Autumn 2017

Little Green Steps
Western Australia

Time of ***Djeran*** and ***Makaru*** in the Nyungar calendar

A Little Update and looking ahead

Little Green Steps WA has been busily supporting early years educators as they embrace new sustainability actions and make in-roads into existing projects with their children. By understanding the Autumn Nyungar Story, we may find some inspiration to revitalise and plant native garden beds in our services.

With the cooler temperatures and the first rains in June, Nyungar people would begin to travel inland to source other hunting and gathering areas. Bulbs and seeds were collected for food with edible Yanjidi (the root of a species of flag flower called Typha angustifolia) growing alongside freshwater streams, being collected in April and May.

There is a huge variety of native edible plants that you can you grow in your centres. They are usually very water wise, having adapted to our climate and they can be used to both enliven children's mealtimes and to stimulate their taste buds to new flavours.

The attached resources will give you some food for thought: Sercul Bush tucker, the Sustainable table and bushfoods from Sustainable Gardening Australia.

We can both immerse ourselves and our children in Australia's diverse heritage by celebrating the Australian Heritage Festival during May. Many events celebrate the contributions of diverse cultures to our communities, such as 'The Noongar Dreaming Story -The Rising of the Sea Level and the Bringing of Colours' at CREEC on May 18th and the important role of the Sikh community in Canning's colonial history at Riverton library on 10th May. See Canning Heritage guide here.

Bush Kinder in Armadale

Mundarda Child Care Centre in Seville Grove has their *Bush Kinder Program* up and running. It is providing opportunities for young children to spend time in bushland areas in and around Armadale, having fun discovering the animals, plants, rocks, soil, water and other features of the bush.

Educators and families at Mundarda are excited about the excursions which, in unstructured ways, help to build skills – from language, vocabulary and gross and fine motor development to developing empathy, helping the environment and working together. Back at the Centre afterwards, children and staff create interactive displays using collected materials and photographs.
Claire Siaus at Mundarda is very happy to be contacted for more information about the Centre's program.

Image: Muddy Play permission Mundarda Childcare Centre, 2017

We wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we work on. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contributions they make to the land and the life of Western Australia.

LGSWA Happenings

Roleystone College 'Walk to School Day'

Students of all ages at Roleystone Community College joined in 'Walk to School Day' events in March. As well as their stroll in the lovely morning air, the students enjoyed.

As well as their stroll in the lovely morning air, the students were treated to a fresh fruit smoothie, whizzed up by a bike-powered blender! Walk to School events raise awareness about reducing our carbon footprint and choosing passive transport.

So why don't you plan a National Walk Safely to school/childcare Event on May 19th. Click here for more information.

'Hello Baby'

In March, Little Green Steps WA was part of 'Hello Baby' - the City of Cockburn's free annual community event providing information, support and entertainment for parents and babies, in the beautiful surroundings of Manning Park in Spearwood. Families visiting our stall and discovered some simple ways to take sustainability into account to have fun and benefit the lives of babies and young children.

The Earth Day Expo at the City of Canning

On March 31st, Little Green Steps WA was invited to present hands-on learning activities to younger primary school children in the wetland surrounds of the City of Canning.

The children became wetland detectives analysing the evidence of native animals living in the Canning river region through their 'tracks and scats' in particular. Much fun was had drawing animal tracks in the sand and making life like scats to take back to school to show peers why it is so necessary to protect our native animals from predators such as the fox and cat !

Educators Support Network news

A focus on FOOD attracted over 20 early childhood educators, managers and support staff to the April Network meeting, held at Mundarda Child Care Centre. After a Centre tour, speakers covered a range of topics, from the Supporting Nutrition for Australian Childcare (SNAC) program to the influence of trauma on children's eating habits to the significance of food in the ecological footprint and social handprint of sustainability.

The Network is for Child Care Services in the City of Gosnells, City of Armadale and Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale. To find out more or join the email list to hear of future meetings contact Toni Davey.

LGSWA Happenings

Little Green Steps in Narrogin

In April, fifteen long day care and family day care educators attended a Little Green Steps half day 'Day to Day Sustainability in Early Childhood Settings' workshop, hosted by Narrogin Regional Child Care Services.

Among the highlights and ideas that educators plan to use from the workshop were tips for documenting sustainability learning and actions; incorporating sustainability into conversations with young children, and using the 'Ecological Footprint' and 'Social Handprint' to understand sustainability more and make it part of everyday activities, from food and meal times, to hygiene, arts and crafts and gardens and outdoors Educators from nine different services in the region, made the most of the opportunity for learning and to network and share their knowledge and skills

Little Green Steps for TAFE and University

J Pearson, 2017

Little Green Steps WA has recently provided sustainability training for pre-service early childhood educators and lecturers in two tertiary settings.

