

Raising expectations: The positive impact of children being seen and heard in their community

Building social capital by taking children outside the gate

Presented by Donna Morley



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FROM VISION TO ACTION

Breaking down the jargon...

What is Social Capital?

And how does it translate into our context?

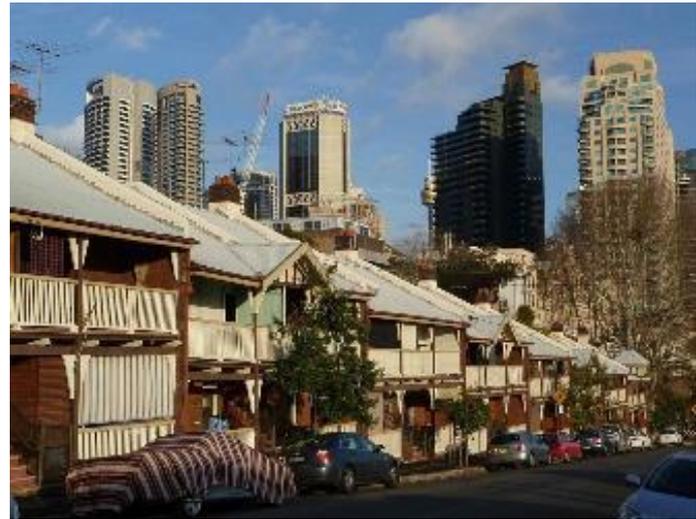


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The public housing sell off in NSW changed our neighbourhood forever...
The neighbourhood was empty! Our centre had been an integral part of this community for over 100years!

How could we rethink our place in this new community?



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“The ultimate goal of education is to allow individuals to become architects of their own education and through that process to continually reinvent themselves” (Eisner, Conscious Educating)

As a community that learns, we needed to find a way for educators to become architects of their own learning alongside children...



A new research project was born

- ❑ Indigenous study
- ❑ Ann Pelo's stories about connection to childhood place
- ❑ Transient families and children
- ❑ Reading about nature play
- ❑ Developing our RAP

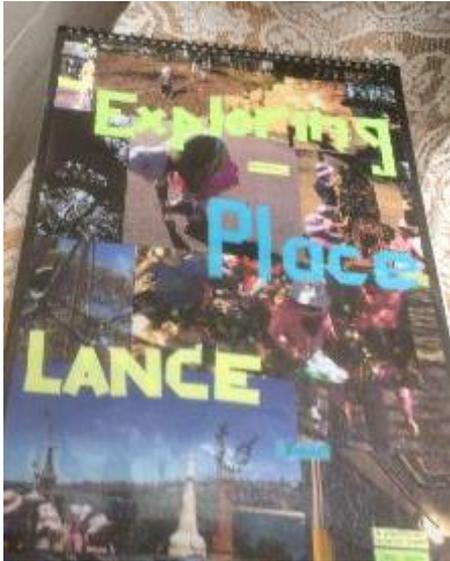
The common denominator between all these things was **“connection to place”**



Exploring a pedagogy of place

A practitioner research project

KU Lance 2017-2018



Some of the theoretical anchors for this project:

Ann Pelo

David A. Gruenewald

**Our own
sustainability
action research**

Nancy Rosenow

David Sobel

Brian Wattachow and Mike Brown

**The Bush Kinder and
forest school's movement**

**Indigenous
connection
with the land**

Reggio

**RIE principles
and practices**



Who was involved?

- **Staff** had a curriculum focus... a new lens through which to plan, reflect, collaborate.
- **Children** were excited to explore their PLACE.
- **Parents** contributed by responding to posts and answering questions posed.
- **Community**
 - Barangaroo Development Authority
 - The Barangaroo Aboriginal Education team
 - New community garden
 - Playgroup at the community centre
 - Sydney festival team



The big questions and concepts to be explored...

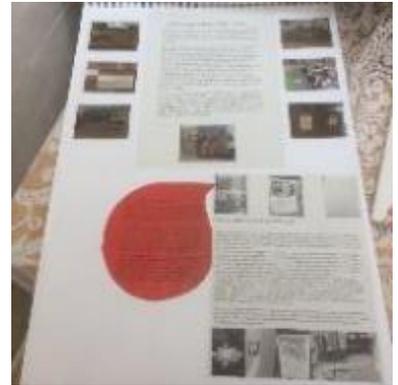
- Does our relationship with the earth, nature, our local environment impact on our ability to learn and our wellbeing?
- Many children no longer have a long term home. What impact does this have on their connectedness and wellbeing?
- How can strong relationships support babies in their learning?
- Can KU Lance be a place of significance for these children as they explore their community and neighbourhood?
- Can we develop an ecological identity in children by connecting them to this place?

New questions arise all the time both for us and the children



To get staff in tune with the notion of place...

