



Case Study

Enviro Week 2013 Saving Energy
Mountain View Children's Centre Myrtleford

What?

What did you do? We registered online with Cool Australia to participate in an Enviro week challenge. We decided to come up with our own challenge rather than follow one of the suggestions by Cool Australia. We put our heads together and decided to do a challenge on conserving energy (electricity). Each day we excluded an electricity item so that by day 5 we were not using any electricity at all in the Starlight and Rainbow Rooms..

Day 1:- No use of the CD player for music.
Day 2:- No Lights, candles were lit in the rooms for light and the children were taught what was used for lighting before the days of electricity. Marg also bought in a kerosene lantern to show the children.

Day 3:- No Heating, We asked parents to pack more warm clothing and send a blanket or sleeping bag for rest time.

Day 4: The washing machine was not used to wash the children's bed sheets, they hand washed them in tubs outside with cold water and hang them on clothes horses to dry.

Day 5: The children didn't eat any food cooked in the kitchen, instead lunch was cooked on a gas cook top and on a camp fire. The children also washed their own dishes and cutlery outside in tubs rather than sending them in to the kitchen to be washed in the dishwasher.

What did you need?

Blankets, Candles, Kerosene lamp, warm clothing, Camp oven, camp fire, gas camping cook top, Tubs for washing sheets, clothes airers for drying sheets.

Why?

Was it driven from children's interest?

No it was more the educators pooling their ideas together.

How did it come about? Paula received an email from Cool Australia about Enviro week and thought it would be a great way to get the Children and educators involved in an aspect of sustainability that fits in with the Seedlings project and what we had previously aimed at achieving with The Green Team - Saving electricity.

What were the drivers?

More who rather than what. After Paula spoke with the educators from the 2 rooms they were all very enthusiastic and came up with the ideas on what we could do for the week. Another driver was that we were trying to raise money for a good cause and also possibly win a prize from Cool Australia for our efforts. The major prize was Solar panels so of course we thought this would be fantastic for our service.



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How does it relate to other aspect of your program / philosophy / community / etc?

This relates to the community as we are providing an awareness in sustainable practices to the future generation of our community by teaching these beautiful children from a very young age. This encourages them to learn to respect and care for their natural environment.

This relates to a section in the Alpine Children's services philosophy:-We value our environment.

Through the educator's intentional teaching of the children they are scaffolding the children's learning about the environment and are able to extend on this in day to day practice.

This relates to all of the ACS job description criteria to follow sustainable practices and demonstrate a commitment to sustainability.

How?

What did you need to do?

Make families aware of the challenge so Paula made up a flyer which was emailed out to parents (See attached) this was information on the event and what the children needed to bring and why we were getting involved.

We also did a risk assessment on having candles and a camp fire at the service.

What steps did you take / what was the process?

After sending out the parent flyer, we registered our challenge with Cool Australia.

We went and purchased some candles.

Marg brought in a lantern from home and Tamara supplied a camp oven and brought in some fire wood for the campfire.

The educators looked at what learning activities they could do with the children. We asked one of our parents that is an electrician to come and do an activity with the children on how energy is created but unfortunately he ended up having to go away for work and couldn't do it.

The educators planned what meal was going to be cooked on the campfire on the Friday and asked the cook to order all the food that was required.

The educators ensured that there were extra blankets in the room for sleep/rest time as we didn't use the heaters and it was during winter.

Who helped?

Educators from the two rooms involved.

How did you record / document the process?

Photos, floor book, children's portfolio observations. Paula also



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emailed photos to Cool Australia which were going to be put on their website. Myrtleford Times newspaper came and did an article for the local paper.



This created positive and negative feedback between the educators. Two parents were unhappy that we were not using heating during a cold week, we then had to address and resolve this concern with the families involved. One parent was concerned about the use of candles so again we addressed this concern and this promoted us into doing a risk assessment.

What were the outputs?

A risk assessment was completed for the camp fire and use of candles. We ensured that we had sufficient staff to help with supervision on the final day when cooking was being done on the camp fire.

Did you hear of any influence beyond the service (home links, community links, etc)?

What Happened?

What was the outcome?

Promoted discussion with the families as questions were asked about what we were doing. The children asked a lot of questions therefore promoting a great learning environment. It promoted conversations between educators about what they could do in the future. The children learnt a lot of different ways in which we can help our environment by saving electricity.



What did you learn? Most Significant Change?

What worked well?

Giving the children the responsibility of washing their own dishes and sheets and also clothing themselves in layers to stay warm created interest and engagement and opened up a lot of interesting discussions.

What would you do differently next time?

We would ask for parent input prior to the event for suggestions, concerns etc



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and a parent feedback form post event to evaluate how successful the event was ie the children talking about the event at home to create family awareness.

Did the experience influence / change your practice?

- This experience influenced our expectations on the children of risk taking.

What surprised you?

- The enthusiasm shown by the children when doing the tasks such as washing their own dishes and sheets and the independence they showed.
- The negative reactions from a minority of parents.

Links to VEYELF NQS

What learning outcomes from the VEYLDF does this project / activity relate to / address?

Outcome 2.4 Community: Children are becoming socially responsible and are showing respect for the environment.

- Children are developing an awareness of the impact of human activity on our environment.
- Children are broadening their understanding of the world in which they live.

Ayla "Where do we hang the sheets?" Indy "On the clothes line, the wind dries them" Ayla "The sun dries them"

What NQS does this project / activity address?

Quality standard 3. Physical environment. The service takes an active role in caring for its environment

and contributes to a sustainable future 3.3.1 and 3.3.2

