



DIAMOND HILLS  
PRE-SCHOOL



August 2014

Play, Learn, Laugh and Shine



Thanks to those ladies who braved the cold and wet weather and joined in the fun @ The Diamond Hills 'Girls Night Out'

It was a fantastic night with a great turn out with over 100 ladies attending.

The Fundraiser itself was a HUGE success with **\$4,840.50 raised!**

An amazing amount that will go towards helping the Pre-School upgrade learning tools & resources.

A big thanks to the Alvaro family from 'Foodworks' in Montmorency, who donated crackers and nibbles for the event & to the Mangos Family from 'Phil's Bakehouse Café' for donating the pies and sausage rolls for the evening.

Many local businesses were very generous in supporting the night and you will see them advertised throughout the coming newsletters. Please support these businesses where you can. Thanks again

Nicole, Dee & Anita (Fundraising Team @ Diamond Hills Pre-School)



# Wombat & Possum Monthly Report

July has been a busy month. The photographers came to take beautiful photos of your children engaging in play at kinder. Hopefully there will be many beautiful photos to treasure. The staff also spent a day at the DEKTA conference, a professional development day which allows educators to network with other professionals and listen to amazing and thought provoking speakers.

During this term, the children have been exploring many things associated with Winter. You may have heard your children speak about the snow at kinder. Well, our very own special type of 'snow' did arrive at Diamond Hills. The children really immersed themselves in the experience, making snow angels, having snow fights and sliding down the ramp. We spoke about the snow being cold and the type of clothing needed to keep warm. The children even made their own snowman. Our songs have included, 'I'm a little Snowman' and 'Splish, Splash, Splosh' where the children use their imagination to put on their gumboots, their raincoats and use an umbrella to go out in the rain and splash in puddles. Responding to the songs using gross and fine motor movements, balance and imagination, children develop a strong sense of **Wellbeing** by using purposeful movement to explore and respond to their world and they demonstrate spatial awareness by being able to orient themselves around their environment safely. A strong sense of wellbeing provides the children with confidence to seek out and accept new challenges. The children also spent some time playing with ice blocks, blue edicol dye and salt. Initially the children used the pipettes to drop water onto the block. After a while, the children began to pile the salt onto the iceblocks. This caused crevices to form in the ice blocks which allowed the blue water to seep through creating blue veins throughout the ice. Not all children enjoyed the cold iceblock though. **(EYLF: Learning** - Children are confident and involved learners when they express wonder and interest in their environments, are curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning and use play to investigate, imagine and explore ideas).

The home corner had changed to a hospital. The children were immediately drawn to the area, dressing up in nurse's and doctor's costumes. When Children immerse themselves in dramatic play, they conceptualise their understanding of their world by re-enacting a scene in their everyday. When children are engaged in a collective imaginary play episode, they negotiate roles and relationships in play, using receptive and expressive language to guide and change the direction of play. Dramatic play allow the children to learn how to take turns, show care, respect and empathy, When educators listen carefully to the dialogue, they are able to gain an understanding of the children's world and through sustained shared thinking, educators are able to holistically scaffold and co-construct the learning with children.

**(EYLF: Identity** - Children have a strong sense of Identity when they engage and contribute to shared play experiences, by exploring different identities and points of view in dramatic play.

**Communication** - Children are effective communicators when they use language and engage in play to imagine and create roles, scripts and ideas and convey and construct messages with purpose and confidence.

**Community** - Children are connected with and contribute to their world when they co-operate with others and negotiate roles and relationship in play episodes and group experiences. In doing so they broaden their understanding of the world in which they live.)

We have also taken advantage of the warm sunny days, spending most of the session outside. The children have benefitted from the extended outdoor play as it gave them an opportunity to expand their play and explore areas that they usually don't have a chance to do. During play, the children have also exercised their gross and fine muscles, using the 'A' frames and wooden planks to climb over and slide down. The children used expressive and receptive language in guiding each other over the obstacle course, giving each other encouragement and they showed patience with each other as each child waited for their turn. Trying to walk down on an angle requires great balancing skills. The children have to adjust their centre of gravity, as they walked down, side step by side step, using their arms to balance.

