

newsletter



Winter 2013

Time of Djeran and Makuru in the Noongar calendar

This Newsletter is best viewed online so you can make the most of the links to more information!

This is the last newsletter for the Little Green Steps Western Australian pilot. With Lotterywest funding, the 12 month trial has been running since July 2012 in conjunction with three childcare centres in three Perth council areas. Read more about our achievements and next steps below...

Highlights from the Little Green Steps WA Pilot



The main purpose of the Little Green Steps pilot was to learn what type of support and resources are required by early childhood staff to engage children in sustainability behaviours, especially those linked to the Early Years Learning Framework. It was an opportunity to create networks that support sustainability education in the early years (particularly in Western Australia), trial new resources and find out how early childhood services are already incorporating sustainability.

The pilot focused on three Childcare Centres (Riverdale, Coolabaroo and Treasure Island), where children were engaged in hands-on sustainability activities with a particular focus on waste and recycling, worms, gardening and Australian animals.



The trial provided resources and professional learning for early years educators from the pilot centres and other services. Our workshops, *Day-to-Day Sustainability in Early Years Settings*, were well attended and we were thrilled to receive these comments from participants: "Fabulous way to network and learn", "Excellent ideas to adapt and adopt", "Really enjoyed how many of the concepts were actively workshoped with different tools", "I learnt that there is more to sustainability than I thought", "Made me think about work and home", "We need to have these presentations in the country areas", "A useful, cohesive introduction to sustainability in childcare", "Fantastic interactive sharing of knowledge!", "Inspirational!"

Our Next Steps



We have been excitedly planning the next phase of Little Green Steps in WA, but at the time of publication we are yet to confirm future funding and partnerships. While the pilot has focused on three childcare centres and their council areas in WA, we hope to expand the program to provide more opportunities and support across the state. To allow this, we plan to offer many more sustainability workshops, as well as membership to the program for a range of early years service providers.

Find out more about Little Green Steps, see snippets from this years workshops, browse our resources, find more links and keep in touch at:

www.aaeewa.org.au/littlegreensteps.html.

Sustainability in Winter



Stories about Conservation

These captivating picture books encourage children to value and protect the environment. Look for them at your local library or bookshop:

- *The Last Dance*, Sally Morgan (2012)
- *Quoll*, Sandra Kendell (2008)
- *Big Earth, Little Me*, Thom Wiley (2009)
- *The Lorax*, Dr Seuss (1971)



Eat in Season

What's in season in Winter?

Fruit: apples, avocados, bananas, grapefruit, kiwi fruit, lemons, limes, mandarins, nashi pears, navel

oranges, paw paw, honeydew melons.

Vegetables: beetroot, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, Chinese vegetables, kale, lettuce, leeks, mushrooms, peas, potatoes, pumpkins, radishes, rhubarb, parsnips, silver beet, spinach, sweet potatoes, turnips.

See the [Seasonal Food Guide](#) online for a full list of seasonal foods for Perth and the rest of Australia.



What to Grow in Winter

In Perth's Mediterranean climate, it's time to plant asparagus, beetroot, broad beans, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, celery, lettuce, onions, peas, parsnip, potatoes, radishes, rhubarb, shallots, silver beet, spinach, turnips, spring onions.



Starting Small

Even if you have a small garden, limited time, minimal experience or little funding, you can still involve children in growing plants and learning about where food comes from. Children enjoy the responsibility of caring for plants, playing in soil and eating what they grow.

While Winter rains look after your patch outside, start growing vegetable seedlings in a warm place by an inside window. They'll be ready to plant into the garden in Spring.

Sunflowers grow quite quickly, and you are soon rewarded with large golden blooms. Plant seeds in Spring and Summer, and when the flowers finish you can collect the new seeds and store them to plant next time!

See www.yates.com.au/kids-gardening

Alfalfa sprouts are quick and fun to grow indoors. See www.greenharvest.com.au/sproutingsndmicrogreens

Networks & Events

Click on the bold text and logos to find out more!



