CHCECE038
Observe children to inform practice

Learner Guide

Updated to include National Quality Framework changes

One World for Children Pty Ltd

Aspire Learning Resources

CHCECE038

Observe children to inform practice

Release 1

Learner Guide

Aspire Version 2.1

One World for Children Pty Ltd

Aspire Learning Resources

CHCECE038 Observe children to inform practice, Release 1

© 2021 One World for Children Pty Ltd
407–411 Thompson Road
NORTH GEELONG VIC 3215 AUSTRALIA
Phone: (03) 5272 2714
www.owfc.com.au

Cover and design
© 2021 Aspire Training & Consulting
® Aspire Training and Consulting Limited
Level 4, 247-251 Flinders Lane
Melbourne VIC 3000 Australia
Phone: (03) 9820 1300

First published July 2021
Second edition published October 2023

Cover design Studio Regina
Printer Doculink Australia Pty Ltd, 1d/28 Rogers Street, Port Melbourne VIC 3207

e-ISBN 978-1-76075-424-2 (PDF version)
ISBN 978-1-76075-423-5

Aspire Training & Consulting apologises for any copyright infringement that may have occurred in this Learner Guide and invites copyright owners to contact us so violations may be rectified.
Every effort has been made to ensure that information within the text is accurate. Note that the writer and publisher accept no responsibility for any loss, damage or injury arising from such information
Except where an information source is acknowledged, the names and details of individuals and organisations in examples are fictitious and have been devised for learning purposes only. Any similarity to actual people or organisations is unintentional. All websites within the text were accessed and deemed appropriate at time of publication.
For updates to previously published errors, please refer to our website.

Copyright Warning

The copyright in this product is owned by One World for Children (ACN 076 297 400).

One World for Children owns copyright in this product. Aspire Training & Consulting owns the licence to publish this material. Except as permitted by the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) or unless you have obtained the specific written permission of One World for Children, you must not:

- reproduce or photocopy this product in whole or in part
- publish this product in whole or in part
- cause this product in whole or in part to be transmitted
- store this product in whole or in part in a retrieval system including a computer
- record this product in whole or in part either electronically or mechanically
- resell this product in whole or in part.

One World for Children and Aspire Training & Consulting:

- invest significant time and resources in creating original products
- protect their copyright material
- will enforce their rights in copyright material
- reserve their legal rights to claim loss and damage or an account of profits made resulting from infringements of their copyright.

Aspire Learning Resources
Supporting Vocational Education and Training for 30 years
1991 to 2023

Contents

Before you begin v

Topic 1 Observing and recording information about children 1

1A Informing practice 2
Planning cycle 2
Educational program and practice 3
Partnerships with families 5
Relationships with children 6
Confidentiality and privacy 7
Permission requests 8
Practice Task 1 9

1B Secondary sources of information 10
Teamwork 11
Communication techniques 12
Collaborating with families 13
Ongoing communication 13
Collaborating with colleagues 14
Collaborating with communities 14
Practice Task 2 16

1C Observing children 17
Positive interactions 17
Useful observations 19
Meaningful records 21
Taking objective records 21
Accurate and useful records 22
Documenting techniques 23
Questioning 24
Jottings 25
Anecdotal records 26
Narratives 27
Learning stories 27
Running records 29
Time samples 30
Event samples and checklists 31
Monitoring development 33
Samples of work 34
Digital images 34
Sociograms 36
Webs and maps 37

Practice Task 3 40
Summary 42
Learning Checkpoint 1: Observing and recording information about children 43

Topic 2 Using observations to inform practice 49
2A Assessing and analysing observations 50
Others' perspectives 50
Analysing records 51
Stages of development 52
Developmental domain links 56
Interpreting behaviours 56
Learning framework links 56
Linking outcomes 58
Holistic view 61
Practice Task 4 63
2B Contributing to the curriculum 64
Principles and practices 64
Using aspects of the child 66
Using sub-outcomes 67
Learning environments 69
Involving children 71
Implement your ideas 72
Evaluate 73
Practice Task 5 75
Summary 76
Learning Checkpoint 2: Using observations to inform practice 77

Before you begin

This Learner Guide is based on the unit of competency *CHCECE038 Observe children to inform practice*, Release 1.

Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. Information regarding how this Learner Guide relates to this unit of competency is detailed in our mapping guide.

How to work through this Learner Guide

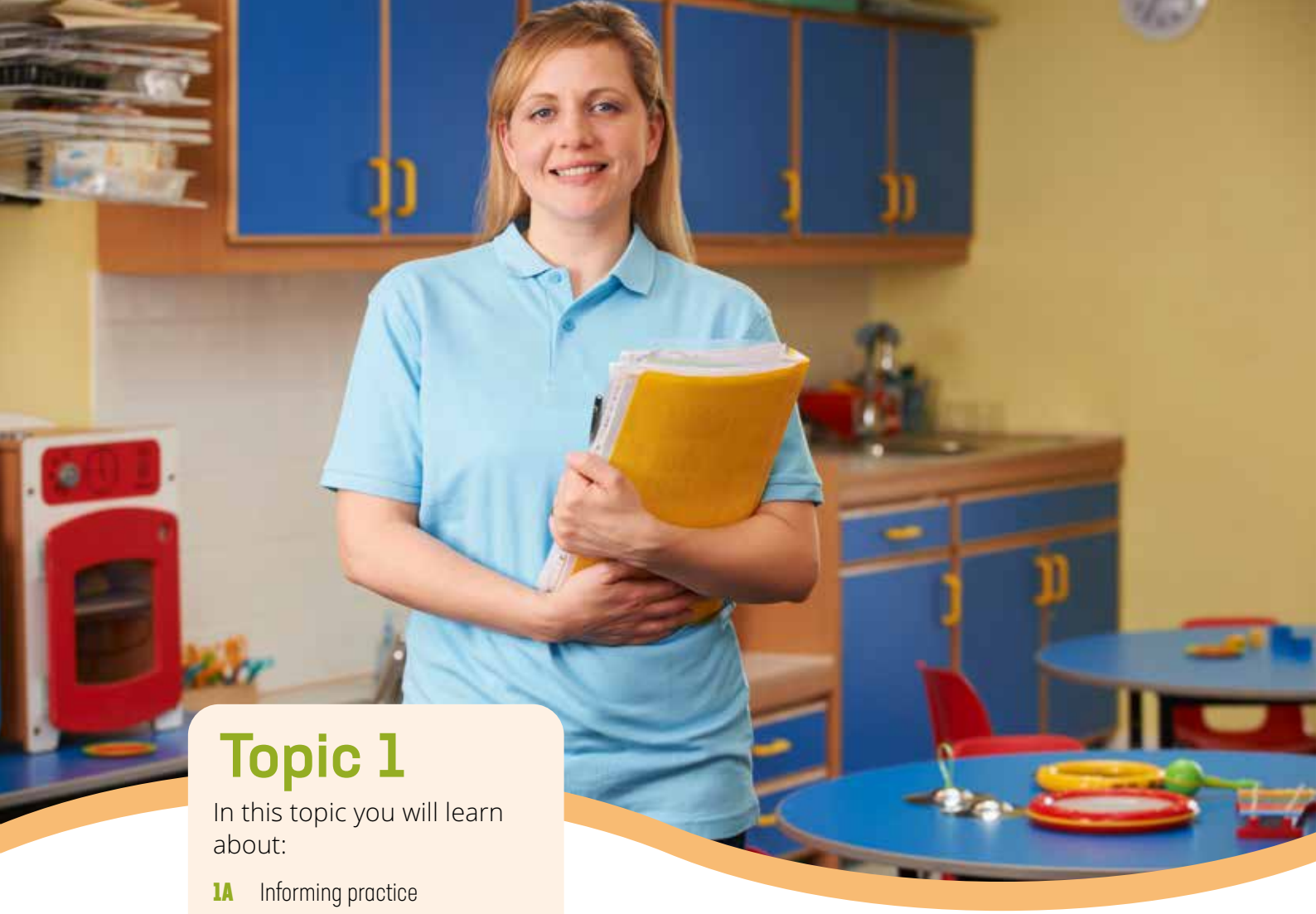
This Learner Guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the Learner Guide you need to read, and which Practice Tasks and Learning Checkpoints you need to complete.

Feature of the Learner Guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	➢ Read each topic in this Learner Guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples	➢ These highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice Tasks	➢ Practice Tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which Practice Tasks to complete.
Summaries	➢ Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning Checkpoints	➢ There are Learning Checkpoints at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which activities to complete. These activities give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

This table maps each topic in this Learner Guide to the National Quality Standard and national learning framework: Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

T = Topic

Topics	National Quality Standard (NQS)
T1, T2	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
	Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
	Quality Area 3: Physical environment
	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
T1	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
T1, T2	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership
	Early Years Learning Framework
	Principles
T1, T2	Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
T1, T2	Partnerships
T1, T2	Respect for diversity
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
T1, T2	Equity, inclusion and high expectations
T1, T2	Sustainability
T1, T2	Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning
	Collaborative leadership and teamwork
	Practice
T1, T2	Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches
T1, T2	Responsiveness to children
T1, T2	Play-based learning and intentionality
T1, T2	Learning environments
T1, T2	Cultural responsiveness
T1, T2	Continuity of learning and transitions
T1, T2	Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing
	Learning Outcomes
T2	1. Children have a strong sense of identity
T2	2. Children are connected to and contribute to their world
T2	3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
T2	4. Children are confident and involved learners
T2	5. Children are effective communicators



Topic 1

In this topic you will learn about:

- **1A** Informing practice
- **1B** Secondary sources of information
- **1C** Observing children
- **1D** Recording information

Observing and recording information about children

By observing children in their play and daily interactions, you can learn to understand their individual interests, ideas, knowledge, skills, strengths and needs as they develop.

Your understanding of children develops through observation, along with your ability to contribute through gathering information from secondary sources, such as from children, families, colleagues and specialists.

There are many different methods for recording your observations about children. Your service's policies and procedures will help you to identify the types of records to use, and they will also help you maintain a professional, positive and objective outlook that is free from biased comments or negative labelling. This means your records will be accurate and will provide clear examples, precise details and a true account of what you observed.

1A Informing practice

Children are affected by the curriculum, which includes all activities, experiences, routines, interactions and practices.

Children rely on you and your co-workers to create safe and appropriate environments. By collecting and using information about them based on your observations and interactions, you are showing that you acknowledge, respect and value each child and their family. The information you notice will contain details about a child's learning, development, interests, knowledge, ideas, skills and strengths. These details inform your planning.

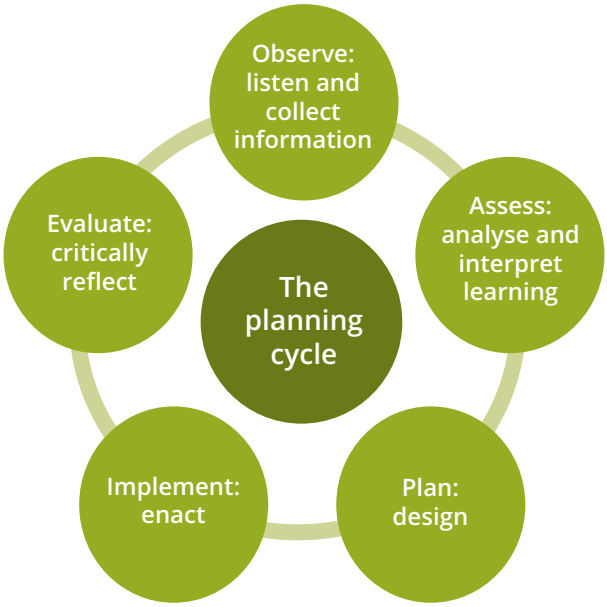
Planning cycle

Each step of the planning cycle is affected by your philosophy, beliefs and knowledge.

The *Early years learning framework* provides a planning cycle that is continuous. As you gain experience, skills and knowledge, the way you plan may change to incorporate your evolving work practices and ideas. This action is called reflective practice, and when you engage in this it means you are looking at what you know, identifying what else you need to know and then working to develop this knowledge. This will develop from a range of areas, including:

Developing your skills is part of the planning cycle.

- children and families
- study
- professional development
- discussions with colleagues and other professionals
- networking
- your day-to-day work.



The following is an explanation of the planning cycle.

Observe	Begin your planning by observing the children, then gathering and recording information.
Assess	Analyse your observations and identify what is important and what learning is occurring and being documented.
Plan	Use your knowledge of the child to identify future opportunities for learning and development. Put this plan into action by following the learning outcome principles and practices. Use them to guide you when considering each child and family.
Implement	Put your ideas into action. Implement what you have planned, including the materials and resources. Interact and engage with the children to observe how your plans evolve and scaffold their learning.
Evaluate	Review what happened during the implementation of your plan. Reflect on and challenge the things that you did and assess the appropriateness of the experiences in relation to: › what worked › who participated › whether the experience was appropriate › if effective learning occurred. Use this information for your future planning.

You can learn more about the National Quality Framework (NQF) in the *Guide to the National Quality Framework* found at: aspirelr.link/guide-to-the-nqf.

Educational program and practice

A range of guidelines contribute to the educational program and practice policies and procedures of a service.

