VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

PRACTICE PRINCIPLE GUIDE HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR EVERY CHILD



Practice Principles cultural knowledge story by Dr. Sue Lopez Atkinson (Yorta Yorta) and artwork by Annette Sax (Taungurung)

Adapted by the Department of Education and Training from *Practice Principle Guide – High expectations for every child*, by Dr Anne Kennedy and Anne Stonehouse.

© State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training) 2017

Practice Principle Guide – High expectations for every child for is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 licence. You are free to reuse the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training), indicate if changes were made and comply with the other licence terms available at

https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/

The licence does not apply to:

- any trademarks or branding, including the Victorian Government logo and the Department of Education and Training logo
- images or photographs or other content supplied by third parties.

Copyright queries may be directed to copyright@edumail.vic.gov.au

Authorised by the Department of Education and Training

2 Treasury Place, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3002

CONTENTS

About this guide	. 4
What are high expectations?	5
Why do high expectations matter?	7
What do high expectations for every child look like in practice?	.10
References and resources	.18

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is one in a series of eight guides to the Practice Principles in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF).

Use this guide to support individual critical reflection on your practice, for discussion with a mentor or critical friend and as a guide for discussion with colleagues.

The guide draws on the Evidence Paper for Practice Principle: High Expectations for Every Child written for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development by the University of Melbourne. For detail about the evidence mentioned in this guide, and for more depth on this practice principle refer to the evidence paper at http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/edcare/Pages/profresource.

PRACTICE PRINCIPLES – CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE STORY

- Bunjil the Eagle and Waa the Crow represent Aboriginal culture and *partnerships with families*.
- The water hole symbolises *reflective practice*.
- The gum leaves with their different patterns and colours represent *diversity*.
- The stones underneath the leaves represent *equity*. They reflect the additional support put in place in order for all children to achieve.
- The child and adults standing on 'Ochre mountain' symbolise the *high/equitable expectations* we hold for children and adults.



- The family standing on and looking out from 'Ochre mountain' reflects assessment for learning and development. Such assessments draw on children's and families' perspectives, knowledge, experiences and expectations.
- The child and adult figures also represent *partnerships with professionals*.
- The land symbol as mother earth represents the basis for *respectful relationships and responsive engagement*.
- The symbols for land, water and people signify *holistic and integrated* approaches based on connections to Clan and Country.

(Dr. Sue Lopez-Atkinson, Yorta Yorta)

WHAT ARE HIGH EXPECTATIONS?

Early childhood professionals:

- commit to having high expectations for every child's learning and development
- show sensitivity to the messages they convey about the child's and family's unique abilities
- notice and actively avoid the negative effects of low expectations, prejudice and low levels of attention to any child's learning and development

HAVING HIGH EXPECTATIONS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN ACHIEVING BETTER OUTCOMES FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN.

- value children's strengths and differences and communicate high expectations to them
- ensure that every child experiences success and is motivated to accept new challenges through which to learn and grow
- recognise that every child learns from birth but some children require different opportunities, spaces and specific supports, in order to learn effectively and thrive
- work with all families, in particular those experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage, to promote the importance of having high expectations for their children
- expect and ensure that children express their views and contribute to decisions that affect them, including children who are not able to communicate with words.

(VEYLDF P. 10)

Discussion starter

Think about a time when someone believed in you and had confidence that you could achieve and succeed. How did that belief and encouragement make a difference? Did it affect your approach to meeting a challenge and to your learning? Why?

Have you ever had the opposite experience, where someone doubted your ability to succeed or achieve? How did that affect you?

Think about the children you work with. Do you have ideas about limits to what they can achieve – maybe because of their gender, age, abilities or cultural, linguistic or family background? Do these ideas affect your expectations, the learning opportunities that you offer, the conversations you have and the challenges you set? How do these ideas contribute to or limit children's learning?

Regardless of the setting you work in or your professional role, think about what role you play in influencing families' expectations of their children.

