

BACKYARD BLITZ

Westmead



Backyard Blitz joined forces with the George Gregan Foundation to create an amazing playground at the Children's Hospital Westmead.

The George Gregan Foundation

The George Gregan Foundation, established in August 2005, is a long term vision of George Gregan and his wife Erica. The idea for this Foundation was born in 2004 when their son Max was diagnosed with epilepsy. They spent time in hospital with Max and experienced first hand the needs of many sick children and their families. The Foundation aims to raise funds for specific projects targeting children.



The key projects on the agenda are researching, funding and delivering outdoor specialised playgrounds in children's hospitals and the funding of a Fellowship in Neurology at Westmead Children's Hospital.

The design

This first playground at Westmead Children's Hospital was designed and built by Access Australia in conjunction with Fox Johnston Architects, Mirvac and Backyard Blitz.



The project was based on Australian and international research and close consultation with The Children's Hospital Westmead to design an accessible and equitable play environment for children with and without disabilities.

The design is based on a combination of looping and branching with an accessible main loop through the site suitable for children in wheelchairs or hospital beds with accessible branches leading to areas of play equipment. The design includes careful location of shade and seating areas to facilitate ease of observation by parents and friends.



The design theme was to create a marine environment and accordingly the centrepiece is a large galleon boat with mast and sails creating shade and a focal point for the design. The safety surfacing soft fall to all accessible areas includes a wave design such that the main looping walkway is a sand colour representing a beach leading to blue and green areas with play equipment representing water.



The play environment will create a research opportunity for The Children's Hospital Westmead and many of the allied health professionals involved in the design process with Access Australia will continue to use the project as a learning and testing laboratory for the important relationship between play and everyday living.



The garden

The low allergy plants were chosen for their suitability for a playground, hardiness, climate and inclusion of some for stimulating the senses e.g. lemon myrtle and lavender. "Sir Walter", a soft leaf buffalo lawn was selected because it is ideal for children to play on, is hardy and low maintenance.

Low allergy plants

Trees: NSW Christmas bush (*Ceratopetalum gummiferum* 'Albery's Red'), blueberry ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*), summer red gum (*Eucalyptus* 'Summer Red'), water gum (*Tristaniopsis laurina*),

Shrubs and grasses: Pineapple guava (*Feijoa sellowiana*), agave (*Agave attenuata*), lemon myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*), red star cordyline (*Cordyline* 'Red Star'), lavender (*Lavandula stoechas* 'Avonview'), rice flower (*Pimelea ferruginea*), lilly pilly (*Acmena smithii* var. minor red tip form), bush germander (*Teucrium fruticans*), violet westringia (*Westringia glabra*), pig face (*Carprobrotus glaucescens*), tussock grass (*Poa labillardieri*), silver flax lily (*Dianella* 'Border Silver'), tassel cord rush (*Baloskion tetraphyllum* often sold as *Restio tetraphyllum*), Nyalla lomandra (*Lomandra* 'Nyalla'), kangaroo grass (*Themeda australis*)



Products

The soft fall impact absorbing surface for preventing injuries under play equipment consisted of a recycled rubber base

and a coloured EPDM synthetic rubber topcoat. The benefit of this surface is that as it wears, the colour remains.

Design by

Access Australia in conjunction with Fox Johnston Architects

Web: www.foxjohnston.com.au

Access consultants for the project;

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Patio-Landscape architecture and design

Web: www.patio.com.au

Special thanks to:

The Children's Hospital at Westmead
Web: www.chw.edu.au

Mirvac
Web: www.mirvac.com.au

Our turf donated by "Sir Walter" premium lawn turf, 1300 554 442.
Website: www.sirwalter.com.au

The Wiggles
Web: www.thewiggles.com.au

For information or to donate contact:



The George Gregan Foundation
www.georgegreganfoundation.com.au

Hi5 – For "Live Action Heroes" Tour Dates
www.hi-5.com.au



Construction by the Backyard Blitz team (all gardens are gifts from Backyard Blitz).

Product Details

- Most of the plants we used are readily available at, or can be ordered from nurseries. Nurseries can also advise on similar varieties suited to your area. You may need to contact specialist nurseries for some plants. Your local nursery should be able to provide you with contacts.
- Most other materials are available from large hardware stores or building or landscape suppliers.
- All tools used are commonly available for hire, including the mini loader, airless spray gun, concrete saw and the compression nail gun.
- Playground sculptures, contact Tim Johnman, Lithgow Pottery, phone: (02) 6351 4483, mobile 0427 183 181, email: handmade@pnc.com.au

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