An 'Introduction to Sustainability', with 50 participants from Armadale and Thornlie TAFEs, was presented at Armadale TAFE in March and a Lecture on Sustainability across the Curriculum for Early Childhood Pre-service teachers at Murdoch University in April. All Students gained insights into thinking about, looking for and taking action for sustainability in their pracs and for embedding it in their education and care roles in future workplaces.

What about some water saving tips from early years educators themselves?

Tip 1. *The Best water wise resource I have come across is a plastic outdoor hand basin. It attaches to the hose and children turn it on to wash hands and the water then travels through a flexible pipe onto the garden.*

Tip 2. *Re-purposed shampoo bottles can be slipped over the laundry tap arm to extend the flow of water when children cannot reach. The corner of the shampoo bottle is cut at an angle to create a spout.*

Tip 3. *Water used to wash veggies in the kitchen can be collected in watering cans and used on the gardens.*

Tip 4. *Spray bottles with water are a good water saver when cleaning tables, paint easels etc. They are also an excellent way to cool off in the heat instead of using a hose or paddle pool.*

Tip 5. *Using watering cans to empty a paddle pool or teaching children how to syphon water onto the garden beds is another good re-use of water tip.*

Tip 6. *Empty soapy water from baby baths, the dog bath or from washing the car straight onto the grass so they can act as a wetting agent.*

By Maureen Daniels from Roberta Jull Family Day care service

Should you have any themed sustainability tips to share with other educators, Let us know as we love to share!

Upcoming Workshops

Upcoming LGSWA Workshops to help you get your sustainable journey off to a flying start in 2017

Sustainability in Early Years Settings Workshops

These workshops are supported by local governments, making them free for early childhood professionals in the relevant area. Come along if you want to explore the meaning of sustainability, learn some new information and discover activities and resources to help you plan your next sustainable steps.

Thurs 11th & 18th May workshop (split evening sessions) Day to Day Sustainability in Early Years settings - **City of Cockburn**. Details are available on page 16 of the Sustainability guide, click here.

Thursday 25th May workshop Cultural Connections and Conversations for Early Years educators – **City of Canning.** Click here to register attendance.

If you'd like these workshops to be available in your area consider approaching your local government about forming a partnership with us. Contact us if you have any questions.

We are also available to deliver workshops at your service. Find more details here.

If your service has participated in a Little Green Steps WA workshop and you would value a visit or just a catch up chat to discuss more 'little green steps' you can take, contact us at lgs@aaeewa.org.au

Reducing Waste Together Workshops

Supported by the Waste Wise Schools program these workshops are free for early childhood professionals to attend and are tailored to your local area. You'll learn about the problems waste causes, find out what happens to waste in your local area, discover new learning experiences for young children and take away a copy of the Reducing Waste Together kit.

These Reducing Waste workshops will take place in the following areas for 2017 – To book a place click here to find workshops on the LGSWA events page.

For early childhood services in the Northern suburbs of Perth:

- **Mindarie Regional Resource Centre – Workshop on Monday 29th May from 4.30 pm – 7.15 pm**

For early childhood services in the Southern suburbs of Perth:

- **Rivers Regional Council – Waste workshop – June 13th hosted by Wirra Birra Primary school, Gosnells.**

Image: SMRC Reuse Art, May 2016

Image of 'MACCA' - Unicare Nedlands, May 2017

Cooking with Kids

ROASTED VEGGIES

by Theresa Rayfield, Australian Nutritionist, BSc Nutrition

As the weather cools down, what better way to get some vegetables into everyone's lives than to roast them in some wonderful herbs and garlic? A great idea as around only 7% of adults and 5% of children eat the recommended serves of vegetables daily (ABS, 2015).

Roasted veggies do not need to be served with a full on Sunday roast but can be used as a snack on any day of the week; morning tea for the littlies; an after school snack, or even a weekend afternoon snack while watching the footy....

This is an ideal way to add some variety into children's' diets also as more than one vegetable can be roasted at a time. Let children select their favourite vegetables ,while adding a couple more for them to try.

There are lots of Autumnal vegetables that can be easily roasted and buying seasonal is great for the pocket too as they tend to cost less when in season. Some autumn vegetables include broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, capsicum, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, and green beans.

