State Government Victoria

Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

For all Children from Birth to Eight Years

Contents

The Framework: vision and purpose

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework advances all children's learning and development from birth to eight years. It does this by supporting all early childhood professionals to work together and with families to achieve common outcomes for all children.

In this Framework, the term 'Early childhood professional' includes any person who works with children between the ages of birth and eight years. It includes, but is not limited to, maternal and child health nurses, all early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings (educators), school teachers, family support workers, preschool field officers, inclusion support facilitators, student support service officers, primary school nurses, primary welfare officers, early childhood intervention workers, play therapists, health professionals and teachers working in hospitals, and education officers in cultural organisations. Appendix 1 describes the roles of these professionals in more detail.

The Victorian Framework shares the vision of the *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development:*

> Every young Victorian thrives, learns and grows to enjoy a productive, rewarding and fulfilling life, while contributing to their local and global communities.

The Victorian Framework is informed by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child advances an image of children as subjects of rights and full members of society, capable of participating in their social worlds through their relationship with others. These principles are consistent with contemporary early childhood research.

Advancing children's learning and development from birth to eight years

Children learn from birth and their learning and development at each stage of life forms the foundation for the next. During the period from birth to eight years, children experience more rapid brain development and acquire more skills and knowledge than in any other period in their lives.

By the time they enter school, children have already developed key communication, learning and thinking skills; learned to build and maintain relationships; and formed a strong sense of their own identity. These skills and knowledge are the foundation for learning at school, and for lifelong learning.

The Victorian Framework sets the highest expectations for every child.

It identifies five Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes for all children:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators.

The Victorian Framework describes each of these Outcomes for children from birth to eight years, linking the learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia to the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) Levels 1 and 2. The Outcomes provide a shared language for all early childhood professionals and families to use when planning for children's learning and development.

The Victorian Framework identifies eight Practice Principles for Learning and Development, which describe the most effective ways for early childhood professionals to work together and with children and families to facilitate learning and development. These Principles are based on the pedagogy of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and the P–12 Principles of Learning and Teaching, and on the latest international evidence about the best ways to support children's learning.

In addition, the Victorian Framework emphasises the importance of supporting children's and families' transitions as they move within and across services throughout the early childhood period.

The diagram below depicts the three elements of the Victorian Framework and the importance of early childhood professionals working with families and children to advance learning and development.

Figure 1: Elements of the Framework
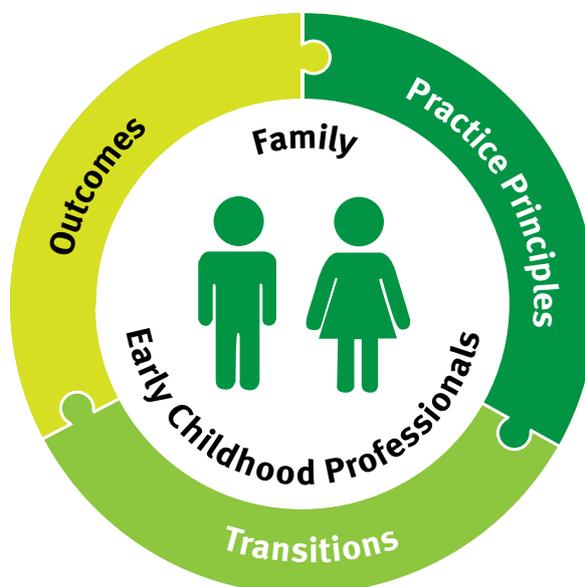
A framework for all children in Victoria

The Victorian Framework recognises that children's learning and development takes place in the context of their families, and that families are children's first and most important educators. Families provide children with the relationships, the opportunities and the experiences that shape their learning and development.

The Victorian Framework acknowledges that the families and communities in which children live are diverse, and children's learning and development is enhanced when early childhood professionals respect their cultures and ways of knowing and being.

In particular, the Victorian Framework recognises and respects Aboriginal cultures and the unique place of these in Victoria's heritage and future. Learning about and valuing the place of first nations people will enhance all Victorian children's sense of place in our community.

The Victorian Framework recognises that every child will take a unique path to the five Outcomes and that all children will require different levels of support, some requiring significantly more than others.

Supporting children's learning and development in Victoria

Children and families in Victoria have access to a range of services that support learning and development. From the birth of their children, all families have access to maternal and child health services. Maternal and child health nurses work with families to support children's learning and development.

Families can also access a range of early childhood services, including playgroups, long day care, family day care, occasional care, outside school hours care, kindergartens and schools, as well as sporting, community education and cultural organisations. Cultural organisations include libraries, museums, botanic gardens, galleries and zoos.

Targeted and intensive services provide learning and development support for children and families. These include child and family support services, and early start kindergarten, as well as a range of community, primary and specialist health services. In addition, the early childhood intervention system in Victoria works with families to support children's inclusion in early childhood services and schools.

Throughout the first eight years of children's lives, all early childhood professionals working in these settings collect important information, which provides a rich picture of each child's learning and development. It is important that families and early childhood professionals access and share this information so that they can build a whole picture of the child to facilitate each child's learning and development.

Using the Framework

The Victorian Framework provides a common language to describe children's learning and common principles to guide practice. It complements the discipline-specific resources that support early childhood professionals working with children and families. It assists all professionals to work together and with families to support children's learning and development. A list of the discipline-specific resources is at Appendix 3.

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework will be supported by a number of Implementation Guides. These Implementation Guides will be developed in partnership with the early childhood profession. They will provide detailed practice examples, case studies and guidance about how the Practice Principles for Learning and Development can be used to support children's learning and development; and more detailed descriptions of children's learning and development in the five Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes. They will be developed for a range of audiences, including families, early childhood educators working in a range of settings, and early childhood professionals more broadly.
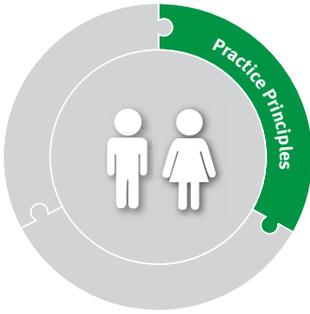
Practice Principles for Learning and Development

' Spirituality' refers to a range of human experiences, including a sense of awe and wonder, a search for purpose and meaning, and an exploration of being and knowing.

Children's learning and development is holistic, advancing simultaneously in the areas of health, cognition, personal and social development, and wellbeing.

Children's learning and development is advanced when they are provided with opportunities, support and engagement within their families and in partnership with early childhood professionals.

By acknowledging each child's identity, culture and spirituality, and responding sensitively to their emotional states, early childhood professionals build children's confidence, sense of wellbeing and safety and willingness to engage in learning.

The Practice Principles for Learning and Development, which are outlined below, are the foundations for professional practice for early childhood professionals working with Victorian children from birth to eight years and their families. They are based on the understanding that when professionals establish respectful and caring relationships with children and families they are able to work together to deliver effective learning and development experiences relevant to children in their local contexts. These experiences gradually expand children's knowledge and understanding of the world and promote their health, safety and wellbeing.

The Practice Principles integrate the pedagogy that forms the basis of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia with the P–12 Principles of Learning and Teaching, which inform the work of teachers in Victorian schools. The Practice Principles are based on the latest international evidence about the best ways to support children's learning. They are interrelated and designed to inform each other.

The Practice Principles are arranged into three categories:

Collaborative

1 family-centred practice

2 partnerships with professionals

3 high expectations for every child

Effective

4 equity and diversity

5 respectful relationships and responsive engagement

6 integrated teaching and learning approaches

7 assessment for learning and development

Reflective

8 reflective practice.

1 Family-centred practice

Children learn in the context of their families and families are the primary influence on children's learning and development. Professionals too, play a role in advancing children's learning and development. Professionals engage in family-centred practice by respecting the pivotal role of families in children's lives. Early childhood professionals:

- use families' understanding of their children to support shared decision-making about each child's learning and development
- create a welcoming and culturally inclusive environment where all families are encouraged to participate in and contribute to children's learning and development experiences
- actively engage families and children in planning children's learning and development
- provide feedback to families on their children's learning and information about how families can further advance children's learning and development at home and in the community.

2 Partnerships with professionals

Early childhood professionals are from diverse professional backgrounds. They use multidisciplinary approaches to provide better support to families and draw on the skills and expertise of their peers. Early childhood professionals:

- work collaboratively to share information and plan to ensure holistic approaches to children's learning and development
- understand each other's practice, skills and expertise, and make referrals when appropriate
- acknowledge the significance of transitions within and across early childhood services and schools, and ensure that children understand the process and have an active role in preparing for these transitions
- build on children's prior learning and experiences to build continuity for their learning and development from birth to eight years of age.

3 High expectations for every child

Every child has the ability to learn and develop. Having high expectations is especially important in achieving better outcomes for the most vulnerable children. Some children require additional supports and different learning experiences and opportunities to help them to learn and develop. Early childhood professionals:

- commit to high expectations for all children's learning and development
- ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and development
- recognise that every child can learn, but some children require quite different opportunities and supports to do this
- work with families to support children's learning and development at home and in the community.

4 Equity and diversity

Children's personal, family and cultural histories shape their learning and development.

Children learn when early childhood professionals respect their diversity and provide them with the best support, opportunities and experiences. Early childhood professionals:

- support children's evolving capacities to learn from birth
- ensure that the interests, abilities and culture of every child and their family are understood, valued and respected
- maximise opportunities for every child
- identify areas where focused support or intervention is required to improve each child's learning and development
- recognise bi- and multi-lingualism as an asset and support these children to maintain their first language and learn English as a second language
- promote cultural awareness in all children, including greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being
- support children to develop a sense of place, identity and a connection to the land
- encourage children as active participants for sustainability, influencing the quality of life now, and for future generations.

5 Respectful relationships and responsive engagement

From birth, secure attachments formed through warm and respectful relationships with familiar adults are fundamental to children's learning and development.

These relationships protect, regulate and buffer children. They provide a secure base that helps children to feel safe and confident to try new things and to learn.

Interactions with children and families inform early childhood professionals' knowledge of children's distinctive interests, skills, cultures and abilities. This is crucial to providing positive experiences and a safe and stimulating environment that will encourage children to expand their capacities and deepen their knowledge and understandings.

Early childhood professionals:

- initiate warm, trusting and reciprocal relationships with children
- provide safe and stimulating environments for children
- develop learning programs that are responsive to each child and build on their culture, strengths, interests and knowledge to take their learning and development forward
- understand, communicate and interact across cultures by being aware of their own world view
- respect the views and feelings of each child.

