



# Voices of Children Pedagogy™ in Practice: Year 1 Reflections – 2024 Implementation Case Studies

# Bright Start International Conference: Early Years Excellence in Practice

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# **Case Studies**

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# INTRODUCTION



#### Geneva, December 2024

#### Voices of Children Pedagogy™ in Practice: Year 1 Reflections – 2024 Implementation Case Studies

We are proud to present this inaugural edition, a landmark achievement in the journey of the Voices of Children Pedagogy<sup>™</sup>. Documenting its first year of implementation (January–June 2024) across diverse early childhood settings worldwide, this edition features compelling case studies that highlight the innovative practices, challenges, and accomplishments of educators and researchers as mentors integrating the evolving Voices of Children Pedagogy<sup>™</sup> approaches into everyday learning.

At its core, the Voices of Children Pedagogy<sup>™</sup> celebrates creativity, self-expression, and the transformative power of children as agents of change. Rooted in the belief that children's voices are vital to driving progress, this evolving approach aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) vision of children as agents of change and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 agenda, which aims to improve the quality and accessibility of early childhood education. It also builds upon the foundational work of world-renowned pedagogists, adapting their principles into a clear, actionable framework for implementation.

In today's rapidly changing world, integrating children's voices into educational frameworks is more urgent than ever. Creativity serves as both a tool and a goal—empowering children to express ideas, solve problems, collaborate meaningfully, and shape their futures. This pedagogy connects their natural curiosity, critical thinking, and resilience with a holistic, rights-based approach to learning.

This publication introduces the first chapter of the evolving Voices of Children Pedagogy™ framework—a 17-stage, step-by-step guide designed to transform this vision into everyday practice. Created in response to a global call from educators for actionable strategies to amplify children's voices, the early implementations of this pedagogy have already delivered extraordinary results, demonstrating its ability to transcend cultural and national boundaries.

We invite you to explore these inspiring narratives, gain valuable insights, and join a global movement to reimagine early childhood education. Together, we can amplify children's voices, inspire meaningful change, and build a brighter future shaped by the creativity and perspectives of our youngest learners.

Sincerely,

The Bright Start Foundation





# VOICES OF CHILDREN PEDAGOGY IMPLEMENTATION: A CASE OF TWO STUDIES Insights from Skool4kidz Campus @Yishun, in Singapore

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Author	Designation	Class	Age Group	Number of Children
Kankjana D/O Jeevananthan		N2A	4-year-olds	22
Nur Sabrina Ardini Binte Mohamad Nizar	_	KIA	5-year-olds	21
Siti Zafirah Binte Razali	Educator	K1B		20
Vanessa Peihui Han		K1C		21
Үі Ниі Үар		K2A	6-year-olds	25
Christina Meijuan Chan	Team Leader	5 Classes		Total: 109

#### INTRODUCTION

All children have the right to give their opinions freely. They also have the right to freely share what they learn, think and feel by talking, drawing, or writing unless it harms other people. We are mindful of articles 12 and 13 in UNESCO as we advocate for children's voices to be heard throughout the day during routines, interactions, verbal sharing and visual art expression, with parental and family engagement.

Embracing children's voices will align with our value statement of equipping children with communicative, critical thinking, creative, and collaborative capabilities (refer to slides 1 to 5). In embracing this project, we are keen to discover the progress and development of the participating children (case study 1) and how this project improves our educators' pedagogy and approaches to interacting with children (case study 2).

#### SETTING UP AN ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S VOICES

With parental consent, we invited 109 children from five classes to participate in this project. The educators agreed that we should let children set up an exclusive atelier as a school, though every class has an art space to support visual art expression. This initiative marks the first step in honouring children's choices and voices as they decide how to set up the art space, what they want to include, and when and how they would take turns using it. Children collaborated to create and design rules and labels and arrange the placement of materials (refer to slides 14 to 19).

The atelier is in a foyer near the reception so children can explore and play with the materials to create art pieces during arrival, transition, schedule timing, and while waiting for dismissal. Their artworks are also displayed, encouraging children to talk about them with their parents.

#### VISUAL ART EXPRESSION AND PHOTOGRAPHY

The project's initial phase concentrated on visual art expressions, with our children creating art pieces daily at the classroom art station or the atelier. The children proudly discussed their creations with peers and parents (slides 20 to 22). We did not limit children to painting, sculpting, and creating artefacts; we also introduced photography to children and showed them how to take clear shots by exploring the camera features. Our children shared the stories behind the photos they took (slides 23 to 26). Children also took pictures of their grandparents, which was one of our family engagement activities.

#### PARENTAL/FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

We aligned our Skool4Kidz's philosophy of collaborating with parents as a continuity effort to empower children's voices. In the first parental involvement activity, parents discussed the artwork children brought home from school, recorded their sharing and shared them with us (slides 29 and 30). We also distributed take-home kits for children and parents to create an art piece using natural materials and encouraged them to discuss the process. To respect children's views, educators have children decide how to show appreciation for their parents on Mother's and Father's Day (slides 31 to 35). To further enhance parents' understanding of the value of children's voices, we have arranged for a guest speaker to hold a talk for parents (slide 36) to show how respecting their choices can impact their self, social, and emotional competencies.

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#### CASE STUDY 1:

Through this project, are our children more vocal in spontaneously expressing their thoughts, knowledge and opinions? Has the project enhanced their language and social development?

#### Findings/Outcomes: Informal Observations

During our daily routines, such as mealtimes and clean-up, we observed that children communicated comfortably with each other and the teachers. As the project progressed, the educators noticed significant changes in the children's behaviour, engagement, and development. The children actively participated in discussions, showed better confidence in sharing their choices and ideas, and felt proud when they saw their artworks being displayed. They also readily shared their feelings, thoughts, and experiences (refer to the educators' reflections – slides 49 and 50).

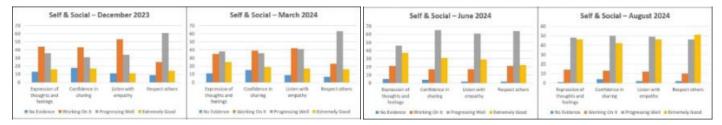
While getting children to select their artefacts for the virtual gallery in May, we noticed that most four- and five-yearolds could not express the rationale for the chosen piece. Their sharing focused much on what they did and how they went about it (slides 39 and 40). The educators reviewed and reflected on their questioning skills and considered ways to enhance them. At the same time, when we involve children in discussions more, we observe improvement in their sharing. This is shown through their support for the themes of the Manifesto. The children discussed the topic, listened to each other's opinions, and ultimately agreed on the two statements (slide 41).

#### Findings/Outcomes: Children's Learning and Development

We assessed our children's self/social and language development using the school learning and developmental cum thematic (skill-based) checklists, with an interval of three to four months to check for progress. Based on our informal observations and assessments, we can confirm that our children have become more vocal. The project has significantly enhanced their self, social, and language development.