What about the notion of high expectations for families? Do we make assumptions about families because of their cultural or language background, disability, socio-economic status, lifestyle, or because they are 'at risk'? Do these assumptions affect our interactions and relationships with them? The practice principle of high expectations for every child is both a belief and an action. Professionals with high expectations believe that all children can and will achieve.

Having high expectations for every child means professionals recognise that each child will experience learning and development differently. One of the many complexities of being an early childhood professional is maintaining high expectations.

Professionals understand that while all children have the capacity to learn and develop, many factors affect both their learning and development. These include their general health and wellbeing and their attitudes to learning.

Children need different opportunities and support to succeed in learning. Awareness of barriers to success (which may include professionals' beliefs and values) helps professionals work to overcome them.

The concept of high expectations relates closely to acknowledging children's agency. The notion of children's agency is based on the idea children:

- construct their own understandings and co-construct understandings with others (both adults and children)
- contribute to others' learning
- initiate and lead their own learning
- have a right to participate in decisions that affect them, including their own learning
- are capable of making choices and decisions from infancy.

Case study

In an education and care setting, children from 18 months of age up spend part of the day together (multi-age grouping). One educator suggested that once a week the older children could butter their own toast at morning tea choosing their own topping (Vegemite and jam), spreading it themselves and carrying it on a plate to the table. Another educator replied, "We can't do that because of the toddlers". A third suggested "Maybe we could get the older children to do it for the younger ones or get the older children to teach the younger ones." An educator who worked with the toddlers said "I think they can do it themselves."

Reflective questions

- Does this example demonstrate high expectations for all children? If so, how?
- If you were an educator in this service, how would you respond to the comments and the suggestions?
- What kinds of support or strategies would help educators to enact high expectations for all children in this group?

WHY DO HIGH EXPECTATIONS MATTER?

Children's motivation to learn is influenced by the expectations of important people in their lives. In other words, children who are expected to succeed are more likely to succeed.

Professionals' expectations have a direct impact on children's motivation to learn, their self-esteem and self-efficacy. Evidence indicates that children who develop strong self-esteem and self-efficacy and are motivated to succeed, are better placed to achieve their potential at school.

High expectations also promote resilience in children who are considered to be 'at risk'. Resilience can be defined as children achieving

SELF-EFFICACY

RELATED TO THE CONCEPT OF AGENCY, 'SELF-EFFICACY' REFERS TO A PERSON'S BELIEF IN THEIR OWN COMPETENCE OR THEIR ABILITY TO TAKE ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.

goals and outcomes despite being at risk of disadvantage. Categories of risk may include (among others): family violence, poverty, homelessness, refugee status, behavioural issues, disability or impairment, low socio-economic status, parent education levels, substance abuse, parent incarceration, poor social skills and mental health issues.

Resilience is evident when children persist and strive to achieve goals in spite of setbacks, obstacles and disadvantage. A number of protective factors work together to contribute to children's resilience. These include internal factors such as:

- willingness to work hard
- persistence
- high self-esteem
- ability to control one's own behaviour and selfregulate
- well-defined goals and aspirations.

They also include external factors such as:

- caring adults
- high parental expectations (supported by words and actions)
- high expectations from professionals
- strong peer and community relationships.

High expectations can work as a protective factor over an extended period of time. In some studies, high teacher expectations in the early years of primary school had a lasting effect throughout the primary years.

Professionals who have high expectations can have a major impact on a family's expectations for their child. Families' expectations have a profound and lasting impact on children's achievement. In fact, research has shown that high expectations by the family are the major factor in predicting children's academic resilience – that is, their capacity to achieve.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS COMMIT TO HAVING HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR EVERY CHILD'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

(VEYLDF, P. 10)

Discussion starter

Early childhood professionals show high expectations for children by offering rich learning opportunities that motivate and interest every child, and help them to see themselves as learners.

Reflect on this statement using the following questions.

