed up our necks, arms, legs and back. I then asked the children why we should stretch, Carter said, **"So we get big and strong"**. Eadie said, **"So our muscles don't get sore from the cold"**. The time had come for the children to participate in our Walkathon, Hugo Exclaimed, **"Let's do this"**.

We continued to further extend on the children's gross motor skills by setting up a challenging obstacle course with various heights, hula hoops, hopscotch and ball sports for the children to engage in some risky play. Risky play gives children the opportunity to extend their limits and learn life skills. By providing children with opportunities to participate in risky and challenging play in a safe learning environment, it provides opportunity for the development of important life skills such as making choices, problem solving and measured risk taking. It's also essential for their motor skills, balance, coordination, and body awareness.. **"The more risks you allow your children to make, the better they learn to look after themselves—Roald Dahl"**

Scholastic Book Club

Thank you for the orders in this issue. These should be delivered in the next week. With the commission earned this issue, we have purchased a book called Kind which supports our ongoing discussions about being kind to each other. Issue 4 should be in your communication pocket in the next couple of weeks.

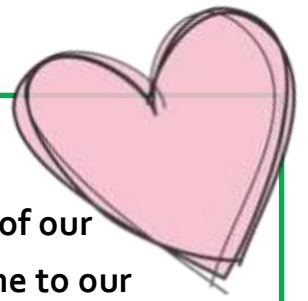


Life can be adventurous

Steph had some cheese popcorn today and Deon was a bit unsure about trying it. Patrick says "Try it Deon, you might like it". So Deon did and said it wasn't too bad. Patrick came up to Deon later and said "See Deon, it's always good to try something new you know".



Mother's Day Dinner—May 9th



A big thank you to all of our wonderful Mums who came to our annual Mother's Day dinner. We hope that you enjoyed spending time with your friends, making some new friends and having a well deserved night off. It was a fantastic night full of conversations and laughter.



June Birthdays'

A big Happy Birthday to all of our children and educators having a birthday this month.

Hamish 4 yrs

Lorelei 5yrs

Pippy 4yrs

Lukas 5yrs

Eadie 5yrs

Adelaide 5yrs

Deon and Adele

Miriam 5yrs



Post Office Excursion

May 1st



The Schoolies embarked on an excursion to our local Post Office this month. Prior to this excursion the Schoolies dictated a letter addressed to their loved ones, to their educator. We learnt about postcodes, address, stamps and how the postal system works. We were all then ready to head off with our wonderful parent volunteers. As we walked to the Post Office the children demonstrated a good knowledge of road safety and explored our community spotting workers, shops and the local people.

When we all arrived our parent volunteers helped us put stamps on our envelopes and then we were each able to post our letters in the big red post box. This was a great opportunity and learning experience for the Schoolies as they broaden their understanding of our local community and explore our local surroundings.

A big thankyou to Noni, Rach, Inese, Bel, Simone, Renae and Bethany

our lovely parent helpers!



WALK-A-THON



Walking For A Good Cause!

During the week of the 6th of May the children participated in our annual Walkathon to raise money for the Children's Ward at Hornsby Hospital.

The Walkathon allowed the children to experience the act of giving and the importance of helping our local community by contributing to help those who are less fortunate. The children had a blast walking and cheering their friends on with their pom pom's and holding up lap numbers. This was a great opportunity for us to show empathy and sportsmanship as we walked for a good cause.

A big thank you to all the wonderful donations we have received, if you haven't already donated you have until Monday the 27th of May.



Safety Reminder

Dear Families, we wish to remind you of our **Preschool Policy** that any siblings or visiting children you have with you during pick up and drop off times for your Preschool child, are to remain with you and under your supervision at all times whilst at Preschool. They are not permitted to play on our equipment and we would especially appreciate you discouraging them from running around on the paved outdoor area and inside as we have a no running policy in these places for our Preschoolers'.

Pick up and drop off times are very busy times and the educators' first priority is to ensure the Preschool children attending that day are able to play safely.

We appreciate your support of this policy.



Snack Time

Meal times at Preschool are designed to encourage community, teach table manners and even build gross and fine motor skills as kids help unwrap food and eat. We also take this opportunity to discuss the importance of eating healthy foods. Here are some great snack ideas for Preschool lunch boxes.

