Welcome

Interesting Happenings during September and October

**Enviroweek, 11-17 September:** The aim of Enviroweek is to encourage children to take genuine action on waste, gardening, energy and health projects and see the immediate impact of positive everyday choices—for them, their childcare and our environment.

There are four areas of focus: Green Thumb, Waste Warriors, Wild Child and Sparky. For each area, you can click on the Early Childhood age group and the website gives you ideas of what action you could take, how to do it, how to involve parents, how to involve the whole centre, interesting facts, further links for information, and how to involve children in discussions.

You can register to be involved, find out how to take action, choose to showcase your participation with others, and then celebrate Enviroweek. There are lots of tips, ideas, facts, science experiments, and pdfs on the website (even if you don’t want to take part in the Enviroweek there are so many great ideas for sustainability). You can even have an online profile (public or private) to engage and involve parents. To access the how-to guide and sign-up for your tool-kit, visit [http://www.enviroweek.org/](http://www.enviroweek.org/)

**Aussie Backyard Bird Count, 17-23 October:** The Aussie Backyard Bird Count (ABBC) provides an important snapshot of the birds that live where we live. You need to count the number of birds you see in a 20 minute period and there is an app (Aussie Bird Count) that you download to count and submit your sightings checklist. It is done in October because that’s when it is springtime, so the birds are more lively and visible. You can count birds anywhere, so your centre is a perfect place to go outside and start counting. For more information, go to the website [http://aussiebirdcount.org.au/](http://aussiebirdcount.org.au/)

**Children’s Week, 25-31 October:** This is a national celebration of children’s rights, talents and citizenship. The permanent theme for this week is “A Caring World Shares”. There are always a wide range of events and activities to attend, this is a great opportunity to be involved in the local community or to invite the community to see what your centre is doing. For more information, visit the WA website [http://www.childrensweekwa.org.au/](http://www.childrensweekwa.org.au/)

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Our website contains information on the courses that we train, the most current newsletter, and the CTAS Professional Development Calendar. Our web address is [www.ctas.wa.edu.au](http://www.ctas.wa.edu.au)

You can also find us on Facebook and Pinterest.

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**In This Issue**

- September/October Calendar
- Thinking Beyond the Home Corner
- Free Logs
- What’s Coming Up in PD
- Outdoor Environments Article
- Inspiration Spot
- Velcro & Pop Sticks
Thinking Beyond the Home Corner

Role play is vital to contributing to a child’s cognitive, social/emotional, physical and language development. Children use role play as a way of exploring the world around them, use their imagination and play make-believe, act out day to day life experiences and express emotions safely.

The environment we provide is the first point for a child to potentially engage in dramatic play and we must not rely on the ‘home corner’ set up to solely meet the needs of role play in the physical environment.

There are many ways to find inspiration for creating role play experiences, such as taking the time to listen to a children’s conversations, learning about the interests of the group and individuals, network with families and reflect on what may be happening within your local community. From conversations and observations an authentic role play area/s or experience/s can be created. Role play set ups can be created in the indoor and outdoor environment and is not limited to just one designated part of a room. It is important to ensure that the area or experience is flexible, allows for creativity and children are provided with an opportunity to make choices.

Props and materials are an important inclusion to the play, be sure to add in new items and change up the environment to allow for new ideas and play to evolve.

Small world set ups are also a fantastic way to encourage role play and can be particularly appealing to children who prefer to engage in play individually or in small groups.

My Dad is a FIFO Dad Small World Experience

This experience was inspired by a storybook that was read to a child who has a parent who has a fly in fly out job. The purpose of the experience is to provide an opportunity to further explore a popular story through role play. The children after some time decided that they wanted to take away the dress ups, story and aeroplane and include dinosaurs and the play evolved to become a dinosaur excavation.

Why Choose A Traineeship?

- You get paid to learn!
- You gain valuable work experience
- At the end you receive a qualification that is recognised Australia wide
- You stay current in industry
- Gain confidence working in a real job role

If you want to learn more about traineeships or to sign up for qualification training, please call CTAS on 9350 9222 or email admin@ctas.wa.edu.au

Educational Leaders

The Educational Leaders Association Facebook page is a page for Educational Leaders to share, learn and develop their role of an Educational Leader in Australia. They share interesting articles, great quotes to make you think, and other information that might benefit the Educational Leaders in our centres.
Free logs**

Free Logs For Nature Play Perth is a platform for Perth schools and childcares to source free logs to be used for children’s playgrounds.

This initiative was started by West Coast Arbor Service with the goal of connecting children with free Nature Play Logs.

The **only costs involved for the school or day care centre is the cost of transporting the wood from the cutting site to the end location. They need to use a crane truck for this as some of these logs are 3,4,5 tonnes.

