Sustainable Practices in Childcare Centres

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Filmed at an industry-leading childcare centre, that specialises in early childhood education we explore practical ways that childcare centres can create and implement a sustainable environmental focus to their work. This inspiring centre Bonkers Beat not only embodies sustainability in its operations but it actively supports children and their parents to connect with and contribute to their environment.

This program explores three key areas aligned to sustainable practices and in particular how to develop a sustainability management plan, how to engage children with their natural environment and how to implement and embed sustainable practices.

This video and additional resources contains information and activities that relate to various performance criteria within elements of units from:

**CHCECE025 Community Services: Diploma of School Age Education and Care, Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care and Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care.**

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Resource written by:
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Interviewees:
**Ms. Galina Zenin**, Owner and Program Director, Bonkers Beat Music Kinder & Childcare Aspendale,

**Ms. Julianne McLady**, 3yr Kinder Teacher, Bonkers Beat Music Kinder & Childcare Aspendale.
Short Program 1 - Develop a Sustainability Management Plan

Sustainable Practices unit (CHCECE025)

*Related to Community Services, Diploma of School Age Education and Care, Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care and Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care. This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to support children to connect with and contribute to their world and embed sustainable practice into service operations. This unit applies to work across a range of education and care service services.*

Performance Criteria:
1.1 Identify aspects of sustainability in the service
1.2 Consider areas of potential change in all aspects of the service’s delivery and environments
1.3 Ensure that nature, waste, energy and toxins have been considered
1.4 Identify areas where change can be instigated to enhance environmental sustainability and increase children’s connection with nature, in consultation with children
1.5 Develop strategies to address these areas of change in consultation with children
1.6 Implement strategies and evaluate outcomes

Initiate Prior Learning

*These activities can be undertaken with participants working individually, or in one or more small groups. They are designed so responses can be made in different ways, including brainstorming, discussion, written responses, role-plays etc.*

1. Brainstorm and list all the ways you can think of, in which sustainability could be addressed in an early childhood environment. Think nature, waste, energy and toxins.

2. Research all the ways sustainability can be expressed in a childcare setting.

3. As a hypothetical exercise, imagine that you are the head of a childcare centre that has decided to install solar panels for electricity. The panels will cost several thousand dollars to install and the economic benefits may not start to flow for several years. Design a strategy to promote the idea to parents and children, encouraging them to get involved. What immediate benefits are there? How can you involve parents with fundraising and installation? How can you get children to understand the benefits of this project?

4. Think back on your last visit to a childcare centre. Identify one area of change to that centre that would enhance environmental sustainability and increase children’s connection with nature. Discuss or write down the ways you would develop strategies to address this change in consultation with children. How would you consult them? How would you discuss the problem with them? How could you help them to see the benefits? How could you involve them in change?

5. You have just started a policy in your childcare centre that allows only the use of eco-friendly nappies at the centre. Most stakeholders are supportive but there are a few people who just ignore the policy. How do you work to convince these people of the value and necessity of the policy? How do you evaluate the success of this policy 6-months down the track? How does the evaluation help you formulate further policy changes and a more successful implementation of the eco nappies policy?
Short Program 1 - Develop a Sustainability Management Plan

Active Viewing Guide

1. The Bonkers Beat Childcare centre was initially “neat and tidy”, without any plants. What negatives does Galina Zenin attribute to this sort of environment?
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_____________________________________________________________________________________________
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2. Bonkers Beat Childcare Centre has created seven key environmental areas in their space. List as many of them as you can.
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_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

3. These changes involved parents and children at a _____________________ and _____________________ level.

4. What does Q.I.P. stand for?
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

5. What are the first four stages of staff developing new environmental strategies?
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

6. Who are the key stakeholders?
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

7. What three words describe Galina’s key message?
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
Short Program 1 - Develop a Sustainability Management Plan

Extension Activities

*These activities can be undertaken with participants working individually or in one or more small groups. They are designed so responses can be made in different ways, including brainstorming, discussion, written responses, role-plays etc.*

1. If you took over a childcare that had no trees or plants, no real environmental features at all, what would be the first environmental project that you would undertake? Why? Discuss with others in your group.

2. Research what the NQS is, and who rates it. Discuss why you think this assessment is important. Discover what their environmental aims and standards are.

3. Devise a quality Improvement Plan for a childcare centre. List the five most important aims and ideals of your centre.
Short Program 1 - Develop a Sustainability Management Plan

Answer Sheet

1. The Bonkers Beat Childcare centre was initially “neat and tidy”, without any plants. What negatives does Galina Zenin attribute to this sort of environment?