The aim of these guidelines is to support you to create a child-focused curriculum.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations identify the following as priorities.

Regulation	Concept	Summary
Regulation 73 **(based on Section 168 of the Law)**	Educational program	› The educational program is to contribute to the outcomes for each child, being those identified in the approved learning frameworks.

Regulation	Concept	Summary
Regulation 74	Documenting of child assessments or evaluations for delivery of educational program	➢ For a preschool child, documentation must consist of assessment of the child's developmental needs, interests, experiences, participation and progress against the outcomes of the approved learning framework. ➢ For a child over preschool age, documentation must consist of evaluations of the child's wellbeing, development and learning. ➢ Documentation must: – be prepared in a way that educators and parents understand – consider the period of time and how educators might use the documentation.
Regulation 75	Information about educational program to be kept available	➢ Information about the educational program must be displayed at the service or in a place accessible to parents.
Regulation 76	Information about educational program given to parents	➢ Parents must be provided with the following, if requested: – information about the educational program; in particular, details that relate to their child – information about the child's participation in the program – a copy of any document kept about the child.

Quality area 1 of the National Quality Standard (NQS) focuses on educational program and practice. It is divided into standards and elements, which guide educator practice, as follows.

Standard	Element	Descriptor
Standard 1.1 – Program: The educational program enhances each child's learning and development	Element 1.1.1 – Approved learning framework	Curriculum decision-making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
	Element 1.1.2 – Child-centred	Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
	Element 1.1.3 – Program learning opportunities	All aspects of the program, including routines, are organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.

Standard 1.2 – Practice: Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development.	Element 1.2.1 – Intentional teaching	Educators are deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.
	Element 1.2.2 – Responsive teaching and scaffolding	Educators respond to children's ideas and play and extend children's learning through open-ended questions, interactions and feedback.
	Element 1.2.3 – Child-directed learning	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
Standard 1.3 – Assessment and planning: Educators and coordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.	Element 1.3.1 – Assessment and planning cycle	Each child's learning and development is assessed or evaluated as part of an ongoing cycle of observation, analysing learning, documentation, planning, implementation and reflection.
	Element 1.3.2 – Critical reflection	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, drives program planning and implementation.
	Element 1.3.3 – Information for families	Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

Partnerships with families

To strengthen these expectations, the NQS adds further guidelines relating to Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

These guidelines are outlined in the following table.

Standard	Element	Descriptor
Standard 6.1 – Supportive relationships with families: Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.	Element 6.1.1 –Engagement with the service	Families are supported from enrolment to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
	Element 6.1.2 –Parents' views are respected	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families are respected and families share in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
Standard 6.2 – Collaborative partnerships: Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.	Element – 6.2.1 Transitions	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities.
	Element – 6.2.2 Access and participation	Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

Being, belonging and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia (EYLF) provides motivation and guidance for collecting, recording and analysing information.

For example, the EYLF Practice: Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing describes the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence of what children know, can do and understand. This is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning.

The information used to document educational programs helps build a comprehensive picture of a child, particularly their:

- learning
- development
- knowledge
- ideas
- strengths
- interests
- social interactions
- reactions to the play environment.

You can use gathered information to:

- record changes, particularly changes in the child or in family circumstances
- communicate progress
- identify progress towards learning outcomes
- identify children with additional support needs
- evaluate the effectiveness of experiences
- reflect on your pedagogy, and how well it matches the needs of the children and their families.

Relationships with children

Quality area 5 of the NQS can guide you in your relationships with children.

This quality area sets expectations that children will be involved in planning and encouraged to share their views and interests. This is supported by Regulation 155 (Interactions with children) and Regulation 156 (Relationships in groups). The following table outlines the NQS elements connected to relationships with children.

Planning involves getting to know each child's interests.

Standard	Element	Descriptor
Standard 5.1 – Relationships between educators and children: Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child	Element 5.1.1 – Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships, which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.
	Element 5.1.2 – Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
Standard 5.2 – Relationships between children: Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships	Element 5.2.1 – Collaborative learning	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
	Element 5.2.2 – Self-regulation	Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.

Confidentiality and privacy

The* Privacy Act 1988 *(Cth) protects all personal information handled by businesses, including education and care services.

Individual states and territories may have specific privacy and confidentiality legislation, which only applies to that state or territory; for example, the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (NSW) and the *Information Act 2002* (NT). Confidentiality and privacy will be represented in your position description and any duty of care statement the service provides.

Your service will have policies and procedures that relate to confidentiality. For example, they may have a security policy that covers all the systems used for:

- collecting and processing personal information
- observing children and taking photographs
- storing personal information
- sharing personal information.

These policies are based on Regulations 181–184 relating to records kept and storage of records and other documents.

Measures will be in place to reduce security risks, such as passwords for computer files, locks on filing cabinets and areas that are restricted. Be aware of these security precautions and follow your duty of care to maintain a safe and secure workplace. Never leave documentation where others can access it, such as on benchtops, in staffrooms or in your car. Help protect the personal information you handle, such as enrolment forms, developmental information and day-to-day information shared at arrival and departure times.

Common confidentiality and privacy policies include:

- obtaining informed consent to observe children, and to collect and share information about children and their families
- ensuring that images of children are collected and shared with consent and stored according to legislation and service policy
- respecting the right of the family to privacy
- negotiating agreement with each family to decide whether:
  - portfolios of work or other general records relating to their child may be displayed
  - their child will be identified by first name, initials or another method of their choice
  - their child may be included in photographs and videos
- storing documents relating to behaviour concerns, developmental monitoring or issues in the family separately to the shared records
- following procedures for using passwords or security locks to access confidential information
- ensuring information is only shared with appropriate people.

You can learn more about privacy legislation at: aspirelr.link/privacy-act.

Permission requests

You must gain families' permission prior to involving children in any service processes, including those related to gathering information about the child.

This prerequisite will be identified in your service's policies and is usually discussed with families as part of their enrolment and orientation. These permissions allow you to observe and/or photograph a child to record learning and development.

You may need to develop your own permissions for particular projects, such as community activities, investigative projects where dangers may be involved, incursions, excursions and various other events.

A typical permission request covers:

- your position or title
- what you want permission to do
- how you will use the permission
- where the permission information will be stored
- how families will be involved in the project
- whether the family allows you to include photographs of their child
- whether the family agrees that you can share the information with others, including who these people may be
- how you will maintain confidentiality (for example, by following service policies and procedures).

Practice Task 1

1. Which of the following steps are included in the planning cycle? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Assessing/Analysing/Interpreting learning
- [ ] Planning/Designing
- [ ] Observing/Collecting information
- [ ] Reacting
- [ ] Evaluating/Crtically reflecting

2. Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

a. Confidentiality and privacy will be represented in your position description and any duty of care statement. * Yes * No

b. Quality area 2 of the NQS guides educators in their relationships with children where the children will be involved in planning and encouraged to share their views and interests. * Yes * No

c. You must gain families' permission prior to involving children in any service processes, including those related to gathering information about the child. * Yes * No

d. Regulation 74 relates to the high priority of documenting child assessments or evaluations for delivery of the educational program. * Yes * No

e. Standard 1.1 is not relevant to educational programs for the children. * Yes * No

f. Element 6.1.2 states 'Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing information and clarifying responsibilities with families'. * Yes * No

1B Secondary sources of information

The curriculum will become richer and more dynamic if you involve relevant people, including children, in discussions.

Discussions can generate fresh ideas and help you to feel supported. Other people might offer their ideas, participate in preparation and implementation, and contribute to evaluations. Always maintain confidentiality in your discussions.

Relevant people to involve in these discussions include:

- children
- parents or guardians
- members of the child's extended family, such as grandparents and other relatives
- other educators
- carers and significant adults
- education providers, such as preschool teachers
- specialists and other relevant professionals
- neighbours, family friends and community members.

Primary sources of information are ones that you collect yourself. Secondary information is something you have not observed yourself; rather, it is information you receive in another way, such as being given a report from someone or reading someone else's records.

Sources of secondary information could be the child's family members, your co-workers or specialists. Someone may witness new or different behaviour from a child due to the environment or situation in which they observe them, and this can help you understand the child better.

The information secondary sources provide could include the child's:

- name
- address
- age
- developmental aspects
- interests
- likes
- dislikes
- routines
- language
- family
- religion
- culture and cultural practices
- social interactions
- reactions to the play environment
- changes to the child's and family's circumstances.

Secondary sources often contain a range of information and opinions, which helps to contribute to a full picture of the child. The table below outlines some common child records.

Enrolment forms	Include permissions, family information, cultural preferences and contact details.

Routine forms	Include details of the individual child's sleep, rest, toileting, clothing and mealtime needs.
Play profiles	Include the child's interests, their favourite games or toys, what they might do at home or in another setting, and what their strengths are.
Background profiles	Include details of the family structure and who is important, including pets, what is important to the family, what their beliefs are, their cultural heritage, if and how they celebrate special occasions, any trauma, or positive experiences that will influence the child's day-to-day learning and development.
Incident reports	Include information about a child's ongoing health and wellbeing, and any regular, specific events that influence their ongoing learning and development or that highlight concerns.
Medical management plans	Include health requirements and risk-management plans, and how medical issues or emergencies should be supported or managed.
Behaviour plans	Include strategies that have been prepared to deal with behaviours that are inappropriate or concerning.
Specialist reports	Include strategies prepared by a speech therapist, occupational therapist or other qualified person whose role it is to guide those working with and caring for the child towards meeting their needs or supporting their development and learning.

Communication apps can allow educators to communicate clearly and frequently with families about their child's learning, development and routines. Apps might link with family member emails, text messages or be accessed through a website. The app might offer options to include photographs, document timetables of the individual child (for example, when the child sleeps and wakes up) or provide information. Apps might also offer families the option to communicate the same information back to educators.

The diaries, journals, logs and communication books that you use to record events form a communication link between home or a specialist and the service. The events are written in brief notes and a number of people may contribute to them in various ways. These records may relate to one child or to a group of children and can take any form or construction that suits the users.

Teamwork

Part of your role is to work as part of a team.

Team members need to know about goals and objectives that are set for each child so that they can support them in the way the plan requires.

Including others in the planning cycle means they will understand the purpose of experiences and activities, and will be able to help extend these into future programs.

To establish and maintain relationships with people based on sharing, you must:

- be non-judgmental
- be open to different perspectives
- be empathetic
- provide clear and relevant information
- demonstrate active listening
- check understanding
- follow service standards, philosophies, policies and procedures.

Communication techniques

Your communication must always be clear.

This can be a challenge due to each type of communication requiring you to act differently. For example, you may need to communicate in an informal discussion, share information or ideas, give or receive a direction, set a limit or resolve a conflict or issue.

If you are speaking to a colleague, you might use language relating to learning frameworks or child development. If you are speaking to a family, you might use conversational rather than professional language.

To use clear communication:

- gain the person's attention
- provide a suitable environment; quiet and private if needed
- use words that the person can understand, considering their age, race, abilities or culture
- use clear, specific and relevant words, and avoid slang or abbreviated terms
- speak to the person directly
- ask if the person needs more information, and explain yourself in different ways
- use body language, words and tones of voice that match, and be aware of mixed messages.

If you involve relevant people, you will gather more useful information, develop ongoing relationships and create a shared approach to learning. To do this effectively, use the following concepts.

Accountability	Give people responsibility and allow them to voice their opinions.
Consultation	Approach others that are involved. Find out what they think, and ask their opinion to gain ideas.
Cultural sensitivity	Consider who is involved and what their needs, values and beliefs are. Consider how the decision will affect them.
Reflection	Step back. Reflect on the decision and take action to improve or change.

Collaborating with families

You must find out about each family if you are to understand and meet the needs of their child.

The information family members, other carers and significant others have of their child's temperament, interests, skills and needs can help you to understand individual children. You can then gain further information as you work together and the child continues to develop and learn.

Each family group has their own beliefs, practices, values and interests, and these form their culture. Keep an open mind and show respect for each family's culture, particularly when discussing it with others.

To communicate effectively with families, you can:

- ask them to fill in forms, such as enrolment forms
- use service apps or social media to post information and receive feedback
- provide opportunities for participation through feedback, such as suggestion boxes or surveys
- involve them in discussions at arrival and departure times
- develop methods where they can write or record information, when necessary
- ask specific questions about children
- share the information you have gathered about the child and ask them to add any further details or clarify the information.

To exchange information with family members effectively, make yourself available to speak with them at appropriate times. This availability may vary according to the structure of your service and your role and responsibilities.

You can make yourself available to communicate and share information with family members when:

- families arrive to drop off or pick up their children
- talking on the phone
- attending organised learning and development review meetings
- families participate in activities
- chatting informally in a tea and coffee area
- family members drop in during the day.

By planning to share information at these times, you show respect and that you value communication. Families appreciate this knowledge transfer as it demonstrates that you are willing to meet the individual needs of their child.

At times, you may need to make specific arrangements and gain permission from a family to speak to another carer or a significant adult.

Ongoing communication

Ongoing communication with family members keeps you up to date with their needs and the needs of the child.

The frequency and level of communication you have with family members may vary – some information may need to be communicated daily or weekly.