6 Integrated teaching and learning approaches

Early childhood professionals recognise that a gradual shift in emphasis occurs over the first eight years of a child's life, along a continuum from play to more structured learning in formal settings. Early childhood professionals apply strategies to support sustained and shared interactions with children through play to more focused experiential learning.

Learning is an active process that must involve children's engagement. Play is essential for its ability to stimulate and integrate a wide range of children's intellectual, physical, social and creative abilities. Active engagement with, and attunement to children in their play extends and supports their learning. Shared, sustained conversations are also a powerful and important feature of active adult engagement. The integration of child-directed play and learning; guided play and learning; and adult-led learning is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Integrated teaching and learning approaches

Adult-led learning

Guided play and learning

Child-directed play and learning

Early Childhood Professionals:

- encourage children to explore, solve problems, communicate, think, create and construct
- use their judgement to support children's learning and development through a combination of child-led and adult-led play-based learning, as well as active teacher-led learning
- create physical environments that support a range of opportunities for learning and physical activity, both indoors and outdoors
- build on children's interests, abilities, cultures and previous learning experiences to extend their thinking, learning and development
- use child-centred approaches to explicitly teach particular knowledge and skills
- recognise the connections between aspects of children's learning and development.

7 Assessment for learning and development

Assessment is designed to discover what children know and understand, based on what they make, write, draw, say and do. Early childhood professionals assess the progress of children's learning and development, what children are ready to learn and how they can be supported.

All children benefit when assessment reflects a whole-child approach, providing an holistic view of learning and development. Early childhood professionals use a range of assessment tools, processes and approaches to build on prior learning, avoid duplication and add value.

Early childhood professionals understand that families play a vital role in their children's learning and development. Early childhood professionals are aware of the health and wellbeing of the family when planning for the child's learning and development.

Early childhood professionals assess children's learning in ways that:

- inform their practice
- include children's views of their own learning
- are authentic and responsive to how children demonstrate their learning and development
- draw on families' perspectives, knowledge, experiences and expectations
- consider children in the context of their families and provide support to families when necessary
- value the culturally specific knowledge embedded within communities about children's learning and development
- are transparent and objective, and provide families with information about their children's learning and development, and about what they can do to further support their children
- gather and analyse information from a wide range of sources to help them assess and plan effectively
- provide the best possible advice and guidance to children and their families.

8 Reflective practice

Children's learning and development is advanced when they experience interactions with highly effective early childhood professionals. Early childhood professionals become more effective through critical reflection and a strong culture of professional enquiry. Early childhood professionals:

- gather information that supports, informs, assesses and enriches decision-making about appropriate professional practices
- continually develop their professional knowledge and skills to enable them to provide the best possible learning and development opportunities for all children
- promote practices that have been shown to be successful in supporting children's learning and development
- use evidence to inform planning for early childhood experiences and practice
- challenge and change some practices.

Early Years Learning and Development Outcomes

The Victorian Framework identifies five Outcomes for all children from birth to eight years:

- Children have a strong sense of identity (identity)
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world (community)
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing (wellbeing)
- Children are confident and involved learners (learning)
- Children are effective communicators (communication).

Children learn at different rates, in different ways and at different times. Their development is not always easy or straightforward. For some children and families, learning and development involves considerable struggle and requires much perseverance. Therefore, different kinds of support and engagement will be required. Early childhood professionals use the Practice Principles for Learning and Development to provide the support necessary for every child to learn and develop.

The descriptions of the five Outcomes included here are neither exhaustive, nor exclusive. The tables show the link between the outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and the VELS. They provide examples of children's learning and development. They can be used by early childhood professionals to design experiences and opportunities for advancing children's development and assessing children's progress toward these Outcomes. The five Outcomes provide a common language to support collaborative approaches between all early childhood professionals and families.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Relationships are the foundations for children's construction of identity. In order to form a strong sense of self, children need to build secure relationships first within the family and then with caring, attentive adults in other settings. For babies and young children, strong attachments are critical. Children's positive experiences of relationships and places support their understanding of themselves as secure, significant and respected individuals. A positive sense of identity strengthens children's interest and skills in being active participants in their communities.

Children develop a sense of autonomy and a sense of agency when they seek and accept new challenges, use their bodies effectively and make new discoveries. They increasingly cooperate and work collaboratively with others.

In early childhood, children begin to take the initiative by asking questions and attempting small projects. With support, children begin to reflect on their achievements, acknowledge the value of persistence and enjoy their accomplishments.

As children develop a more knowledgeable sense of self, they reach out and communicate the need for comfort, assistance and companionship. Dramatic play is a way to explore different identities and different points of view. All children, with support, can develop a strong sense of self and learn to interact with others with care, empathy and respect. As they show interest in others and in being part of a group, children can participate in play with others and begin to develop friendships. This confidence can be transferred to a range of social situations and children can increasingly recognise and accept that there are consequences for their actions.

The maintenance of first or home languages has a significant and continuing role in the construction of identity. This is supported when early childhood professionals respect children's cultures and languages.

Early childhood professionals' respect for diversity assists children to begin to appreciate the similarities and differences between individuals and groups, including different cultural groups. Children develop a deeper sense of identity through participating in cultural experiences and celebrations.

IDENTITY
Early Years Learning and Development Framework

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2
Children feel safe, secure and supported		
This is evident, for example, when children: • build secure attachment with one and then more familiar educators • use effective routines to help make predicted transitions smoothly • sense and respond to a feeling of belonging • communicate their needs for comfort and assistance • establish and maintain respectful, trusting relationships with other children and educators • openly express their feelings and ideas in their interactions with others • respond to ideas and suggestions from others • initiate interactions and conversations with trusted educators • confidently explore and engage with social and physical environments through relationships and play • initiate and join in play • explore aspects of identity through role-play.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • interact with their peers, teachers and other adults in a range of contexts • learn to describe and practise skills that contribute to the formation of positive relationships, and explain why these skills are desirable • learn that some people have special needs and to respect the rights, feelings and efforts of others • make and share performing and visual arts works that communicate observations, personal ideas, feelings and experiences • identify the qualities of a friend and demonstrate care for other students • learn about ways of making personal responses to arts works.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • plan arts works that communicate ideas, concepts, observations, feelings and/or experiences • behave appropriately in a range of social situations • identify the feelings and needs of other people • begin to develop and exhibit appropriate behaviours for maintaining positive social relationships.
Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency		
This is evident, for example, when children: • demonstrate increasing awareness of the needs and rights of others • are open to new challenges and make new discoveries • increasingly cooperate and work collaboratively with others • take considered risks in their decision-making and cope with the unexpected • recognise their individual achievements and the achievements of others • demonstrate an increasing capacity for self-regulation • approach new safe situations with confidence • begin to initiate negotiating and sharing behaviours • persist when faced with challenges and when first attempts are not successful.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • explore their responsibilities and rights and those of others in familiar contexts such as the family, the classroom, the school playground and local recreation areas • learn about classroom rules and why they are needed • learn to manage their impulses by developing habits and routines that help them to be a cooperative class member • begin to take initiative by asking questions when needed and attempting small projects • with support, learn to manage time and resources to complete short tasks • adhere to rules that aid participation and cooperation.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • with support, reflect on personal qualities which contribute to the development and maintenance of friendships • begin to think in terms of other people's feelings and needs, especially when resolving conflict or dealing with bullying, for example, by saying sorry or taking another person's point of view into consideration • develop strategies to use when they are feeling uncertain about their learning, such as seeking assistance from their teachers • begin to recognise that learning from mistakes is an important attribute of being a good learner.
Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities		
This is evident, for example, when children: • feel recognised and respected for who they are • explore different identities and points of view in dramatic play • share aspects of their culture with other children and educators • use their home language to construct meaning • develop strong foundations in both the culture and language/s of their family and the broader community without compromising their cultural identities • develop their social and cultural heritage through engagement with Elders and community members • reach out and communicate for comfort, assistance and companionship • celebrate and share their contributions and achievements with others.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • draw on their own experience to help them understand the world around them • explore different ways of using performing and visual arts elements • learn about and celebrate special cultural, local, community and national days • engage in school and cultural events in a responsible and active way • talk about aspects of their own arts works and arts works and events in their community.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • begin to appreciate the similarities and differences between individuals and groups, including the language, cultural and religious groups that make up the Australian nation • begin to appreciate the common values important to groups and individuals • begin to participate in class and school activities, such as marking local and national celebrations and commemorations • begin to recognise their contribution to the achievement of a positive learning environment in the classroom • describe what they like about themselves, how they are similar to others and how they are unique.
Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect		
This is evident, for example, when children: • show interest in other children and being part of a group • engage in and contribute to shared play experiences • express a wide range of emotions, thoughts and views constructively • empathise with and express concern for others • display awareness of and respect for others' perspectives • reflect on their actions and consider consequences for others.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • learn to play constructively together and are encouraged to develop friendships with peers • contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts • develop social relationships, respect for others' ideas and ability to express how they feel when interacting with others through dance, drama, music and visual arts • begin to understand how their actions affect others • explore their emotions and identify the different ways in which people express and respond to emotions • describe basic skills required to work cooperatively in groups.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • interact with their peers, older and younger students and adults in a range of contexts • identify and accept that there are consequences for their actions • with support, reflect on personal qualities which contribute to the development and maintenance of friendships • learn to recognise and describe the feelings and emotional responses of others. They compare these with their own emotional responses and adjust their behaviour in response.

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

From birth, children live and learn with others in families, early childhood settings and local communities.

Children's connectedness with and different ways of belonging to people, country and communities help them to learn ways of being, reflecting the values, traditions and practices of their families and communities.

As children move into early childhood settings and then schools, they broaden their experiences, relationships and communities.

Over time and with opportunity and support, the ways in which children connect and participate with others increase. Participating in their communities strengthens children's sense of identity and wellbeing.

Babies participate through crying, imitating and making sounds to show their level of interest in relating to or participating with others. Babies' learning is strengthened when adults respond to their cues and observe and follow their lead.

Toddlers participate and connect with peers through such gestures as offering their toys to a distressed child, or welcoming a new child enthusiastically. Older children show interest in how others regard them, and develop understandings about friendships. They come to realise that their actions or responses affect how others feel.

Children learn to live interdependently with others and within different environments. This occurs when they participate collaboratively in everyday routines, events and experiences and have opportunities to contribute to decisions. Some children require carefully constructed experiences to support their participation in a variety of community connections. Some children may require explicit direction and support to remain safe.

