

Reading with your child

We have just celebrated a wonderful week of Book Week, which you can read more about further in this newsletter, and in early September, we will also celebrate Indigenous Literacy Day.

Literacy is being able to read, write, listen, speak and create texts in ways that allow us to communicate well with others. Research has shown that children whose parents and carers read to them when they are young learn to speak, read and write more easily.

Reading books, sharing stories, talking and singing every day helps your child's development in many ways. Reading and storytelling can:

- help your child get to know sounds, words and language, and develop early literacy skills
- introduce your child to the value of books and stories
- spark your child's imagination and curiosity
- promote your child's brain development and ability to focus and concentrate
- help your child build social, communication and emotional skills
- ♥ help your child learn about the world, their own culture and other cultures.
- ♥ The Australian author Mem Fox says if families read 3 books a day to your child from birth, they would have heard around 5000 stories by the time they reach the age of five. Can you imagine the world they will learn about and wealth of language they will have encountered? Wow!

How can you help your child develop their literacy skills?

- ♥ You know your child best. Be guided by their interests. If they are mad about trains, read books about trains. If they are spending their days hunting for fairies, read books about fairies.
- ♥ All children love predictable books, books that have a pattern, a predictable plot or lots of repetition. These books are a great choice for preschoolers as they can guess what is going to happen next and start 'reading' them to you.
- ♥ Hearing and using rhyme is a fun way of making sounds, words and stories memorable. Preschoolers love to chant along and participate in the story.
- ♥ Other characteristics of favourite books for 4 and 5 year olds include humour, suspense, and imagination. If you are still stuck then try well-loved, classic books that stand the test of time, such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar', 'Who Sank the Boat?' or 'Possum Magic'.

Remember to check your local library for Storytime sessions that will introduce new stories to your child as well as incorporate fun craft sessions, all of which will support your child's growing literacy skills.



Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



August in Review 2023

Inside this Newsletter

- ♥ Educator Reports
- ♥ Discovery Topics for the month
- ♥ Book Week
- ♥ Father's Day/Loved Ones Breakfast
- ♥ Phonemic Awareness Report
- ♥ Little Endeavours Report
- ♥ Sustainability Report

Our Preschool Programme in Review

Sweetpeas: The Sweetpeas have enjoyed engaging in craft activities giving them the opportunity to practice important motor skills, including pencil grip, by doing drawings and name tracing, as well as scissor skills. Participating in these activities, the children develop small hand muscles, hand-eye co-ordination and bilateral co-ordination, using the two sides of the body for the same action. It can be quite challenging to co-ordinate left and right hands to work together as well as holding the scissors correctly without twisting their hands. The children have enjoyed these challenges and are determined to master these skills. They are proud of their accomplishments and eager to take their creations home. Activities to help strengthen these muscles include making play dough and clay creations, arranging small pegs on boards, building with Lego and of course sticker craft experiences which are always fun to do. While participating in all these activities so many social skills are developing and it has been wonderful to see children making friends as they engage in all these fun activities together. ***"Play is our brain's favourite way of learning."* – Diane Ackerman**

Bluebells: The Bluebells have had another busy month with lots of exploring the outdoor environment, putting their gross motor skills into practice with climbing, dribbling balls, balancing etc. We have also been developing our numeracy skills. The children were given the opportunity to participate in board games where they had to roll a dice, identify the number and find a ladybird card with the same amount of dots. A favourite activity was beading. The children took a lace and threaded a variety of beads on to this. Some children used a mix of small and large, while others focused on the smaller beads. There was lots of discussion at the table about the colours that were being used or the shapes, as we discovered some stars, circles and squares. Every child was keen to count just how many beads they had used during their threading activity and we discovered how far we could count, while we pointed to each bead. You can encourage your child's numeracy skills at home or in the supermarket - ask your child to count how many apples you need into a bag, or getting the right amount of plates for the table at dinner.