Things that can impact the level and frequency of communication include:

- how often the child attends
- the child's developmental milestones
- the period of time the family has used the service
- the family's expectations of the service.

Ongoing communication helps you and the family members to share significant events that occur, such as celebrations, relocation, separation or the death of a pet, which may all impact the child's abilities, behaviour or needs. These events affect different children in different ways, so knowing about the events helps you to understand their responses.

Be aware that some families may not want to pass information on to you. You must respect this decision; however, you should still work towards establishing a relationship based on mutual interest and trust, which in time may encourage them to share information with you.

Collaborating with colleagues

Colleagues can support your collection of information about children in a variety of ways.

Your colleagues' experience – in particular that of educational leaders – with curriculum planning and with service policies and procedures means they can be great sources of support when it comes to:

- identifying which recording methods suit each type of observation
- determining what record requirements are mandatory, expected or preferred
- identifying your responsibilities and opportunities
- providing support and guidance.

Colleagues may also have knowledge of children that can provide you with background information; for example, if a child is moving rooms or has attended previously.

Colleagues may see or hear information and pass it on to you. This may happen at times when you are not present; for example, if you work an early or late shift and other educators welcome and communicate with the family.

Colleagues can provide information such as:

- documentation they have collected
- records of discussions they have had with others
- portfolios or files containing the child's work or personal information.

Collaborating with communities

Each family sports a range of contacts that make up their support network.

These support networks may include community members, organisations or speciality services.

These support networks may work with you to provide information about the community the child belongs to; they may also become part of your service and share knowledge with you.

This information you collect may provide you with developmental or behavioural information and strategies for support.

If you want to contact a community network or specialist service or discuss any details of a child with a specialist, you must first consult the child's family and obtain their permission. You must also seek advice from your supervisor prior to discussing any concerns with families.

Here is further information about community and specialist services.

Cultural networks

Provide recreational, spiritual or cultural support and help families to pursue their interests. They usually form part of the family's social network and support the family to feel safe and have their needs met.

Other carers and significant adults

Provide education and/or care alternative to your own service. This might relate to another education and care service or somebody close to the family, such as a grandparent, aunt or uncle.

Physiotherapists

Use physical therapy, exercise and massage to restore or maintain movement and physical function.

Occupational therapists

Help people manage activities of daily living, such as dressing, so they can maintain their independence.

Speech therapists

Help people overcome speech, language and communication difficulties.

Social workers

Provide social services, such as help with housing and employment, especially to disadvantaged people.

Inclusion support agencies

Provide support to services that care for children with additional needs; an inclusion support facilitator links the service to specialists, community agencies and equipment that can help meet the child's individual needs.

Community interest groups

Provide speciality information or resources. These groups may:

- bring in specific materials
- talk with children, families and educators about particular information or interests
- share specialty knowledge.

These groups can often be found on social media or websites by searching for the topic.

Interest group examples:

- bird watching
- bee keeping
- recycling
- river or park conservation
- photography
- yoga
- choir
- Lego building.

Practice Task 2

1. Which of the following people could provide secondary information to inform a responsive curriculum? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Parents, guardians and extended family members
- [ ] Vets, police personnel, hospitals
- [ ] Education providers and other educators within a service
- [ ] Neighbours and family friends
- [ ] Staff at the local community chemist or supermarket

2. Draw a line to match the type of information used to inform curriculum planning through collaboration on the left with the most useful secondary source on the right.

* Child's interests	* Other educators and colleagues
* Details about a child's speech therapy	* Family members, carers and significant adults
* Information about observation tools and processes	* Children
* Curriculum planning and the service's expectations	* Educational leaders and other educators
* Children's enrolment details and cultural practices	* Relevant specialists

1C Observing children

To start your planning cycle, you must observe each child and find out what is important to them.

Your focus should be on the learning that occurs. This might be seen through:

- aspects of development
- interests
- ideas
- knowledge
- skills and strengths.

Observing learning is part of a strengths-based approach.

This is called a 'strengths-based approach'. This means that rather than focusing on what a child cannot do, you are focusing on what the child can do. A strengths-based approach helps you use the gathered information to provide appropriate experiences, routines and interactions that reflect the interests and needs of individual children and the group.

To gain information about children, you will need to pay close attention to what they are saying and doing by observing them.

Observing children involves watching, listening and talking with them over periods of time. Play or activity should not be interrupted during your observation. Children should not feel that they are being watched, singled out or stressed by the process.

So that your observations are meaningful, you must spend time getting to know children before you begin. This will help you to identify behaviours that are not normal for each child. Sustained observation helps you develop a learning environment that best meets the children's needs and preferences. You will be unable to collect enough information to identify a child's interests, ideas, knowledge, skills and strengths if you do not have a long-term view.

Positive interactions

Positive interactions show children that you value them and recognise the efforts they have made.

How and when you interact with children affects how they feel about themselves, and this can promote positive self-esteem. During your interactions, observe what the children say and do; this will help you to understand what they are thinking and feeling.

The following table provides a number of ways you can interact with children to find out more about them. Each of these strategies relies on you paying close attention to the child and taking notice of what they are saying and doing.

What you might say	Why this is a positive interaction	What you will learn by observing children
➤ 'Was that fun?' ➤ 'You seemed to enjoy that.' ➤ 'What do you think about what you have achieved?'	➤ You are focussing on the individual child or their work. ➤ You are open to the child's feelings about their activity. ➤ You are encouraging the child to evaluate their own work and effort.	➤ How the child feels about the experience ➤ What they are interested in ➤ What they know about ➤ How they feel about their efforts, skills and abilities
➤ 'What a lot of colours you used!' ➤ 'You worked really hard on that!' ➤ 'Tell me what you think of your work.' ➤ 'You must have planned well to achieve that.' ➤ 'Have you been practising?' ➤ 'How many materials did you use?'	➤ You are avoiding judgment. ➤ You are focusing on the process, time and effort the child used rather than the outcome.	➤ What the child enjoyed about the experience ➤ How they feel about the process and outcomes ➤ The level of self-esteem they have ➤ The words and their ability to express themselves about what they have experienced ➤ What skills the child has ➤ If and how they plan ➤ What other areas of learning are applied or the child is aware of
➤ 'Thanks for being quiet while I was on the phone.' ➤ 'I appreciate you putting the cups out for morning tea.'	➤ You are noticing the prosocial behaviours and using these to show you appreciate the child. ➤ You are valuing individual efforts. ➤ You are avoiding showing children up or demonstrating how things should be.	➤ The child's sense of belonging ➤ How the child understands their environment and the routines and activities that occur in the day

Children are affected by their environment, activities and experiences. By carefully observing an individual child, you will learn about their:

- view of the world, including their cultural practices, the rules and ideals the child has about interactions and social communication, and how they develop friendships
- family life, which increases the connection between home and care, and extends other children's knowledge as this information is shared
- interests, emerging interests and preferences, which can provide opportunities to extend skills and knowledge
- natural abilities, strengths, skills and knowledge.

Useful observations

The most useful observations are when you focus on things that lead you to develop children's learning, rather than solely recording learning.

There are commonly two types of observations:

1. An assessment *of* learning: This is where you observe what a child has demonstrated they have learnt.
2. An assessment *for* learning: This is where you observe what a child is learning or shows to have interest in learning.

The following table outlines some of the factors you should take notice of when deciding what observations are useful.

Key area	Why it is important	What to observe
Belonging	All children need to feel a sense of belonging if they are to learn and develop to their best. Belonging is about feeling they are welcome and valued. It means being familiar with spaces and people.	➢ How children relate to the environment ➢ How children use the environment ➢ How children participate ➢ If children initiate relationships, interactions and play ➢ Their social and emotional preferences
Challenge and stimulation	The play environment should offer challenges and stimulation. If it is too challenging, children may become frustrated as they are not able to master skills. If it is not challenging enough, children will become bored or annoyed and may begin to demonstrate behaviours that are inappropriate.	➢ Level of stimulation and/or challenge ➢ How children interact with activities and materials ➢ If children have developed or are developing a sense of agency, independence, curiosity and enjoyment
Interests, knowledge, ideas, abilities and developmental needs	Children engage with their interests and extend upon their ideas, knowledge and abilities. When you have information about a child's interests, ideas, knowledge or abilities, you are able to provide them with a stimulating and rewarding environment that they are happy to spend their time in.	➢ Evidence of new, existing or developing needs, interests, knowledge, ideas and abilities.
Social interaction	Children learn from social interaction. They watch others, including adults, and notice what they do as well as what happens when they do this.	➢ Notice how well children communicate with you, other adults and other children ➢ Consider who children interact with and how often they interact

The difference between assessment *of* learning and assessment *for* learning can be shown in the following table.

Type of observation	Example of observation content	Outcome
Assessment *of* learning	You notice a child has completed a puzzle. The puzzle is age-appropriate. The child moves to another experience.	This observation clarifies that the child knows how to complete developmentally appropriate puzzles. If this is the goal of the observation, it is useful. If you are observing to extend experiences, this is not useful.
Assessment *for* learning	You notice a child working to complete puzzles for an extended period of time. They work through all puzzles offered on the shelf and ask if there are any more puzzles.	This observation demonstrates the child's interest in completing puzzles. This is useful as it supports you to provide for this interest. If your observation records the developmental level of the puzzles offered, it may lead you to providing puzzles with more complexity or for the child to create their own puzzles.
Assessment *of* learning	Jericho made a construction using boxes. He managed the masking tape competently and glued using a glue stick. He is developing skills in using a stapler.	This information is an overview. It summarises Jericho's learning and development.
Assessment *for* learning	Jericho made a construction using boxes. He managed the masking tape competently and glued using a glue stick. He attempted to use the stapler, but the pressure he applied was not forceful enough. I offered to guide him verbally and physically, but Jericho refused, saying, 'Don't, I want to do it!'	This information describes what happened at the time and explains the learning that Jericho demonstrated as well as the emerging skills he is developing.

Meaningful records

When you observe children and record what you see and hear, you are creating observation records.

Meaningful records are ones that record what the child is learning, not just what they are doing. When you develop observation records, they should help you to:

Observe children's learning to inform your practice.

- plan appropriate play and leisure experiences that extend children's interests and skills
- support children's development at their level of skill, knowledge and understanding
- develop a sound level of knowledge about children's needs and cultures
- support, encourage and assist children
- record changes to children's strengths, interests and levels of development
- support discussion regarding children's skills, needs, interests and cultural practices.

Written observation records can be used on their own or combined with other types of information to provide greater detail. Other information might include photographs, video or audio recordings and work samples.

Make sure families have given permission for you to use these records for planning. Family permission must also be gained prior to the records being shown to any person outside the service or when used for any purpose other than for planning.

Taking objective records

Records of observation that report what you actually see and hear are called objective records.

Objective records never include what you think has happened or how you feel about what you have observed. This type of writing requires a non-judgmental approach to ensure that the child is not labelled in a negative or positive way. By doing this, your record will be free from bias. To provide a fair and factual account, an objective record must not include personal opinions.

Subjective language, on the other hand, includes your own thoughts and feelings about a subject; it is opinionated language. A subjective record is one that includes the writer's feelings and views. This type of record may stop others from understanding a child as it can include negative attitudes and labelling, which may bias the readers' perspectives.

Subjective language might cause the information to be misunderstood because words may mean different things to different people. It may also cause someone to become biased towards a child before getting to know them. By using words that are negative and subjective, you are also demonstrating that you are not professional in your recording abilities.

Example

Different views of the same situation

The following outlines the views of three different educators observing the same situation.

Serena's view (objective)

Three children are at the easel and are talking while they paint. Their discussion is about how paints mix together to make other colours. One child paints on his fingers and then presses his fingers onto the paper and discovers that it leaves his fingerprints. Each child then paints their fingers and presses them onto the paper; they make a series of fingerprints across the pages. The children are laughing and talking loudly about how their fingerprints are different.

Mario's view (subjective)

I think the children at the easel are being too loud and annoying. They are not using the activity as it should be used and this makes me think the children are lacking respect for the room. I think the children are making a terrible mess and they should be made to take responsibility for cleaning it up.

Elisha's view (subjective)

I heard the children at the easel talking about the colours that they made when the paint mixed together; I think they're really smart. Then one child discovered fingerprints and I was excited at how clever he is. This is fantastic!

Accurate and useful records

Accurate records should provide the right amount of detail to allow others to know exactly what you observed.

Objective recording contributes to accuracy, as it is based on fact. When you record information about an amount, a setting, an activity, a skill or progress, you need to give clear details for it to be accurate.

Some examples of ways you could give specific details to provide accurate records are detailed below.

If you are recording that a child completed a puzzle, include:

- how many pieces it has
- whether the child has completed it before or if this is their first attempt
- what type of puzzle it is (a knob set, a floor puzzle, etc.)
- the theme of the puzzle.

If you are recording that a child rode a bike, include:

- how many wheels it has
- whether the child scooted with their feet or pedalled
- whether the child could go forwards and backwards
- what speed the child went
- whether the child could manoeuvre around obstacles.

In most records, you can be accurate if you:

- only provide details of the important information you are most interested in
- include information about what the child is learning
- record your observations and findings at the time of the observation or as soon as possible afterwards, when your memory is clear
- make sure that information such as children's names, dates and times are recorded correctly, and that you check all spelling.