#### Self/social area

In examining the four aspects of the self/social area, it is evident that over 90 (86%) children have made significant progress in expressing their thoughts over eight months, while 90 (82%) children have displayed confidence in verbal communication. Additionally, 95 (87%) children listen to others with empathy, and 97 (88%) show respect towards them has improved significantly (refer to slides 43 and 44 for the data).

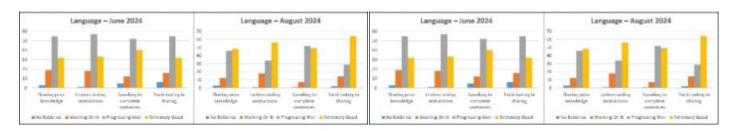


#### Language Development

On the children's language development, there are four areas we assessed:

- 1. Sharing prior knowledge
- 2. Understanding instructions
- 3. Speaking in complete sentences
- 4. Participating in sharing

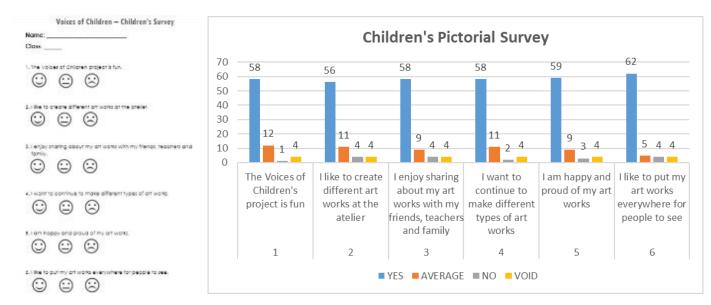
Once again, we see significant progress, especially in children's participation in sharing.



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#### Findings/Outcomes: Children's Views



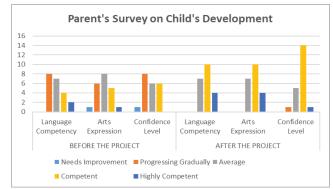
We valued our children's opinions by asking for their input on the project. Out of 109 children, 75 participated in the survey (slide 45). Here are our findings: Most children are proud and happy with their artwork and enjoy sharing it with family and others. They hope to display it everywhere so that others will appreciate it. Based on these findings, educators consciously tried to showcase more children's work in prominent places and regularly display new pieces for children to discuss with parents and peers.

#### Findings/Outcomes: Parental Feedback Through Surveys

To understand how our parents feel about the project, we sent out the first parent survey in May and received 36 responses. Parents shared their observations about the changes in their children's school experiences and their feelings about the first parental involvement activity. Some of the feedback from parents are below: -

Visual Art Expressions	Language	Others
Parent 1: "She would request our phone to take photos." Parent 2: "She tends to draw more at home and describe what her drawing is about concerning what she did in school, too."	Parent 3: "He shared what he does and how he enjoys painting, collage and making sculptures." Parent 4: "He is better at sharing after the commencement of the project." Parent 5: "My child is more observant by identifying his classmates' artwork displayed in school."	Parent 6: "Good start to let us par- ents understand what the child thinks when doing the art piece." Parent 7: "I'm impressed with what they can develop for this project and very proud of Oliver."

To demonstrate that our children have benefited from this project, we sent out the second parent survey to gather feedback on how the Voices of Children project has impacted their child's development after six months of implementation. The survey compared children's language competency, art expression, and self-confidence before and after participating in the project (slides 46 and 47).





Out of 21 parents surveyed:

- 66% noticed an increase in their children's language competence after participating.
- 66% also observed a 28% increase in their children's competence in art expression.
- 71% saw a 43% surge in their children's confidence.

#### Findings/Outcomes: Grandparents' Responses

After introducing an activity to engage grandparents (slides 37 and 38), we collected feedback from the parents and grandparents. Here are some of the responses we received.

- "We felt happy and grateful that our grandson made the decorated frame."
- "More activities like this teach children the value of respecting elderly family members."
- "Novisha's creativity in making the beautiful frame is appreciated."
- "We appreciate this touching gesture from the school."
- "Her grandma was pleasantly surprised by the photo frame from Leesa. She kept it in the transparent display cupboard so the frame wouldn't be damaged. So overall, the grandma said well done and very nice of Leesa to do this for her. I feel this project quite emotional."

Based on the positive feedback from some families, this project has undoubtedly fostered children's communication skills, confidence, and ability to collaborate with others (as reflected in the atelier setup and selection of the manifesto).

#### CASE STUDY 2:

Through embracing children's voices, how have our educators changed their pedagogy and approaches to interacting with children?

When leading the project, a challenge will be to gain the support and alignment of educators' perspectives towards the Voices of Children pedagogy: listening to children, educator's questioning and responding to children. Educators must understand how implementing the Voices of Children pedagogy can be integrated into their daily practices rather than being an additional component. Given this, we are evaluating our educators' pedagogy.

#### Supporting Educators' Skills

The educators attended virtual seminars and coaching sessions and read various journals and articles on ways to elite and embrace children's voices. They reflected on what they learned and how they applied the skill set to their daily practices. To truly listen to children and allow them to express themselves, our educators reviewed the different types of questions, adjusted them as necessary, incorporated more advanced thinking questions, and regularly assessed their effectiveness. Our educators continuously refined and enhanced their approaches to embracing the Voices of Children pedagogy by learning and applying these techniques.

Here's an example of how educators have applied the knowledge gained from a seminar. Please see slide 48 for their takeaways from the article reading.

	Educator 1	Educator 2	Educator 3	Educator 4	Educator 5
One key takeaway from the Seminar	It is essential to rephrase and re-cast children's statements. Extending their sharing could also expand their ideas.	To establish a supportive atmosphere where children feel safe and respected. Children must share their thoughts and feelings openly without fear of judgment.	The children need to establish trust in the teachers, which will increase their confidence and willingness to answer questions.	Teachers should ask more challenging questions to clever and gifted students while posing more straightforward questions to weaker students.	Reviewing what the children have shared is crucial to better understanding their thoughts.
Application	l used question word cards to help the children understand the question's meaning.	I encouraged the children to respect and appreciate their peers' sharing so that the children who shared would feel heard and not afraid to share their thoughts.	I encouraged children to ask questions and have them be engaged by facilitating them to find out more about one another's creations.	Based on children's comprehension, I asked the same questions differently so all children could understand the questions.	I reviewed what the children shared to gain a better understanding of them.



#### Findings/Outcomes: Teachers' Reflections

This project helps children become more confident and expressive while pushing educators to evaluate and enhance their teaching methods.

The table above shows what the educators have learned based on their key takeaways from the seminars. In their initial reflections, all five educators recognised the importance of art expression and how it has become a platform for children to engage in conversations and share with others. The educators reflected on their teaching practices, especially questioning techniques (slides 49 and 50).

#### Findings/Outcomes: Leaders' Observations on Educators' Interaction with Children

Prominent and notable changes were observed in all five educators' skills in interacting with children. This was evident during formal and informal observations of educators' interactions with the children. During lessons, they used question cards to ask higher-order thinking questions to stimulate children's sharing of their thoughts, ideas, and opinions. It was also observed that the educators created ample opportunities for children to talk about their thoughts and feelings during transitions and routines. The ongoing conversations and interactions made embracing and respecting children's voices evident.

