



from Mitchelton Pre-Schooling Centre Term 2 2023

News from the Committee—Belinda Hapgood (President)

As the days and nights get cooler and the opportunities for more indoor play multiply, I've been reflecting on the importance of play for 3 - 5 yr old children. It is sometimes easy to write off play as unimportant and frivolous, but for little children, nothing could be further from the truth. In the book "It's Ok Not to Share and Other Renegade Rules for Raising Competent and Compassionate Kids", Heather Shumaker cites research from neuroscience about the importance of play on brain development in young children. She says:

Brain researchers today are reinforcing the tremendous value of children's play. They're discovering children are designed to play. Play helps kids develop social skills, memory, emotional awareness, creative problem-solving, flexibility and impulse control. It helps them understand the world and their place in it.

What an incredible opportunity then for our young children to enter the "play-based" world that is MPC!

I hope you all enjoyed the variety of activities and events occurring within our kindy community (including our recent Parent Play Information Night!). It has been a busy term with Anzac Day, Grandparents'/Special People Mornings, National Sorry Day, MPC 3's Pyjama Day, Parent Play afternoons and social events as well.

I'd encourage all families to spread the news about our upcoming **Open Day on 10 June 2023**. Thank you to the parents for helping at the recent Working Bee to make us look spick and span for the day.

The committee and I are always happy to hear from parents and welcome feedback and suggestions. Feel free to email thoughts through to committee@mpc.net.au (or just catch one of us at drop off and pick up times).

OPEN DAY
 Saturday, 10 June
 9.30am – 11.30am

Where we help your child develop a love of learning

- Learn about our 2 or 3 day Kindergarten programs
- Talk to our highly qualified and experienced staff
- Ask about our Before and After Kindy Care
- Look through our rooms and explore our natural and leafy play spaces

Apply for 2024 and beyond! Enrol at mpc.net.au

Your local community Kindergarten

29 Kedron Ave Mitchelton (next to the train station) ph 3355 2535 • mpc.net.au

We acknowledge the Turrbal and Yaggera Peoples, for the Land and Waterways where we learn and play.
 We acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past, present, and emerging.

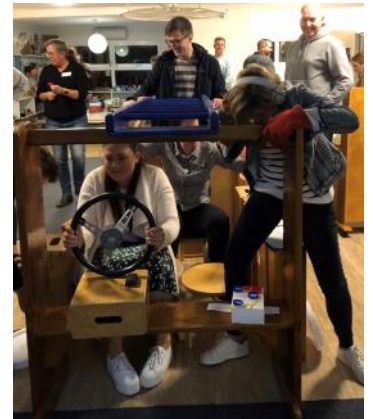
News from the Co-Directors—Anna Duthey and Louise Wood

The saying, "Time flies when you are having fun...!" We have been in this role now for 16 weeks, and wow, has that time flown. As we have been reflecting on our Director role together, we are acknowledging that our feet are paddling very fast under water and we have the "all together look" on the faces that you see. So how are we going? We would love your feedback. The staff are about to share their thoughts as we spend time having individual conversations with them doing our engaged workplace reviews. This is an important part of our workplace culture here at MPC, as it is important feedback that allows everyone to tell us where the Centre can support them, talking about challenges and strengths.

As with taking on any new role, it is the importance to recognize the slow and steady steps to understanding what has been built so well before, learning from that, and then start to dabble in a few changes. Let us tell you, in 16 weeks we have got to know most of the children that are in the various groups across the week and we have spent time supporting our staff as well as keeping our admin responsibilities in line (well, we think so)!

We hope that our Friday emails are sharing some important upcoming dates with you as well as highlighting the goings on of the Centre throughout the week.

Last week we had our annual Play Night, where parents both current, and those who are on the waiting list can come and see the importance of play here at MPC and what the learning outcomes are. It was lovely to see happy adult faces engaged, learning and having fun!



Some children and staff attended the Sorry Day Ceremony held in Teralba Park. This year marks the 25th Year of the first National Sorry Day held. All the children at Kindy have had some discussions in their groups, some read the book "Sorry Sorry" by Ann Kerr and others painted their hand print to create a wreath.

