

Newsletter

23rd August 2019 Term 3 — Week 6

Dear families,

Please enjoy our latest newsletter. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Literacy and numeracy

Please visit the Department for Education's website for some great ideas to support your child's literacy and numeracy development.

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/parenting-and-child-care/parenting/learning-your-child-greatstart/everyday-learning-literacy>

I have also attached a Parenting Easy Guide "More than reading and writing"

There will be a page in your child's learning journal and on Seesaw very soon, describing phonological awareness and noting what your child can currently do and understand. In the meantime, we encourage you to do lots of rhyming and breaking words into syllables with your child.

Can you help?

We need some small cardboard boxes for our making table. We will let you know when we don't need any more!

We are also seeking soft untreated timber offcuts for our woodwork table. We have storage space in our large space so if you can help, we can take loads and/or frequent offerings!

We also have some Watsonia weeds in our Wirra. If you have time to carefully dig them out whilst trying not to disturb the surrounding native plants, we would be much appreciated. Alternatively, you might like to pull out some soursobs! Thanks so much!

Yoga

Some of the Tuesday/Wednesday children participated in a yoga trial session with Amanda from Little Lights Yoga last week. We have asked Amanda to return in term 4 for four sessions per group. If you already provided consent for the trial and you wish for your child to continue next term, you don't need to do anything other than advise if you DO NOT want your child to do more sessions. For all other children, we will be seeking your consent before the end of the term.

Meet Baxter, our visiting Bearded Dragon

We have borrowed a bearded dragon from the Nature Education Centre. He will be at Kindergarten for the next two weeks. Come in and say hi!

Friday Kindergarten dates TERM 4—CHANGES

Next term, Friday kindergarten sessions will be as follows:

Fridays 18th and 25th October TUESDAY/WEDNESDAY GROUP (weeks 1&2)

Fridays 1st and 8th November MONDAY/THURSDAY GROUP (weeks 3&4)

4 ways to increase kind behaviour in children

It's clear that helping our children and young people to act kindly should be an important goal for us as parents/caregivers. Here are four ways we can help children with all levels of challenge to act in kind ways.

1. Talk to young people about – and help them experience - the benefits of kindness.

Young people are more likely to do something when they know (and have experienced) something positive is likely to happen when they do it. This does not mean we should give rewards to children and young people for acting kindly – in fact this may be more harmful than helpful as it can lead to them only acting in this way when they are physically rewarded. But what it does mean is that we should help children and young people understand the immense positive power of kindness – both for themselves and others. In part, this is simply about speeding up the natural human learning process about relationships. As adults with more life experience than children we have probably acted kindly and then experienced subsequent good feelings about this, and good results from it. We have also probably experienced (hopefully) the kindness of others and felt how it has been helpful to us. Younger people have not always yet had these life experiences and so it can be helpful for us to tell them about ours – and help them notice the beginnings of them in their own life. In other words, we want them to notice and reflect on the good things which happen when people are kind. Usually this is best done via questions. (PLEASE TURN OVER PAGE FOR MORE)

CALENDAR DATES

Mon. 26th Aug—Emergency evacuation practice

Tues. 27th Aug—StarDome session

Wed. 28th Aug—Emergency evacuation practice

Mon. 2nd Sept—Kindergarten open (Aldgate Primary school student free day)

Tues. 3rd Sept—Hayley and Lyn at Marte Meo training (Margot relief teacher)

Wed. 4th Sept—Cleland Wildlife Park excursion

Thurs. 5th Sept—Cleland Wildlife Park excursion

Mon. 9th Sept—Gardening with Rebecca

Governing Council meeting 6:30pm

Mon. 16th Sept—Science explorers workshop

Tues. 17th Sept—Gardening with Rebecca

Wed. 18th Sept—STUDENT FREE DAY—No Kindergarten

Fri. 27th Sept—Sun 13th October—Kindergarten closed for

Aldgate Kindergarten

Director: Bianca Stanbridge / Hayley Schroeder

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Government of South Australia
Department for Education

4 ways to increase kind behaviour in children (continued from previous page)

For example:

"How did that feel?" (when they tell us about someone being kind towards them)

