



October 2005

[www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw\\_branch/eceen.html](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw_branch/eceen.html)

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*"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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## Safer Cleaning Practices

Do you know how safe your cleaning practices are?

On Sunday the 30th of October NSW ECEEN will be holding a network meeting in the beautiful grounds of Mount Annan Botanic Garden (located between Camden and Campbelltown)

safer cleaning practices into children's services. She firmly believes that smarter practices, as well as safer products, are the key to reducing our exposure to harmful germs and chemicals

We will be meeting at 9.00am in the restaurant to share breakfast together, before moving on

- Applying Eco-sustainable guidelines to cleaning

- Achieving high hygiene and accreditation standards, with low-chemical cleaning practices

- Discover safer cleaning products and procedures

- Successful implementation strategies for your centre

NSW ECEEN will also be launching their new website on the day.

For more information or to RSVP go to the NSW ECEEN website or contact the Project Officer-Sarah Murray on P:(02) 9528 7509, E: [nswceen@earlychildhood.org.au](mailto:nswceen@earlychildhood.org.au)

*'Incidents of childhood asthma, allergies and chemical sensitivities, behavioural and learning disorders, are steadily increasing. So too are the hazardous cleaning chemicals to which children in care are being regularly exposed. Is this just a coincidence?' Bridget Gardner*

Bridget Gardner will be our guest speaker. Bridget is currently running safe cleaning practice workshops in Melbourne, discussing with staff how to implement effective yet

to explore the following issues:

- How can you assess the health risk of cleaning chemicals?

## Resources for your service

NSW ECEEN has put together two Centre Resource Kits that are available for services to borrow over a two week period.

These kits contain a range of resources that will give you great ideas about how to provide meaningful environ-

mental experiences in your service.

This is a great opportunity for you and other staff members to see the resources that are available, and discover what is appropriate for your particular service.

For more information contact the Project Officer-

Sarah Murray on (02) 95287509, or email: [nswceen@earlychildhood.org.au](mailto:nswceen@earlychildhood.org.au)



## St Ives Park's amazing eco-garden

Amanda Hansen is the Leisure and Cultural Programmer with Ku-ring-gai Council, and is delighted with the project underway in the grounds of St Ives Park Public School.

With a lot of valuable support and generosity from the community, an eco garden is in the process of being created for the children who attend the school and vacation care centre to enjoy.

Amanda talking about the project said "Each holiday period the kids embark on a new project for the garden: we have built a pond and planted native trees around this area, we have raised chickens some of whom now live in the garden, built a chicken coup, and recently had a working bee with a group called 'Permaculture



Vegies, herbs and fruit trees

North' who are helping us with the design and planting of vegetable and herb gardens We have worm farms, and a composting system working well at the school. We are aware of the importance of recycling so most of the materials used in the garden are recycled goods. We are also trying to raise money for a water tank as there is no water supply close to the garden. A water tank will also be an

important learning tool for the kids. The plan is that each class will have an area that they are responsible for and that food grown in the garden will be used in the school canteen.

In the January school holidays, we will be introducing a blue tongue lizard which has been raised by the Ku-ring-gai Council Wildflower Garden."



Happy chooks in their new coup.

## National Recycling Week

Do something in recognition of Planet Ark's National Recycling week, from the 7th—13th of November.



This is a great opportunity for the children to learn about recycling, from the products that can be

recycled, how they are recycled, through to making responsible choices about packaging.

As part of National Recycling week, Planet Ark has designed an environmental education kit for Primary Schools that has been designed to teach the '3 R's' of waste minimisation –Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Although aimed at Primary aged children,

the 'Junior' activities and lesson plans can be easily adapted for younger children.

For more information about this week and to

download a copy of the kit go to [www.planetark.com](http://www.planetark.com)



## The 'SPROuts Practice' Award

NSW ECEEN supports individuals and groups to incorporate environmental education and practices within their Services

So don't forget to showcase your project on our website to share your environmental achievements with the network!

**S**ustainable  
**P**rojects  
**R**ecognising  
**OUTS**tanding  
**PRACTICE**

choose the winner of The 'SPROuts' Prac-

It's easy, fill out one of our project case study forms. The forms and the case studies of others can be found on our website.

Each year ECEEN will

tice Award based on those services who have shown outstanding commitment to promoting environmental best practice involving children in the 0-8 age range. The winner will receive \$500 to put towards future environmental projects and/or resources. Applications close 31/12/05.

[www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw\\_branch/eceen.html](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nsw_branch/eceen.html)

## Water Works at KU Grevillea Preschool

KU Grevillea has a very natural playground with lots of large trees and gardens. We have always been committed to supporting sand and water activities which are open-ended, creative and soothing. Dry sand is fairly limited in its potential so we often used sand and water together. They provide a natural setting for learning.

Our staff had decided that one of our fundraising objectives for 2005 would be to buy some "Water Walls" to put up on the sides of our sandpit. These can be used with dry sand or balls but "in a perfect world" would be used with water. In order to have water for these we needed to install a water tank.

Our terrific parents and commu-

nity raised the money to install a tank and after shopping around we chose a galvanised tank (which has been custom made for our site).



Using the new water tank to get water to use in the sandpit

We are now praying for rain. We are still teaching our children to conserve water and we anticipate that the children will more readily see the link between the arrival of

rain and the availability of water for their play.

