Tolofa Lava welcome to our Term 2 newsletter

We have had a wonderful long summer with lots of learning opportunities available outdoors for exploring, problem solving and discoveries in the wonderful community we live in. Autumn and winter offer other great opportunities to experience changes in our environment with new exciting experiences and materials to learn with.

We have been thrilled to have been fortunate enough to be granted a SELO contract through the Ministry of Education. This means our Educators are now taking part in professional learning development workshops every month for six months. On-going learning and growth not only happens for children, it additionally occurs for Educators too.

Jen Hall.

**Here are our planned events for term 2**

**Tuesday 14/5/19** *9.45am* Pegasus Playgroup Educators and children will travel by bus. If you wish to join the bus ride the bus leaves the stop opposite McDonalds in Kaiapoi at 9.22am, or Caltex Kaiapoi at 9.23 to travel through Woodend to Pegasus and stops right beside the playground at 9.44am. Bring your morning tea, and water bottles, boots and maybe a warm jacket. We will go for a walk around the centre of Pegasus and practice our road safety skills as its road safety week also. Participants will receive a road safety awareness certificate.

**Monday 20/5/19** *10am* Pink Ribbon Day Morning Tea at Tania’s 67 Fuller St Kaiapoi Dress up and wear something pink (children, educators and parents) and gold coin donation per individual to the pink ribbon appeal.

**Friday 24/5/19** *10-11.30* Pukeko Stomp exploring at Otukaikino Wetlands. Bring your morning tea and water bottles, gumboots and a rug to sit on.

**Tuesday 4/6/19** Queens birthday morning tea and crafts- come dressed for a tea party with the queen (crowns and jewellery on, high heels and collar and ties)

**Thursday 6/6/19** *9.30-11.30* Outdoor Playgroup at Matawai Park, King St Rangiora

**Weeks of 10-21st June**: Trip to one of the Christchurch City Libraries (Shirley/Parklands or Papanui) for Matariki stories and crafts; date and time to be confirmed when the CHCH library puts the information out

**Thursday 20/6/19** *10am* Swimming trip to the Kaiapoi Aquatic Centre : Toddler Pool

**Tuesday 25/6/19** *5-6.30pm* Matariki Parent Evening at Tarns at 67 Fuller St Kaiapoi - Celebration for families of Matariki with crafts, stories and soup and rolls shared tea.

**Playgroup Dates for Term 2 2019:**

Wednesday **15/5/19** *9.30-11.30am* Whanau Day (International Day of the Family)

**29/5/19** *9.30-11.30am* Queens birthday celebrations and Party

**12/6/19** *9.30-11.30am* The Gingerbread Man

**26/6/19** *9.30-11.30am* PJ / Movie Day

You are all very welcome to join us.

**The Power of Play**

How often have you read or heard that play is vital for children to learn and develop? It isn’t just for fun or to keep them busy so we can get things done around the house – play is actually building children’s brains, setting up lifelong lessons in learning and is the building block upon which formal education will develop.

At Family Tree homebased our Educators build a programme of activities, events and experiences that set them up to be life-long learners based on their current interests/needs and moves at a pace that is comfortable for them. This means they acquire:

* Perseverance
* Concentration
* Problem solving
* Interpersonal skills
* Confidence
* Independence
* Gross and fine motor skills
* Hand-eye coordination

Children are born curious and imaginative. They can turn an empty box into a toy or game, a sheet in to a house or sail for a boat, pieces of wood in to a race track or bridge.

Our Educators are skilled at following their children’s lead providing them with an environment and resources that allow the freedom to create their own play. Low ratios in homebased allow time for an unhurried day which encourages strong relationships to build, with the consequence of a strong sense of belonging and well-being. We know how important play and discovery is. After all children have a life time to learn how to adhere to structure and routines.

Additionally, Educators provide children with experiences that allow for life skills to be learnt. Being involved in baking, gardening, cleaning, road safety, exploring local community environments, shopping, building with household materials provide children with learning experiences they may not be able to practice in other services.

We encourage parents to share with their Educator what learning is occurring for their children outside of the homebased setting. This collaborative approach ensures children have a sense of connection to others and the environment.

What were we busy learning about last term?

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**February 2019**

**Chinese New Year celebrations**

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**March 2019**

**National Children’s Day and Dr Seuss birthday**





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**Masenlitsa-Pancake Day**

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**Waitangi Day**



**April 2019**

**Easter celebrations**

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**Anzac day**

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**Gumboot day – I am hope**

**Sensory day at Playgroup**

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This term we will be singing happy birthday to: Jimmy, Abigail, Felix, Chloe, Lilly, Beaudyn, Abel, Lillian, Ayla and Isaac.

During Term one we welcomed: Agamemnon, Mason, Rayne, Ayla, Maddison, Harper, Chloe and Lucas. Welcome to our whanau!

Colder weather increases bird’s appetite at a time when food is scarce. There are no insects flying around and seeds, fruits and nuts have disappeared. Water is also scarce and dehydration can be a great threat to birds. Water is also essential to allow them to preen their feathers which can mean they also loose heat from the ventilation if it is unavailable. Let’s all work together to help our wee feathered friends by providing a large flat bowl of water in the back yard, and by creating a bird feeder with our children.

[](https://kidspot.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/00000-15.jpg)

Bird feeder

Connect your children with nature with this easy bird feeder activity. It’s simple to construct and you and your children can watch the birds eat from it once you are done.

**What you need:**

* natural found items (leaves, bark, gum nuts)
* a 1L milk carton (washed)
* stapler
* hole punch
* a loop of string (any size)
* scissors
* PVA glue
* a dish for glue
* a brush for glue
* bird food from a pet store

**Activity:**

Have your child collect leaves, bark, gum nuts or other natural findings from your backyard or even the park, and explain what you intend to make with them – you may even spot birds whilst you are both outside.

Staple the top of the carton together.

Punch a hole in the top of the carton and thread the string through, tying a knot to create a loop to hang the bird feeder.

Cut out an insert/hole towards the base of the carton.

Using PVA glue, get your child to stick the natural found items to the bird feeder, to create a feeder that can blend in with the natural environment by mimicking the birds’ natural habitat.

Let it dry.

Fill the base with bird food and hang on a tree in your garden, or from a high spot on your verandah or balcony.

**Notes:**

* You may want to make this outside where you can spot birds and so that the mess is easier to clean up.
* Buying waterproof PVA glue will mean your bird feeder will last longer. However PVA can take a while to dry, so it is important to allow drying time.
* Alternatively you can use a stapler or tape, and if real leaves are proving challenging to work with then cut out some leaves from green paper.
* This activity can be educational if you find out some facts to share whilst making the bird feeder, about your local bird population.
* It also provides the opportunity for you and your child to work together and an experience that can last several days as you check if the bird food has been eaten.