**(EYLF: Wellbeing** - Children have a strong sense of Wellbeing when they demonstrate spatial awareness and orient themselves, moving around and through their environments confidently and safely, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others.

**Learners** - Children are confident and involved learners when they persevere and experience the satisfaction of achievement and persist even when they find a task difficult.

**Communication** - Children are effective communicators when they engage in enjoyable interactions using verbal and non verbal language)

Holly and Tahnee have also engaged in sensory experiences, playing with mud. The girls were extremely animated as they 'Hi 5' each other in the air, splashing the 'ooey goeey' mud over each other. The giggles, squeals and laughter was infectious as the girls blew raspberries, announcing that the mud was 'eeewww' and 'hickle, tickle funny mud' squeezing it between their fingers and letting the oozy mud drip back into the trough.

**(EYLF: Learning-** experience the benefits and pleasures of shared learning exploration

**Wellbeing** - use their sensory capabilities and disposition with increasing integration, skill and purpose to explore and respond to their world.

**Communication** - Children engage in enjoyable interactions using verbal and non-verbal language)

James and Jacob were wheeling the pram around on the tanbark when they decided to try pushing each other in the pram. They found it difficult over the tanbark and through language, they tried to solve their dilemma. The boys hopped in and out of the pram several times, each time finding it easier to move when they weren't in it. Using force and strength didn't work. James tried to lever the pram by placing his foot against the pram. Though this strategy didn't work, it was a valuable learning opportunity. Eventually the boys decided that it was easier to move if they weren't in the pram.

Time for unstructured play is important as it allows the children time to explore, to try and perfect new skills, to persist and learn how to problem solve. It gives the children the opportunity to build confidence as they try strategies which were effective to solve problems in one situation and apply it to a new context.

**(EYLF Learning** - Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation and hypothesising)

In other news, Diamond Hills has been given permission to beautify the strip of dirt in the carpark in front of the kinder gates. We are in the process of purchasing native plants. We are hoping to include as many families in the planting process as possible. Keep your eyes and ears open for further details. Well, another busy month is over and a busier one is about to begin with Father's day fast approaching. Till next time, Nicole and Tania



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# Penguin Monthly Report

Dear families,

The Diamond Hills staff attended the annual DEKTA teachers professional development conference on the 30<sup>th</sup> July and we came back to work inspired to put into action the information we learnt. You may like to look up the keynote speaker: Dr. Louise Porter – some great suggestions on her website under 'questions' about behaviour guidance and developing your child's self-worth. Congratulations to Annmaree and her DEKTA (Diamond Valley and Eltham Kindergarten Teachers Association) committee on a fabulous and professional conference for 170 delegates.

Staff and committee have also been involved in the ongoing Quality Improvement Plan where we meet to discuss Diamond Hills Preschool in relation to the National Quality Standards. It is important to critically reflect on our principles and practices at our preschool and to ensure we are meeting the required standards to the best of our ability. Many thanks to Josta for her ongoing work with the policies, OH & S and Quality Improvement Plan.

Congratulations to Nicole, Dee, Anita and all the parents involved in the Girls night fundraiser. You all did an amazing job and raised an incredible amount of money for the preschool. Your efforts are really appreciated by all the staff, committee, families and children. We have bought some new equipment already, which the children are very excited about using. Well done!

The Diamond Hills Hospital has been the scene of some severely ill and injured patients of all



ages. Negotiating roles in this symbolic play area was a particular learning outcome for this experience, as well as some fantastic language, developing scripts for their play and experimenting with numerals and text in their play. Children develop symbolic play through their own life experiences, guidance and suggestions from educators and parents and sharing ideas with their friends.

The children have been developing their skills in the fine motor and eye-hand co-ordination with weaving and sewing experiences. Collaborative projects are a great way for our Penguin group to develop their sense of belonging, community and achievement. Weaving & sewing develops fine motor manipulation skills of eye-hand co-ordination, strength and process. Check out the belonging tree to see your children's



efforts in this area.