Schoolies: The Schoolies have recently been demonstrating a strong interest towards cognitive activities, developing their literacy and numeracy skills. This has included tracing activities that some children refer to as "school work". This has not only supported the children's number and letter recognition but their pencil manipulation as they trace a variety of symbols. These activities have turned into games such as "Can you find me the letter c?" with the children eager to showcase their knowledge. During our Letterland programme, we have been incorporating the software ABCYA. This consists of interactive games designed by educators and parents, covering topics such as phonics, patterning and recognition. A favourite is the alphabet game where the children need to order the letters from a-z. We have been offering new spaces for the children to sign their name in the morning, including drawing pads, etch-a-sketches and letter tokens. The Letterland sheets are always popular as the children have the opportunity to trace and write the focus letter/sound. In terms of building the children's numeracy skills as well as their social skills, the card game uno has been very popular. The children have enjoyed sharing with others how to play the game, especially those who have played the game at home before as well as strengthening their colour matching, counting and letter recognition.



National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

Friday 4th August



We celebrated Indigenous Children's Day on the 4th October. This special day was an opportunity for us to show our support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as well as continued learning about the crucial impact culture, family and community play in the life of every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child.

We talked about the importance of storytelling, dance and music in Indigenous culture. Since we were learning about sea creatures, we discovered the significance that dolphins and sharks have to First Nations people of Australia and Torres Strait Islanders. The children created colourful dolphins which are believed to be associated with the human spirit. Sharks have always been respected as they are seen as ancestors. New words we learned in the Darug language are, *Guruwin-Wubbigung* meaning shark and *Baruwaluri* meaning Dolphin.

We continued celebrating Children's Day outside by exploring *Yulunga*, Traditional Indigenous games, and had the opportunity to engage in some active ball games which are played by Indigenous children. Some of the games we played were, *Kai Wed* from Torres Strait Islands, throwing a ball to each other as we stood in a circle. *Chuboochubaa*, from the Lower Murray area, a little like the Keepy Uppy game from Bluey. We also played *Diyari Koolchee* from Lake Eyre, using a small ball to knock over skittles.



Healthy Bodies and Hygiene Week 7th August

Over the past month, the children have been looking into the different things that contribute to a healthy body. We did lots of research surrounding the benefits of physical activity and healthy eating (especially in young growing bodies). The children put their pre-existing knowledge to the test when sorting some **'Always foods'** and **'Sometimes foods'**. Throughout the week it was clear that the children were absorbing their newly gained knowledge as the educators could hear conversations during meals times about the 'Always' and 'Sometimes' foods they have in their lunch boxes and watched the children apply different movement skills and games to get their hearts beating throughout play.

Well done everyone and keep up the good work :)



The Human Body

W/C 14th August

After discussing our healthy bodies, the children began to show an interest in the human body and how it works, so we decided to explore this further. There was a lot of curiosity around this topic as a variety of questions were posed to the educators, followed by discovering the answers to these questions together. This included **"What are nails made of?"** - Keratin. **"How many bones are in our hand?"** - 27. **"Do we have bones in our bottom?"** - Yes, they are called sit bones. We looked closer at our organs, including what they do and their position in our bodies.

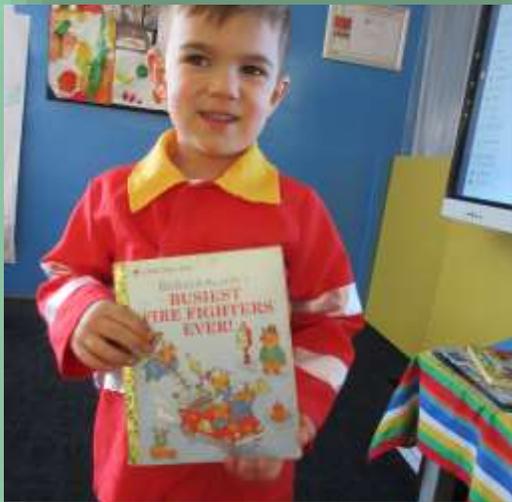
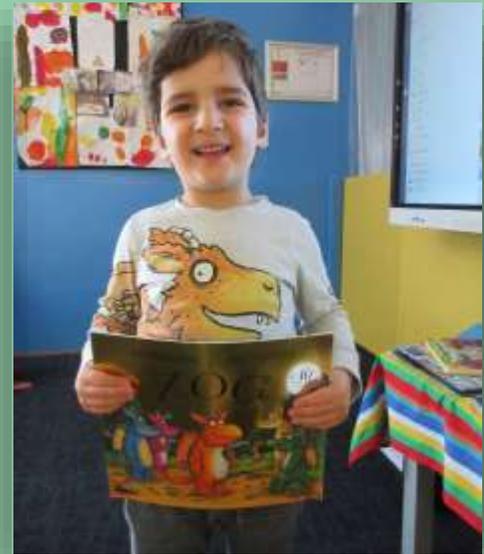
We were lucky to have a visit from Beatrix (Ethan's Mum) who taught the children about her prosthetic leg. This included how it was made, sharing her prosthetic legs she had as a child and how she can do almost anything with her leg. Beatrix celebrated that we are all different however should be treated the same.