#### CONCLUSION (CHALLENGE/IMPLICATION/RECOMMENDATION):

The project has influenced educators' and some parents' perspectives on embracing children's voices by actively listening to them, asking questions, and providing feedback. Positive changes were observed in the children's behaviour, engagement, and development. Our educators expressed satisfaction with the children's confidence in relating to others and engagement in thoughtful discussions. This is attributed to their pedagogy in interacting with children, making each one feel respected and heard throughout the day.

Getting most of the participating children's parents to engage in most activities and surveys was challenging. This may be due to their busy schedules and other commitments. However, we are still thankful that some are making concerted efforts to participate and evaluate the children's learning journey in this project.

Embarking on this is not a one-time or periodic project; it should be part of educators' daily engagement with children. Enculturating this pedagogy should ensure that all children's voices are heard.

#### SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

Through this project, we've gathered numerous photographs and documentation of children's artworks and responses. Please click on the PowerPoint document for the details.



# VOICES OF CHILDREN PEDAGOGY IMPLEMENTATION Insights from Skool4kidz Campus @Fernvale

#### Authors: Cindy Wong Xin Yi, Liang Qiyun, Nur Ameera Senen, Regina Ng Sizhen, Siti Nadiah Abdul Rahim

#### **PROJECT INTRODUCTION**

Our current curriculum approach involves teacher-planned and directed art activities conducted at the outdoor Atelier with teacher-selected materials. However, when the team was introduced to the idea of listening to young children's perspectives and giving them opportunities to make changes, we embarked on a project to **discover how children can lead in their interests and create meaning in their work through expressive visual arts**. The team shared this idea with a group of kindergarten two children, who eagerly expressed interest in participating in the project, highlighting their **active role in the process**.

The team first formally discussed with the children the current processes they participated in when completing art activities. The team then interviewed children and teachers about what they felt could be done better for art activities. The children hoped that they can have **more freedom of choice when doing art activities, from selecting of materials to the setting up of the displays.** The children led a discussion on the set up of a Voices of Children's Lab within the Atelier. They were excited to redesign the layout of the materials within the Atelier and they felt a huge sense of ownership when the set up was completed.



Voices of Children Lab was set up in the Atelier to showcase the children's chosen artefacts.

# Voices of Children Pedagogy™ in Practice: Year 1 Reflections – 2024 Implementation Case Studies



#### Educator: "Do you know what Voices of Children is about?"

"Indoor Voice", "About children" "Children's voice...something that is so nice." "Something that you think about and feel about and then you say."

#### Educator: "If you could draw anything and put it in the gallery, what would youmake/draw?"

Diane: "Nature, I will use color pencil for the garden" Janelle: "Playground, I will draw" Jaden: "I want to build a MRT because I love MRTs. I will use cardboard, straws and glue." Kai Jie: "A flower because I like flower. I will use coloring pencil."





Children writing down their own thoughts and ideas to share with their teachers and peers

#### Educator: "How do you feel about doing art now?"

Arthur: "Boring!" Methias: "Cannot choose what I want to use" Lovelle: "I want more materials" Jia Rui: "To be more fun"

Educator: "What materials do you want to include in the Atelier?" "Paper", "Color pencils", "Plastic straws", "Crayons", "Color paper", "Paint"



Children exploring the Atelier and writing down their choice of materials to use for their art work.

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#### **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

As the VOC project focuses on children as agents of change, the team then discussed with the children on how they can bring about change to the world. The children decided upon the theme focus - 'Environment' as majority of them voiced their thoughts on how they would like to make a change in the environment for a better world. The children were then divided into smaller groups, to ensure better facilitation of the discussion. They were also given opportunities to select the groups they would like to be in.

Educator: "Do you remember what Ms. Nadiah shared about the environment? So, let's think about a problem in the environment that is linked to your artwork."

Jia Rui: "The people litter in the water, and then the clam and starfish will die." Kaitlyn: "I want to stay with my friend." Laura: "People running around and drowning at the beach."

Delving deeper into the project, the educators interviewed the children individually on how they can represent their thoughts on changes through art. They worked on a sketch of the first artwork draft, accompanied by detailed markings on their chosen art materials. Below are some of their thought processes captured during the discussions: Delving deeper into the project, the educators interviewed the children individually on how they can represent their thoughts on changes through art. They worked on a sketch of the first artwork draft, accompanied by detailed markings on their chosen art materials. Below are some of their thought processes captured during the discussions: Delving deeper into the project, the educators interviewed the children individually on how they can represent their thoughts on changes through art. They worked on a sketch of the first artwork draft, accompanied by detailed markings on their chosen art materials. Below are some of their thought processes captured during the discussions:

#### "Changing the World"







#### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

In two weeks, the children worked on their projects, reflecting upon the changes they would like to see. They would visit the Atelier to retrieve materials needed for their artworks and continue working on their masterpieces. One of the children, Laura L., commented, "Doing the artwork in the Atelier is better because I can easily find the materials I want to make my artwork." Another child, Mae L., shared that she enjoyed doing her artwork in the Atelier because her "friends don't disturb her work".

The educators also felt that **because each child was doing different art forms, they were not pressured to complete their artwork quickly. Instead, they put a lot of thought and effort into achieving their artwork**. The children created 2D and 3D artworks, reflecting clearly the changes they would like to see. The children were also encouraged to pen their thoughts about the artwork! For those who were unable to write, the educators helped to scribe their thoughts down.

Kai Jie: "This is a garden. I like to have flowers around for people to enjoy seeing."

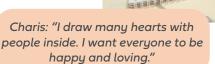




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Vera: "I want to build a tall house for me and my family."





Jia Rui: "The people litter in the water, and then the clam and starfish will die. So I have to dive to pick up the litter. If too much, I have to use a big net that don't have holes."

CLERRER A

# Voices of Children Pedagogy™ in Practice: Year 1 Reflections – 2024 Implementation Case Studies



The children were given an opportunity to share their experiences creating the artwork and their thoughts on the project with children from Dubai via Zoom! They listened gleefully to the stories of their Dubai friends as they shared their hopes and dreams through drawings and stories. **Jayden Y. also volunteered to share how he made his 'shark' artwork and hoped for "more aquariums to be built so that (he) can save more sharks"**. At the end of the Zoom session, **Methias expressed a field trip to Dubai to visit the participants and view their artwork, too!** In addition, the children were invited to view their artworks in the Voices of Children Pedagogy Virtual Gallery on 10 June 2024. Many shared that they were **"happy", "very proud", and "excited"** to see their artwork on an international platform!



Screenshot of our Zoom session with VOC participants from Dubai.



FVC children enjoying their artworks in the Voices Of Children Pedagogy Virtual Gallery on 10 June 2024.

Children's responses on viewing their artworks in the virtual gallery:

Alya - "It feels like I'm a famous artist!" Jeremiah - "It is so nice to see my artwork. I want to show my aunty and uncles!" Charis - "Can we see this at home? I want to show my Grandma!"



