



Welcome to your
Caring and Learning at Home Book
offering forth creative ideas!

This book has been developed for the early childhood families of the Samford Valley Steiner school in Brisbane. It offers the foundational base upon which Steiner /Waldorf early childhood education is supported. At times when families experience the need for *Caring and Learning at Home* this book also stands alongside the delivery of weekly early childhood programs.

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*"We are all in an extraordinary situation. The quality of relationships is fundamental, but at the moment very limited. But new qualities of relationships are also emerging. It seems as if the need for community and solidarity, especially in times of crisis, is always looking for new ways of fulfilment.
The willingness to make the best out of unexpected circumstances together, shows forth creative ideas" ¹*

PURPOSE

Each week your Teacher will email you -

- ✚ a story
- ✚ some songs – with an audio help you (not your child) learn it
- ✚ a craft idea
- ✚ an outside play or movement or nature walk experience
- ✚ domestic experience suggestions (cooking ~ helping)
- ✚ fingerplay or game

This Booklet contains *foundational* information of the **HOW** to integrate these weekly curriculum experiences into your day and your week. It also provides you with the **WHY** these experiences are key in a Steiner early childhood setting for the development of the young child. **So, make yourself a cuppa and relax and have a read through these pages.**

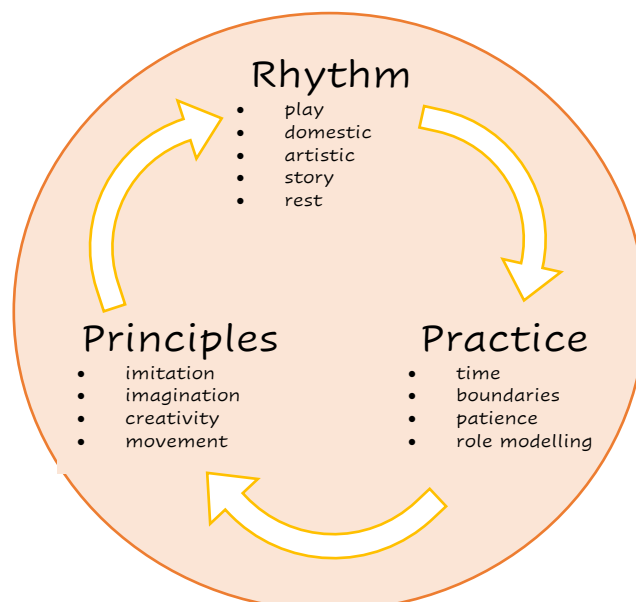
Because we uphold a strong play-based curriculum one of our goals is to provide you, as parents, with practical, accessible tools to inspire your child's *Creativity* so as to feed their *Imagination* to take back into a richer, deeper play.

Although we are providing you with information and documents our hope is to ✚ INSPIRE ✚ your creativity, so you experience a heart-connection to our curriculum and feel engaged and enthusiastic to deliver it. All that is required is to stay CALM, to come from the HEART and to connect with WARMTH.

Please remember that you do not need to fill up every minute of your child's day. But allow **TIME** – children live in that very moment and need to dream, imagine, find their initiative, breath, look, touch, smell, smile, wonder and develop into independent and creative beings.

One of the **first** things to know about our early childhood curriculum is that it is *not linear*...it has a **rhythmical circular** flow...wherein meaningful, purposeful activities breathe in-and-out in relationship to each other.

The three Pillars of the early childhood day



Some guiding principles

“Reverence, enthusiasm, and a sense of guardianship, these three are actually the panacea, the magical remedy, in the soul of the educator and teacher” ~ Rudolf Steiner

Loving Guidance:

Be clear about the fact that you are in charge, that the responsibility is yours to make the best decisions for your children. They can then relax and find their way within the loving boundaries you have set for them.

As adults it is up to you to decide the **boundaries** for the children and how this will look in your homes. You need to decide what time your child goes to bed, what time are your mealtimes, what to eat, time for free play, what language to use in the family home. Remember that children learn through imitation with good examples and parental clarity.

In the preschool we decide the boundaries within our rhythm and how the day will look. We are mindful of our gestures, language and are present for the children during the day. Things do not always go to plan and it is necessary to meet this with a big breath and a question of ‘what is my child asking of me’ and how do meet them?

Let Boredom Happen:

Boredom is the seed for new things to come - let it happen.

Boredom commonly inspires new ideas!

If it goes on too long and you are being pestered, if you are able to then stop... knowing that your child may need your attention in that moment. Engaging in some ordinary domestic work together that arises naturally in the day (cooking, cleaning, laundry) can restore the sense of ‘presence’ with your child for a few full moments and allows them to reset and go back to their play.

Turn Off Electronics:

We very strongly encourage you to resist the urge to entertain your children with screen time as this is not supportive to their overall development and will very likely make their time (and yours) more difficult in the long run. For children to make demands and get instant gratification from a machine is not helpful to their budding social awareness or their sense of connection. Please consider disabling voice-activated devices as well.

Keep Adult Conversation Among Adults:

Children need protection from the anxieties of our adult world. Please keep them away from the news at this sensitive time. If you need to speak with them about the current health situation, find ways to do so that are simple and age-appropriate. They should know that the adults are taking care of things and they do not need to worry.

Rhythm

Daily and weekly RHYTHMS are the anchors that provide security and happiness for your child. Children thrive on this sense of familiarity, consistency and security; they feel safe, less anxious and reassured to have a predictable day, to always know what comes next in a gently flowing RHYTHM.

To create RHYTHM in the home is to seek out the balance between two polarities – to find the 'just right' in between;

- too fast and too slow,
- too loud and too quiet.

