

building a friendship



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By: Jo, Rosalie

Over the past three terms we have been making fortnightly visits to St. Johns Wood to visit with the residents there. We have taken the same group of eight children and it has been awesome observing relationships build between the residents and our children. At our visits we take our profile books to share, sometimes we take reading books and puzzles to do and together we sit and chat about our interests and families. ST. Johns Wood have named this 'Grand-friends' and it is a very special journey to be part of.

What I noticed right from the first visit was an instant connection between Indigo and Rosalie and it was clear to see that something special took place and it was exciting to think what would happen as they got to know each other better? At each visit I observed Indigo and Rosalie forming the special bond of friendship and it seemed to be growing from each visit. One day Indigo would bring flowers for Rosalie and the next time Rosalie would have a trinket that she had made for Indigo and almost at every visit there was an exchange of kindness between them. Today Rosalie had some sewing that she shared with Indigo and she thought it would be nice for them to sit together and draw flowers (daisies) they sat for some time exchanging ideas, then Rosalie needed a drink of water. Indigo quickly got up from her chair and made her way to the water cooler to fetch Rosalie a drink of water.

What learning is happening here?



Indigo, you and your family have really embraced our journey of 'community connectiveness' as St. Johns call it the 'Grandfriends' program. When we first engaged in this program we anticipated that we would have the opportunity to build and strengthen our relationships with St. Johns Wood and the residents there. What we have seen is much more richer than that, we are building friendships with some very special people and in your case Rosalie and these friendships show us that age is but a number and that there are no boundaries when we care about someone.

Indigo, participating in this program has allowed you opportunities to develop friendships outside of our Kindergarten and in our wider community. It is about connecting with the people in our community and developing a sense of belonging, one that cares and shows manaakitanga to those around you. It is also about exploring the concept of 'intergenerational learning' where differing age groups have the opportunity to learn together and from each other, and today illustrated how you and Rosalie were able to do this. I like the way you listened to what Rosalie hoping respect and how you took on board her guidance, I could see that this brought you both enjoyment.