



Health Outcome 1: Policies that promote healthy eating, active play, and limiting small screen time are integrated into our service

Our centre values and strives toward meeting the health outcomes outlined in this publication for the health and wellbeing of each child and family now and into the future. We are guided by written policies and procedures that have been developed using a collaborative approach with our team of early childhood educators. The policies are readily available to all families within their child's room.

After extensive research and sourcing health resources from recognised health agencies our policies were drafted, discussed with educators and families then lastly approved by management committee members comprising of family and community representatives. The policies guide the daily practices of all educators.

Some of our parents and educators have limited knowledge of what should be packed for their child to eat during the day due to child orientated media and clever marketing of food and beverage products. We therefore provide a variety of information to assist in their selection of appropriate foods for their children which is conveyed through newsletters, brochures, posters and empowering the children during mealtimes through conversations about what is appropriate and what is not.

Educators discuss policy and health guidelines regularly to ensure their understandings to guide and improve their teaching and family information in all aspects of the health guidelines to ensure consistency across the centre.

In the centre we have further enhanced each child's wellbeing by adopting a physical activity policy to guide educators in the everyday curriculum. The policy describes processes for setting up environments that promote physical activity such as standing at table experiences rather than sitting, limiting screen time to project research with children closely guided by educators and incorporating fundamental movement skills in transitions of the day.

Family information from recognised health agencies is always available to families in our parent library and through regular newsletter updates and the distribution of brochures.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:



Learning Story

Information and learning that promote the health outcomes integrated into the Early Years Learning Framework not only teaches our children the benefits of health and wellbeing but promotes the foundation for healthy lifestyles for generations for the future.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:



Health Outcome 2: Families are informed about the health needs of their child/ren (including breast feeding, healthy eating, physical activity and limiting small screen recreation)

Following a discussion about healthy foods yesterday at morning tea when Natalia came to school today she walked her mum over to Lea who was near the fridge. "Lea I got healthy food in my lunch today. We can't have chips at school can we?" asked Natalia. Mum then told Lea that Natalia has been telling her what foods she is allowed to eat because they are healthy (as per our conversation yesterday where as a group during morning tea we talked about what foods are healthy for our bodies and which foods are sometimes foods). Mum then proceeded to tell me about some of their conversations they had been having at home in particular how Natalia will only eat apples when they are cut into pieces and a bit of information that Natalia shared with everyone at the dinner table last night. "I need to clean my teeth after eating lollies cause they have sugar in them and sugar is bad for your teeth cause Lea told us" Natalia said.



Mum then shared further information about Natalia's love of fruit but not vegetables and that she is having some trouble finding foods that she will eat. After further discussion with Natalia and mum we gave them a Good for Kids lunchbox booklet to help them with some ideas for a healthy lunch at school. Following on from this interest in healthy foods we had another discussion at group time and as a transition

to lunch we created a list of healthy and sometimes foods.

Later in the afternoon Lea placed some grocery catalogues on the table with paper, scissors and glue. We looked at them and together decided that we could cut out pictures of healthy foods and create a collage to show our mums and dads when they came to pick us up from school.



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Linking to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

As educators we explore ideas and concepts, clarify and challenge thinking, negotiate and share new understandings. We convey and construct messages with purpose and confidence, building on home/family and community partnerships. The staff and families communicate freely and respectfully with each other about learning that is happening both at home and at the centre. Building on children's prior and current experiences helps them to feel secure, confident and connected to familiar people, places events and understandings.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

1.3 Natalia is developing a knowledgeable and confident self-identity and initiates interactions and conversations with trusted educators whilst engaging in and sharing new knowledge.

1.1 She is also developing her emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency being open to new challenges and discoveries. Natalia is connected with and contributes to her world by expressing an opinion in matters that affect her and participates in reciprocal relationships.