- What are 'rich learning opportunities'?
- How do you help children to see themselves as learners?
- How do you motivate and keep every child interested and engaged in learning?
- How do you show children and families that you are interested in them as individuals?
- Is there more you can do to offer 'rich possibilities' for every child?

The way children see themselves (for example, what they can do and are good at) affects their learning. When they believe that they are competent and can achieve results, they are more likely to persist with challenges, spend more time and energy on tasks and modify their approach to achieve better results. In this way self-efficacy is cyclical; the more children believe in their ability to affect outcomes the more effort, time and energy they will expend. When children put in more time and effort, their outcomes improve, thus increasing their belief in their ability to effect change.

Factors that can influence children's expectations of themselves include:

- perceptions of their own ability
- perceptions of the importance and value of the task
- families' expectations
- early childhood professionals' expectations
- feedback from early childhood professionals (for example, through critical reflection with children)
- emotional state
- interest in the task
- difficulty of the task
- knowledge of the task.

Case study

A primary school teacher talked about a child who had significant additional needs. She commented on how his positive sense of self and agency was supported by his high level skills in using technology. Using a computer with confidence and helping others when they had problems had promoted his confidence as a learner and also helped him make friends.

This example illustrates how important it is for early childhood professionals to know what children can do and what they know rather than focusing on what they are unable to do or what they don't know. Identifying and building on children's strengths and skills is sound pedagogy that flows from a commitment to high expectations for all children.

Children's expectations of their own achievement may be affected if they perceive an adult's bias towards them. These biases can relate to cultural, language or family background, gender, social class, personality, age or additional needs. One study found that early childhood professionals are more likely to underestimate children from minority groups and therefore likely to provide them with fewer learning opportunities, leading to poor learning and development outcomes. In another study, boys from minority groups had the largest gains when they experience high expectations and the lowest scores when their abilities are underestimated.

Case study

An educator in an education and care setting talked about expectations: "I've had to work really hard to catch myself when I find myself thinking that children from a particular neighbourhood or even a particular family are going to struggle in my program. I know it doesn't help them and it's almost like it creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. I get what I expect! I remember last year I had a child from a family whose older child had also attended the centre. When I saw the name on the enrolment list I thought of my previous concerns and the problems I had with the older child before I had even met with the family and the second child."

Reflective questions

- Can you relate to this professional's honest reflection? Do you have similar examples from your own experience?
- Why is it sometimes difficult for early childhood professionals to have high expectations for every family?
- How can you overcome low expectations? What strategies might help?

WHAT DO HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR EVERY CHILD LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

When early childhood professionals have high expectations for every child they:

- move beyond pre-conceived expectations about what children can do and learn
- recognise that each child is different and has a unique learning trajectory, requiring different support to learn and develop
- consider multiple ways of knowing and learning
- value children's strengths and differences
- use their knowledge of each child to assess and plan for their learning and development
- take responsibility for each child's learning and development.

In practice, this means:

- communicating high expectations to every child every day
- communicating high expectations for every child to families and other professionals
- enabling every child to experience success by using different approaches that take into account and build on children's strengths, interests and abilities
- having high expectations of oneself as a professional, and viewing oneself as an agent of change
- engaging in ongoing reflective practice (A VEYLDF practice principle).

Early childhood professionals communicate high expectations to every child, every day

Early childhood professionals communicate expectations to children through their words and actions. These have a profound influence on how children perceive their own abilities. Early childhood professionals understand that children need active support and encouragement to experiment and persist in their learning.

Interacting with children in respectful and responsive ways communicates high expectations and in turn builds children's sense of self-efficacy. Such interactions focus on children's strengths, encourage effort and set achievable and meaningful challenges.

Case study

One educator capitalised on a child's interest in and extensive knowledge about whales. The child, who has been diagnosed with pervasive developmental delay, also has talent in drawing and painting. The educator displayed his paintings, made available a reference book on whales and encouraged children to construct sea creatures using boxes and other materials. The child, who often works alone and interacts little with other children, took a leading role in this project.

