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Newsletter

JULY / AUGUST 2010

Learning on display

provoked and inspired by the multitude of Matariki events organised by the Waitakere Central Library, Bright Sparks children and their teachers investigated ways of artistically expressing their understanding of biculturalism in Aotearoa-New Zealand. The initial creative engagement as provided by Rutherford College's powerful Kapa Haka performance at the Waitakere Central Library in June.

On their return to the centre, the children began to visually represent their thoughts of what they had just witnessed.

The investigative journey commenced and over a four week period many varied experiences are made available – however the focus remained unchanged.

From the simple viewing of photographs, to the children's spontaneous incorporation of Maori costumes in their dramatic play, from planting their own garden, to de-constructing the patterns of the koru and modeling clay artifacts, an individualised focus shifted towards building a holistic base of knowledge.



Bright Sparks children's first exhibition: Te Ao Maori: Reflection Through the Eyes of our Children.

As it was the events at the Waitakere Central Library that provoked the artistic exploration, the centre eagerly accepted their invitation to publicly share their findings with the larger community.

Bright Sparks children, parents and teachers would like to thank the Waitakere Central Library for their commitment to furthering the learning and for showcasing their uniqueness.

"Te Ao Maori: Reflection Through the Eyes of our Children" is still available for viewing at the



Waitakere Central Library – Kiri Area: 3 Ratanui Street, Henderson.

For more details about Bright Sparks Childcare Henderson and the services it offers, you can visit them at 40 Paramount Drive, Henderson or view their website at www.brightsparks.co.nz

On Friday the 23rd of July the Western Leader featured our editorial:

Learning on Display. The response from the larger West Auckland community has been absolutely amazing.

Now we are going nationally by having the article "Te Ao Maori: reflection through the eyes of our children" (pages 4-5) published in Education Gazette.

Transition to School Workshop

The Preschool Teaching Team has the pleasure of inviting ALL parents to a Transition to School Interactive Workshop, on Thursday the 26th of August 2010.

It is going to be a highly informative evening, with Mrs. Shelley Quinlivan, Deputy Principal at Epsom Primary, answering all your questions with regards to the expectations Public Primary Schools have for new entrants.

If interested in attending, please RSVP by Monday, the 23rd of August, by e-mailing us at

bsccstellar@gmail.com

Thank you.

Dear Parents,

As you already know Chai is away on holiday until the 13th of September. If you have any questions and/or need my help in any way please feel free to contact me at chai@bscc.co.nz or call me at 09 8362500, or just come into the office.

You, our families, are a tremendous asset to Bright Sparks and we have to thank you for going above and beyond – and helping us, for always being patient, supportive and understanding. So, THANK YOU!!!

Kind regards,
Cami Margasoiu
Assistant Centre Manager

5 year olds still entitled to 20 ECE

Did you know that your 5 year old is still entitled to 20 ECE? If you would like to have your child attend Bright Sparks after s/he turns 5, we are more than happy to accommodate you and your child, provided the learning environment is still beneficial to your child's holistic development. If you are interested send us an e-mail at bsccstellar@gmail.com or at camistellar@gmail.com

IMPORTANT REMINDER

A review of our records indicate a number of outstanding accounts.

This notice is a reminder that all fees are due to be paid in advance at the beginning of each week. This means that your account must always have a nil or credit balance.

Please ensure that you submit your payments as per the agreed Fee Payment Schedule.

Chickenpox Alert

There are five children attending Preschool with chickenpox.

Chickenpox causes a skin rash of itchy, blister-like lesions all over the body. Often there is a fever before the rash. The illness lasts 5 to 10 days. Chickenpox is usually not serious, however, it may cause more severe illness in some children leading to hospitalization. Chickenpox is very contagious. It spreads easily from person to person through the air by coughing and sneezing or by direct contact with the fluid from a chickenpox lesion. It usually takes 14 to 16 days to develop chickenpox symptoms after being exposed to someone with chickenpox, but symptoms may appear 10 to 21 days after exposure.

