



*Proudly promoting the value of play and  
supporting all Australians to play every day*

## Welcome to the Play Australia Early Years Series

# Early Years SERIES

**FREE  
ONLINE  
EVENT**



**Bron Joslyn**

*Taking a Positive Approach to  
Outdoor Play during a Pandemic*

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**Monday 21 February**

**4.00pm (AEDT)**

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**REGISTER [www.playaustralia.org.au](http://www.playaustralia.org.au)**



- Play Australia is the peak national advocacy organisation for PLAY.
- We support outdoor play by way of inspiration, advice, access to information and professional services.
- As the Australian branch of the International Play Association (IPA) we protect the human rights of all children to play, as recognised within Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Become a **Play Australia Member** now, to help us protect the rights of children in Australia to 'play today'.

We have a range of tailored **Membership Packages** to suit both individuals and organisations.

Subscribe for free to our **Play Today eNews**.





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# **Taking a Positive Approach to Outdoor Play During a Pandemic**

**Presented by  
Bronwyn Joslyn**



# When we say 'Outdoors' what do we mean?



Let's investigate

- 🌳 Why Outdoors?
- 🌳 Play Outdoors!
- 🌳 Joy Outdoors.... Woohoo.....

# Why?



Our brains work better, so we learn more, we feel joyful, so we engage more...

Oh then there is that pandemic issue!



# DET says



‘Where appropriate and weather permitting, opportunities for outdoor learning and working should be considered as alternatives to interactions indoors due to improved ventilation’ **(Department of Education and Training Victoria, 2021).**

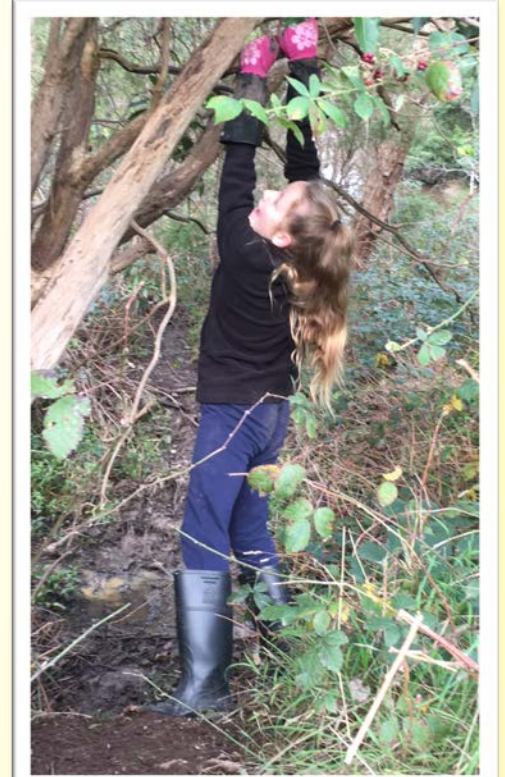
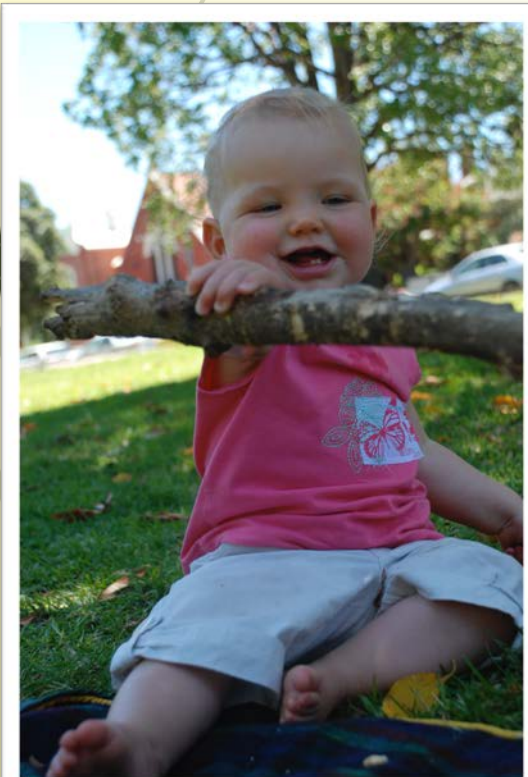
## Offering outdoor curriculum is easier than...

Outdoor air ventilation should be increased whenever possible, including in bathrooms, to dilute the concentration of any airborne virus and to filter air recirculating in a space. Wherever possible switch air handling units with central recirculation to 100% outdoor air and avoid use of fans in shared spaces. Where this is not possible, windows should be open as much as possible.



