

BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING



The Early Years Learning
Framework for Australia
V2.0, 2022

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Lands across Australia. We also acknowledge and extend our respect to Elders, past and present. We recognise and celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia, including their role in the education and care of children. We also acknowledge and recognise the rich histories and diverse cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the valuable contribution their diversity brings.



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This is the only official version of the *Early Years Learning Framework V2.0*, which has been approved by the Ministerial Council under S220(1) (f) of the *Education and Care Services National Law*.

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INTRODUCTION

This is V2.0 of Australia’s national *Early Years Learning Framework*. The aim of *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Framework for Australia* is to support early childhood providers, teachers and educators to extend and enrich children’s learning from birth to 5 years and through the transition to school. The *Early Years Learning Framework* (the Framework) draws on robust Australian and international evidence that confirms early childhood is a vital period in children’s continuing learning, development and wellbeing. It has been developed with considerable input from the early childhood sector, including children and families, approved providers and educators, other professionals, peak bodies, early childhood researchers, as well as the Australian and state and territory governments and the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority.

The Human Rights Commission describes Australia as a vibrant, multicultural country. “We are home to the world’s oldest continuous cultures, as well as Australians who identify with more than 270 ancestries” (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2019).

In recognition of this, and the guiding principles of the National Quality Framework, the *Early Years Learning Framework* contributes to the realisation of Goal 1 and 2 of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (Education Council 2019 p. 4) that:

Goal 1: *The Australian education system promotes excellence and equity.*

Goal 2: *All young Australians become:*

- *confident and creative individuals*
- *successful lifelong learners*
- *active and informed members of the community.*

The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration commits governments to ensuring all children learn about the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to seeing all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children thrive in their education and all facets of life. Contributing to this goal, the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, led by the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisations and all Australian governments, identifies early childhood education, care and development as a national policy priority. Furthermore, it commits to ensuring all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are engaged in high quality, culturally appropriate early childhood education in their early years. Early childhood education has a critical role to play in delivering this outcome and advancing Reconciliation in Australia.

As part of the National Quality Framework, the *Early Years Learning Framework* supports the objectives and principles of the National Law and Regulations including the National Quality Standard. Recognising children as competent and capable learners who have rights and agency, the Framework has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and the intentional role played by both educators and children in extending and enriching learning. The Framework identifies a shared Vision for children’s learning, Principles and Practices to underpin learning and teaching and the 5 Learning Outcomes. Together these elements inform the professional work of early childhood teachers and educators.

The Framework has been designed for use by early childhood educators, early childhood teachers¹ and approved providers working in partnership with children, families, other professionals, schools and community members to inform educational programs and practices that are place-based and relevant to that community.

Educators guided by the Framework will reinforce in their daily practice the principles laid out in the

1 Early childhood teachers and educators are early childhood professionals who work directly with children in early childhood settings and from now on will be referred to as educators.



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) (United Nations 1989). 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. Underpinned by a child-rights approach, the Framework supports implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australian Human Rights Commission 2018). It also promotes children's safety, wellbeing and responsibilities as active citizens.

This document may complement or supplement individual state and territory frameworks. The exact relationship will be determined by each jurisdiction. Over time additional resources may be developed to support the application of this Framework.



A VISION FOR CHILDREN'S LEARNING

A vision: All children engage in learning that promotes confident and creative individuals and successful lifelong learners. All children are active and informed members of their communities with knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.



Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by *belonging*, *being* and *becoming*. From before birth children are connected to family, communities, culture and place. Their earliest learning, development and wellbeing takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they construct their own identities and understandings of the world. Educators engage children in learning that promotes confidence, creativity and enables active citizenship. They celebrate diversity with children and their families, and the opportunities diversity brings to know more about the world. Educators understand children may come from diverse backgrounds and acknowledge this in each child's *Belonging*, *Being* and *Becoming*.

Belonging

Experiencing *belonging* – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong to diverse families, neighbourhoods, local and global communities. *Belonging* acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, trusting relationships and affirming experiences are crucial to a sense of *belonging*. *Belonging* is central to *being* and *becoming* in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

Being

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. *Being* recognises the significance of the present, as well as the past in children's lives. It is about children knowing themselves, developing their identity, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about children *being* in the here and now.

Becoming

Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, dispositions, capabilities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by different events and circumstances. *Becoming* reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as children learn and grow. It emphasises the collaboration of educators, families and children to support and enhance children's connections and capabilities, and for children to actively participate as citizens.