

Belonging in a particular early childhood setting

Jedd's increasing participation

At 5 months of age Jedd is able to express his wants and needs verbally. He will cry when hungry, tired or when he wants to be picked up. He will laugh and smile when spoken or sung to, showing his delight to his teachers Nadine (primary caregiver) and Shaz.

Jedd can sit unassisted for brief periods and will reach out purposely for objects, sometimes bringing his hands together to grasp objects. Jewellery and people's faces are of special interest to Jedd.

Jedd recognises familiar people, showing his recognition and excitement by shaking his head, waving his arms, through his facial expressions and by vocalising.

At the same time that Jedd is communicating more actively with the adults around him, Nadine and Shaz notice that Jedd has started to show a new awareness of the other children he shares the under-twos area with. His new-found physical skills are supporting his interest as he is able to reach out and touch others more than ever before.



Jedd is involved in a shared story with other children.



Things that interest Jedd are placed strategically near him to encourage him to use his body to support himself while on his tummy.

At 7 months of age Jedd regularly participates in small-group experiences.

July



Recently Jack has begun showing an interest in interacting with Jedd. Jedd is just beginning to gain confidence with Jack and the other children

being near him without an adult nearby. Jedd enjoys Jack's smiles and language and responds by reaching out to touch Jack.

Jedd is gradually gaining confidence in being on his tummy. Jedd plays a game with the ball, sharing with us his pleasure in discovering the sounds and movements the ball makes.



Jedd's teachers discuss their observations of Jedd and decide to provide experiences for Jedd that will challenge him physically. They also plan to support Jedd to play near or interact with other children. Gradually Jedd builds trust and confidence in playing near other children.

September

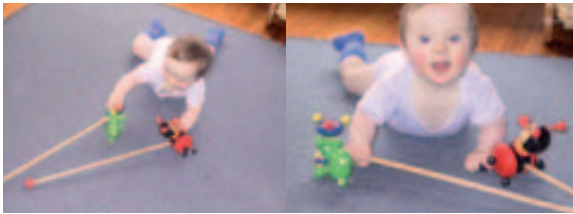
Jedd participated in our music session this morning. He sat very contentedly amongst his friends, observing Nadine who was singing a song about butterflies. He watched, mesmerised, as Nadine waved the coloured butterflies around the children, including Jedd. His eyes grew bigger as Nadine landed a butterfly on his knee. He was quick to pick the butterfly up while still keeping a close eye on Nadine. Jedd reached up with the butterfly as if he was going to mouth it but seemed more fascinated with Nadine who was continuing to sing and float the butterflies around.

The next day we used the butterflies and sang the same song to follow up on Jedd's interest. Again he was mesmerised by this experience and cried when Nadine started to put the butterflies away in the box so we gave them to Jedd to play with until he was satisfied.

Jedd's interactions with other children are becoming longer and Jedd now uses more strategies to interact with them and adults, for example, his expanding verbal skills, in combination with his non-verbal skills.

October

This morning, Jedd was sitting on the rug and busily playing with the stacking rings when Nadine laid Elizabeth next to him. Jedd looked at her and Elizabeth started smiling, and they watched each other for ages. They shared beautiful smiles and conversation.



November

Jedd can now support himself with confidence. He is able to make his body move more freely to reach the objects and people that interest him. Nadine recorded some of these events in a learning story.