Rachael from Edendale Farm 's Educational program visited the Penguin group to speak with the children about their Worm Farm and Composting. She gave us a new compost bin which the children helped to set up behind the hen house. We also have a larger one behind the swing shed. The children gathered leaf litter from the garden and added fruit scraps from their scrap collection buckets. Rachael encouraged the children to solve the problem of which waste was suitable for their worm farm, chooks and compost, which ones for recycle bin and which ones for the rubbish. The children demonstrated a fantastic awareness of these concepts. When the children are taking responsibility for cleaning out the hen house, they now add the waste to



the compost bin and regularly use the special tool to stir the compost to encourage the process. The vegetable and flower gardens continue to periodically receive some worm tea with the children and their watering cans and the vegetables are flourishing. We have begun picking the lettuce, which the children have been eating enthusiastically. The children were recently involved in spreading a large load of mulch in preparation for our indigenous planting of the nature strip. They worked in teams to fill their tubs and buckets with mulch and carry it to different areas. They demonstrated resilience to a windy, dusty day, hard work and a wonderful celebration of their achievements. Bronwen heard a group of children in the shed this week and went in to investigate. They were carefully filling the chooks self – feeder with pellets ready for the weekend – with no reminders or guidance from their teachers! Rachael from Edendale was so impressed with the sustainability and environmental awareness that the children are involved in and suggested we enter the Sustainability Award. (fingers crossed ☺)

Speaking of our vegetable garden..... the penguins check the garden every day to observe new growth and if anything has been eating their plants. (so great to observe the children taking responsibility and continued interest in this learning area) Recently some large 'bites' have been missing from the cabbage and broccoli plants. Upon further investigation and observation, Hercules Morse was caught in the act!! Some very indignant children and a staff member were seen chasing a loping rooster away from the vegetable garden and a problem solving discussion began about what we could do about it?



A fence, a hole in the ground to 'trap' Hercules (!) and a scarecrow were the preferred suggestions by the children, so we sat down together and devised a plan. The children offered suggestions about the scariness of the face of the scarecrow and gave examples with their own facial expressions. From there we moved onto materials needed and how we would make it stand up. The children took it in turns to share their ideas while Kim wrote it down. It was decided that we needed a big scarecrow and a small one. So, check out the children's work

in the veggie garden and we will keep you posted if a fence is still required! *Planning together for a group outcome develops the children's sense of agency in their learning. It encourages the children to share their ideas, problem solve collaboratively and celebrate achievements – a community project that also develops self worth, sense of belonging to their preschool and promotes fantastic language.*



The Penguin group LOVE to play outside. Outdoor play is so important in a child's development. *Children learn through investigation, taking risks, challenging themselves, creating, persevering, problem solving and working collaboratively. Some people may think that more learning occurs in the indoor part of the program; but this is not true – outdoor play is an essential part of a child's development and offers many experiences and skill development.*

Despite our wintery weather in recent weeks, we have had some fantastic learning days. Rolling car tyres down the path to see whose tyre gets to the bottom first. It's a tricky skill, because the tyres are large and need help to balance when they are rolling. The children need to problem solve together about how they could play this game fairly and safely – building resilience, empathy for others and negotiation skills. The children are involved in setting up obstacle courses with Kim and Bronwen. They carry planks and ladders and build up towers of tyres to make interesting play spaces for spies and fairies and pirates. They move and carry natural materials like pieces of tree trunks and branches to make stepping stones and create see saws out of



branches and stumps. The children have helped to create a new play space behind the rainwater tank with stumps and tables and use the area to play symbolically with pine cones, rocks, water, bark, sand and more. They fill a tub at the tank and experiment with rocks and pine cones, to see which one floats and which one sinks and what effect dropping the stones from a height causes. The tub that was full of soil had become mud after the rain, so we added pie making equipment and the children were up to their elbows in wonderful sloppy mud making mud pies and cakes. A 'pop up' restaurant was being wheeled around in

a wheel barrow, with yummy sand cakes and muffins with chocolate (bark) decorations on top to be sold to whoever was hungry.



