PROGRAM

5/10/26

TAKING THE LEAD - Choice, Challenge & Discovery

💡 = Educator Idea 🗣️ = Child Voice / Emerging Interest

Aim: This fortnight invites children to take the lead in their own play, learning and experiences.



Building directly from our Vacation Care observations, educators noticed that children were most engaged when they were given opportunities to make decisions, adapt experiences, collaborate with others and take their ideas in unexpected directions. Children independently organised sporting games, created imaginary worlds, investigated insects and habitats, experimented with materials and transformed planned activities through their own ideas.

Rather than focusing on a particular topic, this program focuses on agency.

Children will be encouraged to choose, lead, question, experiment, problem-solve and decide where an experience goes next. Educators will provide thoughtful provocations, materials and support while creating space for children to take ownership.



The question guiding our fortnight: "What happens when YOU take the lead?"

Group Chat (Theme-Related Discussions): Group conversations encourage children to explore emotions, safety, relationships, help-seeking and belonging.

Taking the Lead: What does it mean to be in charge of your own play?
Children & Adults: Do adults always need to decide what children do?
What Makes a Leader?: What makes someone a good leader? Can you be a leader without being the loudest person?
Different Ideas: What should we do when two people have different ideas?
Changing Your Mind: Is it okay to change your mind? Can changing an idea sometimes make it better?
When Should Educators Help?: When should an educator help you and when should they give you space to work something out yourself?
OSHC for a Day 🗣️: If children were completely in charge of OSHC for one day, what would you change, keep, create or introduce?

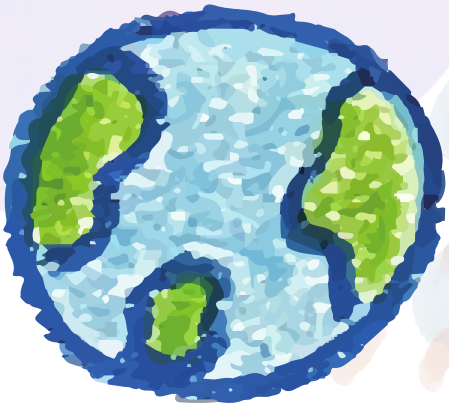


Creative arts: Creative experiences encourage children to express emotions, recognise personal strengths and explore messages of safety, kindness, connection and belonging.

The Open Studio 🗣️: A collection of art materials with no example to copy. What can you create when the outcome is completely up to you?
One Material, Many Ideas: Everyone starts with the same material — cardboard, clay, foil, paper or recycled materials — but what it becomes is completely individual.
Continue My Creation: One child begins an artwork before another adds to it. Continue passing it around and see where everyone's ideas take it.
Create It BIG: Work collaboratively on a large-scale artwork using butcher's paper, cardboard or outdoor surfaces.
Clay Creators: Free Design 🗣️: Following children's sustained engagement with clay during Vacation Care, revisit it without a prescribed outcome. Roll, mould, cut, combine and create whatever you imagine. Children repeatedly returned to clay and used it socially, sharing techniques and building on one another's ideas.



Indoor Experiences: Indoor experiences provide opportunities to practise emotional awareness, respectful relationships, personal safety and help-seeking.



You Choose the Challenge: Choose from different challenges, then decide how to make yours easier, harder or completely different.
Build a World 🗣️: Use blocks, figures, loose parts, fabric and natural materials to create a city, zoo, farm, campsite, planet or something nobody has thought of yet.
Our OSHC, Our Ideas 💡: What would make OSHC even better? Draw, write or build your ideas and work with educators to bring achievable suggestions to life.
Child-Led Club Board: Want to start a drawing club, LEGO club, soccer club, Pokémon club or something completely different? Create your own club and invite others to join.

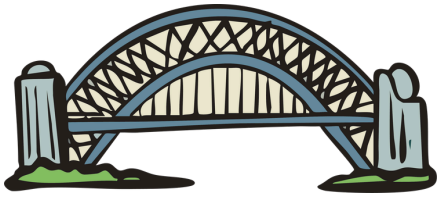
Outdoor Experiences: Outdoor play supports wellbeing through movement, connection, cooperation and positive shared experiences.



Create Your Own Sports League 🗣️: Choose the sport, create teams, establish the rules and decide how to make the game enjoyable and inclusive for different ages and abilities.
Design the Challenge: Use cones, hoops, ropes, balls and other equipment to design your own obstacle course or physical challenge. Test it, change it and challenge somebody else.
Bring Back a Childhood Game: Educators introduce games they remember playing as children, then children modify the rules and create their own 2026 version.
Children vs Educators 🗣️: Children choose the challenge — soccer, basketball, races, chasing games or something completely invented — before taking on the educators.