We say sorry for the mistreatment of the traditional custodians of this land and focus on a future journey together where it is important to share, be fair and care. The Unit 1/3 Day children made handprints for our front garden as part of their acknowledgement for Sorry Day which marks the start of Reconciliation week. Many of the children in the Centre created our beautiful tree canvas as part of a gallery showing for Reconciliation Week. We are looking forward to getting this masterpiece back to display in our foyer soon.



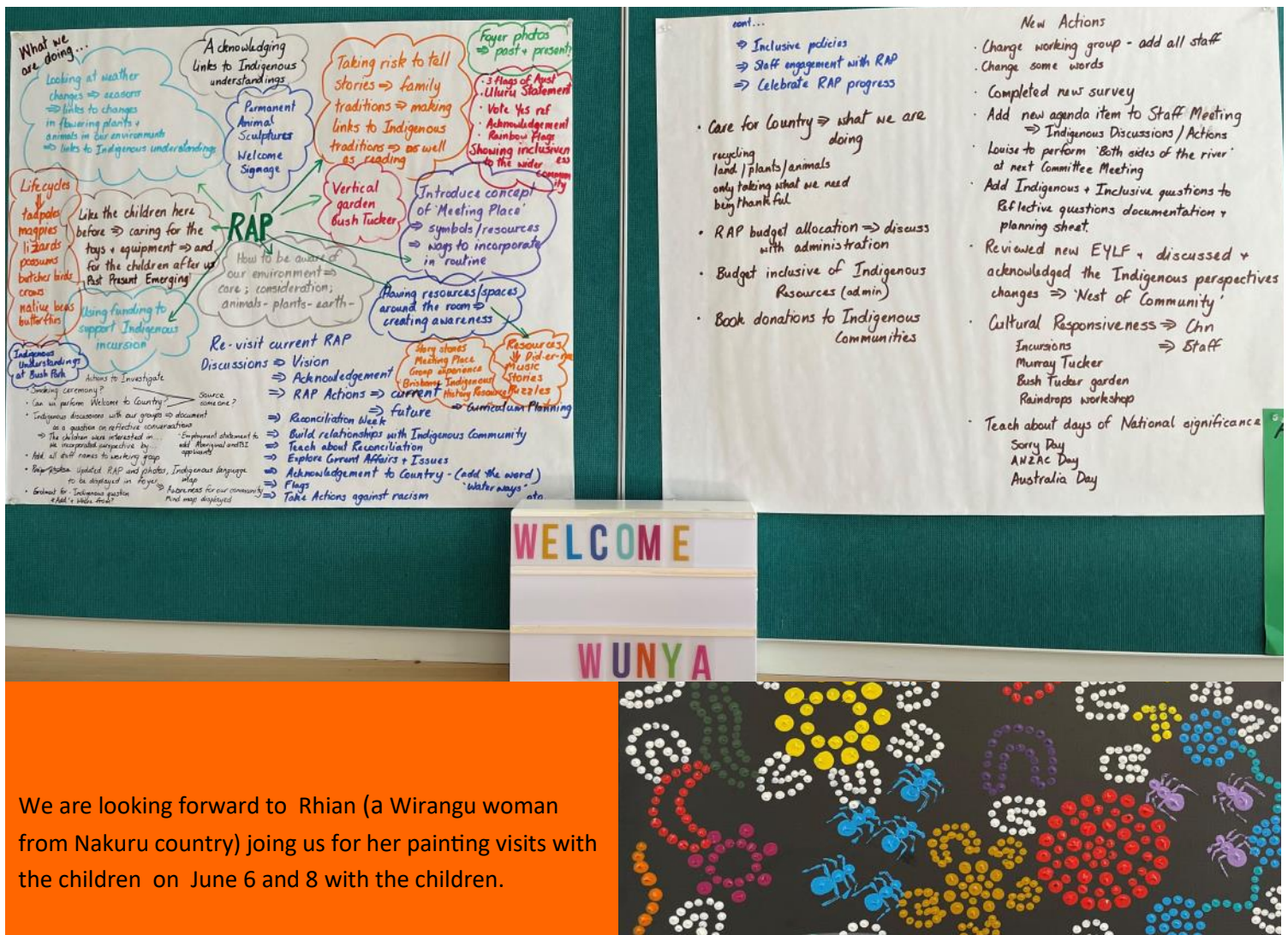
Continuing our RAP journey with purpose and feeling!

