

# CREATING A CULTURE OF SUSTAINABILITY AT EXPLORERS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE: PRELIMINARY ACTIONS

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# Lack of research



# Questions of the research

What were the initial triggers for environmental education?



How the program has changed over time?



How environmental issues topics are raised and acted upon?



How sustainability thinking and practices have been assimilated into the cultural practices of the centre?





# Research techniques



- Participant observation;
- Conversations with key participants;
- Focus group discussions;
- Collection of documents

# The Research Setting

- Culturally diverse, well educated community;
- Middle-class neighbourhood;
- Children aged 2,5 years to 5 years;
- Around 33 children,
- Reggio Emilia Approach.





# Education for Sustainability Initiative

- Gardening;
- Mosaicing;
- Making recycled paper;
- Papier-mâché

## Projects:

- Recycling Learning Project;
- Bush Walk



# The Recycling Learning Project

Teacher Julie: "Where is the rubbish?"

Child 1: "No, not the rubbish! We recycle!"

Teacher Julie: "Where do you recycle them?"

Children: "Wait we have these (they grabbed a pile of large containers, taped them and frantically got to work)"

Child 1: "Here Julie, here!" (she pointed to a tub attached on the edge of the table)

Child 2: "No, this is the one for paper, see? (she had scissors and paper and was cutting tiny bits into a designated tub)"

Then, tubs were taped around the entire table!

Children: "Ok, we are ready to recycle now!"

# Mosaic Work Mini-Project





# Parent contribution





# The Bush Walk Project

aims to deepen the learning in, about and for the environment through hands-on experiences.





# Bush Walk Methods





Bush

Walk



Discussion from the hunt.....  
 Something that makes a noise...  
 "The leaves make a scrunch noise"- James  
 Something faster than a snail....  
 "A bird"-Jordan  
 "A worm"-Mika  
 "A duck"-Juliette  
 Something that doesn't belong in nature...  
 "It might kill the ducks"-Max  
 "plastic bags... because it's dirty and it belongs in the rubbish bin and nobody cares about it"-James  
 "The rubbish doesn't belong!"-Elise

"It was really cool but my feet got sore I even got blisters. We had Chris so that was cool!" Maxwell

"We saw some berries... we went to the river with a playground in it and we saw (spoke)!" Ava



"There was a duck behind the bush and he had some eggs under him" said Phoenix... "It's not a him it's a her" said Ava.

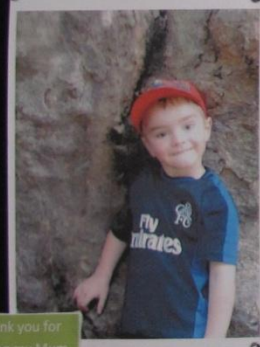
"I loved the ducks and the playground" Neve



"It was better than morning tea... it was a picnic!" Byron

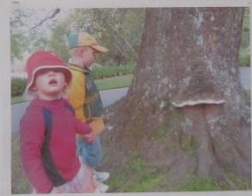
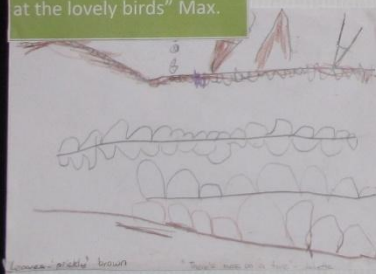


"What did you see?" "I did see trees and I did see flowers" Juliette.



"Thank you for letting my Mum come" Jordan.

"I really love the bush walk, looking and listening at the lovely birds" Max.





# Learning Outcomes



# Discussion





# Conclusion

This study shows that with support from centre's management, in-service training, research and resources development there would be no excuse for any early childhood educator not to embrace education for sustainability.

Thank you!