STEAM: Hands-on investigations encourage children to explore connections between their bodies, emotions, environments and wellbeing.

Build It. Test It. Improve It 🗣️: Choose a building challenge — a bridge, tower, vehicle, marble run or your own idea. Build it, test it, identify what could work better and try again.
The Strongest Structure 💡: Design a structure that can hold increasing amounts of weight. Test its limits, investigate what makes it strong and redesign it if it collapses.
Design for Space 🚀: To celebrate World Space Week, design something humans might need to live or explore beyond Earth — a rover, habitat, spacesuit, way to grow food or something nobody has invented yet.



Nature and Living Things: Children will explore how caring for living things and connecting with nature can support wellbeing, responsibility and belonging.



Backyard Biologists 🗣️: Search our OSHC environment for insects and other living things. Observe where they are found, investigate what they need to survive and consider how we can care for them.
Map Our Living World: Create a map of the service grounds and mark where you discover insects, birds, plants, nests, flowers and other signs of life.
Build a Bug Hotel 🗣️: Investigate what local insects need before working together to design and create a safe insect habitat using natural and recycled materials.
Nature Inventors 💡: Collect fallen natural materials and investigate their shapes, textures and features. What could nature inspire you to design or create?

Language & Literacy: Children will use reading, writing, storytelling and discussion to explore emotions, safety, relationships and help-seeking.



Teach Us Something 🗣️: Become the expert and teach your friends something you know how to do, sharing your knowledge, skills or interests with the group.
My Big Idea: If you could change, create or invent one thing, what would it be? Draw, write or explain your idea and why you think it should exist.
Pass the Story: One child begins a story before passing it to the next person to continue. Keep adding ideas until the group discovers where the story ends.
Interview an Expert 💡: Interview another child about something they're really interested in. What could they teach you that you didn't already know?

Creating Conversations (Cultural & Indigenous Perspectives): Children explore how identity, belonging, relationships and collective wellbeing are strengthened through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities.



Games We Grow Up With 💡: Invite children, educators and families to share a game they grew up playing or one that is important within their family or culture, then teach it to others.
Many Languages, Many Voices: Explore the different languages spoken within our OSHC community and invite children to share greetings, words or expressions they know.
Our Families Know How: What is something someone in your family has taught you? Share a skill, game, recipe, tradition, story or piece of knowledge that has been passed on to you.
Learning Through Country: Explore how knowledge can come from observing Country — land, weather, plants, animals and seasonal changes. Head outside and ask: What is Country showing us at this time of year?

Wonder Wall

I Wonder... What Could We Do Next? 🗣️: Add questions, ideas, problems you'd like to solve, things you'd like to investigate or experiences you'd like to bring to OSHC. Educators will use children's ideas to help decide where our learning goes next.

Where Did This Program Come From?:

This program has been developed directly from observations and reflections collected throughout our September Vacation Care program. Educators identified recurring interests in child-led sport, nature and living things, construction, sensory exploration, imaginative play, experimentation and creative expression.
What We Noticed: Children showed particularly strong engagement when they were given opportunities to make decisions, adapt experiences, collaborate with others and lead the direction of their own play.

Where To Next?: These observations have informed our first Term 4 focus on choice, challenge and agency. Educators will continue observing children's ideas, conversations and interests throughout the fortnight, using these to inform where our program goes next.

That is supported really strongly by the actual Vacation Care reflections — including independently organised soccer, child-led insect/habitat investigation and children transforming planned activities into their own creations.

Framework Connections — My Time, Our Place

Outcome 1 — Identity: Children strengthen their sense of identity, confidence and autonomy by making choices, sharing ideas, taking on leadership roles and seeing their contributions valued within the program.

Outcome 2 — Connectedness: Children contribute to their OSHC community by collaborating with others, sharing knowledge, making collective decisions and recognising the ideas, cultures and perspectives of others.

Outcome 3 — Wellbeing: Children build confidence, resilience and persistence as they take on challenges, make decisions, experience success and navigate moments when things do not go to plan.

Outcome 4 — Confident & Involved Learners: Children lead their learning through curiosity, experimentation, problem-solving and inquiry as they create, test, adapt and extend their own ideas.

Outcome 5 — Communication: Children express ideas, explain their thinking, negotiate decisions, listen to different perspectives and share their knowledge and interests with others.

Our Learning Journey — Where To Next?

Term 4 continues our Curious Minds journey by moving from imagining, designing and creating towards children taking greater ownership of where their ideas can lead. Through choice, challenge and child-led experiences, children are encouraged to turn curiosity into action, lead alongside others and recognise that their ideas can genuinely influence their OSHC experience.