

Promoting a Kind Self-Identity (Tuesday/Wednesday group)

How we think of ourselves and our identity influences how we behave. If we think of ourselves as kind, we will naturally act with kindness to others and experience the benefits. Kindergarten provides a social setting in which children are able to learn and practice social skills. It is one of our values at Aldgate Kindergarten to create a positive learning environment and promoting kindness is part of this. To help learn about and develop a kind self-identity, we introduced the kindness tree at kindergarten last term. Every time staff observed a special act of kindness, a leaf would be added to the tree with details of the event written on the leaf. It was explained to the children that although they may be kind throughout the day, it was not possible to add every act of kindness to the tree – only those which were noted as significantly different to usual, like being friendly to a person who was not your usual play friend or a new act of kindness not seen before.



The leaves started to appear on the tree, slowly at first. To assist our learning, we spoke about what kindness is and what it looks like. We read stories like “When I’m Feeling Kind” and planned actions we could do to others throughout the day. The ideal outcome from this activity was that adding leaves with the children’s names on would assist the children as seeing themselves as kind people and experience the wonderful feelings associated with being kind to others. The tree has been a good influence (there has been a noticeable escalation in children being kind to others), but the work is not complete. Learning to be kind must be ongoing, so we ask you to consider continuing this work at home. Sometimes this might require prompting your child to notice when someone might need help and stating how they could be assisted. When you see your child being kind, show your approval by stating what the kind deed was and telling them what a kind person they are. The last newsletter contained other tips on how to help children develop a kind self-identity. *By Jenifer Maddern*



Taite and Erin are showing kindness when they help look after Squirt.