Anna Dutney and Louise Wood

Gathering our thoughts to make changes and add to our Reconciliation Action Plan, takes time and patience. We want to make sure how we are thinking and feeling, would sit with the Indigenous People in our Community as well as those visiting from other areas of our country. The posters from our PD Day sessions have been on display on our notice board since the start of this term, giving everyone time to glance and add comments if you chose to. Many comments have been told to us about our openness to share our Reconciliation Action Plan work. I guess this shows that we feel that this is an important step in the Reconciliation process to let everyone know that here at MPC we are trying to create open conversations about our First Nations People and how closing the gap of the past and building new relationships into the present day and the future is important to us. We are nearly ready to send through our changes to the Nurragunnawali Organisation for their approval of our updated RAP. Thank you to those that have reached out to help, we will be in touch with you before we submit so you can read through and offer any other suggestions.

We have recently been successful winning a Woolies Landcare Grant of \$1000, we can't wait to use this money to make our own Bush Tucker gardens and add some local area animal artworks to our playgrounds.

The staff have recently completed the last of a series of workshops with the Raindrops of Diversity Team. Money from the Kindy Uplift Program helped enable this full staff PD. We have a visit from Bruce, from Murri Tukka planned for the children in August.



We are looking forward to Rhian (a Wirangu woman from Nakuru country) joining us for her painting visits with the children on June 6 and 8 with the children.

Thanks to our Parent Helpers at the recent Hills Carnival

Thank you to the staff, committee members and parents that helped to make our Hills Carnival stand a success on the weekend. For those that spent time chatting to the visitors at our marquee and to the parents that helped with the set up and pack up we appreciate each and everyone of you. It is a big marketing event in our local community for us, so our continued presence in orange shirts, helps to keep the face of MPC in our Community visible. Word of mouth is always the best way of encouraging others to join the MPC village, so please spread the word to all your family, friends, playgroup, school communities about us and encouraging them to come and take a look at what is behind our fence and visit to our upcoming OPEN DAY ON JUNE 10.



Staying Healthy at Kindy

Over the last few years we have become very aware of the spread of viruses. The Health Department are encouraging us at the moment to be aware of not only COVID, but also the Flu and the of other respiratory viruses that are spreading very quickly. Please remember that if your child is unwell, Kindy is not the place for them. Rest and recovery at home will help reduce the spread to other children, families and staff.

Help stop the spread of respiratory viruses



Cover your cough and sneezes



Stay at home if you are sick



Wash your hands regularly



Keep up to date with your vaccinations



Stay 1.5 metres away from anyone who coughs and sneezes



Clean surfaces regularly



Don't share items like cups or lip balm

RSV Respiratory Syncytial Virus

Symptoms

(usually start 3 to 10 days after infection)

- a runny nose
- cough
- fever
- headaches
- sore throat

Some people will also get an ear infection.



FLU Influenza Virus

Symptoms

(usually start 1 to 3 days after infection)

- fever
- sore throat
- dry cough
- muscle or joint pain
- headaches
- tiredness or exhaustion



Why do children repeat play?

Elke, Vanessa, Jules (Unit 1 / 2 Group)

The house, insect and Bunnings games have been played for many weeks, often appearing the same, but what appears to be repetitive often has subtle but significant differences from one play episode to another. These differences may include: who is engaged in the game or activity, what materials are being used, where the game has been set up and what is the script or storyline of the game. All these factors impact on the complexity of the play from one week to another. Repetition in play serves many purposes for children: it enhances their abilities of concentration and attention to ideas or activities, often provides a secure base from which to explore a new physical and social environment, builds a sense of competency and self-esteem, allows children opportunities to refine skills. It provides a sense of satisfaction in pursuing something of personal interest, confirms that their ideas are valued and important, provides opportunities for children to exercise control in their lives, a rare but important psychological experience for children when so much of their time and activities are usually managed for them. When we take over children's play or redirect them to widen their interests, we often find that the lack of personal relevance or meaning to them results in the activity losing its fundamental benefit. In addition, redirection by adults has the potential to build up a reliance on adults for ideas when autonomy and self-direction are our ultimate goals.



