



Heart to Heart Storytelling

activating imaginations~connecting hearts~creating magic

Storytelling for Early Childhood

Internationally-renowned Storytellers and Facilitators Lindy Mitchell-Nilsson and Ulf Nilsson provide dynamic, play-based learning experiences to early childhood audiences through themed storytelling programs that can be customised to your centre's needs. Each program is grounded in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and a detailed document is provided that outlines EYLF outcomes captured in each program, allowing you to fully document children's learning.

Lindy and Ulf are passionate about the importance of playful, dynamic learning experiences that are only created in person, where children are actively engaged in story, song and performance, guided by their expertise and love of the art of storytelling. Storytelling stimulates children's imaginations and allows them to express their creativity while learning.

Why Storytelling?

Storytelling is a collaborative, participatory, creative and imaginative activity that builds community and encourages deep learning within a context of play, song, movement and performance. Storytelling has documented benefits on children's social, emotional and language development including:

- improving children's communication and comprehension skills, supporting vocabulary acquisition and developing an ear for language, encouraging an interest in reading
- developing predictive skills through the use of rhyme and repetition
- providing language children need to identify and express their emotions and understand their experiences, strengthening language development with iconic gestures
- increasing emotional literacy, helping children identify with and understand other people's emotions and experiences, developing empathy
- developing their imaginations in a richer way than screen-based media (or being read to)
- developing respect for and understanding of diversity and developing cultural competence
- supporting their ability to express their own stories and receive positive feedback and encouragement from the group.

Educators can use storytelling as intentional teaching opportunities and refer back to stories to help children develop their skills. Storytelling is an important way for children to connect with meaning and with each other that is not screen-based and that provides a rich, meaningful and fun experience for both children and educators. Storytelling helps to develop children's imagination, as they are full, active participants in the activity; not simply 'receivers'. Children who have been told stories have better comprehension outcomes than those who have only been read to, as storytelling requires them to actively use their imaginations to understand the storyteller's words, gestures, tone, facial expressions and body language.

Storytelling and the Early Years Learning Framework

In addition to the general benefits of storytelling, Heart to Heart Storytelling's programs are specifically grounded in the learning outcomes, values and principles of the EYLF. You can work together with Lindy

and Ulf to select a program that best meets the specific needs of the children in your care, based on age, interests and specific EYLF learning outcomes.

For example, storytelling supports *Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity* by supporting children to identify specific emotions, discover different options for expressing, communicating and dealing with those emotions and learning to care for, respect and understand other's emotions. Storytelling also supports children's agency and autonomy by encouraging problem-solving and when focussing on specific challenges, such as the transition to school. Stories based in diverse cultures and experiences help to support the self-esteem of all children's identities and promote cultural competency, and a sense of belonging and respect.

To help you document children's learning, each storytelling program will come with a document outlining the specific learning outcomes in which the program is based for your records.

Themed Storytelling Programs

Heart to Heart Storytelling offer a wide range of themed storytelling programs that involve dynamic story, song, performance in a highly engaging, imaginative and interactive experience that children of all ages find magical. Their programs include:

- **Let's be friends:** Stories, rhymes and songs on the themes of kindness, cooperation and friendship.
- **Earth care:** Stories, rhymes and songs on the themes of sustainability and caring for our environment.
- **Courageous kids:** Stories, rhymes and songs on the themes of courage, confidence and communication. Perfect for transition to school preparation.
- **Let's celebrate diversity:** A celebration of multicultural stories and songs that includes fables, folk and fairy tales from all over the world. This program can be customised to celebrate specific cultures and communities as required.

Heart to Heart Storytelling's programs include a range of original, traditional and modern stories from all over the world. Many contain bilingual elements, all are highly interactive, fun, funny, musical and use the power of in-person performance to enrich children's lives and stimulate their imaginations.

We would be happy to work with you to develop a program that meets your specific needs and can also provide a professional development program for educators that focusses on expanding early childhood professionals' storytelling and performance skills. We look forward to sharing stories with you and the children in your care.



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