

The Early Years  
Learning Framework

# Team Meeting Package





ACTPSC is the Professional Support Coordinator in the ACT, and is an initiative funded by the Australian Government under the Inclusion and Professional Support Program.

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**Communities@Work**



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# TEAM MEETING PACKAGE

## User Guide

### What is the Team Meeting Package?

The *EYLF Team Meeting Package* is a useful approach to helping early childhood educators reflect upon *Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework*, within the setting. Key to successful implementation is the engagement of all staff and the leadership role taken by management and coordination staff. This package provides a plan for looking at the EYLF within team meetings. This is not a formula or recipe for unpacking the framework - look upon it as some support for learning within the service.

### Who is the Package for?

The package is appropriate for early childhood educators in all settings within the sector.

### How Will the Package be Used?

The *Team Meeting Package* can be used in any way that suits your team and setting. You may choose to cover the content over a few sessions or in eight team meeting sessions or use it in any combination. There are reflections and suggestions for experiences that may be more easily digested over time and with periods allocated in between. Each session has a suggested allocation of approximately 60 minutes to fit in with a team meeting. Understanding and growth occurs over time and a planned approach to the use of the EYLF is essential.

### Structure of the Package

#### Facilitator Notes

In the facilitator notes you will find clear guidelines as to where one session ends and the next begins. The guidelines are seen as a leadership tool and aim to extend current and existing knowledge – adapt it to suit your needs and the needs of your particular setting. The order of the sessions can be used in any way you feel best suits your team and setting.

Use the **First Steps** and **Food for Thought** sections to initiate and extend discussions between educators. Educators have diverse experience, training and backgrounds and this must be considered in any discussion.

#### PowerPoint Presentation

The **PowerPoint** presentation is an additional resource that can be used to support the facilitator notes. Check through the presentation and use individual slides as a support for your experiences and discussions.

## The Facilitator or Leadership Role

In order to effectively use this guide all staff will need to have some degree of familiarity with the **Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)**. The facilitator of the sessions will need to be familiar with and feel confident with the Framework before embarking on any *Team Meeting sessions* and related *Food for Thought Activities*.

These activities are intended to be led by an educator within the service who has the most extensive knowledge and understanding of curriculum and theoretical knowledge. The facilitator needs to have a close relationship with the staff, the children and families to make learning relative to the individual setting.

Now, if the Framework is still awaiting your attention set aside time to read it and develop an understanding of the contents! Distribute it to the team and encourage them to become familiar with it prior to Team Meeting session/s.

## Suggested Checklist for Team Meeting

- Facilitator notes
- PowerPoint presentation
- Laptop or data projector and/or access to a computer
- A copy of the Educators' Guide (due to release in March 2010)
- Copies of the EYLF for participants to refer to
- Team Meeting Minutes template (**Appendix A**) and
- Resources for activities and experiences (handouts and materials).

## Tips for Running Team Meetings

Here are a few tips to assist with running effective team meetings. This extract provides a general guide for meetings. Meetings are an important and an integral part of a successful program. Staff should be informed of the meeting time in advance so they can prepare or plan any activities. Each meeting can be a platform to:

Discuss and express concerns:

- Share information, for example professional development sessions attended, inservices, seminars, newsletters;
- Discuss programming and policy issues;
- Discuss relevant information on children/families;



- Discuss any issues or concerns from staff;
- Debrief on any relevant issues occurring in the previous month or fortnight.

Time is precious so it is important to be very clear about what you want the meetings to achieve. For example, it is not useful for a team to be pulled into a negotiation between two individual staff. It is also important to have a balance of problem solving issues and opportunities for learning and creative discussion (**an excellent opportunity for EYLF discussions!**).

Discussing with the team how they want to use their meeting time and developing agreements about how this will be achieved can make meetings much more productive. For example, an agreement could be that if a problem is raised, a possible solution also needs to be suggested.

It is up to each individual setting and team meeting leader to decide how and when these Team Meetings will be held and what information will be discussed and reflected upon. It is also important to have a good grasp of the individual personalities within the Team and be able to take these into account when facilitating discussions and **Food For Thought Activities**.

In some instances it is best to have the Team Meetings in the one larger group and in other instances it may be better to break off into smaller individual groups. Some teams may even consider inviting parents and management members to be a part of the experiences – obviously keeping in mind that discussions do not involve individuals and confidential matters.

Remember to enjoy the process and to respect the opinions of everyone involved. In most teams it is rare to reach absolute consensus and individual opinions need to be respected and validated. Sometimes it is a matter of agreeing to disagree!

**(Adapted extract Community Child Care Co-operative (NSW) 2008, pp194-195)**

## Adult Learning

In early childhood settings we spend most of our time working with children before they start formal schooling. However, adults can be somewhat different in the situation of learning. The following information will assist you in your preparation of, and presentation for educators.