Little Green Steps WA Celebration

Join us to celebrate the achievements of the 12 month pilot, and find out the future of Little Green Steps in WA.

This event is part of the Science & Sustainability Expo outlined below. There will also be a Little Green Steps stall where children, families and educators can get hands-on with science! All welcome!

Details: Sunday 18 August 2013, Celebration at 11am



Australian Association for Environmental Education WA Chapter

Community Science & Sustainability Expo

This year we're exploring the *smells* in science and nature (animals, plants, humans and the earth) with interactive displays, guest speakers, animal encounters, Scitech shows, Aboriginal cultural activities, drumming, native plant giveaways & more!

Details: Sunday 18 August 2013, 10am-3pm, at the Canning River Eco Education Centre, Kent Street, Wilson, WA. Free family event!



Kidsafe WA

Tracy Blaszkow from Kidsafe WA prepared a photo document for us with lots of great ideas for children's outdoor spaces- see it on the Resources page of the Little Green Steps WA website.

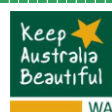
See the Kidsafe websites for helpful resources about:

- **Nature-based Playgrounds**
- **Grow Me Safely**- safe gardening with children
- **Poisonous Plants** (PDF brochure)



Early Childhood Environmental Education Network (NSW)

Become a member of the ECEEN and access the 'ECO SMART for Early Childhood' tool, a sustainability filter for Quality Improvement Plans.



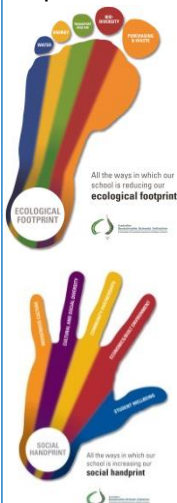
Keep Australia Beautiful WA

Join a free **Clean Schools Workshop** in Term 3.

Find other useful Keep Australia Beautiful **resources and downloads** on their website.

What is Sustainability?

Many participants on our Little Green Steps workshops commented that they didn't realise there was so much to sustainability! While most people associate sustainability with environmental outcomes, social and economic aspects are often overlooked.



In the workshops, the [Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative](#) WA Ecological Footprint and Social Handprint were used to help show the multiple aspects of sustainability, and their interconnectedness. As the participants discussed and expanded their understanding of sustainability, it helped highlight the range of sustainability actions that many were already doing in their early years service, and gave them a point to plan and grow from.

Due to the interests of the centres involved in the Little Green Steps pilot, and wanting to put our time in to exploring topics in depth, the resources and activities provided over the past 12 months have focused on only some aspects of sustainability. The chosen topics of waste, recycling, worms and gardens tied in well together. While looking at waste and recycling, Riverdale Childcare Centre found better use for their food scraps in a worm farm, which is generating liquid fertiliser to provide nutrients for their vegetable gardens. Involving children in growing plants also helps demonstrate the processes of decomposition, nutrient cycling and growth. And they enjoy taste-testing their produce too!

In time, Little Green Steps WA resources will be developed on other aspects of sustainability.

Plastic Free July

Did you know that virtually every piece of plastic ever made still exists in some form today?

Get ready for the Plastic Free July Challenge!

Can you cut your use of single-use plastic items for one day, one week or the whole month of July?

Every year, Australians send over 1.5 million tonnes of plastic packaging to landfill. The Plastic Free July Challenge aims to raise awareness of how much single-use plastic we consume every day. "Single-use" includes plastic shopping bags, plastic cups, straws, plastic packaging; essentially anything that's intended only to be used once and then sent to landfill.

If refusing all single-use plastic sounds too hard, try...

THE TOP 4 CHALLENGE!