And Hercules Morse was surrounded by a group of children who were feeling his different feathers, his leathery feet and using his enormous wing span as an umbrella to guess how many centimetres his wing feathers were. Dodge the duck waiting patiently wagging her tail with delight while searching for snails in the garden, as the children carried her bath over, unwound the hose, took it in turns to fill it up and tried to entice her in. The children squealed when she shook her wings and water sprayed everywhere and listened

carefully as they learnt new information about how she waterproofs her feathers using her oil gland and her beak. Much to her delight, the children also spoil her with some yummy worms. *So much learning, so much fun during one morning outside – lots of planning, creating, problem solving, gross motor, sensory, investigation, sustainability practices, language, negotiation, processing information, hypothesising, challenging themselves, persevering when it doesn't work the first time, developing new friendships, time to day dream and just 'be' (which is very important) and lots, lots more!!!!* **Never underestimate the value of the outdoors as an integral part of early childhood development.**

We finished a fantastic morning with an exciting discovery at lunch time. One of the children noticed some men up on a massive crane at the mobile phone network tower behind the kinder. We left our lunches and all raced out the back to the fence to see what was happening. To our delight the man waved back to us and we yelled in our biggest voices –“what are you doing?” but unfortunately he couldn't hear us!! So of course, we had a wonderful discussion about



what the children thought he might be doing up there (*Hypothesising, problem solving, estimation, language etc*)

- **Group time favourites** recently have been our indigenous song 'Red Black and Yellow' and the '3 bears jive'. If they haven't already, ask your child to sing them to you☺
- **PE sessions** have included Yoga poses like the aeroplane, the tree , the flower and the ironing board. Game favourites have been poison ball , Toilet flush tiggly and the Cat and Mouse game.
- **Cooking experiences:** children made their own pizzas for the Diamond Hills restaurant. YUM!
- **Library** borrowing continues every session.
- **Show and Tell day** – Every Friday until end of term.
- **Learning journals:** thank you for returning these to kinder. We are still waiting on a few. Many thanks for your feedback – we read them all and use them for further planning. We would love to put so much more in them, but unfortunately time is an issue.

## Dates for your diary:

August 21<sup>st</sup>: Police car visiting the 4 year old programs

August 28<sup>th</sup>: Planting day – indigenous planting of preschool nature strip.

September 2<sup>nd</sup>- 6pm-7.30pm Fathers night for Penguins

September 18<sup>th</sup>: Edendale Farm Excursion 1.00 – 3.15pm

Garden roster: the Penguin group have begun their turn at gardening duty – please check roster on Penguin notice board for your weekend – the children, committee and staff really appreciate your help.

Thank you for your help and interest in our program. Please remember to put your name down on the roster. We really appreciate your presence – for you and your child and so that another adult is involved in scaffolding the learning of our Penguin children and helping us to maintain the cleanliness and safety of the preschool environment. If you are unable to commit to a normal kinder roster session or half session, perhaps you could consider putting your name down for coming in at the end of the session to help to tidy up floor, tables, learning areas, sweeping verandah, tidying locker area, putting work in art box etc. Many thanks – we truly appreciate your efforts.

Until next time,

**Kim & Bronwen.**



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are on Facebook!**



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- \* Important Information
- \* Updates & Reminders
- \* Fundraising Info
- \* Ask questions & communicate with other parents of the preschool

# SEPTEMBER



## Penguin Platypus

Brooklyn 26th

Alannah 1st  
Ella 8th

## Wombat Possum

Isabel 25th

Oliver 3rd

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## 2014 Staff List

### 2014 Teachers:

Annmaree Watkins (4yo Platypus)

Tania Mantovani (3yo Possum & Wombat Groups)

Kim Walker (4yo Penguin)

### Co Educators/Teaching Assistants

Bronwen Gear (4yo Penguin Group)