### What is special about Adults as Learners?

- **Adults have a great deal of experience to draw on.** This experience will be valuable and adults will resent learning if it does not take into account their experiences.
- **Adults may have preconceived ideas about the situation of learning.** These may be based on their positive or negative experiences that have occurred at school, college, university, or other places of learning. This means that some adults are more prepared to learn than other adults.
- **Adults may have firmly established attitudes.** These may be a barrier to learning, but they may also be a resource for learning.

- **Adults may bring a number of preoccupations to the learning situation.** They bring worries from home or work with them. This may mean that they are tense or anxious and need to be diverted from these preoccupations.
- **Adults may be more internally motivated.** They will respond to external motivation on a very limited basis.
- **Adults usually approach learning with a specific set of expectations.** They will want something out of their meetings and professional development.
- **Adults may feel that they know all of the ideas and material being presented and they may have heard it all before.** Let them know this may be a positive affirmation of their knowledge and that sharing this knowledge will benefit others.



### What do adults worry about when they come to training?

Adults may be concerned that they will be embarrassed during participation in larger group discussions – they may feel quite threatened by the experience.

They may also feel they are unable to keep pace with the rest of the group or that they do not understand the concepts being discussed and reflected upon. Confidence may also be a concern and people may feel insecure and therefore reluctant to contribute.

As the leader you must always remember to respect the participants. It is your job to facilitate learning and sharing of ideas and concepts. This will only happen if everyone feels secure and stimulated.

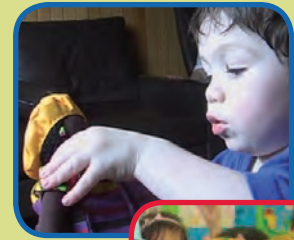
### Keep the following points in mind when preparing for the Team Meetings:

- **Use the strengths of the participants.** This will facilitate greater learning for everyone participating. Draw on the knowledge and strengths that you know already exist within the group.
- **Acknowledge the experience of the participants.** Use the knowledge and experience as a building block in the meetings. This will further everyone's learning and will make people feel valued and respected.
- **Respect the participants as independent learners.** Each person comes to the meeting as an individual. As adults they are also independent and will also want to be

responsible for their learning. Their reward for coming to the meeting will be an increase in knowledge and understanding of some new ideas. If every person takes this away from the meeting you have had a successful session.

- **Keep the focus on fun and participation.** Adults will continue to learn at a greater rate if they are enjoying themselves and they are participating in the discussions. Studies show that adults will tune out from speakers 7 minutes after the presentation begins. This is why it is important to get participants involved and thinking early on in the meeting.
- **Participation** is one of the keys to a successful meeting. With participation you will be able to facilitate learning and reflections with ease. Some people will be reluctant to participate and it is important that the option to be an observer is respected.
- **When brainstorming** and conducting group discussion, clearly state what your intention is. Ask for responses to open questions – such as the **Food For Thought** questions. Value each contribution. It can be helpful to restate their response to ensure that you have understood.
- **At the conclusion** of the meeting thank people for their contribution. This will assist in building people's confidence and encouraging the development of the team.
- **Final points.** You may be working with people with varying levels of literacy and understanding of the English language. You must acknowledge diversity may exist within the team. People may come from a range of language, educational, sexual or cultural backgrounds. This means that presentation must be clear, concise and may need to be adapted in accordance with the training, experience and background of the participants.

**(Edited extract, Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Sydney, 1997, pp10-11)**



# SESSION 1

## Introduction to the EYLF

### Highlights for Session 1

In this session you will discuss an overview of the following:

- Introduction to the EYLF
- Elements of the Framework
- Early Childhood Pedagogy and Principles

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- Ask educators to pick up the EYLF and read an aspect that is of interest.
- For the purpose of the meeting read **EYLF pp5–20**.

### Resources

- PowerPoint presentation, Handouts: *Belonging, Being and Becoming (Handout 1)*, *Talking about Pedagogy (Handout 2)*.

### An Introduction to the EYLF

The **Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)** is Australia's first framework for early childhood educators. 'The aim of the document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school' (EYLF, p5). It is a guide that provides general goals or outcomes for children's learning and how they might be attained. It also provides a scaffold to assist early childhood settings to develop their own, more detailed curriculum (EYLF, Glossary p46). It is a national curriculum framework covering birth to five years and supports the transition to formal schooling.

"The aim of the document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school"

(EYLF, p5)

The EYLF forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all early childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication and language (including literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

The EYLF guides educators in their curriculum decision-making and assists in planning, implementing and evaluating quality in early childhood settings. It also underpins the implementation of a more specific curriculum relevant to each local community and early childhood settings. It is designed to inspire conversations, improve communication and provide a common language about young children's learning among children themselves, their families, the broader community, early childhood educators and other professionals (EYLF, p8).

