



# Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

Tel: 82712042 Fax: 82728272

email: [Chris.Catt906@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:Chris.Catt906@schools.sa.edu.au)

web: [www.mitchampre.sa.edu.au](http://www.mitchampre.sa.edu.au)



Term 2  
Newsletter 3

## Thankyou

What a wonderful community we work in.

Last week the staff received a large pink box full of Menz chocolates.

On the box it read

**"Thank you for everything you do.**

**You're true SA Heroes"**

**Please Share these SA goodies with your**

**colleagues.**

**#sharekind.**

The thank you program has been sponsored by the RAA in conjunction with Menz chocolates.

**We were so surprised, overwhelmed, grateful, thankful for this generous gift.**

Thankyou to someone in our community, who nominated our staff team, on behalf of the community, for the work we have done to manage our children and families, through the challenging times of COVID-19.

Over the past few weeks, we have also received numerous other thank you's which have included Portuguese Tarts for morning tea and emails / messages of gratitude.

We feel very privileged to work in this community, where families value us and the work that we do.

Thank you again. We are really appreciative and truly grateful.

## This week

Last week I distributed "This week at kindy" that explained our program for weeks 4 and 5. (Last week and this week).

Please refer to the article sent to the APP/email last Tuesday.

Added to that, we will also

- Introduce metal spades & boots to the digging patch
- Hard hats, vests / pictures of houses to inspire builders
- Large white board & white board markers outside
- A gym on the platform—cross fit training record
- Rainbow paper at the drawing table
- Craft table—observational drawings of dog
- Name board—Have you got the letter "I" in your name

Some highlights of the past couple weeks have included

- The wonderful play in our hospital (outside) and post office (inside)
- The love and care the children have shown to the guinea pigs and now the rabbit that have visited from the

Nature Centre

- The incredible cooperative work that has occurred in the sandpit and mud kitchen
- The interest the children have shown in learning more about shapes.
- The engagement in "Rest & sketch" after lunch
- Blue group walk to the park / creek. They enjoyed looking for shapes in the environment, a picnic snack on the lawns and participating in fun games . It was a much loved experience
- Gold group walked to the park but it was very drizzly so was too uncomfortable to have snack. They returned to kindy shortly after. So we will try again soon!!

Everyone is now back at kindy. It is lovely to have all the children back. Some children / families have been away for 2+ months due to the impact of coronavirus.

When your child  
Is having a meltdown  
Don't talk,  
Don't reason  
Don't get angry.  
Your child cant hear you.  
Just be silent and loving,  
Until the storm passes.  
Words Come later.

By InyardProducts.com

## Inside this issue:

Quality Improvement Plan 2020	2
Pupil free day	2
Making learning visible	3
Term 2 fees Children being unwell	3
Growth mindset	4
Making mistakes	5

# Quality Improvement Plan 2020

Despite COVID -19 we have continued to work on our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

There are 2 focus improvement areas for 2020 and over late term 1 and in term 2 we have been working on the following goal

## To improve children's literacy skills through a focus on fine motor development and mark making.

**Challenge of Practice:** If educators develop their knowledge and understanding of children's fine motor skill development and the developmental stages of mark making, are intentional in their planning and provision of a range of learning opportunities, then children will develop their fine motor competence and written expression.

We have

- collected data from our term 1 assessing on children's skills in holding & manipulating drawing tools and scissors.
- looked at children's drawing and writing skills (being able to write their name / draw a picture of themselves—we refer to this as mark making).
- observed children during the day, to see who participates how often and where they participate in mark making.
- Looked at where we offer opportunities (inside and outside) for mark making and fine motor development, what experiences are offered and how often.

It has been a very interesting process to examine this data / information.

We are now at the stage of implementing change. That is, to improve our practices; to increase learning opportunities and to ensure that children continue to develop and improve their fine motor skills and mark making (drawing & writing) skills. These skills are so important for school and in life.

## Our agreed actions to support children in these skills

- Funtastics run 3 times per term, with focus on fine motor development and mark making
- We have introduced a "Rest & sketch" time, whereby after the children have finished lunch, they can sketch in their special book, on white boards, chalk boards or magna doodles. It is a non negotiable activity. They have to sketch after lunch but they can have a choice in what medium they use. So far we have seen high levels of engagement in resting & sketching, even by the boys!
- We have increased the number of opportunities for mark making and fine motor skills development, in both the indoor and outdoor environments
- At large group times in the morning, we will demonstrate At least one mark making and one fine motor activity to ensure children know of the experience and what to do.

