Winter’s here!
The change of seasons is inevitable, much like the change we experience in ourselves. Each season is a necessary part of a life cycle, without it we struggle to exist. As the seasons progress, we learn to value the benefits each one brings. Many people see winter as a time for being shut up indoors. However, children often view winter as an opportunity to explore their outdoor learning environment with less likelihood of getting burnt and indeed being able to stay out longer. After all there are puddles to explore and questions to answer! How deep are they? How wide? What can I put in it that will float? Why does the size of something begin to determine if it will float as well? In all these questions, one puddle of water and the opportunity to freely explore through play has opened up a plethora of critical thinking by the children who are beginning to take charge of their own learning. I mean they are even exploring Pythagoras theorem in their own way! All they need is the chance to play and explore and I’m pretty sure gumboots are a fashionable must in any child’s wardrobe 😊

So we see Maths features heavily in the outdoor learning environment alongside our favourite subject, Science!!

As the weather cools there is an increase in a different sort of bug life at kindy. Snail trails are followed; patterns are carefully observed and often replicated in art. Even the paved surface becomes a wonderful canvas to explore ideas and experiment with busy hands armed with chalk; shapes and colours begin to form at their feet. The children even begin to replicate some traditional Aboriginal games they have been taught, like ‘Wanabi’. As they carefully draw the large spiral snake on the ground and explain the rules and guidelines to their friends, the high level of communication and math skill become clearly evident and again the children take control of their own learning.

Plants grown from seeds collected in previous seasons and the children observe their progress. Not everything is always successful and this in itself is important. It is a major lesson in life that we must all learn ...cont/-2

And when it rains on your parade, look up rather than down. Without the rain, there would be no rainbow.
Gilbert K. Chesterton
in order to build resilience within ourselves. If everything always went according to plan, how would we ever feel that wondrous sense of achievement, that immense sense of elation when something is finally achieved? To always do something for somebody is to rob them of this vital step in their development learning journey. Yes, we must assist, BUT we must also give the opportunity to try, to make mistakes! It is when we allow this to occur that the learning becomes more meaningful, the children can then apply it later to much more complex problems without becoming overwhelmed.

Our children are our future leaders and it is up to all of us to make sure they have a love of learning, want to be engaged and lead their own learning as well as become resilient and competent learners ready to take on life’s challenges. As we head into a very important week focused on ‘Reconciliation,’ we must trust that we have done enough to encourage our children that it is possible to expect and exact change for the better within our society. I have included our Reconciliation curriculum program which you will have noticed around the building. We placed it so that all will recognise that what we do and believe in is not tokenistic, to be visited in a designated time frame, but something to be celebrated, embraced and embedded within our curriculum, so that we may constantly learn about the important cultural ideals which can assist us all in our everyday lives.

Science!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I have mentioned that Science is one of our favourite areas of teaching; after all it is the purest form of play that we adults can always justify 😊

Our children are never still, even when they are sitting their eyes are darting, their minds whirling. So many questions are flying around in their heads just begging to be asked, however, they are still learning language and this makes it harder for them to readily explain what they mean or want to know. Therefore, through play and Science, children can practice and experiment over and over until they satisfy those unspoken questions. Invariably an adult or another peer is nearby and the speech and language base becomes richer and more extensive as words and phrases are modeled and shared alongside practical play.

Every year we have a Science Night, where kindy is transformed into one gigantic lab. (no, you don't get to blow something up...hmmm let me think about it first!!!! 😊) There will be hands on experiments from one end of the building to the other. All along the verandah at the back and one of the outdoor sheds will be transformed. This night is a wonderful opportunity for all the family to come out and share in their child's learning environment and again have the chance to enhance and extend their language bank as you become curious about things together. I guarantee you will have fun!!! Every major area of Science is covered (to the best of our ability). So there will be something to enjoy and get ‘stuck’ into for everyone 😊
**High Tea**

The two consecutive High Tea days, were indeed a delightful occasion where grandparents and other special family members were invited to enjoy a light afternoon tea made by our very clever kindy children. We were so proud of the way the children had listened very carefully before their guests had arrived as manners and etiquette tips were shared. The children certainly didn’t disappoint us or their families. Plates and serviettes were held with the utmost care and wide open little eyes looked directly into loved ones as they asked what tasty morsel they would like to try. It was only after their guests had been served that the children then went and carefully chose their own treat and then sit and have an excited chatter with their families. It was indeed a truly delightful experience. Silver tongs were carefully utilized and pastel coloured napkins folded and placed in amongst the wonderful variety of treats the children and staff had made during the week. It was not just a feast for the palate but a feast for the eyes and one which the children delighted in observing as the tables took shape during the morning. Tasty morsels were placed on silver trays, and lace tablecloths lay carefully underneath giving a very delicate touch whilst bunches of lavender picked fresh that morning and tied with ribbon were placed in small vases on the tables in preparation for our special guests.