# The Image of the Child- Full Rights of Citizenship in Life and in Society

‘Children have the right to imagine.... Those who have the image of the child as fragile, incomplete, weak, made of glass gain something from this belief only for themselves. We don't need that as an image of children....we need to give them the recognition of their rights and of their strengths’ **(Loris Malaguzzi, 1994).**





# Nature for Mental Health Protection

When Doctors tell us to go outdoors and take a walk in nature, they mean it.

There is a lot of evidence based research so let's think about

- How do you feel when you're outdoors?
- What is the research?





# Nature as Good Medicine

In 2019, Dr Michael Hahn (Clinical Pediatrician and Dietitian and Public Health Advisor) spoke at the Environmental Education in Early Childhood 'EEEC' Conference. He shared his extensive research around childhood and nature connections or rather 'nature as good medicine'.





# Benefits to Children

- 🌳 Builds immunity through soil and microbe contact and less likely to spread viruses due to open spaces
- 🌳 Research being done into inflammation and disease reduction
- 🌳 Vestibular system- risk taking, sense of balance and spatial orientation, coordination
- 🌳 Inhalation of phytoncides, air ions and microbes (ie- probiotics) (air ions in research about reducing allergy)

***Dr Michael Hahn***





# Why it's Important for Children?

- 🌳 71% of children (5-11 year old) are on screen too much everyday.
- 🌳 Sensory Processing Disorder is increasing (when sensory signals are not able to be organised in the brain) **Raising Children's Network** has good information.
- 🌳 Children with access to green spaces are more likely to have a healthy BMI when 18yo.

***Active Healthy Kids Australia (global alliance with great information)***





# Benefits for Humans and for Teaching



- 🌳 It boosts your energy levels. So when you really don't feel like going for a walk, the best thing to do is go for a walk! Fresh air will reawaken your brain.
- 🌳 Reconnecting with nature reduces stress and calms your nerves. It can lower concentrations of cortisol, lower pulse rate and blood pressure.

***Mind Matters Training UK***

# Benefits for all Humans

- 🌳 It will lift your spirits and mood! In some cases can help with mild to moderate depression.
- 🌳 Trees naturally give off something called 'phytoncides' or 'wood' essential oils, which have a beneficial effect on our nervous systems.
- 🌳 Walking through green spaces can create the calmness needed for reflection. It's in this calm, quiet reflective state that creativity can flourish.

***Mind Matters Training UK***

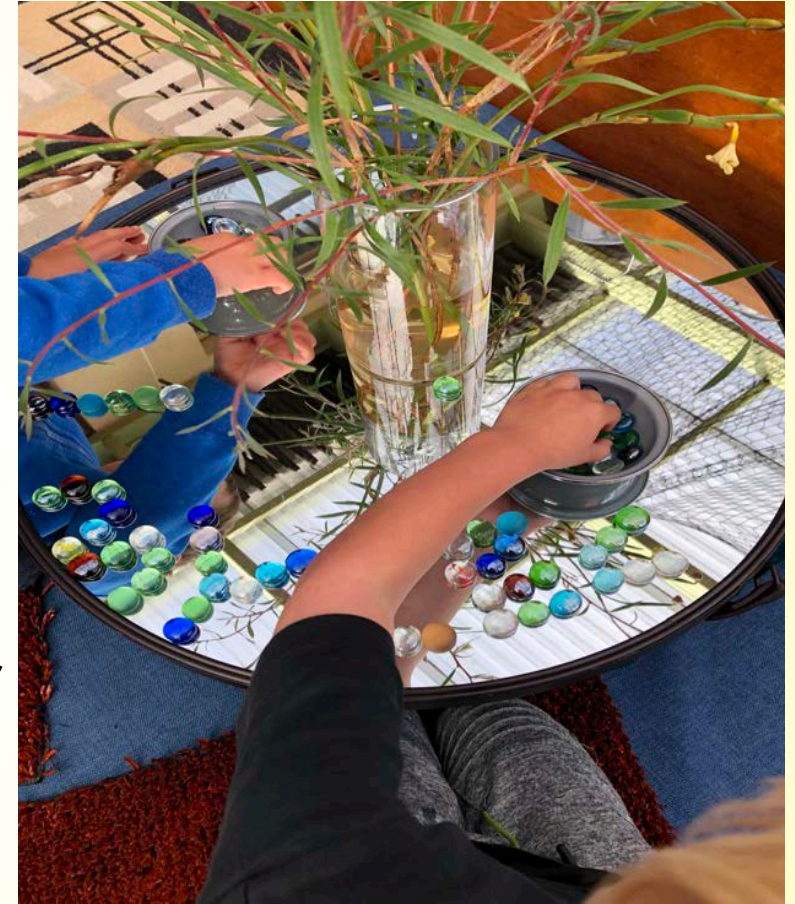




# Benefits to Children

- ✿ Less prepared than ever before especially executive functioning (working memory, flexible thinking, problem solving, self-control= life skill development and managing life).
- ✿ Fosters listening and enhances sense of touch
- ✿ Improves visual skills and sight development
- ✿ Feeds the limbic system- emotional centre of the brain
- ✿ So we need to climb, play in the dark, go barefoot, believe in children and step back