With support, children establish their own important friendships with other children. They explore their responsibilities and rights and those of others in familiar settings, such as the family, groups, the classroom and the playground. They begin to think in terms of other people's feelings and needs, and respond to diversity with respect. Stories and group discussions assist children in talking through conflicts, supporting development of social skills and tolerance for others.

Children show concern for others and practise peaceful and inclusive ways of resolving conflicts. This includes using appropriate language and actions. With support, they regulate their own behaviour and find positive ways of managing frustrations.

Children show increasing awareness of themselves as part of the environment and the broader society. Environmental sustainability provides important learning experiences centred on a commitment to making the world a safe place to live. They become aware of the impact the environment can have on them and future generations by exploring how and why environmental factors affect their lives.

" What community do we belong to?"

"My mummy, daddy, they are my parents" Molly, Age 5 years.

"Kinder" Cody, Age 5 years.

"On earth" Molly, Age 5 years.

"The planet" Kate, Age 5 years.

COMMUNITY

Early Years Learning and Development Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active civic participation

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2
This is evident, for example, when children: • begin to recognise that they have a right to belong to many communities • cooperate with others and negotiate roles and relationships in play episodes and group experiences • take action to assist other children to participate in social groups • broaden their understanding of the world in which they live • express an opinion in matters that affect them • build on their own social experiences to explore other ways of being • participate in reciprocal relationships • gradually learn to 'read' the behaviours of others and respond appropriately • understand different ways of contributing through play and projects • demonstrate a sense of belonging and comfort in their environments • are playful and respond positively to others, reaching out for company and friendship • contribute to democratic decision-making about matters that affect them.	**This is evident, for example, when students:** • are introduced to the idea of the classroom being a community • explore their responsibilities and rights and those of others in familiar contexts such as the family, the classroom, the school playground and local recreation areas • make music, dance and drama with others that express and communicate experiences, observations, ideas and feelings about themselves and their world • talk about art events as part of the cultural and social life of their community • develop a sense of belonging to the school community • develop the skills to work in a group, including taking turns, sharing and caring for equipment.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • identify the range of groups to which they, their family members and their class belong • explore the roles, rights and responsibilities of various family and community members • learn to work in teams to complete structured activities within a set timeframe • explain the contribution rules and procedures make to the safe conduct of games and activities • interact with peers, older and younger students, and adults in a range of contexts • describe their contribution to the activities of the team.

Children respond to diversity with respect

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2
This is evident, for example, when children: • begin to show concern for others • explore the diversity of culture, heritage, background and tradition and that diversity presents opportunities for choices and new understandings • become aware of connections, similarities and differences between people • listen to others' ideas and respect different ways of being and doing • practise inclusive ways of achieving coexistence • notice and react in positive ways to similarities and differences among people.	**This is evident, for example, when students:** • learn that some people have special needs and to respect the rights, feelings and efforts of others • use appropriate language and actions when dealing with conflict • learn about and celebrate special cultural, local, community and national days • talk about how and why the musical traditions of other cultures are different from their own • learn about the cultures and histories that have contributed to Australian society • consider how and why other times and places are different from their own • develop an understanding of the speakers of languages other than English and the countries, regions and communities where the languages are spoken • engage in school and cultural events in a responsible and active way.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • begin to appreciate the similarities and differences between individuals and groups, including the language, cultural and religious groups that make up the Australian nation • identify what is familiar and what is different in their own and other cultures • begin to grasp the role and importance of the various cultural groups that make up the Australian community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities • identify features of communication and differences in dress, eating, greeting routines, ways of being polite and obvious cultural practices.

Children become aware of fairness

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2
This is evident, for example, when children: • discover and explore some connections amongst people • become aware of ways in which people are included or excluded from physical and social environments • develop the ability to recognise unfairness and bias and the capacity to act with compassion and kindness • are empowered to make choices and problem-solve to meet their needs in particular contexts • begin to think critically about fair and unfair behaviour • begin to understand and evaluate ways in which texts construct identities and create stereotypes.	**This is evident, for example, when students:** • learn about respect and concern for others and being fair • explore possible actions and responses to social situations through dramatic play • participate in movement and physical activities that follow rules and procedures and share equipment and space safely • learn about classroom rules and why they are needed • begin to compare classroom and family rules and other rules they know about, such as those for games and sport.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • discover why groups and communities have rules, begin to question rules which they believe are unfair, and make suggestions about improving the rules within the community • begin to appreciate the common values important to groups and individuals, for example fairness, tolerance, understanding and respect • identify the feelings and needs of other people • take appropriate steps to resolve conflict • share resources fairly.

Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2
This is evident, for example, when children: • use play to investigate, project and explore new ideas • participate with others to solve problems and contribute to group outcomes • demonstrate an increasing knowledge of and respect for natural and constructed environments • explore, infer, predict and hypothesise in order to develop an increased understanding of the interdependence between land, people, plants and animals • show growing appreciation and care for natural and constructed environments • explore relationships with other living and non-living things and observe, notice and respond to change • develop an awareness of the impact of human activity on environments and the interdependence of living things.	**This is evident, for example, when students:** • explore how and why natural factors (for example, changes in the weather) and human activities (for example, the closing of a park) affect their lives • participate in activities such as wearing protection from the sun, saving energy, saving water, and recycling • learn that materials can be recycled and reused to produce new products.	**This develops, for example, when students:** • investigate and describe elements of the natural and built environments in their local area • begin to participate in a range of class and school activities such as recycling, taking responsibility for class resources • are introduced to the concept of resources and their management, and begin to understand how resource use reflects community interdependence • investigate the ways individuals, families, groups and communities can work to improve their environment • think about environmental differences, locally and in other parts of Australia and the world, why these differences exist • investigate ways of reducing waste in their classroom for example, recycling and composting.

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

During early childhood, the foundations for social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing are laid. Wellbeing includes good mental and physical health, feelings of happiness and satisfaction.

Relationships that are warm and supportive assist babies to express feelings such as joy, sadness, frustration and fear, and support strong attachments. Children's resilience helps them to regulate and balance their emotions to cope with day-to-day stresses and challenges.

The readiness to persevere and 'have a go' when faced with unfamiliar and challenging learning situations provides children with a sense of achievement. It also teaches children to be flexible and adapt to new environments and events. With support and guidance, children can learn to manage disappointments, frustration and loss.

Babies' and young children's learning and physical development are evident through their movement patterns, from physical dependence and reflex actions at birth through to the development of spatial awareness and the ability to move around their environment confidently and safely.

Children progress through the development of basic motor skills – running, jumping, hopping, balancing and skipping – on to the complex integration of sensory, motor and cognitive systems required for the playground games and organised experiences that characterise the early years of school. Dance and drama experiences combine stillness and movement and children learn to create and perform simple rhythmical movement sequences.

Children develop self-reliance and confidence in personal hygiene, care and safety for themselves and others. Routines, rituals and rules, such as hand-washing, toileting and packing away, provide opportunities to learn about health and safety.

A healthy diet is essential for healthy living. Early childhood settings provide many opportunities for children to experience a range of nutritious foods and to learn about food choices from early childhood professionals and other children. Children also gain a basic understanding of the aspects of an active lifestyle.

"I really like doing bother work" Aidan Age 5 Years.

"Bother time" is when the children discuss issues which are concerning them. They gather together and each child is encouraged to give their views.

WELLBEING
Early Years Learning and Development Framework

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

Children become strong in their social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

This is evident, for example, when children:

- demonstrate trust and confidence
- remain accessible to others at times of distress, confusion and frustration
- share humour, happiness and satisfaction
- seek out and accept new challenges, make new discoveries, and celebrate their own efforts and achievements and those of others
- increasingly cooperate and work collaboratively with others
- enjoy moments of solitude
- recognise their individual achievements
- make choices, accept challenges, take considered risks, manage change and cope with frustrations and the unexpected
- show an increasing capacity to understand, self-regulate and manage their emotions in ways that reflect the feelings and needs of others
- experience and share personal successes in learning and initiate opportunities for new learning in their home languages or Standard Australian English
- acknowledge and accept affirmation
- assert their capabilities and independence while demonstrating increasing awareness of the needs and rights of others
- recognise the contributions they make to shared projects and experiences.

VELS LEVEL 1: PREP

This develops, for example, when students:

- identify the qualities of a friend and demonstrate care for other students
- contribute to the development of positive social relationships in a range of contexts
- use appropriate language and actions when resolving conflict
- describe basic skills required to work cooperatively in groups
- explore their emotions and identify the different ways in which people express and respond to emotions
- learn to consider, support and encourage others to share equipment and to adhere to rules that aid participation and cooperation
- start identifying new things they can do and the responsibilities associated with these
- begin to reflect on themselves as learners, in particular on their feelings about learning, by responding to open-ended statements such as 'I'm proud of this because … '

VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

This develops, for example, when students:

- discuss the way various situations and behaviours affect the way they feel, and develop personal responses to such behaviours and situations
- explain the contribution rules and procedures make to safe conduct of games and activities
- explore people's needs at various stages of development and recognise that some needs apply to all stages of life
- describe what they like about themselves, how they are similar to others and how they are unique
- identify the feelings and needs of other people
- identify and accept that there are consequences for their actions
- take appropriate steps to resolve simple conflicts
- with support, describe their contribution to the activities of the team.

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

This is evident, for example, when children:

- recognise and communicate their bodily needs (for example thirst, hunger, rest, comfort, physical activity)
- are happy, healthy, safe and are connected to others
- engage in increasingly complex sensory-motor skills and movement patterns
- combine gross and fine motor movement and balance to achieve increasingly complex patterns of activity, including dance, creative movement and drama
- use their sensory capabilities and dispositions with increasing integration, skill and purpose to explore and respond to their world
- demonstrate spatial awareness and orient themselves, moving around and through their environments confidently and safely
- manipulate equipment and manage tools with increasing competence and skill
- respond through movement to traditional and contemporary music, dance and storytelling of their own and others' cultures
- show an increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and good nutrition
- show increasing independence and competence in personal hygiene, care and safety for themselves and others
- show enthusiasm for participating in physical play and negotiate play spaces to ensure the safety and wellbeing of themselves and others.

VELS LEVEL 1: PREP

This develops, for example, when students:

- are introduced to the basic principles of living an active and healthy life
- explore basic health needs that must be met to maintain or promote their health and to help them grow and develop
- begin to develop basic motor skills, including running, jumping, hopping, balancing skipping
- participate in a range of movement patterns in aquatic environments
- use simple vocabulary to describe movement, the physical responses of their bodies to activity and their feelings about participation in physical activity
- regularly engage in periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity
- in dance and drama activities, combine stillness and movement, and share space safely with consideration for others
- in dance activities, learn to coordinate breathing and movement, copy and mirror movements, develop movement memory and awareness of self in space
- perform basic motor skills and movement patterns, with or without equipment, in a range of environments
- follow rules and procedures and share equipment and space safely.

VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

This develops, for example, when students:

- begin to identify the benefits of safe behaviours and learn how they can protect and increase their health and safety and the health and safety of others
- regularly engage in sessions of moderate to vigorous physical activity and describe the link between physical activity and health
- begin to adapt movement skills to changing environmental conditions
- combine motor skills and movement patterns during individual and group activities
- create and perform simple rhythmical movement sequences in response to stimuli
- demonstrate control when participating in locomotor activities requiring change of speed, direction and level
- explain the contribution rules and procedures make to safe conduct of games and activities
- use equipment and space safely.

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Children learn in the context of their families and community. Throughout the early years, children acquire knowledge and skills that form the foundations of their later achievement. They learn how to learn and they develop dispositions for learning and a sense of agency, where children are able to make decisions and choices, to influence events and to have an impact on their world.

Babies explore the world through touch, sight, sound, taste, smell and movement. Their sensory and physical explorations increase brain development.

When babies and young children are relaxed and involved they express wonder and interest in their environments. When they are encouraged and supported to be curious and enthusiastic participants in learning, they begin to develop positive dispositions for lifelong learning.

From their earliest years, children develop the view that learning is exploratory, fun and rewarding. They use their imagination and curiosity to generate ideas, solve problems and apply that knowledge to new situations. With support, children expect to learn and they use their senses and their bodies to explore the world around them and begin to develop simple explanations for observed phenomena.

Children consider why things happened and what they can learn from experiences, reflecting on their own thinking processes and approaches to learning.

Active involvement in learning builds children's understanding of the concepts, creative thinking and inquiry processes necessary for lifelong learning. They can challenge and extend their own thinking and that of others through interactions and negotiations. Children's active involvement changes what they know, can do and value, and transforms their learning.

Long periods of uninterrupted play support children to invent, investigate and discover, using a rich variety of open-ended materials and resources. When provided with many opportunities and a rich supply of natural and manufactured materials and tools, children create, build, sculpt, draw, paint and construct.

Children learn with peers and share feelings and thoughts about learning from others. They begin to understand that listening to the responses of others can assist them to understand and make new meaning of experiences. Children become more confident over time in seeking assistance from adults.

Children's increasing understanding of their environment forms the basis for their concept development. As they develop, they generate questions about situations and phenomena, and make predictions.

Children broaden their learning about the world through connecting with people, places, technologies and natural materials. They manipulate objects to investigate, assemble, invent and construct. They explore ideas using imagination, creativity and play, and they use their own and others' feedback to revise and build on an idea.

Children need many opportunities to generate and discuss ideas, make plans, brainstorm solutions to problems, reflect and give reasons for their choices. They investigate what products and systems can do, and how they work. Increasingly, they begin to use information and communication technologies to assist their thinking and to represent what they know and understand.

LEARNING

Early Years Learning and Development Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2
This is evident, for example, when children: • express wonder and interest in their environments • are curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning • use play to investigate, imagine and explore ideas • follow and extend their own interests with enthusiasm, energy and concentration • initiate and contribute to play experiences emerging from their own ideas • participate in a variety of rich and meaningful inquiry-based experiences • persevere and experience the satisfaction of achievement • persist even when they find a task difficult.	**This is developed, for example, when students:** • with encouragement and support, wonder, question and become adventurous in their thinking about familiar contexts • with support, make links with their existing experiences and develop the view that learning is exploratory, fun and rewarding • begin to reflect on themselves as learners, in particular on their feelings about learning, by responding to open-ended statements such as 'I'm proud of this because … ' and using visual aids that illustrate their responses to learning, such as happy and unhappy faces • reflect on their thinking, for example why they think what they think about a text, and take time to consider before responding • with support, learn to manage their time and resources to complete short tasks • use their imagination and curiosity to generate ideas • begin to take initiative as learners by asking questions when needed and attempting small projects.	**This is developed, for example, when students:** • begin to reflect on their thinking processes • reflect on those approaches which they believe help help them learn most effectively • begin to record their feelings and understanding about their learning, responding to prompts which help them acknowledge their successes, noting where improvements could be made and reflecting on the effort they put into particular tasks • begin to take responsibility for managing their time and resources within the context of structured tasks that have clear outcomes and a set timeframe • understand that people use creative, imaginative and inventive thinking to help them meet human needs and wants • develop imaginative and practical design solutions to problems, needs and opportunities • experiment with ways of expressing and communicating ideas and feelings to particular audiences or for particular purposes.

Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2
This is evident, for example, when children: • apply a wide variety of thinking strategies to engage with situations and solve problems, and adapt these strategies to new situations • create and use representation to organise, record and communicate mathematical ideas and concepts • make predictions and generalisations about their daily activities, aspects of the natural world and environments, using patterns they generate or identify, and communicate these using mathematical language and symbols • explore their environment • manipulate objects and experiment with cause and effect, trial and error, and motion • contribute constructively to mathematical discussions and arguments • use reflective thinking to consider why things happen and what can be learnt from these experiences.	**This is developed, for example, when students:** • use their senses to explore the world around them, for example the seasons, and living and non-living things • use a range of simple thinking tools to gather and process information • begin to develop simple explanations for the phenomena they observe • participate in very simple investigations involving observation and measurement (for example making and flying kites) • develop an awareness of spatial concepts through structured experiences within their immediate environment • count the size of small sets using the numbers 0 to 20 • use ordinal numbers to describe the position of elements in a set from first to tenth • use materials to model addition and subtraction • recognise, copy and draw points, lines and simple free-hand curves • test simple conjectures such as 'nine is four more than five' • identify basic two-dimensional shapes, such as triangles, circles and squares, and three-dimensional solids and objects, such as boxes and balls • learn to give and follow simple directions and describe locations in relation to other people and places • make measurements using informal units such as paces for length, bricks for weight • begin to make estimates • use informal units, such as heartbeats and hand claps, at regular intervals to measure and describe the passage of time • place and orientate shapes according to simple descriptions, such as 'next to', 'beside', 'in front of', 'behind', 'over' and 'under' • compare length, area, capacity and mass of familiar objects using descriptive terms such as 'longer', 'taller', 'larger', 'holds more' and 'heavier' • consider the explanations of others, they begin to ask, 'How do you know?' and 'What makes you think that?', and consider a range of possible responses • take risks with their learning and begin to understand that mistakes can be a vehicle for further learning • devise and follow ways of recording computations using the digit keys and +, x and = keys on a four-function calculator.	**This is developed, for example, when students:** • explore the community and environment around them and increasingly consider contexts and information which is beyond their immediate experience • begin to recognise that learning from mistakes is an important attribute of being a good learner • participate in and develop control over a range of locomotor activities that require a change of speed, direction and level • generate questions about situations and phenomena and suggest appropriate forms of observations and measurements that are appropriate for the investigation of their question • repeat observations over time to make predictions • begin to recognise simple patterns in data and describe them in terms that represent conclusions drawn from the data • tell the time at hours and half-hours using an analogue clock, and hours and minutes using a digital clock • order numbers and count to 1000 by 1s, 10s and 100s • form patterns and sets of numbers based on simple criteria, such as odd and even numbers • describe simple fractions such as one half, one third and one quarter • add and subtract one- and two-digit numbers • describe and calculate simple multiplication as repeated addition, e.g. 3 × 5 = 5 + 5 + 5 • apply simple transformations to shapes • use both non-uniform (for example hand- spans) and uniform (for example pencil length) informal measurement units • make, describe and compare measurements of length, area, volume, mass and time • use a four-function calculator, including use of the constant addition function and x key, to check the accuracy of mental and written estimations and, approximations and solutions to simple number sentences and equations • work with peers to develop a range of creative solutions and test them against given criteria • test the truth of conjectures by attempting to find examples or counter-examples, and exploring special cases.

Children transfer and adapt what they have learnt from one context to another

This is evident, for example, when children:
- engage with and co-construct learning
- develop an ability to mirror, repeat and practise the actions of others, either immediately or later
- make connections between experiences, concepts and processes
- use the processes of play, reflection and investigation to problem-solve
- apply generalisations from one situation to another
- try out strategies that were effective to solve problems in one situation in a new context
- transfer knowledge from one setting to another.

This is developed, for example, when students:
- enrich their imaginations by playing games and making links between their own experience and the ideas in texts
- ask and answer simple questions for information and clarification
- think and talk about how their designs will solve a problem or meet a need, and reflect on the steps they took to design and make their product
- begin to look for simple patterns in their observations by classifying familiar items and by looking for similarities and differences.

This is developed, for example, when students:
- develop skills in making accurate observations about people and events and begin to use a variety of means to record their observations
- develop their own explanations for the observations they make and learn to question the accuracy of other people's explanations
- develop skills in using a range of sources of information when investigating selected questions
- begin to understand that people are more likely to believe an explanation if evidence or reasons are provided
- consider whether design solutions work and are appropriate for the purpose for which they were designed.

Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

This is evident, for example, when children:
- engage in learning relationships
- use their senses to explore natural and built environments
- experience the benefits and pleasures of shared learning exploration
- explore the purpose and function of a range of tools, media, sounds and graphics
- manipulate resources to investigate, take apart, assemble, invent and construct
- experiment with different technologies
- use information and communications technologies (ICT) to investigate and problem-solve
- explore ideas and theories using imagination, creativity and play
- use feedback from themselves and others to revise and build on an idea.

This is developed, for example, when students:
- learn with peers and share feelings and thoughts about learning with others
- begin to understand that listening to the responses of others can assist them to make sense of new experiences and provide useful cues for learning
- investigate everyday, familiar products and recognise the basic characteristics and materials/ingredients from which they are made and how they are used
- explore the differences between natural products and artefacts
- play with and manipulate materials/ingredients in both a free and focused manner to foster development of their design and technical skills
- learn characteristics and properties of materials, for example 'rough', 'soft' and 'flexible', and processes, for example 'measure', 'mix' and 'cut'
- use simple pictures and models to represent design ideas
- use different types of ICT data such as text, images and numbers to share their ideas
- explore multimedia resources such as CD-ROMs, DVDs and approved websites.