BOOK WEEK 21ST AUGUST

One of our favourite weeks of the year arrived and it brought a variety of characters to preschool! We had princesses, pirates, wizards, dragons, superheroes and fairytale characters, and it was fantastic to see everyone dressed up each day. Thank you to all the families that organised costumes for the children. We shared lots of our favourite stories and discovered some new ones too. We also discovered some facts about books such as what the author and illustrator's jobs are and what a publisher does. The children also shared their experiences of visiting the library.



BOOK WEEK 21ST AUGUST

Thank you to all the families who shared their favourite books with us during Book Week. Below is a list of some of our favourite books! There might be a new one you would like to add to your book library at home.

- ♥ Pig the Pug
- ♥ Bears at the Beach
- ♥ See you later Alligator
- ♥ Where's the Green Sheep
- ♥ Peppa the Mermaid
- ♥ Green Eggs and Ham
- ♥ The Book With No Pictures
- ♥ The Baddies
- ♥ If I Had A Little Dream
- ♥ The Gruffalo
- ♥ Tyrannosaurus Drip
- ♥ Crocodile Rock
- ♥ Matilda
- ♥ Goodnight Goodnight Construction Site



Father's Day/Loved Ones Breakfast

Wednesday 30th August

What a fantastic turnout we had for our special loved ones breakfast. The children loved to be able to share their Preschool life with their Dads and Granddads, engaging in a variety of experiences with them including self portrait painting, sunflower planting, craft tie making, lego and outdoor games. It was also an opportunity for families to develop relationships between each other (MCPK Philosophy). We love that we are able to hold these special events that bring our Preschool community together, further developing our sense of belonging.



Father's Day/Loved Ones Breakfast Wednesday 30th August



Little Endeavours with Jo

We have been busy since the school holidays keeping our bodies fit and moving. It was a good month as we prepared and baked yummy food for afternoon tea for two weeks, and the preschoolers all worked as team collaborating and helping each other. Fine motor skills were needed in all the activities and great listening skills. The children were also active with the koi kites and dancing ribbons we made and were then able to use them outside and in group time moving and co-ordinating their bodies.



Koi Kites – We had fun making our Koi Kites for Letterland 'K' week and it was great to have Hunter's grandma helping us. It was fiddly to make the kite but the preschoolers listened to the instructions and used their fine motor skills, working together with their adult helper to put it together. This allowed us to incorporate of exercise as they ran around with them outside in the afternoon.



Dancing Ribbons – Counting skills were practiced and more fine motor finger co-ordination was used by the preschoolers as they counted out the ribbons and put them together before they were attached to the straw. In the afternoon session dancing skills were shown as they used their newly made dancing ribbons.

Little Endeavours with Jo

Noise Makers – For Letterland 'N' week we made a lot of noise with just a cup, twine and a bit of wet sponge. It was tricky to put together and the preschoolers and I had to work as a team to make our noise maker, and I was again able to see how far their fine motor skills had developed this year. To make the noise it took co-ordination and the children persevered, practicing until they were able to make noise. They could make a variety of noises by the way they pulled the sponge down the string.



Banana Muffins – Muffins for afternoon tea after we worked together to make our muffins. Sam E's Nanny came in to help as well as Chloe our Work Experience student. We learnt it was important to follow the recipe and numerical skills were used to measure ingredients. We had the best mixed muffins ever as each child did some stirring before we put them in patty pans. It is great to see the skills children have from baking at home with their family.



