

Uma's Family Day Care wins Award for Excellence

Family day care educator with Communicare, Uma Kotian, attended a Little Green Steps WA (LGSWA) workshop at the City of Canning in April 2016. Since then she has been having fun implementing sustainable practices into her service and teaching the children in her care ways to look after our precious resources.

One change Uma has made is to practice 'green cleaning methods', in particular using vinegar and bicarb soda instead of nasty chemicals. As Uma says *"It is not difficult to make little green changes with the children in your care"*.

Uma's garden and play spaces have been organised with exploration in mind and her children spend the majority of their day in the lush garden, looking after the plants, composting fruit and veggie scraps and giving them to the worms. The veggie patches and individual pots are maintained by the children who eat the produce as well as happily try out new flavours such as mint and fenugreek.

This is the perfect space to explore imaginative outdoor play and Uma's wooden 'loose parts play' encourages her children to go 'camping by the campfire' while also enjoying water play with recycled containers and toys sourced from garage sales, making sure the water is redirected into the garden beds during use.

Although Uma has only been running her family day care service for a few years, her parent community think she is doing a great job encouraging their children's social responsibility to the environment. This was highlighted in December 2017 when Uma won the Communicare 2017 Award for Excellence for her embedded sustainable practices.

Uma considers herself a lifelong learner and recently attended the LGSWA 'Conserving and Protecting Water Workshop' hosted by the City of Canning in April 2018. This workshop not only provided Uma with knowledge to share with her children about precious water, but also shared activities to teach the water cycle, and to understand the effects of pollution during those water play moments.



For further information on the Little Green Steps Program contact the LGSWA Education Officer, Megan Mentz, on 08 9461 7160 or send an email to m.mentz@aaeewa.org.au.