Environmental Sustainability Policy

Background
Sustainability education should be incorporated into everything and should be considered as an ongoing part of the program rather than isolated activities. Sustainable development should meet the needs of the present citizens without compromising the ability of future generations to live comfortably. Children are our future generation; it is essential that adults advocate and promote sustainable practices. Children need to feel positive about the future as they are introduced to the lovely aspects of the world and empowered to begin to look after it.

Purpose
The Peter Toms Early Learning Centre Staff acknowledge the importance of integrating sustainable practices to help promote an environmentally conscious centre and community.

We aim to:

- Encourage children to be active participants in environmental practices
- Promote the importance of sustainable practices, which includes recycling, reusing and reducing rubbish
- Provide opportunities for incorporating sustainable practices
- Educate parents/guardians and the community about sustainable practices through the provision of information, role-modelling and discussions while acknowledging the diversity of families
- Provide children with opportunities to learn about our environment and incorporate sustainable practices
- Provide a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy sustainable practices

Centre Practices will include:

- The centre and staff will act as positive role models for the children. Demonstrating environmental techniques and practices, such as turning off water taps, using most of the paper front and back, recycling unwanted papers and art works.
- Spontaneous discussions to further children's interest. “How, What, Why and I Wonder”
- Paper will be recycled from printers (when appropriate) and used as drawing paper for the children and made into notebooks for staff to use.
- Staff will try to limit the amount of “notes and letters” printed for families and will try to email information instead.
• Teachers will incorporate into their daily programs, ways in which children and their families can help the environment and the planet. www.ceres.org.au
• Recycled art materials collected from reverse garbage, staff and families will be used in children’s programs
• Water tanks will be used as a valuable tool in portraying water conversations and explaining terms such as a drought or flood
• Horticulture will be encouraged, by providing vegetable patches and water tanks for the children to care for the flowers, herbs and trees growing
• Conservation of our precious water will be practiced, within the guidelines of the state government of Victoria www.vicwater.org.au www.melbournewater.com.au
• Children will be exposed to a large variety of experiences and thoughts about conservation and environmental practices, through incursions and excursions into their community
• Children will have a voice to express their concerns regarding environmental issues and where possible we will try to expose these voices into the community
• Recycling bins are located in each classroom to educate and encourage children, staff and families to recycle
• Environmental Awareness program will be incorporated within the entire centre and celebrated at assembly time through “Environmental Eddy Award”

Centre Design structures:
• Rooms have been designed to use and take advantage of the natural light instead of relying on light switches and globes.
• Sensor lighting has been incorporated in the design within all areas of the centre to ensure that lights turn off when not required
• Rooms have also been designed to encourage natural air flow where applicable instead of using air conditioners
• Water tanks are provided under the centre to store rain water for outdoor sand pit pumps, watering the garden, and toilet flushing
• All computers turn off automatically at 5pm if not being used
• All heating/air conditioning turns off automatically at 5pm

Who is affected by this policy?
Boys, families and staff

Review
The review will be conducted by:
* The Peter Toms ELC staff
* Families

Policy created: 5 September 2012