

THE PHOENIX FIVE

playspace card

This playful environment centers on watching five very different friends work together to build a treehouse while learning about needs, strengths, and teamwork.

Based on the beautiful book, *The Phoenix Five*, this playscape offers opportunities for children to explore and understand that everyone has different needs and strengths, allowing us to all work together in unity. Through playful characters and rhythmic storytelling, this story opens the door to rich conversations about wellbeing, emotions, and what helps us thrive.

Through story and play, children begin to build the language to express how they feel, what they need, and why it matters. It's a gentle first step into what we call Needs Literacy, an understanding that sits at the heart of wellbeing and growth

WHAT IS NEEDS LITERACY? a brief introduction

Before children can construct complex emotional concepts, they first need a foundation: an understanding of human needs. Needs literacy means helping children recognise, name, and reflect on the core needs that motivate their feelings and actions. In the Phoenix Cups framework, these needs are:

- ➔ Safety (security, predictability)
- ➔ Connection (love, belonging)
- ➔ Freedom (autonomy, creativity)
- ➔ Mastery (competence, achievement)
- ➔ Fun (joy, playfulness)

When a need is unmet, unpleasant feelings often arise. When a need is met, feelings of wellbeing flourish. Helping children notice their needs first can lay the foundation for richer, more accurate emotional literacy later.

PLAYSPACE BUNDLES

and where to find them

- ➔ Purchase the full bundles of resources used to put this playspace together and bring the learning to life in your room, head to bellbird.com.au and search for the following kit codes!

- SKU 116721T
- SKU 116728T
- SKU 116729T



Follow the QR Code link for more playspaces!

*Please note that the photography may not show all items from the resource sets. Purchasing this playspace includes complete sets beyond those displayed.



Flip over the page for links to the EYLF, Planning Cycle and Implementation/Extension tips



Take some of the guess work out of the 'why' behind the 'what' and let the Bellbird playspace cards help guide you to create engaging and meaningful learning opportunities.



THE BIGGER THOUGHTS

learning themes and connections

Wondering what topics and themes you might see children exploring whilst engaging in this playspace? Check out some relevant learning themes here:

- ➔ Social and Emotional Wellbeing
- ➔ Needs Literacy
- ➔ Working Together and Teamwork
- ➔ Protecting Our Country

**Head to bellbird.com.au for more indepth details of learning connections in this playspace*



PROMOTING THINKING DURING PLAY

engaging with children

Help children to think deeper about the topics you're exploring by engaging with them during play! Use open-ended questions to challenge and develop children's thoughts and ideas about what they're learning. You could ask children:

- ➔ When have you felt like Saffi the Koala; needing safety or rest?
- ➔ What helps you feel calm or safe when things feel uncertain?
- ➔ What makes you laugh like Flo the Cockatoo?
- ➔ How can the Phoenix Five work together even when they are different?

**Head to bellbird.com.au for more questions*



LINKING TO THE LEARNING BEHIND PLAY

possible links to the early years learning framework

You might find children engaging in the following learning outcomes from the EYLF:

- ➔ Outcome 1.1: Children feel safe, secure, and supported: The Phoenix Five supports children to recognise and articulate needs such as safety, connection, and belonging through trusted characters and shared play experiences.
- ➔ Outcome 1.4: Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect: Children explore how different needs show up for different people, fostering empathy, perspective-taking, and respectful collaboration.



EXTENDING PLAY: WHERE TO NEXT

extension ideas and prompts for continued inquiry

- ➔ Invite children to explore feelings and changing energy levels through music and movement experiences, encouraging them to express emotions with their bodies.
- ➔ Provide drawing, collage and loose parts materials for children to creatively represent different feelings, emotions and needs they experience in their bodies.
- ➔ Observe and discuss non-verbal communication cues such as facial expressions, body language, tone of voice and movement to support children's understanding of emotions and needs.
- ➔ Encourage children to reflect on times in everyday life when they have felt like different characters in the story and share strategies that help them feel safe, calm or connected.



EVALUATING EXPERIENCES

prompts for critical reflection



- ➔ Which children step into leadership; which need support to feel included?
- ➔ How does this playspace tell us about children's wellbeing, language and play?

MORE INSPIRATION

Want some more guidance and ideas on engaging environments? We've got you covered!



➔ bellbird.com.au/inspiring-playspaces