Early childhood professionals advocate for high expectations with parents, colleagues and other professionals

Family expectations can influence children's perceptions of their ability as well as their outcomes. Professionals are in a unique position to establish mutually respectful partnerships with families (Practice Principle: Partnerships with Families) that involve sharing information about expectations for children and promoting the importance not only of having high expectations but also communicating them to the child. EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS WORK WITH ALL FAMILIES, IN PARTICULAR THOSE EXPERIENCING VULNERABILITY AND DISADVANTAGE, TO PROMOTE THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

(VEYLDF P. 10)

Case study

At the start of the year an early childhood professional in an early childhood intervention service asks each family what they want for their child – their aspirations or goals. Once the goals are identified, professionals develop a plan with each family to work towards achieving these goals. One mother said that she wanted her child to be the ring bearer at his uncle's wedding in a few months. The professionals' initially thought it might be difficult to support this goal. However, on further reflection they recognised that this was a good goal for the child and important for the family. They identified that in order for the child to be a ring bearer he would need to develop physical coordination skills, be able to concentrate on a task and have the social confidence and self-esteem to participate in this important event. These integrated and complex learning outcomes aligned well with the VEYLDF Learning and Development Outcomes.

Case study

A maternal and child health nurse often comments to parents about their child's competence during visits to the service. She might talk for example, about the way a baby is communicating with her - "He is so clever the way he lets me know by smiling and babbling that he likes being touched gently when I am examining him." She sees these comments as one way of advocating high expectations with parents.

Professionals engaged with the VEYLDF understand children in the context of family, culture and community and base the decisions they make on this knowledge. Sometimes this requires thinking and acting 'outside the square' to decide what is in the child's best interests.

Early childhood professionals advocate for high expectations for children with other professionals. Transitions which occur on a daily basis throughout early childhood, are an ideal opportunity for early childhood professionals to promote high expectations for children. For example, in collaboration with families and children, early childhood professionals prepare a Transition Learning and Development Statement (TLDS) for each child as they transition to school. Each TLDS uses a strength-based approach, DIFFERENTIATED APPROACHES CAN BE DEFINED AS TAILORED APPROACHES THAT RESPOND TO CHILDREN'S UNIQUE ABILITIES, CULTURE, PERSPECTIVES, STRENGTHS AND LEARNING STYLES WHILE ALSO UNDERSTANDING THE COMMONALITIES IN CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT.

provides important information for Prep teachers and families about a child's strengths, abilities and interests, and identifies strategies that Prep teachers can continue.

Educators can demonstrate high expectations for children during transition from one group to another in an early childhood setting. Positive messages - for example, 'Tyge will enjoy playing with the older toddlers' - and practical support such as making sure families meet all the educators in the new room and are allocated a primary contact person, help to support children's and families' confidence.

All children have varied experiences, knowledge, strengths, abilities and interests. Effective early childhood professionals respond to these differences with curriculum that extends each child's learning and creates opportunities to build children's sense of self-efficacy.

Early childhood professionals who acknowledge and celebrate achievements will keep in mind the concept of 'distance travelled,' that is, that each child will be at a different place in their learning and development. This means that progress is the focus rather than getting each child to the same point. Extending children's strengths and celebrating success encourages children to be confident and involved learners (Outcome 4). EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS ENABLE EVERY CHILD TO EXPERIENCE SUCCESS BY PROVIDING DIFFERENTIATED APPROACHES THAT TAKE ACCOUNT OF AND BUILD ON CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS, ABILITIES AND INTERESTS.

High expectations for each child will sometimes lead to spending more time providing individualised support for some children so that they can experience success. For example, an early childhood professional who sees that a child is having limited success at an experience and who believes that the child is capable of learning will alter the learning experience to suit that child's learning needs.

