



# PUMPKIN LONG DAY CARE CENTRE

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## Newsletter – March 2020

### Centre News

For the past few weeks, it has been a significant challenge to the families, early childhood educators and providers of early childhood education and care service. Some of our family members have lost their jobs or their work hours have been reduced.

With the uncertainty we are all facing right now, it is a very stressful moment for everyone, **if you feel that you want to keep your children at home, you should do so, but please do not formally remove them from care.** It's important that our service remains financially viable and is able to open when things return to normal.

The Government has introduced and passed legislative amendments to Family Assistance Law that will help families and early childhood education and care services manage the impact of the COVID-19 related events.

***The amendments allow the Minister for Education to:***

- increase the number of allowable absence days a child can access beyond 42 for an exceptional event or circumstance, such as COVID-19 In recognition of the impact of COVID-19, for the 2019-20 financial year, families are entitled to 62 allowable absences, rather than the standard 42 allowable absence days
- prescribe that additional absences (when allowable absences are exhausted) can be taken in relation to COVID-19 without evidence.
- Additionally, a new amendment to Family Assistance Law means that providers are not required to recover the gap fee from families after Child Care Subsidy has been applied. For many services, this will simply mean not charging the gap fees to families. **This provision only applies for period of directed closure, and once the period of forced closure expires, the requirement to recover the gap fee must be reinstated**

### ***Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS)***

ACCS (temporary financial hardship) is available now for families experiencing financial hardship. It can provide short-term support to families experiencing a significantly reduced ability to pay child care fees, including for example where a parent loses income because they can't attend work. In most cases, the full cost of childcare will be covered. It can be accessed for up to 13 weeks and for up to 100 hours of care per fortnight. Families need to provide evidence of a substantial reduction in their income, such as an email from their employer. See Applying during temporary financial hardship.

### ***Income support***

The Government has expanded eligibility for income support payments. Eligibility now includes, for example, casuals, self-employed and sole traders). There's also an extra coronavirus supplement of \$550 per fortnight to new and existing income support recipients. These measures apply for the next 6 months. Asset testing for some support payments, including JobSeeker Payment, will be waived while the Coronavirus supplement is paid. See Increased and accelerated income support.

***At the moment our service will remain open, we will follow the advice from our State and Regulatory Authorities on matters related to COVID-19.***

### **What are we doing to protect your children from Coronavirus?**

In addition to our usual stringent hygiene and cleaning measures we are now more frequently cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and engaging in regular handwashing with children. We're also implementing the following social distancing strategies where possible:

- restricting parents and family members from entering our class rooms, children and bags to be dropped off in front of the doors
- deferring activities that lead to mixing of children from different rooms/groups
- avoiding situations where children are required to queue, assemble in large groups or hold hands
- cancelling all excursions and unnecessary visitors
- ceasing activities which may have a higher risk of infection including play dough, cooking and dress up activities
- providing children with resources rather than letting children select from communal resources
- serving food to children rather than providing sharing plates

***I also want to thank the parents and families in this service for their support in the last couple of weeks. Please remember, we are all in this together, stay safe and take care.***

Kind regards,

Pumpkin Educators

# April Calendar of Events

**02<sup>nd</sup> – Thursday** - **Ram Navami** – Hindu tradition, celebrate the birth of Lord Rama. The day involves visiting temples and telling stories

**03<sup>rd</sup> – Tuesday** – **Walk to Work Day**

**05<sup>th</sup> - Sunday** – **Palm Sunday, Christian**

**06<sup>th</sup> - Monday** – **Mahavir Jayanti** – Jain, celebrates the birth of Mahavira

**08<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday** – **Hanuman Jayanti** – Hindu tradition, this day celebrates Hanuman, who was an embodiment of Lord Rama. Devotion and selfless work are encouraged.

