

Case Study

Hungry Caterpillar garden
Mountain View Children's Centre

What?

We created an edible garden out of donated recycled tyres. We placed the painted tyres in a formation to resemble the Hungry caterpillar. We needed to obtain the materials, tyres, dirt compost, paint, antenna, face and plants.

We made our garden in the 0-3 yard. Our aim is to recreate the story through our garden. Each tyre will represent a day in the story.

We are hoping to make an edible garden that children can relate to the popular story. As well as a place to learn about gardening, sustainability, recycling, life cycles and healthy eating.



Why?

Children in the butterfly room (2-3) displayed a lot of interest in the Book the Hungry caterpillar. They continued this interest through activities such as butterfly painting, handprint caterpillars and telling the story using props. One educator found a picture of a similar garden on the internet and as a group Educators decided it was a great project for us to do.

Educators felt that we needed some areas to provide gardening for the younger children and felt that this was an affordable , valuable option that linked to the program been offered .

During room meetings we made plans to how we would achieve the garden. We then sent out emails, set up a display talked to families and other educators to involve our community.

We shared our progress through our Daily Journal and individual portfolios. In our foyer display we added photos of our progress and shared the great learning opportunities that were created.

We added a potting area so children can continue their learning through role-play and have identified other gardening projects for the future.

How?

We obtained some tyres from a parent that works at the local tyre shop. One Sunday educators met. Together they planned the garden, painted the tyres and inserted the antenna.

The gardener opened the compost bin and added the compost to the bottom of the tyres. Over the course of a few weeks children filled the tyres with soil. We then needed plants so asked educators, staff, local businesses and families for donations of seeds, cuttings and plants.

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Once we had some plants donated we started the planting. We planted one trye each day so children attending on different days could have a turn .We also invoveld children from the 3-5 rooms as families had donated plants.

We set up a display in the front foyer with videos, photos, our community book and information about the benefits of gardening. We also took observations for the daily journal and individual portfolios.

Gardening has many benefits for children and adults. Our aim for this project was to involve our community and to create a garden that can be used to grow our own produce.



What Happened?

Educators have received positive comments and feedback .Some comments have been:

“Looks great from the road”

“What a great idea”

“So bright”

“I like how children are learning about growing vegetable and healthy eating”

“Every day I walk past and check how the plants are growing, they are thriving.”

At our bi annual conference a display was set up with “How To” sheets available. Educators and parents took home information and all handouts were taken Community has been very supportive with the donations received.

What did you learn? Most Significant Change?

All educators in the 0-3 area worked together to create the project.

We would change the material used for the antenna as they broke in the first week. In future I would make a timeframe plan as it took a lot of time from the beginning to end.

Through this project educator have learnt that sustainability can be fun and part of their everyday program. At first educators were keen to complete what they could themselves. After one educator involved the children in the project other educators could see what wonderful learning opportunities the garden created for all.

Now educators are thinking of adding some vertical gardens using recycled materials and are enthusiastic to network with our community to do future projects.



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Links to VEYELF NQS

Learning outcome: Community.

The Hungry caterpillar garden facilitated children's learning about the independence between plants, people, animals and the land.

Children are gaining respect for the environment and are learning to care for it. Through this project they are learning about the impact human activities has on the environment.

Quality area 3.3 MVCC is taking an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.

3.3.1. Sustainable practices are embedded into MVCC.

3.3.2 Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and to show respect for the environment.

*It looks nice – Rose.
(Child)*