Example

Recording accurate and useful information

Keira is recording her observation of Gayle doing origami. At the same table, a number of children are working on individual projects. Sometimes, Gayle and another child speak. At one point, Gayle helps another child find some scissors.

Keira only makes a record about Gayle doing origami, as she is interested in the folds that Gayle has mastered as well as the figures she attempts. What she records about the origami is detailed and descriptive. She notices that Gayle speaks to and helps other children, but this is not what she is interested in at the moment. She already knows that Gayle is helpful and social.

Documenting techniques

Information collected about children is used to support you to provide care and education.

How you document information will be influenced by your service's beliefs and how you work with children. The service's beliefs are demonstrated in the philosophy, and how you work with children is called your pedagogy.

Some services have clear philosophies, policies and procedures that identify exactly how and what you should observe and record, whereas others may allow you to use your own judgment and ideas to work out what is important.

Outside of these guidelines, you may be given the opportunity to choose the most effective recording method yourself. Consider the following:

- When will you be recording your observation; for example, during participation with children or following participation?
- What is the simplest method for gathering the information while still including all details? At some point your information will be used, so you need to be sure the important details of the record are easy to find and understand.
- How much time do you have available for recording; for example, do you have set times for documenting information, does your documentation occur at times you only have a moment to spare?

- Who will be reading the records and what will they be doing with them? A record you are using to plan an experience will be different to one requested by a specialist, just as one provided to another educator might be presented differently to one shared with a family member.

All records of observations need to be provided a context. This will include information that allows those reading the record, including yourself, to understand who the record is about. Most records require the following details to develop a context:

- child's name (sometimes a code, changed name or initials are used for confidentiality)
- child's age or birth date
- date of observation
- time of observation
- setting
- name of the person recording the observation.

Questioning

Questioning can occur directly, or through developing a questioning method that allows children to consider and reply in their own time.

Questioning can be useful for documenting information about a child's knowledge, ideas, interests and reactions to the play environment.

Bear in mind that not all questioning is useful; sometimes children respond inappropriately, or give a response that is what they think others would like to hear. For example, you might ask school-age children to suggest some activities and they might say ballooning, playing a violent video game, having a food fight, etc.

Tips for questioning children
- Verbal questioning may be documented in a variety of ways: You may use a jotting, anecdotal record, a log or a checklist to tick off or make notes against an anticipated set of responses.
- Brainstorming can be used to ask a question and gain ideas. This might happen through discussion.
- Surveys, feedback sheets and questionnaires are more formal methods that can be used with educators and older children. To use with younger children, questions and answers could be added using drawings or emoticons, such as smiley faces and sad faces. Drawings and emoticons can make the process fun.
- A daily evaluation sheet asks educators and children to evaluate how the day went by asking specific questions, such as what activities were enjoyed most, what could be extended on or how the curriculum can be improved. Use prompts to encourage a response.
- A graffiti sheet or graffiti board provides space for all those involved to add their ideas based on a question that is provided. The graffiti sheet can be used for brainstorming ideas, surveying, questioning or evaluating.

Example

Questioning children

The following are three examples of ways you might question children to select an excursion venue.

Verbal questioning	'Would you like to go to the bakery or the fruit shop?'
Survey	Tick the place you would like to visit. **Bakery** | **Fruit shop** ✓ |
Emoticon survey	
Graffiti sheet	Where would you like to visit on our excursion? Bakery *Fruit shop*

Jottings

You can use simple reminder methods, such as jottings, during your day to gather details of observations, which you can extend on later to produce a record of observation.

Jottings are quick reminders that can be made on a sticky note or in a pocket notebook. When you take quick notes for later extension, remember to add details such as names, dates and times.

Jottings can be useful for documenting information about a child's behaviour, learning, play preferences, strengths, interests and relationships.

Example

Making a jotting

Julie is overheard talking about how her dad is going into hospital. Her educator makes a jotting to remind her to find out more about this. She writes: 'Julie's dad in hospital, Tues 15, 9 am'.

Later in the day, the educators review the jottings they have collected over the day. They decide how these will influence the learning and development experiences they plan for the next day and plan to discuss Julie's comments with her family.

Anecdotal records

Anecdotal records are brief descriptions, often written from memory.

Anecdotal records do not record every detail of the environment or observed behaviour – the focus is just on the area of interest being observed. Anecdotal records are written in past tense as they are a reflection.

Anecdotal records can be useful for documenting information about a child's learning, development, knowledge, ideas, strengths, interests, social interaction and reactions to the play environment.

Example

Anecdotal information

Regina wants to document Timothy's physical learning, particularly his ability to use a ladder. They create the following anecdotal record.

Recorded by: Regina **Child**: Timothy **Age**: 3.5 years **Date**: 6th March **Time**: 10.15 am **Setting**: Outdoors, ladder
Timothy climbed the ladder of the fort using both hands to hold the sides of the ladder. He used alternating legs and hands to pull himself up the rungs. Timothy got to the top of the fort then turned around. Timothy said he wanted to jump from the fort and stood at the top. He bent his body, but each time he went to jump off, he stopped. After a few tries, I offered to hold Timothy's hands. He agreed and jumped off, landing on two feet.

Narratives

Narratives are stories that record what has happened over a period of time.

This might be an account of an experience, a learning event, a project or session. This makes it different to an anecdotal record, which records a single event or particular area of learning or development.

A narrative is written in past tense as it is a reflection. It includes the details needed to show what happened and what learning or development occurred.

Narratives can record information about a child's learning, development, knowledge, ideas, strengths, interests, social interaction and reactions to the play environment.

Example
Narrative

Child's name	Raelene	**Age**	4 years
Recorded by	Graeme	**Date of record**	2nd October

Raelene had lots of fun today using collage materials. She pasted using the new brushes and talked about how they were easier to use and that she could carefully apply the glue exactly where she wanted. Raelene loved the new materials and asked me what some were called. She repeated these names and added descriptions. Some examples of her descriptions were: crackly cellophane, bumpy corduroy, smooth silk.

Learning stories

Learning stories often use a narrative to describe learning, development, an incident or a project.

A learning story, written in past or present tense, may be added to by the child, family members and others who participate in the child's life.

Evolving from New Zealand's Te Whāriki curriculum, learning stories include only positive information, never negative.

The approved learning frameworks encourage you to view children, the curriculum and pedagogy in a creative and open manner. Learning stories fit this brief as they focus on the stories or journeys of the child's learning experiences.

Each learning story should demonstrate that you are able to:

- notice – observe children's learning
- recognise – strive to understand what you notice
- respond – put your understanding to use by acting to support and provide for the child.

You can use a learning story to present a reflection of learning goals and outcomes (sometimes referred to as dispositions). Record details that relate to:

- belonging and identity
- communication
- thinking, independence and creativity
- understanding the world
- health and physical development.

Learning stories identify and record information that concentrates on assessments *for* learning, rather than assessments *of* learning. To do this means that your observations (the things you choose to observe and record) should demonstrate areas where you can support the child with new learning opportunities, not simply record what the child can already do. This happens when you observe and record emerging skills. These details help you to understand the child and to develop strategies for what will happen next.

- Use stories to describe photos or diagrams.
- Write a letter to the child; for example, 'Stephen, I watched you playing with Kellie and you both worked together carefully to …'.
- Use dot points to highlight important aspects of information you are sharing, or photos or samples of work you are including.
- Use a storybook style that includes children adding drawings of what happened.
- Use a journal style to communicate information.

Example
Learning story

The following is a learning story written about a child exploring gel.

Child's name	Dan	**Age**	3.5 years
Recorded by	Alice	**Date of record**	2nd October
Setting			
Indoor coloured gel table. One child.			
Story			

Dan had lots of fun today exploring with the coloured gel. He participated by using both of his hands to squish the contents, showing lots of exploratory practices, examining the colours and watching it slide off his hands. Alice asked Dan, 'What does the gel feel like?' Dan smiled and laughed. 'It feels warm and squishy,' he replied. Dan took great interest in this activity, watching the different shapes he could mould and make, and laughing as a squelching sound could be heard. He spent 10 minutes exploring.

Educator's voice
Dan really enjoyed exploring with gel using his hands, listening to the sounds it made and mixing the colours together.
Parent's voice
Dan loves to help me cook, he always enjoys mixing dough with his hands and pressing out biscuit shapes.
EYLF learning outcome
Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners. Sub-outcome: Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.
Future planning
Making play dough

Running records

A running record documents everything you see the child doing and saying during a specified amount of time, usually between one and 10 minutes.

Decide the length of time you will observe the child for based on what you want to record.

A running record is written in present tense as it is recording what you see at the time. It needs to contain information about the play spaces the child uses and how their actions relate to areas of development. This type of record is demanding of your time because you need to continually observe and record. It also draws on your knowledge of child development because you need to understand every action of the child.

Create a running record for each child.

Example

Creating a running record

Zoe, an educator, has created the following running record about Fiona.

Recorded by: Zoe **Child**: Fiona **Age**: 4.5 years **Date**: 6th January **Time**: 10.17 am **Setting**: Dough table
Fiona sits at the dough table with her feet flat on the ground, her back against the chair back and her arms on the table with her hands clasped (physical). She looks up at the educator who is talking to her and listens as the educator asks if she would like a ball of dough (communication). Fiona answers 'yes' (language) and holds her right hand out to the educator with her palm up (physical), as the educator holds out the ball of dough to Fiona. The educator places the dough in Fiona's hand, and Fiona's fingers close around it (physical). Fiona's head moves to the side and down as she places the ball of dough on the table immediately in front of her and puts her left hand on top of the ball of dough with her fingers splayed (physical).

Time samples

Time samples are observations taken at time intervals to record progressions or patterns of behaviour or interactions.

The record may be taken every five minutes, every half hour or at a set time each day.

Time samples can be useful for documenting information about a child's behaviour, learning, play preferences, strengths, interests and relationships.

Example

Using a time sample

Regina has recorded the following time sample about Louise.

Child: Louise	
Age: 3 years, 11 months	
Date: 7th January	
Recorded by: Regina	
Focus: Which experiences does Louise participate in?	
9.00 am	Louise is playing at the car mat with two other children.
9.15 am	Louise is playing by herself at the car mat. She is building a road with blocks.
9.30 am	Louise is at the collage table. She is sticking feathers onto a piece of card with sticky tape.
9.45 am	Louise is at the climbing frame. She is sitting on the top and watching other children on the bounce board.

Event samples and checklists

Event samples record your observations each time a particular event occurs.

You need to specify which event is important to record and, each time this event occurs, add a record of what happened before, during and after the situation.

An event sample is an excellent tool for recording the behaviour, learning play preferences, strengths, interests and relationships of one or more children.

There are different ways you can document an event sample, some of which are shown in the following examples.

Example
Recording specific behaviour

Child: Macy

Age: 5 years

Date: 8th February

Recorded by: Regina

Focus: What is happening when Macy's peers are upset with her?

9.05 am	Macy stood at the edge of the car mat and watched for five minutes as Louise, Graeme and Erica played. Macy began lifting the edge of the car mat with her foot and this tipped the children's road, making it break. Graeme said, 'Macy, you need to fix it.' Macy sat on the mat and fixed the road, then Graeme asked her if she wanted to drive the truck. They played for some time.
10.13 am	Macy stood at the collage table. She watched Megan using the materials for approximately four minutes. Macy picked up the scissors that Megan was using in her work. Megan asked for them back, but Macy did not respond. Megan called an educator who came and asked Macy for the scissors. The educator then asked Macy if she would like to use her own pair of scissors, and Macy agreed and sat to work for approximately 20 minutes.

Example
Recording different activities

Child: Preschool group

Age: 4–5 years

Date: 9th January

Recorded by: Regina

Focus: Children's interests and peer relationships

Child	Collage	Painting	Puzzles
Bernice	9.05 am: 10 mins with two other children	9.15 am: 20 mins	9.35 am: 10 mins
Jet		9.05 am: 5 mins with Gerard	9.10 am: 35 mins with Gerard
Rex			9.10 am: 40 mins
Ralph	9.30 am: Watching for 5 mins	9.12 am: Watching for 18 mins	9.05 am: 7 mins

Example

Event sample checklist

Date: 12 June	Puts own jumper on (using buttons)	Puts own pants on (using zip)	Puts own shoes on (using velcro)	Puts own shoes on (tying laces)
Patsy	✓	✓	✓	✓
Henry	✓			
Grace	✓		✓	
Nixon	✓	✓		
Stephano	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gurleen	✓			

Monitoring development

The information you gain from monitoring children's development helps you to identify specific needs, develop an individual program, and set goals and targets for the child.

While most methods of recording are useful, many educators choose a checklist with comment spaces as an effective tool for assessing, measuring and monitoring children's development.

A developmental checklist should:

- include milestones that you feel a child should demonstrate if their progress is appropriate at this age/stage of development
- include milestones that the child's family feel are appropriate and important
- be clearly written so that you can identify when a child requires support or needs to be more closely monitored
- consider the child's chronological age (the number of years the child has lived) and maturational age (the stage of development the child is demonstrating) to ensure that individual rates of development, needs and strengths are addressed
- reflect the individual child in some way; for example, the skills the family say are important to their child.

