Dear Parents,

**Spontaneous teachable moments at home**

In the previous edition we discussed how we as teachers use spontaneous teachable moments to improve the knowledge of your child. This is a critical part of our curriculum and evidence from previous experiences clearly suggest that these teaching techniques often lead to effective learning environments and positive learning outcomes.

In this edition, we intend to examine how such spontaneous learning opportunities can be used to improve the knowledge of the children outside the kinder environment; the journey of children’s learning is not confined to the time they spend at the kinder. As parents, you can play a vital role to complement the work we do to achieve better learning outcomes.

Quite often, you will be unintentionally using spontaneous teachable moments to enhance the knowledge of your child especially on matters related to the outside world. We are inviting you to make a conscious effort to recognise these teachable moments and use it effectively in the family environment.

Let us consider the following situation at Tara’s home. Tara is four years old and played in the garden and came inside to eat the lunch.

**Mum:** ‘Tara, wash your hands before you eat’

**Tara:** ‘Mum, I don’t like soap. Why do we have to use soap when washing hands?’
**Scenario 1**

‘Tara, I am really tired now. Wash your hands and eat.’

**Scenario 2**

‘Tara, I have told you several times that we must wash our hands with soap before eating.’

**Scenario 3**

‘Tara that is how we wash our hands before meals. We use soap. I will explain it later, now you start eating.’

**Scenario 4**

‘Tara, you played outside. There are tiny germs on your fingers. You can’t see them as they are very small. When we use soap those tiny germs get washed away, that’s why we have to use soap.’

**Scenario 5**

(Same as scenario 4 but extending the learning to understand the ‘cause and effect’.)

‘Tara, you played outside. There are tiny germs on your fingers. You can’t see them as they are very small. When we use soap those tiny germs get washed away, that’s why we have to use soap.’

Do you know why germs are not good? If the germs get into our tummy we can become sick as some of them are very nasty.’

One of the above five scenarios can happen in a domestic environment depending on various circumstances prevailing at that moment. Scenario 1 and 2 will not give Tara the information she is seeking. If it is not the appropriate time, deferring the discussion as in scenario 3 is a compromise but is not the best option. Scenario 4 and five will definitely yield positive learning outcomes.

Scenario 5 is a good example of how a teachable moment at home can be effectively used to improve the knowledge of a child. Identification of these teachable opportunities to extend their knowledge needs a deliberate and conscious effort from the parents. Selection of the most useful teachable movements is important because in our busy lives, it is not possible to grasp each and every teachable moment.

It is also important to stress that messages conveyed to a child at the most appropriate moment potentially has a significant impact compared to a subsequent discussion as in scenario 3. Scenario five is a good example where a topic can be seamlessly moved from one area to another. In scenario 5, the topic of washing the hands moved on to the topic of germs and establishing a connection between germs and sicknesses.

If you need further information, please feel free to talk to the kinder staff.
Angelique from ‘The Victorian Government’s Responsible Pet Education’ came to visit CJELC on Friday 17 July to talk about Dog Safety and Responsible Pet Ownership. Angelique bought her pet dog ‘Woody’ with her who was a 10 year old Labrador Retriever. The program taught our children skills and strategies on how to stay safe around dogs. We learnt how to interact safely around dogs and discovered there are many positive benefits to having a dog in the family.

Angelique asked “what makes a dog different from human beings”? The children answered: “his tail; dogs wave their tail; they are furry; they wear a collar and a lead; they have big wet noses and they have 4 legs”.

It was an informative session for the children. The important learnings were:

- A dog is a good family friend
- A dog can distinguish between family members and outsiders. Therefore, we need to be careful when approaching dogs.
THE RESPONSIBLE PET EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Dogs should not be approached when: sleeping, in their kennel, eating, tied up, unwell or injured, with their puppies and not with their owner.

The children also learned the most appropriate way to behave if they were approached by an unknown or an aggressive dog. The children learned that the best behaviour in these circumstances is to stand still with hand down, be quiet as a mouse and look at ground.

