

Connecting with your Community

Embedding sustainable practices in our environment is an important aspect of Family Day Care. The Guide to the National Quality Standard, states an aim of QA3 is 'Educators and children work together to learn about and promote the sustainable use of resources and to develop and implement sustainable practices.' When Educators encourage children and their families to be sustainable in the care environment, they are assisting the children to achieve Early Years Learning Framework:

OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Educators can encourage families to be involved in sustainable practices, and look for ways to connect with the community to help the children to understand the importance of caring for our environment.

What sustainable practices can we implement into our services?

- Recycling • Using recycled and upcycled resources • Conserving water
- Using energy efficiently • Using open ended resources • Using natural cleaners • Having digital/electronic processes in place • Minimising waste

Visit <http://recyclingnearyou.com.au/>

This is a national website run by Planet Ark. It includes tips for recycling; resources; posters; activity sheets; and a search function to find recycling programs in your local area.

Start a recycling program at your service and encourage families to reduce the amount of waste that is included in the children's lunch boxes.

Organise an excursion or incursion with your local recycling centre.



Find a Community Garden in your local area or start your own!

Not only will your service build connections within your community, but the children will also be able to learn about the interdependence between land, plants and people, and could learn how to grow their own food.

Contact your local council for more information. You could also consider having a working bee in your own environment. Parents and community members could join or sponsor the event! Send out letters (including your logo) explaining what FDC is and how a new garden would benefit the children!

Visit Op Shops, markets, and garage sales, and keep an eye out on Gumtree and Facebook to buy preloved items!

Get to know the staff at your local stores and get them to contact you if something special comes in! Ensure that items are clean and safe before including them in your environment.



Try a letter box drop or door knock to meet people in your community. Let them know that you are looking for 'loose parts' or second hand items for the children's play. Give them a list of items you are looking for and let them know that whenever they have a clean out, you are happy to take things off their hands! Let all your families know too. Ask them to pass on your flyer to their extended families, friends and colleagues.

Spaces invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature. They foster an appreciation of the natural environment, develop environmental awareness and provide a platform for ongoing environmental education.

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Send out thank you notes or a gift from the children to show your gratitude to the people who have helped you out! Make sure you include your business logo and contact details to market your service. You could consider contacting the local media to promote your connections with other community services, and tag other services on your Facebook page to build interest!