#### CHALLENGES

#### Some of the challenges faced by the team during implementation:

- Integrating VOC pedagogy into daily activities as the school follows a pre-determined curriculum and timetable.
- Finding sufficient time to meet children to follow up on their craft and have discussions while fulfilling the daily lessons and activities stipulated by the school.
- Children's lack of awareness of many worldly issues might be insufficient to determine a change they feel
  passionate about.

#### SOLUTIONS

#### Solutions the team came up with:

- Introduce new ideas during the morning circle time and provide daily class opportunities for children to have autonomy in making choices and voicing their thoughts. These include extensive group sessions, a current issues segment, and small group art activities.
- The team planned weekly sessions to meet children and allow them to gain access to the Voices of Children's lab, where they could continue creating crafts in their free time.
- More real-world issues were shared during the weekly current issues segment to prompt children on their thoughts
  and ideas further to invoke their thoughts on the matter and their responses.



FVC children working hard on their artworks, as they use a variety of art materials of their choice.

#### PROJECT OUTCOMES / IMPACT ON OUR STAKEHOLDERS

#### Chilidren

Children were observed to be more reflective during the project duration and even after its completion as they went about their daily activities. They could articulate their thoughts on the themes of their artworks and how they could make changes in other areas. Together, they devised manifestos on how they could be agents of change and sent them to their local community to let their voices have an impact on our society. The project also had a positive impact on children's self-and social-emotional development. Children who were more withdrawn and quieter in class prior to the project could speak up more during small group facilitations as they were assured that their voices would be heard. The children had the autonomy to present their artwork to their parents. There is a significant increase in the positive experience felt by children after the initiative of this project.



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#### Educators

The educators were also deeply inspired to change the way they discuss topics or conduct art activities in the classroom. They learnt to be more attentive to children's voices, which helped steer the direction of the discussion or the final artwork. In addition, the educators noticed the growth in the children's confidence in leading the way towards creating their masterpieces. Educators' questioning techniques have also greatly improved to invoke more voices from the children!



Class teachers conducting morning circle time to give children more time to share their thoughts in class.



#### **Family: Grandparents**

The project also helps bridge the relationship between children and their grandparents. As children shared about the project and their artworks with them, grandparents were also encouraged to share their thoughts about the ideas shared and to give words of motivation to children.





Lovelle's grandpa: "Very proud of her art, so nice."

#### **Family: Parents**

Here are some of the parents' thoughts about the VOC project from a survey conducted:

- "He came back describing about his progress in building up his art piece with his teachers. And he was super excited about the zoom meeting with Qatar. He was full of pride when introducing to us about the artwork done!"
- "This is a fantastic project. It not only arouses interest in the children about art, it also teaches them about the bigger world they are in."

\*\*95% of parent respondents from a recent survey indicated that they are happy with the outcome of the VOC project



Zheng Han's mummy: "I never thought he could express his thoughts well because he don't like to speak English."



Ian's mummy: "To see his artwork coming to life, it makes me happy!"



Jia Rui's mum: "Very proud to see his work. Surprised to see how he wants to change the world."



#### PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY / PROJECT EXTENSION

Listening to children's voices was also implemented daily in the classroom to extend the project's positive impact. This is done through children now selecting their art materials, being the primary decision-makers on the outcome of their artwork and show and tell sessions for children to share more about their final products. This also helps children develop pride and accomplishment.

The children's voices are also reflected in the classroom as they frequently share their thoughts and feelings about what is happening in the world through the current issue awareness segment during the week.

#### IN CONCLUSION

Overall, the success of the Voices of Children project cannot be negated. The positive impacts of the Voices of Children's pedagogy enhance the children's development in more areas than one. It improves the children's command of language as they are given the time and freedom to express themselves through written or verbal form. Additionally, it builds children's confidence in their abilities and empowers them to make their own choices as they feel respected, valued and heard.

The educators observed that children were more engaged in art activities, displaying a sense of ownership and pride in their artwork. Children with a slow-to-warm-up temperament were also seen benefitting from the project. It was truly a meaningful experience for children and educators as they embarked on the learning journey together.

#### FUTURE PLANS:

From the survey conducted with the children, they were eager to share about this project to other children in school. The team hopes to sustain the VOC Pedagogy Project to benefit more children and teachers in the coming year. With this, teachers will be more equipped with effective questioning techniques and skills to listen to the children's voices. We also hope that our children will be more confident to verbalise their thoughts and feelings, not just in art activities, but also in daily sharing. Here's a brief timeline on our future plans for the **VOC Pedagogy Project:** 

- Share about the findings from the VOC project with all teachers

 Brief teachers on timeline of VOC project for 2025

-Identify teachers who require additional support in implementing the project & plan for support to be given -Inform parents of VOC project timeline through curriculum sessions held for each level. Launch VOC Project for Semester 1 (Jan–June) for K1 & K2 classes

Weave opportunities in daily schedules and activities such as creative arts sessions, circle time, etc., to ensure space and time for children to express their voices, in line with the Voices of Children Pedagogy

-Check-in #1: current project progress, success & challenges

Plan for Gallery Walk #1 - theme and timeline

Continue to work on their art masterpieces for the Gallery Walk in June 2025.

-Send invites out to parents & grandparents

#### Dec 2024

VOICES OF CHILDREN FIESTA GALLERY WALK #2

#### Jan-Mar 2025

Neave opportunities in daily schedules and activiies such as creative arts sessions, circle time, etc., to ensure space and time for children to express their roices, in line with the Voices of Children Pedagogy

Check-in #2: current project progress, success & challenges

-Plan for Gallery Walk #2 - theme and timeline

All class teachers and children to work on their art masterpieces for the Gallery Walk in end Nov 2025.

Send out invites to parents & grandparents

#### Apr-May 2025

#### VOICES OF CHILDREN GALLERY WALK #1

- Conduct sharing session by K1 and K2 children on their experience taking part in the VOC project

- VOC project by K1 & K2 children

- Launch VOC Project for semester 2 (July-Nov)

June 2025



July-Oct 2025



# VOICES OF CHILDREN PEDAGOGY IMPLEMENTATION: INSIGHTS FROM SKOOL4KIDZ TAMPINES GREEN RIDGES PRESCHOOL IN SINGAPORE

# Authors: Mariah Binte Masmin, Esther Seow Wen Hui, Nurul Huda Binte Yahaya, Minakshi Agarwal, Lee Mee Han Jessica, Vasandy S N

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Skool4kidz Tampines Green Ridges Preschool serves a diverse group of 200 children ranging from 18 months to 6 years. The school is committed to provide high-quality early childhood education that respects and integrates the voices of children in their learning process. The teachers in this centre are deeply committed to empowering to children to be decisionmakers. We believe in involving children's interest and thoughts in their daily learning. Thus, making children suggest and talk about what they would like to know is always the starting point for our themes. In 2024, Skool4kidz Preschool embarked on implementing the "Voices of Children" pedagogy to enhance its child-centred approach across 3 age groups, totalling 117 children aged 4 to 6 years old.

