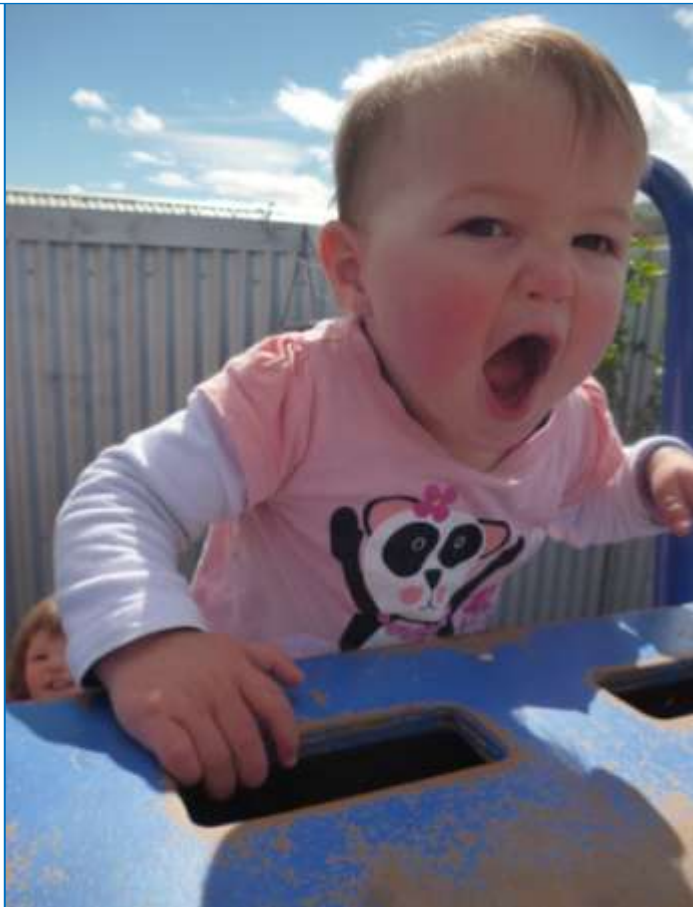


Taking risks!



The learning I think is happening...wow Bianca, there is so much going on here with your physical development as you make discoveries about the things your body can do and challenge yourself to take on new experiences. You are testing and re testing your balance, and coordination. You set your own goals my friend, motivated I think by a desire to keep up with the older children you see around you. But that is only part of the story and I can only imagine what is going on in your mind as you enjoy a sense of achievement in making choices and doing things for yourself. You are growing your confidence and learning to persist and persevere in problem solving as you traverse these demanding apparatus.





Bianca there is always lots in the media about the number of children in New Zealand that have accidents, many reports are suggesting that this is because today's children are living in a "cotton wool" society where they are not allowed to take risks in their play, therefore not developing the dispositions or skills to cope with difficult situations they encounter.

At Educare we encourage risk taking in a safe, supervised environment. We believe that children who are supported to freely test their skill gain a greater degree of confidence and competence than children whose activities are constantly inhibited by well-meaning adults, and they develop a more positive sense of self by participating in a 'yes' environment.

That is why today, when I discovered you at the steep steps to the blue box, I simply stood back to observe your actions. I was close enough to step in if I felt you were in danger, but far enough away so as not to distract you from your mission. The photos tell the story Bianca as you go up the steep steps, negotiate the split-level boxes and then go on to tackle the slippery slope of the ramp back to the ground. I see you using your hands and arms for support and moving your feet with confidence, stopping to take a seat if you feel it is safer on your bottom.

I videoed your antics so Mum and Dad could see you in action Bianca; they know what a daredevil you are and often have stories to tell about your exploits at home, standing on the back of the couch is never a good idea my friend!. We talked about how, in the video, we could see you stop at the top of the bridge when you heard another child cry out across the playground, your face showing interest and concern. I love your capacity to take in what is happening around you even as you are intently focused on another task.

In September I talked about this place being your "tūrangawaewae" (place to stand), and this is just another example of your sense of belonging and empowerment in the Educare environment...On a daily basis I'm just blown away by your confidence in this place, and your trust that you will be kept safe while following your dispositions to learn. You show such enthusiasm and joy for learning and as always this is reflected in your face, body, and your voice...I have heard people talking about "wearing your heart on your sleeve" ...you wear yours on your face Bianca!

How can we encourage these dispositions to grow?

I can't wait to see what developments the next weeks bring Bianca as we continue to provide safe opportunities for you to test your body and discover what it can do, allowing you to take risks with new challenges while remaining close at hand to offer support when you need it.