The children were delighted when their guests joined in and yes even led them in singing favourite nursery rhymes. The best experience was when the visiting adults sang rounds of ‘Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree’ …the children and staff were over the moon with such a wonderful performance. Just perfect for our special day 😊

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**Kernewek Lowender**

A huge thank you to all the families who baked goods for us to sell last weekend at the Districts’ first Piskey Hollow and a MASSIVE thankyou to those few who gave up some of their precious time to assist with door takings and selling the goods. This was indeed an amazing event and one which focused on the children in our District. On the 20th and 21st May we are having a High Tea, this is a delightful occasion where grandparents and our very own Kindy Shop volunteers are invited to enjoy a light afternoon tea made by our very clever kindy children. Invites to this very special occasion are going out this week. Lots of lovely letters came back last year from grandparents in response to the day and the invites and were enjoyed and shared by all the children, we have our fingers crossed that this will happen again. 😊

Our ‘Home Corner’ shed, has been converted to a Miners Cottage, thanks to the ingenious work of Alison. Little china cups are clinked together as the children chatter and enjoy a spot of afternoon tea; and some absolutely precious memories are being made between friends!
Kadina Preschool – Reconciliation Week 2015

Kadina Preschool is a busy preschool with 80 children enrolled. We have a high number of ATSI children who are all heavily involved in our curriculum. We believe that the Aboriginal curriculum, just like the teaching of literacy and numeracy, must be present and consistent throughout the curriculum. They are fully engaged and empowered in their own learning through our combination of explicit teaching and play based curriculum. We include Aboriginal songs, games, words, stories and history throughout every part of our routine. We ALWAYS get asked to view the Aboriginal Dreamtime stories during our rest period, we consistently have Aboriginal books and puzzles on the shelf for the children to engage in (which is often their first choice when making a choice of play activities). We also teach Aboriginal games during free play, which has now led onto the children initiating this game themselves and teaching each other the rules.

The favourite nursery rhyme to sing at Kindy is ‘Incy Wincy Wagu’ which is the Narungga version of ‘Incy Wincy Spider’. We are even teaching community members the words to this song for them to use with other children in their groups.

Part of a local community celebration in our area that reflects and remembers on the history of the mining area instigated the involvement of Grandparents into our curriculum. We asked the children to write a letter to invite their Grandparents to an afternoon tea party and to share some of their memories of being a child by writing a letter. These letters allowed the children to gain an understanding of the similarities and differences between now and then, but it also allowed conversations of the history of Aboriginal people in our area to be explored, with the sharing of stories and games between the children.

One of the responses we received was from an Aboriginal woman and she was able to share photographs of family members and an wonderful insight into her childhood growing up at Point Pearce on South Australia’s Yorke Peninsula. This response was a really rewarding input into our curriculum and the engagement all families share with in the children’s learning.

We had a visit from the Aboriginal educator at the local primary school who shared with us some traditional stories and musical instruments. What most impressed him though was the children’s detailed understanding and knowledge of the dreamtime story ‘The Rainbow Serpent’. This is one of the children’s all time favourite stories and they were able to retell the story and share their deep understanding of the meaning behind some of the concepts underlying in the story.

The children have requested we make our own Rainbow Serpent to weave around the Kindergarten which we are going to incorporate in ‘Reconciliation Week’. We are also going to make our own ‘Long Walk’ where we are going to walk around the local football oval and have stations along the way where we will look at Aboriginal artwork, read stories, discuss the dreamtime symbols.

We are going to discuss the concept of writing a new message ‘Its time to change it up’ and we will explain the idea of ‘learn, respect and celebrate’.

After all it is our children who will be the leaders of tomorrow’s society!

A last(ing) word………

*Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass, it’s about learning to dance in the rain ..........so get those gumboots on and start boogying on down!!!!!!*