This is developed, for example, when students:
- develop strategies to use when feeling uncertain about learning, such as seeking assistance from teachers
- investigate what products and systems can do, how they work and why they are the way they are
- play with and manipulate materials and/or ingredients
- think about, discuss and describe the characteristics and properties of materials (for example 'strong', 'sweet') and why they are suitable for products and systems
- develop basic design ideas
- use multimedia products and begin to think critically about these resources and how they help learning
- model and describe daily activities and familiar events using physical materials, diagrams and maps.

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

Children communicate with others from birth. They begin by using gestures, visual and non-verbal cues, sounds, language and assisted communication in forming relationships. Over time, communication becomes more intentional.

Children's wellbeing, identity and sense of agency are dependent on their communication skills and are strongly linked to their capacity to express their feelings and thoughts, and to be understood.

Most children are innately social, creative and motivated to exchange ideas, thoughts, questions and feelings. Children respond non-verbally and verbally to what they see, hear, touch, feel and taste. Through relationships with responsive adults, they take turns to explore sound and movement patterns, sing songs and are exposed to chants and rhymes.

Maintenance of first language is important for children's identity, wellbeing, communication and learning. Children can successfully learn English as a second language through quality exposure to English, explicit modelling and language teaching and appropriate time to acquire the new language. This requires early childhood professionals to be knowledgeable about the way children learn a second language, the stages of acquisition and the recognition that children differ in their rate of acquisition.

In school settings, children may have the opportunities to learn languages other than English (LOTE). For some children this may be an opportunity to continue their first language, and for others the opportunity to learn a new language.

Children's rich spoken language, as well as their gestures and actions, underpin the development of basic literacy and numeracy concepts.

Initially, children use symbols in play to represent and make meaning. Then they begin to be aware of the relationships between oral and visual representations and to recognise patterns and relationships and the connection between them. They recognise how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some letter sounds, symbols, characters and sign

relationships. They also recognise the function and value of visual elements and use them in art works to symbolise meaning, for example using colour in painting to express emotions.

Children express ideas verbally and use a wide range of media. They share the traditional stories and symbols from their own culture, re-enact well-known stories and use the creative arts, such as drawing, painting and sculpture, drama, dance and movement. They create and explore imaginary worlds through dramatic play and artworks that communicate their ideas, observations and feelings.

Children begin to engage with a range of texts and media, obtaining meaning from them and sharing the enjoyment of language in a variety of ways. Older children start to read printed text from left to right and use information in context from pictures and other sources to assist in making meaning. As they progress through this period, children begin to self-correct when reading aloud and distinguish between texts that represent real and imaginary experiences.

Fundamental to this development is the understanding of how symbols and pattern systems work. Children begin to explore written communication by scribbling, drawing and producing approximations of writing. Print-rich environments and adults who model and respond to children's written messages strengthen the progression to using conventional letters, groups of letters and simple punctuation.

Over time, children use simple texts about familiar topics and select content, form and vocabulary in their writing. As their skills advance, they accurately spell frequently used words and make use of known spelling patterns to make plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words.

From an early age, children use information and communication technologies to communicate, learn and play, using multimedia resources such as DVDs and websites. As children gain independence in the world of information and communications technologies, they create and display their own information in a way that suits different audiences and purposes.

COMMUNICATION
Early Years Learning and Development Outcome 5: : Children are effective communicators

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	VELS LEVEL 1: PREP	VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

This is evident, for example, when children:
- engage in enjoyable reciprocal interactions using verbal and non-verbal language
- respond verbally and non-verbally to what they see, hear, touch, feel and taste
- use language and representations from play, music and art to share and project meaning
- contribute their ideas and experiences in play and small and large group discussion
- attend and give cultural cues that they are listening to and understanding what is said to them
- are independent communicators who initiate Standard Australian English and home language conversations, and demonstrate the ability to meet the listener's needs
- interact with others to explore ideas and concepts, clarify and challenge thinking, negotiate and share new understandings
- convey and construct messages with purpose and confidence, building on literacies of home and/or family and the broader community
- exchange ideas, feelings and understandings using language and representations in play
- demonstrate an increasing understanding of measurement and number using vocabulary to describe size, length, volume, capacity and names of numbers
- express ideas and feelings and understand and respect the perspectives of others
- use language to communicate thinking about quantities to describe attributes of objects and collections, and to explain mathematical ideas
- show increasing knowledge, understanding and skill in conveying meaning.

This develops, for example, when students in Standard Australian English and, where applicable Languages Other Than English (LOTE):
- express ideas through mime and movement
- sing songs, chants and rhymes, listen to songs and explore rhymes and word structures
- create two- and three-dimensional visual artworks based on imagination and fantasy and in response to everyday occurrences
- communicate feelings through facial expression, gesture and non-vocal language
- listen to and produce brief spoken texts
- sequence main ideas coherently in speech
- speak at an appropriate volume and pace for listeners' needs
- self-correct by rephrasing a statement or question when meaning is not clear
- ask and answer simple questions
- follow simple instructions.

This develops, for example, when students using AUSLAN:
- demonstrate simple signed sequences
- produce simple manual signs and non – manual signs to participate in games and activities.

This develops, for example, when students in Standard Australian English and, where applicable LOTE:
- use echo songs and rounds
- explore sound and movement patterns
- listen to others and respond appropriately to what has been said
- contribute to group activities by making relevant comments and asking clarifying questions
- listen to and produce spoken texts that deal with familiar ideas and information
- listen to short live or recorded presentations, then recall some of the main ideas and information presented
- organise spoken texts using simple features to signal beginning and endings, using basic vocabulary, and varying volume and intonation patterns to add emphasis.

This develops, for example, when students using AUSLAN:
- participate in real or simulated conversation and everyday transactions by imitating and adapting models.

Children engage with a range of texts and get meaning from these texts

This is evident, for example, when children:
- listen and respond to sounds and patterns in speech, stories and rhymes in context
- view and listen to printed, visual and multimedia texts and respond with relevant gestures, actions, comments and/or questions
- sing chant rhymes, jingles and songs
- take on roles of literacy and numeracy users in their play
- begin to understand key literacy and numeracy concepts and processes, such as the sounds of language, letter–sound relationships, concepts of print and the ways that texts are structured
- explore texts from a range of different perspectives and begin to analyse the meanings
- actively use, engage with and share the enjoyment of language and texts in a range of ways
- recognise and engage with written and oral culturally constructed texts.

This develops, for example, when students in learning Standard Australian English:
- recognise how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some sound–letter relationships, match print and spoken text
- use context and information about words, letters, combinations of letters and the sounds associated with them to make meaning, and use illustrations to extend meaning
- read printed texts from left to right with return sweep, and from top to bottom.

This develops, for example, when students learning LOTEs:
- recognise how sounds are represented by letters/characters/symbols.

This develops, for example, when students learning AUSLAN:
- recognise simple sign sequences.

This develops, for example, when students in learning Standard Australian English:
- read independently and respond to short imaginative and informative texts with familiar ideas and information, predictable structures, and a small amount of unfamiliar vocabulary
- predict plausible endings for stories and infer characters' feelings
- self-correct when reading aloud and describe strategies used to gain meaning
- distinguish between texts that represent real and imaginary experience
- order money amounts in dollars and cents and carry out simple money calculations.

This develops, for example, when students learning LOTEs:
- read aloud and for meaning with words/character symbols.

This develops, for example, when students learning AUSLAN:
- obtain meaning from non-verbal communication to follow instructions or to use the information for a purpose.

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

This is evident, for example, when children:
- use language and engage in symbolic play to imagine and create roles, scripts and ideas
- share the stories and symbols of their own cultures and re-enact well-known stories
- use the creative arts, such as drawing, painting, sculpture, drama, dance, movement, music and story-telling, to express ideas and make meaning
- experiment with ways of expressing ideas and meaning using a range of media
- begin to use images and approximations of letters and words to convey meaning.

VELS LEVEL 1: PREP

This develops, for example, when students in Learning Standard
Australian English:
- write using conventional letters, groups of letters, and simple punctuation, such as full stops and capital letters
- write simple texts about familiar topics to convey ideas, messages, feelings and information
- make performing and visual arts works that express and communicate experiences, observations, ideas and feelings, for example create and explore imaginary worlds through dramatic play
- improvise dance in free and structured contexts.

This develops, for example, when students learning LOTEs:
- write simple texts using letters/symbol/characters.

This develops, for example, when students learning AUSLAN:
- demonstrate simple signed sequence.

VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

This develops, for example, when students in Learning Standard
Australian English:
- accurately spell frequently used words and make use of known spelling patterns to make plausible attempts at spelling unfamiliar words
- use capital letters, full stops and question marks correctly
- select content, form and vocabulary depending on the purpose for writing
- link ideas in a variety of ways, using pronouns, conjunctions and adverbial phrases indicating time and place
- write short, sequenced texts that include some related ideas about familiar topics and convey ideas and information to known audiences
- create and present performing and visual art works
- plan art works that communicate ideas, concepts, observations and feelings and/or experiences
- make choices about expressive ways of using arts elements and/or conventions.

This develops, for example, when students learning LOTEs:
- independently produce words/characters/symbols in writing and produce original variations on modelled written sentences.

Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

This is evident, for example, when children:
- use symbols in play to represent and make meaning
- begin to make connections between, and see patterns in, their feelings, ideas, words and actions, and those of others
- notice and predict the patterns of regular routines and the passing of time
- develop an understanding that symbols are a powerful means of communication and that ideas, thoughts and concepts can be represented through them
- begin to be aware of the relationships between oral, written and visual representations
- begin to recognise patterns and relationships and the connections between them
- begin to sort, categorise, order and compare collections and events and attributes of objects and materials in their social and natural worlds
- listen and respond to sounds and patterns in speech, stories and rhyme
- draw on memory of a sequence to complete a task
- draw on their experiences in constructing meaning using symbols.

VELS LEVEL 1: PREP

This develops, for example, when students:
- recognise how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some sound–letter/ symbols/characters/signs relationships
- sort objects according to basic criteria, such as size, shape, colour and weight, and identify and describe the similarities and differences between them
- group objects into sets (collections) and form simple correspondence (relations) between two sets, for example sharing pencils among students
- recognise the continuity of time and the natural cycles such as day–night and the seasons
- sequence days of the week
- begin to recognise the unpredictability and uncertainty of events such as the roll of a die
- draw simple pictorial maps from their developing mental maps of familiar environments
- recognise the function and value of visual elements and use them in artworks to symbolise meaning, for example use colour in painting to express emotions
- develop and select visual art works for community exhibitions
- recognise and maintain a steady beat in simple metre.

VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

This develops, for example, when students:
- recognise how sounds are represented alphabetically and identify some sound–letter relationships/symbols/characters/signs
- use a variety of thinking tools to assist with recognising patterns in surrounding events and objects
- recognise the key elements of the calendar and place in sequence days, weeks and months
- predict the outcome of chance events, such as the rolling of a die, using qualitative terms such as 'certain', 'likely', 'unlikely' and 'impossible'
- recognise and describe symmetry, asymmetry, and congruence
- understand and employ colour groupings and relationships of colours, including, primary, secondary, warm and cool colours, and their symbolism related to emotions and cultural symbolism
- interpret conventional and graphic music notations
- use a combination of everyday language and mathematical statements and symbols to describe manipulation and play with sets of numbers, shapes, objects and patterns.

Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: BIRTH TO 5 YEARS

This is evident, for example, when children:
- identify the uses of technologies in everyday life and use real or imaginary technologies as props in their play
- use information and communication technologies to access images and information, explore diverse perspectives and make sense of their world
- use information and communications technologies as tools for designing, drawing, editing, reflecting and composing
- engage with technology for fun and to make meaning.

VELS LEVEL 1: PREP

This develops, for example, when students:
- use a mouse to control the point on the screen
- use different types of data, such as text, images and numbers, to create simple information products
- apply navigation skills when responding to stimulus in multimedia resources such as CD-ROMs, DVDs and approved websites
- safely use ICT tools, including leaving electrical connections alone, sitting upright in front of a computer, and carefully handling storage devices such as disks and memory sticks.

VELS LEVEL 2: GRADE 1 AND 2

This develops, for example, when students:
- access a website to participate in a game
- cut and paste, drop and drag drop and colour-code in order to group similar items, sequence events and identify examples that illustrate key ideas
- create and display their own information products in a way that suits different audiences
- compose and send electronic messages such as emails
- use drawing applications for a range of purposes, for example, graphic music score.
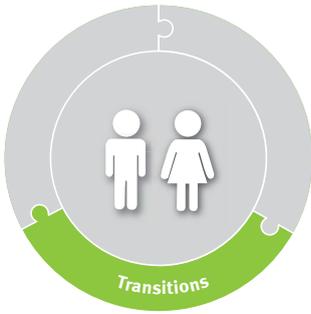
Supporting children's transitions

Transitions occur on a daily basis for families with young children. One of the earliest transitions for most children is the transition after birth from hospital to home.

In the first few years of life, children may also move from the care of a parent to a grandparent, or move into child care and between rooms within the child care centre. As children become older they may make the transition to kindergarten, and most children experience the transition to school.

Change is a key feature throughout each of these transition periods. Children need to feel secure, confident and connected to people, places, events, routines and understandings when they move into new environments.

What does effective transition look like?

A combination of approaches and processes is required to support effective transition, which is achieved when:

- respectful, trusting and supportive relationships are maintained among all those working with children and their families
- information about the children is well understood, shared and valued
- children have the opportunity to have their say about what is important to them
- processes are adapted in response to the local communities
- children and families who require additional support are identified early, and support is planned and delivered through a collaborative approach.

Who is involved in transition processes?

Children, families and early childhood professionals are involved in the transitions throughout early childhood. Successful transitions rely on children, families and early childhood professionals developing positive, supportive relationships.

Children's learning and development is advanced when they feel that the new environment is a place where people care about them and where they can succeed. Families also need to be valued and respected, as well as included in the new environment.

Children's transitions are more successful when they are involved in planning transition programs. It is important to listen to their perspectives.

Families are the most important people in children's lives and play a central role in supporting their learning. They must be involved in the transition process – it is not only children who experience changes during periods of transition.

Early childhood professionals from different contexts also have a lot to contribute to children's transitions. They bring professional knowledge and experience about children's learning and development. By sharing this knowledge and experience, and working in partnership with families, educators can recognise a child's strengths and plan appropriate learning and teaching programs.

Supporting children's learning and development through times of transition

Children learn everywhere, all the time. It is now well recognised internationally that when children experience learning opportunities that are responsive to their strengths, interests, cultures and abilities, and build on their previous experiences, their learning and development is enhanced.

Throughout the early childhood period, early childhood professionals develop their knowledge of each child's strengths, interests, cultures and abilities. They also develop strong relationships with children's families. Some of this knowledge is gained through assessments of children's learning and development – such as the School Entry Health Questionnaire, the Parents Evaluation of Developmental Status or the Transition Learning and Development Statement. Other knowledge is gained through the daily interactions with children and their families.

When this information is shared with other professionals, new learning and development opportunities can be planned in a way that responds to children's strengths, interests, cultures and build on what they have learned before.

Conversations between professionals about children's learning and development are enhanced when the family is involved. It is also essential when sharing any information about the child or family that the family's consent is gained.

The Transition: A Positive Start to School initiative

Starting school is a major life transition for children and their families.   It's a time of change that can be both challenging and exciting, in which children and families adjust to new roles, identities and expectations, new interactions and new relationships.

The Transition: A Positive Start to School initiative is an important step towards achieving the following *Blueprint* goal:

> ... by the time Victorian children start school they will be ready to learn at school and schools will be ready for them.

The initiative aims to improve children's experience of starting school by enhancing the development and delivery of transition programs. This approach will enable a shared understanding between early childhood services and schools about what is important for children and their families during this exciting time.

It also introduces the Transition Learning and Development Statement, which families and educators can use to share information about children's learning and development.

The initiative is accompanied by a comprehensive *Transition: A Positive Start to School Resource Kit* for schools and early childhood services, which provides detailed information about effective programs and approaches to transition planning, including advice about additional support for specific groups of children and families.

For children with a severe disability to make a positive transition from kindergarten to school, the *Sharing Our Journey* resource has been developed. This includes a protocol for early childhood services and schools, support groups for families and early childhood professionals, and an information kit for families. The resource kit includes some information sheets for families, a planner outlining actions to support the child's move from kindergarten to school and an additional family section of the Transition Learning and Development Statement.

Conclusion

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework advances all children's learning and development from birth to eight years. It does this by supporting all early childhood professionals to work together and with families to achieve common outcomes for all children.

It sets the highest expectations for all children in every community across Victoria, and generates new opportunities for families and early childhood professionals to work together to advance all children's learning and development.

The Victorian Framework emphasises the importance of collaborative, effective and reflective practice. It informs daily collaborations and interactions with children, families and with other professionals. Local discussions and learning networks will enable professionals to reflect on their work and on children's learning to inform future practice. The Framework will be used as the basis for new research in early childhood. This will support growth, transformation and continuous improvement of all professionals who work with children in these formative early childhood years.

By creating a common language and understanding of children's learning and development, the Framework supports opportunities for increased coordination and integration of all early childhood services.

The Victorian Framework is enacted as early childhood professionals engage with it and use it to inform their practice for the immediate and long-term benefit of all children in Victoria.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Overview of early childhood professional roles

Early childhood educators are defined in the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia as all 'early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings'. This includes unqualified, certificate-qualified, diploma-qualified and degree-qualified teachers or educators working across all forms of all early childhood settings. These settings include long day care, family day care, occasional care, playgroups, outside school hours care and kindergarten.

Teachers are degree-qualified and work as educators in early childhood settings and schools, including special schools.

Early childhood intervention workers are professionals from a range of health and education backgrounds who work in a variety of settings to support children with a disability or developmental delay in early childhood education and care, and their families.

Maternal and child health nurses are registered nurses with qualifications in midwifery and family and child health. They work in maternal and child health services, which offer support, information and advice regarding parenting, child health and development, child behaviour, maternal health and wellbeing, child safety, immunisation, breastfeeding, nutrition and family planning.

Preschool field officers provide consultancy to kindergarten teachers and parents to facilitate the inclusion of all children in state-funded kindergarten programs.

Inclusion support facilitators (ISF) are usually specialists in inclusive support practice. They work directly with child care services to support staff in a variety of ways, such as linking services with other child care professionals, community groups and organisations; facilitating skills development; assisting services to access specialised equipment; assisting with inclusion readiness planning; and developing service support plans.

Education support officers comprise teacher aides and integration aides who together play an important role in supporting teachers and schools to implement inclusive approaches to education. They support children and families who experience a disability or developmental delay, or require access to a special needs program.

Student support service officers include visiting teachers, psychologists, guidance officers, speech pathologists, social workers and other allied health professionals. Their role is to enhance the capacity of Victorian government schools to meet the additional learning and wellbeing needs of children and young people through the provision of access to school and community specialist support.

Play therapists, health professionals and teachers support wellbeing and the continuity of children's learning and development whilst accessing services through hospital settings.

Primary school nurses conduct health assessments of all students in participating schools in their first year of school; provide follow-up contact with parents; respond to referrals from school staff regarding identified health issues for students at any year level; and provide referrals to relevant health practitioners.

Primary welfare officers enhance the capacity of schools to support students who are at risk of disengaging from school and not achieving their educational potential. They inform the development of tailored programs to meet the individual needs, interests and abilities of 'at risk' students. Their work is central to building and maintaining continuity of care for students and their families, by ensuring ongoing engagement with the school, school community and relevant services.

Family support workers include professionals from a range of health, welfare and/or education backgrounds, who provide support and services to vulnerable families to assist with parenting capacity, family strengthening and connection with other community supports and services. Family support workers are employed by family support agencies.

Cultural organisations such as libraries, museums, zoos, galleries and botanic gardens employ early childhood professionals to design and deliver programs to support learning and development for children and families. Early childhood services and schools work with cultural organisations through on-site, online and outreach programs.

Appendix 2: Overview of early childhood services

Maternal and Child Health Services

Maternal and Child Health Services deliver a universal health service free of charge for all Victorian families with children from birth to six years. The service supports families and their children in the areas of parenting, child health and development, child behaviour, maternal health and wellbeing, child safety, immunisation, breastfeeding, nutrition and family planning.

The Universal Maternal and Child Health Service consists of the Key Ages and Stages consultations and a flexible service component. It also includes an enhanced service which provides a more intensive level of support for children, mothers and families at risk of poor health and wellbeing outcomes, in particular where multiple risk factors for poor outcomes are present.

The Maternal and Child Health phone line (13 22 29) is a 24-hour telephone line which provides appropriate information, advice, support, counselling and referral to families with children from birth to school age. More information about maternal and child health services is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/oced/maternal-child-health.html**

Parenting services

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development funds parenting information, education and support services throughout Victoria. All parents and carers of children birth to eighteen years can contact the services.