This experience improved the children’s knowledge on the outside world. The learning are also important for children’s safety and physical wellbeing.

We invite the parents to reinforce these learnings in the family environment by engaging in discussions about your family dog or by using a suitable moment to discuss this topic.

“This is fun!” Acting like dogs

How to identify an angry dog
NAIDOC WEEK
05-12 July 2005

This week we have been talking about NAIDOC and spoke about the achievements and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. NAIDOC Week highlights the achievements of Indigenous people all over Australia.

This was a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn about the diverse cultures and learn to appreciate and respect diversity in Australia. The important learning outcomes were:

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

Children learned to be 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.

Children respond to diversity with respect.
When we have Yoga, we practice our “Twinkle Twist/Running Through the Jungle” incorporating stretches and lots of body movements such as jumping, jogging and crawling to build strength and increase flexibility. We talked about our experiences with water and used our bodies and imaginations to become crocodiles, whales, swans, tigers, octopuses and elephants.

The children learned to listen to instructions, initiate the tools for better concentration, coordination and balance. These learning outcomes were achieved in a playful but structured learning environment. The children enjoyed making body movements resembling various animals.
FEELINGS

We have been discussing the topic ‘feelings’ and how our feelings affect the way we react and behave. The children understood we encounter different feelings at different times based on the circumstances. We discussed about how we feel when we are happy, angry, sad and surprised.

We also read the following related books improve the children’s understanding on the topic.

When I’m Feeling Angry; When I’m Feeling Lonely; When I’m Feeling Jealous; When I’m Feeling Scared; When I’m Feeling Sad; When I’m Feeling Loved; When I’m Feeling Happy and When I’m Feeling Kind

The children created a picture of themselves using recycled materials. The children depicted the appropriate facial impressions that resembled the way they were feeling at the time.

This learning experience motivated the children to make a conscious effort interpret their own behaviour and take the initial steps to better control their emotions.

The learning outcomes were closely connected to having a better control of the mind, body and spirit.

Kindergarten

Fortnight ending 26 June 2015
The new sports program consists of a range of interesting outdoor games and activities. The children engage in group activities and are challenged in many different angles to develop greater control over their body.

Due to the innovative nature of the activities, a high level of participation was noted.
NEW SPORTS PROGRAM

The new sports program is carried out especially with the aim of achieving learning outcomes related to the physical wellbeing of the children. The children like to participate in rich and innovative playing experiences and this program is an incentive for the children to engage in outdoor physical activities.

The outdoor play area is a wonderful opportunity for the children to create new friendships. During these activities the children interact and communicate with the other children freely. It is an opportunity for the children to think and react beyond their own boundaries and become confident learners.

SERVING FOOD

The children are independent learners who can make decisions relating to their own lives. We provide opportunities for them to make decisions relating many aspects of their lives including but not limited to physical and emotional well-being.

The children are learning to serve their own food. This involves a series of decisions including selecting the food items, deciding on quantities to serve and using previous experiences in making choices.

The children also learn to show empathy and to learn to share food.

Serving Food by themselves

Note to parents

Your child is capable of serving food and is practicing this routine in the kinder. Try to encourage this habit in the home environment.

Fortnight ending 26 June 2015
Our program will cover many aspects relating to a child’s sense of belonging. The children belong to a wide cross section of the community and the family is the first and foremost. This is clearly evident from much of the artwork and activities they engage in the kinder.

We will be learning more about our families and will engage in exploring our bonds to the family and understanding why our family is very important.

Please send a family photo to be used in these activities. Please feel free to contact kinder staff if you have any concerns in this regard.

**Clothing**

The weather conditions during this winter has some impact on our program. Please consider appropriate clothing because the children will be engaged in outdoor activities.

**Water Bottles**

Please remember to take your water bottles home every night for cleaning (and remember to bring back to kindy on your next visit)