

EARLY LEARNING & KINDER

Cire
children's services

Yarra Junction NEWSLETTER



March 2020 Edition

From the Director's Desk

Hi everyone

I understand that in these times of uncertainty we are all awaiting information on a daily basis in regards to the COVID-19 and whether care will be suspended. I would just like to confirm that at this stage we have been advised that we need to remain open unless we receive Government advice that we need to close. I would also like to again confirm that we have not had any cases of COVID-19 with our children, families or educators.

Our primary goal is to ensure the health and safety of our children, families and staff.

Some of the measures in place to ensure safety are:
Our services are cleaned daily with hospital grade cleaners and disinfectants.

Our services follow strict hygiene and infection control practices

- We have hand sanitisers at the service entry and outside each room.
- Educators and children wash their hands on arrival to the service and at regular times throughout the day, including (but not limited to), before and after meals, after toileting, after blowing their nose
- Surfaces including doorknobs, gate entries, table tops and iPads are cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day.
- All toys are disinfected daily and for the younger rooms we have a mouthed toy bucket where toys that have been mouthed by children are immediately placed, so that they can be disinfected to minimize any spread of infections.
- As an additional precautionary measure, we have postponed all excursions and incursions to our services.

- We understand that these provide valuable learning experiences for the children but the current climate these measures are in place to protect children, families and educators.
- We follow strict exclusion periods as set out in Staying Healthy in Childcare. If children are sick please keep them home and if educators are sick we also enforce exclusion periods.
- We are enforcing social distancing by adults in line with Government guidelines.
- We are also using intentional teaching and educational expertise to implement social distance practices for the children (where possible).

We understand and can appreciate that many families are nervous about the current situation but I can assure you we are working hard to continue to provide high quality and safe environments for our children, families and our team of wonderful educators who have worked tirelessly through these challenging times. We will continue to offer support to you and your family and will update you regularly.

As you would also all be aware, on Thursday the Australian Government made an announcement regarding free childcare. Whilst we are still seeking clarification regarding some aspects of the package, this is fantastic news for families. This initiative will ensure that children can continue to have access to early education and care which is so important for children's development. It also ensures that working parents still have access to quality care for their children and do not have to rely on family for care including grandparents who may be more vulnerable to COVID-19.

We have also provided some resources below that you may find useful.

Some resources to support your family

- Link to Unicef's guide on how to talk to children about coronavirus
<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Links to some online and offline learning opportunities for you to do with your child
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/learning/Pages/preschoolers-play-based-learning.aspx>
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/learning/Pages/literacy-birth-year-2.aspx>
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/learning/Pages/numeracy-birth-year-2.aspx>
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/parents/learning/Pages/stem.aspx>
<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning>

If you have any questions please feel free to speak with us at anytime.

Cheers Mel

Bear Hunt

Cire Children's Service Yarra Junction have joined in the Bear Hunt. If you're out on an errand and in the area drive by and you might catch a glimpse of our two cheeky bears just hanging around out the front.



At Home Activity Ideas for Children

The wonderful Linda and Mary have put together a huge activity pack for the whole family to enjoy! It's full of DIY craft activities, mindfulness, colouring templates and more!

The staff at Cire are busy working on bringing activities to you via our online hub to help you feel connected during this challenging time. We encourage feedback or suggestions you may have, so please get in touch if you have an idea you would like to share.

Download your free Activity Pack here:

<https://www.cire.org.au/.../Kind-Home-Family-Activity-Pack-27...>

From the Cire Team

Educator Announcements

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce that we have appointed Karen Kearns as the Assistant Director of Yarra Junction Children's Service. Karen will still assist in her room while we wait to appoint a new Room Leader. Laura, Pat and Hannah will remain in the room to ensure consistency for the children.

We are also pleased to announce that Amanda Brown will take on a leadership role at the Centre as 3IC (Room Based). Amanda will also take over the role of Room Leader of the Toddler's Room. This will be effective from Tuesday 14th April 2020, which will enable Amanda to remain in the Kindergarten Room while Grace is on school holidays ensuring consistency for the children. When Amanda moves to the Toddler Room, Jenni Shaw and Melanie Mullens will remain in the Kindergarten Room as the Assistant Educators and Charli Stritch will support the kindergarten team when required. This will ensure stability for the children.

Due to the current conditions around COVID-19 it is regret that we inform you that we have had to cancel all excursions and incursions until further notice, including our planned Grandparents/Special person's Day which was planned for April.

We will however still be going ahead with our PJ Week to raise funds for the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal.

During the week of 6th to 9th April all staff and children are encouraged to wear their PJ's to the service. We know it is an extremely difficult time for all families financially, but if you could spare some loose change please feel free to donate into our RCH Appeal purple fundraising tin located at the front desk.



Nursery News

This month has seen lots of outdoor play, as we all do our best to stay healthy by enjoying active play in the fresh air & sunshine. The children have loved climbing the a-frame, and playing peek-a-boo in the tent with each other. We have also done a number of art experiences this month, which has allowed the children to experiment with various mediums, including crayons & chalk.



Hand-washing has also been a focus over the past few weeks. The children love washing their hands in the sink, and think it's great fun to rub the soap between their fingers.