The Nature of RHYTHM consists of two aspects;

1. REPETITION
2. The balanced dynamic of BREATHING IN and BREATHING OUT – as we observe in our own physical rhythmical system (inhaling/exhaling)

Inhaling or breathing-in periods - are **structured** experiences organised by the adult where a child can direct his/her attention to themselves; drawing, painting, and crafting, mealtimes, rest time, story. Often these are short because young children can only concentrate for short periods of time.

Exhaling or breathing-out periods – are **unstructured** experiences where the child relates mainly to the surrounding world; free play, roaming, daydreaming



















It is the breathing qualities of *Expansion* and *Contraction* that nurtures harmony in the child's body and soul. An imbalance e.g. a lot of breathing in (going from one planned activity to another) can create hyperactivity and the expectation of being always entertained. In contrast, allowing the child to engage in complete freedom (breathing out) without structure could foster a certain lethargy leaning towards inertia and lessen their capacity to focus. A balance will help bring about inner peace through form and structure.

Every family is totally and completely unique, so begin with a RHYTHM that meets your needs as a whole. Be gentle with yourself. Perhaps start by setting just one RHYTHM in place and be consistent with just that one. Please don't become annoyed with yourself if your entire day is not rhythmical.















Work loosely with the timing of daily school events (especially meals and rest), at home. That will ease the transition back to school when the time comes. Keep it simple!

Using RHYTHM at home can help families to establish little islands of refuge and calm from all the storms of daily life. RHYTHM helps the whole family to experience familiarity, balance, and to come together secure in a well-known calm harbour.

DAILY RHYTHM - Hold the Rhythm

Breakfast	
MORNING PLAY – Choose one <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative-Free Inside Play -includes Tidy up time  • Creative-Free Outside Play •  Large Movement experiences – e.g gardening  • Nature Walks  	
DOMESTIC EXPERIENCE – Choose ONLY one experience per day <u>either</u> Morning or Afternoon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking or preparing meals or baking  •  Practical helpful tasks  	
Lunch	
	STORY-TIME
	REST-TIME
ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE – Choose one per day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing • Craft • Painting  • Beeswax Modelling  • Songs 	
AFTERNOON PLAY – Choose one <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative-Free Inside Play -includes Tidy up time  • Creative-Free Outside Play •  Large Movement experiences – e.g gardening  • Nature Walks  	
DOMESTIC EXPERIENCE – Choose ONLY one experience per day <u>either</u> Morning or Afternoon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking or preparing meals or baking  •  Practical helpful tasks  	
Prepare for Dinner and Bedtime Routines	
Dinner	
Bedtime	

WEEKLY RHYTHM – Hold the Rhythm

Breakfast					
MORNING PLAY – Every day create time for BOTH Indoor and  Outdoor play CHOOSE one PLAY (e.g. indoor) for the Morning and PLAY (e.g. then outdoor) for the afternoon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative-Free Inside Play  -includes Tidy up time • Creative-Free Outside Play • Large Movement experiences - <i>Suggestions offered every week</i> • Outside Walks  					
DOMESTIC EXPERIENCE – Choose ONLY one per day <u>either</u> Morning or Afternoon  <i>Cooking and Helping</i>  <i>Suggestions offered every week</i> 					
Lunch					
 STORY-TIME – Story Suggestions offered weekly					
 REST-TIME					
ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE <i>Craft Suggestions offered weekly</i>	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Craft	Beeswax modelling 	Painting  	Drawing  	Craft
AFTERNOON PLAY – same as above					
DOMESTIC EXPERIENCE – Choose ONLY one per day <u>either</u> Morning or Afternoon <i>Cooking and Helping</i>  <i>Suggestions offered every week</i>					
Prepare for Dinner and Bedtime Routines					
Dinner					
Bedtime					

Tips for Keeping the Rhythm Simple! - Hold the Rhythm

PLAY – Children need to play **twice a day** both Indoors and Outdoors

- Make sure you create daily opportunities for **both** types of play
- You are free to choose when you schedule Indoor Play and Outdoor Play
- Outdoor play is way easier as it arises more naturally, (sandpit, running outside, walks etc)



Opportunities for meaningful **DOMESTIC EXPERIENCES** also arise naturally throughout your day like washing dishes, baking, preparing a meal etc

Please read further in this **Caring and Learning at Home Booklet**

STORY-TIME, REST-TIME and ARTISTIC EXPERIENCES

each have a separate Section with suggestions on how to create and support these important quiet moments



Bedtime and Dinner routines are very individual for each family and best left up to the 'Experts' – you!



CREATIVE FREE INSIDE PLAY

“The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination” ~ Albert Einstein

Free, undirected play is critical for a child’s healthy development. We recognize this might be more difficult for some children without their social group 😞



Between three and five years old, when their feeling realm truly begins to emerge, two new faculties are born – **Imagination** and **Memory**.

It is very important to observe that children experience this **Creative** activity within the body in a kind of *dream state*.

Sense impressions from the physical world PLUS the urge to imitate, connected to the will aspect in play, are the elements from which play arises.

Imagination is a key tool with which children can explore and make sense of their experiences. Children start to take their everyday experiences of people and objects and use them in imaginative play to create new mental pictures and feelings. In the kindergarten play contains unexpected themes, whose origin can’t be explained and where the child appears deeply immersed into another world.

Between Three and Five years old:

A strong time for creative play. Being able to verbalise thought through language plays a big part in this. This play is carried by *will-activity and feeling* which at this time are strongly connected with each other. **Willing** and **Feeling** are seen as the bedrock for the development of **Thinking**.

