**[Narrator 1]:** The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, the VEYLDF, adopts a comprehensive approach to children's learning and development. Educators in Victoria can take guidance from the VEYLDF to uphold the image of the child as a rights holder and a competent learner from birth. The VEYLDF identifies five Learning and Development Outcomes for young Victorian children from birth to eight years of age. These five Outcomes provide a common language to support collaborative approaches between professionals and with children and families to build continuity across early years settings and programs for children. Each of the Outcomes can be broken down and understood by their respective key components of learning. Supporting children to progress towards these Outcomes in conjunction with their families is the core of the VEYLDF.

**[Narrator 2]:** Identity is unique to each of us as individuals. It defines who we are, what shapes our interests, and how we come to view the world around us. Some aspects of our identity are permanent, and others change throughout life. The foundational sense of who we are is profoundly important. From the time a child is born, relationships are at the foundation of the construction of their identity. They are asking, who am I? Where do I fit in? How do others see me and relate to me? These questions are at the core of identity formation. In order to form a strong sense of self, children need to build secure relationships first within their families, and then with caring, attentive adults and other children in the places they spend time in. As early childhood professionals, when we support children to have positive experiences of relationship and place, they can develop a strong sense of security, identity, and belonging.

They can construct a positive image of themselves and behave as secure, significant, respected individuals. The acquisition and maintenance of first or home languages has a significant and continuing role in the construction of identity. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, connections to Country, including learning with Country in the natural world all support identity. With a strong sense of identity children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy, and respect. They build their abilities to cooperate and work collaboratively. They demonstrate initiative by asking questions and attempting new challenges. Children who have a strong sense of identity, feel comfortable within local, social, and cultural practises, important in their lives.

From birth, children learn to see themselves as individuals. Young children like to feel connected and seek belonging to people, places, and community. This helps children to learn about themselves, others, and the broader world they live in. As children experience settings beyond their home and kinship groups, their experiences, relationships, and connections broaden. Children who are strongly connected to their world, participate in shared everyday routines, events, and experiences, and use opportunities to contribute to decisions. They help and show concern for others, learn to respect those who are different from them, and practice peaceful and inclusive ways of resolving conflicts. They come to understand fair play and how to make a contribution to a group. Children who are strongly connected established friendships with other children. Children become aware of the impact of the local environment, both physical and social on their lives. They learn ways to care for the environment and contribute to a sustainable future.

**[Narrator 1]:** From birth and throughout early childhood, the foundations for physical, social, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing are laid down. Wellbeing means having good mental and physical health, including attachment, positive affect or mood, and self-regulation. This means being able to manage emotions productively and build resilience and persistence, being adaptable and confident, and experiencing feelings of satisfaction and happiness. Children who have a strong sense of wellbeing are able to practice and consolidate a range of social skills and establish positive dispositions to learning and to new situations. They learn to navigate a range of settings that are part of their lives. They become capable of seeking and receiving assistance. Children learn how to express and manage their feelings and develop self-reliance. They grow in their ability to be responsible for their wellbeing and seek support from others around them in socially acceptable ways. As children progress and mature, their social skills and their resilience increase. They learn to manage emotions and impulses, cope with day-to-day stresses, and to persevere and have a go when faced with challenging learning situations.

**[Educator]:** Almost.

**[Child]:** Yes, I did it!

**[Narrator 1]:** Children experience wellbeing, as they develop a sense of achievement and as they learn to be flexible and adapt to new environments and events.

**[Educator]:** I was wonder if you were going to find some creatures.

**[Child]:** Some worms live in the grass and some worms live in dirt.

**[Narrator 2]:** Educators are able to model and encourage children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and acknowledge and affirm these traits when observed in young children. Children learn in the context of their families and communities. From birth and throughout their early years, children continue to establish dispositions and patterns of engagement with others that have a profound influence on their learning, behaviour, motivation, and ability to become confident and involved lifelong learners. Children are active learners and explore the world through touch, sight, sound, taste, smell, and movement. Their brains develop rapidly through physical exploration and their active engagement with others who respond to their interests and engage them in conversation and social exchange. From birth, with the warmth and support of others around them, children experience and come to realise that learning is exploratory, and it can be fun and rewarding.

Periods of uninterrupted play give children time to invent, investigate, and discover using a rich variety of open-ended materials and resources. Time in the natural world builds confidence and supports discovery. Children who are confident and involved learners have positive dispositions towards learning, experience challenge and success in their learning, and are able to contribute positively and effectively to other children's learning. With encouragement, guidance, experience, and learning, children further develop the capacity to reflect on their own thinking processes and approaches to learning. This is fundamental to maintaining positive learning and development trajectories.

**[Narrator 1]:** Children communicate from birth. They use a variety of communication techniques that includes non-verbal and verbal strategies. From birth, intentional communication is strengthened and broadened. Children learn to take turns in communication exchanges through their relationships with responsive adults. Exploring sound and movement patterns, singing songs, reading stories, playing games, and recording their thoughts and ideas. In the very early years, spoken language emerges in response to role models around the child. Adults who spend time in one-to-one communication with very young children, verbalising and conversing with the child with multiple back and forth exchanges make significant contributions to the development of children's vocabulary. As children learn and develop, access to print rich environments and contact with adults who model and respond to children's oral, and later their written messages continue to strengthen the progression of learning. Children who are effective communicators are able to express their thoughts, feelings, and be understood. Their communication and self-expression may take many forms, and might include sharing visual art, stories, drama, dance, music, and movement in their efforts to communicate with others.

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