National Quality Standard

2.2 We value each other's knowledge, contributions to and roles in each child's life sharing insights whilst supporting the parents' role, values and beliefs about their children. Current information and resources are shared with families to support them in their parenting role.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

Lunchbox Services Health Outcome 3: Children are guided and encouraged to experience a range of healthy foods and drinks

Following on from interest shown by a number of children in healthy foods, Tanya brought in her apple slinky peeler and some apples to share. Tanya placed an apple onto the slinky and began turning the handle. The children became extremely excited when Tanya removed



the apple and showed them how it had peeled the skin off and created a swirly apple. All of the children then asked if they could try an apple from the slinky. "I have one cause I like apples?" asked Brady. "I don't like apples," said Harry. After seeing lots of children trying the apples Harry then said to Tanya, "can I try a little one please?" Harry sat and ate the entire apple sharing his excitement and his

achievement with others.

Milk and water were placed on the table in jugs today as some of our friends had forgotten their drink bottles. All children were given the choice of using their drink bottle or a cup with the jugs of water and milk. Lots of children chose to use the jug and cups and were encouraged to pour their own drinks. Zack relished in this new challenge where he used his problem solving skills to manoeuvre the jug and cup to pour his drink himself. He was proud of his achievement which could be seen through his facial expression. Lea "I swish and swallowed after eating my apple," said Harry.



These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

Analysis

The children were provided with strategies to make informed choices about self-service of food and drinks. Children's efforts to pour their own drink was supported and encouraged with enthusiasm.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.

National Quality Standard

2.2.1 Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.



These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

Health Outcome 4: Children are guided and encouraged to learn about healthy food choices



Last week several of the children extended on an interest in gardening by planting some seedlings and seeds into a planter box and garden bed. Today we talked about the plants and revisited the great big enormous carrot story (which was acted out by all children). We discussed what colour the carrot was, 'orange' and how it grows under the ground. When we went outside we went to look at the garden and Mia

asked 'which ones are the carrots?' 'Them ones' said Brady 'cause they green on top, see?' All the children that were standing around the garden looked and pointed to the green parsley. As a provocation for further discovery Val asked what other vegetables were in the garden that was also green. Several children pointed to the tomato plants and the bean plants but were unsure of what they were. I asked what plants needed to grow. Madison said, 'sun'. Brady said 'water'.

To extend children's knowledge of vegetables Lea brought in a basket of different vegetables. During this experience the children had the opportunity to smell, touch, look at and smell the vegetables. Lea showed the children the vegetables one by one and asked if anyone could recognise the vegetable I held up. Brady recognised the carrot, potato, zucchini, corn but not the spinach, button squash or the leek. As I chopped the vegetables I introduced some mathematical concepts: counting the pieces I chopped the vegetables into, cutting the squash into halves and quarters and counting how many pieces of zucchini we had when I had cut it ten times; we only had nine pieces, "but you cut it ten times," said Brady. This led to a discussion about counting.



When I held up the leek I asked, "What are these pieces hanging from the bottom?" Brady looked but didn't offer any suggestions as did all the other

Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

Good for kids
good for life

children. I explained that these were the roots; roots are how plants and vegetables get their food from the ground. "But what's that black stuff?" asked Brady. "It's the dirt from the ground; the rest of the dirt was washed off when it was picked," explained Lea. "What do plants need to make them grow?" Madison said, "They need water and dirt, you put the seeds in dirt and water them then they grow".

Everyone was happy with this shared knowledge. Once we had finished cutting all the vegetables I explained that I was going to cook them then we could all taste them, the children clapped and cheered excitedly. During lunch I brought out the cooked vegetables and asked the children who would like to try some. "Can I have a carrot?" asked Brady, which he ate as well as trying the button squash, spinach and corn. Jeremy tried the carrot and potato, Madison tried the carrot, beans and potato, Lachlan and Xavier tried the carrot and corn, Harry had carrot and potato, Zack had carrot. The children noticed that the vegetables felt softer and warm to touch which then prompted discussions about texture and temperature.



Analysis

This experience gave the children the opportunity to use their active learning processes to identify different vegetables and discuss how they grow and what they needed to grow bigger. They gathered information and considered various possibilities. Whilst talking together they shared their knowledge to develop higher understandings of their natural environment whilst reinforcing the concept of social awareness of peers and collaboration with each other, further developing class co-operation and improve listening and communication skills. All children used various senses to discover new information about vegetables that they had not seen, heard of or tasted before. The children were becoming more confident in group experiences and are developing a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, investigation, experimentation, hypothesising and researching.

Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships have been formed between children and educators. Educators have created environments and relationships to support children's

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development of skills and understanding whilst interacting positively with each other and value collaboration.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

1.1 Children feel safe secure and supported through openly expressing their feelings and ideas in interactions with others when they co-contributed ideas to the discussion which were acknowledged and respected.

1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency being open to new challenges and discoveries whilst co-operating and working collaboratively with others and by providing opportunities for children to engage independently with tasks both individual and collaborative.

2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities whilst broadening their understandings of the world in which they live, expressing their opinions and participating in reciprocal relationships through providing opportunities to investigate ideas, complex concepts and meaningful ways to contribute to group discussion and shared decision making about rules for using knives and sharing space.

2.4 Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

4.1 By recognising and valuing children's involvement in learning we are able to promote dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, enthusiasm, persistence and imagination. We encourage children to engage in both individual and collaborative explorative learning processes and provide opportunities for involvement in experiences that support the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning and hypothesising.

National Quality Standard

2.2 This play based learning experience allowed children to make sense of their world helping to build a foundation for the development of healthy eating habits.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

Health Outcome 5: Educators model their enjoyment of eating healthy food and participate alongside children during active play

This morning we finally got to go outside as the rain had stopped. Khalish asked, “Can we play a game?” This question was discussed between children and educators. A few suggestions were made; “soccer” said Riley; “duck, duck, goose” said Brady; “can we have the big colour thing we used the other day?” asked Asha.



Upon further questioning we discovered that it was the parachute and this became the choice of game to play by unanimous decision. Once we had the parachute ready we discussed the rules of the game. Shaye and Kelsie joined in the fun and sat with the children shaking and moving the parachute up and down and side to side to keep the balls on the parachute. As they shook they counted how many times they could move the parachute before any balls fell off.

We then after collaboration decided to move our bodies and arms up and down to raise and lower the parachute so we could take turns running underneath it. Some of us ran, some jumped and some walked. Even our teachers had a turn.

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Analysis

Together everyone was building on their respectful, trusting relationships with other children and educators through spending time through interacting and conversing. Educators modelled communication strategies to support children to initiate interactions and join in play and social experiences in ways that sustained productive relationships with others.

Educators provided opportunities for children to participate in meaningful ways in group discussions and shared decision making about rules and expectations. Educators participated in energetic physical play with children whilst co-constructing rules and expectations for play that initiated from their own ideas. Everyone engaged in enjoyable interactions using verbal and non-verbal language and contributed their ideas in this play.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:



Learning Story

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

1.1 Children feel safe secure and supported

1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.

3.2 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical well-being.

4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, co-operation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

5.1 Children interact verbally and non-verbally for a range of purposes.

National Quality Standard

2.2 Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program.

2.2.2 Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:



Health Outcome 6: Babies are provided with supervised floor based learning, including tummy time

Kirraleigh was reaching for a toy that was out of her reach whilst sitting on the floor. Kerry placed her onto her tummy as she is beginning to become more mobile when on her tummy (as per conversation with mum this morning). Kirraleigh smiled and began lifting her head up immediately and using her hands to stretch for the pop toy that she had been trying to reach. She then pushed up onto her knees using her arm muscles and looked up at Kerry and smiled whilst rocking back and forth. Once on her tummy she moved her body to move right, to be closer to the frog that was also out of her reach earlier. "Great job Kirraleigh!" praised Kerry smiling at her. Kirraleigh spent around ten minutes in tummy time when Kerry picked up on her vocal cues (she became louder, unsettled and was lying head down on the floor resting) and sat her up. Kirraleigh smiled and began to play once more.