**10<sup>th</sup> - Friday** – **Good Friday, Centre closed**

**11<sup>th</sup> - Saturday** – **Holy Saturday**

**12<sup>th</sup> - Sunday** – **Easter Day**

**13<sup>th</sup> – Monday** – **Easter Monday, Centre Closed**

**08/04/20 – 16/04/20** – **Passover, Jewish Holiday**

**20 – 21/04/2020** **Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day), Jewish Holiday**

**25<sup>th</sup> – Saturday** – **Anzac Day.**

**27<sup>th</sup> – Friday** – **Isra & Miraj, Muslim tradition**

**28/04/20 – 29/04/20** – **Yom Haatzmaut, Jewish Holiday**



# Clownfish News

Here we are, entering well into the autumn season already. We saw the season change as the weather became less sunny and occasional rain, however, it would not deter us to have fun! This month, we welcomed Estelle, Jake and Cody into our room. We explored different celebration such as St Patrick's Day, the children's birthday, and different interests as well.

## Construction play

This month, construction was another play that the children were very interested in. They were building with different materials and collaborating with their peers from different age group. The materials that offered such as bricks, soft blocks, magnetic tiles, flexo set, nest and stack set, and many more. Through construction play, the children are developing range of dispositions and processes such as persistence, creativity, concentration, imagination, problem solving, experimenting, hypothesising, etc. Together with their peers, they build castle, long tiles, bridges depend on their imagination.



## Pretend play

Pretend play is another play that interest the children the most this month. We saw a lot of different type of play that emerged from their ideas as they explored the room. For example, cooking with pretend food and feeding and taking care of the baby. The children loved to pretend to cook such as making butter toast, having tea with fruits (banana is the most popular one ☺), and feeding the crying baby. As more resources

were added and educators were always available to if they ever needed us, they are developing rapidly, such as they were broadening their understanding and building their language skills among others.



### Sensory play

Sensory play such as music and movement, painting, play dough were staple play in our room as the children are at the stage of developing their senses and understanding their world. The children were offered ample opportunities to play with materials or just tried it out for the first time. It is so excited to see their nervous and excited face as well as the benefits for their development such as their motor skills and imagination too.



It has been another adventurous month in Clownfish room as we had new children, so we just have few reminders for the parents:

- Please ensure all your child's belonging are clearly labelled such as hat, sheets, water bottle, etc
- Please bring spare clothes, including short and long sleeves shirt, short and long pants as well as thin jacket as we are heading to unpredictable weather.
- If there are any changes in routines or concerns, please speak to any of Clownfish educators (Miss Fenny, Miss Maylene, Miss Chun and Miss Yuki) or Miss Elly to address the issue.

Until next time,

Clownfish educators.

# Jellyfish News

**Animal interest** – The children's interest in nature from last month developed into an interest towards animals this month. Therefore, the children and families were invited to share animal related news with us for our fourth news topic. The interest and shared input led us to many interesting experiences this month, but we didn't forget

our tadpoles! We looked more into a frog's life cycle through videos about how the egg hatches, the tail and leg develop and how they shrink to become frogs. We compared it our tadpoles and saw that they already have 2 legs and we are waiting for them to become froglets in a few more weeks as we observe the, eagerly! Hang on, we have froglets now and the children enjoy watching them jump! We also revisited last month's turtle life cycle leaning after Ava brought in a turtle to share with us. Jellyfish children also found lots of grapefruits in our garden one morning, which led to a grapefruit painting experience! When the children revisited their caterpillar interest (from January), it led us to making food and fruit with using playdough in a very creative and imaginative experience. We also learnt about beagle dogs, tabby cats and owls after Billie and Ailsie shared their favourite animals with the everyone. The children really loved engaging in a mini zoo sensory activity using water, sand and

different animals, learning about which animals live in the water and which live on land. The children also enjoyed painting their favourite animals this month. Thanks everyone for all your contributions!

**The nature interest continues** – The children continued to show an interest towards nature this month also as they found nature items, such as flowers and fruit from our gardens, using their senses to explore their environment. One day,



Cara found a passionfruit on the ground and showed it to Miss Alex. Together they also used their senses to explore the passionfruit and decided that it wasn't ripe yet. On another day, when more grapefruits were found, the children engaged in a rolling the grapefruit to each other game!

**The rubbish truck** – The children have been engaging with a local community member this month, the council's rubbish truck driver! On Thursdays, they excitedly scream as they see (and hear!) the rubbish truck approaching and move over to watch it tipping the rubbish in the truck. The driver waves to the children and they excitedly wave back! We have discussed how the rubbish truck driver take our rubbish away every Thursday as the children begin to learn about the process of rubbish collection, from the rubbish they throw in the bin to the driver collecting it from our red bins weekly. We have also spoken about the recycling rubbish being taken away from our yellow bins to be recycled.