Evidence indicates that tiered instruction is a useful approach to meet the range of learning needs and abilities in a group. Tiered instruction means using different tasks or experiences, different kinds or levels of support and specialised resources to ensure that every child's learning is promoted and continuous. Educators and children selecting books together appropriate for different literacy levels or interests, using one-to-one teaching rather than small group or whole group instruction, or encouraging a child to show what he knows through drawing rather than writing are examples of tiered instruction or differentiating the approach. Tiered instruction has proven especially effective for children learning to read.

Discussion starter

Using the questions and examples provided in the table reflect on your current practice. Does it reflect the research on the importance of having high expectations for every child?

Identify the changes you would like to make in response to your own reflections and discussions with others. This table is adapted from VCAA's Early Years Exchange (6), 2010 available at <u>http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.</u> <u>au/Pages/earlyyears/eye/index.aspx</u> EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS RECOGNISE THAT EVERY CHILD LEARNS FROM BIRTH, BUT SOME CHILDREN REQUIRE DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES, SPACES AND SPECIFIC SUPPORTS IN ORDER TO LEARN EFFECTIVELY AND THRIVE.

(VEYLDF, P. 10)

RESEARCH EVIDENCE	CURRENT PRACTICE	CHANGING PRACTICE
Each child's development has both unique and universal features.	Every child in the 3-5 room is expected to participate in a whole group story session.	Think about how you could change this practice to reflect the research evidence so that every child has the opportunity to experience stories in ways that recognise their unique learning needs and styles.
Children's sense of self-worth is based on their experiences and especially their interactions with others.	Children often select who will be on their team for different purposes. Some children may not be selected until the end of the process.	Think about how the children who are selected last would feel about themselves. How could you change this selection strategy so that negative outcomes are avoided?
Effective educators have high expectations of every child and communicate that message to each child every day.	Children are expected to complete pre- determined craft products that all look the same. Children use pre-designed worksheets every	Think about how these practices convey messages of low expectations – for example, the expectation that children do not have their own ideas. Worksheets often don't require deep engagement in learning, don't demonstrate respect for children's cognitive capacities and may not support differentiated learning. How could you change these types
	day for literacy and numeracy learning.	of practices to reflect children's competence as learners in your practice?
Children with disabilities or developmental delay benefit when there are program or curriculum adaptations to support their active inclusion and participation.	A child with cerebral palsy remains in her wheelchair, watching other children participate in group singing and dancing experiences.	What adaptations are possible to allow the child to be an active participant?
		You might think about the size of the groups, where these experiences take place and how they are organised.
		Where could you get help if it is difficult to find ways to ensure every child can enjoy being actively involved in these types of experiences?

Supporting children's learning and development in differentiated ways is part of supporting children's rights. A differentiated approach or environment, responds to children's unique strengths, abilities, and interests, cultures, perspectives and learning styles. This approach applies to every child, not only children who have identified disabilities or learning difficulties. It requires professionals to have meaningful and challenging interactions with individual children in order to assess and extend their understanding and skills.

Responding in differentiated ways is taking action to ensure equity for all children and families. It can include:

- modifying or changing the program, curriculum, interactions or practice in response to community contexts or expectations in order to support and extend children's unique strengths, abilities and interests
- using material resources, making environmental adaptations and collaborating with other professionals
- communicating and interacting in different ways to promote and assess children's learning
- providing practical support to meet every child's wellbeing, health and nutritional needs.

Planning a differentiated curriculum or program requires professionals to provide a range of learning opportunities to engage children with different learning styles and abilities with equally challenging and meaningful content. A differentiated curriculum or program caters for different ways of learning. Demonstrations, experiments and oral, written and multisensory activities varied in difficulty ensure that each child is challenged and can experience success.