- Plain yoghurt topped with fresh fruit
- Sliced or chopped veggie sticks
- Whole grain crackers and cheese
- Edamame
- Pita bread with hummus
- Cottage Cheese with cut fruit

- Mashed avocado with whole grain crackers
- Air popped popcorn
- Cream cheese on celery sticks
- Fruit salad
- Anzac Biscuits
- Mixture of pitted olives and cheese
- Fresh fruit or vegetable muffins



Sustainability Programme

Book Exchange: We are so pleased with the way our Book Exchange collection basket has been accepted. Children and parents are enthusiastic about using and contributing to this project. Some really great books have been donated giving used books a new lease of life. It is so good to see the excitement in finding a book treasure to take home. What a great way this is, to foster the love of reading.



For Mother's Day we made reusable bags for Mums to save using plastic bags.

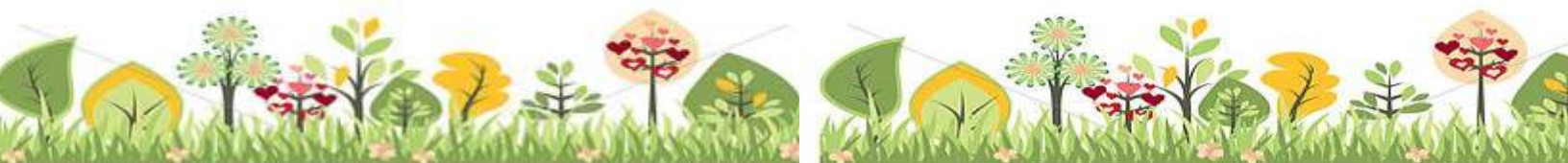


Return and Earn Project: The children continue to be interested and involved with our Return and Earn project. By the end of the term we managed to crash through our target of \$50 earning \$57.20. We were all pretty excited. We have put some of our money to good use, planting new carrot and bean seedlings in the veggie patch. There were many enthusiastic helpers preparing soil and planting the seedlings very carefully with guidance from Jo. Now all that is left is to make sure we water them regularly, we always have many volunteers for this job. Next we are looking at finding plants to replant our hanging pots in the outdoor area. We have decided to increase our target for this term to \$60. Please take a moment to look at our progress on our new target poster near the big TV. Well done everyone!

Talking Recycling: Our soft plastic, cardboard and paper bins are filling up with the children being really conscious of putting waste into the correct bins for recycling. Jo kindly took a big bag of soft plastic away to be recycled. We have had some deposits of old ink cartridges into the recycling box, this is a good way of disposing of these unwanted cartridges without too much trouble. All these things help to save on landfill. Kara had some very interesting news and photos about landfill after visiting the dump with her Dad, to show us.



Craft: Steph created an awesome fire station using old boxes from our cardboard recycling bin. The children have really enjoyed creating and playing with it.





Hello to **Harry Hat Man** and **Munching Mike**

The children have really enjoyed meeting our new friends from Letterland

Harry Hat Man... and his habits

Harry Hat Man lives in a **house halfway** up the **hill**. He makes **hundreds** of hats to sell in his **hat shop**. Over the past few weeks our Schoolies have been given the opportunity to participate in various learning experiences to allow them to explore and extend their knowledge and understanding of the letter 'H' sound.



A current topic of interest that is being focused on during group time has been 'Community'. During these group times the children have gained greater understandings about various people and groups that make up our community. This led to discussion about **helping** people and recognising the vital role they play within our community. **Helping** others tied in with the current phonemic awareness letter sound that we were currently focusing on and this has prompted the children's educators to carry out a group brainstorm. During these group time experiences the children were encouraged to put their 'thinking caps' on and think about how they can help their Mum's and Dad's, Teacher's, Brother's and Sister's, and friends at Preschool.



Many of our Schoolies had some wonderful thoughts and their ideas were recorded and scribed on a large blue poster (located next to the entrance of the bathroom).

Hat Harry man loves to wear his hat. An array of different emergency service **hats** were provided during free play time over the past few weeks including, police/ fireman helmets,

nurse caps. These resources allowed the children to carry out their own means of imaginative/ pretend play where they carried out various roles and expressed themselves.

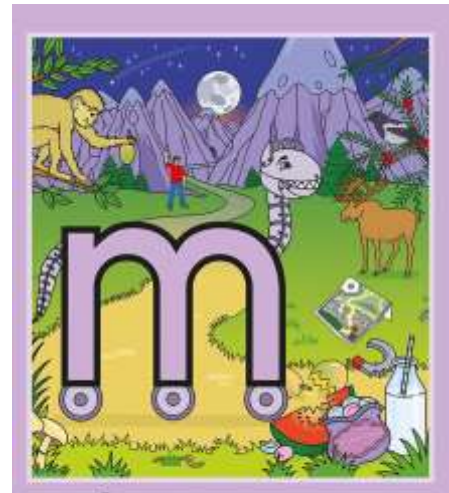


Our Schoolies also expressed a great deal of enjoyment whilst engaging in some **hopping** races. During these experiences the children were separated into groups. One group was the cheer squad and the other was participating in the race. During this experience the children were given the opportunity to balance on one foot and further develop and strengthen their overall physical ability and skills.





