

Monday 20 July, 2015

ASG Local Community Program helps support children's education

Three early learning centres around Australia have received grants to build on their outdoor learning environments and invest in weatherproof clothing.

The grants, provided by ASG, are worth \$2000 each and will be presented to East Linfield Community Preschool NSW, Balnarring Pre-school VIC and Noarlunga Community Children's Centre SA.

ASG CEO John Velegrinis says there was an overwhelming response from the community who applied for the grants.

"I congratulate these recipients who demonstrated how the grant money would benefit the children in their centres, while using flair and creativity in their applications. This is another way ASG helps support children's education, and this initiative ensures communities and families benefit too."

Lisa Kardachi, Director of East Linfield Community Preschool in NSW said the grant will go towards building a cubbyhouse in their outside area, which is shared by church and youth groups.

"I am finding the children's core body strength is not properly developed due to constraints society has placed on families. By having an attractive play structure for the children to use, this would encourage them to play outside more often and they'll be developing their strength, imagination and creativity that play encompasses.

"We recognise as educators, that to assist children in becoming ready for school, their physical body needs to be developed."

Karen Anderson, Educational Leader from Balnarring pre-school said they developed a 'Living and Learning' with nature philosophy which requires the children to be at the beach, bush and local wetlands in rain, hail or shine.

"The four year-olds access the beach once a week for between three to five hours and this year we have 90 children participating, which is really stretching our resources. The grant money will help us purchase more waterproof clothing such as bib and brace overalls and coats and have a few spares to replace the old ones.

"They keep the children dry and warm so they can enjoy learning in the outdoors. The children are able to; jump in puddles, play games with the waves, sit on the wet sand and grass and remain warm and comfortable while exploring and playing."

Debbie Ironside, Director of Noarlunga Community Children's Centre said she would like to develop their outdoor learning area, by building tunnels, water tables, music stands and benches where children can plant vegetables, herbs and fruit trees.

“Inspired by Reggio Emilia, the outdoor learning environment that we wish to create is more than just a place where children play. The environment becomes the third teacher in a child’s world. We want to build a learning hub which is rich in materials and resources and opportunities for children to engage. ”

The next round of application for one of ASG’s Local Community Program grants will open on 1 August, 2015.

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Editors notes:

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 515,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.com.au.