# Assessment for learning and development

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| Anne Stonehouse: | My name is Anne Stonehouse. Welcome to the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework Practice Principle video series. The Framework is for all professionals and service working with children from birth to 8 years. In the videos, you see each practice principle in action. It is important to remember that all the principles intersect and overlapped. Combined, they guide professional practice. This video should be used in conjunction with the Practice Principle guide on Assessment for Learning and Development. The guide is on the Department of Education and Training website. |
| [00:01:00] | Assessment of children's knowledge, understanding skills and capabilities is an essential ingredient of planning for and promoting new learning and development. Assessments are designed to discover what children know and understand based on what they make, write, draw, say, and do. It is important that you focus on progress, not just where a child is up to. You should also consider areas where support is needed in order to promote progress. Emphasis on progress underpinned by high expectations is a feature of effective communication with families and with children. |
| [00:02:00] | Early childhood professionals choose assessment instruments and techniques to create a holistic picture of each child's knowledge, understandings, skills, and capabilities. They are thoughtful, deliberate, and purposeful in the way they use this information in discussions with families. This information also help shape their responses to children. Information gathered from assessments forms the basis for identifying the next steps for children's learning and development, highlighting strengths, abilities, interests, noting progress, and where further support is needed. |
|  | The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework features illustrative maps from the 5 learning and development outcomes to the first three levels of the Victorian curriculum. These maps have been designed to support continuity of learning. It is important to be clear about what the next steps are for the child's learning and development and what strategies will best suit the individual child's learning dispositions. |
| [00:03:00] | The Early Years Planning Cycle outlines the process that early childhood professionals use in partnership with families, children, and other professionals to collect, analyse, and reflect on evidence of learning and development. Questioning and analysis informs the planning and practice decisions so that what is planned has meaning and is worth children knowing and doing. Today, we'll be visiting several services. The professionals, families, and children at these sites will help you consider assessment for learning and development and how this relates to your service. |
| Wendy Jarvis: | Every child, you know, it's basically personal best. It's a little bit hard to convey to some parents because they wonder is my child in the top half of the grade, the middle of the grade, and I won't do that. I just talk about well… they couldn't do this at the start and now they can do that, or we have scrapbooks that we send home mid-year and at the end of the year, I say to the children, "Go back and have a look at the first page. See what you could do and what you could write and what numbers you knew. Now have a look at the end." They can say to mom and dad, "I have come a long way." |
| Emma Buckler:[00:04:00] | By involving children in assessing their own learning, a lot we use our portfolios so we'll bring out the portfolios and let them look through getting things out and they'll look at some of the learning stories and ask the questions of, "Oh, look what we learnt here” and “Oh, this is what I do and this is what I created." For example something that we do is “this is me” and it's got a photo of them and they draw a picture in term 1 and we then revisit it in term 4, new photo where they look a little bit more grown up and they draw a new picture and then we show them both. And so we ask them to assess what they think’s different and if they feel that they've learned anything more or their ability to draw is a little bit better or how different they look. So just talking about that with the children. |
| Anne Stonehouse: | Receiving constructive feedback about their learning from professionals, families, and peers can help children to be more aware of their learning. When children see themselves as capable learners, they believe strongly in their ability to achieve their goals because they can see their progress and they experience more clearly the rewards for their effort. |
| Linda Davidson:[00:05:00] | We're relying on observations of children, of educator knowledge and understanding of where they would expect children to be and having conversations with parents, particularly if parents are concerned about certain things. As a first point, if there's a concern about a child's learning or development, we might look at maternal and child health. If there's a, perhaps, concern about physiological concerns. |
| Marlene Fox:[00:06:00] | It's about having authentic assessments. It's about taking all of the information that you have. It's about doing observations. It's about speaking with families. It's about engaging with others that are working with the child so you can really build a sound basis of knowledge about where that child's up to and where they might need some additional support. And it's about being authentic. It's not about doing assessments for the sake of assessments. It's about doing assessments, gathering knowledge, getting information that help inform your practice and really helps to inform how you're going to work with that child moving forward and the sorts of information that you can provide to others working with that child. It's going to really assist and best meet their needs. |
| Joanne Richmond: | Teachers use a variety of assessment tools, so they do summative or end assessment tasks and then they do assessment for learning. In a school, you have an assessment schedule. For example NAPLAN or English online for prep students. As well as that teachers do ongoing formative assessment where they might keep anecdotal notes about student's learning and that helps you to plan for the next lesson for those students. Teachers sit together with their assessment of students to more talk about it, look at what that assessment material is telling us and then we'll work at how we're going to group the children, what we might need to do to take those children further on. It's very important that we monitor their learning and their development and that we see where they've started and where they're going. Assessment drives the teaching in schools. |
| [00:07:00]Anne Stonehouse: | Assessments need to take into account the individual circumstances of the child and how these influence the child's abilities and the type of learning opportunities that are most helpful. For example, you might consider the child's family, cultural, or language backgrounds. Assessment approaches should include the perspective of others, families, colleagues, and children so that a fuller and more accurate picture of the child emerges, including an understanding of each child's home learning environment and the health and well-being of the family. Having this deep understanding of learning and development will enable professionals to plan what's next for the child. |
| Joanne Richmond: | What are we doing for that student that's not making that growth? And identifying those students and then planning for those students. And perhaps it might involve putting in some intervention planning for your educational support staff to do some targeted support for those students. |
| [00:08:00]Helen Walter: | Each child is unique and they will do things in their own time and some with a bit more support than others. But it's recognising that some children will need that support and that we're here to provide some sort of education and referral if necessary. When we're assessing children for their learning and development. We're assessing from the moment we see them really. Observation skills are really finely tuned. In that last assessment day there with Lucy, just in that 4-week period reflecting with Mary how much Lucy had changed in what is a short period of time but she has achieved so much. Holistic assessment is looking at not just the child but the child in the family and the community. |
| Anne Stonehouse:[00:09:00] | Authentic assessment requires professionals to reflect critically on the meaning of what has been learned and the effectiveness of the learning opportunities provided and their approach to working with each unique child. Professionals should also pay attention to community level data and information collected through assessment. Being aware of the children and families within the community can help professionals provide more welcoming and responsive environments. It can also be a basis for collaborating with other professionals. For example, professionals in many communities have engaged with information from the Australian Early Development Census to identify areas of focus for collaborative work to achieve improved learning and development outcomes for local children and families. |