## Elements of the EYLF

This is a brief overview of the key concepts and words of the EYLF. Reflections and discussions should be related back to these concepts (EYLF, p9).

**Belonging** – children learn from their social contexts – relationships are critical to a sense of belonging, it acknowledges their interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities.

**Being** – children are capable learners from birth and contribute to family and society – they are not merely learning to become adults – individuality and distinctiveness. Children live very much in the present.

**Becoming** – childhood is the beginning of life with many possibilities – ongoing learning, ongoing reflecting. Children experience rapid change in their early years and it emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

Children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Children’s earliest learning and development takes place through these relationships – especially within families. Families are children’s first and most influential educators. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children’s learning. (EYLF, p9)

### First Steps

- The word ‘educators’ is described as ‘early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings’ (EYLF Glossary of Terms, p45). What does this word mean to your staff team?
- The words ‘Belonging’, ‘Being’, ‘Becoming’ have different meanings for different people. Ask people to work in pairs to talk about their own ideas on ‘Belonging’, ‘Being’ and ‘Becoming’. Use the handout to record these ideas and share these in the larger group.

### Food for Thought...

- How do the concepts of Belonging, Being and Becoming relate to our personal and professional life? What possibilities do they offer for change? How do you as an educator relate Belonging, Being and Becoming to your own daily life and experiences with children and families?
- How might the concepts of Belonging, Being and Becoming be used to communicate with families about children’s learning in your setting? How do we talk with families about how children learn? (EYLF, p9).
- Do children have an opportunity to just simply be during the day? How would you describe these times and are they valuable? Why?
- Look at **Figure 1 together (EYLF, p10)**. How does this relate to our current learning frameworks and plans?

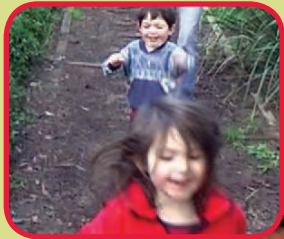


Figure 1: Elements of the Early Years Learning Framework

## Early Childhood Pedagogy and Principles

The word ‘pedagogy’ and the Principles of the EYLF may be new or challenging for some educators. Discussion over time will help people in their understanding of pedagogy and the principles and how it relates to their work with children.

### First Steps

Discuss the term *pedagogy* – Think about pedagogy as the holistic nature of early childhood educators’ professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, curriculum decision-making, teaching and learning (EYLF, p11).

- Talk about the theories and approaches that inform the approaches to children’s learning within the setting. (Also refer to *Session 2 - Talking About Practices and Outcomes*).
- Use the handout ‘Talking about Pedagogy’ to provide an overview and basis for discussion. Ask educators to return to the handout in the following days and talk with peers or team members about what the words mean to them.

The 5 principles ‘reflect contemporary theories and research evidence concerning children’s learning and early childhood pedagogy’ (EYLF, p12).

- Discuss the 5 Principles. What are they? What do they mean to me, to our community of learners? How do we work with these principles within our setting?

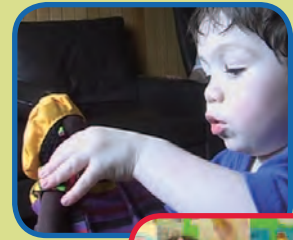
The Principles are:

- **Principle 1** – Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
- **Principle 2** – Partnerships
- **Principle 3** – High expectations and equity
- **Principle 4** – Respect for diversity
- **Principle 5** – Ongoing learning and reflective practice

### Food for Thought...

- How do we establish secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships? Reflect on interactions and times with children and families. (EYLF, p11).
- How do we value and encourage partnerships with families and other professionals?
- How do we ensure children succeed and overcome individual barriers?
- Children are born belonging to a culture. Share stories on understandings of family's cultural heritage. In pairs or small groups talk about knowledge of a child's history, cultural heritage and uniqueness of family. What curriculum decisions are made to uphold children's rights to have their culture, identity, abilities and strengths acknowledged and valued? How are the children in your setting shown that their life outside of the setting is valued and celebrated?

**End of Session 1.**



# SESSION 2

## Talking About Practice & Learning Outcomes

### Highlights for Session 2

This session talks about practice and begins a conversation on Learning Outcomes.

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- Ask educators to read **EYLF pp 14-18**.
- Ask educators to write a short reflection on how they spend their time with children - guiding, teaching and talking. This may be an account of one experience during the day.

### Resources

- PowerPoint presentation slides, service philosophy, policy relating to learning frameworks and curriculum, note paper and pens.

### Practice

The principles of early childhood pedagogy underpin practice – what we do. Educators draw on a rich repertoire of pedagogical practices to promote children’s learning by:

- adapting holistic approaches
- being responsive to children
- planning and implementing learning through play
- intentional teaching
- creating physical and social learning environments that have a positive impact on children’s learning
- valuing the cultural and social context of children and their families
- providing for continuity in experiences and enabling children to have successful transitions
- assessing and monitoring children’s learning to support children in achieving learning outcomes.

