

Leading the Way - The Continuing Journey in Planning for Learning

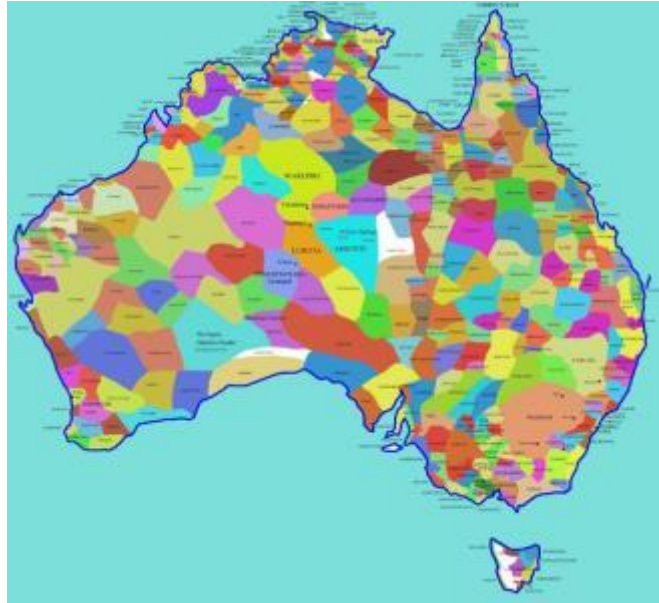
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Acknowledgement of Country



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SEASONS OF CHANGE EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

Sharing stories

Educational Leaders from Qld, NT, WA and Vic

Inspiring, Engaging,
Passionate, and Amazing



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NQS Quality Area 7

Good leaders empower others

They listen to differing views, recognise and address areas of potential conflict, and engage and manage teams through change processes.

(Page 171, Guide to the National Quality Standard)



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The prospect of change can cause some people to feel anxious



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Some need to work through the phases of change:

- Denial
- Resistance
- Exploration
- Commitment



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Assisting others through change

- Acknowledging own anxieties about the role
- Building respectful, reciprocal relationships with colleagues
- Undertaking professional learning
- Working collaboratively and supportively with staff to increase their capacity and sense of ownership within their programs and the centre



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'I think it is helpful to understand that most resistance to change is motivated through fear of the unknown, insecurity, or being stuck in a rut or comfort zone, and with time and support and a chance to feel involved in the process, most educators want what is best for the centre and the children'

Ariel, Annie Dennis Children's Centre, Northcote, Vic



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Approaches that have assisted

- Having high expectations for educators
- Acknowledging their varying backgrounds and learning styles
- Seeing resistance as lack of understanding
- Seeing obstacles as opportunities for professional growth



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*‘Change does not have to happen **to** us but in conjunction **with** us. When we are involved in the change then fear subsides and the resistance changes to excitement’.*

Michelle, Jindi Woraback, St Albans, Vic.



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'The most challenging aspect of being an Educational Leader is being flexible to everybody's learning styles and persisting against resistance. I tailor change to every educator's needs and try and spend the time encouraging those who need it. Most opposition is born from a fear of failing and resistance to criticism'

Hayley, Goodstart Flora Hill (Bendigo), Vic



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Ways that Educational Leaders are motivating and supporting educators and assisting their planning for learning -

- Providing time and encouragement
- Helping them to know, understand and embed the EYLF
- Encouraging family input
- Supporting documentation and planning
- Sharing the importance of reflective practice



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Providing time and encouragement

- Time is rostered to provide one-to-one support
- Log books are used for educators to note questions, concerns or areas of need
- Time is planned to tutor, research, observe, look at documentation and planning
- Records are kept, goals and professional learning possibilities identified



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Providing time and encouragement

- ‘Teachable moments’ are seized with educators
- Reflective discussions take place during staff meetings or room-leader meetings where everyone is encouraged to share their perspectives and strategies
- The focus is on assisting children on their learning journey



