

# Grandparents & stardust

Well known American writer Alex Haley once said, "Grandparents sort of sprinkle stardust over the lives of little children". His words came back to me the other day when the children from Padua Kindergarten returned from an informal visit to Mornington's Andrew Kerr Nursing Home.

The children were full of great stories. They talked about the wonderful time they had 'helping' the 'grandmas' and 'grandpas' with their painting and pasting. Their artwork filled the walls before they could even tell the stories behind them!

This visit filled everyone at Padua with a sense of connection and a sense of community. It also led me to remember my own grandparents and the valuable role they played in my life. I believe that strong bonds between grandparents and children foster an emerging and positive sense of belonging and instill values which shapes them as adults.

During my 15 years working in early childhood I have witnessed many grandparents playing such a role in their grandchildren's lives. Doing kinder and school pickups, helping out with child care on non-kinder days or sharing a story about when they were young, all go towards creating lasting bonds.

When I look to where my own values lie I remember planting seeds with my Nanna and, each time I visited, running to see how much they had grown. And all the time she would explain to me the 'why, what when and how'. All the key questions a curious child with handfuls of dirt would ask in a priceless garden!

My own (and my parents) values such as respect for others, respect for the

environment and a positive manner all stem from the values and belief systems of my wonderful grandparents. As children grow they listen, learn and absorb. When values and beliefs are strong and true they will 'stick'.

As I built up Padua Kindergarten all these thoughts flooded back to me. The values I learnt as a child have become part of me and I share them with everyone at Padua. I have a passion to create a natural and unspoilt environment for young children. A sanctuary to foster a positive sense of self and just enough spiritual energy so children can thrive and grow.

My Nanna still watches over her plant cuttings which grow abundantly in our Padua garden. My dad still proudly walks me around his own garden and shares his passion for the natural world and my mum shares her love of art and creativity. Both inspire me to be proud of my family's values.

The loving, supportive and unhurried interactions between grandparents and their grandchildren are a priceless part of their journey. Each year I hold onto my memories tighter. They are part of me and who I am.

The children at Padua will now be visiting Andrew Kerr Nursing Home each fortnight. We are all excited to be part of this blossoming relationship. Hopefully we can also contribute to nurturing the children's values and beliefs systems as they grow.

**By Jannah Young. Jannah is the owner of Padua Kindergarten. She can be contacted at [info@paduakindergarten.com.au](mailto:info@paduakindergarten.com.au) or see [www.paduakindergarten.com.au](http://www.paduakindergarten.com.au)**



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