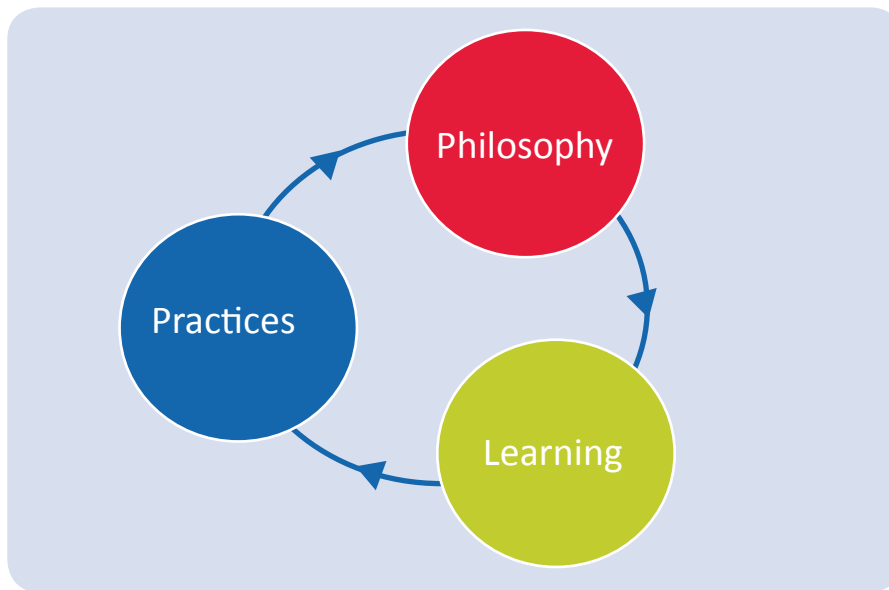
**(EYLF, p14)**

### Getting Started - Where are we now?

This session is an opportunity to explore current practices and to understand that the philosophy, policy and procedures are the foundation and cornerstone.

Talk with educators about their own philosophy on children’s learning. How does this relate to the service philosophy and the EYLF.

Discuss the development of philosophy, policy and practice using the following diagram:



### Food for thought...

- How does our philosophy flow through into learning policy, learning framework and then into practice?
- How do you see these practices currently occurring within the setting. As individuals and a team what are the strengths in practice? Where will there need to be considerations for improvements?
- How often do you critically evaluate these practices and then plan for change and extension as a result of discussions? How often are decisions educators and families make about children's learning followed up on?

In the development of plans for children's learning we observe children, reflect and review, question, and then act on the plans we have made. This is a cyclical process that must be understood by educators. Think about how to develop understandings of this cycle and what additional support educators may need to grow in their knowledge.

Note that this is a very broad and introductory step into looking at practices within the setting. Be aware that more in depth exploration is required.

### Starting a Conversation on Learning Outcomes

Discuss the 5 Learning Outcomes. What are they? What do they mean to me, to our community of learners? (EYLF, p19)

- **Outcome 1** – Children have a strong sense of identity
- **Outcome 2** – Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- **Outcome 3** – Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- **Outcome 4** – Children are confident and involved learners
- **Outcome 5** – Children are effective communicators

(EYLF, pp20-44)

Children learn in a variety of ways and vary in their capabilities and pace of learning. Learning in relation to outcomes is influenced by:

- each child's current capabilities, dispositions and learning preferences
- educators' practices and the early childhood environment
- engagement with each child's family and community
- the integration of learning across the outcomes

Children's learning is ongoing and each child will progress towards the outcomes in different and equally meaningful ways. Learning is not always predictable and linear. Educators plan with each child and the outcomes in mind. (EYLF, p19)

### Food for Thought...

- The Framework will require ongoing commitment from educators and families in order for constructive and sustainable changes to be made to professional practice. How can these changes best be supported by management and the other educators in your setting?
- The Framework needs to be interpreted and followed in ways which are relevant to your community and context and there needs to be a planned approach. Think about how these Team Meeting sessions may help your service achieve this.
- Where and how will you start? Who will be involved and how will all educators, children and families be involved and kept informed about the journey?
- How does the EYLF have relevance in day-to-day routines such as meal times and nappy changing? Do your routines and transitions need consideration? Think about this in relation to the concepts of Belonging, Being and Becoming.
- How can the Learning Outcomes be linked to Quality Assurance and regulatory requirements?
- How does it link in with your service Philosophy and your program documentation? What may need to be changed after everyone engages in these Team Meeting sessions and educators in your setting have had a chance to really reflect on the EYLF?