We investigate ways to incorporate different ideas or props in a child's repetitive play thereby extending their familiarity and engagement in other experiences. For example: the child who only chooses to do collage may be invited to make food for the house game; the insects may be housed at a zoo, museum or school; the mothers/fathers, aunts/uncles, grandparents may take the babies on an excursion to the zoo, museum, Bunnings or Ginger factory; maps, plans, prices, aisle numbers, safety signs may be drawn for builders or shoppers. Group discussions offer opportunities to share ideas about games, solutions to problems (eg how to move rocks, bricks and logs safely) and new ways to use materials (eg making biscuits from play dough, small wooden blocks, stickle bricks). When children see and participate in other children's games this builds a reserve of possibilities for the future, and/or when the developmental level has been reached this allows children to make more diverse choices. Brain research also tells us that: "because playful behaviour is usually pleasurable, children will repeat particular activities and are more likely to remember and learn from those repetitive behaviours. It is important to remember that it is through repetition that synaptic connections are strengthened, facilitating greater neural connectivity, which in turn means the brain can spend more energy on new learning (perhaps those conversations at group time) and the refinement of other synapses. In other words, practice not only makes perfect, it makes connectivity permanent." (Michael Nagel, 2012, In the Beginning: The brain, early development and learning.)



The Going out Challenge!

Shirley, and Jo (Unit 1 /3 day group)

Our group have been talking about journeying out the front gate and into the community. In the lead up to these excursions the children have discussed and practiced walking with a partner, holding their hand and staying together, listening to teacher instructions and staying safe when navigating footpaths, roads, station stairs and eventually level crossings and Bush Park boundaries. Most importantly we are learning to help each other to remember what to do. We have practiced and then practiced some more! Our first 'Going Out' excursion was a walk to our front footpath for Clean Up Australia Day. The children were armed with

Recently we went for a walk up the station stairs to the train bridge. We had a 'bird's-eye-view' from there. We could even look down and see our Kindy! We saw the yellow safety line and remembered the safety rules Aaron from QLD Rail had told us about. 3 different Train Drivers waved to us.



The children showed Jo and I that they are ready for the next 'Going Out' challenge! That is to take a walk and play at the Bush Park- a green zone between McConaghy Street, Blackwood Street and the creek.

Many in our group visited this space last year. Some however have not, so we are mindful that these children will need our support and reassurance to encourage their developing sense of independence, of bravery to have -a-go at something new and to connect with nature through real experiences. Here the group will feel the freedom of just running! The space offers opportunities for exploration, observation, wondering, imaginative play and physical challenge. There are spaces for children to sit quietly and ponder, to watch birds, insects and lizards go about their day, or to watch the sunlight hit the water in the creek, in the hope of seeing fish, turtles, tadpoles or eels swim by. The creek may give us opportunities to think about rubbish management, discuss the quality of the water and the health and safety of the animals living there. The trees will provide challenging climbing opportunities and wonderful shade for our Base Camp Mats. The children will practice ways to assess their own risk and challenge themselves, whether they are tree climbing, balancing on windy buttress roots, or walking along the bouncy branches of the 'Secret Hide-out Tree'. We can make collections while there, categorizing leaves, seed pods, sticks and barks by size, shape, number and colour, and to learn a little about the trees themselves- who lives there in the tree hollows, between tree branches, on leaves and dug into the ground in hidden spots. We plan to play hard but most importantly we plan to return!

Because children grow up, we think a child's purpose is to grow up. But a child's purpose is to be a child.