The **chickenpox vaccine** is not included in the New Zealand immunisation schedule, however it is available for those aged over 9 months. The vaccine costs approximately \$60-\$90 per dose. Most people who have this vaccine will not get chickenpox, but if someone who has had the vaccine does get chickenpox, it is usually very mild. Also, given within 3-5 days of exposure, the vaccine may prevent or will modify the severity of chickenpox.

For more details check with your GP, or call IMAC on 0800 IMMUNE (466 863)

Reminders!!!

- **If your child develops a contagious disease he/she must not attend Bright Sparks until cleared by a doctor. Clearance medical certificates are mandatory upon the child's return to the centre.**
- **All important changes/ information (e.g. holidays, different attendance days, moving house, changing jobs, allergies, pick up/ drop off times, emergency contacts etc) must be notified in writing, simply by flicking an e-mail at chai@bscc.co.nz or by using a Change of Details form. E-mail is used as our regular form of communication. Please provide us with your preferred email address(es), and keep us updated if they change.**
- **Please check that your child has a complete change of clothes suitable for the colder weather. Name everything you possibly can hats, shoes, lunch box bottoms and lids. All lost property that is not claimed will be donated to the child cancer clothing bin.**
- **Several of our children have life threatening allergies to nuts, please ensure that we keep the centre a safe place for all.**
- **Due to the growing number of children attending our learning centre we are unable to offer any more make up days. If you are interested in booking casual EXTRA DAYS, we will attempt to support you provided there are spaces available. The requests must always be done in writing. In general, Mondays and Fridays tend to have lower attendance numbers.**
- **Dropping off your children later than 9.30 am tends to be disruptive for the other children as group experiences, morning routines are already in process. We know that sometimes things happen, however we would really appreciate it if you could let us know whenever you are going to be late. Thank you.**
- **Late pick up fee: please be reminded that we are not licensed to have children in the centre after 6.00pm. If you are going to be late do let us know as soon as you can and make alternative pick-up arrangements. However if you are unable to arrive at the centre before 6.00pm a surcharge will apply(\$1/min). The fee will be given directly to the two supervising teachers.**

Te Ao Maori: reflection through the eyes of our children

PAGE 4

Written by Cami Margasoiu and Susan Naidu

Provoked and inspired by the multitude of Matariki events organized by the Waitakere Central Library, Bright Sparks children and their teachers investigated ways of artistically expressing their understanding of biculturalism in Aotearoa.



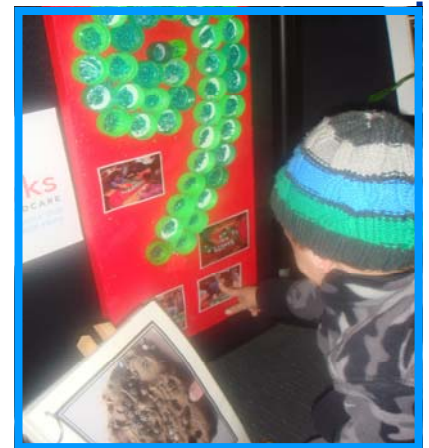
Our initial creative engagement was provided by the Rutherford College's powerful Kapa Haka performance at the Waitakere Central Library on the 14th of June 2010. Upon their return to the centre the children began to visually represent their thoughts and theories of what they had just witnessed. (Te Whariki, 1996)

Impressed by our commitment to honouring Matariki in meaningful ways, Rachelle, Maori specialist at the Waitakere Central Library, suggested an exhibition with the children's drawings.

The proposal was accepted with great joy. We agreed that de-constructing our understanding of "shared knowledge" would be recommended at this stage in our learning engagement. Discussions amongst us began, questions started to arise (Te Whariki, 1996), our investigative journey commenced...

Rankin (1996) said that "cognitive learning and social learning happen simultaneously; one does not happen without the other. Therefore they see learning taking place most effectively in social situations, both for themselves as teachers and for the children."