INGREDIENTS: Vegetables of choice, 2-6 garlic, olive oil, herbs of choice, favourites in our family are rosemary (gives a feeling of the Sunday roast), basil and oregano or for a little more heat add paprika or some fajita spices.

INSTRUCTIONS: Vegetables are easy to roast, cut cauliflower or broccoli into florets, chop green beans into about 5 cm pieces, cut an average capsicum into about 12-16 pieces. Chop carrots and sweet potato into small chip size pieces and pumpkin into small chunks. Then place on a baking tray, with the whole peeled garlic cloves, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with herbs, toss to cover in oil and herbs then spread out into a single layer.

Place in an oven at 200°C. Carrot, sweet potato and pumpkin take around 30 mins so put in the oven first for 15 mins then add any other vegetables for the final 15 mins.

Allow to cool a little, but eat while still warm. They can be served with some dips such as hummus or a little mayonnaise or can be served topped with a sprinkle of grated cheese.

TO SERVE: For littlies you could serve on a large plate and allow them to select the vegetables they prefer or serve a small plate with a selection.

LEFTOVERS: It does not happen often but these can be added to meals the following day and go nicely as pizza toppings, so they won't go to waste.

Thanks Theresa

Check out Theresa's video instructions for hummus & veg on 'Be Calm and Roast Vegetables' page on Facebook.

Sustainable Schools WA

Little Green Steps WA is a part of the Sustainable Schools WA Alliance where we work with many organisations to support schools and early learning services to reduce their ecological footprint and increase their social handprint. The handprint and footprint provide a framework for educators to use in their planning to embed sustainable practices.

Regional Network Groups

These groups are for teachers, school administrators and other members of school communities (including early childhood professionals) to meet, learn from one another and guest speakers, and share ideas about sustainability in educational settings, including accessing a range of support resources.

Meeting dates in Term 1 for these groups can be accessed from the Sustainable Schools website. Click here

- Armadale
- Canning
- Mandurah/Peel
- Mundaring/Perth Hills
- Padbury
- Wembley
- Albany
- Bunbury
- Geraldton
- Port Hedland

Details of Meetings in Term 2 for Early Years in Canning and Armadale

South Metro Regional Network meeting:

16th May 2017

4 pm – 6pm at Canning Eco Education Centre, Wilson. Please contact Hayley Bullimore at CREEC for details: mailto:hbullimore@canning.wa.gov.au

Presentations by Switch Your Thinking and Art and Science Biodiversity workshops showcased too.

Armadale Sustainable Schools networking group meeting:

10th May 2017 3.45 – 5.50 pm at Jarrahdale Primary School. The theme is 'WATER'. The meeting will include a school garden tour and Waterwise Schools and Ribbons of Blue presentations. Please contact Anne Pettit for more details: lgs@aaeewa.org.au or 0418 602 281

Book Review

Book reviews from your local librarian

The Library

Sniff's First Vegetable Patch

Created by John Walters & Steve Murray

Sniff would like to grow a vegetable patch but everything doesn't go or grow quite as it should! Themes of planning ahead and self-control as well as the process of growing plants are covered. Colourful illustrations and easy to read text add to this book's appeal.

The book is part of a series promoting 'Parent Assisted Immersive Reading' (PAIR) which provides prompts and questions for parents to ask their child while reading the book. Literacy skills are promoted and the book is educational and interactive.

Sunshine

By Helen Cox-Cannons

As part of the 'Weather Wise' series this visual book with lovely photographs and simple text introduces children to different types of weather. *Sunshine* explains why sunshine is important as part of our weather, where it comes from, sun safety and how the Sun moves. Other titles in the series include *Thunder and Lightning* and *Wind.*

Both books encourage parental involvement and are suitable for beginner readers.

Encourage your child's love of reading - if your child is interested in a particular topic bring them to the library and borrow some books on a subject they like e.g. gardening, dinosaurs, cars etc. This will help to engage them with books and make reading fun!

These reviews have been written by Shirley Riley, Young People's Services Librarian, City of Armadale Libraries.

Thanks Shirley

CITY OF Armadale

Resources

Resources & Ideas for your Early Years Service:

Young Re-inventor of the Year – COME ON EARLY YEARS, YOU ARE NEVER TOO YOUNG TO BE A RE-INVENTOR!

The theme for 2017 is 'Gardens alive!' Children of all ages are invited to re-invent rubbish into something that brings a garden to life and send a photo of their creation.

It's that simple. For more information and project ideas click here.

Mini Twitchers – Bird ID toolkit

Available for loan from **All Cockburn libraries** for early years services, so borrow away and encourage your children to get outdoors and admire our amazing birdlife – you can even record sightings in the logbook provided. Become a library member and then reserve a loan online - Click here for more info.