-Tom Stoppard

It is so interesting to see that in our current media and education policies and early childhood research, the focus is now switching from looking at the adult and our wellbeing – to the importance of the child's wellbeing. What is that saying to us about the lives we are creating for our children? What message are we embedding in their hearts and minds about the society that we are living in and that they are growing up in? What is our (the adults) responsibility in changing how we manage our lives and listen to the needs of the children, your child? Why are we seeing so many anxious and stressed children?

When the brain is feeling threatened, it gets worse at thinking and making choices.

Want students to think better? Help them feel safe.

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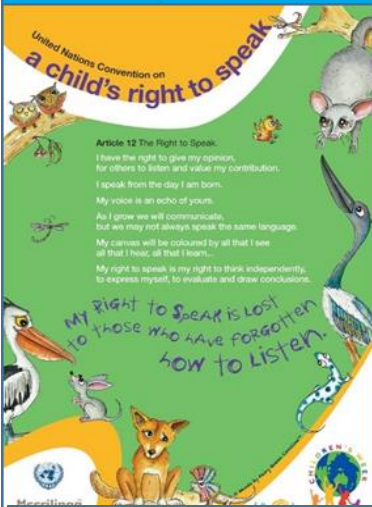
Beneath every behavior is a feeling. And beneath every feeling is a need. And when we meet that need rather than focus on the behavior, we begin to deal with the cause not the symptom.

– Ashleigh Warner
Psychologist

If we all sat and looked at our day, from the moment the alarm or sun wakes us to the time we flop into our beds at night, what exactly have we done in our day and what have we expected our children to do in their day that has become merged into ours...**TAKE THE TIME TO DO THIS IT IS AN INTERESTING EXERCISE!** How did this day look like? Was it calm and free flowing? At what point did you start the rush, raised heartbeats, accelerated breathing, louder voices and heavy sighs of frustration, the pushing along of both adults and children? **TAKE THE TIME TO WRITE THIS DOWN ON PAPER.**

If you have taken the time to do this exercise, what is it telling you about your day and the parts of your child's day that you can have control over? Can you make changes to help keep some calm in your day and your child's?

In our Kindy days it can often seem busy and at these times we need to look at how it is structured so we can give the children or a child some time to take a breath and move to the next challenge as they feel ready, not as we want them to. Throughout our day if we are seeing a recurring behaviour we look at the what could be behind this, what is in the surroundings, who or how are children responding to each other, and then we look at how that effects the child's day and their sense of wellbeing in this environment. With all these parts we can try to work out how best to help the child. Sometimes the behaviour can be from the morning even before they walk through the kindy gates. The cause of this could also be the rushed start to the day, not feeling well, a bad night's sleep or something that could be playing on their mind from another day. When I am talking about behaviour, it is the stressed, teary, anxious, worried, quiet, silly, loud and angry behaviour a child expresses. Our job as educators is to consider all aspects of the child to help them learn and develop to their full potential in this environment and take this with them to the big outside world. Often it is good to look at the 'Circle of Security' a child has or hasn't a perspective of. They need to know that you are always there for them, they can ask for help, there are familiar routines and expectations, when changes occur they are informed and know how things will affect them and that they have a voice in what happens in their day. If you are seeing a behaviour in your child that is needy, angry, sad, anxious or worried take the time to look at the why this could be happening and is there a subtle change in the way you run your day to help them work through these emotions.



Why do we put so much PRESSURE on CHILDREN?
As adults we have SLOW days, SAD days, DOWN days, HAPPY days.
As adults we have days where we just want to NAP and EAT CAKE.
So why do we expect so much from our little people?
They are still GROWING.
Still LEARNING.
Still DEVELOPING.
Still HUMAN.

@BigLifeJournal

Letting children feel all their emotions Anna, Vanessa and Pam (unit 2 /2 day)

There is nothing harder as an adult than to watch a child who is upset and crying. From birth crying is the instant cue to let us know something needs fixing. As parents we innately want life to be better for our children, to be happy and healthy. It's easy to be with children in the excited, happy, joyful moments but can be uncomfortable to see children sad, angry or afraid.