#### IMPLEMENTATION

To ensure children's voices are heard and respected, the group of teachers involved children to brainstormed activities that could be implemented, allowing them to express their thoughts and ideas in their individual age group settings. Instead of conducting the project separately, it was suggested by children and decided to make it part of the daily flow of activities in the classes. Children are observed to express their thoughts through drawings and enjoy doing it. To encourage children to express their thought processes, the Art Corner was chosen and was designed to provide free access to a variety of materials in each class. Through free exploration, children will be able to express their thoughts through drawings and artwork.



Art Art corner prepared for children to explore

The program was launched with a reading of the book *Anna at the Art Museum* by Gail Herbert and Hazel Hutchins. This inspired the children to create their own artwork, which would be sent to an art gallery for display. The children then expressed a desire to visit an art gallery to see what it looks like in person.

After reading the book, children were observed to do a self-portrait, where they developed self-awareness and an understanding of their physical appearance and unique traits by drawing themselves. Teachers encouraged children to communicate their feelings, personality, and identity to their peers and teachers. 'Understanding that everyone is an individual helps bring awareness to others' perspectives and behaviours. This concept is essential because recognizing individual differences allows us to better understand and empathize with others. When we acknowledge that each person has a unique perspective shaped by their experiences, it fosters more meaningful connections and reduces misunderstandings in our interactions.' (Psychology Today) When children share their likes and dislikes, peers are able to comprehend the uniqueness of each child and work alongside. Teachers witness the understanding among peers after this activity.

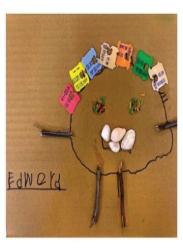




- "This is "It's Me"

"Look at me. I have short, straight and black hair. I like my hair and I like my smile."

Edith, 4 years old, Skool4Kidz @ Tampines GreenRidges, Singapore



- "This is "My Self-Portrait".

This is Edward, the little boy. I used bread tags for my hairs because my house has a lot of them. I like my rainbow eyes. I collected shell from the beach and used this for my teeth.

Edward, 4 years old, Skool4kidz @ Tampines GreenRidges, Singapore

Self portrait of children drawing their unique features.

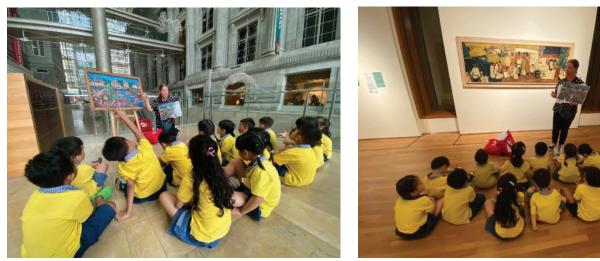
After completing the self-portrait activity, children at Skool4Kidz formed small groups to explore the term's curriculum theme, "Neighbourhood." The teachers facilitated group sessions where the children collaborated to construct their own neighbourhoods and create a mailbox. They drew on their prior experiences and observations from neighbourhood walks, sharing what they had seen around their local area. At the conclusion of the theme, the children collectively wrote a manifesto to community leaders, asking for more swimming pools and public toilets. This activity empowered the children to express their needs and preferences, reinforcing their role as active members of their community. Although the curriculum team provided the theme, the ideas of creating a mailbox and constructing their neighbourhood were suggested by the children.

	Deat Leaders. We hope to Have make playsrounds and Weiss parks, so whe can play with out friends. Here more Public to the In the Parks an ancients for People to use	Gelery Tame Color Arres CACLY NYCO Tame Call Arres CALY Arrow CALLY NYCO Tame Call Arrow Call Arrow Call Arrow Call Arrow Call Tame Call Arrow Cal
P Charter and the Shock Kitz Voc 2024	Hahk you!	Skool4KidZ Voc 2024

Manifesto created by children for the leaders with their needs for the community

At the children's request, an excursion to the Singapore National Gallery was organized, allowing them to join a tour that explored how artists portray families in their works and how these artworks reflect important family values such as love, care, concern, commitment, and respect. This experience enabled the children to observe, imagine, and engage with these values in a meaningful way.





Children at the Art Museum engaged in discussion

To involve families in the project, teachers created a home-school connector activity as part of the school curriculum. During discussions, the children shared their experiences visiting various types of buildings, such as dome-shaped structures. One child suggested exploring the buildings in their local area. Following this, teachers sent an activity home to parents, encouraging them to explore different types of dwellings and buildings in Singapore and around the world. Families were invited to create models of their favourite buildings, fostering values of respect and appreciation for the community. Parents were also encouraged to listen to their children's perspectives on the buildings they explored.

#### OUTCOME

There was lots of excitement and anticipation being observed from children, upon introducing the project. The enthusiasm was evident throughout the project via children's conversations, suggestions and questions raised. There were many instances when children were able to discuss and put their suggestions and ideas to the group they were working with. Firstly, when children presented their self-portraits during show-and-tell, the comments from their peers were enlightening, revealing the different ways they perceived one another. Questions raised, such as "I didn't know you like this, so much" and "I'll be your friend to play blocks. We can play together".

Secondly, lots of collaboration was seen when the group of children started building their community with materials they use for recycling. Children were able to collaborate and give in to accommodate the ideas of others. There were discussions on problem solving, brainstorming and accommodating ideas among the groups displaying teamwork as they dwell on building their community with minimum interference from teachers. "What do you want to place in the playground?" "We can use recycle bottles and strings to make a swing." "That's a good idea."



Children engaged in reproducing the neighbourhood using recycle materials.



Next, the visit to the art museum brought awareness to how art can express one's emotions and enable relationships to flourish. Children got to see the respect that was given to the artwork on display. When children were back in the classroom, there was sharing of how they could appreciate their peers' artwork, which are displayed in the classrooms. Reference was also made to the online Art Gallery where the children's work were displayed.

Grandparents were involved by getting them to come in to share on their neighbourhood facilities. Children were amazed as to how very minimum facilities were available in the neighbourhood. Grandparents shared on how they made their own toys using tyres and stones. This provoked the children's thinking and they expressed amazement.

Lastly, teachers were amazed when the manifesto was created. Children put forth their views of what can be included in the neighbourhood to enhance the environment. Ideas coming from children was astonishing because it is for their needs and wants. They requested for a swimming pool and restrooms to suit their convenience. It was phenomenal to hear children's view of putting their needs to the leaders.

#### CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

Overcoming the lack of materials and the place to store them for easy retrieval by children, was one of the challenges initially. However, this was overcome by getting parents to contribute recyclable materials. Teachers used these recyclable materials to create storage boxes to hold the art materials.

Teachers reflect that the project emphasizes listening to children, validating their experiences, and encouraging them to be active participants in their learning environment. Reflecting on teachers' role, they realize how essential it is to create a space where children feel safe and respected to express themselves. Observation shows that when children are given a voice, their creativity flourishes, and they become more engaged and confident in their learning. The project also paved way for intentional listening, ensuring not only hearing children but actively understand their thoughts and ideas. By prioritizing their voices, teachers become more attuned to their individual strengths, interests, and emotional needs. Ultimately, this approach strengthens relationships and promotes a more inclusive, dynamic learning environment where children feel seen and valued.