Analysis

Kirraleigh is exploring the environment and objects with growing curiosity. She expresses her feelings through her facial expressions, giggling and babbling sounds that she was making. She was initiating interactions with Kerry by looking and smiling at her which were replicated by Kerry. Her sense of belonging and feeling safe and secure could be seen when she moved away from Kerry to explore the room. Kerry encouraged Kirraleigh to be physically active by placing her onto her tummy so she could build on her physical strength and sense of wellbeing and responded sensitively to her attempts to initiate interactions.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:



Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

1.1 Children feel safe, secure and supported and this is evident from the secure attachment Kirraleigh has with a familiar educator.

1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency as she persisted when faced with challenges when her first attempt was not successful.

2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities which is evident by Kirraleigh being playful and responding positively to others and participating in reciprocal relationships.

3.1 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing; this is evident when Kirraleigh communicated her physical needs for rest and her use of her sensory capabilities and dispositions to explore and respond to her world.

National Quality Standard

Standard 2.2 Physical activities are promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and are appropriate for each child.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

Health Outcome 7: Children engage in active play

Sasha brought in some photos of herself at her ballet class. She shared her new dance skills with everyone explaining how she has to point her toes saying, "Point, point, turn". Sasha then stood up with Lea and she demonstrated how to do ballet. "You have to point your toes like this and this then put your hands up in the air and turn around," said Sasha as she performed each action in front of the group. Lea copied Sasha's actions and together we then taught everyone how to do ballet. These expressive movements were a way Sasha could communicate her feelings, thoughts, and ideas and express her learning with others.



The experience generated Sasha's confidence and competence in performing in front of an audience as well as entertaining others. Due to this ongoing interest in dancing we had a group discussion about what type of dancing we all like to do. After lots of suggestions: "ballet" said Sasha; "rock'n roll" said Khalish and "just dancing to music" suggested Brady, we decided to have a disco where we could do all kinds of dancing to lots of different music. Everyone began to cheer and shouted excitedly. Together we searched through our collection of discs and then decided on a day to have our disco. After another discussion we set a date and time and invited children from the other rooms at the centre to come and join us. The disco pre-empted a sense of excitement and anticipation of what will happen next.

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Sasha's increasing confidence is evident during the whole experience with her feeling confident to perform in front of an audience and share her new found dancing abilities with others. Sasha has used observation skills to watch the dance steps and movements in her ballet class and to re-create them to teach others.

Disco day!

Everyone was excited about our disco. They talked together about what music we can dance to, when it will start, what type of dancing we will do were some of the topics of discussion. Lea suggested making some streamers to shake as we danced. We worked co-operatively to cut crepe paper and tape together into bunches of streamers. Once the music started the children began dancing. They moved their bodies to the beat of the music. As they became tired from dancing it was suggested to do the limbo. "What's limbo?" asked Brady. "It's like a game to music. Two people hold onto a stick and you have to move your body under the stick without touching it while the music plays. This became an instant hit with the children. They engaged in moving and lowering their bodies to crawl under the stick. Once the stick was too low it was suggested that everyone jump over the stick. This promoted a new way to move our bodies to music.

Analysis

As everyone dances, jumps, and claps, they are exploring aspects of their body's ability to move in different ways and are becoming more aware of the relationship between the rhythms in sounds and dance. They are being creative and expressive through dance by responding to rhythmical patterns. Together the children are exploring movement through the elements of dance, including body awareness, energy, space, time, and relationships.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Principles

Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships have been formed between children and educators. Educators have created environments and relationships to support children's development of skills and understanding whilst interacting positively with each other and value collaboration.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:



Learning Story

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

Outcome 1: children have a strong sense of identity

Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

National Quality Standard

2.2 Physical activities both planned and spontaneous are embedded in our daily program that are child initiated and create opportunities to build positive reciprocal relationships between home and the centre.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:



Health Outcome 8: Children explore fundamental movement skills

This morning we discussed the weather as it was raining again and we couldn't go outside. We decided to use our measuring cylinders to collect the rain and measure how much water was in the cylinders. When we went outside to check on the cylinders Brady shouted, "It's stopped raining! Yeah! Can we go outside now?" It was unanimous; we were going out for a run to use up some energy.