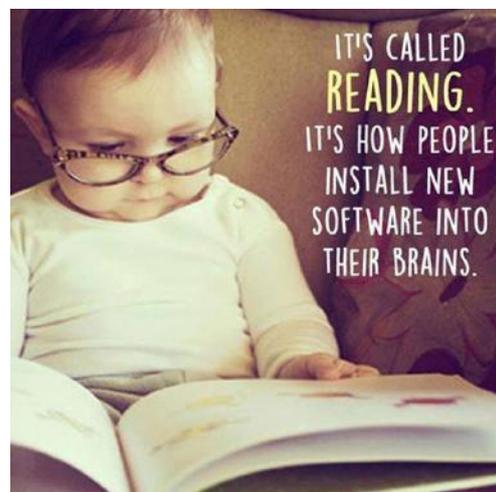
- We may plan for more fine motor and mark making activities in our small groups
- We are setting up mark making boxes that children can access at all times and take to their play
- We are monitoring children's engagement in these experiences
- We are continuing to monitor children's skill development in fine motor and mark making skills

In children's work folders, you will notice at the rear of the folder, a section "My mark making journey",

In this section of the folder we will have photos and drawings (self portraits). This will be done at the beginning of each term, and will demonstrate children's developing fine motor skills and mark making (drawing themselves & writing their name).

Improving educators knowledge and skills, improving our practices and learning opportunities will ensure that your child is continuing to make progress in their skills, in readiness for school.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to come and speak with one of us.



## Pupil Free Day

*There is a pupil free day on **Friday June 5th.***

So there is no kindy on that day. Each year we are granted 4 pupil free days for professional development. Whilst I cancelled our pupil free day on March 30th, we will have one on Friday June 5th, and one in term 3 and 1 in term 4. (Dates to be advised)

Please note the additional 4 pupil free days at the end of term 1, were for preparation for on line learning and are separate to the annual pupil free days.

## Children being unwell

With COVID-19, we have been instructed by the Department to send children home, if they have a cough or cold or fever—any sign they are or maybe unwell.

I am really grateful to families in that, even the slightest sniffle, they have kept their child home "just in case". I am also really grateful to families, who I have phoned during the day and they have come in to collect their child.

In a non COVID time, we would accept children with a runny nose or a cough, when they didn't have a fever but were at the "tail end" of a cold. But we are in different times.

We are continued to be told by the Department to send children home. The following information is from The Department for Education website

*"If there are no signs of fever, but the child or young person appears unwell, contact the parent or guardian to collect them.*

*Not everyone who is unwell, has an infection or is infectious will have a fever"*

## Making learning visible

We have been also focussing on "Making learning visible".

Maddie has set up a literacy and numeracy wall (near the kitchen), with photos and information on literacy and numeracy. The photos depict, children engaging in experiences that support their literacy and numeracy skills.

Suzi has established a "Mark Making" Wall, with information and photos of children engaging in a range of mark making activities.

With both of these boards, information and photos will be added during the term / year.

Come and have a look at the boards.

I was told my early child hood worker, after discussing this with her a few weeks ago, If a child has a runny nose, cough they should be sent home / stay home. If their symptoms do not progress to the flu, a virus, coronavirus, they are able to return to preschool. This may be just after a couple of days. They may even have a residual cough, but as their symptoms didn't progress and they are not infectious, they are free to return to kindy.

Whilst we do not currently have any current active cases of COVID-19, in SA, we still need to be vigilant in our health and hygiene.

If you are not sure about your child coming back to kindy, come and chat with me. I will probably "err on the side of caution". Seeking a doctors advice is also a good idea too.

Please note, the Department have instructed staff to stay home if they are unwell, eg sore throat, runny nose, cough.

## Information

Over the next few newsletters, I will include information on the importance of fine motor skills and its relationship to mark making, (drawing & writing). Look out for this information.

**Term 2 fees were due by Friday May 22nd.**

If you are having any difficulties paying fees, please do not hesitate speaking with me. All conversations will be kept in strictest confidence.

For term 2, we have not included the excursion / incursion evy or the fundraising levy. We will review this for term 3, later in the term.

Whilst we may have "soldiered on" prior to COVID-19, we now must stay home.