This play is very flexible and may change from one minute to the next. Often there is not much logic or order to it. What they do is connect mental ‘pictures’ which they have formed from experience, with objects at hand: any rectangular piece of wood can become a car. The missing wheels are not a problem, the child can see them!

Between Five and Seven years old

The child becomes interested in another person’s views and actions and is now willing to listen to a friend. This new ability is like an inner movement: going out of oneself into the other person and back again: a kind of *soul-breathing*, essential for developing social abilities.

Free Creative-Play is a deeply foundational preparation for developing imagination in due course. It is a preparation for life skills later: being flexible, inventive, enduring and able to make something from whatever is at hand.

Simple Ideas:

- ✚ Give them access to open-ended playthings and space in which to make a mess, make noise and explore the world through play.

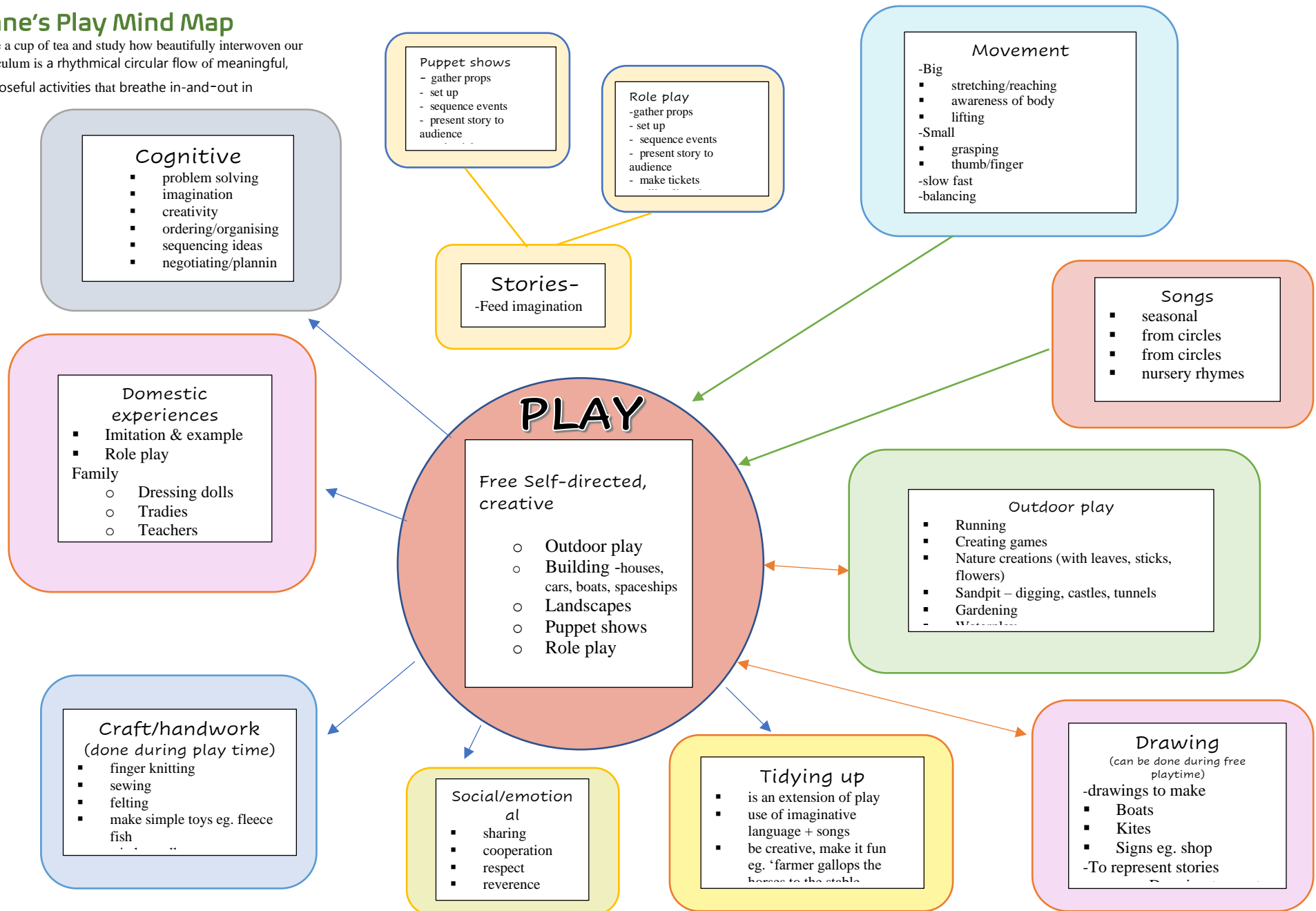
- ✚ Get them started with a play idea and then start working on something tangible of your own nearby. That way they will feel you are available if they need you but you will not be responsible for entertaining them.
- ✚ A large empty box can provide hours of play ideas indoors.
- ✚ Resist interactive electronic toys and those that have a specific purpose and therefore limit imagination.
- ✚ Minimize toys available and rotate them every week or two if needed.



“I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious” ~ Albert Einstein

Anne's Play Mind Map

Make a cup of tea and study how beautifully interwoven our curriculum is a rhythmic circular flow of meaningful, purposeful activities that breathe in-and-out in



Puppetry and Play

Puppetry and puppets contain a mysterious power which can cast a spell over children and grown-ups alike. They nourish the feeling life of the child and their fantasy. Puppetry also nourishes their will and out of imitation, we will often see children building and performing puppet shows in their play.. with tickets, food sellers, musicians and an audience!

Here developing and sequencing a story they have created children 'play' with the social notions of sympathy, antipathy, empathy as well as simply recreate their inner life experiences.