Cockatoo Kids Club

Is a collaborative initiative of the Cities of Canning, Cockburn, CREEC, Native Arc and Millenium Kids for children aged 6-12.

Become a member and go to 4 events a year plus have lots of fun learning together how to care for WA's three species of threatened Cockatoos. Click here for more info.

Teach Nature Play

For educators who want structured lessons following the outcomes of the EYLF, **Cool Australia** has created a short online course which can be purchased. click here for more information.

Educated by Nature

Mud Pie Playgroup for 1-5 year olds
Incursions for early years services
Click here for programs

Image: Mundarda Childcare March 2017

Buggy & Buddy Scavenger hunt

FREE downloadables

Sustainable table – Is a non for profit online resource for Australians wanting to make a difference to eating more ethically and sustainably – A great section for educators is 'What you can do ? and also the downloadable resources.

SNAC (Supporting Nutrition for Australian Childcare) – This site helps you connect with other childcare professionals to share experiences of promoting healthy eating & network their ideas. Register to join and see what great recipes are on offer during MAY Munch month.

What's On?

City of Cockburn Sustainable Events

Many of these workshops are free. For more information see the Sustainable Events guide.

13th May & 14th June – *Sustainable building & design consultations at Cockburn libraries*

28th April – *Henderson Waste recovery park bus tour*

6th May – *Guided Bush Tucker Tour*

6th May – *Green Skills – from Waste to Wonderful upcycling Pallets for your home garden*

13th & 20th May – *Ethical and Investment & Sustainable Money Management*

13th May–24th June – *Living Smart course*

11th June & 24th June – *Community Planting Days in Cockburn*

17th June – *Growing your own food with Ecoburbia*

City of Canning Sustainable Events

The City offers many events at a highly subsidised cost if not FREE. Please click here to view the Sustainable Canning Living Guide

18th April–18th May – Heritage Festival of Events

15th May–21st May - Families week
Around the World in 7 days is the theme. Click here for the calendar to help plan going to these child friendly activities

City of Armadale Sustainable Events

see the 2017 Growing Our Community calendar for FREE Community events and Grants information – click here

Saturday 20th May – *Fun Mosaics Workshop*. To book a place, click here

Fri 19th & Sat 20th May – *Giving Backathon*

Join like-minded people, make new connections and share your skills to come up with exciting solutions to local issues of interest to you. To get involved, click here.

8th–14th May – *National Volunteer Week* events from kicks off with:

11th May, 5.30pm – *Step into volunteering* at Armadale Library

Wed 14th June, 6pm – *Make Social media work for you* at Frye Park

As well as giving Rewards for residents in Member Councils, Switch Your Thinking also does Rewards for Businesses

Discounts are offered to help businesses become more sustainable by helping them cut waste and reduce energy and water use.

For further information on how to purchase products and to check whether you operate within a Switch Your Thinking Member Council Click here

What's On?

Ideas for Energy, Air and Transport

- Earth hour was celebrated on March 24th but Cool australia has plenty of ideas and activities for children to learn about for Energy, Air and Transport.
- Use picture books and simple props like food labels and animal toys to explore which plants and animals our foods come from.
- Worm farms are not only for learning about reducing food waste. Involve children in conversations about how earthworms recycle energy and nutrients in the foods they eat:
- Find tips for sustainable transport
- Children can learn about transportation through activities:
- Read a book such as R.M. Bramley's 'Air is all around you' OR try to source it from your local library.
- Find out about the air quality and other benefits of plants and involve children in the selection
- Do an energy/sustainability audit in your early years service

Dates to Remember

18th April–21st May – Heritage Festival 2017

8th–14th May National Volunteers Week

15th May – International Day of Families

19th May – National Walk Safely to School Day

21st May – World Day of Cultural Diversity

22nd May – International Biodiversity Day

26th May – National Sorry Day

27th May–3rd June – National Reconciliation Week & Events in WA

1st June – International Children's Day

3rd June – Mabo Day

5th June – Act, Belong Commit & WA Day & World Environment Day

8th June – World Oceans Day

20th World refugees Day (18th June – 24th June Refugee Week

3rd–9th July – Naidoc Week

We're on Facebook... And we're sharing lots of great ideas, links and food for thought. Look for us here. We'd love you to send us pictures of anything sustainable you're doing too.

Have any questions, comments or requests for the next newsletter? Contact the Little Green Steps WA Program Manager: lgs@aaeewa.org.au

Little Green Steps WA is proudly supported by: