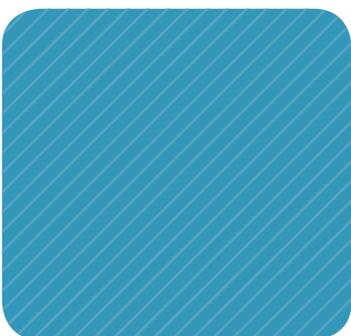
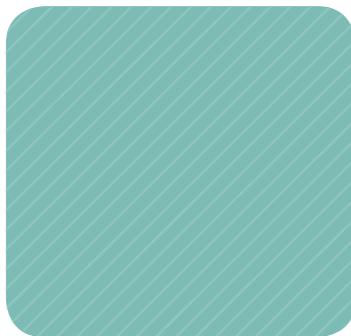


BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING



The Early Years Learning
Framework for Australia

Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments.

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INTRODUCTION

This is Australia's first national Early Years Learning Framework for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

The Council of Australian Governments has developed this Framework to assist educators to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. In this way, the Early Years Learning Framework (the Framework) will contribute to realising the Council of Australian Governments' vision that:

*"All children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation."*¹

The Framework draws on conclusive international evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children's learning and development. It has been developed with considerable input from the early childhood sector, early childhood academics and the Australian and State and Territory Governments.

The Framework 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 early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. The Framework has been designed for use by early childhood educators working in partnership with families, children's first and most influential educators.

Early childhood educators guided by the Framework will reinforce in their daily practice the principles laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention). The Convention states that all children have the right to an education that lays a foundation for the rest of their lives, maximises their ability, and respects their family, cultural and other identities and languages. The Convention also recognises children's right to play and be active participants in all matters affecting their lives.

This document may complement, supplement or replace individual State and Territory frameworks. The exact relationship will be determined by each jurisdiction.

More broadly, the Framework supports Goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians², that:

All young Australians become:

- *Successful learners*
- *Confident and creative individuals*
- *Active and informed citizens.*

Educators:

early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings.

¹ *Investing in the Early Years - a National Early Childhood Development Strategy*, Council of Australian Governments

² On 5 December 2008, State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education meeting as the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, released the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians.

Children:

refers to babies, toddlers and three to five year olds, unless otherwise stated.

The Melbourne Declaration also commits to improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and strengthening early childhood education.

The Council of Australian Governments is committed to closing the gap in educational achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade³. Early childhood education has a critical role to play in delivering this outcome.

Recognising this, a specific document that provides educators with additional guidance on ensuring cultural security for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families will be developed and made available to educators.

Over time additional resources may be developed to support the application of this Framework.

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.

3 The Council of Australian Governments - Communique - 3 July 2008. *Indigenous Reform - Closing the Gap*.