The production of a puppet show can contain many artistic elements for the children.

- ✚ making the puppets
- ✚ building the scenery and gathering all props – on the floor, table or knee
- ✚ narrating the story and practicing
- ✚ setting chairs for the audience
- ✚ making tickets/stamp for audience
- ✚ playing an instrument (eg. bell) to notify the start the puppet show
- ✚ narrating and sequencing the story



CREATIVE FREE OUTSIDE PLAY and TIME IN NATURE

“Live in the sunshine, swim the sea, drink the wild air” ~ Emerson

The young child is one with nature! Their consciousness is such they can lose all sense of time in one caterpillar, a good stick, tricky rocks or cool water. Time in nature and exercise are proven to reduce stress and improve both mental and physical health. Outside time plays a key role in the child's well-being and is scheduled **daily** in our kindergarten. Dedicating time every day to breathe out gives a positive boost to your child's attitude and behavior for the remainder of the day. It also supports good sleep!

- Finding treasures for the Nature Table - collecting seed pods, shells, feathers, leaves, grasses, stones (that look crystal like)
- Sand, dirt and water with some old pots, scoops and shovels can provide hours of fun outdoors.
- Designate a spot in your yard in which your child can dig and make a nice mess!
- Fill a large bowl or plastic bin with warm soapy water and a few different metal cups or bowls.
- Making fairy gardens, play with sand, mud, dirt, water,
- Rock grinding for potion making.

Gardening

- ✚ Planting bulbs; digging up, dividing, planting, succulent garden, cuttings in pots,
- ✚ watering
- ✚ picking flowers for the meal table.
- ✚ Outside time is a significant part of the Daily Rhythm.

Weekly bushwalk

Choose a day once a week either on the weekday or on the weekend where you plan a bushwalk as a family. You can alternate between two or three parks or you can plan a proper excursion to a different adventure spot every week. Don't rush or focus on an end goal or destination- let your child (and yourself!) explore, discover and have freedom of direction and movement.

The possibilities are endless, but you are looking for a few common denominators when choosing a location:

- ✚ Somewhere away from cars, busy streets and loud noises;
- ✚ Somewhere where there are birds to hear,
- ✚ Trees to shade you and rocks to climb
- ✚ Above all else somewhere you can escape to that is free from electronics and filled with time and space and a place which draws you into the present moment.



Creating a Nature Table (also known as the *Special Table*)

“The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn” – Emerson

Creating a **Nature** table or **Seasonal** for has been an activity that in the kindergarten never stops giving...over and over again!

Finding gifts for a seasonal table can inspire you and your little ones to take a walk and gather **earthly treasures**. A wonderful act of giving thanks to Mother Earth AND a dreamy, magical way for your child to connect (inwardly know) what subtle changes are taking place in their environment.

A meaningful activity for you and your child is to spend one afternoon to **choose** just the right spot in a room for the Nature table, and then hunt around for materials to build the table or find a small suitable table.



- ✚ Cloths – are essentially a colour experience for the child. It suggests through the chosen colours, an unspoken association of the **seasonal mood**.
- ✚ Autumn cloths – pale orange, red, brown
- ✚ Collecting seed pods, shells, feathers, leaves, grasses, stones, crystal like
- ✚ The child will spend hours playing with the table, rearranging it, and engaging in wonderful imaginative play.

“The earth laughs in flowers” ~ Emerson

Tidying Up

Create a Cleaning-up ritual with your child after creative-free indoor play-time, can actually be fun! The child has the opportunity to experience the RHYTHM of taking apart and putting back together again. When it is both a regular occurrence, and, an expectation your child will soon **imitate** the mood.

- ✚ To counter a resistant attitude to tidying, it is **essential** that every toy has its own dedicated 'home' (place it goes away) at the end of play.
- ✚ Put **Imagination** into the experience – ‘*the little horse can gallop into the stable*’, while ‘*the car can be driven back to the garage or carpark*’.

- ✚ **Energetic songs** and **verses** will go a long way. When putting blocks away in the basket, "One potato, two potato" may keep hands working. Any song sung at this time will help to keep the mood – 'Baa, baa, black sheep'..is a favourite as it's rhythmical.
- ✚ Young children still have the innocent, unspoiled ability to experience tidy-up as play! It's only when the adults help *jolly their will along* that cleaning up time can be over soon so we can all move on to something nicer... like morning tea.

TIDY-UP TIME SONG



On the shelf,
In a sack,
Here we put our toys and blocks,
Each one has its special place,
We will help them find their way,
On the shelf,
In a sack,
Time to put toys back.

[Link to Audio Files](#)

Hand Washing

This occurs regularly throughout our day, usually at transition times such as after tidying-up, coming in from outside, prior to preparing or eating lunch. This is a familiar practice and recommended as one of the most effective ways to develop good hygiene. At kindergarten we spend time helping children to learn to wash their hands thoroughly. It helps develop good fine motor development for strong hands for all other work and play now and in the future. Enjoy the interaction and the bubbles!

Washing hands song:

A Little Pearl is all we need,
To wash our Hands so sparkling clean,
The bubbles come... the bubbles go,
As round and round our hands slip so.
We give our hands a little shake,
To dry our hands a cloth we take.