"It made me feel....it did this ..." (telling them how we felt when someone acted in a kind way towards us)

2. Show children and young people what it "looks like" to act kindly

One of the most effective ways of helping young people act in kind ways is for us to act kindly around them – both towards them, and towards others. Psychologists call this modelling, and there is a hundred of years of research to show that young people are likely to "do what they see": in other words children and teens who watch others act in kind ways more likely to act in kind ways themselves. When we act kindly towards others, children and young people notice – and over a lifetime they receive strong conscious and subconscious messages that acting kindly is the "right thing" to do. As well as acting kindly in front of young people, sometimes it can be helpful for parents/caregivers to verbally describe (out loud) their kind behaviour – not in a boastful way, nor lecturing way - but simply and matter of factly. For example:

"I bought Jane some soup tonight as she was having a hard time"

"I just have to make a phone call as I want to ask Grandma if she is okay after her big day"

3. Provide children/young people specific ideas about how to be kind.

It can be very helpful to tell young people the specific words they can say and actions they can take in order to be kind. In other words, instead of just telling young people about kindness in general, we give them specific options for how to be kind.

Here are three specific ways of being kind I talk with young people about:

- Compliments (saying something positive about something a person has, has done or is connected to) – ie using "sentence starters" such as: "I like your...", "It was fun to ...", "I enjoyed your...", "You are a great...".
- Using "check in" sentences with someone experiencing a challenge, such as "Are you okay", "Is there anything I can do" and "Can I help?". Then if they hear someone is having a tough time, thinking about what they might be able do to help the person cope with their challenge.
- Helping people have or do something that makes them feel good. For example noticing what makes people happy and seeing if we can make that happen (letting someone go first in a game, drawing a picture for them, buying them a chocolate bar, letting them choose what to do when hanging out)

Once we have explained these three strategies (compliments, helping people when they have tough times and helping people have/do something that makes them feel good) – then we can ask young people about how they might like to use each of these ideas.

For example, *"What makes your friend Jane feel good? Is there anything you could do to help them feel good this week?"*

"What could you do Is there anything you'd like to do/say to offer to help when they are having a tough time?"

Danger alert!

While I've found this kind of coaching to be really powerful for some young people, I should point out that for some children, if we use it too often they can start to see kindness as another "job" that parents/caregivers are nagging them about. If this happens it can actually reduce their internal motivation to act kindly. To avoid this, most of the coaching we should do about kind behaviour should be based on questions – ie the examples above - rather than instructions or nagging, and on us sharing our experiences.

4. Notice kindness (or any steps towards it) in children and teens – and use acknowledgement and thanks.

Appreciation and encouragement of behaviour in children does – in general - result in people acting in that way in an ongoing way. In other words, when we notice, acknowledge and thank children and young people for acting kindly this is likely to help them continue to do it.

We can do this when we notice young people acting kindly (or even when they take a small step towards doing so). For example we might use comments such as:

*"I noticed you...I'm sure that made them feel...."**"I felt really proud of you for...."**"When you did X...for me...it really helped me because..."**"Thank you so much for....I appreciated it because..."**"When you did X for Y, it meant they would have..."*

A particular kind of acknowledgement of kind behaviour can be especially powerful - something called "character praise". Character praise is telling children and young people we believe they have positive personal qualities, for example:

You are a person who is kind to others.I can see you really like to help other peopleI notice that you are becoming more and more kind to others all the time.

Danger alert 2!

It's important to avoid praising children every time they are kind and also to use exaggerated praise (you are the NICEST child in the WORLD). The key to acknowledging praise in children and young people is to be genuine and caring – rather than using it to try to control a young person's behaviour.

To summarise then, here are the key actions we can take to help young people act kindly:

Help children and teens see the benefits to others (and themselves) in acting in a kind way;

Act in kind ways ourselves – towards our young people and toward others - to provide a model for children and teens to copy;

Give young people specific examples about how to say and do kind things;

Notice when children and young people act in kind ways and gently acknowledge this.

To read this entire article please visit <https://mailchi.mp/developingminds.net.au/4-steps-to-increase-kindness-in-children-and-young-people-with-social-emotional-or-life-challenges?e=6b5ed1fa06>