

'Babies' and children's attitudes and dispositions to learning are influenced by feedback from others and children's communications, both non-verbal and verbal.'

(Anne Stonehouse, 2004)



Snapshots

Snapshot 1

A snapshot from the under two years old room inspired by Nada Rowan, Room Leader (Hume City Council, Homestead Child and Family Centre) focusing on the **Practice Principle: high expectations for every child.**

NOTICING

One day as I was engaged with a small group of children playing and building with blocks, I noticed that even though each child could only say a few words, they were effectively communicating with one another through pointing and eye contact. I was involved in their play, talking about what they were doing and posing questions about their thinking. I recognised that the children's play provided an opportunity for educators to acknowledge the importance of listening to the voice of the child and support the different ways in which children develop their sense of agency.¹

REFLECTING

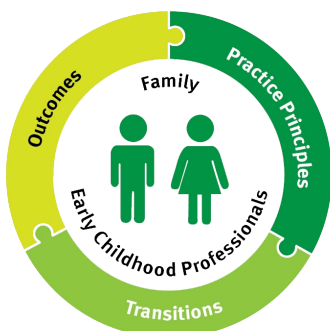
At Homestead Child and Family Centre, we aim to put into practice our philosophy that children are capable and active participants in their own learning. At our team meeting, I commented on the children's skill in non-verbal communication and someone suggested that we could build on this strength and create opportunities for sustained shared conversations and thinking. As a team, we discussed how we would support and guide the children's communication to make choices of play equipment to be taken from the storeroom.

RESPONDING

The educators in the babies' rooms decided to take photographs of the play equipment that is kept in the storeroom. We printed the photographs, laminated and stuck them onto the storeroom door. We explained to the children that this space would be called the Meeting Space.

We modelled how each child could lead the educator to the Meeting Space and choose the play equipment they wanted. This provided an opportunity to demonstrate the relationship between

¹ Agency: being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one's world (EYLF 2009, page 45)





WHAT NEXT?

After a couple of weeks and many experiences of talking about his block building and working with me to sketch his ideas, Oliver became quite skilled at drawing the details for himself. We created an Ideas Book and he began to use this to sketch ideas and plans. We helped Oliver write descriptions under his sketches.

We are now encouraging Oliver in shared tasks with other children in his favourite area. Our conversations together in a small group have been about castles with ramparts and ballasts and large oak doors wide enough for chariots and cart. We are using the Internet to download architectural drawings and sketches. A group of two to three children (including Oliver) have begun to work from these designs to create structures.

We are introducing props to support shared engagement and leaving the space undisturbed for two to three days to provide the opportunity for the children to extend on their ideas over time.

VEYLDF principles:

- High expectations for every child
- Integrated teaching and learning approaches
- Reflective practice

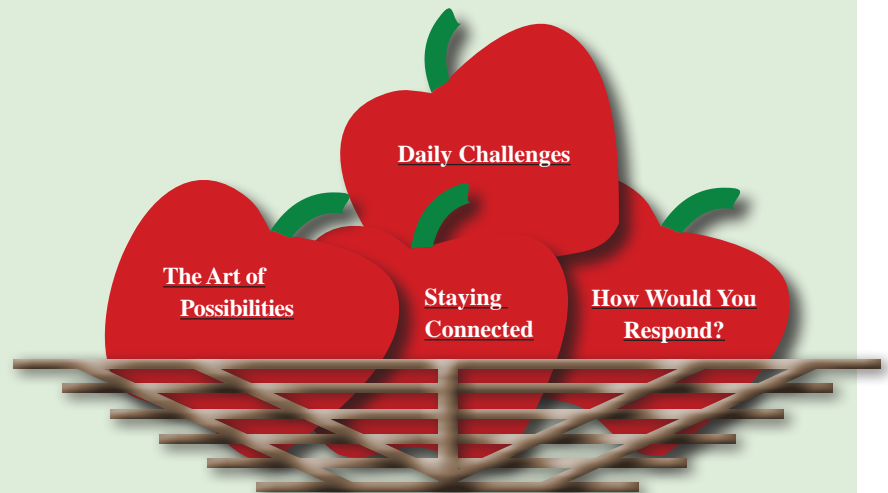
VEYLDF/ EYLF outcomes:

- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

National Quality Standard Areas:

- Educational program and practice

Links to reflective tools



Exchanges and changes

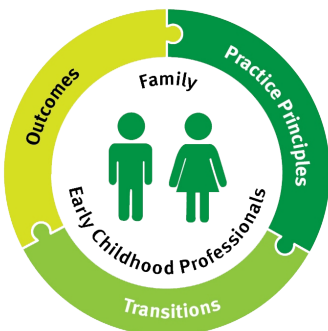
The Early Years Unit is keen to hear from you regarding:

- 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: veylf@edumail.vic.gov.au



References

Boschetti, C and Stonehouse, A 2006, *A Piece of Cake*, Ability Press, Melbourne, Australia.

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Siraj-Blatchford, I 2009, 'Conceptualising progression in the pedagogy of play and sustained shared thinking in early childhood education: A Vygotskian perspective', *Educational and Child Psychology* 26 (2) June, British Psychological Society, UK.

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Mythbuster

'I've read the frameworks and I don't have to change anything I'm doing at my preschool.'

In 2010 early childhood educators are making a space to:

- understand the need for change
- implement the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)¹
- interpret the learning frameworks with colleagues and access professional learning, resources and networks to support one another with the implementation of the frameworks
- begin the process of planning to put the new National Quality Standard into practice.



What is the National Quality Standard?

The National Quality Standard (NQS) outlines seven areas that have been identified by research as critical to the provision of quality early childhood education and care.

From 1 January 2012, all long day care, family day care, outside school hours care services and preschools will be assessed and rated against the NQS.

The seven quality areas are:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements, including staff-to-child ratios and qualifications
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management.

It is expected that all early childhood services will need to:

- provide evidence of their use of the EYLF and VEYLDF in designing and delivering early learning programs
- underpin all their practices and policies on the holistic wellbeing of every child.

Information about the NQS is available at:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Pages/QualityStandards.aspx

¹ The EYLF and VEYLDF are companion documents. They are key components of the Australian and Victorian Government's quality reform agenda for all early childhood education and care settings.