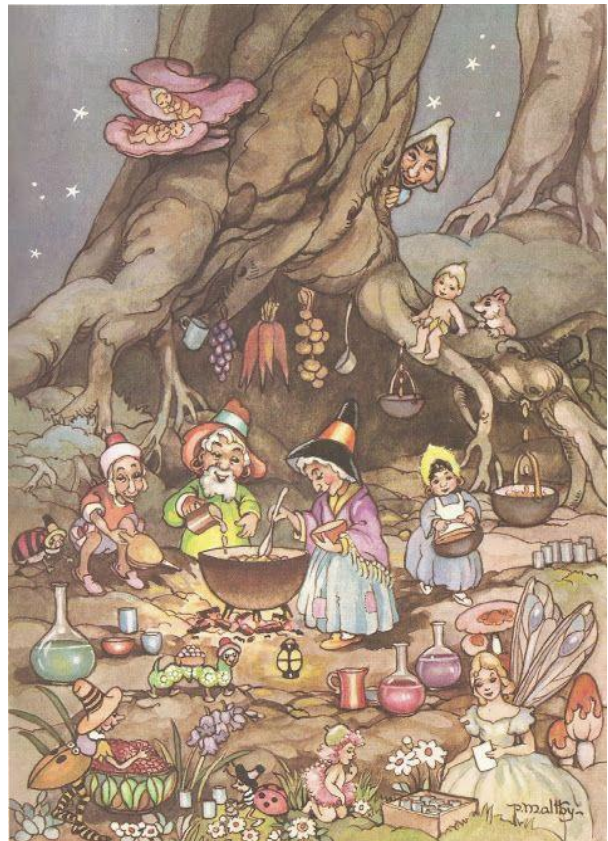
[Link to Audio Files](#)

Story Telling

Through stories we are making sense of the world, connecting with each other through sharing and building pictures which relate to our own reality and that of others. In the kindergarten, stories are told rather than read as oral storytelling supports the child's developing 'mental-imaging' or Imagination. A storyteller's **words creates** mental **pictures** of the story for the listener.

To **tell** a story (by memory), one has to read it prior so as to know the story very well and may be able to bring to bring a personal touch.

A meaningful storytelling experience will be shaped using eye contact and gesture, with close attention to an **undramatised** voice. Told stories will weave pictures into children's imaginations and make a deep connection which may be played out in their play, or in artistic activities such as drawing, modelling or painting.



The 'holding' power of storytelling can also help develop and strengthen children's concentration and memory. Over time with practice, this concentration is one of the most important preparations and skills necessary for more formal learning.

Repetition of the same story over the whole week is a very significant part of the kindergarten program – it allows the child time to **digest** the content and develop images which work dreamily, inwardly on them. You may notice yourself how your own child never tires of hearing the same story over and over - thriving on repetition.

Choosing too many stories is unnecessary and can create confusion and overload the child's senses and may cause '*soul indigestion*'.

Stories are always carefully chosen ranging from simple every day and nature stories to folk-and fairy tales which contain a rich imagery and old wisdom and often a moral message. For the older child in particular they suggest solutions to inner conflicts and are reassuring, giving the child a picture of hope for the future, that goodness prevails.

Creating Story Rituals

Creating rituals for storytelling helps to build the mood and encourage children to pause and listen.

This can be as simple as;

- ✚ lighting a candle
- ✚ singing a song at the start and the end of a story
- ✚ playing an instrument before and after (bell, guitar, xylophone)
- ✚ sitting in a special story chair or place in the room
- ✚ having a set time in the rhythm of the day for story
- ✚ helping bring children into a 'listening mood' by using some finger games before story

Children enjoy creating this 'mood of listening' when telling stories or puppet shows themselves – the rituals and process are deeply important and can build reverence for the story experience.

Verse - Before Story:

Our candle shines so brightly,
It shares with us it's light,
We love to see it dancing,
It's such a lovely sight

Song - Before Story

Hand in hand let's journey,
To a Fairyland.
Where noble deeds are many,
And people rule the land.
Let's stay there just a little while,
Such wonders we shall share.

[Link to Audio Files](#)

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FINGERPLAY

Fingerplays can be used as a tool for transition (from one activity to another) or as a redirection (from unfavourable behaviour). Nursery rhymes and fingerplays stimulate a loving and intimate connection between the caregiver and child. "*The interaction with your child, the engaging faculties of imitation and the musical elements all used in [fingerplay have] delighted children for centuries and have great value for their development as well.*" (Rahima Baldwin). Look out for the weekly fingerplay we will give you each week – they are fun to learn, and your child will be delighted!

Rest

Quiet Time, Nap or Rest Time:

Keeping a REST TIME on the schedule every day supports the RHYTHM between Waking in the morning and Sleeping at night. AND you too will each need your time alone during these weeks!

We encourage you to set yourself up for success by implementing a rhythmic set of activities - a little *routine* that lead to this independent quiet time (whether the child be sleeping or playing quietly alone in a bedroom).

First it is ideal that you create or identify on the **space** for this to happen. If they are not too tired this rest will be short, and if the nightly rhythm is strong it will not impact on their evening sleep. For example:

- Eat lunch,
- Clear and wash the table,
- Wash the face and hands with a warm washcloth (lavender oil optional),
- Settle in bed, or a special area with pillows in the room ...read or tell a story,
- Rub child's feet and leave the room.

If they do not wish to sleep that's fine, **BUT make it clear what your expectation is** for them during this rest-time – "everyone just needs to rest their bodies"



Bedtime

This is a very important time of the day, and the rhythms and rituals surrounding this help prepare the children for restful sleep. Having predictable times for waking, resting and sleeping, along with set mealtimes helps children and their bodies to feel settled and secure. Most children need at least 12 hours sleep each night, so a secure bedtime of 6.30 /7pm, with a predictable daily rhythm, will support your child towards this. It may also help you have a good night's sleep!

If it's not already part of your bedtime ritual you could include a gentle, reassuring verse to carry children into their sleep. You can use the verse your child received from their teacher for their birthday.

