

### Nourish and Flourish - Activity Report

<b>Activity:</b> Making natural soap		<b>Location:</b> Outside	
<b>Group Size:</b> Approx 6		<b>Age range:</b> 3-5	<b>Date:</b> July 2nd 2019
<b>Length of Session:</b> Approx 2 hours (activity itself 45 minutes)		<b>Session ref:</b> Hatherleigh	
<b>CiP Curriculum:</b> E 12		<b>Holistic Planning</b> colour code ( <i>see coloured text in observation</i> ) – <b>Eyes Hands Heart Head</b>	

#### **Brief summary - (see observation for more detail)**

We used plants from the garden to make natural soap. The Children worked together harvesting Soapwort (*Saponaria Officinilis*), cutting several stems to make the soap. With guidance the children used secateurs to cut the stems and counted them. We used warm water to mash the soapwort up and agitated it with a masher and our hands to make the bubbles. We spoke about different types of soap, natural and non-natural soap. Once we had finished mashing the soapwort up, we strained it and washed our hands and arms with it.

#### **Resources and People:**

Washing up bowl, potato masher, strong large sieve, large mixing bowl, secateurs, soapwort, hot water, cold water, table.

#### **Key Vocab questions:**

What does it smell like?  
What does it feel like?  
How many do we have?  
How many more do we need?  
What happens if we do...?

#### **Adaption/Differentiation:**

#### **Extension Activities:**

Other plants that make soap which are from different countries or cultures.

#### **Children for whom this activity is particularly appropriate:**

Age 3+

### Session In Depth

## Observation:

**When we arrived the children were already using soapy water for play.** This was appropriate to the activity we had planned. The Forest Garden aspect of the preschool garden is growing a perennial plant called soapwort, (*Saponaria Officinalis*). This plant contains saponins. These saponins can be harvested to make liquid soap.

We played with the children by the soapy water they were playing with already, and discussed where the soap in the sandpit container came from. It was a blue, non-natural, hand-pump soap.

We discussed how we can make soapy water from plants. **We encouraged the children over to the garden and asked them to choose which plant they think makes soap.** Some pointed to other plants but J pointed to the saponaria. We high fived when he got it right.

**We explained to the children that we needed to cut stems from the plant but that we must not harvest too many. We asked them, "what happens if we do"? J said "it will die".**

We told them we needed five stems. The children wanted to cut the stems, so we guided them in using the secateurs by holding their hands on them with ours. W said "I'll hold it". He held the each stem for the child as it was cut, so it didn't fall to the ground.

We counted the stems as we cut them. We asked the children how many we had cut and how many more we needed? They said we had "three" and needed "two more". They held their hands up and spread their fingers to indicate the number 5.

We ask them to use their fingers to pull the leaves off or, with help, cut the stems with the secateurs and put them in the clean washing up bowl. We had a flask of hot water ready. We got the children to stand back as we poured the hot water in carefully, on top of the soapwort. We then gradually added cold water, testing it until it was safe for the children to use.

**They then used the masher and their hands to squeeze and crush the soapwort up. As they did this we asked them "what it feels like"? D said it felt "mushy". We also asked them "What it smells like?", they said, "it smells like flowers," and "it looks like seaweed". We all agitated the water together to make bubbles. D used her body to do this, 'dancing' and wriggling.**

C took some time to get involved in the activity but he eventually put his hands in the water splashing and making bubbles.

We looked at the patterns on the leaves and said they looked like the veins on our hands. J said the leaf was green. **M said "I'm making a cake" when she was mixing the soapwort in the water.**

**We washed our hands and arms with the water and we looked at different types of natural soap. We showed them Ecover liquid soap and a hard bar of natural soap. S pointed to the lemon on the wrapper and said, "lemon", (the soap was made from lemons)**

When we had finished, S poured the used soapwort into the compost bin and M poured the water onto the potatoes.

**Where EYFS Learning Intention have been met:** *(based on preschool term aims)*

- **Personal Social and Emotional Development – Self Confidence and Self Awareness**

Using secateurs to cut the plants and imaging making a cake

- **Communication – Developing Understanding**

"What will happen if we harvest too much of the plant?" Group discussion on treating the plants with kindness.

- **Physical Development – Health and Self Care**

Washing hands and arms and dancing

- **Maths – Numbers**

Counting the stems and knowing they needed more and spreading fingers out to indicate the number five

**Staff Feedback:**

No feedback given

**Designers' Feedback:**

- This is the second time we have done this activity. Last year was the previous session. The session went well as before.
- Too diluted, so not enough bubbles. Less water and more leaves needed.
- It went extremely well linking the existing water activity the preschool was doing. **This is beneficial if done again**
- It flowed really well.
- This is a great session to do with the children.

**How has Permaculture been introduced and met?**

**Ethics**

***Earth Care –***

Encouraging the use of plants to make natural soap. Limiting the amount of stems being harvested.

***People Care –***

Using natural soap, especially soapwort, to wash our skin with. Especially for people with delicate skin.

***Fair Share –***

Taking turns with secateurs;

***Principles –***

- Integrate rather than Segregate - "many hands make light work" - literal example of this;
- Use and Value Diversity - variations on different types of natural soaps
- Designing From Patterns To Details - Using a different media to get the same result, i.e, using the soapwort to make bubbles instead of the blue handsoap.

**Social Impact:**

*(what evidence is there to support our work)*

Karen said Charlie does not get involved with much. She asked us to take pictures of him as he had got involved with the soap making.

This activity was done whilst the children were already playing outside. Some of the children chose to do this activity instead of play. This was instead of children usually being chosen as a group.