Reading is fundamental for professional growth. In Australia, our policy and legislative frameworks require early childhood professionals to work in ways that are informed by current research evidence to promote positive outcomes for young children (DEEWR, 2009; DET, 2016). We are also required and encouraged (DEEWR, 2009; DET, 2016; ECA, 2016) to practise critical reflection in our work. And critical reflection is a professional practice that can definitely be supported by your professional reading.

Recently, I asked a group of three-year-olds about reading. Their answers revealed a lot about their eagerness to read as adults do.

• ‘Do you read? Why do you read?’
  • ‘cos I like it.
  • Yes, we read lots.
  • Sometimes I just look in the books myself!

• And do your teachers read to you?
  • Yes, they read to us.
  • And they read with us.
  • They look at the pictures and say, ‘I wonder’.
  • Yes, and we wonder too.

• ‘Do you think your teachers read by themselves too?’
  • Yes, yes, I see them on their breaks!
  • Yes, I saw Emma watching us play and she said, ‘I wonder’. Then she went off on her break and I saw her through the window. She opened the magazine on the table in their room and it looked like she was reading. She was eating a banana and she got a coffee too, and she was reading.
  • We see them, the teachers, on their breaks, with their cups and their books and magazines.
  • Sometimes their eyes are closed!

For those of us who read, there will be children observing us. For those of us who write (and, that is all of us in some way—creating evidence ourselves through observations, notes, documentation), there will be children observing us doing this too. Maybe, their observations make children wonder ‘why’ as well.

As educators, we are role-modelling and encouraging the need to:
  • reflect, think deeply and wonder
  • be challenged and try a new approach, or believe what we are doing is helpful
  • understand what we are doing is helpful.

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I trust that this edition of Every Child will cause you to take a break and think deeply and reflectively about your work. I’m sure you will find something in this edition that will cause you to ponder, spark your imagination and affirm or challenge your thinking and practice.

These articles, so generously sharing the authors’ thoughts, knowledge and experience, will encourage your sense of wonder. For example, the articles by Cindy Blackstock, Rachael Phillips and Rachel Ho on rights, reconciliation and justice; or Virginia Artinian’s feature on the importance of caring for our own wellbeing.

I hope you can grab a cuppa, a piece of fruit and enjoy your break reading Every Child.

Jackie Brien
Every Child Co-Editor

References

‘Recently, I asked a group of three-year-olds about reading. Their answers revealed a lot about their eagerness to read as adults do.’