Case study

An educator shared her centre's experience of 'projects':

"Children work on projects that interest them, usually with another child or in a small group. When we started working this way, we worried that it would be difficult to support different projects, but we realised fairly quickly that children don't always need help from us and that they can help each other too. The projects are a good way of engaging families – they seem to interest families more than our previous more traditional ways of working. Families often bring things in to support projects or offer to help. Projects can involve children using art materials, blocks, computers, books, collections, recorders, cameras, scrapbooks and photos to pursue their chosen interest and make a record or representation of what they are learning. Like any centre we have children with diverse abilities and skills, but we have found that working with others on a project using a range of resources and processes really does help every child to learn. Our project work continues to be inspired by the Reggio Emilia idea that children can use a 'hundred languages' or more to express what they know and can do."

Individual learning plans are one way that educators can use assessments of individual children to set goals and plan ways to support them to achieve those goals. Early childhood professionals ensure that assessment is strengthbased and encourages each child to succeed. This requires professionals to recognise the strengths of the children they work with and focus on progress or the 'distance travelled'.

Feedback should acknowledge effort above ability, as children's sense of self-efficacy will grow when they feel their effort is helping them to achieve their goals. Professionals use assessments to reflect and plan for children's learning and development and to improve the support they provide. EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS ENSURE THAT EVERY CHILD EXPERIENCES SUCCESS AND IS MOTIVATED TO ACCEPT NEW CHALLENGES THROUGH WHICH TO LEARN AND GROW.

(VEYLDF, P. 10)

Case study

An educator in an early childhood education and care service describes how she often observes children's play to identify learning because she understands that children may show skills and knowledge in their play that are not always evident in other contexts. The educator gives an example of a child learning English as an additional language who didn't answer questions or make comments during discussions, even in a small group. She has observed the child playing in home corner over several weeks, and hears her begin to use single words such as 'no', 'yes', 'me' and 'baby' as she plays with other children. The educator shares her observations with the child's family, who are eager for their child to learn English. She continues to observe, listen and encourage the child's participation in play experiences as a safe place to practise and use the English words she is learning.

This example illustrates the importance of careful observation in order to learn more about what children know, can do and understand. Often in self-directed play children surprise observant adults and surpass their expectations.

Educators who take responsibility for children's learning recognise that the physical environment affects learning. Learning spaces directly influence how enabling or 'disabling' a child's additional need may be. Professionals take action to ensure that children with additional needs have access to resources and all learning experiences. An obvious example is that an environment that has a number of levels, requiring children to step up or down, restricts the learning opportunities of children with mobility difficulties.

Case study

A principal in a rural primary school talked about a 'whole-of-school approach' to having high expectations for all children. He described a range of practices to help every child from Prep to Grade 6 experience success as a learner:

- developing individual learning plans that identify children's strengths, abilities, interests and long- and short-term learning goals
- providing focused professional learning opportunities and resources for educators that support them to individualise and differentiate their pedagogy
- providing regular opportunities for children to discuss matters that concern them (for example, 'circle time' or whole class discussions)
- re-designing learning environments so that the spaces meet the needs of diverse learners and diverse learning experiences
- planning carefully for transition to school in collaboration with the local early childhood education and care service, children, families and school staff.

He said that educators in the outside school hours care service also used the individual learning plans to help plan their program.

Early childhood professionals have high expectations for themselves and view themselves as agents of change

Reflective questions

- What does it mean to have high expectations in a work setting for all professionals? Is there a flow-on effect to families and children?
- What are some steps to take to establish a culture of high expectations in an early childhood setting?

PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR EVERY CHILD ARE ALSO MORE LIKELY TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND HAVE HIGH LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL AGENCY.

 How does the notion of a culture of high expectations translate into practices in services such as maternal and child health and playgroups?

