



May 2013

Child Side School is always looking out for ways of integrating real life experiences into their "living curriculum". Located in the heart of the dairy country in Boyanup and surrounded by dairy farm paddocks it made perfect sense to get involved in the Cows Create Careers.

John Lucey (Industry Advocate from the Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia) visited the school early in the program. He explained how "the aim was to raise awareness of the whole dairy industry from driving trucks, through to undertaking research in pasture technologies, and not focusing solely on dairy farming as a career opportunity".

Through the program Phil Depiazzi, a local dairy farmer, has loaned the school two calves for a 3 week period. During this time Phil has become a "living book" by making regular visits to teach the children about looking after the calves and about his life style, experiences and career in the dairy industry.

The program has been established for year 7 to 11 children, and as such is aimed primarily at children in the Family Learning Association (FLA). The FLA supports Child Side families who choose to home school through the high school years. However, the school is making use of this great opportunity by structuring this terms planning for all years around topics related to the dairy industry.

Leonie O'Connell (Child Side School - Principal) explained "this is a fantastic project as it provides us with the ability to create a diverse and integrated learning package that includes curriculum outcomes based on history, technology, social studies, health education, maths, English and science". There are other benefits that Leonie is enthusiastic about detailing how "the children through this project have become more aware of their surroundings and the community they live in, having a greater awareness and appreciation of the landscape and the local industries they support".

This project was made possible by Dairy Australia, Western Dairy and Provico (who supply the milk powder) and Phil Depiazzi who has donated many hours of his valuable time.

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Phil Depiazzi introducing Georgia Hudson, Ruby Depiazzi & Hailey Atkinson to the calves



Tristan McDonald mixing up the calves' formula milk, which has to be done twice a day



FLA student Bryce Lanigan feeding the calves while the younger children look on



The younger children using investigative play to discover about the life of a dairy farmer