The following is an example of a development checklist.

Physical development	Developmental comments	Date achieved
Walks independently		6th January
Walks up stairs using two feet on each stair	6th January: Crawls up stairs	24th February
Throws a large ball	14th February: Pushes ball along ground	
Uses pincer grip to pick up small objects	24th March: Picks up sultanas at snack time	

Samples of work

Keeping samples of children's work helps you to build a clear record of progress or development of an interest.

You can collect originals or create photocopies. Always ask the child before you take their work and respect their wishes if they refuse. Samples can be used to make special portfolios that show a child's progress and become keepsakes for families.

Example

Work sample

Tye, an educator, collected a sample of Michaela's work to show how she has begun to draw in more detail using different methods.

Digital images

There are many effective information and communication technology (ICT) tools you can use to capture observations.

The following table shows how some ICT tools can be used in the learning environment.

ICT tool	Application in the learning environment
Computer	➤ Record observations in a file for each child. ➤ Share information about children with parents via email or cloud sharing. ➤ Play a slideshow or video of a child or group's learning journey to others; photographs, videos, sounds, commentary and text can be combined to tell the story. ➤ Help families access information through websites or social media.
Smartphone or tablet	➤ When recording video: – encourage children to reflect on their activities – add videos to learning stories – demonstrate progression. ➤ When recording sound: – record children's discussions – take verbal notes for you to write down in more detail later – reflect on your own interactions as part of professional development. ➤ When taking pictures: – allow children to take their own pictures – add to learning stories – share with others. ➤ Play slideshows of the photos of activities, excursions or children's work.

There are a number of childcare apps on the market that can be downloaded and used on smartphones, tablets or computers. These apps are designed for ease of use, to advance communication and simplify the recording process. Many apps link to families through programs, text message or email so that information can be shared.

ICT is a useful tool, but you need to ensure it is creating meaningful and actionable learning records. Consider the following points when collecting audio and visual material:

- You may need to edit material before sharing it with others.
- Children may stage their activity for a camera or video.
- Make sure you have permission from families before displaying children in slideshows, recordings or photographs. This may affect the recordings you take of other children.
- Note who recorded or took the photographs. Add the date, time, place and event.
- Use children's names as you speak to them during a sound recording as you may not recognise a variety of voices on the playback.

ICT can be useful for documenting information about a child's behaviour, learning, play preferences, strengths, interests and relationships.

Example

Using photographs

A group of children are creating a huge sandcastle in the sandpit. Two children are moving cars and toy people over the sand. Two other children are using feathers and shells to decorate the edge of the castle. Other children are discussing where to place the flag.

The weather begins to change and Cassie, the educator, points out that it might rain. The children are disappointed and concerned that the rain will destroy the castle before their parents get to see it.

Cassie suggests taking a photograph so their hard work can be recorded and shown to others. Raseem's father has asked that Raseem not be photographed, so Cassie asks Raseem if he would like to be 'official photographer'. He takes five pictures of the other children with the castle.

Cassie and Raseem choose the best picture. Cassie adds the photo to the video file that is shown in the room. At pick-up, the children excitedly show their family members what they achieved.

Sociograms

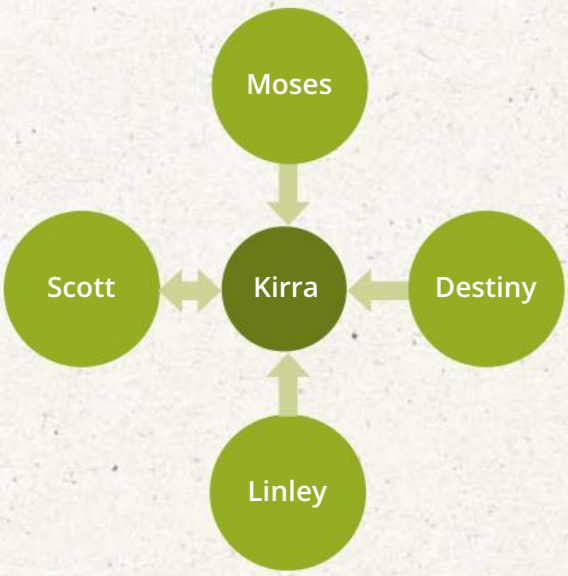
A sociogram is a simple and useful tool used to map interactions.

Sociograms use a web-like connection to show the interaction between children and/or adults. You can use a sociogram to record existing or emerging communication skills, social interaction, play preferences or changing dynamics in a group.

Example

Mapping social interaction

Richard, an educator, uses a sociogram to collect interaction information and later adds a summary so that Kirra's social participation can be understood.



Richard's sociogram demonstrates that Kirra was spoken to by four children (you can see they spoke to her as the arrows point towards Kirra), but that Kirra only responded to Scott (you can see this as an arrow points from Kirra to Scott).

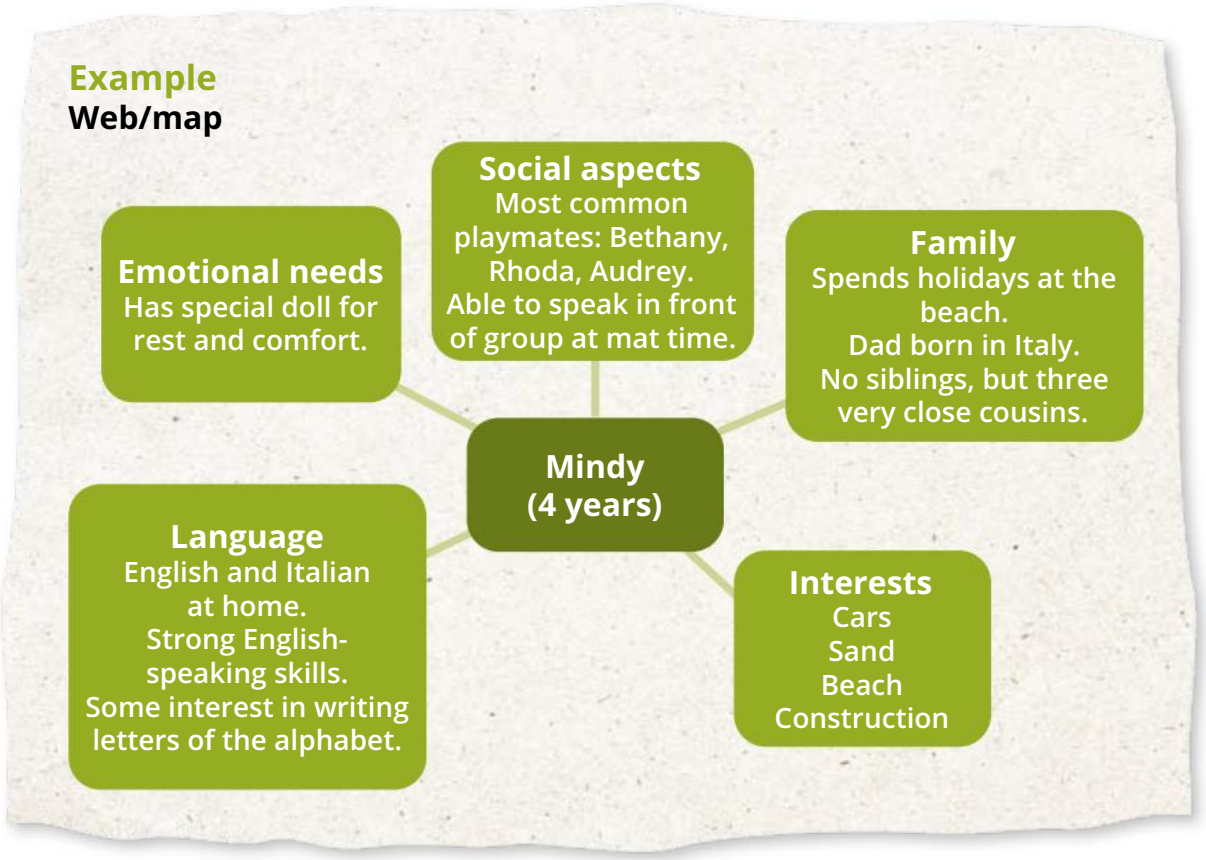
Webs and maps

Webs are an excellent tool for documenting a range of information about a particular child or group.

The structure of a web allows you to identify links and clearly map out aspects you are focusing on. They are useful for brainstorming.

Webs might link to the whole child or may represent a specific area. This can be seen in cultural mapping where a child's background might be explored, including their religion, family beliefs, ethnic origins, knowledge, family (both immediate and extended) social demographics, food preferences, dress preferences, etc.

Example
Web/map



Example

Recording an observation

Zach observes Corrina drawing. This is his observation documented in different ways.

Jotting	Cynthia (4 years) used crayons to draw a bear.
Digital image	
Sample of children's work	
Learning story	Cynthia loves drawing her toys from home and often tells us about her favourite toy of the day, and then draws a picture to show us what it looks like. Today she told me about her bear 'Fuzzy'. She asked for crayons then set to work to draw him. Cynthia wanted me to put her drawing in her portfolio. She said I could look at this any time so I remember what he looks like.

Practice Task 3

1. Which of the following statements related to observing children are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

a.	During discussions and conversations, all children are encouraged to share their own ideas and feelings.	* Yes	* No
b.	Mistakes are seen as a learning opportunity and children are never ridiculed or degraded.	* Yes	* No
c.	Experiences are planned to meet children's individual needs, strengths and interests.	* Yes	* No
d.	The expertise, culture, values and beliefs of families support educators in decision-making about their child's learning and wellbeing.	* Yes	* No
e.	All opportunities for learning throughout the day are captured and responded to.	* Yes	* No
f.	Children are comforted when they are upset.	* Yes	* No

2. Draw a line to match each type of recording method and tool on the left to its definition on the right.

* Learning story	* Brief descriptions about an area of interest or learning that are often written from memory.
* Narrative	* Information gathered from children that may occur directly or through a questioning method.
* Jottings	* Information gathered from others to provide knowledge about a child.
* Time or event sample	* A story that is written in the past tense to record what happened over a period of time and to reflect on the learning that took place.
* Questioning children	* Used to describe the learning that is taking place and may include the voices of others, such as the children, other educators and family members.
* Anecdotal record	* Simple reminders that can be added to or extended on at a later stage to develop a record of observation.
* Child record	* A recording made at particular time intervals or each time a specific event occurs.
* Cultural map	* A written and/or visual representation of a child's culture, such as their religion, ethnicity and beliefs.

3. Draw a line to match the beginning of each sentence about recording on the left to the correct ending on the right.

* Objective records	* include what the child is learning, not just what they are doing.
* Appropriate techniques	* include using your judgment and ideas to work out what is important to record. This might be guided by service policies and procedures about exactly how and what you should observe and record.
* When recording information about a child	* include what you actually see and hear happening free from biased or subjective language.
* Accurate records	* include the right amount of detail to allow others to know exactly what you have observed.

Summary

- To gain information about children, you need to observe, listen and talk with them, and pay close attention to what they are saying and doing.
- By collecting and using information about the children based on your observations and interactions, you are showing that you acknowledge, respect and value the child and their family.
- Whatever the age of a child, you should notice aspects of their interests, ideas, knowledge, skills and strengths.
- Collecting and sharing information from secondary sources, such as from family members, colleagues and specialist services, contributes to ongoing support and planning for each child.
- Secondary sources may be written or may be verbal information that is passed on to you.
- Ensure that you have permission from families prior to recording observations for each child.
- It is valuable to use a range of recording methods to document your observations.
- You must be able to write observation records that are factual, non-judgmental, and free from bias and negative labelling.
- Documenting accurately involves giving clear examples and precise details for objective recording.

Learning Checkpoint 1
Observing and recording information about children

Part A

1. Draw a line to match each of the following statements that inform practice to the correct NQS Quality area.

* During discussions and conversations, all children are encouraged to share their own ideas and feelings.	* Quality area 1
* Mistakes are seen as a learning opportunity and children are never ridiculed or degraded.	* Quality area 2
* Experiences are planned to meet children's individual needs, strengths and interests.	* Quality area 3
* Children are comforted when they are upset.	* Quality area 4
* All opportunities for learning throughout the day are captured and responded to.	* Quality area 5

2. Roxie, the educator, wants to learn more about Mica (five years old). Draw a line to match each primary or secondary source of information on the left to the details it would provide for curriculum planning on the right.

* Enrolment form	* Daily needs for sleep and toileting
* Mica's family	* Tools and processes to record observations of Mica
* Mica	* Family structure, traditions and customs
* Routine forms	* Dietary requirements and medical information
* Occupational therapist	* Interests
* Educational leader	* Strategies for supporting Mica's physical injury

3. Look at the image below. Which of the following records are meaningful, useful and free of subjective, biased or labelling language? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Adon, the Indian child, likes trains. He can't put tracks together well and this means that he can't play to the best of his ability.
- [ ] Adon shows an interest in trains, joining them into long lines and pushing them around a track many times.
- [ ] When Adon puts together curved sections of track he gets upset. He just looks at them and doesn't know what to do.
- [ ] Adon works with the curved train tracks. He tells me he is trying to create a circle but is only able to make a twisted track.
- [ ] Adon shows he is interested in trains.