When it does rain it will be very exciting to listen to our tank filling up as we have placed it right beside the verandah. There won't be any complaints about the rain that's for sure!

The arrival of our tank has provided the stimulus for endless conversations between the children, parents and staff about conservation, the water cycle, ecosystems, patience, sharing, sustainability and responsibility. If you would like more details about our experience please call 9476 2686 or email us at [ku.grevillea@bigpond.com](mailto:ku.grevillea@bigpond.com)

Written by Carole Netterfield, Director of KU Grevillea.

## Beyond the Worm Farm

On August the 10th NSW ECEEN held their AGM and *Beyond the Worm Farm* Forum.

After the formalities of the AGM and successful appointment of our new committee, the discussion about environmental ethical dilemmas began.

Ben Cole from the Total Environment Centre discussed the numerous chemicals that are often used within the home and child-care centre. There is a real lack

of research available about the effect of these often strong chemicals on children's health.

Dr Christine Woodrow, Lecturer at UWS, presented a thought provoking discussion about ethics in early childhood settings. When faced with ethical dilemmas such as using food or water as a plaything, Christine reflected on the need for an open and honest discussion between staff and families. It is through this process that all opinions may be

expressed and an informed and well considered consensus reached.

Our last speaker was Anna Johnston, Children's Services Advisor with DoCS. Anna highlighted how the Children's Services Regulations can be used to support environmental education. Anna discussed the importance of being familiar with the Regulation, and finding the appropriate research to justify your practices. This information can then be drawn upon when in discussion with your CSA.

## EE in QIAS

Although only small steps, the National Child-care Accreditation Council have made reference to environmental education within the newly revised QIAS Source Book.

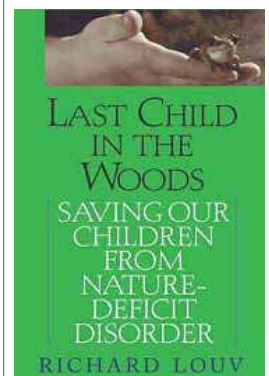
A submission was made to the NCAC by the AAEE Early Childhood Special Interest Group

suggesting how and why environmental education should be included in the QIAS.

The changes focus on using the natural environment as a learning tool, and encouraging the use of recycled materials and environmentally friendly products.

## Book Review

*The Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder* by **Richard Louv** is a thought provoking book that highlights the positive and powerful effect that nature has on children's general health and well-being, including depression. Louv also discusses how children must be given the opportunity to make meaningful connections with nature if they are to value, and therefore want to protect the environment in the future.



## Green Dates

October	
<b>Walk to Work Day</b> www.walk.com.au	7
<b>Parks Week</b> www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au	9-16
<b>Law, Science and the Environment: Biodiversity</b> www.edo.org.au	13
November	
<b>National Recycling Week</b> www.planetark.com.au	7-13
<b>Universal Children's Day (UNICEF)</b>	20
December	
<b>Coast Care Week</b> www.landcareaustralia.com.au	1-7

### Check out these websites

Eco-friendly Communities Program  
[www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community)

Who cares about the environment? Research  
[www.environment.nsw.gov.au/whocares](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/whocares)

VISY recycling [www.visy.com.au](http://www.visy.com.au)

[www.sustainable.design.com.au](http://www.sustainable.design.com.au)

Australian Native Landscapes [www.anlscape.com.au](http://www.anlscape.com.au)

### Kimbriki Recycling and Waste Disposal Centre

There is so much to do and see at the tip! Kimbriki is a great place to bring children to see where all that rubbish they throw in the bin ends up, and how materials are recycled. Peter Rutherford is the Eco Gardener at Kimbriki and has a fabulous garden to share with all types of groups including children. Early Childhood and School groups are encouraged to visit for a hands-on educational gardening experience. The Garden showcases how to incorporate composting, worm farming and mulching into your everyday gardening. Bookings are essential. For more information go to their website:

[www.warringah.nsw.gov.au/AAAKIMBRIKINEW](http://www.warringah.nsw.gov.au/AAAKIMBRIKINEW)

The University of New South Wales (UNSW) **Ecoliving Centre** comprises of a house and garden site which operates as a research and demonstration facility for ecologically sustainable urban living. It is a working model of accessible, ecologically sustainable living as a dynamic learning resource for the UNSW and the broader Community. Their website also has details of upcoming events and workshops [www.ecoliving.cat.org.au](http://www.ecoliving.cat.org.au)

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



## AAEE - AGM and Workshops

The Australian Association for Environmental Education (AAEE) is holding their Annual General Meeting on **Monday the 24th of October 2005 from 4.45-6.40pm**. The meeting will be held at Y on the Park, YWCA 5-11 Wentworth Ave, Sydney—Level 4.

AAEE exists to provide a forum for professionals interested in Environmental Education to come together, network and share their knowledge and expertise. It also serves to represent the environmental education fraternity in national discussions and debates.

It is a membership based association and offers a number of mem-

bership services including on-line resources, Special Interest Groups and the Australian Journal of Environmental Education.

Associated with the AGM, the association is co-hosting two one-day practical workshops: **Evaluation tools for environmental education programs** (October 24th) and **Using action learning and action Research** (October 25th). The venue for these workshops will be in the Sydney CBD.

To find out more, or to become a member go to their website:

[www.aaee.org.au](http://www.aaee.org.au)  
Ph (02) 9718 1651

*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*

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