**Important point:** For all of the Learning Outcomes there is a section titled 'Add your own examples from your context. This will be an essential consideration in any discussion around the Learning Outcomes.

### End of Session 2.

The remaining sessions will focus on the actual Learning Outcomes.



# SESSION 3

## Learning Outcome 1

### Highlights for Session 3

- Exploration, and discussion of **Learning Outcome 1**.

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- This is an opportunity to have in-depth discussions about the Learning Outcomes. Prior to this session ask educators to reflect upon identity in both a personal and professional sense.
- Ask educators to read **EYLF pp20–25**.

### Resources

- PowerPoint Presentation slides, note paper and pens.

## Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity (EYLF, pp20-24)

Take 5 minutes at the beginning of this session to have team members reflect upon their qualities as educators. What makes them feel confident and unique in their role. Brainstorm as a group why this is important and the way this connects to identity.

### Food for Thought...

The discussion moves to children's identity and the points within the outcomes.

#### Children feel safe, secure and supported:

- Focus on a child, in your setting, who displays attributes of Outcome 1 - how is that being achieved and who has played a role in this?
- Focus on another child who is developing these attributes. How can educators, children and the family support this child?

#### Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency:

- How do educators in your setting support children to achieve this? As a team, share how these characteristics were or are still developing in, not only the children, but also in the educators themselves.

#### Children develop knowledge and confident self identities:

- How do we show children they belong? How can we extend on this and develop better understandings of their individual family circumstances?
- Do educators have a sense of identity – share aspects of how educators feel they belong and how that sense of belonging to the group/setting can be enhanced?

#### Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect:

- Reflect on how much time each educator has spent interacting and conversing with each child in their care today. How meaningful were these interactions and in what ways were they meaningful?
- How can we promote greater understanding of cultural backgrounds that develops in to cultural competence for children, families and staff?

**End of Session 3.**

# SESSION 4

## Learning Outcome 2

### Highlights for Session 4

- Exploration and discussion of **Learning Outcome 2**.

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- This is an opportunity to have in-depth discussions about the Learning Outcomes. Prior to this ask educators to reflect upon connections and contributions to their world in both a personal and professional sense.
- Ask educators to read **EYLF pp26–29**.

### Resources

- PowerPoint Presentation slides, note paper and pens.

### Learning Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world (EYLF, pp25-29)

This outcome relates to children’s connectedness to their community and their world-their participation and contributions.

“Having a positive sense of identity and experiencing respectful, responsive relationships strengthens children’s interest and skills in being and becoming active contributors to their world. As children move into early childhood settings they broaden their experiences as participants in different relationships and communities.”

(EYLF p25)

### Food for Thought...

Select a set of questions to reflect upon and discuss within the Team Meeting.

**Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation:**

- Share examples of how children connect with one another and the educators. How does this differ across age groups, and what are the similarities? Think about the service as a community – what does this mean? What are the children’s roles within that community? How do we foster a sense of belonging within the community? What does a community of learners mean to the group?
- Do you set aside time for group discussions with the children for shared decision-making about rules and expectations? Why is it important to have children contribute their views?
- How do you raise ethical discussions with the children that are relevant to their lives and their community? What are some of these ethical issues?



### Children respond to diversity with respect:

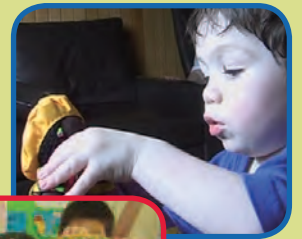
- How can the concepts of diversity be raised with children and how can these ideas then be explored in a respectful manner?
- Reflect on your own responses and feelings towards diversity. How do you deal with situations where differences arise which you are uncomfortable with? E.g. Feeding a four year old child.
- Talk about respecting family practices whilst still respecting the rights of the child and the child's community.

### Children become aware of fairness:

- Think about the resources in your setting. How are diverse abilities, backgrounds and needs represented and shared with the children and families in your setting? How are children represented within resources?

### Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment:

- Think about your own connections and interactions with nature as a child. Why is it important to develop a connectedness to nature in young children?
- Think of 3 – 5 ways in which sustainability and environmental awareness can be encouraged in daily routines and practices. For example, do you use the clothesline or a dryer?
- How is the natural environment integrated into your setting? Is there room for improvement?



**End of Session 4.**

# SESSION 5

## Learning Outcome 3

### Highlights for Session 5

- Exploration and discussion of **Learning Outcome 3**.

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- This is an opportunity to have in-depth discussions about the Learning Outcomes. Prior to this session ask educators to reflect upon their own sense of wellbeing.
- Ask educators to read **EYLF pp30–32**.

### Resources

- PowerPoint Presentation slides, note paper and pens.

This Outcome relates to children’s wellbeing and it is an opportunity to focus broadly upon educator wellbeing.