- We learned about the place where we were born, the nearest landmarks, and the traditional custodians of the land (if born in Australia)
- We took an explorative walk around the Rocks area to discover something new about a team mate, an excursion possibility, to photograph urban literacy and numeracy and to find a piece of fallen nature that we could bring back
- Each staff member reflected on the process and their discoveries



An Acknowledgement of Country and exploring this with children... Visiting Barangaroo Headland Park and the Aboriginal Education team



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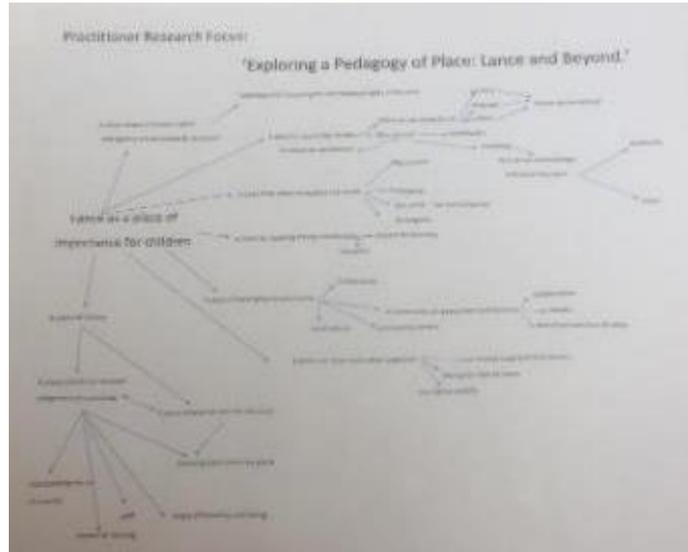
Displaying the work for parents
and visitors to see...



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Our curriculum board... influenced by Catharine Hydon's Rhizomatic Thinking



Regular visits to explore and investigate...





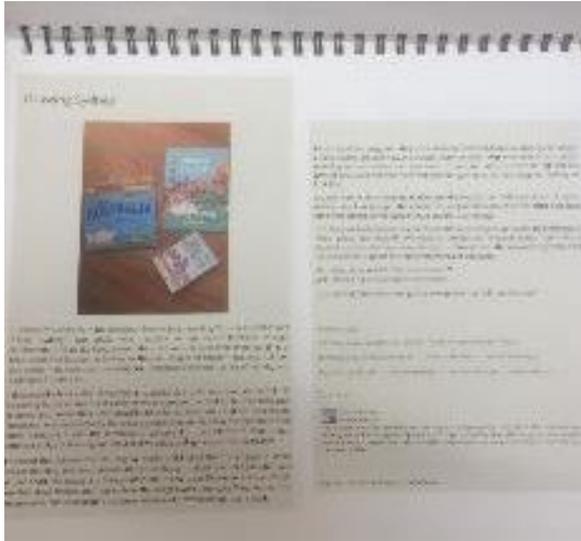
A fascination with the tower...



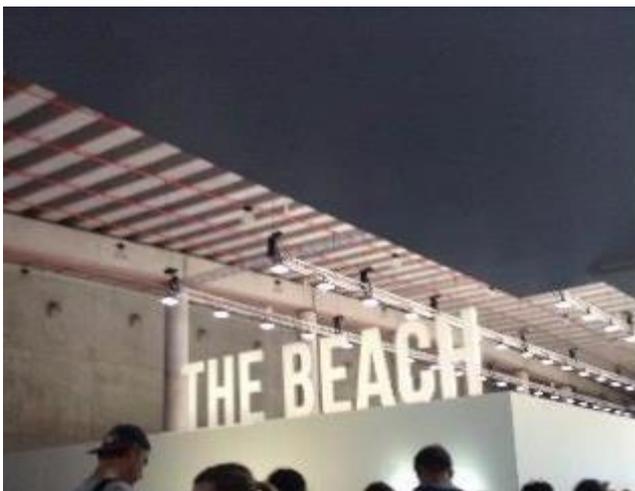
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The children record their observations and thinking through drawing



By developing strong relationships with the Barangaroo Authority and the Sydney Festival organisers, we were able to gain free access to festival events such as the Beach at Barangaroo.



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Don't be limited by what you think is possible... rather, think like a child with all the possibilities, then be brave enough to explore them... Dreaming big gave us a new perspective of our headland park.



Shared memories and adventures add to children's social capital...



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Our babies and toddlers love going out to explore. Babycinos at a local café are always a treat.