**Construction Interest** – The children have been also demonstrating a strong interest towards building together in small and large groups, both indoor and outdoor. They often initiate their social construction experiences. They like using the magnetic blocks to build houses, soft blocks to make tall towers and connecting blocks to make

making trails. They often combine animal and dramatic play to their construction play, such as by building a house for 'three little pigs', like the story and trying to blow it down!





### **St Patrick's Day –** To celebrate St.

Patrick's Day, Miss Sinni showed the children a video about the celebration and learnt that green means to bring luck. The children were also invited to dress up in green for the day. Our friend Cara was ready to celebrate St Patrick's day on the beautiful Irish themed bow, tie and

day as she arrived with a

tattoos. She proudly showed it all off to her peers and educators. Cara requested dancing and we found a fun YouTube video about St Patrick's day. The children followed the dance instructions, jumping, moving to the left and right etc. What a fun time! And as promised by Miss Sinni, she prepared a lovely St Patrick's day creative experience for the children. Miss Alex guided the children as needed as they enjoyed decorating shamrocks with lots of green decorations!

**Hygiene Practices –** The children requested, "The Wiggles" for group time one day this month. Miss Alex decided to combine 'The wiggles' interest with a hygiene practices discussion as we are focusing on being extra clean to keep healthy during this time. We discussed washing hands after using the toilet, before eating and after coughing/sneezing. We also rehearsed coughing and sneezing inside our elbows. As the children transitioned to wash hands for lunch, they made sure to remind each other of our discussion, "Use the soap. Like this! Don't touch the bin with your hands, use your foot". And have continued to do so since! Great advice!

Until next month,  
Jellyfish Educators

# Starfish and Lionfish News

## Parent Notices

- Please ensure all your child's belongings are clearly labelled.
- If your child is four years old and you wish for their eyes to be screened please collect a form from Miss Nicole or Miss Tracey or from the sign in/out area
- This month we have introduced the Starfish and Lionfish to Grow Your Mind. This is a mental health kit aimed at preschool and school aged children. There are various resources you can access and use within the home on their website. Please check it out.

**Grow Your Mind....** Earlier in the month the Starfish and Lionfish were introduced to Grow Your Mind. When doing so introduced to the various animals in their mind who each need to talk together. Together we explored each animal's roles and began to explore techniques to get all our animals to talk to each other. Together we created calm down jars (some to take home and others to leave at Pumpkin). It has been great to see the Starfish and Lionfish talking about the animals and when they should or are using each animal.

**St Patrick's Day...** On St Patrick's Day the Starfish and Lionfish were shown a YouTube video explaining what is St Patrick's Day. We explored why people were wearing green and the meaning behind shamrocks. While outside some Starfish and Lionfish participated in a stamping craft experience. This provided the Starfish and Lionfish the opportunity to use three corks tied together and green paint to create their own shamrocks.

**Harmony Day...** On Friday the 20<sup>th</sup> of March the Starfish and Lionfish collaborated in regards to harmony day. We discussed, that even though we look different and like different things it is okay. While outside the Starfish and Lionfish each decorated a handprint, which will be put together for a special display within our classroom. This will act as a reminder that even though we are different together we are a masterpiece and belong.





**Construction...** The interest of construction followed through from February. While outside the Starfish and Lionfish used various boxes and other recycled materials to build and create. For example, we had various towers, garbage trucks, houses



and cars. While inside the Starfish and Lionfish used the mobilio and the junior engineer kit to construct cars, planes, beyblades, zoos and even vacuum cleaners (The list goes on). The magnetic shapes were also another hit. They were used to build houses, zoos and various food items. Using Lego, the Starfish and Lionfish created various animals, patterns and towers.



**Gross Motor Games...** While outside this month the Starfish and Lionfish have been busy using their gross motor skills. The Starfish and Lionfish have collaborated and cooperated to make their obstacle course. Once done demonstrating pro-social behaviours through lining up and taking turns to move through the course. The Starfish and Lionfish have assisted educators to bring out the basketball hoop and balls. When doing so including their peers and educators in various ball games. This led to the target throw game being set up. The Starfish and Lionfish enjoyed



throwing the ball and discussing what number they got and if it was higher or lower than their peers. The Starfish and Lionfish have also been frequently engaging with the hurdles and the agility ladder.