★ Straws ★ Plastic bags ★ Plastic bottles ★ Coffee cup lids

More information / Register for the challenge:

www.plasticfreejuly.org/index.html
www.earthcarers.org.au



Read tips from people who have gone plastic free for a whole year in Fremantle and Melbourne:

- [Jess & Nathan's Plastic Free Year in Freo](#) (facebook)
- [A Plastic Free Year](#) (blogspot)

Find out more about the impacts of plastics, educational resources and what you can do:

- [Surfrider Foundation](#)
- [Tangaroa Blue Ocean Care Society](#)

Thank you....

To Lotterywest for providing the grant funding for the 12 month pilot of Little Green Steps, to the staff and children involved in the pilot, to the agencies that assisted with resources and to everyone who has shown interest and support for the program. We have built a solid foundation for our next steps...

An invitation to those in our area

Please come and celebrate the achievements of the Little Green Steps pilot and find out more about the program at the **Community Science & Sustainability Expo** at the Canning River Eco Education Centre (Wilson, WA) on 18 August 2013. The formal celebration will be inside at 11am. Young children, families and early years educators can also get hands-on with science at our interactive stall- engage your senses and discover more about biodiversity, catchments, frogs, turtles, Aboriginal knowledge and how to rethink waste.

The annual Expo is presented by the Australian Association for Environmental Education, City of Canning, Canning River Eco Education Centre and the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare. Little Green Steps is presented at the event this year with funding from a National Science Week Seed Grant.



Things to do in Winter



Local Events

Free or low cost children's/ family activities in the cities of Canning, Gosnells and Armadale.

Click on the bold black text for more information!

City of Canning

- **Volunteer for National Tree Day**

28 July, 9am-1pm, Ferndale Flats Park, free! [Book](#)

- **Community Science & Sustainability Expo**

18 August, 10am-4pm, Canning River Eco Education Centre, Wilson. Free family event!

City of Armadale

- **NAIDOC Celebration Day**

9 July, 10am-4pm, Champion Centre, free!

- **School Holiday Activities at local libraries**

10-19 July. Fun, free school holiday activities. [Book](#)

City of Gosnells

- **Southern River National Tree Day**

28 July, 9-11am, Yilgarn Way Reserve, free! [Book](#)

- **NAIDOC Week Sponsorships**

Develop a community event in NAIDOC Week.

- **Community Garden**

Get involved in the new community garden.

South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare

- **Two Rivers Catchment Group National Tree Day**

28 July, 9am-12pm, Queens Park Road. [Book](#)

See more events at www.sercul.org.au

→ **Take your family along to a National Tree Day planting event, or see what's happening near you in NAIDOC Week!**

School Holiday Fun

- Perth City Farm www.perthcityfarm.org.au

- Perth Zoo www.perthzoo.wa.gov.au/whats-on

- Kanyana Wildlife www.kanyanawildlife.org.au

- Nearer to Nature activities www.dec.wa.gov.au
(Department of Environment & Conservation)

- Canning River Eco Education Centre
www.canning.wa.gov.au

Note: Some of these are paid activities.

Green Dates

MABO Day 3 June

www.indigenous.gov.au

World Environment Day 5 June

www.unep.org/wed/theme

World Oceans Day 8 June

www.worldoceansday.org

Plastic Free July

www.plasticfreejuly.org

NAIDOC Week 7-14 July

www.naidoc.org.au

School's Tree Day 26 July

National Tree Day 28 July

www.treeday.planetark.org/about

National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Children's Day 4 August

www.snaicc.org.au/news-events

International Day of the World's Indigenous People 9 August

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/un/international-day-indigenous-people

National Science Week 10-18 August

www.scienceweek.net.au

Keep Australia Beautiful Week 19-25 August

www.kab.org.au/keep-australia-beautiful-week

Find previous Newsletters on our website.
Scan the QR code to go there now! →



More about Little Green Steps WA

www.aaeewa.org.au/littlegreensteps.html

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Australian Association for Environmental Education, WA Chapter

The WA Chapter is unique, involving a broad cross-section of environmental educators from diverse areas such as schools, government agencies, industry, universities, technical and further education centres, zoos, museums, parks and reserves, environmental education centres and community and conservation groups.