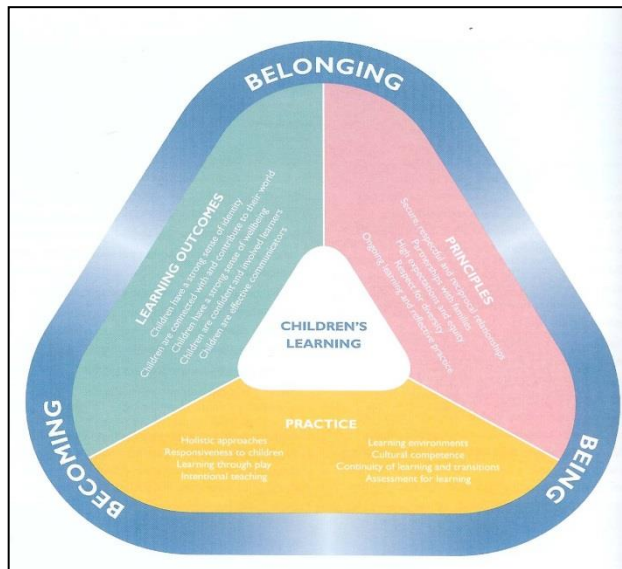
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Helping educators to know, understand and embed the EYLF

- Supporting new educators to assess their knowledge and providing further resources



Helping educators to know, understand and embed the EYLF



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Helping educators to know, understand and embed the EYLF

- The Principles and Practice of the EYLF are discussed at meetings
- The learning outcomes are used to choose broad goals for groups of children as well as to track the ‘distance travelled’ for individual children



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Encouraging family input

Gathering information from families to inform planning

- Parent link diary
- My day at Community Children
- Parent Feedback- Assessment for learning
- Summative assessment

Community Children Moonee Ponds



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'Our service is currently building very strong bonds and relationships with parents, children, child safety organisations and foster care families. I am working with my educators to ensure we are listening to their needs and incorporating their culture, their knowledge, their beliefs, their ideals and planning from these conversations to ensure all children have a strong sense of belonging to their family and culture'

Leonie, Goodstart Mossman, Qld



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Encouraging family input

Gathering information from families to inform planning using video, online and social media strategies

Little Mangoes (Katherine, NT)

Kingdom Kare (Albany, WA)



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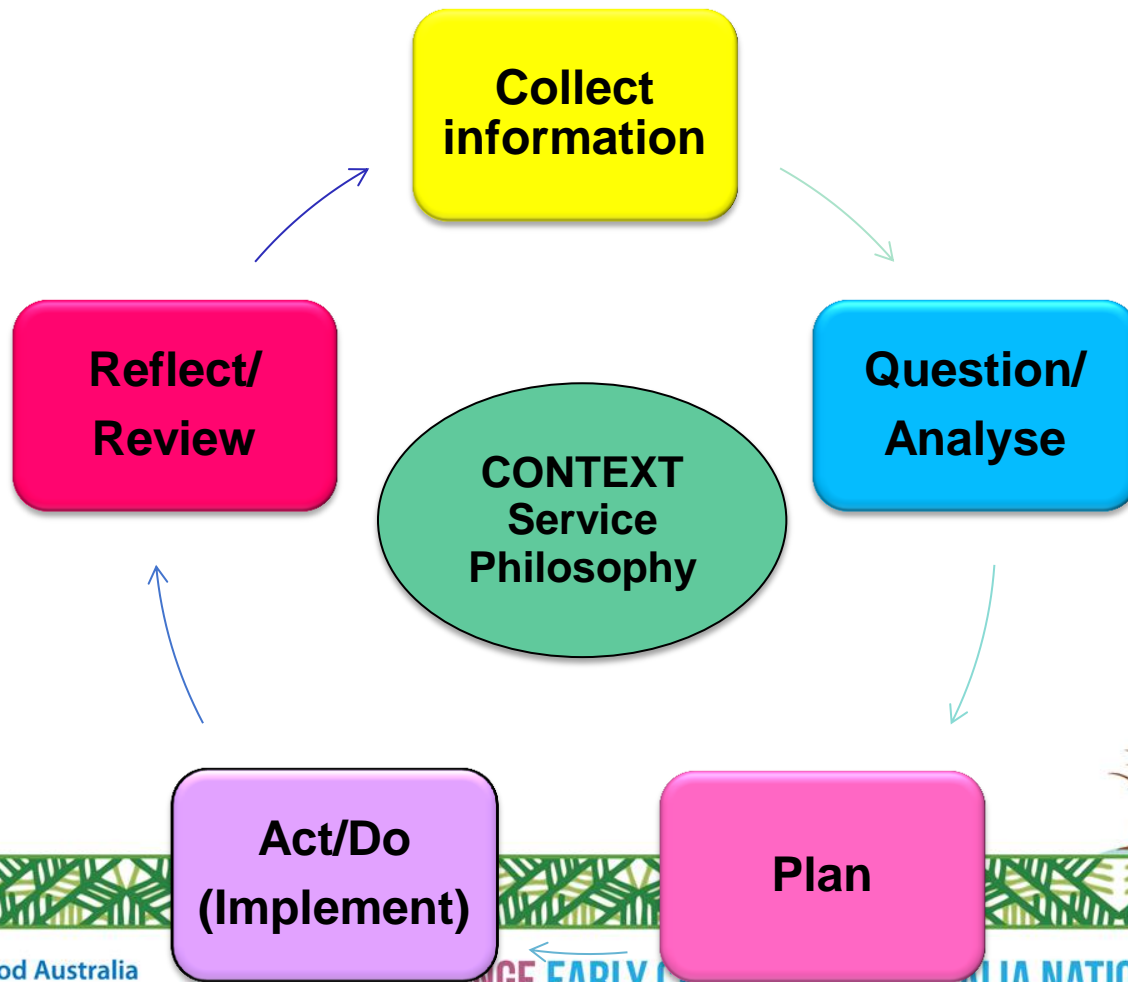
Supporting documentation and planning

