

VCAA

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

EARLY YEARS EXCHANGE

No. 4 April 2010

ISSN 1837-736X

WHAT'S IN THIS EXCHANGE?

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The Early Years Exchange (EYE) is a series of online publications to familiarise you with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (the Victorian Framework). There will be further monthly updates in May and June to support your thinking, discussions and planning with families, colleagues and children. The EYE is intended for everyone who works with children from birth to age eight.

This fourth issue explores ways to consider **Practice Principle 2: Partnerships with professionals**.

When early childhood professionals work to create partnerships with one another, they can work collaboratively to understand each other's practice and expertise, for the benefit of all children. Through these partnerships, early childhood professionals can build on children's prior learning and experiences and strengthen children's sense of themselves as nurtured and capable learners.

The Victorian Framework emphasises the importance of supporting children and families as they move within and across services throughout the early childhood period.

LINKS



[Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework \(VEYLF\): For Children from Birth to Eight Years](#)
(PDF - 1.9MB)

Guest appearance

The Hobsons Bay City Council manages a range of local children's services including two long-day day care centres, an occasional care service, a family day care service and support for playgroups.

The children's services are delivered and coordinated by a team of early childhood professionals. Sharon McGrath is the Coordinator of Children's Services at Hobsons Bay City Council. Karen Carter is the Team Leader of the Family Day Care service.



Partnerships with professionals are underpinned by:

- discussion with others
- a culture of enquiry
- using the wisdom and skills of colleagues to inform practice
- enlisting families, children and the community as partners
- openness to possibilities
- looking to children for inspiration and guidance about the content of experiences
- playful and creative thinking

(Adapted from Stonehouse 2004)

‘From a child’s perspective, every important caregiver is a potential source of love and learning, comfort and stimulation. From a neuroscientist’s perspective, every important caregiver has the potential to shape a young child’s future.’

(Pam Schiller, 2009)

Snapshots

Snapshot 1

A family day care (FDC) coordination unit recently enrolled an Aboriginal child, Neika (two years old).

Neika’s mother, Kylie, was beginning a part-time job and wanted Neika to be placed in a small group, home environment while she worked. When Kylie was referred to Saruchi, a FDC professional, she discussed how she was proud of her Aboriginal heritage and had always discussed what this meant to Neika. Kylie wanted the other children to be aware of Neika’s cultural heritage.



Saruchi was unsure of how she could honour this in a meaningful way for the children, so she raised the issue with her FDC fieldworker. Together they discussed how they could respect Neika’s cultural identity as well as develop his sense of belonging at the FDC setting.

The FDC fieldworker liaised with the Inclusion Support Facilitator (ISF) who visited the FDC home setting with a Koorie kit. This kit included information, books, puzzles and ideas for talking to children and families about Aboriginal history and experiences. It gave Saruchi the information about how to respectfully include Aboriginal culture in her educational program.

The ISF provided the FDC coordination unit with information about professional development programs that could be introduced at FDC network meetings so all FDC professionals in the area could strengthen their understanding of Aboriginal culture and ways of knowing and being.

Additionally, the ISF suggested that Saruchi encourage Kylie or a family member to visit the FDC setting to talk about Aboriginal culture to the children.

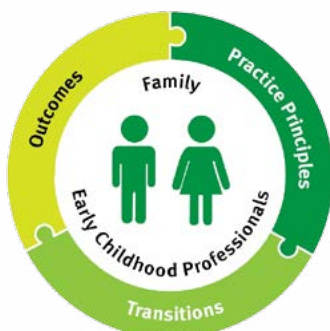
When all early childhood professionals work together, improved outcomes are achieved for all children.

[Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#)

- Page 10, Partnerships with professionals
- Page 11, Equity and Diversity

[Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#)

- Pages 12 and 13, Partnerships, Respect for diversity
- Page 15 and 16, Learning environments, Cultural competence



‘Partnerships are a perspective that underpins everything that happens in an educational setting.’