As a parent, I personally struggled with this and wanted to protect my children from feeling scared, sadness or anger. It was during my child's first year of Kindy that I discovered this need to protect wasn't providing him with emotional literacy or resilient skills. It is important for children to experience all feelings rather than moving the world around them to make 'everything better', 'easier' or 'happier'.

It's important for children to learn strategies when emotions come to visit. How can adults help with this growth? Allow children to feel and practice moments that are emotion evoking. (Eg. using a different water bottle, leaving a painting or snuggle toy at Kindy overnight.)

- Be with children when they have strong emotions
- Notice the emotion and where you can feel it in your body.
- Label the emotion, 'This is sadness' or 'This is fear'
- Scale the emotion "This is a really big sad feeling with time it will feel smaller."
- Calm finger breathing or belly breathing
- Allow your emotions space and acknowledge they are with you.
- Always remember that all emotions will pass. Give it time.
- Think about what you will do the next time the emotion visits you.

Aroha's Way written by Rebekah Lipp

Unit 2/2 children have been playing various games and looking at illustrations in books to explore and label emotions. Emotion freeze and posting pictures into the box of feelings have been some of our favourite activities. We talk about things that make us feel happy, sad, angry, afraid and excited. We've discovered that everyone has feelings even adults too.



The children are enjoying the time to move, play, explore and be outside first this term. We are seeing them putting more thought and planning into what they are going to do while outside. We set certain explorations, games or provocations up for the children based on previous conversations with them or observations we have made, and the children will also come up with new ideas or interests.

Over the past few weeks the children have been enjoying setting up games outside and then continuing with them when we are having inside play and also at aftercare. Last week some children wanted to build a super hero car. We supported the children to each share their ideas for what they wanted the super hero car to have – a super hero car needs some amazing features! I wrote the children's ideas down while they drew about the special feature and then created the feature. It had booster jets, flying powers, super rocket speed, computers for navigation, buttons to push so it could glide across the sand and not get bogged, maps and of course, seatbelts! And as the children began to add these amazing features, more children wanted to join the game.

Now that the superheroes had their amazing car, they needed some people to help. They were Super Heroes after all. This was an opportunity for us to support the children in different games to engage with each other. We had a house game that day (which we often do) and the babies in this game had been sick. So, the 'mums' called the Super Heroes to help get the babies to sleep. Super Heroes are amazing at taking babies for walks in their prams, and drives in the car to get them to sleep. A music player was added to the car so the babies could listen to music to help them fall asleep. The parents in the house game were happy to have sleeping babies and the super heroes celebrated their great work!

Play is a natural way for children to learn and practice life long skills. There was so much learning just in this snippet of our day.

Some of the learning included:

- Listening to others ideas

- Taking turns to talk and share their own ideas

- Negotiating with each other (could there be 2 types of jet boosters if 2 people want to add jet boosters?)

- Represent ideas through drawing

- Fine motor skills – drawing, using scissors and tape

- Working together to build car and add features

- Maths skills – how many seats do we need?, how many seatbelts?,

- Working memory - Remembering our characters and roles in the game, remembering what the red button was for.



During my discussions with families recently, some parents have asked about their child's level of play and interactions with other children in our group. Having a friend can be very important to a parent but less so to a child who may be engaged in exploring surroundings, sitting back to take in what's happening or engrossed in a book. Children choose a space to play in and may engage, to their own degree, with others in that space. They may have one close play partner or a few, or they may be comfortable playing with many others. Some children are equally as happy playing alone for now. As children move to different areas of our environment, they are interacting with many others along the way. Rather than focusing on your child making a 'friend' think about the valuable learning that is happening alongside other children: sharing, negotiating, observing, taking turns, waiting, dealing with conflict by learning to be brave and speaking up.

As your child develops, they go through different stages of play.

Unoccupied Play (Birth-3 months)

Solitary Play (Birth- 2 years) This is the stage when a child plays alone. They are not interested in playing with others.

Onlooker Play (2 Years) during this stage a child begins to watch other children playing but does not play with them.

Parallel Play (2 + years) When a child plays alongside or near others but does not play with them.