### First Steps

Discuss the concept of wellbeing and what it means to educators. Where appropriate ask educators to consider their own wellbeing with regard to the examples provided on pages 31-32 of the Framework. Draw the discussion into connections between educators’ wellbeing and children’s wellbeing.

## Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing (EYLF, pp30-32)

### Food for Thought...

#### Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing:

- How can we encourage children to develop social and emotional strength?
- Keep a Reflective Journal of children’s and educator’s interactions and analyse these in the context of social and emotional growth and development.

#### Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing:

- Give examples of how children are taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing in your setting. How can this be extended?
- How can daily routines and the program help reinforce these concepts with children and families?

**End of Session 5.**

# SESSION 6

## Learning Outcome 4

### Highlights for Session 6

- Exploration and discussion of Learning Outcome 4.

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- This is an opportunity to have in-depth discussions about the Learning Outcome 4. Prior to this session ask educators to reflect upon their observations of children as confident and involved learners.
- Ask educators to read **EYLF pp33–37**.

### Resources

- PowerPoint Presentation slides, note paper and pens.

## Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners (EYLF, pp33-37)

### Food for Thought...

#### Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity:

- How do we currently recognise and value children's involvement in learning? How can we further develop this?
- Think of an aspect in the service which needs consideration. For example: the indoor learning environment. Approach this with a child's perspective – with wonder, curiosity and imagination. How does this environment look and feel for a child? How do they experience this environment?

#### Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating:

- Reflect on the day's activities – in which experiences were these concepts apparent? How were the children and the educators using language for communication and description? Revisit these experiences and analyse them in greater depth reviewing how they can be presented and extended upon.
- Think of how children display these attributes. How is that being achieved and who has been instrumental in this? Why?

#### Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another:

- How do children transfer knowledge from one setting to another? How do educators and families encourage this? How do we share these experiences with families?

#### Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials:

- What opportunities are available for children in the service to explore technologies and a variety of materials? What is the role of the educator in fostering these interactions and learning?
- How does the service interact with the broader community? How can this be further developed to allow children the opportunity to connect with people and places outside the service?

**End of Session 6.**

# SESSION 7

## Learning Outcome 5

### Highlights for Session 7

- Exploration and discussion of **Learning Outcome 5**.

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- This is an opportunity to have in depth discussions about the Learning Outcomes. Prior to this session ask educators to take some notes on children's communication at arrival time and their observations of children who are challenged in their attempts to communicate and those who easily navigate different aspects of communication.
- Ask educators to read **EYLF pp39–44**.

### Resources

- PowerPoint Presentation slides, note paper and pens.

### Starting Point

Begin by sharing observations of children and communication. Did they have a new perspective on the communication strengths of children or on particular needs?

### Learning Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators (EYLF, pp38-44)

### Food for Thought...

#### Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes:

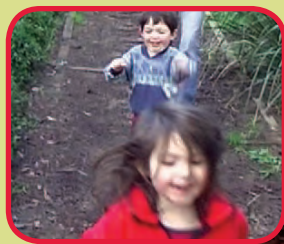
- Think about how young children communicate. How can we support this communication process? Set aside time every day to think about your own ways of communicating. When and how is it most effective and with whom? Share communication techniques as a team.

#### Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts:

- Choose one of the examples from the list on page 41 (EYLF) of how educators promote learning. Discuss it as a group and map out how you will develop one of these concepts as a group or in smaller teams in different rooms.

#### Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media:

- How can we promote literacy through the range of modes of communication – music, movement, dance, storytelling, visual arts, media and drama?
- Map out a plan of how some of these experiences can be achieved.



**Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work:**

- Reflect on symbol systems in various cultures. Educators may be able to contribute their own understandings based on their individual backgrounds.
- Does children’s learning incorporate sorting, categorising, ordering and comparing patterns? Do children have access to a range of materials and resources?

**Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking:**

- How can technology be integrated into children’s play experiences and projects?
- If your service only has one computer which is in the office – how can you work around this?
- If you are unsure about using technology – how can you overcome this in order to be able to teach and learn with the children?
- What types of technology are children exposed to and have access to?

**Knowledge of individual children, their strengths and capabilities will guide the program and help educators optimise children’s capacity for learning.**



**End of Session 7.**

# SESSION 8

## Talking with Families About the EYLF

### Highlights for Session 8

- This is an opportunity to focus on the partnerships for children's learning – specifically the partnership with families.

### How can educators prepare for this session?

- Ask educators to read **EYLF p12**.
- Read service policy and procedure relating to family partnerships and involvement

### Resources

- PowerPoint Presentation slides.
- Service policy on partnerships with families, involvement and curriculum decision-making, *EYLF Brochure for Families* - [www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood](http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood).

Fundamental to the Framework is a view to children's lives through a lens of 'Belonging, Being and Becoming'. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly with families (EYLF, p7).