Everyone was keen to run outside. Once outside the children ran and ran and ran. Lea suggested making an obstacle course using the hoops and having a relay jumping from hoop to hoop. The children all became excited and began helping to arrange the hoops in a long line. We then split into two groups, one at each end. Lea demonstrated how to jump with two feet together from hoop to hoop until you get to the end where you tag the next person and they jumped back. This enabled the children to exert their energy safely. We all took turns practising to focus on where we had to jump, swinging our arms back, bending our knees then propelling our bodies' forward landing with knees bent and both feet together.



This experience provided the children with a positive, safe environment and gave them encouragement and support as they eagerly participated in a fundamental movement experience. To extend on their movement and balance we then introduced balancing a bean bag on our heads as we walked from hoop to hoop. This added a problem to solve, how do we watch where we have to step and keep the bean bag on our heads? Lachlan tried first but the bean bag kept falling off (as he was looking down), Brady shouted, "Put your arms out to help you balance!" Lachlan tried this with great success. The other children copied and became extremely excited with their own achievements and those of others. To further

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

extend the children's interest in balancing we brought in a wooden beam from outside with the bean bags and set this up in the room as it had begun to rain again. The children utilised various objects from the room to balance with as they walked along the beam. This challenged their thinking, problem solving and physical skills as they experimented with different objects.



Analysis

Educators have created environments and relationships to support children's development of skills and understanding whilst interacting positively with each other and value collaboration. Children were empowered to make choices and problem solve to meet their needs. Play was used to investigate and explore new ways to move our bodies, take considered risks and accept challenges.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

Take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing whilst engaging in complex gross motor experiences. Children had the opportunity to mirror, repeat and practise the actions of others as they eagerly participated in this experience.

National Quality Standard

2.2 Physical activity is included in both indoor and outdoor areas to promote complex and specialised skills needed for participation in games, sports and recreational activities.

These learning stories from Merindah Children's Centre Inc were developed in partnerships with:

Health Outcome 9: Screen time is limited at our Service

Today due to the wet weather we have had limited outdoor time. After a discussion with the children who had asked to watch a movie we decided that we would instead put on a circus where everyone could play a part as this has been an ongoing interest.

We decided to create Merindah Children's Centre Circus. Lea asked, "How will we get to the circus?" "On a bus," suggested Riley. This led to further inquiry as to how we can make a bus, once it was decided to use the chairs we got to work. We travelled on the bus making sure to click clack our seatbelts, we then lined up for our tickets. More discussions were happening about what we will see at the circus.



"Clowns," said Zack. We went into the circus tent and sat down. Zack and Lola put on some wigs and became clowns as did Asha and Jade. Brady and Khalish did some juggling. Everyone then had a turn at balancing as this was something that was suggested we might see at the circus. Some children outstretched their arms to help balance, some walked along the beam slow, some fast and not using their arms to balance and they fell off laughing.

To further extend this ongoing interest we watched a short u-tube video of a real circus. This developed into a group discussion linking existing knowledge to new knowledge: horses can dance, turn-taking and its importance in real life, community participation and roles people play at the circus. This continued to include drawing clowns and other things we remembered from the video.

Whilst revisiting the circus pictures on the wall it was decided that we needed some popcorn to have like at the circus. We looked at some uncooked corn kernels and talked about where they come from, how they felt and what they would look like when they are

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cooked. Most children said the kernels felt hard to touch. Once we started cooking them in the popcorn machine we used our sense of smell and we all became excited at the sound of the corn popping. We all shared the popcorn as we talked about what we liked at the circus the most.



Analysis

Throughout this experience we were able to explore different identities and points of view in dramatic play whilst engaging in and contributing to shared play experiences. Educators planned opportunities for all children to participate in meaningful ways in the group discussions and shared decision making about the creation of the circus. Using technology to research information to extend on the children's interest provided a resource that enhanced their capacity for self-expression and communication.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcomes

- 1.3 Children develop knowledgeable and confident identities.
- 1.4 Children actively participate in group experiences and shows interest in peers.
- 2.1 Sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.
- 2.4 Children investigate new ideas through play.
- 5.3 Express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.

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