Associative Play (3-4years) When a child starts to interact with other during play but there is not a large amount of interaction at this stage.

Cooperative Play (4+ years) When a child plays together with others and has interest in both the activity and other children involved in playing.

While these ages are guidelines, all children will develop at their own pace. In these early days of kindy our focus is on encouraging children to feel safe and supported by staff while saying goodbye to adults each morning, then creating positive experiences for them throughout the day as they become familiar with our environment and routines. Some children have attended other centres in the past and continue to do so while for many of our group this is their first time away from the security of their home environment. How your child interacts with others is unique to them while still progressing through the play stages. Our kindy environment is set up to allow for many individual spaces where children can play alongside others, begin to learn each other's names, learn to share resources, and interact if they wish all while under the watchful eye of supportive adults. Encouraging play with others is not something to be rushed or forced, however as adults at kindy we model appropriate interactions and language children may use with each other during the day.



Playgroup

There are always many beautiful invitations to play that Jo sets up for our Playgroup mornings.

Whether a quiet sit playing at places like this ,or your child wants to climb, dig in the sandpit, play on the swings or just explore our Kindy environment come and join us for Playgroup every second Saturday!



Creating Childhood Memories
Mitchelton Pre-Schooling Centre Inc.

Experience the fun of
PLAYGROUP
at Mitchelton Pre-Schooling Centre

- ✓ Welcoming all children 0-5 yrs! (including Families not enrolled at MPC)
- ✓ DATES during TERM 2 2023:
22nd April
6th and 20th May
3rd and 17th June
TIME: Saturday mornings 9.00am to 10.30am
- COST: \$10.00 per Family per session
Pay on the day by card or cash

Offering a stimulating, safe and friendly environment for Families to come together to play and build relationships.

29 Kedron Ave Mitchelton
(next to the train station)
phone 3355 2535 • mpc.net.au

Kindergarten Approved Program Queensland Government

Lady Gowrie Community Kindergartens

News from Before & After Kindy Care

Before and After Care is a valuable part of our days here at MPC. It has been a case of 'if you build it they will come.' With the changing work habits and busy lifestyles, families have the need for Before and After Care has grown and now it is definitely thriving here at MPC. Numbers are growing and we are making changes to the way care may look. On our heavily booked days we are lucky enough to be able to spread the children across the playgrounds . The staff will be happy to let you know which playground your child is using . This experience also gives the children a chance to try new play spaces and connect with other children. Please remember to sign your child in and out at the folder in the inside courtyard area. When you are dropping off in the morning please take them to complete the jobs they need to do for the unit they are in and then take them to the staff to welcome them. When collecting in the afternoon, please see the staff for any notes or reminders that they may have for you. If you are making permanent bookings please fill in the booking sheet and for casual booking please talk to the teachers or the office staff to check numbers.

Sustainability

We have just sent another couple of boxes to be recycled. Keep it coming!



Share the Dignity

Please help us to make this box full so we can all Share the Dignity

The essentials you can include:

- Bags (new or pre-loved handbag or backpack in good condition)
- Period products
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Deodorant (roll-on preferred)
- Soap or body wash
- Breast pads
- Newborn nappies
- Baby Shampoo & Conditioner
- Baby soap or wash
- Disposable nappy bags
- Baby wipes
- Dummies
- Nappy rash cream
- Special gifts (make-up, jewellery, notebook, bookmark, scrunchies etc.)



Thanks for the donations to this great cause. Keep them coming. This was initiated by the lovely Kaitlin that works in our B & A Team.

Parent News and Advertising Opportunities



MPC Enrolment Lists - 2024 and beyond are OPEN!

- ◆ Do you have younger children?
- ◆ Do you want the option of sending them to MPC?
- ◆ Is their name on the Enrolment Waiting List?

Do it now!you will then have peace of mind, knowing you don't have to think about it anymore. It's easy. Complete a form online or collect one from the office. Complete an additional form if you are considering MPC 3's group. **MPC does not have a sibling policy**, and offers and choice of groups for new enrolments are allocated in strict waiting list order.