### Food for Thought...

- How do we communicate with families?
- How do we value and include families in the life of the service?
- Where are the opportunities for families to contribute to decisions about children's learning?
- How have we furthered family understandings of the EYLF and the concepts of Belonging, Being and Becoming?
- Is our policy consistent with the Framework?

### Activities

- Plan for the evaluation and review of current service policy relating to families. Form a small group to work on important changes to policy as it relates to the EYLF.
- Brainstorm ideas for strengthening family partnerships.

**End of Session 8.**

# CONCLUSION

This package is just one of your starting points in using the Early Years Learning Framework within the setting. There are many opportunities available for the development of knowledge on the EYLF, for analysing learning frameworks that already work, and for a practical use of the EYLF.

## Where to from here

- EYLF Info Sessions will continue throughout 2010. These sessions will provide an overview of the EYLF and opportunities for further exploration. These sessions can also be organised as a customised training session.
- The ACT PSC Annual Programme and Curriculum Calendar.
- EYLF action research projects that will explore the EYLF principles, practice and learning outcomes and support educators to translate theory to practice.
- Resources and publications developed by Professional Support Coordinators across Australia.
- Contact the ACT PSC to assist your service in finding a “Critical friend/Mentor” to support the implementation of the EYLF.
- Regularly check the ACT PSC website for updates on professional development opportunities and resources - [www.actpsc.com.au](http://www.actpsc.com.au).

## EYLF Resource Folder

Put together an **EYLF Resource Folder**. That may include a *copy of the Framework*, the *Educators’ Guide* and *Team Meeting Package* plus *Minutes* along with any other *relevant information*.

Ensure educators have regular access to the resource folder/s in order to keep their knowledge up-to-date and to prepare them for the next Team Meeting. A separate copy for families and visitors would be ideal.

## Feedback

The ACT PSC value your feedback and suggestions. Please email us with your constructive critical comment and suggestions for changes to this resource at [actpsc@commsatwork.org](mailto:actpsc@commsatwork.org).

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## Extract from EYLF pp45-46

**Curriculum** – in the early childhood setting curriculum means ‘all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development’. (Adapted from Te Whariki).

**Educators** – early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings.

**Inclusion** – involves taking into account all children’s social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes. The intent is to ensure that all children’s experiences are recognised and valued. The intent is also to ensure that all children have equitable access to resources and participation, and opportunities to demonstrate their learning and to value difference.

**Intentional teaching** – involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and action. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have always been done that way.

**Involvement** – is a state of intense, whole hearted mental activity, characterised by sustained concentration and intrinsic motivation. Highly involved children (and adults) operate at the limit of their capacities, leading to changed ways of responding and understanding leading to deep level learning (adapted from Laevers 1994).

**Learning outcome** – a skill, knowledge or disposition that educators can actively promote in early childhood settings, in collaboration with children and families.

**Pedagogy** – early childhood educators’ professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, curriculum decision-making, teaching and learning.

**Play-based learning** – a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.

**Scaffold** – the educators’ decisions and actions that build on children’s existing knowledge and skills to enhance their learning.

# APPENDIX 1

Use this template to record important points from team meetings. It will assist in following through on discussions and action points.