Evidence shows that high professional efficacy has a positive impact on children's outcomes. Professionals' agency or efficacy can be defined as the belief that they can make a positive difference – influence behaviour and make changes that will achieve desired outcomes. Professionals with a high level of efficacy are more likely to examine their own practice and make changes to improve outcomes for children. This sense of efficacy can be strengthened through engaging in reflective practice (practice principle in the VEYLDF) Some factors that impact on professionals' self-efficacy include:

- opportunities to participate in high quality professional learning
- support from colleagues
- experience
- knowledge of child development theory
- the belief that all children can learn
- an environment that promotes reflective practice.

Greater self-efficacy leads to greater effort and persistence, which in turn lead to better performance and even greater efficacy. The reverse is also true.

Case study

A family day care educator demonstrated self-efficacy in practice when she described working with her service's coordinator to plan her professional development as a two-year program. The plan was based on shared understandings of her current professional knowledge and skills and how she could further that learning.

Reflective questions

- Think about the setting where you work. Is it a place where high levels of professional responsibility are promoted?
- What are the factors in your setting that promote or hinder the development of high professional responsibility?
- From your experience, what are the outcomes for children and families when professionals have high professional responsibility?

Early childhood professionals engage in ongoing reflective practice, including reflecting on bias and promoting social justice and equity through high expectations for every child

Having high expectations for every child requires early childhood professionals to consider their own biases and to think critically about issues of power, discrimination and disadvantage. Early childhood professionals must expect each child to succeed and work consciously to avoid labelling learners based on cultural background, gender, socioeconomic status, ability or other difference.

Reflective questions

Think of the way you work with families and children every day. Use the questions to critically reflect on this practice.

• How do you understand and address the power differences between yourself as a professional, families and children?

THIS EXPECTATION OF SUCCESS IS A POWERFUL MOTIVATOR FOR CHILDREN, PROMOTING RESILIENCE AND WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARD, REGULATING BEHAVIOUR AND ESTABLISHING GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE.

(VEYLDF, P. 10)

- Who is advantaged by the way you work with families and children? And who is disadvantaged?
- How could you change your practice to ensure no family or child is disadvantaged?
- How do you balance the need to have high expectations for every family and child and to be empathetic and responsive to particular needs a family or child has?

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australia Governments. (2009). Belonging, being & becoming: early years learning framework for Australia. Canberra: Australia Government.

www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/PolicyAgenda/Quality/Pages/ EarlyYearsLearningFramework.aspx

Department of Education and Training and Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. (2016). *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: For All Children from Birth to Eight Years*. East Melbourne, VIC: State of Victoria (Department of Education and Training).

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/ veyldframework.pdf

Education.vic.gov.au. (2013). *Principles of Learning and Teaching P-12*. [online] Available at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/ principles12.aspx [Accessed 1 Mar. 2017].

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/principles12.aspx

Education.vic.gov.au. (2014). *High Expectations of All Learners*. [online] Available at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/curriculum/Pages/expectations.aspx [Accessed 1 Mar. 2017].

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/curriculum/Pages/expectations.aspx

Education.vic.gov.au. (2014). *High Expectations*. [online] Available at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/Pages/ highexpect.aspx [Accessed 1 Mar. 2017].

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/ Pages/highexpect.aspx

Forman, G., Edwards, C. and Gandini, L. (1998). *Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach--advanced Reflections*. 1st ed. Westport: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Fuse.education.vic.gov.au. (2017). VEYLDF Modules - FUSE - Department of Education & Training. [online] Available at: https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Search/ Results?AssociatedPackageId=&QueryText=veyIdf&SearchScope=All [Accessed 28 Feb. 2017].

https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Search/ Results?AssociatedPackageId=&QueryText=veyIdf&SearchScope=All

Saffigna, M., Church, A. and Tayler, C. (2011). *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework Evidence Paper, Practice Principle 3: High expectations for every child*. Melbourne: State of Victoria (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development).

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/highexpect. pdf

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, (2010). *Early Years Exchange*, [online] (6). Available at: http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/earlyyears/eye/EYE_No6b.pdf [Accessed 1 Mar. 2017].

http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/earlyyears/eye/EYE_No6b.pdf





Education and Training