



“Our Vision is an active, environmentally aware community that ensures a sustainable future for our shared world.”



ECA NSW Branch proudly
auspice NSW ECEEN

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Beyond the Worm Farm

NSW ECEEN will be holding the Annual General Meeting and an environmental ethical dilemma’s forum on **Wednesday August the 10th at the Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre Elliott Ave Erskineville from 6.00pm to 8.00pm.**

versity of Western Sydney, Anna Johnston Children’s Services Advisor with DoCS and Ben Cole from the Total Environment Centre. The panel will discuss your questions and explore the environmental issues and ethics surrounding :

- Playground surfaces
- Food and nature as a plaything
- Artificial lighting and furniture
- Play spaces within your centre

Have you considered the environmental impact and the messages children receive through your daily practices?

This is a fantastic opportunity to challenge your practice and grow a culture of environmental awareness.

A light snack and organic tea and coffee will be available.

Join with us at our AGM and a lively panel discussion chaired by Di Roberts, Educational Consultant with KU Children’s Services and panel members: Dr. Christine Woodrow Lecturer Uni-

- Cleaning agents and other chemicals used in your centre
- Use of play materials including water and paper

For further information or to RSVP contact NSW ECEEN’s Project Officer - Sarah Murray. P: (02) 9528 7509, E: nsweceen@earlychildhood.org.au

Who is NSW ECEEN?

ECEEN works under the umbrella of Early Childhood Australia’s NSW Branch. It provides for the exchange of teaching ideas and resources, networking and environmental advice. As part of a new initiative, ECEEN encourages services to submit a case study of their environmental projects to inspire others and also be in the running for

the SPROuts Practice Award and \$500 cash to continue promoting quality environmental education.

Sarah Murray has recently taken on the role as Project Officer for NSW ECEEN. Sarah is busy establishing a webpage and other initiatives to promote the network and facilitate environmental education within the Early Childhood sector.



Sarah Murray

The 'SPROuts Practice' Award

NSW ECEEN aims to support and encourage individuals and groups to incorporate environmental education and practices within their services and homes.

This year ECEEN invites you to showcase your project on our webpage to share your environmental achievements with the network!

It's easy, just fill out one of our project case study forms and submit the details to ECEEN. The forms and the case studies of others can be found on our webpage under *Current Projects and Case Studies*: www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw-branch/eceen.html

Each year ECEEN will choose the winner of The 'SPROuts' award based on those services who have shown outstanding commitment to promoting environmental best practice in

Sustainable Projects Recognising OUTSTANDING PRACTICE



volving children in the 0-8 age range. The winner will receive a prize of **\$500** to put towards future environmental projects and/or resources.

These project case studies will surely prove to be a great motivator for others wanting to find a meaningful way to help children connect with nature, and work towards environmental sustainability. Go on, get involved and make a difference! Some ideas to get you thinking..... *

- Construct a worm farm
- Build a veggie patch and/or herb garden for the children to tend to, and ultimately the healthy fruits of their labour.
- Incorporate natural and/or recycled materials in the children's activities and experiences
- Grow plants and flowers from seeds (sprouts are quick and easy, sunflowers are easy to grow and have big seeds for little fingers to hold)
- Experiment with environmentally -friendly alternatives for cleaning purposes.

*Source: "Just Discover" Young & Elliott



This year marks Australia's 8th National Science Week, scheduled from August 13 through to 20.

The school theme for this year is **Energy: Future Challenges**. A resource kit has been put together that contains triggers, ideas, activities, facts, and websites on a range of topics to do with energy and challenges for



students in their everyday lives and for the future. Although this kit has been designed for school aged children, there are many

Get Involved!

great ideas that can simply be adapted for the younger children.

To get a copy of the National Science Week Resource Kit as well as finding out more about Science Week and the events, go to:

National Science Week began in 1997 to raise the profile and appreciation of the role of science, technology and innovation in improving our society and the environment.

Go on a 'tree spree' this July



Planet Ark is calling all schools, community groups and individuals to help

plant one million trees in one weekend. This year's **National Tree Day** is on **Sunday the 31st** of July, with the **Schools**

Tree Day taking place on **Friday the 29th** of July.

Last year 250 000 volunteers planted over a million native trees at more than 3 200 sites. This has helped to combat serious problems like salinity, erosion and loss of habitat for native bird and animal species.

Children enjoy experiences involv-

ing the natural environment and this could be the perfect event to extend children's environmental consciousness and learning.

If you are interested in getting involved call the Planet Ark Tree Day Hotline on 1300 88 5000 or go to www.planetark.com/treeday



'Little Green Steps' to EC environmental sustainability

On Thursday the 16th of June NSW ECEEN held a network meeting hosted by Maree Whelan from Gosford City Council. Maree is the Project Coordinator of the 'Little Green Steps' project.

In August 2004, the Little Green Steps preschool sustainability program commenced. This partnership between Wyong and Gosford Councils has the specific aim of promoting environmental education in preschools and early childhood (EC) services in the region.

Maree gave us an overview of the project, along with Danielle Willcox (Wyong Council) and Trisha Donnelly (Gosford Council) who have been working closely on the program with Maree.

Maree explained that the idea for the project came about due to the lack of sustainability education resources for

EC services. Therefore, a multi-faceted approach was successfully implemented over the past year, including profes-



ECEEN Network Meeting (from left): Danielle Willcox, Trisha Donnelly, Maree Whelan, Sarah Murray, Rachael Kinsella & Kylie Payne.

sional development workshops, newsletters and a water information display stand in centres for parents.

Three resource kits have also been de-

veloped on the topics of waste, water and biodiversity. They provide centre staff with resources and teaching aids to communicate environmental messages to children. Many centres have used these kits and found them very useful. One of the key points is that the information provided in the kits is specifically based on the Central Coast region. For example the photographs of wildlife are those native to the area.

