

Teaching problem solving to children.

Problem-solving and critical thinking are among the most crucial skills a child can learn. They provide children with the foundations for decision making, logical reasoning, categorising, analytical thinking, negotiation, and creativity. Providing children with a caring environment that is rich in appropriately challenging activities is the key to developing problem-solving and higher-order processing skills. This is especially important for our Schoolies at they move into a larger school setting which will encourage a lot of problem solving in social and learning contexts.

Name the problem: If you can see a child struggling with an activity, give them the language to express what they are finding difficult. Once you have named the problem, follow up with a prompting question that encourages them to take the next step to solve the problem. For example, if a child spilled water and can't find a cloth to clean it up, you could say: **"That looks like a big spill of water. What should we do next?"**

Answer with a question: When a child asks a question, resist the urge to answer immediately. Instead, think about how you could use their query to encourage them to take the next step. For example, if a child asks: **"Where are my shoes?"** ask them: **"What were you doing when you were wearing them last?"** Prompting questions will encourage them to track back, problem-solve, and find the solution on their own. Use prompting questions such as: What do you think about that? What do you think comes next? Which part are you finding difficult? Is there another way you could try that? Where could we find the answer?

Set the right level of challenge: Develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills by providing children with activities that are challenging but not impossible. Activities should be a little **out of reach and account for the child's stage of development,** skill level, and interests. A task that is interesting and appropriately challenging will encourage persistence, which ultimately leads to problem-solving and critical thinking skills, as opposed to frustration and discouragement.

Slow down and stand back: Children are often more capable than we think. Sometimes, all it takes is to slow down, stand back, and observe. Take your cues from the child. Are they asking for help? Are they getting visibly upset? If not, allow them the time and space to persist. They will discover the learning outcome on their own.



September in Review 2023

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- ♥ Discovery Topics for the month
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What is the size of the problem?

This is a social skills concept used to help children identify the severity of their problems which then allows them to choose an appropriate reaction. When children have a common language to describe their problems and reactions, they can identify solutions. Think... a problem such as a broken pencil versus a fall from the monkey bars that breaks a child's arm. Both are problems, but both have vastly different consequences. Understanding the size of the problem also means we need to adjust our reactions and adjust the way to deal with each problem. This is a great tool to use to help your child if they are having big reactions or learning how to solve problems for themselves.

3	<h3>Big</h3> <p><u>You need help from someone else right away</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-You get really hurt-There is an intruder in school-Someone threatens you or someone you know
2	<h3>Medium</h3> <p><u>Something that you may need help with to fix</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-You lose something-Someone is mean to you-You have a little accident
1	<h3>Small</h3> <p><u>Not a big deal. Something you can fix or get over yourself</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-You lose in a game-You are not line leader-Your pencil is dull

**What do I think is a small or big problem?
My own examples**

3	<h3>Big</h3> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
2	<h3>Medium</h3> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
1	<h3>Small</h3> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Our Preschool Programme in Review

Sweetpeas: This past month the Sweetpeas have enjoyed taking part in group games as we continue to build and develop social skills. Some games we have enjoyed are Bug in a Rug, Duck, Duck, Goose, Hot Potato and the very popular musical statues game. The children have been encouraged to engage with new friends in the group while engaging in these games. During music group times and dance sessions with Lorraine the children have been challenged to listen to actions songs as we copy instruction and learn simple dance moves which all are enjoying. This is a fun way to help the body and mind work together. Participating in these fun activities challenge balance, co-ordination, body and spatial awareness. This is also an opportunity to learn new vocabulary, strengthen memory skills while allowing children to practice self-expression. It is lovely to watch the enjoyment and a sense of accomplishment on the faces of the children as they conquer these challenges.

Bluebells: September has come and gone, and we are heading into the last term of the year. As we look back over the past month in this newsletter, you will see how much the children have been learning and their engagement in the preschool day. Through their everyday interactions, the Bluebells continue to further develop their social skills. There is lots of imaginative play happening just now, with the children adopting typical roles such as mums, dads, sisters, brothers etc in their play. Even playing in the water trough with the ponies, we saw Queens, Kings and Princess ponies with the children creating elaborate stories where everyone was involved in the process. This type of play supports the children's ability to learn negotiating skills, develop language skills and make sense of their world. There are some lovely friendships developing and we can see this when the children tell us about the playdates they are having with their preschool friends or the parties they have attended. Learning these social skills at this age help children develop positive relationships as well as developing leadership skills, empathy skills, and sharing skills in the future.

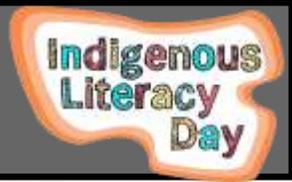
Schoolies:

This month we placed a focus on the Schoolies social interactions with each other, with a particular focus on pairing and encouraging the children to interact with friends they may be transitioning into kindergarten with. As the Schoolies are finishing up their last few months as preschoolers, these skills are very important as their social interactions help them develop their self-esteem and build resilience towards the unknown and in turn, create connections that make new social interactions and situations less scary. This is particularly important as they transition into the big school environment. Throughout the month, the Schoolies have been participating in a variety of games that promote team work and small group discussions. They have also been making a conscious effort to sit with different friends and to include/invite different friends into their imaginative games at play.