A Learning Story					
belonging mana whiwhi	Recently Jedd had begun to enjoy spending time on his tummy. Today, when most of the children were outside, I put Jedd on the floor without setting up toys around him and left him, explaining that I was going to get Harrison changed, then I would return.				
well-being mana atua	When I came back, I saw for one of the first times Jedd showing confidence and happiness with being on his tummy. Looking around eagerly to see what he could reach, he found a push along frog. Stretching out he grabbed hold of it and moved it from side to side. Looking very pleased with himself as he experimented with manoeuvring this toy, he was moving backwards without realising.				
exploration mana arotua	I continued with other things, watching Jedd with interest, intrigued as to what he would do next. Occasionally, he would rest his head on the floor, then on hearing my voice, he would quickly look up, smile, laugh, and kick his legs. It was as if he was saying “Look at me and what I’m doing!”				
communication mana kōi	Reaching out for toys Jedd continued to manoeuvre himself around on his tummy. As he came across different toys, he somehow managed to keep hold of or come back to the same push along frog toy.				
contribution mana tangata	Another interesting moment was when Jedd found himself at the edge of the carpet, where there is a wooden strip of floor before the next piece of carpet begins. At this point there was a metal car. Jedd discovered that it was great to bang the car on the strip of wood, listen to the noise and then compare it to the sound the car made on the carpet. Squealing with delight and vocalising the whole time, he was expressing his enjoyment in his own initiated activity.				
Analysis/Interpretation					
Jedd spent at least 30 mins on the floor on his tummy.					
He appeared to thrive on this opportunity for freedom and space to explore and develop his physical skills.					
Jedd is rapidly gaining confidence in and control of his body.					

22 November

Wow! Jedd is now crawling. It took such a short time for him to develop the necessary motor skills – from becoming confident on his tummy to gaining control on his tummy (e.g., getting onto his front independently and sitting back up) to moving on his hands and knees.

26 November

Jedd has been very confident crawling today, everywhere! He is really starting to explore the environment, enjoying his new mobility. He is definitely very excited and proud of himself, panting, vocalising and smiling as he crawls along. This morning during music he was able to move away from the group to get closer to the tape player, following his curiosity as he tried to find out where the music was coming from.

Back in our room, he followed some children across the room to the beds, watching with interest what they were doing.

Jedd smiles back at Rosie who is enjoying giving him a gentle push. Rosie has taken a special interest in Jedd recently becoming a very kind friend to him.



Jedd’s interest in other children is growing and he is beginning to develop another friendship, this time with Elizabeth. Where previously Jedd had enjoyed Elizabeth pushing him while in the swing, he is now able to approach her to initiate play.

5 December

Jedd has had a great day. He has become very fond of Elizabeth, crawling over to her at any chance he could and talking to her and touching her face while they both smiled.

Jedd is now also initiating and taking the lead during play with teachers.

When Jedd finished his bottle this afternoon he sat up smiling and saying “Dad, dad, dad” while looking at the song posters on the wall. I began to sing, “See how I’m jumping,” and Jedd bounced on my knee, laughing with a real chuckle. Once finished, I asked him if we should sing it again. Jedd bounced eagerly, like “Yes, yes,” many times over.

13 December

Jedd was very interested in the balls this morning. After he had been sitting playing with one, he threw it to me, initiating a game between the two of us. When I threw it back, Jedd would smile and laugh and throw it straight back. This went on for ages.

Jedd also started some pretend play this morning. Twice he pretended to feed me with different objects. The first time was with a spoon and the next with a toy elephant; holding it to my mouth, he made eating noises and smiled.

Jedd’s teachers recognise Jedd’s growing communication skills. They see how these new skills are supporting his interactions with other children and with them, and they recognise their role in utilising any opportunities they see to allow him to practise the new words he is beginning to use, as well as his growing range of non-verbal skills. Some of these times were recorded in his profile book.

After the Christmas break, Nadine and Shaz noticed a big change in Jedd. Usually it had been other children initiating play or interactions with Jedd, but in the month or so before the holidays they noticed how gradually he had started initiating these. Now after the holidays, at 11 months of age, Jedd is able to confidently play a part in a small group.

January

Wow Jedd has grown so much over the Xmas break! It has been great to see him again and he seems happy to be back with his friends. A favourite game at the moment seems to be a “ta” game, where he shares toys with me and other children. When we were playing with the cars and planes today (with Elizabeth and Jimmy), Jedd would make car noises and then copied an aeroplane noise that I made, showing the others what to do.