- It wasn’t attractive
- It wasn’t stimulating for children
- It wasn’t stimulating for children’s development

2. Bonkers Beat Childcare Centre has created seven key environmental areas in their space. List as many of them as you can.

- Sunshade
- Digging patch
- Yoga deck
- Jungle
- Mud kitchen
- Sensory / reflexology path
- Fruit & vegie garden

3. These changes involved parents and children at a hands on and consultative level.


5. What are the first four stages of staff developing new environmental strategies?

1. Initiate ideas
2. Develop
3. Research
4. Take to parents for feedback and approval

6. Who are the key stakeholders? The children.

7. What three words describe Galina’s key message?

1. Passion
2. Support
3. Consistency
Sustainable Practices in Childcare Centres

Short Program 2 - Children and the Natural Environment

Sustainable Practices unit (CHCECE025)

Related to Community Services, Diploma of School Age Education and Care, Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care and Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care. This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to support children to connect with and contribute to their world and embed sustainable practice into service operations. This unit applies to work across a range of education and care service services.

Performance Criteria:
2.1 Provide children with a wide range of natural and recycled materials in their indoor and outdoor environments
2.2 Create opportunities to discuss with children the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land
2.3 Role-model respect, care and appreciation for the natural and constructed environments
2.4 Share information and provide children with access to resources about the environment and the impact of human activities on environments
2.5 Create spaces that promote the development of life skills, such as growing and preparing food, waste reduction and recycling
2.6 Encourage children to exchange thoughts and ideas about sustainable practice through intentional teaching, learning experiences and projects
2.7 Explore ethical dilemmas of waste disposal for sustainability with all stakeholders

Initiate Prior Learning

These activities can be undertaken with participants working individually or in one or more small groups. They are designed so responses can be made in different ways, including brainstorming, discussion, written responses, role-plays etc.

1. Brainstorm and list all the ways you could discuss with children the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land.

2. At your childcare centre you have a vegie garden. Discuss the ways you could use it to explore the concept of interdependence with children.

3. List the ways in which life skills are developed by children who use your vegie patch.

4. As a hypothetical exercise, imagine that you are the head of a childcare centre that has decided to build a play area using natural and recyclable materials. Discuss what materials you would use, and the ways each material illustrates environmental concepts. For example, old tyres, wood from packing crates, stones from a reclamation centre.

5. How can you involve parents with fundraising and installation of a “mud kitchen’ made from recyclable materials?
Short Program 2 - Children and the Natural Environment

Active Viewing Guide

1. List all of the recycle and natural materials you see in this short program.

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_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

2. Bonkers Beat Childcare Centre has five main principles. Name the two that relate directly to respect for the environment.

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

3. Explaining the key principles to children gives teachers the opportunity to encourage children to:

_____________________________________________________________________________________________

4. What does “intentional teaching” mean?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

5. Experience in the natural environment sparks further, ________________________ learning within the classroom.

6. Encouraging children to play with rocks, sticks and tree nuts encourages children’s _____________________.

7. Name the five key aspects that Bonkers Beat practices sustainability

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
Short Program 2 - Children and the Natural Environment

Extension Activities

These activities can be undertaken with participants working individually or in one or more small groups. They are designed so responses can be made in different ways, including brainstorming, discussion, written responses, role-plays etc.

1. Brainstorm and list all the ways that you could role model respect, care and appreciation for the natural and constructed environments as a childcare worker.

2. Discuss the ways that you could create spaces that promote the development of life skills through recycling at a childcare centre.

4. As a hypothetical exercise, imagine that you are the head of a childcare centre that has decided to address issues of waste disposal from the centre. What areas of waste can you identify as being suitable for environmentally friendly waste disposal? Discuss how you could safely involve children in this.

5. You work at a childcare centre with many recycled and natural resources. Describe how you would encourage children to exchange thoughts and ideas about sustainable practice. Think intentional teaching, learning experiences and projects.
Sustainable Practices in Childcare Centres

Short Program 2 - Children and the Natural Environment

Answer Sheet

1. List all of the recycle and natural materials you see in this short program.

- Old tyres
- Stones
- Wood
- Plastics
- Crates
- Tubs
- Plants
- Seedlings
- Cuttings
- Barrels

2. Bonkers Beat Childcare Centre has five main principles. Name the two that relate directly to respect for the environment. Respect for all animals and living creatures. Respect for all plants and nature.

3. Explaining the key principles to children gives teachers the opportunity to encourage children to exchange thoughts and ideas about sustainability.

4. What does “intentional teaching” mean? Observing children’s interests at play, then responding to these with learning activities.

