

*Mary has been a regular and much anticipated visitor at our Early Learning Centre for some time. She has an amazing gift! Whilst educating and encouraging very young children to become involved with gardening she is empowering them to develop and extend their skills and knowledge as well as teaching them to care for themselves and the environment. Learning opportunities are endless as they hone fine and gross motor skills through seed sowing, digging and cutting and korero with Mary and each other about the growth of plants and the importance of insects in the garden. Along with promoting an ethic of care for their environment the children are encouraged to embrace their manaaki (care and nurturing) of each other through collaboration, turn taking, patience and sharing. They delight in working alongside Mary to harvest produce or pot seedlings so they can proudly share their bounty and knowledge with their family at home. Mary has taught us all that there is much more to gardening than green fingers!*

Denise Starr

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