You need to be a not-for-profit to access the logs.

Like their page to see all of the conditions and to be involved.

What’s coming up in PD?

Check our website for up to date calendar information. If your service requires specific training, consider our in-service sessions. We can customize any of our previous or upcoming topics, just contact us for dates and availability through our email: pdtraining@ctas.wa.edu.au

Maths and Science, 28 September

Discover how much Maths and Science is embedded in everyday play and life activities, and how you can enhance this. The workshop will also look at strategies to use resources for maths and science learning.

QA1

Developing and Building a QIP, 5 October

A QIP is a living working document, in this session we will delve into developing one and how to constantly build and enhance on it. The session will examine what is critical reflection, a skill necessary for an evolving QIP. We will look at strategies to include input from children, families and the community.

QA7

EYLF Practice: Responsiveness to Children, 2 November

One of the eight EYLF practices that promote children’s learning we need to pay special attention to, is our responsiveness to children. What does this mean for you? How do you do this each day? How does it look in your service?

QA5
OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS: THE FORGOTTEN LEARNING INSTRUMENT

By Alice Jackman, CTAS Trainer

What I have been observing is that the indoor environments might look absolutely fabulous in the setup, resources presented and the aesthetics, but then when you go outside it isn't presented well, bikes strewn across the yard, no quiet areas or experiences not focused on physical activity setup. This may be an issue because some educators see outdoor play as a time to sit down and not have to interact with the children because it's 'free play'. Of course it is a good idea to sit back and observe if the children are so engaged that you would be encroaching on their learning if you became involved, but in other cases you are missing out on invaluable learning opportunities.

Some children aren't that interested in the obstacle course, sandpit or bikes; so what are they able to access to interest them? Just like our indoor environment, each child should feel the sense that there is something of their interest and capabilities to access. This not only promotes a sense of belonging but encourages appropriate social interactions and learning through play. We should not lose the fact that the outdoor play equipment needs as much respect as the indoor resources so it is important that the children are guided to pack them away appropriately e.g.: if you are coming back outside in the afternoon maybe line up the bikes in a row etc. (aesthetics).

Some ideas to suit different interests for outdoor play could be:
* Sketching: Each child having a clipboard and some drawing equipment e.g.: lead pencils, charcoal pencils, water colours etc. and you could have a comfortable picnic blanket on the grass and sketch the beautiful surrounds you can see. They can also use the clipboards for 'writing' things down, which enhances their literacy skills.
* Make a cubby house or setup a tent with the children's involvement and use it for a variety of purposes e.g.: make it a 'camping' area, create a sitting area with logs and a 'fire'. The cubby house could also be used as a cosy book area.
* Easel painting: How relaxing to be able to look into the garden for inspiration and do some painting.
* Dramatic play: Using mud as 'food'. Teddy bears picnic. Set-up a mud kitchen. Take the dress-ups outside.
* Gardening: Planting seeds or seedlings, watering and harvesting.
* Stretching: Tai Chi, Yoga: How wonderful to get fresh air and stretch out for the day.
* Flower arranging: Finding flowers that have fallen from the plants, rocks off the ground and leaves and create a beautiful arrangement in a jar or larger fish bowl sized piece to add extra rocks and make it an 'inside the bowl' arrangement.
* Weaving: Use cut-up pieces of ribbon or material and encourage children weave them into the fence or chicken wire. Use double sided tape and newspaper strips to create spaces for children. Children could also use leaves or sticks to weave. Children learning to tie their shoes could tie the ribbon around sticks. And most importantly: YOU! As an educator you can use yourself as a resource. You might initiate a bug hunt in the garden, watching the clouds go by and using your imagination to see what you can point out, Hide and Seek, What's the Time Mr Wolf, Duck, Duck, Goose and many more. You do not always need 'resources' to have fun, learn about each child and develop your relationships with them. Use your imagination and the opportunities are endless. Remember do not forget how valuable both environments are to a child's learning and development. Outdoor play is not just a way to get the children's physical activity but also an important learning tool.
Inspiration Spot

These are a couple of centre’s photos that have caught our eye this month,

Velcro and Pop Sticks

You will need:

- Pop sticks (the wider ones are better for smaller children)
- Velcro dots (you can cut them in half to make them go further)

Put Velcro dots on both ends and either sides of the pop stick. Give them to children to use as they wish.

Children can make shapes, lines, letters, animals, sort them into colours, the only limit is their imagination.

Join in

Be a part of our newsletter, and you could earn your centre a $100 voucher for resources.

Just send in some photos of your centre’s makeover, an amazing experience you have set-up or your inspiring environment.

Send the photos to pdtraining@ctas.wa.edu.au with a paragraph describing the event.

Visit us on the web at www.ctas.wa.edu.au