5. Experience in the natural environment sparks further, motivated learning within the classroom.

6. Encouraging children to play with rocks, sticks and tree nuts encourages children’s imagination.

7. Name the five key aspects that Bonkers Beat practices sustainability

1. Composting
2. Gardening
3. Water recycling
4. Using paper effectively
5. Food as nutrition
Short Program 3 - Implement and Embed Sustainable Practices

Sustainable Practices unit (CHCECE025)

Related to Community Services, Diploma of School Age Education and Care, Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care and Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care. This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to support children to connect with and contribute to their world and embed sustainable practice into service operations. This unit applies to work across a range of education and care service services.

Performance Criteria:
3.1 Encourage children to participate in sustainable practice discussions and learning experiences
3.2 Engage with adults and children to encourage their participation in the service’s sustainable practices
4.1 Review the service philosophy, policies and procedures in relation to sustainable practice
4.2 Identify areas of potential change in the service philosophy, policies and procedures
4.3 Discuss with stakeholders any identified areas of potential change
4.4 Finalise changes after agreement with appropriate stakeholders

Initiate Prior Learning

These activities can be undertaken with participants working individually or in one or more small groups. They are designed so responses can be made in different ways, including brainstorming, discussion, written responses, role-plays etc.

1. Imagine that your childcare centre is in an area where concepts of sustainability are not a priority. You decide to implement a sustainability program that is fun and engaging for children and parents. What sort of project do you come up with? What is your strategy for getting parents and children involved?

2. Get on the web and research local kindergartens via their web page. Find one with a written service philosophy or aims. Copy down these aims and then identify how you would change them to create your ideal centre, one with a strong sustainability focus.

3. As a hypothetical exercise, imagine that you are the head of a childcare centre that has decided to install solar panels for electricity. The panels will cost several thousand dollars to install and the economic benefits may not start to flow for several years. Design a strategy to successfully discuss the concept with parents and children, especially the changes that will occur, both short and long term, positive and negative.

4. Think back on your last visit to a childcare centre. Identify one area of change to that centre that would enhance environmental sustainability and increase children’s connection with nature. Discuss or write down the ways you would develop strategies to address this change in consultation with children. How would you consult them? How would you discuss the problem with them? How could you help them to see the benefits? How could you involve them in change?
Short Program 3 - Implement and Embed Sustainable Practices

Active Viewing Guide

1. Bonkers Beat Childcare Centre has created seven key environmental areas in their space. List as many of them as you can.

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_____________________________________________________________________________________________

2. All this was created using _________________ and _________________ materials.

3. Why was the hardest work to get parents involved?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________________

4. What activity was the breakthrough in engaging with parents?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________

5. What is really driving parent engagement between parents and staff?

_____________________________________________________________________________________________

6. The nature of learning and play is collaborative partnership involving _________________, _________________, and _________________.

7. This approach allows teachers to encourage children to exchange _________________ and _________________ about sustainability.
Short Program 3 - Implement and Embed Sustainable Practices

Extension Activities

These activities can be undertaken with participants working individually or in one or more small groups. They are designed so responses can be made in different ways, including brainstorming, discussion, written responses, role-plays etc.

1. You want to rebuild part of your childcare centre play area using recycled materials as much as possible. In pairs with one playing the role of a reluctant parent, discover what the objections are then devise ways around those problems, ways that involve parents actively.

2. Your aim is to encourage children at your childcare centre to put food scraps in a compost bin. Devise a lesson around the benefits of composting that will generate understanding and enthusiasm for the practice. Think books, songs or other forms.

3. You have just started a policy in your childcare centre that allows only the use of eco-friendly nappies at the centre. Most stakeholders are supportive but there are a few people who just ignore the policy. How do you work to convince these people of the value and necessity of the policy? How do you evaluate the success of this policy 6-months down the track? How does the evaluation help you formulate further policy changes and a more successful implementation of the eco nappies policy?
Short Program 3 - Implement and Embed Sustainable Practices

Answer Sheet

1. Bonkers Beat Childcare Centre has created seven key environmental areas in their space. List as many of them as you can.
   - Digging Patch
   - Yoga deck
   - Jungle
   - Mud kitchen
   - Sensory path
   - Fruit & vegie garden

2. All this was created using natural and recycled materials.

3. Why was the hardest work to get parents involved? Needed to change parents’ mentality and show them that staff wanted to work together.

4. What activity was the breakthrough in engaging with parents? Harmony nights.

5. What is really driving parent engagement between parents and staff? Working bees.

6. The nature of learning and play is collaborative partnership involving children, families and educators.

7. This approach allows teachers to encourage children to exchange thoughts and ideas about sustainability.