In the first instance, parents can contact Parentline, a statewide telephone information, education and counselling service, for the cost of a local call. Parentline's professional counsellors provide advice on a variety of issues affecting parenting and relationships. Parentline can provide contact details for community services and respects the confidentiality and right to privacy of callers. In addition to Parentline, the Victorian Government funds a network of regionally based parenting support services (Regional Parenting Services).

The Victorian Government will also conduct an Early Home Learning Study. The Study will be of international significance and will support vulnerable families to promote their home as a positive learning environment for their children. The Study will support 2000 vulnerable families to strengthen their home environment for learning and at the same time build the evidence base around what works.

Regional Parenting services

Regional Parenting Services promote the independence and healthy development of families with children aged birth to eighteen years by providing information and education on parenting to parents and professionals who work with parents and children (for example Maternal and Child Health nurses, teachers and child care workers). They provide families with the opportunity to participate in local, effective and relevant parenting programs that focus on key transition points in the lives of children and families. To reinforce the importance of parent education for all members of the community, parenting groups are run in easily accessible venues such as schools, preschools and neighbourhood houses.

Regional Parenting Services operate in all Department of Education and Early Childhood Development regions. Regional Parenting Services also offer consultation, linkages, resources and professional development to professionals who work with families. A list of these services can be found on the Parentline website at: **www.parentline.vic.gov.au**

Playgroups

Playgroups are an excellent way for babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their parents to socialise. They are informal, low cost and run by the parents. Parents stay with their children at playgroup. This gives them the chance to meet other people going through similar experiences and break down the isolation that can come with caring for young children. Families can be gently introduced to community, health and support services while they are at playgroup.

The Supported Playgroups and Parent Groups Initiative is a Victorian Government program that aims to engage disadvantaged and vulnerable families and provide quality play opportunities for children at a critical time in their development. The initiative builds parents' capacity to support their children's health, development, learning and wellbeing, and aims to increase families' participation and linkages with other early years services and supports. More information about playgroups is available at: **www.playgroup.org.au/**

Child care

Child care is provided for children in a range of settings. Child care services provide active, play-based education and care programs including long day care, occasional care, family day care and outside school hours care services. In Victoria, all these services are required to be licensed and must meet the requirements of the *Children's Services Act 1996* and the *Children's Services Regulations 2009*.

Long day care services, outside school hours care services and family day care services are typically used by working parents and the hours of operation are structured to meet these families' requirements. The Commonwealth Government provides funding for eligible families to assist them in meeting the costs of these services.

Occasional care is generally provided for short periods of time in a variety of settings, including neighbourhood houses and sports and leisure services.

Long day care, occasional care and family day care services predominantly cater for children aged birth to five years, while outside school hours care services provide care for primary school-aged children. More information about childcare is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/ecprofessionals/childcare/default.htm**

Kindergarten

The Victorian Government provides funding to kindergarten programs delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher for children in the year before school. Additional subsidies are provided by the Victorian Government that makes kindergarten free for:

- three and four year old Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- three year old children known to Child Protection
- four year old children who hold, or whose families hold a Health Care Card, pensioner Concession Card, Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Card, Temporary Protection/Humanitarian Visas 447, 451, 785 and 786, Asylum Seeker Bridging Visas A-F, Refugee and Special Humanitarian Visas 200-217, and triplets/quadruplets in the same year of kindergarten.

Many kindergartens also provide programs for three year old children as an introduction to four year old kindergarten.

More information about kindergarten is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/earlychildhood/careandkinder**

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Services

Kindergarten inclusion support services (KISS) provide supplementary assistance to support the inclusion of children with severe disabilities in their local kindergarten programs. An inclusive program encourages and allows all eligible children to access and participate in the kindergarten program. Inclusion fosters the development of a sense of belonging and respects individuality and diversity, in order to promote learning, development and wellbeing in children's early years.

This program is funded by the Victorian Government through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and the Commonwealth Government.

More information about kindergarten inclusion support services is available at: **www. education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/inclusion/disabilities.htm**

Early Childhood Intervention Services

Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS) support children with a disability or developmental delay from birth to school entry and their families. ECIS provide special education, therapy, counselling, service planning and coordination, assistance and support to access services such as kindergarten and child care.

Services are tailored to meet the individual needs of children and focus on supporting children in their natural environments and in their everyday experiences. These services are funded through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and provided by specialist children's services teams and early childhood intervention agencies.

The overall aim of these services is to provide families with the knowledge, skills and support to meet the needs of their children and to optimise children's development and their ability to participate in family and community life. All services are provided using a family-centred approach, recognising the importance of working in partnership with the family. More information about ECIS is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/intervention/**

Program for Students with Disabilities

Program for Students with Disabilities is an additional program for a defined student population with moderate to severe disabilities. The Program for Students with Disabilities supports the education of students with disabilities in Victorian government schools by providing schools with additional resources. Resources are provided to schools to assist in the education of students with disabilities, not to individual students. More information about the Program for Students with Disabilities is available at:
**www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/disability/**

The broader context

Children are at the centre of the Ecological Model of Child Development that illustrates the broad social, political and economic environment.

This model illustrates the strong network of services and programs that exist to support children's learning and development.

This model identifies families as significant influences throughout childhood and illustrates a range of other factors that may impact on learning and development.

Fig 3: Ecological model of child development, adapted from Bronfenbrenner, 1979
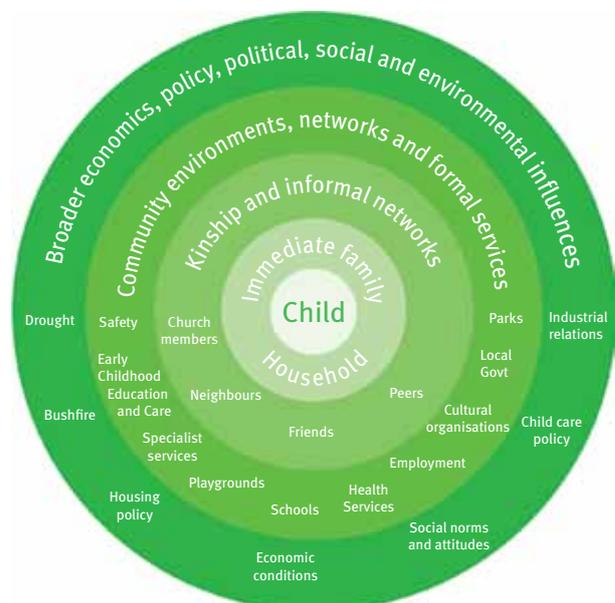
Appendix 3: Overview of key discipline-specific resources

Early childhood professionals are informed by a range of discipline specific resources. A list of key resources is below. The Victorian Framework complements, rather than replaces these resources. Professionals will continue to use these resources and will also use the Victorian Framework to support common understandings and shared conversations with other professionals and families to support children's learning and development.

Maternal and Child Health

Maternal and Child Health Practice Guidelines 2009 - cover the Department's piloted new Key Ages and Stages framework, guidelines, contexts and definitions. The guidelines are available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/mch/policy/**

Key Ages and Stages (KAS) Service Activity Framework - March 2009 - introduces a new approach to the ten KAS visits provided to parents and children by the universal Maternal and Child Health Service. The new framework sets out new evidence-based activities for each of the ten age and stage visits. The framework is available at: **www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/ public/earlychildhood/mch/serv_activity_frameworkmar09.pdf**

The Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Service Guidelines 2003-04 were developed as part of a wide-ranging information management strategy. The guidelines are available at: **www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/mch/guidelinemchenhanced.pdf**

Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS)

The Early Childhood Intervention Service Program Framework promotes the development and implementation of evidence-based approaches in service delivery components within ECIS and assists providers in understanding their roles and responsibilities with the service system. The framework is available at: **www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/ intervention/framework2005.pdf**

The Specialist Children's Service (SCS) Program Standards were developed by SCS service providers as a practical tool for continuous quality improvement. The standards apply to SCS teams, early intervention services and preschool field officers. They are available at: **www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/intervention/programstandards.pdf**

Kindergarten Inclusion Support Services for Children with Severe Disabilities provides information about the support of children with severe disabilities in Victorian kindergarten programs. These documents are available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/ careankinder/inclusion/disabilities.htm**

Early childhood education and care services

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia is the first national learning framework for all educators working with children from birth to five years.

The framework and other key documents for the framework can be found at: **www.deewr.gov.au/ EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Pages/EarlyYearsLearningFramework.aspx**

The Outdoor Play Guide for Victorian Children's Services provides information about the planning and design of the outdoor play space for children. It is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/csg/outdoorguide/default.htm**

The VicRoads, *Starting Out Safely* (SOS) program is designed to provide road safety information and support to families of children under six years of age. The program aims to encourage families to act as role models in road safety, to supervise children effectively in and near the traffic and to educate children in pedestrian and passenger safety. The program is delivered through maternal and child health, family day care, and early childhood services. It is available at: **www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/RoadSafety/TrafficSafetyEducation/earlychildhood**

National Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings provide evidence-based, practical information and advice to support and promote healthy eating and physical activity in children attending early childhood settings. The Guidelines are linked to the new National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care currently being developed by the Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations. Guidelines are available at **www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-index**

School services

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) is the Prep to Year 10 curriculum for Victorian schools. The VELS is available at: **www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/vels/index.html**

The P–12 Principles of Learning and Teaching articulate six principles that can be used by schools, teams of teachers and individuals to reflect on practice and support professional dialogue to strengthen pedagogical practices. The principles are available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingprinciples/principles/principlesandcomponents.htm**

The e5 Instructional Model is designed to assist school leaders and teachers to develop a shared understanding of how teachers can improve their practice as well as to provide a focus for professional learning and growth. It is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/panddc/default.htm**

Shared Vision; Resource Kit for Outside of School Hours Care is a practice document for educators in Outside School Hours Care. The 2004 edition forms part of a resource kit produced by Community Child Care Association. Shared Visions draws on the expertise of Community Child Care to provide the outside school hours care sector with a resource to assist programming. It is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/eyldf/default.htm**

The VicRoads, *Kids on the Move* is the core traffic safety education resource for primary schools. It targets a minimum level of traffic safety education for children in Prep to Year 2. Primary school road safety education focuses on passenger and pedestrian safety. Children begin to take more responsibility for keeping themselves safe on the road – such as remembering to use a seat belt and using the correct road crossing procedure. It is available at: **www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/Home/RoadSafety/TrafficSafetyEducation/primaryschools**

Aboriginal Early Years Support

The In Home Support for Aboriginal Families Program Guidelines have been developed to provide direction for those interested or involved in the In Home Support for Aboriginal Families (In Home Support) initiative. In particular, they provide guidance to support funded agencies to implement this initiative. The guidelines are available at: **www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/inhomesupport.pdf**

The Koorie Kindergarten Inclusion Kit provides a kindergarten cultural awareness tool to enhance support for Aboriginal children. It also provides material to promote the values of kindergarten to aboriginal children and their families. It is available at: **www.education.vic. gov.au/ecsmanagement/careankinder/inclusion/koorie.htm**

Dardee Boorai: the Victorian Charter of Safety and Wellbeing for Aboriginal Children and Young People defines key actions and measures of progress required in improving the safety, health, development, learning and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people. It is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/govrel/policy/ thecharter/dardeeboorai/charter.pdf**

The Wannik education strategy for Koorie students reinforces the Government's commitment and is the major strategy in place to improve educational outcomes for Koorie students. It is available at: **www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/aboriginal/wannik/**

" Where do you feel happy at kindergarten, who would be with you and what would you be doing?"