Another teacher's reflection states, by reinforcing the importance of allowing children to express themselves, be it in making decisions, sharing their thoughts, feelings and ideas, or even in daily interactions. Opportunities can be planned and created spontaneously for children's voices to be heard and valued, like engaging in conversations during routines and selecting materials for an art activity. At the same time, the importance of perspective-taking and open-mindedness in listening to others, including children should not be neglected.

Art activities initiate the thought processes of the child and as a teacher, understanding their expression was effective in individualising and making learning be more effective and enjoyable.

Listening to feedback from children provides valuable insights for refining teaching practices and creating an inclusive environment where every child feels valued and supported. Ultimately, diverse listening practices contribute to the holistic development of students, fostering a more effective and dynamic learning experience.

Although it was an enjoyable journey, it does not end here. The journey has just started for the teachers as they can further understand the voices of children by not only being with them but by listening with intention to their thought process and creating more opportunities to express and take different perspective.

#### SUSTAINABILITY

Teachers have had a valuable experience listening to the children, which has enhanced their learning and made it more aligned with the children's interests. We aim to advocate to our peer teachers about the significant insights gained during the project implementation. This approach can inspire others to adopt it, fostering a culture of child-centred learning throughout the centre.

To put this into practice, each class will conduct a brainstorming session at the start of every new theme to understand the children's thoughts, interests, and what they would like to explore. Teachers can then plan activities based on the children's needs and interests.

While this project mainly focused on art activities, we aim to broaden it to include other domains such as language, math, science, and physical activities. This can be achieved by introducing books and encouraging children to share their reflections, conducting science experiments, and more.

To keep parents informed and involved, the termly newsletter will feature a "Voices from Children" section to share the children's thoughts and learning experiences.

These steps will yield significant benefits, encouraging teachers to recognize and incorporate the children's thought processes into their teaching, making it a fundamental approach to education.

#### REFERENCE

David W. Johnson Ed.D., The Importance of Taking the Perspective of Others, Psychology Today, June 5 2019,



# VOICES OF CHILDREN PEDAGOGY<sup>™</sup> IMPLEMENTATION Insights from Pre-School By-The-Park in Singapore

#### Authors: Fedore Chua Shu Chyi, Natalie Choo Zhixuan, Yi Lin Tan

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

This project was implemented at Pre-School By-The-Park, involving two classes: a Kindergarten 1 (K1) class of 10 children (5 years old) and a Kindergarten 2 (K2) class of 12 children (6 years old). The project aimed to empower children to express their voices and ideas through art and dialogue, fostering confidence and autonomy in the learning process.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION**

#### Starting Phase: Discussions During Circle Time

The project began with intentional facilitation by educators during circle time to encourage children to talk about their artwork. A routine was established where a section of circle time was dedicated to observing and discussing artworks created within the class. Through these discussions, children extended their vocabulary on art appreciation, enabling them to share their artwork with increasing confidence.

As the circle time discussions progressed, the educators extended the dialogues to the children's learning environment by inviting children to share their reflections on the setup of their classroom's art spaces. Through the reflection sessions, children expressed their preference for the choice of materials, placement of tables, and the arrangement of display boards for their artwork. A collaborative plan was made, and the children, alongside their educators, transformed the art space. The redesigned area featured a board at children's height, allowing them to display their artwork independently. A variety of materials were provided for children to write descriptions and ideas next to their creations.

#### Listening to the "Voices"

Drawing inspiration from Reggio Emilia's pedagogy, the concept of listening was expanded to include listening not only with ears but also with all senses—sight, touch, smell, and even with their bodies. Listening to the "hundred languages" became a metaphor for being open and sensitive to the various ways children express themselves (Victoria State Government, n.d.)

To document these expressions, educators created time and space to capture children's voices by writing down their ideas and words on post-its and notes, which were displayed alongside the children's artwork. The journey to elicit and honour children's voices continued and the term "voice" became part of the common language shared between the educators and children.



Picture 1: Display board that includes children's artwork and voices



#### **Exhibiting Children's Work**

The project's focus on children's voices sparked curiosity about the concept of "voice," both spoken and written. This led to an exploration that culminated in a "Museum Camp," where children visited museums to observe how artists express their voices. Inspired by their visits, the children decided to create their own museum, featuring galleries of their artwork and pieces to sell in a museum shop.

In the culminating event, families were invited to a gallery walk, where children took on roles such as ticket collectors, ushers, and exhibit guides, proudly showcasing their creations.



Picture 2: Children showcasing their galleries of artwork with families



Picture 3: Children planned and take up different roles such as ticket collectors at their museum showcase

The entire process was conducted over an extended, unhurried period, aligned with the principles of a slow curriculum. The implementation of this slow curriculum by the educators allowed children ample time for thoughtful self-expression and careful selection of materials to use in their creative processes (Clark, 2023). The unpressured timeframe enabled the children to revisit their ideas and creations, as well as reflect on places they had visited and stories related to museums and art pieces. It created opportunities for deeper learning, encouraging children to engage in observation, listening, reflection, and documentation over the course of a month (Froebel Trust, 2023). During this period, teachers organised multiple excursions, allowing the children to visit various museums across Singapore. These experiences culminated in collaborative brainstorming sessions, where the children devised plans to create their own museum within the school and discussed the necessary components to set up art exhibitions in their classrooms.

#### OUTCOMES

One of the most significant outcomes of the project was the noticeable increase in children's calmness and emotional regulation. Before the project, children often spoke over one another during playtime, leading to a noisy, disorganised atmosphere. The project introduced a structured platform for children to express their ideas respectfully and thoughtfully, which helped create a more regulated and respectful environment.

As the project advanced, educators observed that children were becoming more confident and empowered in expressing their ideas. Through the reflections of the learning space, it was observed that the children were motivated to express their preferences. This observation showed that acknowledging the children's inputs fostered a sense of ownership and increased the engagement of children. This led to the intrinsic motivation for children to continue to express their ideas and document their own voices in the class. They began writing their own descriptions and displaying their artwork in the art space without prompting, turning the space into a vibrant area of self-expression and peer interaction.





Picture 4: After working on an art pieces, the child proceeded to create a paper book taught by the teacher and wrote down the process of how he created the artwork independently in the art space.

The educators also noticed an increased appreciation among the children for each other's work. Children offered words of encouragement like "I really like your drawing" and "Can you show me how you draw?" Over time, they began to observe finer details in their peers' artwork, leading to collaborative moments such as, "I didn't think of adding the texture of the bark in my drawing, can you show me how you did it?" This exchange of ideas fostered peer learning by empowering the children's voices.

As children grew more accustomed to sharing their thoughts during circle time, they also learned to listen to one another and wait their turn to speak, fostering a culture of mutual respect. This shift contributed to a calmer classroom environment, where children could confidently express themselves and collaborate meaningfully.