4. Milan (four years), has a physical and intellectual disability. Which of the following statements are correct about the information Zahra, the educator, should use to inform her curriculum?

a. Zahra should share information about Milan with other families and educators. These are relevant people that will want to know what Milan's needs are.	* Yes	* No
b. Zahra knows that Milan's milestones of development will be delayed in some areas. Zahra might provide Milan with a range of activities so she can record his interests and create a strengths-based approach.	* Yes	* No
c. Zahra could collaborate with other educators and carers so they can work together to build an accurate picture of Milan's needs, interests, skills and cultural practices.	* Yes	* No
d. Digital images can be used to record information, such as showing how Milan is unable to complete tasks that should be easy for his age.	* Yes	* No

e. Zahra will be able to check the milestones of development for a four-year-old child and refer to these when checking Milan's progress. * Yes * No

f. Milan will enjoy developing his skills if a strengths-based approach is used. This means his interests and abilities will be used to develop all skill areas. * Yes * No

5. Which of the following methods or tools might best record the information in this image using past tense? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Event sample
- [ ] Narrative
- [ ] Anecdotal record
- [ ] Running record

6. Which of the following methods or tools might best record the information in the image below using present tense? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Jotting
- [ ] Sample of work
- [ ] Anecdotal record
- [ ] Running record

Part B

Read the case study and then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Miniya, an educator, watches as Odelia painted long strokes of blue. She then begins dotting yellow paint; putting a yellow dot onto one of the blue stripes. Odelia squeals and says, 'Look, I made green!' Miniya answers, 'Yes, you mixed blue and yellow and it made the colour green. Which other colours can you make?'

Miniya takes a photo to record the learning that she noticed, then asks Odelia if she could keep her artwork. Miniya thinks about how Odelia had been exploring the paint. Miniya thought about the most meaningful learning that took place and decides this would be how Odelia was exploring colour. Miniya identifies a way to extend on this colour mixing interest.

The next day Miniya puts out some jars of clean water and some food colouring with droppers. She shows Odelia and explains how she might further explore colour mixing. Odelia mixes and talks about the colours, describing this to Miniya. While this is happening, Miniya sings the song 'I can make a rainbow' and talks to Odelia about the different colours.

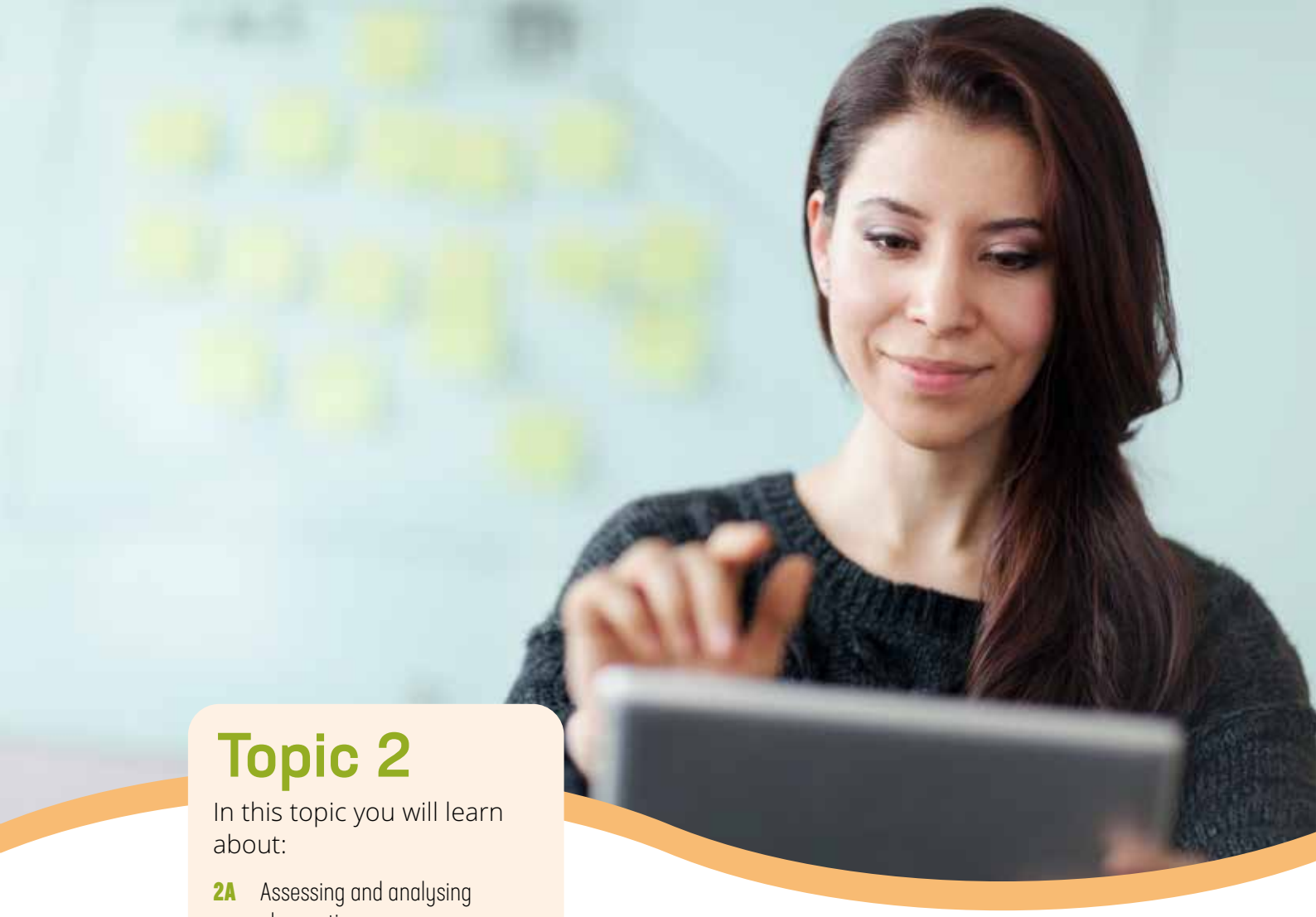
Miniya considers what happened in the experience. She noticed that Odelia was starting to describe colour shades. Miniya notes this down as a reminder, and identifies that she could improve the experience for Odelia if her future plans included shades of one colour at a time.

1. Draw a line to match each stage of the curriculum planning cycle on the left to Miniya's actions on the right.

* Observe	* Miniya finds the way Odelia had been exploring the paint and colour to be meaningful learning.
* Assess	* Miniya puts out some jars of clean water and some food colouring with droppers.
* Plan	* Miniya thinks that she could improve the experience for Odelia if her future plans included shades of one colour at a time.
* Implement	* Miniya identifies a way to extend on this colour mixing interest.
* Evaluate	* Miniya watched Odelia paint. She noticed how she used the paint, in particular, how Odelia discovered colour mixing.

2. Which of the following recording methods and tools did Miniya use in her collection of primary sources of information? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Questioning
- [ ] Jotting
- [ ] Anecdotal record
- [ ] Digital image
- [ ] Running record
- [ ] Sample of work
- [ ] Time sample



Topic 2

In this topic you will learn about:

2A Assessing and analysing observations

2B Contributing to the curriculum

Using observations to inform practice

Once you have gathered and recorded information about a child, you need to analyse it so it can be used effectively.

The records of observation you have collected over a period of time and in different situations can help you to develop a complete picture of the child, including understanding learning and development aspects, such as their knowledge, ideas, strengths, interests, social interaction and reactions to the play environment. The outcome of your analysis is your perspective. Your perspective gives meaning and relevance to any plans and helps you to implement experiences, then reflect on these to understand and learn about children.

2A Assessing and analysing observations

By assessing the content of your observation records and the information you have sourced from others, you are able to analyse and interpret what is important.

Think about:

- the learning you noticed and have been told about
- any development or developmental domains that were highlighted
- what was important when you noticed it
- what was important from the views of other people.

By doing this, you are documenting your perspective.

The aim of analysis is to develop a perspective that leads you to planning. These perspectives will be linked to evidence.

Others' perspectives

Gaining the perspectives of others allows you to consider a greater range of information about a child.

You can discuss your observation records and information from secondary sources with other educators. Gaining the perspectives of others supports you to reflect on what you notice and to develop your skills and knowledge.

Discuss your observation records with others.

Following this sharing of information, you can support each other to develop and implement a curriculum that is responsive to the needs of children. When all educators are involved, they can work together successfully at all stages.

Opportunities you may have for discussing or gaining the perspectives of others include:

- throughout the day as you record information
- during meetings
- as part of a planning time
- through daily discussions.

Analysing records

There are a variety of factors you should take into account when analysing your observation records.

Aspects about a child's learning and development are explained below.

Interests, knowledge, ideas, skills and strengths

- Interests are the things the child likes or enjoys and wants to know more about or extend on.
- Knowledge is what the child knows about, including facts and details.
- Ideas are things the child suggests, invents or wants to do.
- Skills and strengths are things the child is good at.

Children will demonstrate that they enjoy and know about experiences and activities by doing them more regularly, spending more time participating or telling you about how they feel or what they think.

Children might come up with ideas that can be used to create new experiences or to extend on experiences that already exist.

You may notice that children are very skilled at some activities as well as being challenged by others.

Social interaction

Notice how well children communicate with you, other adults and other children. Identify whether this meets their developmental milestones or if you can build on their ideas and abilities.

There may be times when children have difficulty becoming involved in play or social interactions. At times, children may support others and model behaviours or skills.

Reactions and choices

Take children's reactions to the play environment into consideration. These may be negative or positive.

Often, the way the environment is set up, the sensory information that it includes, the other children involved or the level of experiences provided can influence behaviours, involvement and interactions.

If you identify and use this type of information, you can determine appropriate ways to enhance children's play and experiences. You can ensure your interactions meet their individual requirements. Children should enjoy and benefit from the experiences you choose.

Stages of development

You can assess and analyse information about children based on your knowledge of development.

Whatever the age of a child, you should notice:

- aspects of their physical, social, emotional, cognitive and communication development
- the child's interests, ideas and abilities
- the child's knowledge, skills and understanding
- how they react in the play environment.

The expected physical development of children of different ages is outlined in the following table.

Observe skills and abilities at every age and stage of development.

Age	Physical development
0–3 months	➤ Brings hand to mouth ➤ Takes swipes at dangling objects ➤ Opens and shuts hands ➤ Raises head momentarily while lying on stomach ➤ Reflexively grasps finger or object placed in their hand
3–6 months	➤ Can reach for things voluntarily ➤ Holds head up in a sitting position ➤ Holds head up for longer periods while lying on stomach
6–12 months	➤ Rolls over ➤ Crawls or shuffles ➤ Able to support own weight when held in standing position ➤ Pokes objects with index finger ➤ Lets go of objects voluntarily ➤ Holds own bottle ➤ Pulls themselves to standing position by holding onto furniture ➤ Walks with adult assistance or independently
1–2 years	➤ Holds a large crayon with a palmar grasp (in their fist) and marks paper ➤ Places objects in another person's hand and lets go ➤ Attempts to feed themselves with a spoon ➤ Uses their thumb and forefinger to explore objects ➤ Walks unassisted ➤ May begin to run

Age	Physical development
2–3 years	➤ Runs with ease ➤ Pedals a tricycle ➤ Builds a tower of up to 10 blocks ➤ Screws and unscrews objects such as lids and knobs ➤ Jumps using both feet ➤ Kicks a large ball ➤ Walks on tiptoes ➤ Begins to hold a crayon or pencil between the thumb and fingers
3–5 years	➤ Walks up stairs one foot per step ➤ Throws a ball overhand ➤ Balances on one foot momentarily ➤ Uses scissors with some control ➤ Draws a person with some recognisable body parts ➤ Begins to hold a crayon or pencil in tripod grasp (between the thumb and two fingers) with varying degrees of control

The expected social development of children of different ages is outlined in the following table.

Age	Social development
0–6 months	➤ Begins to smile at people from six weeks ➤ Enjoys social play with caregivers ➤ Shows fascination and interest in mirror images of themselves ➤ Squeals with delight ➤ Uses various cues for gaining attention to needs ➤ Starts developing attachment relationships
6–12 months	➤ Imitates people during play ➤ May begin to test caregiver and parent responses to behaviour ➤ Has clear attachment relationships
1–2 years	➤ Increasingly becomes more independent of caregivers ➤ Defiant behaviour is more apparent ➤ Can recognise themselves in a mirror
2–3 years	➤ Prefers routine; does not enjoy changes ➤ Imitates the world around them through social play ➤ Is increasingly independent and exerts control with the use of the word 'no' ➤ Does not have the ability to share toys and equipment ➤ Can pick themselves out in a photograph
3–5 years	➤ Is able to cooperate with other children more regularly ➤ Negotiates simple solutions to problems and conflicts with peers ➤ Pretend play increases as children act out what they see ➤ Is more likely to listen and respond to rules

The expected emotional development of children of different ages is outlined in the following table.