Well Done Schoolies!

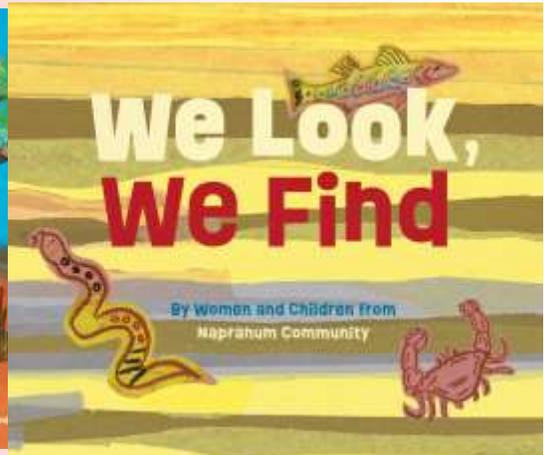
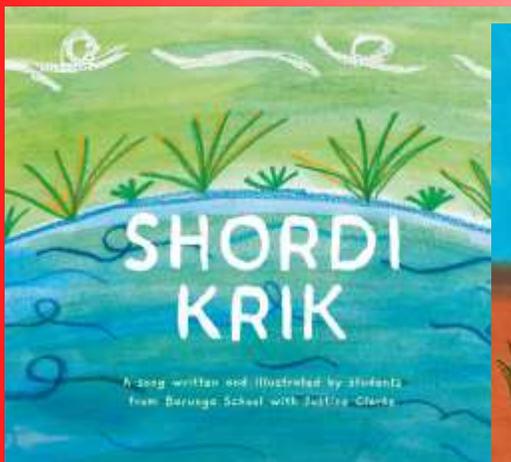


Indigenous Literacy Day 6th September



To celebrate Indigenous Literacy Day, Jessica Mauboy took us on a virtual tour around Australia to meet some Indigenous mobs from Barunga (NT), Karajarra (WA) and Alngith (Qld). They shared their way of living and the books they have written and illustrated, supported by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (see below). The stories capture Indigenous language and teach children about it.

The children enjoyed celebrating Indigenous culture through songs, stories, language and dancing. This included animal dancing including jumping like a kangaroo which we learnt the word kangaroo is maloo in an Indigenous language. The children of the Barunga country sang Shordi Krik to the Preschoolers.





Space and Astronauts

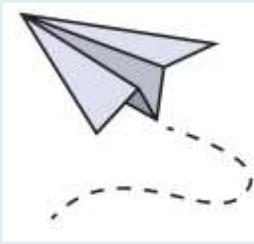
This month the children had shown a lot of interest towards the solar system, which stemmed our learning for the topic of space. During this week, we had a closer look at what the solar system is made up of and the climates of each planet. The children loved using our interactive board to research their inquisitive questions and watching short videos to help follow up on our discussions.

While exploring astronauts, the children enjoyed wearing special astronaut costumes and putting their recently taught knowledge into play. We discovered that space suits are made with a similar material to thermal blankets and as a result tried this on to feel the warmth. The children took part in a rocket experiment to explore chemical reactions as well as engaged with bubbles to see what it would be like to float around in space.



Space and Astronauts continued..





Things That Go w/C 12th September

Following on from our discovery about space rockets and shuttles, we investigated "Things that go". We looked at all different forms of transport, from away back to the very first vehicles to discovering how hot air balloons stay in the air. Visits to the Community Garden meant we could see lots of vehicles pass by and we identified how many wheels some had, what role in the community they had and how they moved – yes, we even saw helicopters! The children carried this discovery outside as we created our own paper planes and raced them across the garden.

We learned about what makes different vehicles move, by using wind, fuel, hot air and even muscle power like rowing or bike riding. We enjoyed experimenting with air power as we raced balloons across the room on string. With anticipation the children watched as the blown-up balloons were released racing to the other side of the room with lots of cheering for the winner.

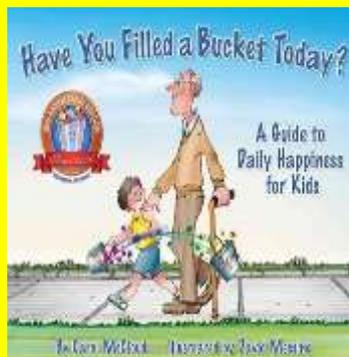
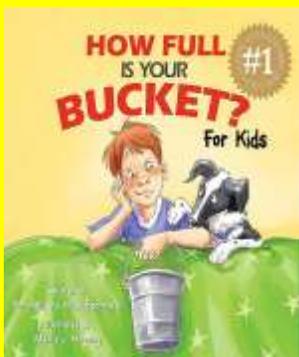