Verse

✧ The stars all whisper softly
To each of us each night,
Like angels all around us,
Who guide you with their light ✧

Verse

✧ Our work, our play, our song,
In us becomes a light,
We carry it along, till stars shine in the night
✧

Song - Rest or Bed-time

Which is the way the wind blows
Over the silver sea,
Bringing a ship for father,
And a shining star for me.
Which is the way the wind blows,
Over the silver sea,
Bringing a moon for mother,
And a golden dream for me.

Song - Rest or Bed-time

Through the mountains wending,
Sleepy birds now fold their wings,
Soon the day is ending.

Song - Rest or Bed-time

Little gnomes are sleepy too,
Into their homes a creeping,
Mid-the tree roots deep below,
Soon are soundly sleeping.

[Link to Audio Files](#)

Artistic Experiences

Drawing, painting, modelling, singing, poetry, music, story-telling and puppet shows are woven through the RHYTHM of the day and week and are repeated so that the children can build on their experiences, enhancing their literacy skills (songs, rhymes, poetry and stories), their imaginations and their physical skills.

Artistic expression comes from deep within us and it is very individual and personal. Artistic experiences give rise to our creativity. Enlivened and enriched by our feelings – they are affected by, and, contribute to what Steiner refers to as our '**soul life**'.

One does not have to be 'artistic' in the known sense to create an artistic atmosphere that enhances the creativity and enriches the inner life of the child. It is only imperative that adults provide an environment which is enlivened by their artistic interest, creating a mood and inviting creativity.

Drawing

Providing time and space for unstructured artistic activity provides children will an outlet to express emotion, feelings and ideas through **colour** and **form**. Opportunities to draw allows children to freely communicate about themselves and others through the use of crayons and paper.

Drawings reveal where children are developmentally. We start to see basic geometry forms of lines and circles until slowly forms will arise. Younger children will mostly have a sensory experience of colour, whereas older children begin to draw motifs – representations of objects. Once a week in the kindergarten we schedule a set time for all the children to draw together before they transition into free inside play.

The basic essentials required for drawing are paper and stick and/or block crayons. Where possible provide sensory rich materials such as beeswax crayons made of pure wax and light resistant pigment. We can send some crayons home with each family – please let us know if you need them.

Guide to Drawing

- ✚ It is important for children to experience joy and freedom while colouring. Allow children to work through their own pictures freely without influencing them too much with ideas or subjects
- ✚ You can place a basket on the shelf with paper where the children can have access throughout the day.
- ✚ We encourage children to use the front and the back of paper “lets chase the white away”, rather than directing explaining why we use both sides.
- ✚ It is important when your child has finished drawing that their drawing is placed in a special place.
- ✚ The crayons are polished and put away on the shelf.

Painting

Wet-on-wet watercolour painting is an introduction to the beautiful world of colour for the young child. There are many ways to paint, but wet-on-wet watercolour is a dreamy, fluid, mostly formless painting method that allows the painter to fully experience colours.

Children experience wet-on-wet water colour painting as a weekly activity using the primary colours of red, yellow and blue only. This allows the secondary colours of purple, green and orange to arise ‘magically’ for the child, as a surprise and delight!

Remember your children have been painting every Monday or Wednesday at kindergarten. We ask that you set up the painting equipment with them and hold a reverent space for them. After the painting, paints pots and brushes are cleaned and put away your child can then enter into their next experience.

You will need:

- ✚ Stockmar paints in yellow, blue and red
- ✚ A thick paint brush for each person painting
- ✚ Small jars for each colour paint.
- ✚ Larger jar of water to washes your brush
- ✚ Painting paper
- ✚ Painting board or table to allow the colours to blend and flow into each other AND for your painting to dry on



Guide to Painting:

- ✚ It is important your child is involved in the whole process of set up, painting and clean up.
- ✚ Provide a safe place for treasured drawings and paintings to live
- ✚ Engage your child in the set up and pack up of their artistic work

We can send families home with paint and painting paper – please let us know who would like a small kit.

Parents who choose to can watch a demonstration online on how to paint with wet on wet painting with kindergarten aged children. PLEASE remember this is really only for you to watch Go to <https://www.bellalunatoys.com/blogs/sunday-with-sarah/waldorf-wet-on-wet-watercolor-painting>

Our Kindergarten Painting Song

Rainbow, lovely glow,
Put some colour in my hand,
Together we'll make a fairy land

[Link to Audio Files](#)

Modelling – Beeswax

Through engagement with beeswax, children experience transformation through the senses of touch and smell. They experience warmth as the wax is warmed and softened in their hands and develop control of their hands and fingers in a fun, joyous way as they roll, twist and mold the wax into new creations. This is an excellent opportunity for developing fine motor skills.

Guide to Beeswax:



- ✚ Set aside a space just for this experience, light a candle, slow down. This is a wonderful moment to work quietly after listening to the accompanying story.
- ✚ Allow children to work through their creations with minimal adult input
- ✚ Set aside a special place to treasure your creations until they are ready to be transformed again.

Kindergarten Beeswax Activity

Have your child make a 'Beehive' by cupping their hands together, then place a small amount of beeswax into their hands. Insist they keep the beeswax warm inside their hands while you tell this story..... when the story is finished, let the child open their hands (wax should be softer) and then they can quietly begin to fashion the wax.

Beeswax Story

Long, long ago when the people told the stories of the land to their children, it happened that the wind was listening and the wind took the stories to the tree tops, and whispered the stories that they he had heard the people tell the children long, long ago.

The stories went into the trees, and fell down through the leaves, down past the branches until they trickled down into the beehives. The bees found the stories and they spun them into soft, golden beeswax. So now when you open your hand and see the soft golden wax, you can see the stories that the people told the children long, long ago.

