



Our Philosophy

Children are our future and are integral to our world. Everything we do is in the best interest of the child. We honour and respect the child's rights, views and 'being' through our program and practice. We aim to nurture children to be confident people. Our core values and beliefs are that all members of our community exude Respect, Safety and Kindness in all aspects of their lives.

At AAA we value parent and community relationships and embrace families through shared decision making and story sharing. Our core values and beliefs are that all members of our community exude Respect, Safety and Kindness in all aspects of their lives. We will promote children's learning and development through respectful, equitable and meaningful relationships in a highly responsive, inclusive and innovative learning community.

Our work is grounded in the principles and practices of the My Time, Our Place, the National Quality Standards and the UN Rights of the Child. It is informed by our collective ideas and understandings about early childhood theories and research.

Relationships

At Aranda Afters we thrive to build and nurture trusting, reciprocal relationships with children, families, our wider community and each other where open and meaningful communication is of the essence. We believe that this is essential for children to form secure attachments in their life whilst becoming confident independent people. AAA encourages the practice of story sharing to create a feeling of belonging in our community. Everyone has a story to tell and by sharing these stories we create relationships and bonds that strengthen and unite us. Learning is enhanced in an environment where you feel you belong. Story sharing is a foundation for holistic learning and relationship building to encourage and support children to interact peacefully and collaboratively, express empathy for each other and actively challenge bias and promote social justice.

Professional development

Aranda Afters Association upholds high expectation relationships and high standards for all educators and team members. AAA strives to create an environment and culture which embodies integrity, compassion, empathy, motivation. We encourage all members to embrace opportunities for spontaneous and innovative practice, critical reflection and embed professional development into our everyday practice. We strive to create opportunities and culture of professional inquiry in which our educators operate without bias but challenge themselves and others to engage in actions and robust discussions that promote social justice. It is integral to our practice that our educators are knowledgeable of the UN rights of the child and that our educators are challenging themselves to engage with these rights to the highest ability.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy is not stagnant, it is something that develops and changes as our team, children and community changes and we strive to evolve our pedagogy and practice as our community evolves. Currently, our pedagogies are utilised to build confident people are the Playwork Approach and the Aboriginal 8 Ways of learning. Our practice is underpinned by Critical Theory and Socio-cultural theory.

These theories support the notion that all children are born with rights and have the agency and capacity to make decisions and choices about their learning. Critical theory encourages social transformation through education for a more just and equal world. We thrive to include families and the children as coparticipants in developing and implementing program. Socio-cultural theory holds relationships and participations as central to learning. Through our planned experiences and routines, children learn ways of being interdependent through their participation in everyday events and as members of different social groups. Children become active agents and contributors in the social groups in which they participate. It is empirical that our educators listen to our children and take the context of the childrens lives into account in our practice and expectations. Both our educators and childrens learning experiences connect with and extend children's ways of knowing, skills and understanding that they bring from home and the community.

Play

AAA is a place in which play takes priority as all children have the right to play. Play is central to how children learn, form and explore relationships and make sense of their world. As such, our program provides the possibilities for children to actively engage, interact and co-construct learning. Our aim is to create an innovative environment that activates a mindset where experiences are framed as occasions to be curious and creative, build confidence and agency to flourish and fail.

8 Ways

AAA is passionately committed to the reconciliation process and supporting the oldest surviving culture in the world. As such, educators are encouraged to practice the 8 interconnected ways of Aboriginal learning. Going into the 21st century, Indigenous pedagogies connect the deep past of human history with contemporary experiences and multimodal learning. We utilize this pedagogy to guide *through* culture, and not just about culture.

We strive to utilise these pedagogies by involving narrative-driven learning, visualised learning plans, hands-on/reflective techniques, use of symbols/metaphors, land-based learning, indirect/synergistic logic, modelled/scaffolded genre mastery, and connectedness to community.

Advocacy and Leadership

We recognize and respect the diverse backgrounds and cultures of each member of our AAA community and acknowledge how their involvement in our community enriches our service.

AAA is committed to fostering a safe and respectful environment free from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, age or disability. AAA will actively pursue social justice to address inequality and encourage our children to build the tools to do so as well.

We believe children's early experiences have long term implications for their learning and development. We are committed to providing the highest quality education and care in an inclusive, welcoming and vibrant setting, centered on children's best interests and rights.