Filling Buckets Week

18th September

Have you heard your child use the metaphor about their bucket being full or empty? Here at Preschool we have been focusing on kindness and friendships, using the metaphor of filling a bucket. This metaphor explores everyone having a "bucket" and when someone does something kind or we do something kind for someone else, our bucket is filled. When our bucket is full, we are feeling good and happy. However, when we take from someone's bucket it can leave us and them feeling sad and unhappy. We have our own bucket up at group time which we add colourful pom poms to as the children share their kind and caring stories about how they helped, cared for and included others. We also engaged in role play situations using puppets where the children asked if they could play or invited others to play, created friendship chains and made our own recipe for friendship. We have absolutely loved watching the children transfer what they have learnt during their play, strengthening their ability to form friendships and increase their kindness and empathy.

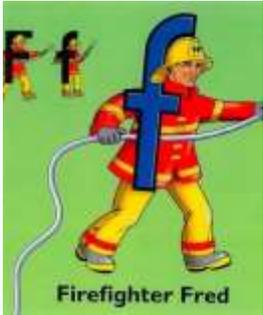
We love being a bucket filling Preschool! :)



Books for home that promote bucket filling
How full is your bucket? For kids. By Tom Rath,
Mary Reckmeyer,
Have you Filled a bucket today? By Carol McCloud



Phonemic Awareness Programme



As we explored the /f/ sound, the children learnt about fire safety with Firefighter Fred. This included practising the fire safety technique of *get down low and go go go* as well as providing the children with the opportunity to learn their home addresses in the case of an emergency. Recently when we practised our fire drills, we were able to discover that many of the children were able to explain where they live for the firefighters to find them.



Jumping Jim was able to listen to many funny jokes over the fortnight as the children shared their hilarious jokes. This developed the children's confidence with speaking in front of a group. They developed their /j/ production in words such as jelly and jellybeans as they made fruit jelly cups and took part in different jellybean experiments, observing the changes to the jellybeans after being placed in different liquids. We also incorporated guessing games and counting activities using jellybeans.



SUSTAINABILITY

Wonder bread bag box equipment:

This month the children took part in selecting some new outdoor resources as we successfully earned 1800 points from our bread bag collection. The children selected a variety of equipment that will help further their hand-eye coordination skills and over all gross motor skills.

For the remaining of the year, we will no longer be collecting bread bags for this program as the year is coming to an end. Thanks again to everyone for your bread bag donations over the past few months .

Some of the chosen equipment on it's way for term 4:



Some TLC as we enter SPRING:

The children weren't afraid to get their hands dirty this month as they all helped tend to our sensory gardens. They pulled the weeds out, laid new hay on the garden beds and watered our garden with some nutrient dense worm wee collected from our very own preschool worms.



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 recycle 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.





We have a very busy term ahead of us so please put the following dates in your calendar. We have copies of the Term 4 Programme on the entry table for you which contains these also.

Schoolies Plant Bug Excursion - Thursday 12th October
Steps Vision Screening (4yo) -Monday 16th, Thursday 19th
Kindifarm Visit - Friday 27th October
Big School Week - 27th November
Christmas Concert 9am - Friday 8th December
Schoolies Graduation 5pm - Thursday 14th December
(Community Garden)

October Birthdays

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



Ralph—4 years

Leo—4 years

Joshua—5 years

Ethan—5 years



Community Connections

Families, just a reminder if you would like your child to participate in the singing of 'Happy Birthday' at Mt Colah Public School's 70th Birthday Fair please let Lara know.



The poster features a light blue background with a banner at the top that reads "70th Birthday" in gold cursive. To the right is the Mount Colah Public School logo, which is a green circle containing a red stylized tree and the text "MOUNT COLAH PUBLIC SCHOOL". Below the banner is a large red ribbon with the words "SPRING FAIR" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. In the center, a white cloud contains the text "Sunday 22nd of October" and "9.30am to 4.00pm" in red, and "MOUNT COLAH PUBLIC SCHOOL" in green below it. To the right of the cloud are three white flowers with red centers. Below the cloud is a red ribbon containing a QR code on the left and the text "For more information: mountcolahspringfair.com" on the right. At the bottom, the text "Brought to you by:" is centered above three easels. The first easel is white with the logo for "BITE ME BAKEHOUSE" in orange and black. The second easel is dark green with the logo for "belle PROPERTY" in white. The third easel is white with the logo for "jenny fusca PAINTINGS" in black cursive and sans-serif fonts.

70th Birthday

SPRING FAIR

Sunday 22nd of October
9.30am to 4.00pm

MOUNT COLAH PUBLIC SCHOOL

For more information:
mountcolahspringfair.com

Brought to you by:

BITE ME
BAKEHOUSE

belle
PROPERTY

jenny fusca
PAINTINGS

Community Connections



SPRING FAIR



Wristband Packages

Silent Auction



Artwork Raffle Prize

Holiday Raffle Prize