BEESWAX

Beeswax modelling Age 3+

Beeswax is just what it says it is — a truly natural modelling material. Talk to the children about the work of the bees who make it in their busy colonies.

Beeswax is perfect for young children as it warms in the hands and becomes more pliable as you use it. It's not cold to the touch and doesn't dry out like clay. It comes in colours, smells delightful and is very economical because it can be re-used over and over and a little bit goes a long way. It comes in small slabs and is available through mail order, although you could ask your local toy or art shop to order it.

You will need

- modelling beeswax, cut into small pieces about 2.5 cm square (see Appendix)
- a small cake tin or baking tray
- a basket or plastic bag

What to do

- 1 If it is very cold weather, you may want to warm the beeswax gently by putting the little pieces in a small cake tin or baking tray and sitting them near a heat source.
- 2 Give each child one small piece to start. Suggest that they put it in their "little ovens" (their closed hands) to warm and soften it.
- 3 Begin to manipulate the beeswax with your fingers, kneading, pulling, pushing and rubbing it. Stretch it out so thin that you can see the light shine through.
- 4 At first it's good to just get to know the material, not making anything in particular. Just play with it. You may want to do just this much several times.



- 5 Make various objects by warming the beeswax, working it to make it flexible and then shaping it into various forms, from birds to baskets to people. You might set up a little scene — some pine-cones on a green cloth, a few rocks — and tell a story about the birds who live in this "forest." While you're telling — and after — the children can be making the birds, or whatever, to place in the forest. Send each bird home with its maker, or re-soften the wax and form it into little beeswax patties to be used another time. Store in a basket or plastic bag.



NOTE: You may also want to control the colour selection at first, using only one colour at a time, as this reduces colour competition among the children and keeps the individual pieces a pure colour. Older children may ask to use different colours to make hair, clothes, tree trunks, flowers, animals, and so on. Younger ones should do quite well with one colour at a time.

Salt-Dough Modelling

An alternative to beeswax modeling is also Salt-Dough Modelling.

Recipe for salt dough:

- ✚ 1 cup white flour
- ✚ 1/2 cup salt
- ✚ 1 cup water
- ✚ 1 tablespoon oil
- ✚ 2 teaspoons cream of tartar

Combine all ingredients in a pot over low heat and stir continually until a ball forms and it gets very difficult to stir anymore.

Knead and let it cool slightly.

Store in a covered container for up to 3 months.

Handwork - Craft



The love of colour, texture and form of the child's work nurtures their artistic sense. They learn to appreciate the beauty and artistry of handmade goods and the empowerment that comes from being able to make one's own belongings.

The experience of traditional handcrafts takes children to the times of old. When adults are engaged in skilful and purposeful work the children have a sense of dedication to imitate.

A sense of purpose is instilled by making useful and functional items to take into their play. Also fine motor skills increase when beautiful things are created in a childlike way.

Guide to Craft:

- ✚ Choose projects that are meaningful, interest your particular child and are simple
- ✚ Work together to collect resources and set up a working space. The space could be outdoors under a shady tree or in a corner of the living room with soft pillows to sit on.
- ✚ Learn together. Help each other through each step and any challenges encountered
- ✚ Enjoy the opportunity to chat or just be quietly industrious and inward looking
- ✚ Enjoy your new creation in play or for a specific function within your household.

Improvisation – anything goes! Not everyone will have cupboards full of craft supplies, therefore searching the house for all sorts of recycled items is a must. This is a time to be industrious and thinking outside the box!

Feel free to modify the instructions regarding any of the creative experiences we provide weekly to suit your children's ages and the supplies you have on hand. If your children are too young for the weekly craft, consider doing the craft yourself while your children play. They will gain just as much from the experience of watching and observing you- calm and focused on meaningful work and may be able to help here and there if they show a desire to.

Domestic and Practical Experiences

The task of the kindergarten teacher is to adjust the work taken from daily life so that it becomes suitable for children's play activities. The whole point... is to give young children the opportunity to imitate life in a simple and wholesome way.

Rudolf Steiner

Young children are naturally most active in the 'doing', the willing realm of soul life. They are drawn to adults' work activity, especially when the adult is truly engaged in meaningful working. The atmosphere created by adults engaging in such purposeful activity, creates a protective and

nurturing environment for the child. Five to six-year old's are particularly attracted to participating, while the younger ones may explore and imitate the activity of 'doing jobs' in their play.

Examples

- ✚ Cooking: bread making, making soup, preparation of the meal
- ✚ Laundry: washing, rinsing, wringing, hanging, folding, ironing, storing.
- ✚ Cleaning: sweeping, wiping, washing, scrubbing, dusting, washing windows.
- ✚ Gardening: digging, planting

Taking up household tasks gives children a sense of calm, purpose and meaningful work. Domestic activities, housework, taking care of the surroundings: all of these take us out of the personal and into the social realm. Caring for one's surroundings is a social gesture. We work together to help each other! The basis of our community life is the home, and social responsibility starts there.

From time to time when a child is out of sorts and is not able to play constructively, either by him/herself or with siblings. A magical cure for that child is helping out with some **real work** that needs doing. Folding laundry or cutting vegetables is an opportunity for a child to become grounded from this type of work, and the obstacle to relaxed and peaceful play then they may have been experiencing, dissolves. A few minutes later one hears, *"I want to go and play now"* because the child's fantasy or imagination has 'woken up' again from a small dose of meaningful work.

Cooking / baking



Children love baking! Baking is an archetypal activity involving four elements of water, earth (grains and salt), air (in the rising dough) and fire (baking). All the senses are involved in smelling, touching (kneading), tasting and seeing the bread. Through baking we learn patience, being gentle with our hands and sharing.