Age	Emotional development
0–6 months	➢ Cries in response to another infant's cry ➢ Capable of demonstrating various emotions; for example, interest, sadness, happiness, joy, anger and disgust ➢ Uses various cues for gaining attention to needs ➢ Smiles in response to others ➢ Expresses anger from approximately 1 month of age
6–12 months	➢ Begins to demonstrate fear ➢ Separation anxiety increases ➢ Begins to laugh at silly things; for example, putting a toy bear on your head
1–2 years	➢ Demonstrates self-awareness ➢ Towards the latter part of this stage, separation anxiety may begin to fade
2–3 years	➢ Experiences new feelings such as guilt, shame and pride ➢ Wants to do things themselves
3–5 years	➢ Begins to develop and express a sense of individuality and personal preferences ➢ Labels own feelings and those of others based on their facial expression or tone of voice ➢ Understands, at least on a basic level, that feelings are caused by events ➢ Shows progress in expressing feelings, needs and opinions in difficult situations or conflicts, without harming themselves, others or property

The expected communication development of children of different ages is outlined in the following table.

Age	Communication development
0–6 months	➢ Coos back and forth with caregiver ➢ Capable of responding to their own name (4–5 months) ➢ Pays attention to human voices more than any other noise ➢ Gives and receives communication ➢ Imitates and responds to someone speaking
6–12 months	➢ Until 8–12 months, communicates by crying, cooing, babbling, imitating, making facial expressions, using body language and gestures ➢ Can respond to simple verbal requests ➢ Begins to imitate spoken words ➢ First words may be spoken
1–2 years	➢ Has a vocabulary of approximately 5–20 words ➢ Vocabulary is made up chiefly of nouns ➢ May repeat a word or phrase over and over ➢ Able to follow simple commands

Age	Communication development
2–3 years	➢ Can name a number of objects common to their surroundings ➢ Able to use at least two prepositions, usually 'in', 'on' or 'under' ➢ Approximately two-thirds of what the child says is intelligible ➢ Has a vocabulary of approximately 150–300 words ➢ Can use two pronouns correctly; for example, 'I', 'me' or 'you', although 'me' and 'I' are often confused ➢ The words 'my' and 'mine' are beginning to emerge ➢ Can respond to commands such as 'show me your nose'
3–5 years	➢ Uses clear speech with only a few grammatical errors ➢ More complex speech patterns and vocabulary emerge ➢ Asks questions ➢ Tells stories and recalls past events ➢ Understands advanced concepts such as 'same' and 'different' ➢ May be capable of reciting their name and address

The expected cognitive development of children of different ages is outlined in the following table.

Age	Cognitive development
0–12 months	➢ Gains information through all senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch ➢ Explores objects in a variety of ways; for example, by shaking, banging or dropping them
1–2 years	➢ Recognises own facial features ➢ Acquires the notion of object permanence ➢ Begins to develop a self-concept; that is, that they are male or female, what different body parts do, etc. ➢ Begins to sort shapes and colours
2–3 years	➢ Problem-solving skills increase ➢ Can complete a four-piece puzzle ➢ Participates in make-believe play ➢ Can sort by shape and colour
3–5 years	➢ Increased use of verbal representation ➢ Beginning of symbolic rather than simple motor play ➢ Uses language to show they can think about something without it being present ➢ Speech becomes more social and less egocentric

Developmental domain links

You may choose to add a developmental domain or area to your analysis.

This can show your understanding of the child's development and gives a particular direction to the curriculum.

Developmental domains include:

- physical development – gross and fine motor skills
- social development
- emotional development
- cognitive development
- communication and language development.

While the actual domain can be identified easily, it is stages or milestones of development that influence what you need to know and what you do with that information. Understanding of milestones and developmental stages allows you to determine what is meaningful.

Interpreting behaviours

Some common behaviours can help you to interpret how children feel about their play environment and the planned program of experiences.

The following table outlines some common environmental issues and examples of behaviours, or reactions to these environments.

Scenario	Behaviour
The environment is not stimulating enough.	- Lack of interest - Being disrespectful or rough with materials - Not being engaged or involved - Using the materials in a way that was not intended
The environment does not meet the child's interests and needs.	- Walking around looking at activities - Saying they are bored or they don't like activities - Not being engaged or involved
The environment is too challenging.	- Not wanting to try or become involved - Saying they can't do it - Being aggressive with materials - Not completing tasks or activities

Learning framework links

Educators across Australia commonly use the EYLF learning outcomes and sub-outcomes to connect what they notice through observation to language that is consistent across the industry.

By linking to the learning framework outcomes, you are showing an understanding of what you have documented and how this relates to the child's learning. This makes the observation record and your analysis meaningful.

The following outlines the learning outcomes and sub-outcomes you will use.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Sub-outcomes:

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable, confident self-identities and a positive sense of self-worth
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

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

Sub-outcomes:

- Children develop a sense of connectedness to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities as active and informed citizens
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Sub-outcomes:

- Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing
- Children become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing
- Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

Sub-outcomes:

- Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of learning and thinking skills and processes, such as problem-solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

Sub-outcomes:

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use digital technologies and media to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

Linking outcomes

When analysing an observation record, take note of anything that stands out to you and demonstrates a particular area of interest.

This information is the point that you will focus on. Follow these steps to link learning outcomes:

1. Observe and record what you see.
2. Analyse the information by asking yourself, 'What does this tell me about the child's learning and development?'
3. Choose a learning outcome and sub-outcome. Do this by:
   - reading the five learning outcomes of the approved learning framework, and choosing the one that most closely connects to what you have observed, recorded and analysed
   - reading the sub-outcomes of the learning outcome you have chosen and selecting the one that most closely connects with what you have observed, recorded and analysed.

To gather more information on each learning outcome and sub-outcome, you can read the EYLF. Under each sub-outcome there is a list headed '*This is evident when children, for example:*'

You can research information about the approved learning frameworks at: aspirelr.link/approved-learning-frameworks.

The following is a sample of information taken from the EYLF showing what educators might notice when children are showing learning and development within a sub-outcome.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Sub-outcome: Children feel safe, secure and supported

This is evident when children, for example:

- build secure attachments with one and then other familiar educators
- participate in familiar routines and rituals to make smooth transitions
- sense and respond to a feeling of belonging
- share ideas and information about their culture and cultural artefacts
- seek and connect with adults they trust to share their accomplishments and 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

- use home languages
- access resources that support cultural diversity, family structures and gender identities
- describe things that make them unique
- tell stories about their family and culture.

Linking observations to the EYLF clarifies learning and development and allows you to see how the child is progressing.

Be sure you link to the most relevant outcome and sub-outcome. If you link to many outcomes you will not gain direction or purpose.

Example

Linking observations to outcomes

Here is an example of how an educator, Marsha, links her observation of Lim to an outcome and then a sub-outcome.

Observing, listening and collecting information: Notice learning and record what you see	When Lim comes to the sink to wash his hands, he tells the educator, 'I want to do it myself.' He usually asks for help.
Assessing, analysing and interpreting learning: Asking questions about the information	This is the first time Lim has washed his hands without an educator's help. The educator knows that Lim has learned a new skill and shown increasing independence.
Choose a learning outcome and sub-outcome	The educator thinks the learning outcome that links to this learning is Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing. The educator thinks the best sub-outcome is 'Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety'.

First, Marsha checked the list of dot points under the sub-outcome 'Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety', which showed she had chosen correctly. She read:

'This is evident when children, for example:

- show increasing independence and competence in personal hygiene.'

Sometimes it is challenging for Marsha to choose the right outcome. When this happens, she finds it easier to choose the sub-outcome first.

Example

Linking evidence to perspectives

The following are examples showing how analysis might allow you to develop a range of perspectives.

Links	Example 1
Observation record	Lim (2.5 years) washes his hands independently. This is the first time Lim has attempted this task.
Perspective	☐ Knowledge ☑ Interests ☐ Ideas ☐ Social interactions ☐ Strengths ☐ Reactions to play environments
Outcome 3	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
Sub-outcome	Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety..
Developmental domain	Lim is showing age-appropriate physical, social and emotional development

Links	Example 2
Observation record	An infant is cuddling up to an educator. The educator is talking quietly to the infant and the infant is smiling up at the educator.
Perspective	☐ Knowledge ☐ Interests ☐ Ideas ☑ Social interactions ☐ Strengths ☐ Reactions to play environments
Outcome 1	Children have a strong sense of identity
Sub-outcome	Children feel safe, secure and supported
Developmental domain	Social and emotional development is age appropriate

Links	Example 3
Observation record	Kim (4 years) is speaking to a group about her birthday party. She explained the climbing park she went to, including equipment such as anchors and carabiners. She suggested that she could bring some equipment in so everyone could see. During the discussion, Kim stopped a few times, but managed to tell the group all the information she wanted to express. Kim has only ever spoken to one or two children previously.
Perspective	☑ Knowledge ☑ Ideas ☑ Strengths ☑ Interests ☑ Social interactions ☐ Reactions to play environments
Outcome 5	Children are effective communicators
Sub-outcome	Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
Developmental domain	Social, cognitive and communication development strengths

Holistic view

When you collect a range of information and attempt to see children from different perspectives, you slowly build a picture of who they are and what they need.

The information you gain helps form a full picture that shows a holistic view of the child.

Example

Holistic view of a child

An educator has collected and analysed information about Casey. You can see how the educator has incorporated perspectives that include:

- learning outcomes
- aspects of the child – or areas of focus
- developmental domains.

By assessing collected information about Casey based on each of the learning outcomes, the educator has developed a holistic view.

Areas of focus	**Name:** Casey **Age:** 4.5 years
Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity	
Strengths	Takes considered risks and deals with outcomes
Interests	Uses dramatic play to explore different roles that connect with home experiences (mum, dad, grandma, sister, doctor, hairdresser)
Social interactions	Demonstrates attachment to a particular educator
Learning and development	Persists with challenging activities, but occasionally becomes frustrated and displays anger (emotional development)
Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world	
Strengths	Speaks in front of a large group confidently
Interests	Likes group play, attempts to be included in all group activities
Social interactions	Spoke to educator about different skin colours of children at the service
Learning and development	Uses the words 'that's not fair' when playing games and she does not come first (communication and social development)
Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	
Strengths	Is aware of bodily needs and communicates these clearly
Interests	Asks to take on responsibilities at mealtimes and talks to other children about nutritious foods
Social interactions	Tells educators that her baby sister needs a bottle
Learning and development	Enjoys movement activities and attempts new movements that are introduced (physical development)
Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners	
Strengths	Knows how to do a search on an iPad
Interests	Spends time daily at the science activities
Social interactions	Asks for educator support when persisting with a task
Learning	Asks many 'why' questions (cognitive and communication development)
Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators	
Strengths	Reads first and last name and some words that are meaningful to her, such as 'stop', 'exit' and 'zoo'
Interests	Interested in numbers and letters
Social interactions	Listens to peers when they are talking
Learning	Attempts to recognise numbers up to 20 (cognitive development)

Practice Task 4

1. Draw a line to match each term related to analysis of records on the left with the description on the right.

* Milestones of development	* A process where you look at your attitudes and motivations and identify your directions and how you will work towards a higher level of understanding or application of skills and knowledge.
* Critical reflection	* Checking on how you are going and asking yourself questions that lead to a useful conclusion.
* Meaningful reflection	* Completed in order to develop a perspective that leads you to planning based on the learning and development you notice.
* Analysis	* Used to show a perspective on achievements and abilities.

2B Contributing to the curriculum

After documenting information about a child, you can interpret this data to plan activities and experiences.

Every service will involve educators in curriculum planning in some way.

At this level, you must be able to:

- observe children
- identify information that is important
- document information using simple recording methods
- plan and prepare activities and experiences
- implement the activity or experience successfully
- evaluate your planning and use this to lead to further plans.

When planning, consider individuals, groups, routines, experiences, and inside and outside learning. Think about interactions and communication. Plan to support children so they remain positive and encouraged, while you build on their learning and demonstrate respect.

Principles and practices

During planning, think about the learning framework principles and practices and use them to support the choice of experiences you plan.

The principles will give you direction and help you to consider each child and family. The practices will help you to plan how you will implement each idea.

The following table outlines how you can demonstrate the principles of the EYLF.

Principles	How you can demonstrate this in your actions
Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships	- Plan to provide safe and predictable learning experiences that show you welcome the child and family, and include them in your plans by linking their interests, needs, strengths, ideas and knowledge.
Partnerships	- Plan using information you collect and share with families, children and other educators. This is your knowledge of the child. Include ideas and skills of families and children and take into account their needs.
Respect for diversity	- Plan to include experiences that involve families, children, educators, the community and the world - Support children to understand that we are all different yet have similarities. - Show children how to accept others and to learn about them in respectful ways.

