



PRACTICE

Responsiveness to children

Responsive educators are attuned to children's agency, strengths and potential. They listen to children's ideas, questions and theories and use this to develop curriculum that honours children's funds of knowledge and connects learning to their lives. Educators draw on their professional knowledge and deep understanding of the Western Australian Curriculum and *Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines* when they use a blend of developmentally appropriate approaches – including play-based learning, inquiry and explicit teaching – to develop learning experiences that integrate knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes across learning areas.

Rich learning occurs through responsive and thoughtful interactions between educators, children and the learning community in a range of planned and spontaneous experiences. Specific skills, concepts and knowledge are clearly and intentionally taught through a combination of child-initiated, adult-led and co-constructed approaches. Responsive educators build connections across learning areas in ways that are meaningful, engaging and relevant. They cultivate opportunities for children to transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another as they connect with and contribute to their world.

Reflective Question 1

The Early Years Learning Framework defines 'funds of knowledge' as the historically accumulated experiences and understandings that an individual has and includes abilities, skills, bodies of knowledge, life experiences and cultural ways of interacting. A child's funds of knowledge are often described as a 'virtual backpack' of all the life experiences and knowledge they bring into the early childhood setting.

How do you actively learn about each child's funds of knowledge? How does this influence your planning and the delivery of whole school programs?

Reflective Question 2

Being responsive also means recognising each child's potential and supporting their agency through interactions that extend thinking, enable decision-making and promote a positive sense of self. Thoughtful questioning, encouragement and non-verbal cues can help build children's confidence, curiosity and desire to learn or do more.

How do you support children's agency in your learning environment, daily routines and learning experiences?

Reflective Question 3

Unplanned and spontaneous teaching moments have the potential to be highly effective. Responsive educators make the most of child-initiated provocations, ideas and questions, and take advantage of unexpected occurrences in the school day to meaningfully connect learning to the Western Australian Curriculum or Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines. This fosters children's curiosity, engagement, deep learning and a strong sense of agency.

How do you use spontaneous and unplanned teaching moments to responsively teach concepts, skills and knowledge from the Western Australian Curriculum in ways that are meaningful and relevant for children?

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