

NO WAR TOY PLAY POLICY

1. Purpose

It is recognised, that each family will have its own value on playing with guns and knives. These will include the real items, paper, plastic or wooden replicas. At Blue Gum Montessori School (BGMS), our value is to educate children to play according to restorative practices of solving problems through talking to one another rather than using more aggressive mediums. Staff will make every effort to ensure play is inclusive and ideally self-regulated by the children themselves. Our experience has been that once you add even pretend guns and knives, the play becomes aggressive and children find it challenging to manage their and others behaviour. BGMS is a war toy free zone. Children are not permitted to bring knives or guns of any nature to school.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the BGMS community, to students enrolled at BGMS, their parent/guardians, staff as well as other relevant members of the community, such as volunteers and visiting specialists.

3. Policy Statement

There are many theories about why young children play with guns, but most revolve around the concept that being powerful through violence is deeply ingrained in both our culture and psyche, if not our genetics. Our nation's history, in many ways, is the story of using gun violence to exert power. From the Revolutionary War through our current violent occupations of the Middle East, we've "proven" our superiority from behind the barrels of guns. More recently terrorist and militant attacks occurring more locally. Literature is rife with the conflict between good and evil, with "necessary" violence often being at least part of the solution. Any home with a television, no matter how strictly monitored, will eventually bring gunplay of some sort – be it the news or a cartoon – into the home.

Whatever our personal opinions about guns, it's hard to argue that our children are not surrounded by violent imagery and it shouldn't surprise us that they bring that into their dramatic play. Just as they might play with dolls to experience the nurturing they see around them, or basketballs to emulate athletes, they pick up toy guns (or more often than not, form them from their fingers) as a way to explore the violence in their lives, real or imaginary. And it's often boys because guns are almost always connected in some way to masculinity (Teacher Tom, March 28, 2011).

4. Responsibilities

Please assist the School in remaining a "War toy free" zone.

4.1. Compliance, Monitoring and Review

Conducted by the Principal and delegate.

4.2. Reporting

Conducted by the Principal and delegate.

4.3. Records Management

Conducted by the Principal and delegate.

Approval and Amendment History	Details	Date
Original Approval Authority and Date		1/10/17
Amendment Authority and Date		
Review		22/6/2018
Review		08/04/2019