Jedd’s involvement in dramatic play has continued to develop in the past two months, as shown in the following example when Jedd is playing with his friend Elizabeth. He is also pulling himself up to stand a lot more recently.

February

Jedd was standing at Elizabeth’s high chair, role-playing feeding her with Elizabeth responding beautifully by playing along with Jedd’s game.

From their observations of Jedd’s and other children’s involvement in dramatic play, the teachers decide to shift some of the equipment around to form a home-like dramatic play area for the children to support their play. This area included highchairs for feeding “babies” and opportunities to use water with the tea set. Water was provided outside for the children to wash and bath “babies”.

A Learning Story

Robert was the first to arrive this morning, noticing the newly set up family play area almost immediately.

Becoming deeply involved in play with the tea set, Robert was very busy using a spray bottle (a very important tool in Robert’s play) to “pour” into the cups, drinking from the cups himself and offering them to Lisa (another teacher) and to me by placing the cup onto a saucer and carrying them over to us carefully.

When Chris arrived he joined Robert at the table, giving him a gleaming smile before playing alongside him and with him at times, giving each other drinks they had stirred.

After a while Jedd joined Chris and Robert, smiling at them as he used the spoons to stir in the cups and talking and watching the others.

After a few minutes, Jedd decided it was time to “unset” the table by sweeping it all onto the floor!

While Jedd’s teachers take action to support his dramatic play, they also recognise his growing repertoire of interests in the programme and how his ever-increasing mobility supports this.

Jedd’s enthusiasm and delight for music grow every day as he confidently participates in our music times. To introduce music this morning Shaz used the big purple bird puppet to sing “Hello”. Jedd smiled and laughed eagerly when the puppet went close to him and we sang his name. We were singing “What do you think my name is?”

March

Jedd’s interest in music continues. This week Jedd especially loved singing and doing peek-a-boo with scarves, moving the scarf up over his face and down again. Another favourite is listening to “Peace Like a River” while lying down underneath a big blue moving scarf. Jedd lay down after watching the other children, moving himself closer to the group.

In this story and as seen in the story with Robert and Chris playing with the tea set, Jedd is beginning to use strategies to make sense of group experiences. Nadine and Shaz notice how Jedd first watches other children before copying what they do.

At 13 months of age Jedd is practising walking, supporting himself with equipment or furniture to do this. Jedd’s teachers make sure these objects are available to Jedd at all times. Within the following group story it is evident how Jedd uses the outdoors equipment to support himself as he explores the environment.

A Learning Story

Playing outside has become very popular, with the children enjoying the freedom of the large space, initiating and choosing their own interests. This morning was a prime example.

Harry went over to the storage box and implied to me that he wanted something out. “What would you like, Harry?” I asked. At this point James rushed over saying “bike”. As I opened the lid they both waited patiently for the bikes to come out.

Jedd enjoyed practising walking by holding onto the back of a bike and pushing it along – looking very proud of himself as he did so. As he drove the bike along he came across a tin hanging from a tree at perfect standing height for him. He stopped for a while, banging the tin with his hand and smiling and singing still, while holding onto the bike with his other hand for support. He later went on to play peek-a-boo in the big cube.

From being able to explore the wider environment of the centre by his own means, other children and teachers help Jedd to explore environments outside the centre. On an outing Rosie, Jedd’s friend, shows how she is able to take special responsibility for him.

A Learning Story

Our Friday afternoon walk

Rosie amazed us by very confidently walking the whole way holding onto Jedd’s pram. Every now and then she talked to Jedd enthusiastically, telling him about what she could see. Rosie was very proud to be walking with Jedd and introduced him to people walking past! She took on a sense of responsibility for Jedd, giving him a walnut to look at when we stopped to look at them and letting us know when his hat dropped, etc.

