

Essay by Lauren Wright

The Beach Bonanza was.....an extraordinary event! There were 260 children present, so the whole beach was filled with excitement, laughter and joy! Cronulla is my home, so I am extremely fortunate to live so close to the beach. The Beach Bonanza was organised so that children who did not live near the beach could experience its wonderful feelings and sights. The wind whipping through your hair, sand so soft and warm, and waves that gently crash ashore.

On 9/10/07, at 8:50am, I wandered down to Wanda Beach with my classmates. As soon as we arrived, we saw a huge mass of children who were all very excited to be at the beach. They were enthusiastic and eager to start, as many of them had not experienced the beach before. Each school was given a variety of different hats so that only a few children from one school had the same hat. We split up and sat in lines according to our colour hat. I was in Royal Blue and there were children from other schools in my group. We were welcomed to the Beach Bonanza, the main message was "make some friends, experience the stunning beach and have fun"! Then we were off and starting our activities!

To start with my group went to the indigenous games. I was excited because I was interested to know what they did instead of watching TV or using some other luxury we have today. We played a game where you would throw a ball until you got it into the hoop and we also played a relay game. My group was getting excited because our next activity involved being down on the beach! We played volleyball, flags and relays. Everyone wanted to go in the water but unfortunately it would have been impossible for the teachers to supervise, especially when some children could not swim well. I met a girl from a school in Bankstown. She was of a different religion and wore the head dress. She was very nice and I talked to her all day. She also introduced me to her friend.

Lunch! The Community Relations Commission had organised a sausage sizzle. The sausages were delicious! Everyone wanted seconds! When a helicopter arrived we were all amazed! Separating into small groups we were allowed to venture through the helicopter. After everyone had been through, we all waved as the helicopter flew off. Time for more games and "ultimate Frisbees" was next on our list, a really fun game that was a bit like netball except we used Frisbees! Finally we said goodbye to all the friends we had made and headed back to our classmates. We all had a story to tell! Gift bags, wristbands and the hats, ensured we would never forget all the wondrous memories that we gained from the Beach Bonanza.

It was a wonderful and intriguing experience and I hope that it will be organised again so that everybody can understand and interact with children who live further away!

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