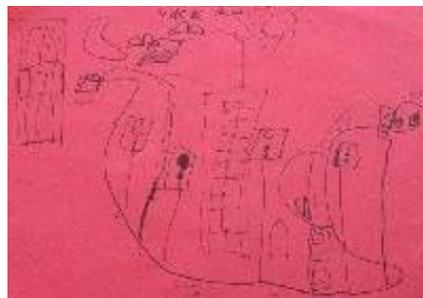
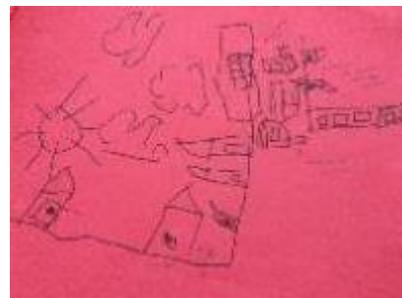
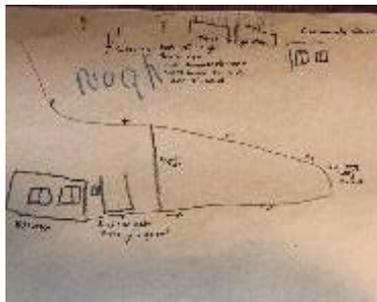
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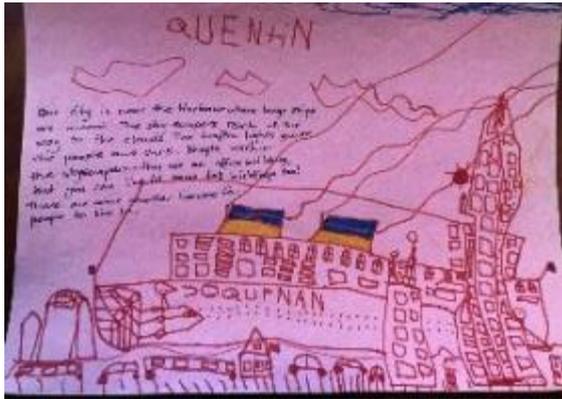
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“Taking part in community events provides “a sense of belonging and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active civic participation” (EYLF)

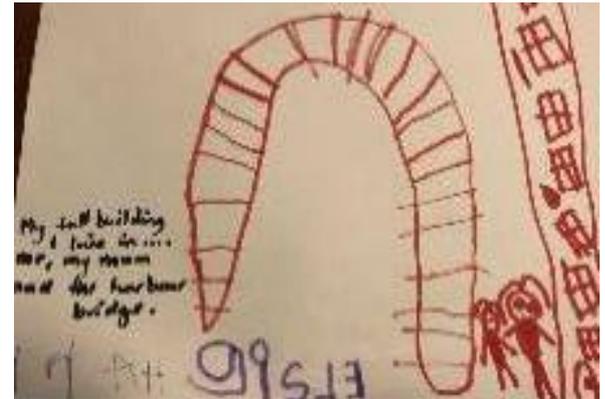


An intimate knowledge of place is demonstrated through mapping





And through artworks,
model making, story
telling and even yoga



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The community garden

becomes a place of advocacy



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The community garden

Helping the community to see young children as contributing citizens



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Developing empathy and kindness...

...through the travelling heart project.



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Children as advocates for others



Our children have a strong sense of social justice.

Their bark letter to the Prime Minister supported the Uluru Statement from the Heart for a First Nations voice in parliament.



...and their community


THE LORD MAYOR OF SYDNEY
CLOVER MOORE

24 July 2019

Invitation to Submit Your Ideas on the Future of Sydney

I invite you to submit ideas for action that will help shape the future of our city.

Since November 2016, the City of Sydney has undertaken extensive community consultation to help inform the vision for a new plan for Sydney to 2050. You can read the City's Community Engagement Insights Report at sydney2050.com.

We are now looking for large-scale transformative ideas to help realise the community's vision for Sydney. We are collecting ideas until 31 August 2019. You can submit your ideas for action and see other people's ideas at sydneyjourney.com.au.

From September to November 2019, a citizens' jury will consider and make recommendations on the ideas submitted. A citizens' jury is made up of a sample of everyday people from the community, who bring their local knowledge and develop a consensus on the recommendations they bring to Council.

The City is partnering with newDemocracy, a leading foundation working in citizen participation, to design and oversee the jury process. The jury will be made up of 50 randomly selected citizens who live, work or visit the city.

I also encourage you to sign up for our community research panel, which represents the diversity of our city. It is made up of residents, visitors, business owners, ratepayers and students. It is a great way to stay involved in the development of our new plan for Sydney to 2050 through surveys, workshops and e-news updates. To sign up, please go to sydneyjourney.com.au.

I look forward to seeing your ideas for action for our new Sydney 2050 plan.

Yours sincerely

Clover Moore
Lord Mayor of Sydney

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Our sculpture garden

Provides a special place for mosaic stepping-stones made with an Elder, an exhibition space for large artworks and provides art for passing workers and community members to enjoy on their lunch breaks.



Our street library



“Why aren’t there any children’s books in the community centre street library?”

“We should make one just for children!”



Our native beehive

Learning from the Aboriginal education team, the children discovered the importance of pollinators to our natural world



Bees need flowers, so our gumbot garden provided a perfect food source close to home for our native bees.



By going out the gate, children...

- Share adventures
- Build relationships
- Become observant
- Experience their world through new lenses
- Connect with nature
- See local community members as resources
- Become environmentally aware
- Learn about social justice
- Develop empathy
- Experience rights and responsibilities
- Develop confidence
- Build thinking and questioning capacities
- Become contributing citizens in the community



Social Capital is built

By providing these learning opportunities and sharing them with families, social capital is extended as families begin to see their community through the eyes of their children. This new view of their community brings families together with their community and allows them to develop a sense of belonging in the area and also contribute to the life of their community.