For a period of four weeks the provocations made available varied, however the focus remained unchanged. From simple visualizations of photographs, to the children's spontaneous incorporation of Maori costumes in their dramatic engagements, from planting their own garden, to de-constructing the patterns of the koru and modeling



clay artifacts, the initially individualized focus shifted towards building a collective body of knowledge.

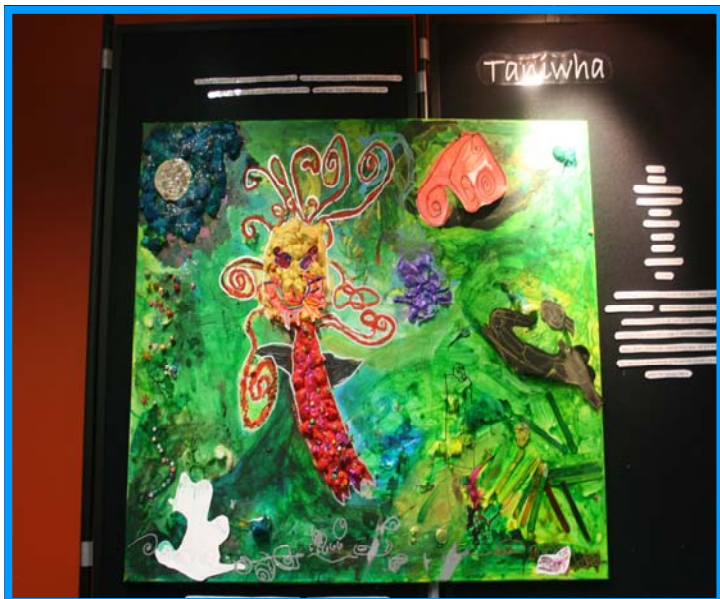
Theories started to surface:

"His tongue... because they just poke their tongues out. I think they want to be scary" Seth said looking at a photo from the Kapa Haka performance.

"Two koru partners that love each other." Leila mentioned as she was finalizing her drawing.

"We need to look after the plants or they will die." Boston commented as he was planting the garden.





“The Taniwha live in the moana...they have koru on the face...with big eyes.” Stanlee said after listening to the legend about the Taniwha.

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have koru on the face...with big eyes.” Stanlee said after listening to the legend about the Taniwha.

“We have multiple interacting subjects who construct reality starting from different points of view, because observing means not so much perceiving reality as constructing reality.” (Rinaldi, 1994)

Clay, photos, plants, wire, recycled materials, shared discussions, consistent support, varied textures encouraged our children to make their theories real...stars, koru, gardens, vegetables, marae, Maori girls, Maori warriors, Maori statues, Taniwha began to take shape.

Publicly displaying our findings within the premises of the Waitakere Central Library was received with great enthusiasm by our Bright Sparks families, who joined us on the evening of the 12th of July 2010 for the official opening of the exhibition. To further emphasise their commitment to our learning, Catherine Grey, children’s librarian and Rachelle Forbes, Maori Specialist Waitakere Library, honoured us with their presence.

Rachelle commented: “It was very humbling for me to see that the children were so inspired by the Kapa Haka performance. [...] and to have you [...] explore the themes of Matariki and the Maori world view further and more in-depth was awesome for me to see. So thanks to you guys for 'watering' the seed that was planted here at the library. The fruits that the children created are heart-warming.”

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The four-week-display span allowed our children and their families to re-visit and enjoy the amazing outcomes of a collaborative investigative process.

“Dear Bright Sparks [...] We just wanted to say how proud we were of this amazing work! Thank you for facilitating such wonderful learning experiences for our children. Ronelle & Bevan” was one of the many comments made by our supportive families.

“Te Ao Maori: reflection through the eyes of our children” is now available for viewing at Bright Sparks Childcare– Henderson.

Parents Networking Board

Have you ever looked at a fellow parent and wondered how you know them?

Our upcoming Parents Networking Board will be an ongoing resource. Our parents represent a diverse set of talents and skills and we would like to connect you when possible or when needed.

Would you be interested in adding your business card or profession to our Parents Networking Board?

Would you be interested in advertising your business in our bi-monthly Newsletter?

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