

ewba in action...



Morphett Vale and Murray Bridge communities share how they've put *eat well be active* into action

Name of site and author of this story:

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What has your site been doing in relation to ewba's key message/s and strategy/ies for action? Who has been involved?

Expanding and enriching our music and movement program for children has been an important part of our centre's involvement in ewba. Several of our staff members have attended various 'Music and Movement/Dance' workshops organised by ewba, which has helped to generate new ideas for music, dance and movement opportunities with children, especially children 0-2 years in our Infant Room. Small ewba grant funding has also helped our staff to broaden the range of music layered into movement components to encourage the children to become more physically active from infancy.

Music, dance and movement have been embedded as an integral part of our program for children and part of many ways our centre supports children to be active at play every day.

Has this been a new event/project/activity/practice/environmental changes/policy for your site, or does it build on existing elements?

Music and movement have always been a part of our centre. We just have continued to expand and enrich these elements in our programming during our involvement in ewba. We have incorporated new ideas gained from staff who have attended ewba workshops, and our ongoing learning from our music/movement experiences with our children.

ewba has supported our centre by:

- Providing various free 'Music and Movement/Dance' workshops that our staff have attended which has generated new ideas for music, dance and movement opportunities with children;
- Providing us with a small grant to help our staff purchase music resources to enrich and diversify our music and movement experiences with our children;
- Providing us with a sample Active Play policy template for us to use to develop an 'Active Play' policy for our centre which supports our music and movement programming.

What has been the best part of your site's action/s?

Music and movement has become a regular daily experience with the children. It has allowed some of our younger children to experience and express themselves through music, dance, movement and general participation. The staff have also gained valuable knowledge and ideas from workshops and resources they may not have otherwise had the opportunity for.

What has been the biggest challenge (if any) that has had to be overcome?

Finding the time and relief staff to allow all staff to attend workshops. However, our staff who have attended training have shared their experiences with others at our staff meetings.

Being able to supply the children with Yoga mats due to costs.

What have been some of the outcomes so far, what changes have you noticed, or what are you hoping for as a result of your new activity/project/policy?

We have found that more children are more active throughout the day and show a genuine interest in participating in music and movement experiences. The children look forward to Yoga times, and group times with instruments and music. The children even request more physical experiences! The younger children join in more with songs and puppets. Children also use the skills they have learned during programmed experiences in their free play and transfer that into their outside play environment. The children have developed a greater range of movement skills and incorporate dance moves into dramatic and imaginary play.

What do children / parents / staff say about this?

Parents have commented on songs children are singing at home, as well as ask about actions to songs. The Kindy parents have noticed that their children are trying Yoga poses at home and how much their child talks about what they have done at the centre. The Kindy children request Yoga sessions with staff during the day.

Where to for the future?

Continue to develop our music and movement programs to extend the children's already developed skills and entice them to try new things.

Finalise an Active Play policy for our centre.

What advice would you give to others who would like to start a similar project?

Being involved in the ewba Morphett Vale project has been a great experience for all involved - staff, children, and families. It has allowed us to learn new skills, keep up to date with relevant resources and provide a new, enthusiastic and invigorating program. If you have the opportunity to be involved in a project similar to ewba then I would suggest you take the opportunity as it is very beneficial for all.

If you would like to ask any questions or follow up further about this story, please contact Kelly (Director) at Emu Children's Centre, email: emuccc@bigpond.com

Do you have a photo/s you would like to share to accompany this story?

