



Treading lightly – the pitter patter of little feet

In 2002, I heard Rose Knuth Monks (an Aboriginal elder), speak as she opened an Agricultural conference in Alice Springs. She is one of the few speakers, that I will never forget. She recounted the first time she heard a shower run. Her granddaughter was taking a shower and she couldn't believe it. Access to water in the dessert in her life was so precious and to hear it running freely like that disturbed her. She said that to ensure we sustain and protect our environment, "We must tread lightly."

I couldn't help being reminded of this as I volunteer on the odd occasion with the C&K Magnetic Island Early Child Centre. This 'place of little people' are supported by an underlying philosophy and generations of young parents and teachers who care about the environment and educating their young.

The Centre is now one of the major collection points for recycled materials on the island and as I found out recently, they have a history of caring.

Last week at one of our zero waste meetings, we found out that the Childcare Centre called on Michael Terkelsen from Lifestyle Landscapes 6 years ago, to design and build shaded seating under one of the big trees. The seats are made of recycled-plastic slats which are non-toxic and non-splintering. As you can see these children are not too shy about using the seats and they were very keen to show off their new T-shirts.



This bridge, which Ruby and Kobie are racing barefoot across, was also made from recycled-plastic Enduroplank™ with a composite fibre sub-structure. Then, as it turned out, as if that wasn't enough, Michael could not waste any material so using the leftovers, he created a little fairy house.

This is maybe old news for those families whose children were at the Centre 6 years ago, but for those of us who are visiting or part of the Centre in 2019, we need to be reminded about how forward thinking the Centre staff were, and still are. They seriously manage to care for the environment and the children as though they are one. And they are. Go kids go!

Story by Julie Woodlock, Zero Waste Committee Member.

Reference: <https://www.replas.com.au/?s=magnetic+island> accessed on the 13.11.2019