We acknowledge everyone as an individual who is capable and competent, and we strive to operate without bias. For children, this will provide a sense of belonging and ownership of their environments, whilst also enabling them to become empowered and confident citizens. AAA believes children who have known kindness, trust and respect will value themselves and others.

We are respectful

We are safe

We are kind



- We are kind to ourselves, others and Country.
- We connect with each other in a meaningful way.

Children

- Feel safe, supported, heard, and loved
- Are genuinely consulted in decisions that affect their daily experiences, learning and wellbeing
- Are respected and empowered as active and capable learners, with agency
- Are encouraged and supported to develop reciprocal, respectful, and meaningful relationships with others that enhance their learning
- Are encouraged and supported to express their ideas, creativity, thoughts, and feelings
- Are provided opportunity and support to explore, experiment and take risks
- Are empowered in who they are and have a strong sense of identity and wellbeing
- Are supported to develop connections between people, country, place, and communities

- Are supported to regulate emotions and learn strategies for self-awareness and resilience

Educators

- Are sensitive, respectful, and ethical in their interactions with children, families, colleagues, and other professionals
- Are encouraged to be innovative, reflective and to base their pedagogy on theories, research, and other professional ideas
- Are respectful and supportive of children's rights
- Hold high expectations for every child by recognising, respecting, and building on children's strengths, interests, capabilities, and sense of agency
- Establish calm, consistent, and flexible routines/transitions based on children's individual wellbeing, identity and developing agency
- Are recognised as early childhood professionals and supported to continue their learning and development
- Are resourced to use a range of strategies to work towards the best outcomes for children
- Communicate honestly, respectfully, and effectively with others to promote children's best interests
- Model environmentally, socially, and ethically responsible thinking and pedagogy

- Support the development of the next generation of educators and leaders through student placement and mentoring
- Are responsible for advocating the value of early childhood education and supported to share their work with the wider early childhood community
 - Working collaboratively with colleagues to reach our common goals.
 - Listen empathetically to children when they express their emotions, reassure them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions and guide children to remove themselves from situations where they are experiencing frustration, anger or fear.
 - Support children to negotiate their rights and rights of others and intervene sensitively when children experience difficulty in resolving a disagreement.
 - Learn about children's relationships with others and the relationship preferences they have and use this knowledge to support children manage their own behaviour and develop empathy.
 - Use positive language, gestures, facial expressions and tone of voice when redirecting or discussing children's behaviour with them. They will also remain calm, gentle, patient and reassuring even when children strongly express distress, frustration or anger.
 - Guide all children's behaviour in ways that are focused on preserving and promoting children's self-esteem as well as

supporting children to develop skills to self-regulate their behaviour

- Model strategies for children to initiate interactions and participate in group play and social activities and assist them when they have trouble understanding or communicating with each other.
- Promote a sense of community in the service.
- Support and promote children's interpersonal relationships and support the inclusion of children from diverse backgrounds and capabilities in group play, projects and experiences.
- Learn about children's shared interests and will use this information to plan further experiences that provide collaborative learning opportunities.
- Pre-empt potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children's play and supporting interactions where there is conflict.
- Consider whether the size and composition of groups enables children to develop positive relationships with their peers and educators. They will minimise the time children spend in very large groups by offering activities where children are able to participate in smaller groups

Pedagogy

- Occurs in an environment that is safe, stimulating, creative, equitable and inclusive
- Provides open-ended learning experiences that are inviting, engaging and promote thinking and learning through play
- Respects and reflects children's unique dispositions for learning and their existing knowledge.
- Is responsive to the interests, ideas and needs of children, educators, and community
- Provides group and solitary learning opportunities that enable participation according to children's ideas, interests, strengths, developing agency and wellbeing
- Provides opportunities for children to broaden their perspectives and understanding of diverse ways of being, knowing and becoming

- Promotes environmental responsibility and sustainable practices through respect of natural, recycled, reused and other ethically purchased resources
- Empowers children to explore and act upon big ideas such as sustainability, children's rights, social justice, reconciliation, health, wellbeing, and diversity
- Is reflective of the unique values, knowledge and culture of our children, families, educators, and local community

Families

- Are recognised and valued as their child's first and most influential teachers
- Are encouraged to share their ideas, questions, values, and culture in a welcoming environment
- Are actively consulted and informed about their child's care, development, learning and daily experiences
- Are provided with opportunities and encouraged to take part in centre decision making
- Have opportunities to engage with each other and establish relationships with other families
- Are encouraged and supported to develop meaningful and engaging partnerships with educators that enable best outcomes for children