Nicole De Cata (3yo Possum & Wombat Groups)

Kyla Ridgeway (4yo Platypus Group)

Administration Officer: Kerrie Haynes

## 2014 Volunteer Committee List

President: Linda Wein (Possum)

Vice President: Josta Barton (Penguin)

Secretary: Shannon Fitzpatrick (Platypus)

Assistant Secretary: Rebecca Fisher (Penguin)

Treasurer: Emma Jones (Platypus)

Fees Officer: Kylee Chesser (Penguin)

Enrolment Officer (4): Robyn Bolger (Penguin)

(3): Rochelle Tousaint (Wombat)

Fundraising Co-Ordinator: Nicole Webster (Penguin)

Events Co-Ordinator: Robyn Nicholas-Scott (Penguin)

Maintenance Officer: Paul King (Penguin)

Staff Liason: Jenelle Graham (Platypus)

## Sub-Committee Members

Purchasing Officer: Carly Veale (Penguin)

Duty Roster: Rebecca Spagnol (Platypus)

Fundraising Sub Committee: Anita Staffieri (Penguin) and Deanna Constantin

Events Sub Committee: Sarah Selkrig & Lauren Pilakis

### Centre contact Information:

Hours- Monday- Friday 8am – 5pm

Phone: 9435 8694

Email: [diamond.hills.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:diamond.hills.kin@kindergarten.vic.gov.au)

Web: [www.diamondhillspreschool.com.au](http://www.diamondhillspreschool.com.au)

Postal: PO Box 56, Greensborough, Victoria 3088

### Newsletter Contact:

Rebecca Fisher- [rubyfish11@gmail.com](mailto:rubyfish11@gmail.com)  
(photo's, stories or things you would like to share with the kinder community.)

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# Platypus Monthly Report

As the year progresses the children are growing and changing almost before our eyes. Their skills are developing and emerging in all areas. As an educator it is wonderful to be a part of this journey. The highlights of the past few weeks that I would like to share are -

Many of the children love using their imagination and creativity and one of the avenues that we present for the children to do this through, is dramatic play. As I reported last month, to start the term, we had a restaurant set up. To add to the experience of the 'restaurant', we provided the children with the opportunity to make their own pizza from the start. (The dough for the base was provided) The children really enjoyed doing this, especially when it came to the eating of their pizza.

Recently a hospital scenario was set up and the children have really involved themselves, taking care of many an interesting ailment. The language and understanding by the children of what occurs in this setting has been wonderful to witness. The platypus group this year really love experimenting and discovering new ways of being creative through art, so as educators we are always endeavoring to come up with new ideas. Over the last couple of weeks we have been experimenting with 'magic drawing', this has been done in several different ways - using candles and paint, using a tape, paint and peel technique and also applying colour, then painting over the top before using a stick to scratch a drawing through the paint to reveal the colour underneath.

Also introduced to the children was the importance of working together to produce the same end result. This does occur throughout the program at different times but this was purposefully planned for, with the reasons being - For a team to work together effectively, it takes all members of the team to respect each other's abilities and opinions. Teamwork is a highly social activity and involves much interaction and

exchanging of ideas and actions. Being part of a team enables children to move from more intra-personal (individual) ways of thinking to interpersonal (communicating with others). It will help a child in all areas of their learning, and will help them to feel part of a 'community', to working as part of a team will strengthen your child's social and emotional skills, help develop their communication skills, and can improve confidence.

(VEYLF -

Community) The 1st experience they were involved in was creating their version of the garden. The children collectively went outside with baskets, collected things and then came inside and put together one piece of work. This week the children were involved in drawing themselves as part of the group, on just one piece of paper. (see the result for yourself) .

Because we see the importance of discovering more about the local indigenous history, we were endeavoring to do this when we discovered that Tania was also studying this through her course. Tania is very passionate about this topic and it was through her research that we were able to further our knowledge and introduce the children to this through our program. We are continuing to discover more and extend

our knowledge in this area. Another topic that has proven to be of great interest and passion has been increasing and extending our sustainability knowledge. This has involved the worm farm,

composting and establishing a native garden. Recognition must go to Bron as she was so keen to learn more, that she attended a seminar at Edendale farm in her own time.