#### CHALLENGES AND REFLECTIONS

A significant challenge we faced at the initial stage of the implementation of Voices of Children Pedagogy was managing the classroom dynamics as children tend to talk over each other with children who are more expressive dominating the discussions. The team of educators worked together to come up with strategies for children to share respectfully and ensure each child has equal opportunities to share. One strategy was passing a ball in a circle, allowing children to take turns to share when they are holding onto the ball. The educators took the opportunity to pose the issue to the children and invited them to come up with different ways to respect each other's sharing. A class pact with the children's ideas was displayed in the classes to remind the children of their commitment.

"Teachers are involved in continuous research; individually, with other teachers, and with the children. They are engaged in an ongoing process of observing and documenting children's work and learning in order to reflect on their practice and understand the learning process more deeply." (Edwards et al., 2012, p. 200). The collaboration among the educators in the Kindergarten 1 and 2 classes proved to be a valuable learning experience. Working together not only addressed immediate challenges but also fostered a culture of reflective practice. Through self and group reflection, the educators engaged in ongoing discussions about their practices, enabling them to continuously adapt and improve their teaching strategies. These reflection sessions allowed the team to identify areas of strength and opportunities for further growth, reinforcing the importance of collaboration in enhancing the pedagogical process.

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# VOICES OF CHILDREN PEDAGOGY™ IMPLEMENTATION Insights from International School of Creative Science in Sharjah, UAE

#### Authors: Samira Baiq, Shaheda Ghani, Ambreen Humayun, Houda Karamallah, Aasiyah Craft

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

We had 10 classes involved in the project with approximately 200 students taking part who were three to five years of age. Most of the students showed a lot of interest in the project and were excited to be part of the project.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

- ---Educators allocated additional time to actively listen to children.
- Educators motivated children to freely express themselves.
- Children were prompted to work together with peers on tasks.
- Educators fostered their communication by encouraging them to describe their creations and the steps involved.
- ---Children were prompted to forecast outcomes and suggest improvements to their projects.
- ---Children were empowered to autonomously choose their materials.
- Educators were actively involved with parents, addressing their inquiries and providing support.
- Children were provided with a platform to explore various forms of artistic expression. This not only enhanced their artistic skills but also boosted their confidence and self-esteem.
- ---Educators implemented the core objectives of this research project, which is directly aligned with our early years program,
- Children were involved in extra art activities daily, this included projects being done at home too.
- -Grandparents were invited to come to School and take part in an art activity.
- A classroom conference took place where the children chose their best piece of artwork.

#### OUTCOME

The Voices of Children Project was a great success due to its outcomes. Parents, grandparents and educators were involved in the project and participated enthusiastically in it to make the change children need to improve the way they communicate and express themselves. The outcomes of this project are as follows:

- Children's communication and expression skills have improved clearly through their drawings and creations at school and at home as well.
- Children's confidence has strongly improved.
- Grandparents' reaction to their grandchildren's work has positively changed.
- Parents interaction and engagement with their children at home has become stronger.
- Positive feedback was received from parents about the project indicating its impact on the family.
- Family members involved in the project have become equipped with the skills needed to help their children communicate better and express themselves openly through different means.

Overall, the project truly bridged the gap between children and their caregivers, bringing together family members and educators in a meaningful way where the children are better heard and supported. This collaboration nurtured understanding and open communication, creating a warm and supportive environment that greatly benefited the children's growth and development.

#### CHALLENGE AND SOLUTIONS:

The Voices of Children project proved to be beneficial for our young learners' emotional and social development. However, during the implementation of this initiative we did face few challenges such as:

#### 1. Engagement of Participants:

Getting children interested and actively participating in the project along with their parents' consent was slightly difficult. Having a large number to cater, we had to ensure that all the consent forms are duly filled in both by parents and children. Moreover, a large group of children come from diverse backgrounds, therefore, communicating the core information to their parents/guardians was not easy.

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#### Solution:

We incorporated interactive and fun methods for children to promote the project, conducted online workshops for parents to inform them about the project details, showed the 3D International Art gallery to the children in class to get them excited about their participation. Our leaders too played a vital role in facilitating bilingual i.e., English and Arabic correspondence to the parents of the participating children.

#### 2. Mentor/Educators' meeting timings:

Most often our meeting schedule with the mentor proved to be a challenge, as due to our time schedules, it became difficult to organise meetings in the mornings during the weekdays. Furthermore, during weekends some of the educators due their prior family or personal commitments couldn't attend the meetings.

#### Solution:

Some meetings were shifted to the later part of the day during weekdays and for the educators who couldn't attend, meeting minutes were taken and shared with them later.

#### 2. Diverse Backgrounds and Expressions:

Children in our setting came from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, leading to varying levels of engagement and expression.

#### Solution:

Our Inclusive practice supported us immensely in providing the necessary environment conducive to each child's freedom of personal expression. Children were given ample opportunities to explore and express their creativity in any form or medium.

#### 4. Sustainability of Engagement:

Maintaining children's interest and their parents support throughout the project was tough at times. **Solution:** 

We managed to plan special events, programs and worked collaboratively in providing follow-up sessions that allowed continued engagement from both the participants. We also showcased our children's on-going artwork in class and outdoors through on-site exhibitions or online platforms to keep their interest alive.

5. During the implementation of the Voices of Children Pedagogy, the main challenge was engaging parents and caregivers in the process. While many parents were supportive, a few were unsure about the new approach and how it would benefit their children. This hesitancy sometimes led to a lack of participation in activities that required parental involvement, such as home-based projects or sharing observations from home.

#### Solution:

To engage parents more effectively, we organized 1-1 meetings to explain the benefits of the program and how it aligned with their children's development. We also provided regular updates on their children's progress, which helped build trust and confidence in the new approach. Encouraging parents to share their observations and participate in reflective discussions further strengthened their involvement.

#### WHAT WORKED WELL:

The alternative forms of expression were particularly successful, as they allowed all children to participate actively and express their ideas in ways that suited them best. This inclusive approach not only enhanced their communication skills but also boosted their confidence. The increased communication with parents, through regular updates, significantly improved parental engagement. Many parents who were initially hesitant became more supportive and involved once they understood the positive impact the program had on their children.

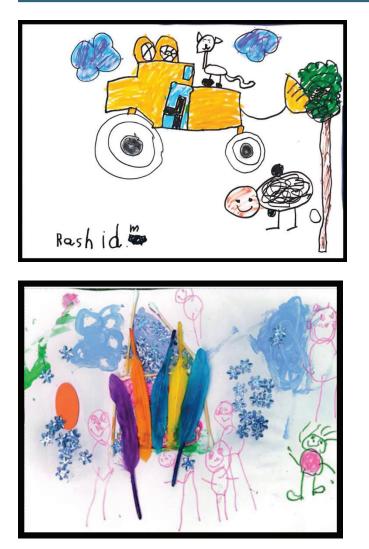
#### WHAT COULD BE DONE DIFFERENTLY:

In hindsight, informing parents in detail about the process and the outcomes earlier, might have mitigated some of their initial concerns. By seeking their input and addressing their questions from the outset, we could have fostered a stronger partnership from the

Overall, while the implementation of the Voices of Children Pedagogy came with its challenges, the solutions we applied and the lessons we learned have laid a solid foundation for continued success and improvement in our early years setting.