This week, Lyn, Maddie and Robbie all presented with a sore throat. So I made the decision that they must not come to preschool, until their symptoms subside / do not progress further.

By staying at home, when unwell (even with a cough, cold etc), it means that other infections do not spread.

Thankyou for your understanding and cooperation.

# Growth Mindset

One of the many focus's of our work at preschool is supporting children in developing a growth mindset.

If you have a Fixed mindset

- you believe that you can not change, "you are the way you are"
- intelligence is static
- You avoid challenges
- Give up easily
- See effort as fruitless
- Ignore useful constructive criticism
- Can Feel threatened by the success of others

If you have a growth mindset

- you believe that intelligence can be developed
- Leads to a desire to learn
- Embrace challenges
- Persist in the face of setbacks
- See effort as the path to mastery
- Learn from criticism
- Find lessons and inspiration in the success of others.

Most people do not have a 100% fixed mindset or a 100% growth mindset: most of us have both. However it is possible to change from a fixed to a growth mindset.

It is really important that we (parents and educators) support children to develop a growth mindset—a belief that they can learn more, to accept change, persist, take risks in their learning, learn from constructive criticism, learn from and be inspired by others.

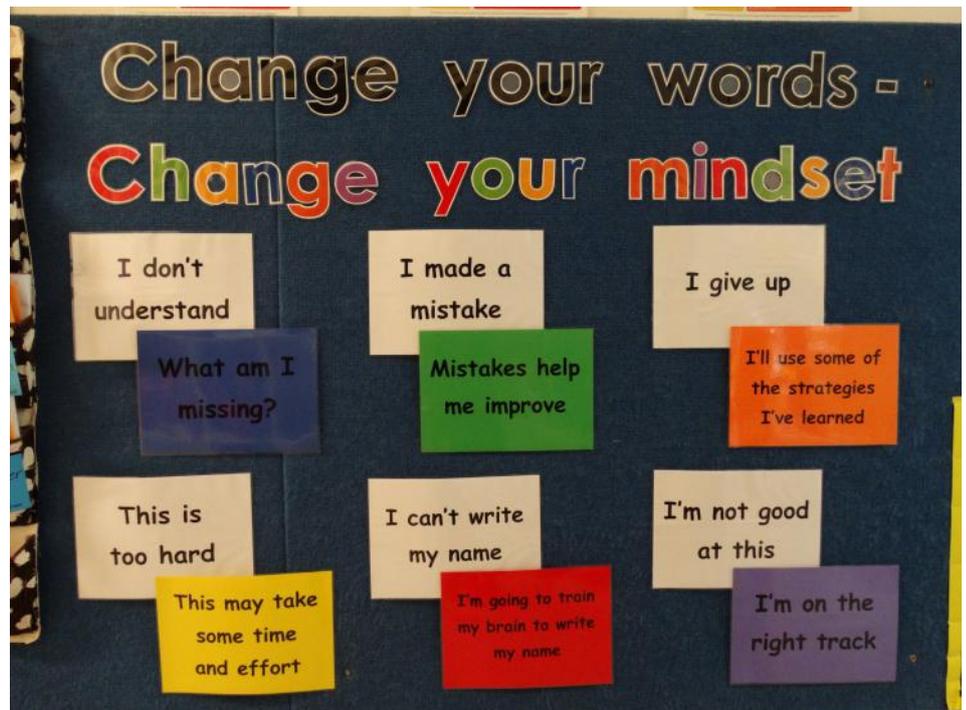
Here are some examples of how we (children and adults) can change our words—change our mindset. The statements on the white background are the fixed mindsets (the negative). The statements on the coloured backgrounds are the growth mindsets (the positive). When children make statements such as "This is too hard", we can support them by saying "***This may take some time and effort...*** but persist, don't give up, have another go"

Each week / fortnight we introduce an activity or experience that is challenging and will require some risk taking. These may include challenge puzzles ( 35–100 piece puzzles), cutting activities, writing your name, drawing detailed pictures, putting your name on the name board but checking each week for the letter in your name, physical challenges etc.

Our walks in the creek pose physical challenges. Each time, we present a new challenge task, there is a sense that this may be hard work, and "***It may take some time and effort***" but once achieved it will mean success and "***I'm on the right track***". This not only builds a growth mindset, it builds confidence, self esteem and a belief in yourself that with effort you will achieve mastery.