## Team Meeting Minutes

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

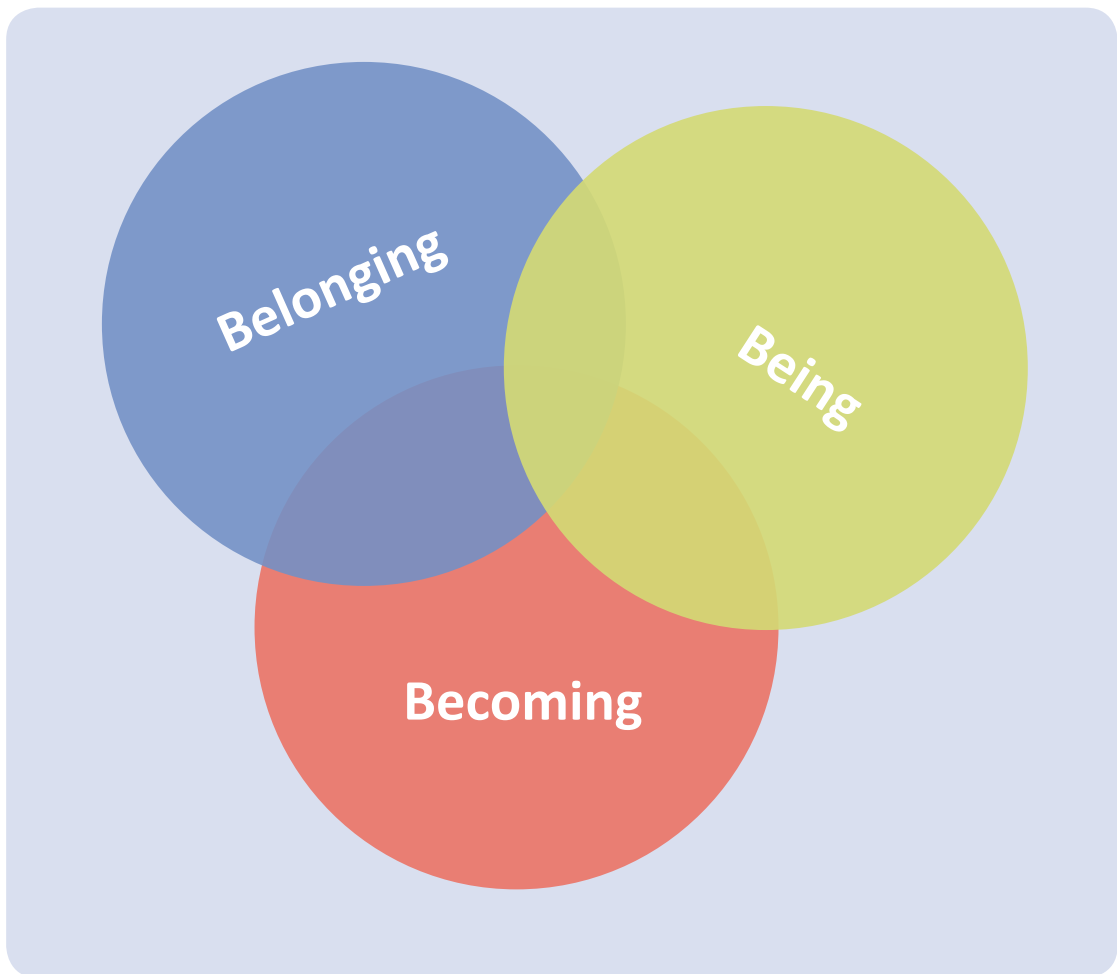
**Participants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Apologies:** \_\_\_\_\_

Discussion/Topic	Action Plan	Communication with Families (if appropriate)	Professional Development Opportunities

# HANDOUT 1

What do these words mean to me?



# HANDOUT 2

## Talking About Pedagogy...

### Handout for Session 1 - Introduction to the EYLF

“Early childhood educators’ professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, curriculum decision-making, teaching and learning.” (EYLF, p46)

“Pedagogy is both the behaviour of teaching and being able to talk about and reflect on teaching. Pedagogy encompasses both what practitioners actually DO and THINK and the principles, theories, perceptions and challenges that inform and shape it. It connects being an early years educator with personal, cultural and community values (including care), curriculum structures and external influences.” (Talking Point, Early Childhood Australia, June 2008)

“Pedagogy is the art of teaching. Effective teachers use an array of teaching strategies because there is no single, universal approach that suits all situations. Different strategies used in different combinations with different groupings of students will improve learning outcomes. Some strategies are better suited to teaching certain skills and fields of knowledge than are others. Some strategies are better suited to certain student backgrounds, learning styles and abilities. Effective pedagogy, incorporating an array of teaching strategies that support intellectual engagement, connectedness to the wider world, supportive classroom environments, and recognition of difference, should be implemented across all key learning and subject areas.” (Department of Education and Training - Queensland Government)

“Effective pedagogy requires education and care to be integrated, with learning, development, and experiences for children inter-related. Learning goals are broad and include knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Evidence about effective pedagogy shows the need for teachers/educators to understand children’s experiences, and focus on children’s interests and understanding. Building linkages between settings, especially home and early childhood service, by sharing curriculum and learning aims supports such understanding and shared experiences. Reciprocal interactions within early childhood settings make a key contribution to children’s learning and wellbeing. Effective pedagogy is linked to teachers/educators who are involved, responsive and cognitively demanding, and who encourage “sustained shared thinking” where adults and children co-construct an idea or skill.” (Professional Development in Early Childhood Settings: BES, Linda Mitchell and Pam Cubey, October, 2003).

Pedagogy in practice relates to the way in which educators plan and program with specific needs in mind—those of the children, the families, and the community of the service and setting.

**Refer to EYLF, p11.**

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

- Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments. (2009) The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.
- Children's Services Central. (2009) Professional Support and Training to Children's Services in NSW. PowerPoint Presentation.
- Community Child Care co-Operative. (2009) The Manual Managing a Children's Service.
- Lady Gowrie Child Centre. (1997). Fair Play Anti-bias in Action – Training Manual.
- Talking Point, Early Childhood Australia, June 2008.
- Department of Education and Training. Queensland Government. [www.education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/teaching/technology/pedagogy/index.html](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/curriculum/teaching/technology/pedagogy/index.html) (Accessed Nov. 11 2009).
- Professional Development in Early Childhood Settings: BES, Linda Mitchell and Pam Cubey, October, 2003.



# NOTES



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