Kyla and I are endeavoring to increase the Platypus children's knowledge and involvement in this area and so the children, who are already great at sorting their food into scraps and rubbish into 2 containers on the table, are now being encouraged to take this one step further by, sorting what is left in the containers after snack and lunch time into, food for the chooks, food for the worm farm/compost and rubbish.

To also extend this idea even a little further, we are wanting to encourage the idea of 'nude food'. What is "Nude" Food? Nude Food is food without excess packaging. This reduces the amount of 'stuff' that needs to go into bins to be sent to landfill. Helping our children understand the importance of less waste and rubbish is a great way to begin to teach our children about caring for the environment. This area is also seen as very important when you look at the EYLF.

This document states - the program needs to - - "Explore the diversity of culture, heritage, background and tradition and that diversity presents opportunities for choices and new understandings Demonstrate an increasing knowledge of and respect for natural and constructed Environments. Explore, infer, predict and hypothesise in order to develop an increased understanding of the interdependence between land, people, plants and animals Show growing appreciation and care for natural and constructed environments Explore relationships with other living and non-living things and observe, notice and respond to change Develop an awareness of the impact of human activity on environments and the interdependence of living things.

It is also very exciting to report that the kinder has been nominated for a 'Sustainability Award'. This award is being offered through the Shire of Nillumbik. Congratulations needs to go to both Kim, Bron and Carina (one of our Wombat mums) as they have worked very hard to develop the kinder even further in this area.

The children's interest in numeracy continues to grow and so as a part of this we have provided various tools for measuring. The children have really enjoyed discovering the use of these tools. These remain out for use by the children to access at anytime.

PMP/sport still continues to be a favourite part of our program. Each week we try and focus on one or two developing areas that are important for the children to acquire. At the moment we are developing working together both through our learning experiences and sport.

As you are aware all the staff attended a Personal Development day in the form of a Conference. This conference was organised by our support group known as DEKTA. The day was highlighted by having two well known experts in their field, as keynote speakers. It was also a great networking and support opportunity as our Profession can be very isolating. One

of the important things that I took away from this day was the importance of acknowledging children in what they do by not just using praise. Acknowledgement in place of Praise safeguards children's self esteem. One of our Keynote speakers - Dr Porter states "When we judge children, we raise their ideals, teach perfectionism and consequently risk lowering their self esteem"..... "Therefore, adults need to acknowledge and celebrate children's successes without praising these"..... "Acknowledgement is otherwise known as informative feedback". (If you are interested in knowing more, please let me know.)

We are also excited to let you know that beginning on Monday 18th August we will be hosting 2 overseas students from China, this is in liaison with RMIT. The students are studying Early Childhood. We are looking forward to making them feel very welcome. Lastly congratulations to our Social Event Team. Wow! Ladies Night - what a great night was organised. Thank you for all the hard work and effort that went into making this such a brilliant success!!!! Your hard work is much appreciated.

**Exciting upcoming events for your diary:**

Thursday 28th August - Rhythm Fun

Thursday 4th September - Father's Night/F.U.D.G.E Night - 6.00pm - 7.30pm.

(The children would like to take this opportunity to spoil dad just before Father's Day)

Thursday 11th September - establishing our Native Garden (a note regarding the details will be sent out soon)

Thursday 18th September (last day of term 3) - Excursion to Edendale Farm (a note regarding the details will be sent out soon)

Please Remember that we value your opinion and comments. If at anytime you would like to discuss anything in regards to the kinder, your child or the program please don't hesitate to have a chat either via email, in person or just drop us a note.

Thanks

Kyla & Annmaree.

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Learning and achieving new gross motor skills.



Using large muscles in the dirt (digging) patch.



Group project. Working together for the same

Numeracy in action. The children are measuring how tall Kyla is.