***Angela Hanscom (Balanced and Barefoot)***







New Research Release from  
Active Healthy Kids

# Rewild your kids: why playing outside should be a post- pandemic priority

[https://theconversation.com/rewild-your-kids-why-playing-  
outside-should-be-a-post-pandemic-priority-156077](https://theconversation.com/rewild-your-kids-why-playing-outside-should-be-a-post-pandemic-priority-156077)



# Australia Resources

- Play Australia [www.playaustralia.org.au](http://www.playaustralia.org.au)



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- Outdoors Victoria <https://www.outdoorsvictoria.org.au/outdoor-learning/>  
Outdoor learning Toolkit



- Environmental Education in Early Childhood [www.eeec.org.au](http://www.eeec.org.au)





so Get Out There....



Let's discuss how...C



# Be Prepared and have systems in place like you do indoors

For adults and children





**Think in it, not on it so, you are comfortable  
to explore it**





# How?

- Let families and children know why.
- Ensure your colleagues know the why and the how.
- Involve children in the why and the how.





# Good Bones Produce Benefits



Pause and Practice  
Mindfulness



Outdoors provides real  
examples- shadow



Spread Joy, Kindness and  
Generosity



# In Outdoor Learning Environments, Nature Provides Endless Opportunities



Easy adaptable spaces



Let children lead and test their own theories



Peaceful Places to Learn



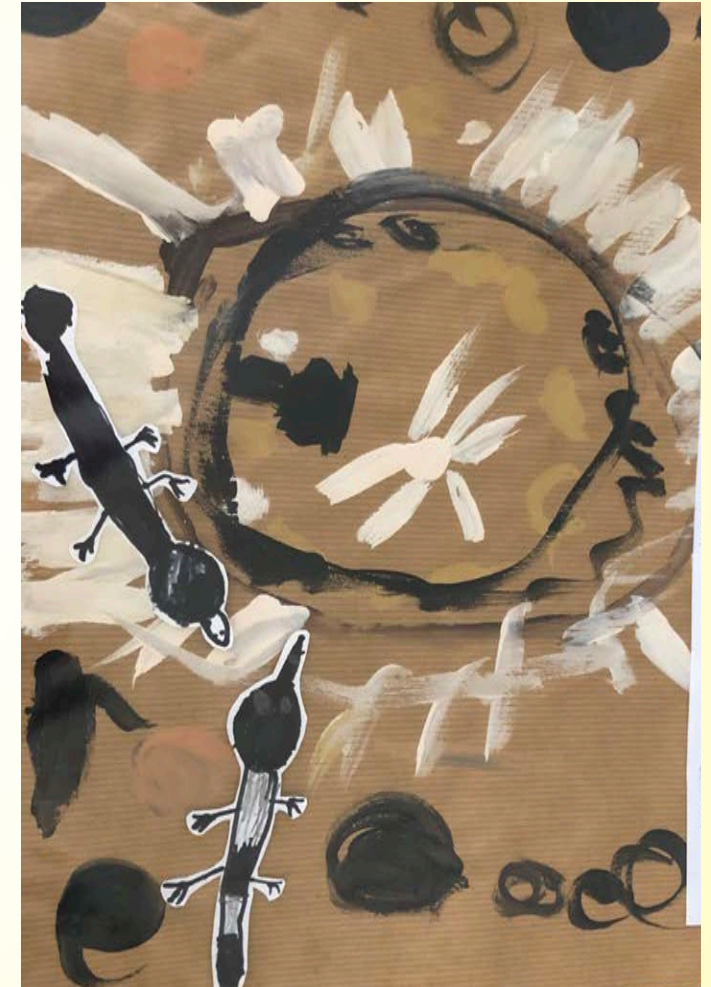
# Inquiry Based Learning/ Emergent Curriculum



Opportunities for Sustainability conversations



Take only what you need or nature gives



Protecting the local platypus-sparks indoor curriculum



# Holistic Learning and Development



STEAM



Learning through Noticing



Ecology, Eco-literacy





***As adults, we have the responsibility to provide FREEDOM, TIME and SPACE for our children to play freely every day, so they can make sense of the world in their own way, at their own pace.'***

Barb Champion, Executive Director - Play Australia