Nature of Play:
10 years of the Children’s Garden

The Ian Potter Foundation

Children’s garden

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... WHERE CHILDREN CAN DELIGHT IN NATURE AND DISCOVER A PASSION FOR PLANTS ...
A child needs to touch the earth and be touched by it

Connecting children to nature through immersive experiences.

Play-based approach
Today

Snapshot:
3.2M+ visitors
10K+ teachers
150K+ students
10K+ visitor programs
Introducing the Children’s Garden
Community Engagement
Our learnings:

- child-centred exploration, absorbing the landscape
- loose material
- dirt digging pit
- love of water
Welcome! Help make this a safe and happy place...

Please supervise your children at all times
You are responsible for keeping your children safe while in this garden. The garden features deep water and rocky areas. Wading, swimming in or drinking the water is prohibited.

Slip, slop, slap and keep your clothes on! Please make sure children have adequate sun protection while they play. Children must be clothed at all times.

Children: this is your garden to explore and enjoy!
Care for it so that it will always be a fun place to visit.
Adults: please encourage children to respect the garden while they play.

Our learnings:

- Safety:
  - Nudity
  - Sun
  - Signage
Our learnings:

Safety:

Adventure vs risk

Water – access and management

Access for all abilities
Our learnings:

• Comfort:
  - Parent facilities
  - Blanket space – turf was designed for rolling!

• Horticultural integrity
  - Loved to death!
  - Sophisticated planting
  - Soil structure is important
  - Resting the garden
The future

• Vision ✓
• Keep working on reducing barriers to visitation
• Continue outreach programs
• New programs for different audiences