**Dramatic Play...** During March the Starfish and Lionfish have frequently expressed their creativity and imagination through the means of dramatic play. There has been dramatic play of mums, dads, babies, puppies, Pj Mask, Paw Patrol and even zombies. The Starfish and Lionfish have requested the dress ups to be set up and have been observed helping each other to put on and take off their dress up. During the middle of the month some Starfish and Lionfish peers assisted Miss Nicole to set up a new puppet show theatre. Once set up the Starfish and Lionfish began putting on their own puppet shows using the various hand puppets.





**Cars and Trucks...** Once again, the Starfish and Lionfish have been busy engaging within car and truck learning experiences. Together the Starfish and Lionfish and educators collaborated to make



their own parking station for cars using a donated piece of wood. The Starfish and Lionfish furthered this through asking for and assisting to add roads and a roundabout. When in the sandpit the Starfish and Lionfish have asked for the larger trucks to be added. Once done using them to dig, fill up with sand and transporting sand. The Starfish and Lionfish have also engaged with the car and bikes to pedal around and explore the outside environment. While inside the Starfish and Lionfish have collaborated to make a large train track before using various cars and trains to move through the track.



**Natural Environment...** This month the Starfish and Lionfish have worked with their educators to plant various succulents within our outdoor environment. In the afternoon the Starfish and Lionfish have once again



requested to assist with the watering of all the plants. To extend on the interest of music and dance the Starfish and Lionfish created their own musical shakers using natural materials.

Two Lionfish friends brought in passionfruit for news and when outside Miss Tracey found a mango which fell from our mango tree. This led to the Starfish and Lionfish researching and taste testing mangos and passionfruit.



**Animals, Insects and Bugs...** The Starfish and Lionfish have also continued to look within the garden beds for insects, bugs and animals. During news the Starfish and Lionfish have also shared their home experiences with animals,



insects and bugs. For example, some Starfish and Lionfish peers shared about their pets (dogs, kittens and fish) while others shared about trips to the zoo, wildlife park and exploring their own garden.

A Starfish friend brought in some caterpillars to share and for us to keep in our classroom. This led to us reaching caterpillars using the promise board, reading the hungry caterpillar, creating our own hungry caterpillars and cocoons. To make our caterpillar we painted plates green using natural resources, cut out various foods from



supermarket catalogues before collaging them onto the paints. In regards to the cacoons we collaged balloons with coloured crepe paper and then added string. Using the prowse board we have also researched earth worms, tadpoles, lizards and iguanas. A Jellyfish friend brought in some tadpoles for use to have after the Starfish and Lionfish expressed interest in the tadpoles within the Jellyfish room. Each day the Starfish and Lionfish have expressed great excitement seeing if the tadpoles have grown and changed into frogs. While outside the Starfish worked with Mr William to make their own zoo. They firstly explored what animals they had before drawing shapes for the animals to live in.



**Drawing....** While both indoor and outdoor the Starfish and Lionfish have frequently requested to draw. Using texters, pencils and other resources the Starfish and Lionfish have expressed her imagination and creativity. Some examples as

to what the Starfish and Lionfish drew were pictures of their family, patterns, crowns, dragons and them going to beach.



**Literacy and Numeracy...** Each afternoon the Starfish and Lionfish have been encouraged to continue with the practising of writing their first and surname as well as the numeral one to ten. In the afternoons the Starfish and

Lionfish have also worked with Miss Nicole to play literacy and numeracy related games. These games have frequently been requested.



**Keeping Us Healthy...** In current times the Starfish and Lionfish have collaborated with their educators regarding how we can keep healthy. We have read numerous books dealing with how to wash our hands, when and why. We watched videos explaining how germs are spread and how we can attempt to stop the spread. As a result, Starfish and Lionfish wash their hands more regularly through out the day. When doing so counting to twenty or singing happy birthday twice. We explored the need to cough/sneeze into our elbow, use a tissue and wash our hands straight away. We have discussed the importance of not touching each other and trying to stay away from others. Educators are now setting tables for mealtimes and serving all food. Educators are also cleaning surfaces and resources through out the day.

Until Next Time,

Starfish and Lionfish Educators 😊😊