



# National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program



## 15 favourites from the NQS PLP

### NQS PLP e-Newsletters are back!

2013 will bring more support for services meeting the requirements of the *National Quality Standard* (NQS). As well as e-Newsletters, the NQS PLP team will develop and deliver quality resources for the early childhood education and care sector, including more *Talking with practice* series, *Connecting with practice* series, *Have you thought about ...?*, *Observing practice*, *What do **you** think?* Provocations, free articles and more. This first issue will start by recapping some of the most popular NQS PLP resources.

### Top 5 NQS PLP e-Newsletters

The regular NQS e-Newsletter gives momentum to the work of educators towards meeting the NQS, by providing case studies and other information about how they are engaging with the *Early Years Learning Framework* (EYLF) across Australia.

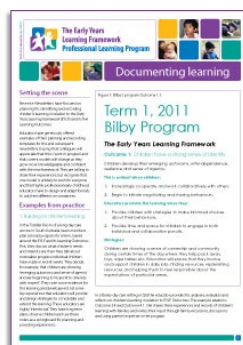


#### NQS PLP e-Newsletter No.39 2012

#### Observing children—Gathering and analysing information to inform curriculum decision-making

This e-Newsletter is the first of two that focus on assessment in early childhood settings. This e-Newsletter focuses on formative assessments—the process of observing children in everyday experiences, analysing those observations and recording the information. Formative assessments include jottings, photos and notes as well as more formal assessments of children's experiences and learning. The next e-Newsletter will focus on

summative assessments—bringing together a range of observations and analyses to create a summary of children's learning. Both forms of assessment contribute essential insights into what children are gaining from their experiences in early childhood settings and help to ensure that the curriculum contributes to their learning in each of the EYLF Outcome areas.



#### EYLF PLP e-Newsletter No.9 2011

#### Documenting learning

One of the aspects of documenting learning that becomes obvious ... is that educators are realising that it's only legitimate and valuable to link their planning and record of what happens in a learning episode to some of the EYLF Learning Outcomes. It may be tempting to suggest that all experiences in the daily program contribute to learning in all Outcomes. But that's neither valid, nor helpful. We need to be more 'intentional' than that. We need to plan specific learning experiences

with particular Outcomes in mind. We need to observe and record children's learning in relation to particular Outcomes. And, we need to track the progress of individual children in relation to each Outcome, so that we can intervene if progress in particular aspects seems delayed.

This issue of the EYLF PLP e-Newsletter focuses on documenting children's learning, and offers some examples of planning and recording templates shared by educators.





## NQS PLP e-Newsletter No.42 2012 Cultural competence—stories about work in progress

Cultural competence, a Practice in the EYLF, is a complex concept that informs all aspects of the operation of an early childhood setting. It is defined as:

'A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enable them to work together effectively in cross-cultural settings.' (Tong and Cross in Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency [VACCA] 2008, quoted on p. 23, in the *Educators' Guide to the EYLF*, p. 21).

All seven Quality Areas in the NQS require cultural competence, particularly those aspects of practice that relate directly to interactions, communication and relationships with children, families and colleagues.

In this issue, Anne Stonehouse discusses the practice of cultural competence and illustrates this through four stories for readers to reflect on.

These e-Newsletters as well as the full series is available here:  
[www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-newsletters/](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-newsletters/).



## EYLF PLP e-Newsletter No.1 2010 Talking about 'play'

We know that '... play shapes the architecture of the brain in unique ways; it links social, creative and cognitive skills' (Bartlett, 2010).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms '... play as a fundamental right of all children' (Article 31).

The EYLF (p. 46) defines play-based learning as 'A context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.'

This confirms that play is nationally and internationally valued for its contribution to young children's lives and learning. But, it doesn't tell us exactly what is meant by 'play' and what roles educators should fulfil as they interact with children in early learning settings. If we are to defend the place of play in our early childhood programs, we need to be able to describe play in action and explain its value for children's learning.

This newsletter includes information on the characteristics of play and the role of educators in children's play and will support educators to describe play in action and explain its value in children's learning.



## NQS PLP e-Newsletter No.40 2012 Summative assessment—Taking the analysis of collected information further

The term summative describes assessment processes that 'sum up' what a child has learned by reviewing documentation gathered over time from a range of sources. These processes bring together information about what the child knows, understands and can do in relation to the EYLF Learning Outcomes. Summative assessment differs from analyses of learning that occur for individual pieces of documentation

such as anecdotal records, photos or learning stories, as it involves reviewing a range of records in order to understand and document the 'distance travelled' by a child. Reflection is particularly important in summative assessment. We question what we know about the child, interpret and analyse the information collected and reflect on what this tells us about their learning and development and how we can support the child further. Involving colleagues, families and, if possible, the child in the process adds different perspectives that lead to a deeper understanding of progress.

This e-Newsletter explores how educators analyse that collection of information to make a summative assessment of each child's progress.





## Top 5 NQS PLP *Talking about practice* videos

The *Talking about practice* series of e-Learning videos provides an opportunity for leaders in early childhood education and care services to discuss ideas about significant issues related to the EYLF and NQS. A range of early childhood scenarios are used to inspire these professional conversations.



### Planning and documentation

In this three-part video, Heather Barnes talks to three educators about how they implement all the steps of the planning cycle, despite working in different settings (Long Day Care, Preschool and Family Day Care) and in different parts of Australia (Vic, WA and Qld). Each of their settings has unique aspects, beliefs and values that incorporate the views of educators and families and that provide the basis for the philosophy that guides their work.



### Intentional teaching

*Talking about practice: Intentional teaching* provides insight into what 'intentional teaching' is, and how educators can implement this approach in their daily practice, in order to maximise children's learning and development outcomes in a thoughtful, informed and deliberate way.



### Reflecting on practice

'Reflective practice' is one of the five key principles that the EYLF identifies as underpinning effective early childhood pedagogy or educational practice. Reflective practice involves educators, whatever their background or setting, closely examining their ethics, philosophy and decision-making processes. This video is designed to support discussion and reflection about the EYLF and its relationship to what educators in varied settings currently think, plan and do.



### Cultural competency

Cultural competency is one of the eight areas of practice in the EYLF. Cultural competency is about interactions and attitudes. It is how we honour and celebrate diversity when working with families and children. When we are being culturally competent we appreciate and live with difference and we are aware of what we gain from acknowledging differences.



### Environments for learning

How does the physical environment contribute to children's learning? Learning environments are one of the key practices outlined in the EYLF. A carefully and thoughtfully prepared environment however, is also integral to many of the other EYLF Principles, Practices and Outcomes. Rather than looking at the physical environment in isolation, consider how it contributes to the successful application of all of the elements of the EYLF.



These *Talking about practice* videos and their supporting documents are available here: [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-learning-videos/talking-about-practice/](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-learning-videos/talking-about-practice/).

## Top 5 Connecting with practice videos

These professional learning vignettes feature short sequences of practice viewed from a range of EYLF and NQS perspectives. They provide educators who work alone or in small settings with a learning experience that mimics a professional group conversation. They may also be used as a professional learning tool in staff meetings or training institutions.



### Discovering—Making Connections

This vignette shows three- and four-year-olds in a group setting using a rich learning area set up to explore the topic of animals. They use a light box, documentation and other materials.



### Engaging with babies and toddlers

This vignette shows babies and toddlers in a group setting interacting with educators and engaging in a range of play and learning experiences. Educators are demonstrating a variety of roles and practices that link to the EYLF.



### The busy baby room

This vignette shows a group setting for babies. It features babies playing with balloons as well as an educator reading a book to a small group of babies.



### Opportunities for learning in natural spaces

This vignette shows a two-year-old and some three- and four-year-olds in an outdoor space in a group setting. The two experiences captured in the vignette are an educator alongside a very young child holding a chicken and several children playing in a sand area with water, pipes and sand.



### Discovering—Routines around lunch

This vignette takes place in the lead-up to lunch for two four-year-olds and two babies in a family day care home and focuses on health and hygiene, including wiping down eating surfaces and washing hands.

These *Connecting with practice* videos and their supporting documents are available here: [www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-learning-videos/connecting-with-practice-eylf-nqs/](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/nqsplp/e-learning-videos/connecting-with-practice-eylf-nqs/).

There are more quality NQS PLP resources available online, and you can connect with the team through Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and google+. The next issue of the NQS PLP e-Newsletter will continue the work to address the key components of the NQS and maintain a focus on continued quality improvement. 2013 is shaping up to be another exciting year for the NQS PLP.



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