



# Imua Inclusion Preschool Newsletter

January 19~22



## DATES TO REMEMBER

**Wednesday, January 27**

**Walking trip, wear Imua shirts and walking shoes**

**Thursday, January 28**

**Uncle Wayne Sing-along  
10am**

**February 1**

**Whale watch  
payments due \$8.00 per  
child \$15.00 per adult**

**Monday, February 8**

**Chinese New Year  
Celebration...more info  
coming soon**

**Thursday, February 11**

**Whale Watch  
Be in class by 7.45**

**Monday, February 15**

**President's Day  
NO SCHOOL**



Our learning trip to the Maui Ocean Center was a huge success due in part to all of our wonderful chaperones! We walked over to the bus stop and took the Maui Bus all the way to Maalaea. The children were respectful members of the community as we waited in line and followed the rules on the bus despite being very excited! At the Ocean center, we listened to Aunty Lily who described the Ocean center rules...even she said that the number one rule was to stay with your grown-up and the children did amazingly well at

this. They were able to use their knowledge of sharks as we watched black-tips, hammer heads and a small tiger shark swim around us. They were intrigued by the sting rays and as it moved away Sebastian said, "Look! It's flying! It is so beautiful!" As we travelled around, the children looked for the animals on their scavenger hunt card. Not everyone found the slipper lobster which Monty described as "Delicious!" Some of us got a treat at the touch pool as a whale showed itself in the harbor nearby. We watched it wave its pectoral fin at us and some people even got to see the tail. We discussed that the ocean center doesn't have mammals because there is not enough space but we did get to learn about them in the interactive whale room. Another well spotted item was the cowry shell snail. We have been singing a song about the shell and have one displayed in our observation station so many of our friends were excited to see them in real life. The sea horses and sea jellies were particularly captivating for some, while others couldn't get enough of the sharks! At the end of the trip, the children rode the bus back to the center. They were able to be safe, and active members of the community and we were very proud of their behavior, curiosity and excitement, Aunty Lily of the Ocean center commented, "It is so nice to see a group so excited and interested. Upon our return, the children were all very tired and erupted in a flood of emotions. This made us realize truly how well they had held it all together. There was a chorus of tears before everyone relaxed and fell asleep. Phew! What a busy but wonderful day!



## Child-guided Activities



The children are quickly learning the power of their agenda books. When they make a plan, we will try our hardest to allow them to follow through with their idea. After our Ocean center visit, the children were all excited to talk about our next learning trip, a whale watch. Patrick made a plan in his agenda book on Friday saying, "I am going to make a boat." Ms Gemma worked with him to find materials to make a boat. He wanted it to have a sail. "What can we use to make a sail?" she asked. Patrick thought for a moment, "Paper!" he exclaimed triumphantly. When his boat was complete, he wanted to test it on the water. The other children saw what was happening and became interested. They wanted to make boats too. We gathered the supplies and brought them outside. They all followed Patrick's design until Zylar noticed that the hole for the mast let in water. "It's going to sink!" He said. He got to work taping the hole. We had to fill up additional water tables in order for all of them to test their creations and in the process, the paper sails began to get soggy. "I wonder what else we could make sails out of," Ms Gemma thought out loud. "I know! How about a sheet," replied Emma. While we didn't get the chance to make new sails, the children did get the opportunity to participate in the scientific method. They made a hypothesis about whether their boat would float. They created the boat and then tested it. When situations occurred that may have hindered their boat's ability to float, they thought about how they could re-design it. All of this from one child's desire to make a boat. As we listen to children and learn to follow their lead, their experiences become more rich and meaningful. They are participating in activities that are personally relevant and collaborative. Following the children's lead gives them a shared power within the classroom community and lessons the need for them to exert power in more negative ways. When we honor where the child's interests are, they become genuinely engaged in the process of learning. Next week, as we prepare for our whale watch, we will provide more open-ended materials for them to explore their boat engineering. We will add challenges such as having the boat carry items. How many items can it hold before it sinks? What if we change the material of the items, rocks instead of kukui nut seeds for example? Of course, we may find out that they are no longer interested in creating boats and that Patrick's experiment was enough for now. We look forward to seeing where the children's inquiry will take us!

## What's your kuleana?

In our classroom, we expect everyone to take care of themselves, each other, and the things around them. These three expectations form the basis for our daily interactions from classroom management to shared activities. Part of taking care of things is to take responsibility. We have a kuleana chart that functions as a classroom job chart. On Monday each week, our morning group time includes designating our kuleana for the week. Responsibilities range from botanist, who waters the plants, to the self-explanatory light switcher. Throughout the week, we check in with the children when jobs need to be done or simply to see if they have been enacting their kuleana.

At home, children can begin to take on simple responsibilities. Keep the tools size appropriate and make it part of the routine. For example, after they eat at school, they use a small sponge and wipe their spot. If there are crumbs on the floor, they use a small dustpan and brush to sweep them up. With help, they can feed the fish and the guinea-pigs at school. At home, you can give them the role of scooping out dog or cat food. At school, the children rinse yogurt pots or fruit cups to save in our recycling. The same can be done at home. Young children are capable of so much more than we give them

credit for and once it becomes part of the daily routine, they will ask to help!

As they develop these skills you can add more 'chores' such as assisting in separating and folding laundry, loading the dishwasher, washing the car. After they have practiced with you many times, they will eventually be able to take on bigger responsibilities on their own. Remember to start small, make it routine, and assist them. Be prepared for it to take a little extra time and be patient. Know that they can do it! On a side note, I would not offer compensation in exchange for help at this age. (E.g. allowance for chores). I suggest that taking responsibility become the expectation and the children will live up to it.