Munching Mike....



Munching Mike is a metal monster.

To reflect the Munching Mike letter sound the children were given the opportunity apply their own problem skills whilst exploring and experimenting with an array of **magnetic** tools, including magnet sticks as well as an array of different **metal materials** including, washers, screws and bolts. This experience was made readily available to all the children during free play time and appeared to be a huge hit. To allow the children to gain a greater understanding of what magnetic force is they were given the opportunity to further explore magnetic force by viewing some kids YouTube video's.





This month the children have worked individually in our activities but this does not mean they have been working alone. Its great to see how they help each other out and conversations never stop as they work, talking about what we are doing as well as anything else that they think of.



Mother's Day: We all love our mums for different reasons and it was wonderful to hear how well some of our mum's vacuum and clean! When placing the beans and chickpeas carefully on the heart shape the children and I discussed what we could cook if we used the beans.



Walkathon: We made streamers and lap counter numbers to use as we raised money for Hornsby Hospital Children's Ward. Numeracy skills were shown as we counted the crepe strips for the streamers and as we collaged the numbers we extended the activity by working out what numbers we could add together to make the number on the cardboard.



Worm Wee Bottling: Our worms have been working hard and each family will receive a bottle of our premium worm wee to put on their plants or vegetables in the garden. The preschoolers love our worms and as we filled the bottles one of the children asked me if we could get some of the worms out to play with us – we do get them out and hold them. The worm farm is an important part of our sustainability programme.



Emergency Services: We now have police force trainees at Mt Colah Preschool and the children drew themselves on the front of their police wallets before adding the all important police badge and their names and police number inside. Great fine motor skills were shown in this activity.



Learning Story—JIM JAM EASTER FUN

18/4/19

"We all can dance when we find music we love." – *Giraffes Can't Dance* by Giles Andreae

Today we had a wonderful opportunity to participate in a Jim Jam session with Gabe's Mum, Carmel and Grace's Mum, Nicole. It was so good to watch how you all enjoyed this very lively Easter themed music session. Everyone enthusiastically engaged and interacted, using language and actions, contributing and sharing ideas with each other as you all expressed yourselves through music and song. We did lots of dancing to different tempos, moving fast and slow. There were rhymes and actions to participate in, some of them where a little tricky, but we all did so well and even had an opportunity to create our own movements which was so much fun.

Then there was our very own Mt Colah Preschool Percussion Band. This took so much concentration from everyone. We had 3 groups all playing different percussion pieces, bells, tapping sticks and shakers. We practiced singing 'Little Peter Rabbit' and watching the conductor, which was Gabe's Mum Carmel, as she pointed to each group to start playing their instruments on cue. You all made such a good effort and the results were amazing with everyone joining in with the fun.

We had a break from singing and everyone got to make their own maracas with colourful plastic eggs filled with rice, held together with two spoons taped on for a handle. We got to put our maracas to the test and sang songs tapping and shaking them all around the room. We finished off dancing with scarves pretending to be Roosters strutting about shaking beautiful tail feathers and cones on our head. A big thank you to Carmel and Nicole from Jim Jam. We all had so much fun, what a great way to start the Easter long weekend.

My thoughts on your learning: Today we discovered that learning is so much fun as we whole heartedly participated in this group experience. We explored both verbal and non-verbal means of expressive communication and language by using music and movement. (Howard Gardener) We also found that by co-operating and interacting with each other, as we participated in this group experience, we were able to develop our social, emotional and motor skills as well as helping our bodies and minds to work together. (Learning Disposition) Howard Gardener - Multiple Intelligences: Interpersonal; Learning Disposition - Creativity

Opportunities and Possibilities: As you all enjoyed this experience so much with so many learning opportunities, we will continue to incorporate rich and meaningful experiences within the learning environment for you to take part.



Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):

We are currently working on an Strategic Inclusion Plan with the help of our Inclusions Support advisor. We have determined an area where we need to place focus is on our knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. One of the guiding principles of the National Quality Framework is that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued throughout all education and care services. To do this we plan to increase educator knowledge to extend our personal cultural competency.

We will be looking to embed these cultures into our teaching practice and aim to build a culturally competent and responsive service. If you have any knowledge you would like to share with our educators about the people who lived on our land before us or any other information we warmly invite you to do so.



Dates to Remember!

June 10th Queen's Birthday Public Holiday Preschool Closed
July 8th—19th Holiday Programme



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