Something that we would love to do in the nursery is display family photos for the children to look at throughout the day. Seeing photos of loved ones is a beautiful way to foster a child's sense of well-being & identity, and can also be an effective way of comforting and settling children, as well. If you would like to contribute a family photo for this display, feel free to either bring in a photo, or email it through to the centre.

Thanks!
Becca & Janine

News from the Toddler's Room

It has been a busy month in the Toddler Room! We have been enjoying being outside every day before the cold weather arrives. We have been making smoothies in the sandpit, playing on the swings and reading books under the trees. We have also enjoyed a few visits to the Nursery Room yard in the afternoons and some water play giving the toy babies a bath.

Inside, the children have been enjoying the big foam slide. Easter crafts have also begun and the children have been enjoying drawing and colouring in.

Unfortunately, we haven't been able to visit the library or bush block like we had hoped due to COVID-19 but hopefully we can begin these activities again soon.



Also just a friendly reminder to please pack your child an extra jumper or jacket as the weather gets cooler.

Chelsea, Nicole
& Charli



Pre Kinder News

We are still enjoying some beautiful sunny days' outdoors which we are definitely making the most of. We have been creating different outdoor activities for the children to explore. Our children have been working on their social skills, engaging in conversations with their peers, either with their own age group, or with their older siblings. The sandpit has been quite busy this month and the children have been making some beautiful creations such as sand castles, Olaf the snowman and birthday cakes. This helps their cognitive development by using their imagination and creativity skills. Some children have been engaging in playing chasey or hide and seek outdoors which is great for their physical wellbeing and development, and also learning how to take turns and engage in cooperative play.

The children have been enjoying many craft activities on the colder and rainy days, and we have been using their artwork to teach them about seasons. Some children created umbrellas on rainy days using bubble wrap around them for the rain effect and cotton wool for clouds, and some added beautifully coloured rainbows to the backgrounds. Whilst the artwork was hanging in the room to dry, the children were excited about their masterpieces, and this created conversations about the weather as they were able to acknowledge the resemblance outside.

Some of our children have been given the opportunity to attend Japanese language and culture lessons in the kinder room on Wednesdays and have really been enjoying it. Chie, our Japanese teacher, teaches the children words and songs in Japanese, and artwork that reflects the Japanese culture. Children need to explore and celebrate diverse cultures and understandings, which presents new opportunities for them to learn about alternative ways of living.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss your child's learning and development, please feel free to chat with us anytime or book an appointment.

Thank you from Karen, Laura and Hannah.

Kinder News

We have had a lovely March full of learning in the Kinder Room. Mindfulness has been important at this anxious time of year. We have enjoyed lots of outdoor play in an effort to socially distance. We have enjoyed lots of laughter and child-led activities, allowing the children to show us what is needed in this time. The children have been more tired as well, so we have built in quiet times to our day when we lie down and relax listening to a relaxation story. We have discovered that "Hunwick's egg" by Mem Fox is a mine of learning. The care that Hunwick showed towards his egg, the patience while waiting for the egg to hatch, the concern of Hunwick's friends for Hunwick when they realised that the egg wouldn't hatch and the beautiful illustrations of the Australian natives and animals. We looked at a picture of Mem Fox, Pamela Lofts and John Hunwick, who was the inspiration for the story with his love of bilbies. We then had a go at painting the natives illustrated in the book and this led to children learning how to paint a flower.

The children also enjoyed using watercolour pencils to draw with, exploring how the line bleeds when water is added. We have been exploring the "Getting to know you" book and learning about the children's favourite foods, stories and toys and then exploring the favourite stories in the afternoon. Tips for kids at this time: Relaxation and mindfulness is important at the moment Lots of outdoor play in the backyard so children can explore nature which will help them relax Find stories online read by famous authors or teachers or even the online library - this will help to expose your children to more stories than you may have at home. Try gardening, cooking, cleaning with your children - give them small tasks to help watch playschool or mister maker and have a go at making the crafts Build some mindfulness into your day so that you can be more calm with your children. Even a 2 minute breathing activity may help. Lots of yoga and free exercise classes for kids on YouTube Reach out for help if you're struggling - you can contact us through OWNA or email or message us on the mobile.

Grace, Amanda, Jenni & Mel

Looking for Rainbows!

Our Children's Centre at Yarra Junction has joined in the Rainbow Trail. The children collaborated to create a huge rainbow to display at our Centre showing that "we are all in this together"!



Cire Children's Services Facebook Page

Cire Children's Services now has its own Facebook Page. Please follow and like our page.

Here is the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/cirechildrenservices/>

Uplift Project

Many women live without one
RECYCLE YOUR BRA



In many regions second hand bras are cheap enough but rarely available. A new bra, if available at all, can cost 10-30 hrs wages.

If you have any bras you would like to donate, please drop them off to Nat in the Children's centre. They welcome donations of new and used bras!

Dates to Remember

28 March – 13 April – School holidays

Friday, 10 April – Good Friday
Public Holiday
(Centre Closed)

Sunday, 12 April – Easter Sunday

Monday, 13 April – Easter Monday Public Holiday
(Centre Closed)

Tuesday, 14 April – Curriculum Day, State wide

Wednesday, 15 April – First day of Term 2 (TBC)

Saturday, 25 April – ANZAC Day