As we walked along the path beside the river behind the school Rosie spotted some children playing in the schoolyard. As she ran up to the fence chatting away Rosie made sure that Jedd saw the children too by turning around to tell him, pointing at them.

Sarah and Jack sat in the double buggy together, playing wee games and communicating to one another. Jack was in front so he took responsibility for pointing things out to Sarah as he came across them, smiling and talking.

Jedd was very excited about being in the buggy, waving his arms and kicking his legs about. He thoroughly enjoyed Rosie’s attention, showing this again later by responding to Rosie at the afternoon tea table, touching and talking to her excitedly.

On the final part of our walk we stopped at the side of the river to throw bread to the ducks. Rosie would tear the bread up and throw it over her shoulder to the ducks, jumping up and down with excitement.

An enjoyable walk for all!

What's happening here?

This exemplar includes excerpts from Jedd's portfolio over ten months. The first entry relates to when Jedd was aged five months, and further entries document his progress in participating with activities at the centre.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Belonging/Mana Whenua lens)?

This is a documented account of Jedd's increasing participation in the life of the centre. The continuity of Jedd's developing interests can be described using the four overlapping dimensions of strength discussed in Book 10.

Frequency and regular events: Over the period documented in this exemplar, Jedd appears to routinely set himself physical challenges as he practises physical skills and achieves more mobility. Frequently he participates in and then initiates games and interactions with adults and other children, often watching other children before copying what they do. He has a growing repertoire of interests in the programme, and "his ever-increasing mobility supports this" (February).

Distribution across helpful people and enabling resources: Early in the record, Jedd begins to communicate more actively with the children and adults around him. He also explores an increasing range of objects of interest – stacking and nesting toys, books, a push-along frog, and props for stories (for example, the butterflies). By March, at thirteen months of age, he is "practising walking by holding onto the back of a bike and pushing it along".

Connected to a diversity of social communities: Within the centre's community, Jedd is developing special relationships: with Jack in July, with Rosie in November, and with Elizabeth in December. Perhaps one of these "social communities" is the group of people making music that Jedd is attracted to in November. The following February, it is noted that "Jedd's enthusiasm and delight for music grow every day as he confidently participates in our music times."

Mindfulness and power balances: The teachers comment on Jedd's new ability (once he can crawl) to "follow his curiosity", and later he begins to pull himself up to stand, widening his horizons

considerably. During this period, Jedd gains confidence in interacting with other children. In July, he was "beginning to gain confidence with Jack and the other children being near him without an adult nearby"; by the end of November, he is beginning to approach other children to initiate play. Early in the record, Jedd begins to explore the sounds and movements that a ball at the centre makes; later, the teacher describes Jedd initiating a ball game with her. A teacher also notes his initiation of pretend play, pretending to feed the teacher with different objects. Jedd's participation in dramatic play continues to develop in the new year; by now it includes other children (he role-plays feeding Elizabeth).

How might this documented assessment contribute to Belonging/Mana Whenua?

The documentation notes the way that the teachers have noticed, recognised, and responded to Jedd's learning journey, looking back on the record in order to look forward. They introduce toys and activities to respond to the developing interests that have been noted in Jedd's portfolio. From their observations of Jedd's and other children's involvement in dramatic play, they decide to shift some of the equipment around to form a "home-like" dramatic area to support their play. Although Nadine is Jedd's primary caregiver, other teachers build on observations in the record. Photographs provide a vivid communication tool for Jedd and his family to revisit this story of belonging.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The documentation describes Jedd's growing confidence and trust (the Well-being/Mana Atua strand). This exemplar is a record of actions that reflect Jedd's widening sense of this community, especially of the people and things but also of the places as he begins to play outside and goes for walks in the local area (the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand). Here too is a record of a widening horizon of other children and groups in which Jedd feels comfortable to initiate social interactions and contribute play themes. His increasing communication skills, verbal and non-verbal (the latter especially in pretend play), are documented (the Communication/Mana Reo strand) as are his explorations of artefacts and territory.