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Raising Dementia Awareness Amongst Primary School Children

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Dementia



- Dementia is an umbrella term for over 100 disorders that affect the brain, such as Alzheimer's disease.
- Dementia affects the way people think and behave and can interfere with their normal life.
- By 2050, approximately 900,000 Australians are expected to be living with dementia.
- Children today, more than ever before, are likely to know family and/or community member living with a form of dementia.

Project DARE (Dementia knowledge, Art, Research & Education)



- Multidisciplinary team of teachers, artists and researchers with the aim to increase awareness of dementia amongst Stage 2 children (ages 8-11 years).
- The intervention was piloted in May 2017 in three stages.
 - Stage 1:** The children created their first artwork
 - Stage 2:** The dementia lesson will take place.
 - Stage 3:** The children were able to add to/modify their artwork.

Research Measures



Mixed-methods approach

Pre-post test design

Artwork

Survey tool, Kids4Dementia

Interviews with children

Aim to measure changes in children's knowledge and perception of dementia.

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Lesson 1

Art intervention



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Artspace is part of Big Fat Smile a not for profit NGO.

They employ degree-qualified, professional artists to work with children aged 3-13 years.

The artists must be exhibiting 'career' artists (working on their own practice). Influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach, the artists work alongside children and educators in support of their creative (learning) process.





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Lesson 2 - Education intervention



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Lesson about Dementia



- Collaboration between teacher and academic
- Connection to syllabus
- Variety of activities

Name: _____

Dementia Worksheet

Class: _____ Date: _____



Activity 1: What I already know about dementia.

Activity 2: Relating to people who live with dementia: a shared personal experience.

Activity 3: What is dementia (animation). What things are harder with dementia?



Activity 6: What can be done in home areas to help people living with dementia? What can I do to help people with dementia? How do family members feel about their relative living with dementia?

Activity 4: I will remind you (song by Brian Aspell).

Activity 5: The brain & changes caused by dementia.



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Lesson 3 - Art intervention



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April May June July August September October November December

Maths posters on the wall include:

- What is an Equilateral Triangle?**
 $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{2}{4}$
- What is a Mixed Fraction?**
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ $3\frac{1}{2}$
- What is a Prime Number?**
 2 3 5 7 11 13 17 19
- What is a Factor?**
A number that divides another number exactly without any remainder.
- What is a Multiple?**
A number that is the result of one number multiplied by another number.
- Area - Perimeter** (multiple posters)
- Statements**
- Compound Sentences**
- Complex Sentences**
- Simple Sentences**
- Conjunctions**
- Missing a Noun**
- Missing a Verb**
- Missing an Adjective**
- Missing an Adverb**
- Missing a Preposition**
- Missing a Conjunction**
- Missing a Punctuation Mark**
- Missing a Capital Letter**
- Missing a Spelling**
- Missing a Punctuation Mark**
- Missing a Capital Letter**
- Missing a Spelling**

1000 000
One Million

10 000 000
Ten Million

100 000 000
One Hundred Million

1 000 000 000
One Billion





Link to Video



[https://
globalchallenges.uow.edu.au/living/
UOW221057.html](https://globalchallenges.uow.edu.au/living/UOW221057.html)

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Results & Exhibitions



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Survey Results – Preliminary Analysis



- Pre and post matched data n=74
- Slightly more boys (41; 55.4%); most born in Australia (66; 89.2%)
- Majority aged 8yrs (26; 35%) or 9yrs (36; 49%)
- T-tests showed significant improvement ($p < .05$) for the following variables:
 - Spending time with people with dementia can be fun
 - People with dementia can feel when others show them love and understanding
 - People with dementia have hobbies and interests
 - People with dementia can be creepy
 - You can “catch” dementia from other people
 - Dementia is when something has gone wrong in your brain
 - Dementia is unpredictable
- Only one variable got worse, ‘I wouldn’t really know what to say or do if I met someone with dementia’.







Visitor Book Comments



"Wonderful exhibition, wonderful initiative"

"Will have to come back for a second viewing – so much to see and so emotional"

"Bringing people together in a non-judgemental way to contemplate a part of life that can be clouded by sadness too often"

"Probably the most impressive and well executed project I've seen. Wonderful to see so many professionals supporting learning and creativity of young people"

"Wow! What an incredible exhibition. We loved the interpretations made by each of the kids"

Where to Now?



- **Project DARE** will run at a school in Aberdeen, Scotland in 2018.
- We hope to continue to pilot the program in three schools across NSW.

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