'I use a lot of positive reinforcement with educators who are struggling with documentation'.

Kidz Galore, North Perth



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Supporting documentation and planning

- Educators are supported to notice children's learning
- They are reminded to keep a sensible balance between gathering enough information about each child to know them well, (skills, relationships, knowledge, strengths, areas where they may need support) but to also remember the importance of interactions and engagement



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'Working with educators who have English as their second language, I have had to find ways to share knowledge that is easier for them to understand. I have encouraged educators to use more photographic evidence in their documentation and planning'

Leonie, Goodstart Mossman, Qld



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Supporting documentation and planning

- Educators are supported to ensure that adult-led learning is documented (ie. planning is evident)
- And that child-led learning (spontaneous learning) is documented



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*'We allow ourselves to forget what is planned on the curriculum
and seize those teachable moments'*

Kidz Galore Nedlands, WA



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‘We use those teachable moment to share, extend and build upon the children’s knowledge interest and strengths. We are also conscious that we need to ensure that fine balance between being flexible and yet still maintaining a stable base and consistency for the secure development of trusting relationships’

Letitia – Stuart Park Neighbourhood and Child Care Centre, NT



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Supporting documentation and planning

- Trialling new ways to display curriculum so that it is more appealing to families

Little Mangoes, Katherine, NT



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Supporting documentation and planning

- *Families are encouraged to make suggestions and provide feedback on curriculums and portfolios*
- *Children's quotes are displayed on the walls, interests and ideas are extended and followed through and documented on the daily curriculum and in portfolios*

Kidz Galore Kyilla, WA



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Sharing the importance of reflective practice

- Establishing a culture of professional inquiry in order to review current practice
- Focussing on improved outcomes for children and families
- Using reflection journals - *'write it down'*
- Implementing critical reflection as a whole team



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'We are trying to shift reflection from statements about the weather to rich, meaningful thinking that is purposeful and focused'.

Hayley, Goodstart Flora Hill, Vic



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‘Ultimately the role of the educational leader is to motivate other educators to achieve the very best learning outcomes for young children’

Sandra Cheeseman in NQS PLP e-Newsletter no. 33



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Grateful thanks and appreciation to:

WA

- Kidz Galore (North Perth, Kyilla Yokine and Nedlands)
- Kingdom Kare (Albany)

NT

- Stuart Park Neighbourhood Child Care Centre (Darwin)
- Little Mangoes (Katherine)

Qld

- Goodstart (Mossman)

Vic

- Jindi Woraback (St Albans)
- Goodstart Flora Hill (Bendigo)
- Annie Dennis (Northcote)
- Community Children (Moonee Ponds)



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