Sarah Murray, the ECEEN Project Officer provided an update on the networks achievements and plans, including the new webpage.

Everyone, including Rachel Kinsella (Carinya CS Centre) and Kylie Payne (Team leader Child & Family Services at Gosford Council) were inspired by the Little Green Steps project and looking forward to the added support NSW ECEEN will bring to the EC sector.

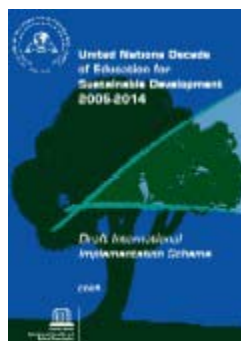
The time is now!

2005 marks the start of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

and UNESCO was designated as the lead agency for the promotion and coordination of this significant event. The vision of this decade is to create a world that provides everyone with the opportunity to benefit from quality education and learn about the values and lifestyle choices that must be adopted to create a sustainable future. .

After receiving more than 2000 con-

tributions a draft implementation scheme for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development was shared and reviewed by leading experts and academics in 2003. The draft is now available online.



Check out the UNESCO website for more information and downloads.
<http://portal.unesco.org/education>



abc eco preschool

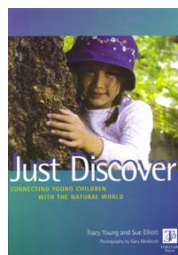


A new preschool has recently opened in Seaforth

NSW that promotes environmental education and practice. It aims to help families and their children reconnect with nature by encouraging chil-

dren to tend to their own vegetable patch, care for the chickens that eat the "left overs" and produce tasty free range eggs in return. The Guinea Pigs simultaneously fertilise and mow the lawn ! Look out for details in our SPROuts Practice case studies. Contact Kiri for more info (02) 9948 4289.

Book review



Written by **Tracey Young & Sue Elliott** "Just Discover" is a valu-

able resource for those wanting practical and creative ideas about how

make a connection with nature. The topics covered include plants, animals, the human body and environmental education. Great photos, and an emphasis on play-based learning and utilizing recycled and natural materials.

www.tertiarypress.com.au

Green Dates

July

Save the Koala Month	1-31
Schools Tree Day	29
National Tree Day	31

August

International Day of Indigenous People	9
International Youth Day	12
National Science Week (Energy)	13-21
Keep Australia Beautiful week begins	29

September

National Biodiversity Month	1-30
Wattle Day	1
Landcare Week	1-7
National Threatened Species Day	7
International Day of Peace	16

Gowrie Training

Promoting environmental sustainability in children's services

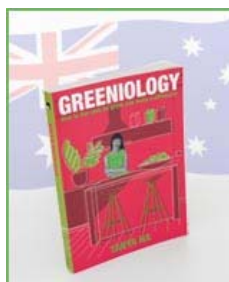
Presented by **Helen Nippard** this workshop utilizes group discussions and 'hands on' activities to explore a range of environmental issues including recycling green cleaning and outdoor environments.

Monday 5th September, 9-4pm, Erskineville
PH: (02) 8345 7623.

The Free GreenHome

Program is a partnership between Parramatta City Council and the Australian Conservation Foundation, helping residents to make eco friendly lifestyle choices. The workshops include free giveaways and gadgets and are held at the Parramatta RSL from 6.30-9.30pm:
Recycling/Compost—Aug 3, **Energy saving @ home**—August 31, **Veggie & Native gardens**—Sept 28, **Transport & Healthy lifestyles**—Oct 26, **Household chemicals**—Nov 30.

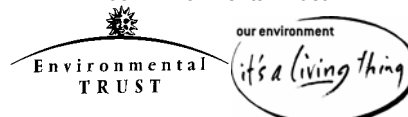
Contact ACF on 1800 223 669 to register.



Saving the planet is easier than you think if you have a copy of **Greenology** by **Tanya Ha**. Valuable information about environmentally friendly choices when purchasing items ranging from cosmetics and appliances through to baby goods. Available from bookstores and the Planet Ark website.

KU Children's Services Annual Seminar 29-30 July "at the Australian Catholic University National Strathfield Campus includes a presentation by **Janet Robertson** about the amazing **Forest Schools** in Norway and Denmark. For more information about the workshop '**Crossing Borders—Cultural Influences in Outdoor Education**' contact **KU** on **(02) 9264 8366** or **www.ku.com.au**

This project has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust



It's easy being green!

Now it is easier than ever to embrace environmental sustainability in Early Childhood (EC) services with the support of the New South Wales Early Childhood Environmental Network (NSW ECEEN).

Helen Nippard and Julie Gaul established this network in 2003. During their years as pre-school teachers, both had become aware that environmental education (EE) resources for the 0-8 age range was not readily available.

With the world now so complex, quick and competitive, it is critical that children make meaningful connections with the natural world. NSW ECEEN is committed to supporting EC professionals and families with young children to incorporate environmental awareness and practice into their everyday activities.

This is being achieved through this newsletter issued quarterly, and the

design of a new ECEEN webpage as a platform to deliver and coordinate an EE network for individuals and groups across NSW.

The webpage will provide a valuable forum to link up with other organisations committed to environmental sustainability and education and seek their advice. The webpage will provide information and contacts about identify useful resources to support and extend environmental activities and experiences for young children.

Check out the ECEEN webpage: **www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw_branch/eceen.html** where you can also access our newsletters.



Our aim is to bring together interested people and organisations in order to promote the paramount importance of integrating environmental education into all facets of young children's lives in NSW

www.
earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au
/nsw_branch/eceen.html

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