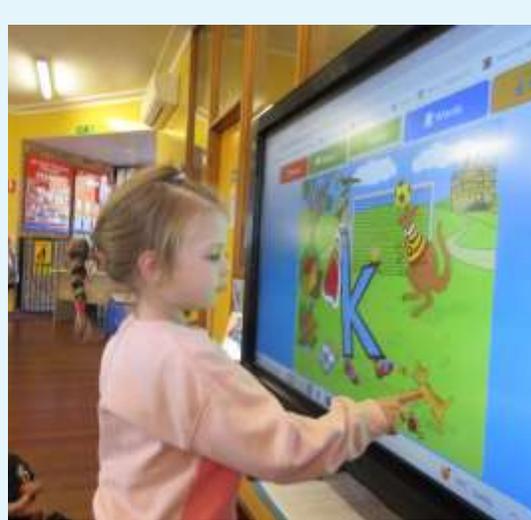
Book Week Baking – We baked and iced book characters for Book Week – gingerbread men and pigs from the Three Little Pigs. Lots of talk about hygiene when cooking and as we did these activities the children happily shared their favourite books. The pig that built the brick house was a favourite as he had a strong house and some gingerbread men had a sad face as they were going to be eaten.



Phonemic Awareness Programme



What a great time to explore Kicking King while our Matilda's soccer team kicked their way into the semi-final. We were able to develop our kicking skills while learning about the /k/ sound. This included karate lessons with side kicks, roundhouse kicks and push kicks. We also made Kicking King crowns. The children enjoyed making koi fish kites with Jo.



As we learnt about the /n/ sound, we explored the occupation of a nurse. This included vet nurses, dental nurses and nurses who care for babies (midwives). The children were able to make their own noise making noisy cups with Jo and engaging with the hammer and nails activity.



We also explored the /o/ sound with Oscar Orange. This included making new discoveries about octopus' and making yummy orange juice!



SUSTAINABILITY

Bee and Butterfly Sanctuaries

This month the children have participated in creating two new sanctuaries for our garden. We are aiming to use these sanctuaries to attract more bees and butterflies as they are an essential part of the pollinating process and help to produce healthy growing plants. Many of the children helped decorate the sanctuaries and plant some attracting seeds. Now all we have to do is wait for the hot weather and seeds to sprout.



Wonder Bread bag Box Success:

This month we packaged and sent off three of our wonder rewards bread bag boxes to the post office. In return, we received 1800 points to go towards some new outdoor equipment for the preschool. Thanks again to everyone for your bread bag donations. The children will be a part of the equipment selection in the upcoming weeks :)

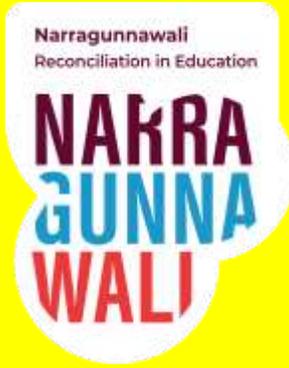
Friendly reminder:

Here at preschool we collect ink cartridges and recycle them to help make an impact. Feel free to bring in your home printers empty ink cartridges and give to one of the educators so that we can help you recycled them correctly.

Did you know: 375 million cartridges are disposed of each year noted that it takes between 450 and 1,000 years for one to break down. Cartridges do not break down in landfill.



Reconciliation Action Plan Update



Over the past eighteen months, the Educators have been developing our Reconciliation Action Plan. This has included gathering evidence of how we embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history into our program at preschool. With the help of Narragunnawali, we have been able to put our plan together which we submitted for approval in late July. This has now been approved and we are pleased to inform you that we have a published Reconciliation Action Plan! This doesn't mean that the hard work is over, we will continue to add to our plan, reflecting on our practice and discovering other ways we can continue to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into our teaching and learning.

If you would like to view our plan, we have a printed copy in the office. Otherwise, you can follow this link:

<https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/raps/27580/mt-colah-preschool-kindergarten>

September Birthdays

A big Happy Birthday to all of our children having a birthday this month!



Eda—4 years
Owen—4 years
Ivy—4 years
Atharv—5 years
Jacob—5 years
Jack B—4 years