*This is the way we knead the dough,
Knead the dough,
Knead the dough,*

Before starting to knead the dough, you could bring forth the delight in creating – “*I wonder who found their way into the dough today?*”.

As the dough starts to be kneaded and warmed, perhaps a snail may come, a mouse, pumpkin or a leaf – any seasonal treasure may make it into the dough shape. The children will delight in showing you what they have created. Enjoy singing one of our bread making songs together.

*This is the way we knead the dough,
On a bright and sunny morning.*

- ◇ This is the way we **pat** the dough...
- ◇ This is the way we **fold** the dough...
- ◇ This is the way we **roll** the dough...

Simple cooking

When engaging children in cooking, we provide them with a sense of wellbeing, warmth, purpose and connection to community. Children will feel a sense of responsibility in helping to care for others through the provision of healthy, nourishing and sustaining food, and take pride in their accomplishments when sitting down to share what they have cooked.

When chopping vegetables for a soup or stir fry, cut the vegetables into smaller pieces for the children to then chop (ie cut carrots into quarters long ways).

Singing....

*Chop, chop, choppity chop.
Chop off the bottom and chop off the top.
With what's left we'll put it in the pot.
Choppity, choppity, choppity chop*

Guide to Cooking and Baking

- ✚ Choose simple recipes you that suit your family circumstances
- ✚ Gather ingredients and prepare the cooking area together.
- ✚ Enjoy measuring, pouring, chopping, mixing or kneading, shaping, rolling the dough.
- ✚ Take time to notice beautiful aromas and interesting textures
- ✚ Tidy up together. Your child can be in charge of washing the dishes or sweeping the flour up while you put ingredients away.

Our kindy bread recipe (makes 16- 18 rolls)

Ingredients:

7 cups BD light / spelt flour
 Pinch salt
 3 cups warm water
 2.5 teaspoons yeast
 1 tablespoon honey/sugar
 1 tablespoon olive oil

Method:

- ✚ In a bowl, add honey to 1 cup boiling water and dissolve, add 2 cups of warm water
- ✚ Leave to froth, then add the remaining water
- ✚ Mix cinnamon and salt with flour
- ✚ Place one cup of flour in the bowl
- ✚ Add liquid and oil and stir
- ✚ Add remaining flour (and barley flakes if using) and knead for 5 minutes
- ✚ Cover and leave in a warm place for 30 minutes
- ✚ Knead again - shape into rolls (with children) and bake at 180°C for 30 minutes

Gluten free recipes

<https://feedmephoebe.com/best-gluten-free-bread-recipe/>

<https://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/bread-recipes/gluten-free-bread/>

Some more baking songs

<u>Pat-a-cake</u>	<u>Five bread rolls in the baker's shop</u>
<i>Pat-a-cake, pat-a cake, baker's man, Bake me a bread roll as fast as you can. Pat it and prick it, and mark it with C, And put it in the oven for the children and me. (*repeat with initials of the child's first name)</i>	<i>Five bread rolls in the baker's shop Big and round with some flour on the top Along comes (insert child's name) with a penny one day Bought a bread roll and took it away</i>

Preparation to eat the food

- ✚ Perhaps a picnic in the garden.
- ✚ Set the table beautifully together - Collect flowers from the garden, bring out special cups or plates.
- ✚ Light a candle.
- ✚ Say a verse to begin and end the meal.

Engage in the final clean up together including taking out the compost and deciding how to manage leftovers thoughtfully

MEALS – verses and Songs

Song - Before Morning Tea

Earth who gives us our food,
Sun who makes it ripe and good,
Dear Earth, dear Sun,
Thank you both for all you've done.

Alternative Verse:

Kind hearts are the gardens,
Kind thoughts are the roots,
Kind words are the blossoms,
And kind deeds are the fruits.

Song - Before Lunch-time blessings:

For the golden corn and the apples on the trees,
For the golden butter and the honey from the bees,
For fruits and nuts and berries,
That grow beside the way,
We praise our loving Mother Earth
and thank her every day.

Song - After Lunch or Dinner

Brothers, sisters give thanks.
For our meal we thank the Sun,
And gentle wind that blows.
The leaves and the roots,
The blossoms and fruit,
And rain that helps them grow

[Link to Audio Files](#)



Useful links with excellent resources

<http://www.steinerearlychildhood.au> (Aust)

<http://www.iaswece.org> (International)

<http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org> (North America)

<http://www.steinerwaldorf.org> (UK)

<http://www.creativelivingwithchildren.com> (Susan Laing SA)

<http://www.susanperrow.com> – Stories (therapeutic)

At this time of physical isolation our thoughts turn to our connections of human community in the school movement and in our wider life. There are certainly positive sides to this, but also challenging sides....we can therefore strengthen our spiritual relationship with our students even more and thereby create a balance.

*Our children are watching us to learn how to respond to uncertainty.
Let's nourish our children towards joy and resilience rather than fear*

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- Healing Stories for Challenging Behaviour. Susan Perrow
- Holistic Parenting Resources. Meagan Rose Wilson.
- Imagination and the Young Child. Renate Long-Breipohl
- Imagination in Steiner Kindergartens: Practices and potential purposes. (Meeting the Child in Steiner Kindergartens). Sue Waite and Sarah Rees
- Practical Activities with the Young Child. Stephen Spitalny
- Seven Times the Sun: Guiding Your Child Through the Rhythms of the Day. Shea Darian
- WE CAN <http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org/>
- Waldorf-Inspired Learning. <https://waldorfinspiredlearning.com>