"The sand, the turtle, I like it"
Jaafar, Age 5 years.

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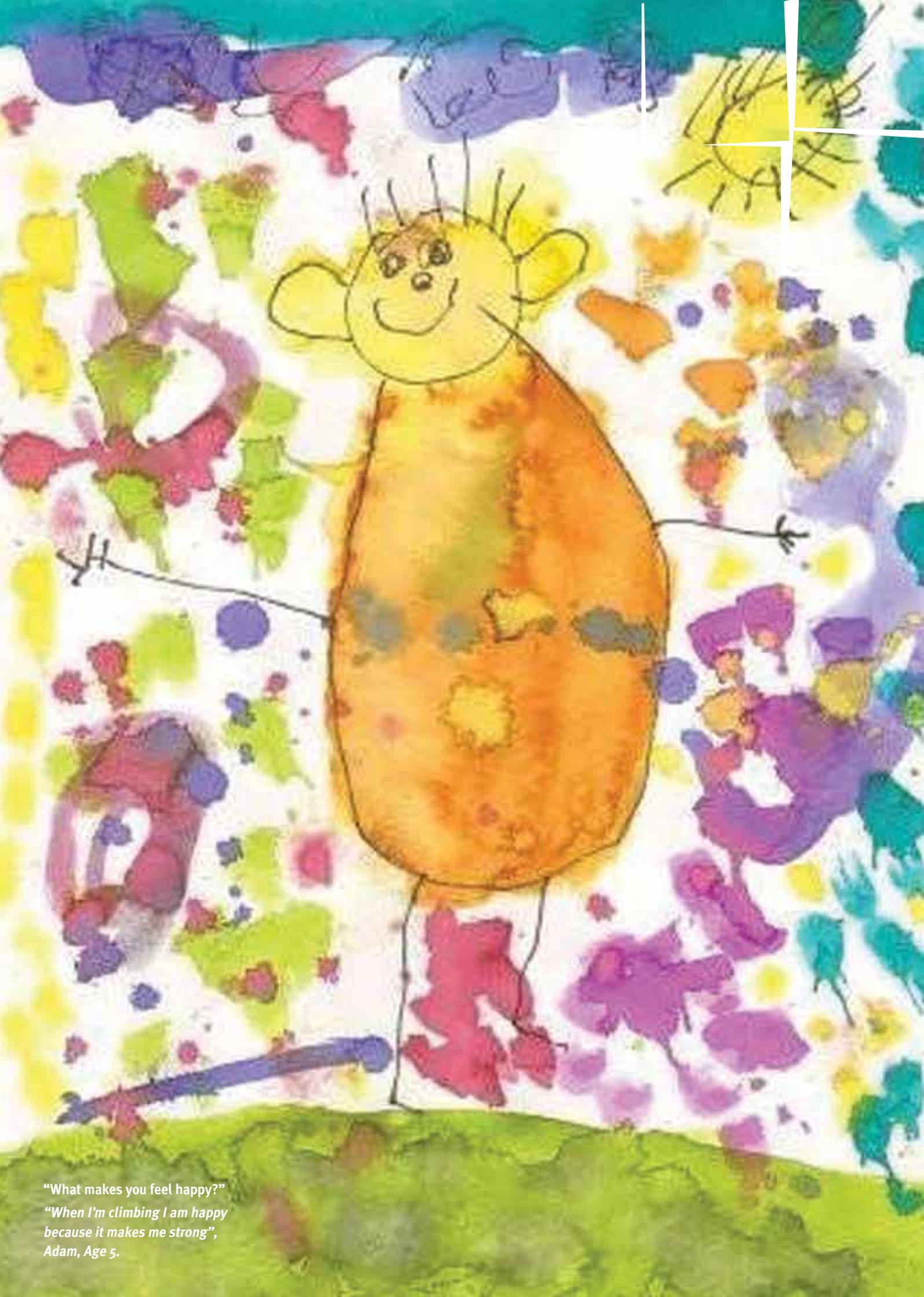
"What makes you feel happy?"
"When I'm climbing I am happy because it makes me strong", Adam, Age 5.

Appendix 5: Glossary

Active involvement in learning: occurs in an active learning environment in which children are encouraged to explore and interact with the environment to make (or construct) meaning and knowledge through their experiences, social interactions and negotiations with others.

To support active involvement in learning educators play a crucial role of encouraging children to discover deeper meanings and make connections among ideas and between concepts, processes and representations.

This requires educators to be engaged with children's emotions and thinking. (Adapted from South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework, General Introduction).

Agency: being able to make choices and decisions, to influence events and to have an impact on one's world.

Attend: being attentive and aware. Children display a range of non-verbal signals, including eye contact, body orientation, stillness and an alertness. Gauging a child's attendance is useful, for example with infants and toddlers, where English is not the first language, or if augmented communication is used.

Attunement: includes the alignment of states of mind in moments of engagement, during which affect is communicated with facial expression, vocalisations, body gestures and eye contact.

Communities: social or cultural groups or networks that share a common purpose, heritage, rights and responsibilities and/or other bonds. 'Communities' is used variously to refer, for example, to the community within early childhood settings, extended kinships, the local geographic community and broader Australian society.

Dispositions for life long learning: enduring habits of mind and actions, and tendencies to respond in characteristic ways to situations, for example, maintaining an optimistic outlook, being willing to persevere, approaching new experiences with confidence.

Inclusion: involves taking into account all children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes. The intent is to ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued, and that all children have equitable access to resources and participation, and opportunities to demonstrate their learning and to value difference.

Involvement: a state of intense, whole hearted mental activity, characterised by sustained concentration and intrinsic motivation. Highly involved children (and adults) operate at the limit of their capacities, leading to changed ways of responding and understanding leading to deep level learning (adapted from Laevers, 1994).

Children's involvement can be recognised by their facial, vocal and emotional expressions, the energy, attention and care they apply and the creativity and complexity they bring to the situation. (Adapted from Reflect, Respect, Relate, DECS 2008)

Literacy: in the early years, literacy includes a range of modes of communication, including music, movement, dance, story telling, visual arts, media and drama, as well as talking, viewing, reading and writing.

Multidisciplinary approaches: describes a partnership where two or more professionals are involved in the provision of integrated and coordinated services for children and families to support the best outcomes. In the early years, multidisciplinary approaches may include, but are not limited to educators, community workers, allied health professionals and medical personnel.

Numeracy: broadly includes understandings about numbers, structure and pattern, measurement, spatial awareness and data, as well as mathematical thinking, reasoning and counting.

Pedagogy: early childhood educators' professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, curriculum decision making, teaching and learning.

Shared sustained conversations: can be both child initiated and adult initiated. They are an effective learning/teaching interaction where two or more individuals share their thinking for a sustained time, work together to make observations, solve a problem, clarify a concept, extend ideas and narratives, or evaluate activities (adapted from Siraj-Blatchford, 2009).

Spirituality: refers to a range of human experiences including a sense of awe and wonder, a search for purpose and meaning and the exploration of being and knowing.

Technologies: includes much more than computers and digital technologies used for information, communication and entertainment. Technologies are the diverse range of products that make up the designed world. These products extend beyond artefacts designed and developed by people and include processes, systems, services and environments.

Texts: things that we read, view and listen to and that we create in order to share meaning. Texts can be print-based, such as books, magazines and posters or screen-based, for example internet sites and DVDs. Many texts are multimodal, integrating images, written words and/or sound.

Transitions: the process of moving between home and childhood setting, between a range of different early childhood settings, or from early childhood settings to school settings

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989): advances an image of children as subjects of rights and full members of society, capable of participating in their social worlds through their relationships with others.

The 54 Articles contained in the UNCRC (1989) promote children's rights through four key principles, namely:

1. protection against discrimination

Young children and groups of children must not be discriminated against. Discrimination may take the form of reduced levels of nutrition; inadequate care and attention; restricted

opportunities for play, learning and education; or inhibition of free expression of feelings and views.

2. the right to survival and development

All measures possible to create ... conditions that promote the wellbeing of all young children during this critical phase of their lives.

3. the best interests of the child

This applies to all actions concerning children and requires active measures to protect their rights and promote their survival, growth and wellbeing, as well as measures to support and assist parents and others who have day to day responsibility for realising children's rights.

4. the right to participation

The child has a right to express his or her views freely in all matters affecting the child, and to have them taken into account. This right reinforces the status of the young child as an active participant in the promotion, protection and monitoring of their rights.

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) the body of independent experts that are appointed to monitor implementation of the UNCRC

General Comment No. 7 **"Implementing child rights in early childhood' (2005) (CRC/C/GC7):** a statement by the committee that seeks to guide States with respect to the measures required to secure implementation of the various rights under the CRC (CRC/C/GC7, 2005: 2). The value of this document for early childhood professionals is that it acknowledges the tensions around enacting the key principles underlying children's rights and explores principles and practical measures for implementing rights-based principles in early childhood educational contexts.

The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006: is an Act of Parliament that clearly sets out our rights and freedoms, and the responsibilites that go with them, in one document. The Charter is an agreed set of human rights, freedoms and responsibilities protected by law. Government departments and public bodies must observe these rights when they create laws, set policies and provide services.

This means that Government, public servants, local councils, Victoria Police and others are required to act in a way that is consistent with the human rights protected under the Charter. These bodies will have to comply with the Charter and take human rights into account in their day-to-day operations.
www.equalopportunitycommission.vic.gov.au/home.asp

Wellbeing: Sound wellbeing results from the satisfaction of basic needs - the need for tenderness and affection; security and clarity; social recognition; to feel competent; physical needs and for meaning in life (adapted from Laevers 1994). It includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity and resilience.