#### SUPPORTING MATERIALS:



(left to right) Rashid M (5), Shaikha Laila (5), Leya (4), Lujain (5)







# CASE STUDY: INSPIRING YOUNG VOICES FOR SUSTAINABILITY Odyssey Nursery, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

#### Author: Hoda El Naddaf

#### INTRODUCTION:

In a recent initiative, a group of young children was introduced to the concept of sustainability. This case study explores how a conversation about environmental responsibility led to a creative and innovative project, demonstrating the power of early education in fostering environmental stewardship among the youngest members of society.

#### BACKGROUND:

The discussion began with the children expressing curiosity about sustainability, a term many of them were unfamiliar with. Initial reactions were characterized by confusion, but the conversation quickly turned to concepts they understood, such as recycling and reducing waste. Filippo Darian Alae Naziri, 5.5 years old, said :"The earth is already dead," which ignited a lively debate and a deeper exploration of environmental issues. (The observation took place on May 14, 2024, during a structured play session.")

#### **IMPLEMENTATION:**

—Discussion and Brainstorming: The children engaged in a thoughtful discussion about ways to help the Earth. They brainstormed several strategies:

Planting trees	Sorting garbage	Keeping the Earth clean
Creating clothes from recycled materials	Reducing car usage to minimize pollution	

These ideas reflected their growing awareness of environmental issues and their desire to contribute positively.

Project Development: The children decided to channel their newfound knowledge into a creative project. They chose to create a heartfelt letter to children around the world. This letter combined individual drawings, handwritten names, and personal messages advocating for sustainability. The project aimed to express their collective concern and propose simple actions that could make a difference.

Art Project and Exhibition: Excitement grew among the children as they prepared for their art project. They envisioned their artwork being showcased in a global exhibition. The collaborative process included brainstorming, creating art pieces, and discussing the potential impact of their work. This phase was marked by enthusiasm and a strong sense of purpose. In their engagement with diverse artistic mediums and materials, children experiment with different colors, mixing them to create new shades and hues. They also explore various charcoal techniques, such as blending, or erasing with an eraser or their fingers, to achieve different textures and effects on their artwork.

#### OUTCOMES:

- 1. Educational Impact: The project effectively educated the children about sustainability, fostering a sense of responsibility and optimism. Their understanding of environmental issues was demonstrated through their practical suggestions and creative expressions.
- 2. Emotional Engagement: The children's investment in the project reflected their genuine concern for the Earth and their desire to make a positive impact. Their artwork and messages conveyed both a sense of urgency and hope.
- 3. Global Reach: The global exhibition of their project highlighted the children's voices and ideas, emphasizing that even young voices can contribute to global conversations about sustainability.
- 4. Unity and Cooperation: The project underscored the importance of love, acceptance, and cooperation among children. Their messages of unity and mutual 5
- 5. Lasting Influence: The project served as a touching reminder of the influence that even the youngest voices can have in promoting sustainability. It highlighted the importance of nurturing environmental awareness from an early age and encouraged the children to continue thinking critically about their role in protecting the planet.
- 6. Creative Project Development: The children decided to convey their messages through a letter and artwork. Their project included drawings of a happy, clean Earth, with symbols of nature like trees, butterflies, and flowers. They also wrote heartfelt messages about unity and love, advocating for a cleaner, more harmonious world.
- 7. Exhibition and Impact: The children were enthusiastic about showcasing their work in a global exhibition. Their art and messages aimed to inspire other children worldwide to care for the planet and embrace each other with kindness.





Title: **Save the Planet** Number of children: **6**, Age: **4-6 years** Technique: **painting**, **drawing**, **blending** Materials: **Charcoal**, **wax crayon**, **watercolour paint** Purpose: **Sustainability awareness** Authors: **Hoda El Naddaf Reggio Director - Odyssey Nursery - Duba**i







#### VOICES OF CHILDREN & OBSERVATIONS:

#### Jahan Rzayeva (5.6 years old):

"If we want the Earth to be happy, everyone can help the Earth not be sick."

Jahan's comment underscores a proactive approach to environmental care, focusing on collective responsibility to maintain Earth's health.

#### Filippo Darian Alae Naziri (5.5 years old):

#### "The Earth is already dead."

Filippo's perspective, highlighted through a drawing of a polluted Earth, reflects his concern about environmental degradation. Despite this, he contributed positively to the project, indicating a desire to improve the situation.

#### Isabella Lindstrom (4 years old):

#### "You know how, we need to stop throwing garbage on the floor."

Isabella emphasizes the importance of cleanliness, suggesting a fundamental understanding of the impact of littering on the environment.

#### Zian Dhiman (4.10 years old):

"Yes, the garbage in the bin."

Zian's comment supports practical actions for cleanliness, reinforcing the concept of proper waste disposal.

#### Agatha Demidova (4.8 years old):

"When the Earth is clean, I will draw the grass, the butterflies, the birds."

Agatha envisions a vibrant Earth, linking environmental cleanliness with the ability to create and appreciate nature.

#### Laura Semotam (3.9 years old):

"We can use bicycles instead of cars so we have no gas. The trees will grow taller. I will draw lots of flowers, grass so the Earth will look green."

Laura advocates for reducing pollution through practical actions like biking, and her vision includes a greener Earth, showing an understanding of how actions affect the environment.

#### Isabella Lindstrom (4 years old):

"The tree, to grow should see the sun, and needs water and wind, but if the Earth is not clean, the tree cannot grow taller because it cannot see the sun."

Isabella connects environmental health with the growth of trees, illustrating an understanding of the interdependence between cleanliness and plant health.

#### A MESSAGE TO THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

#### From Agatha Demidova (4.8 years old):

"Children of the world should not throw garbage on the floor, and I will tell you that I love you and you love each other. Hug each other, hold hands around the Earth."

Agatha's message is a heartfelt call for global unity and environmental responsibility. She emphasizes the importance of keeping our surroundings clean while promoting love and togetherness among children worldwide.

#### From Isabella Lindstrom (4 years old):

"They hold hands because they love each other. We are different; we have different colors, skin, and hair, but we love each other, and this is how the world is supposed to be."

Isabella's message highlights the beauty of diversity and the power of love and acceptance. She advocates for a world where differences are celebrated and harmony is cherished.

#### CONCLUSION:

This case study illustrates how an initial conversation about sustainability can transform into a significant and educational project for young children. The children's creative endeavors not only deepened their understanding of environmental issues but also showcased their dedication to a sustainable future. Their project serves as a powerful example of how early education can empower even the youngest individuals to make meaningful contributions to global awareness and positive change.

Date: May 14, 2024 Session: Seekers B Class (Ages 4-6) Location: Odyssey Nursery, United Arab Emirates







#### **Bright Start Foundation**

Avenue Louis-Casai 18 1209 Geneva, Switzerland www.brightstartfoundation.org