(Arthur et al. 2008)

Snapshot 2

Mia (four years) spends most of her weekdays at a Family Day Care (FDC) setting while her parents work. During the week, the FDC professional also takes her to a local funded kindergarten program for 12 hours. As Mia moves from one early years setting to another, she experiences changes in these different settings that have their own expectations and ways of doing things.

Both the FDC professional and the kindergarten teacher frequently exchange observations about Mia’s interests, skills and abilities, her developing friendships and her language development. During drop offs and pickups from kindergarten, the FDC professional always takes an interest in the projects that Mia is involved in (whether it be the new garden, the wheat grass or the chickens) and builds on them in the FDC setting.

These day-to-day interactions between the early childhood professionals have established an ongoing relationship, so that when the kindergarten teacher is collating information for Mia’s Transition Learning and Development Statement (Transition Statement), she will discuss it with the FDC professional to gain broader insights into Mia’s learning and development in different settings.

Successful transitions and positive outcomes for children are more likely to occur when early childhood professionals work together and in partnership with families.

Partnerships with professionals can include sharing information or observations in daily conversations or more formal arrangements like monthly network meetings where specific support and resources are shared.

[Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework](#)

- Page 10, Partnerships with professionals
- Page 33, Supporting children’s transitions

[Early Years Learning Framework for Australia](#)

- Page 12, Partnerships
- Page 16, Continuity of learning and transitions

References

Arthur, L, Beecher, B et al. 2007, *Programming and Planning in Early Childhood Settings*, 4th Edn, Cengage Learning, South Melbourne, Australia

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**Link to
Network Activity**

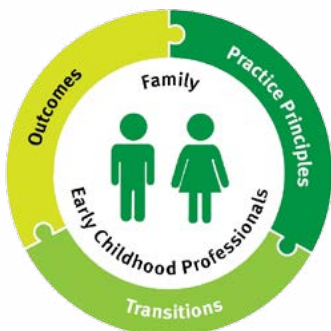
**Mapping how we
establish and maintain
partnerships with
professionals**



Think about partnerships with ...



- MCH nurses
- Allied Health professionals
- Preschool field officers
- Inclusion support facilitators
- Early childhood intervention workers
- Education officers in cultural organisations



Mythbuster

‘The Victorian Framework doesn’t affect carers in family day care. It’s too academic. “We will keep on doing what we are doing. Parents are happy and we are happy.”’

The Victorian Framework applies to all early childhood professionals who support children’s learning and development, regardless of their setting.

FDC professionals can promote that their setting provides families with opportunities for children to participate in out-of-home early childhood education and care programs, in small groups in home-based settings.

Using the language of the Victorian Framework is a great way for FDC professionals to begin the shift into this new era where care and education are not regarded as separate roles.

FDC professionals can use the language of the Victorian Framework in discussions with families, e.g. ‘Today at the water tray, Ben (age 3) persisted with pouring water from the jug into the cup. As he was pouring, I discussed with him how the water was almost to the top – it was almost full. After many trials, Ben shouted with delight “cup full to the top”. You might like to talk about the cup being full at dinner time.’

FDC professionals can use the language of the Victorian Framework in discussions with colleagues, ‘I wonder if you know many different number rhymes that I can sing to Tamika when I change her nappy. She really likes ‘One Two Buckle My Shoe’ but I need to try some different ones’.

Using the language of the Victorian Framework will gradually become part of the way all FDC professionals discuss their practice and children’s learning and development.

Brain development evidence indicates that all children are born ready to learn and that early environments matter. All early childhood professionals have an important role in children’s learning by providing responsive interactions and nurturing relationships. Children are happiest when all their needs are addressed. Children are constantly learning and always need care—education and care are intertwined.

‘Spending time talking with a colleague can be inspiring and form the basis for ongoing learning and influence positive changes to practices.’ (Anon)

Exchanges and changes

The Early Years Unit is keen to hear from you regarding:

- questions about implementation
- changes and adaptations you have made
- interesting discussions in your workplace about the Framework
- what’s happening in your community.

We would also like to invite comment regarding:

- feedback about the EYE
- suggestions/requests for articles that will support your team.

Simply email: veyldf@edumail.vic.gov.au