At school, there may be many instances where the work is hard, such as Learning the process of reading, or how to add numbers together to make bigger numbers. So it is important that at preschool, we are supporting children to accept that sometimes work can be "hard" but if we accept a challenge, persist, take risks, have a go, learn how to gain help (from an adult or peers), then children will be "***on the right track***".

If you have any queries about growth & fixed mindsets or how to support your child, don't hesitate to speak with one of the staff.



## Help wanted

We have 2 new children's wheelbarrows that are partially put together. I cannot seem to get them finalised. Is there any handy person who could have a look at them for me. I am happy for you to take them home and finish putting them together.

Please let me know if you can help. Your help is much appreciated.

# Making Mistakes

Making mistakes can be very challenging. They often feel like a failure when they make a mistake. For example, if they have got an answer wrong, or they don't know an answer to a question, or made a mistake on their drawing, or their writing doesn't look perfect or they perceive they can't do something as well as their friends (eg catch a ball) Often adults or other children don't even notice a drawing doesn't look perfect. But the child just feels a failure. They will believe they will be judged for what they perceive as an imperfect drawing. They will often be very anxious about failure.

As a result making a mistake can become debilitating. It will stop children from having a go, trying new experiences, putting up their hand and answering questions, solving a problem, joining a team, going to Auskick etc. This in turn inhibits their growth and development. And whilst they do definitely have the ability and capacity to flourish as a learner, their learning is inhibited.

We can refer to fear of failure, fear of making a mistake as a fixed mind set. It inhibits growth and development.

When children (and adults) see making a mistake or failing as a learning opportunity, we can refer to this as a growth mind set. Making a mistake means you have learnt something—what to do next time, how you will do it next time, who to get help from etc. Making a mistake can be seen as an opportunity for growth, learning and improvement.

Children who can make mistakes, who aren't anxious when a mistake occurs, who will have a go no matter what, can develop a growth mind set about learning.

Often parents want to rescue and help children, prevent them from making mistakes. They want their child's world to be perfect!

However, we know that the world isn't perfect. Allowing children the opportunity to make mistakes and learn from them, will only enhance your child's ability to develop that positive growth mindset. Shielding children from making mistakes will mean that making a mistake at kindy, school, university / TAFE and in later life at work, will be debilitating and inhibiting.

My son was a perfectionist prior to school. Making a mistake or failing was always a challenge for him and us. And he was (and is) highly competitive. He only wanted to play Yahtzee with his dad. He couldn't stand losing especially to his older sister. If he wrote something on a piece of paper or did a drawing and it wasn't perfect (in his eyes) he would screw it up and put it in the bin.

His reception teacher began the journey for him of recognising that making a mistake is ok. She taught him that crossing out an incorrectly spelt word was fine- it didn't make his work look "bad" / To continue on with the drawing despite the mistakes as the drawing could be changed. Whilst we had "battled" the fear of mistakes and failure with him, and tried many ways to overcome it, it was his teacher that made a difference.

Helping children to accept mistakes has a positive outcome, whether you are a parent or teacher. So how can you help? Try modelling making a mistake with your child, eg dropping a catch, crossing out a word on the shopping list, losing a game of Yahtzee etc. If children see adults can make a mistake and that adults can cope with that mistake, that there is an alternative, that something has been learnt from making a mistake, children will learn from that experience.

Acknowledge that making mistakes is a really good way for us to learn something new—a new way, a new possibility, new information.

Assisting your child to develop a growth mindset about their learning, is such an important thing that you can do. It is a positive outcome for their future!!

There is a wonderful book called the "Beautiful Oops" by  
Barney Saltzberg.

It is a book about mistakes. We all make mistakes—grown ups and children. But children sometimes have trouble dealing with their mistakes, whether it is a piece of art work they have torn by accident or juice they have spilt on their favourite drawing. In this book, each page begins with a mistake. Children see firsthand as they go through the book that any smudge, smear or stain can lead to something absolutely marvellous. This interactive book teaches a valuable lesson "When you think you have made a mistake, think of it as an opportunity to make something beautiful"

Being a parent is full of challenges!! Being able to support your child to make and accept mistakes, to grow and learn from these opportunities, will provide your child with experiences to develop that positive growth mindset.....and this is so important for life long living!!

Thankyou as always for your continued support. It is always very much appreciated.

Kind regards

Chris, Maddie, Suzi, Lyn, Robyn, Karen, Jan