



Greenhill Living

“planting a seed and growing nature's magic”

Greenhill Living Food Garden Program

THE GARDEN GANG WITH GAYE THE GARDEN GIRL

DECEMBER 2017

Early Years Learning in the garden

by Rebecca Mumford

Welcome to the Greenhill Living newsletter. I want to offer you the highlights for 2017.

Participating kindergartens:

Just like your gardens, Greenhill Living grew in 2017 with over a dozen preschools/kindergartens participating in the Greenhill Living Food Garden Program.

8 book program, including The Garden Gang with Gaye the Garden Girl seasonal series:

Newland Park Kindergarten
JB Cleland Kindergarten
Kensington Gardens Kindergarten
The Grove Kindergarten
Wattle Park Kindergarten
Aldgate Kindergarten
Uraidla Kindergarten
Lady George Kindergarten
Conyngham Street Comm Children's Centre
Elizabeth Grove Kindergarten

4 book program, Gaye the Garden Girl seasonal series:

Unley Kindergarten
Agnes Goode Kindergarten

Incursion program:

Hawthorndene Kindergarten (joining in 2018)
Faith Montessori Centre

Participating Primary Schools:

In addition to the kindergarten program, this year I have continued to work closely with Elizabeth Grove Primary School within their Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program and Burnside Primary School with Primary Science teachers.

I have been helping to develop curriculum links with the garden across many learning areas and cross curriculum priorities including Science, Sustainability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)

The Greenhill Living Food Garden Program supports the application of the EYLF in many ways with examples highlighted below.

ACECQA National Quality Standards (NQS)

The program can assist in achieving NQS:
QA2 Children's health and safety
QA3 Physical environment
QA6 Collaborative partnership with families and communities



Australian Curriculum

My consultation program has enabled primary school teachers to deliver the Australian Curriculum learning areas out in the garden, with practical connections to current issues concerning the environment and our local communities.

Bill the Bush Tucker Boy coming soon.....

I have been writing a new book this year about Native Bush Foods, highlighting the importance of considering native edible plants along with edible plants originating from all around the world. I am incorporating augmented reality where, with the use of an app, the images will come to life. I am patiently waiting for fruit to appear on the plants to obtain the final images for this book, so the launch date has been extended to early 2018.

Learning areas and the books...

Summer

(T1)1. Gaye the Garden Girl, The carrots and the ladybirds

We started the year with the toy carrot, introducing ourselves, the seasons and the garden, some children fondly naming me "Garden Girl". This was the start of establishing a relationship where the children connected my entry to the kindergarten through the year to mean the garden, the seasons and seasonal vegetables. This first visit made an impression with carrots often being the first vegetable they recalled when asked what we have planted through the year. The children were encouraged to tell me their stories of their planting adventures with family and friends at home.

(EYLF Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity – children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect)

(T1)2. Faye the Farmer Friend, Legume Life cycle

Each child had the opportunity to plant a broad bean in the garden and watch it grow, some even showing commitment and dedication to measure the plants as they grew with their own made measuring tools. Children were also encouraged to use their imagination to imagine how tall their broad bean stalks would grow (just like in Jack and the Beanstalk).

(EYLF Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners – children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity)

Autumn

(T2)3. Gaye the Garden Girl, The broccoli and the caterpillars

Into the second term and the next season of the year, being autumn, the children started to connect with their role in caring for the environment and growing food. Gaining an understanding about beneficial insects and pests in the garden, the children took an active role ensuring that the plants in the garden did not get eaten by caterpillars. They made butterfly decoys and watched for green caterpillars, removing them from the plants.

(EYLF Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world – children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment)

(T2)4. Gaye the Garden Girl, The Allium Family

By the middle of the year the children had made a strong connection to me and the learning outcomes. When I walked in to the kindergartens many asked me questions such as "it is winter now, what are we planting?"

It was also time to explain how some plants grow fast like a Hare and others grow slow like a Tortoise!

When talking seasons and weather conditions best to grow food, I took the opportunity to introduce my new book Bill the Bush Tucker Boy, also introducing the idea of native Australian foods. This linked in well for those kindergartens investigating Aboriginal culture.

(EYLF Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity – children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities)

THE GARDENS

1. Beneficial insects & life cycles



2. Plant life cycles



3. Pests & life cycles



4. Growing through the seasons



..cont to read through the seasons

Winter

(T3)5. Gary the Garden Guy, To dig, or not to dig

It was time to read and talk about building soil. The children were given an opportunity as a group to build a mini garden in an old soft drink bottle to demonstrate how to build healthy soil. This was followed by preparing a garden bed ready for planting our next vegetable, potatoes.

It was fantastic to see the recall by one kindergarten following my visit, of creating a large wall display with the children, illustrating the layers required to build a no dig garden.

Understanding the importance of worms was certainly a highlight during this session and many worm farms were built or reestablished at this time. Worm filled kindergarten made compost was spread out in the garden too.

EYLF Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners – children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another)

(T3)6. Gaye the Garden Girl, The potato treasure hunt

Planting potatoes and even making up a potato growing dance was only the start of the fun of growing them. Fun, before the big potato treasure hunt at the end of the year. Some kindergartens took the opportunity to count and order their harvested potatoes from smallest to biggest.

This year we successfully grew potatoes in bags where space was limited.

Many kindergartens cooked following their potato treasure hunt at the end of the year. Gnocchi, Roast Potatoes with Rosemary, Zucchini and Potato slice were a few of the recipes created. For those without cooking facilities, they opened mini markets and shared potatoes with the parent community. The green potatoes went to the craft table where the children made potato people.

(EYLF Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing – children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing)

Spring

(T4)7. Gaye the Garden Girl, Five foods on a vine

My giant toy bee created quite the buzz in kindergartens at the start of term 4 with lots of discussion about the role and importance of bees in our garden and for growing our food. The children learned through an interactive reading of this book about pollination and the type of flowers on a plant.

One of the kindergartens connected with their family community who were bee keepers and expanded on the topic to learn more about how bees make honey.

(EYLF Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world – children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation)

(T4)8. Pete the Planting Pal, Planting abc

The final book of the year allowed the children to learn about the different ways to grow plants. Each child had the opportunity to plant a cutting of rosemary to take home and grow. They even got to recall the information we learnt about bees seeing how honey can be used to help plants to grow.

It was a great opportunity for the children to learn the steps in planting a cutting by doing one themselves, then go on to teach their new knowledge to others by helping to explain the procedure.

(EYLF Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators – children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes)

THE GARDENS

5. Building Healthy Soil



6. New ways to grow food



7. The importance of bees



8. Many ways to propagate



There is a time to talk rubbish!

It was fantastic to see many kindergartens this year take on an active role in educating the community about the importance of effective waste management.

My program covers the topic of compost and worm farms as a means to manage compostable materials. This saw many kindergartens obtain new



compost bins and worm farms.



It was also great to see many with effective waste management for landfill and recycling materials.

Bill the Bush Tucker Boy coming soon!

Bush Tucker

I am looking forward to launching my newest member of the Garden Gang, Bill the Bush Tucker Boy in 2018.

In the meantime, feel free to promote the purchase of my current books in my program by visiting:

www.greenhillliving.com.au



YOUR FEEDBACK

I would appreciate your feedback and comments. While your gardens grows, your comments will help to fertilise my food garden program into 2018.

EMAIL FEEDBACK TO rebeccamumford@greenhillliving.com.au

How kindergartens have displayed the program!