Principles	How you can demonstrate this in your actions
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives	➤ Plan to include the perspectives of First Nations people, in particular those families within your service and community. ➤ Involve children in activities that celebrate Country (land, waterways and sea) and teach them about how they might acknowledge the traditional owners of the land. ➤ Plan in ways that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait culture while making sure you incorporate this naturally into your program.
Equity, inclusion and high expectations	➤ Plan to provide children with opportunities that are challenging and interesting, while still giving them a variety of options. ➤ Treat them fairly and allow them to explore and try for themselves, but support them and encourage their attempts.
Sustainability	➤ When planning think about how to create a sustainable environment through the inclusion of practical experiences that engage children. ➤ Consider how these experiences consider economic and social sustainability, meaning how they meet budget constraints and ensure the needs of people are met.
Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning	➤ Regularly think about how you are doing and what skills you could develop. ➤ Make changes when needed and set goals for yourself to increase your knowledge, as well as developing further understanding of each child and their family.
Collaborative leadership and teamwork	➤ Remember that a successful curriculum is one where the whole team are involved, this creates a sense of ownership. ➤ Share information about the things you want to achieve for children, what you see and hear. ➤ Listen to other educators and consider their perspectives.

The following table outlines how you can demonstrate the practices of the EYLF.

Practices	How you can demonstrate this in your actions
Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches	Plan to consider all areas or aspects of the child or children. Think about all of the outcomes of the EYLF and how they can be represented.
Responsiveness to children	Plan to listen to children and take their ideas and thoughts into consideration. Ask them questions and get them involved in planning, setting up, decision-making and problem-solving.

Practices	How you can demonstrate this in your actions
Play-based learning and intentionality	Plan with play as a focus. Create valuable yet realistic group activities and limit long periods of time where children's play lacks choices or opportunities to learn, or where children are confined. Plan learning opportunities that include time where you model and demonstrate. Plan to use open questioning, speculation, explanation, engagement in shared thinking and problem-solving to extend children's thinking and learning. While intentional teaching is important, this does not mean it must be provided as part of an organised group activity. Intentional teaching might occur during particular activities as planned, or spontaneously during play.
Learning environments	Plan to enrich the environment to make it somewhere children grow and learn in an exciting and yet nurturing place. Create interest and wonder at the child's level of understanding. Use different methods to expand on learning, using materials and equipment that children are familiar with, as well as introducing new ideas.
Cultural responsiveness	Plan to include ideas that support children and adults to respect others and to learn about them and their needs. Expand learning to include the world as well as their current environment.
Continuity of learning and transitions	Plan to make routines, change and learning opportunities as consistent as possible. Take into account the emotional needs of children and work from this to enable them to become confident and capable. Allow children to 'be'. Avoid always preparing them for the next stage in their lives. Scaffold their learning due to them showing they need this challenge, rather than you deciding they must know or demonstrate a particular skill.
Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing	Plan based on the things you see and know are consistent. Gather information over time and take this into consideration in order to provide environments that meet each child's needs.

Using aspects of the child

During your analysis, you should confirm your perspectives about the child's learning and development, as these underline your planning.

By using this information, you are able to build on where the child is and develop them in a direction that is positive and which includes topics and experiences they enjoy.

This can be useful in many ways, as shown in the following table.

Aspect of the child	What this means	Ways you may use this
Knowledge **Skills and strengths** **Interests**	The child may want to share or develop these.	➤ Extend the child. ➤ Support the child to use skills. ➤ Apply the topics to teach new or difficult skills.
Ideas	The child may want to see these happen.	➤ Provide opportunities. ➤ Support discovery. ➤ Develop possibilities and show the child they are capable. ➤ Extend children's skills, knowledge and relationships. ➤ Help children learn to plan, negotiate, problem solve and make decisions.

Using sub-outcomes

Use sub-outcomes and your knowledge and perspectives of the child to identify future opportunities for learning and development.

To gather more information on how you might plan what to do next, you can read the EYLF. Under each sub-outcome there is a list headed: 'Educators promote this learning for all children when they, for example:'

You can research information about the approved learning frameworks at: aspirelr.link/approved-learning-frameworks.

On the following page is an example of information taken from the EYLF that shows how educators promote learning within a sub-outcome.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

Sub-outcome: Children feel safe, secure and supported

Educators promote this learning for all children when they, for example:

- acknowledge and respond sensitively to children's cues, signals and home languages
- value and respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations
- support children's sense of security through consistent and warm nurturing relationships
- give children their full attention, showing interest, understanding and attunement
- design and use routines and rituals to support smooth and effective transitions
- ensure daily schedules, including individualised arrival, departure or sleep rituals that support children's sense of security
- are attuned to children's natural daily rhythms to support being and belonging
- learn key words in children's home languages and use them when greeting and talking with children
- ensure continuity to bridge the gap between the familiar and the unfamiliar, e.g. feeding and sleeping routines
- build upon culturally valued child rearing practices and approaches to learning
- provide a culturally safe place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally diverse backgrounds can share their stories about history and culture.

Example

Planning for developing skills

Maria, an educator, observes Witney (four years) using thick textas. Witney writes numbers roughly but legibly on the paper. Witney shows Maria the paper. She points to the number '4' and says it is how old she is.

Maria analyses this to gain a perspective that Witney:

- has knowledge of numbers
- has strengths in writing and recognising numbers
- is interested in writing.

Maria links this to sub-outcome: Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts (Outcome 5).

Maria plans an activity that allows Witney to extend her knowledge, strengths and interests while allowing for her open-ended use of materials.

Learning environments

Learning environments play a significant part in helping children achieve planned outcomes.

A responsive environment adapts to reflect children's interests and abilities, stimulates their imagination and encourages participation. Responsive environments allow educators and children to learn together in a comfortable and safe place.

The following table describes the combination of experiences, people and spaces that an effective learning environment should provide. Keep these in mind as you plan for children's learning and development.

Create a range of stimulating experiences.

Experiences and opportunities	Description	Example
A range of stimulating experiences	When children experience things for themselves, they can explore the activity, experiment and gain knowledge.	Jackson is learning that watching others is interesting and that he can copy what they do. The educator provides a range of experiences that allow Jackson to play near others, such as dough moulding, collage, block building and dramatic play areas.
Opportunities for spontaneous and organised play	➤ Play should be voluntary, pleasurable, symbolic, active, process-oriented and intrinsically motivated. ➤ Play is seen as right for all children. ➤ Play is associated with social development but also provides a way for children to have new experiences and build skills. ➤ Children learn best through an approach that combines physical, emotional, cognitive and social growth.	Leora is using her creativity to imagine what her painting will look like, and is using a paintbrush and her fingers to paint. She uses physical skills to hold the paintbrush. She then uses her social skills to tell a friend about her painting. Her emotional skills are demonstrated as she shows pride in her painting.

Experiences and opportunities	Description	Example
A range of teaching and learning strategies	➤ Educators may be actively involved in interacting with individuals and small groups of children, at times entering into their play, intentionally teaching, observing children at play, preparing the learning environment and collecting resources. ➤ Educators reflect on their observations and their own learning, reviewing programs, and preparing learning activities and resources.	Helen, an educator, provides an art experience for the children. She observes them interacting with the materials. She notices how some children are capable with the art tools and others show emerging skills. She records what she notices as part of her evaluation. Helen learns that she has the skills to develop meaningful experiences that meet a range of children's needs.
Diversity of people	➤ Interactions and socialisation are key factors in children's learning and development. ➤ Along with educators, children may meet other staff, such as cooks and cleaners. ➤ While some interactions could be planned for and organised, many will be spontaneous events. It is beneficial to introduce people from the community, such as police officers, postal workers, grandparents or an Aboriginal Elder.	Melody, an educator, organises for the local firefighters to come to the service with their truck. The community has been preparing for the bushfire season. This visit allows the children to ask questions and for the firefighters to share information about how the children can be safe if there is a fire in the area.
Significance of children	➤ Children need to feel important and that what they do is valuable and meaningful to others. ➤ Children should be given roles such as setting tables for lunch or setting up experiences.	Grace, an educator, works with the children to develop a simple roster that allows each child to take responsibility for a task. The tasks link with each child's interests. For example, Aiden has pets at home and loves to talk about them, so he agrees to feed the fish. This responsibility helps build his confidence.
Places to call their own	➤ This relates to the learning framework goal of belonging. ➤ Children need to be close to people they know, have familiar and comfortable objects, and be in a setting that has a personal history for them. These factors will make the environment responsive.	George, an educator, organises for each child to have a named locker for their belongings. This is somewhere they can put personal items from home and know they are safe. He encourages the children to create a name tag to put on their locker.

Involving children

Where possible, involve the children in altering and setting up the environment.

By including children in setting up activities and experiences, you provide opportunities for discussion and can observe children's interactions. This further expands your knowledge of the child while helping them to feel ownership and control over their environment.

Children can be active participants in setting up the environment.

The depth of this sharing will depend on the age of the child as well as their experience of being involved. The more opportunities they are offered, the more their skills and knowledge will develop.

When setting up experiences, consider the suggestions provided in the following table.

Age group	Appropriate activities	Interactions
Infant	➤ Set up or pack away activities while they watch ➤ Get them to help you pack up by putting items in a tub or on a shelf	➤ Tell them about the materials you are using and what you are doing ➤ Give them the opportunity to touch, feel and watch the materials ➤ These activities can be excellent opportunities for one-to-one interaction
Toddler	➤ Work together on simple tasks ➤ Give directions, such as: – pushing in chairs – placing items on a shelf or table – filling a box or tub – sweeping the floors – setting up or packing away materials	➤ Talk about what you are doing and discuss the materials you are using ➤ These times can be excellent opportunities for one-to-one and small group interaction

Age group	Appropriate activities	Interactions
Preschooler	➤ Allow children to: – plan activities – choose materials – choose settings – set up materials or areas – place items (aesthetically and practically) – pack away materials – make changes or modifications – give advice – provide information and ideas ➤ Encourage children to problem-solve how things may need to be set up or how activities can be altered	➤ Keep their interests in mind and ask questions that can be extended into activity ideas ➤ Form a small group and discuss or negotiate the things they would like to do ➤ Encourage them to listen to the ideas of others ➤ These times can be excellent opportunities for one-to-one, small and large group interactions ➤ Team or large group activities are appropriate for this age group

Remember to take your time and make your changes and adaptations part of the day rather than something you do in a rush or while the children are absent.

Implement your ideas

When you act, you put your ideas into action.

Based on your knowledge of the child and the learning frameworks, this becomes your future planning. To do this effectively, you need to:

- put into place what you have planned, including your materials, resources, displays and opportunities
- interact as you planned and, in response to how the plans evolve, engage children, guide them, create interest, care and respect
- scaffold learning by supporting children to become independent and capable while developing their self-esteem
- care for children so they feel confident trying, feel supported and develop a positive self-image
- be flexible by changing your experiences and interactions to suit the children
- add additional challenges or materials to extend learning and engage the children using their direction, interests and ideas
- accept mistakes as opportunities to learn and as a part of problem-solving through trial and error.

Evaluate

Once you have implemented your plans and ideas, reflect on what happened.

Reviewing what happened involves revisiting the reason that you developed the plan to ensure you have direction and purpose. It will also include feedback from children, families and others involved.

The approved learning frameworks expect you to plan based on the things you see and know are consistent. They ask that you gather information over time and take this into consideration in order to provide environments that meet each child's needs.

You will find these guidelines in the learning outcome Practice: Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing. This practice encourages you to think regularly about how you are doing and what skills you could develop. You should make changes when needed and set goals for yourself to increase your knowledge, and develop further understanding of each child and their family. Part of this involves your interactions with colleagues about your observation records and analysis.

Evaluation occurs when you reflect on and challenge the things you have done. It allows you to assess the appropriateness of your thinking according to each experience and use this to inform your future actions and practices.

Evaluation is an ongoing process that encourages change. When reflecting on your plans, start by asking yourself these questions:

- What worked?
- What did not work?
- Who participated?
- Who did not participate?
- Was the learning experience developmentally appropriate and age-appropriate?
- How could I extend on this learning experience?
- Was the learning experience effective and enjoyable for the children?
- What feedback have I received from children, other educators, families or others?
- How does this information affect my pedagogy (teaching practices)?

The answers to these questions, and the reflection information you gather, form the 'observe' stage of the planning cycle. By recording what you learn from the reflection, you are creating ongoing records that you can use to plan, act and then reflect again.

Example

Planning cycle

Alan, Felicity's father, tells Sam that Felicity is interested in cars. Sam records this information.

The following table outlines how Sam, the educator, implements the planning cycle in relation to Felicity.

Observe	**Child**: Felicity **Age**: 4 years **Date**: 21st February **Recorded by: Sam** **Secondary information received from**: Alan (Felicity's dad) Over the weekend Felicity has independently organised the routine chart at home. She was able to set out the order of the day in a way that represented the planned events. Each routine is represented by a photo of what will happen, for example, before meals Felicity washes her hands, so there is a photo of the bathroom tap.
Assess	Sam gains a perspective on Felicity's knowledge, interests and strengths. He links this to the learning framework: › Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators › Sub-outcome: Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work.
Plan	Sam plans the following experiences: › Working with the children to identify the current routine. › Deciding on where to place the routine chart and how it might be organised – for example, whether it needs to be mounted on using Velcro or stuck on using tack. › Creating a routine chart. The children will use their own ideas for representing the routines; these may include drawings, photos or other ideas the children choose.
Implement	Sam asks Felicity to explain the routine chart to the children and how each piece sticks on Velcro on her fridge. This arouses their interest. Together the children decide to start by writing down the routine on squares of recycled paper. Sam initiates conversations and supports learning through intentional teaching. He provides materials, makes suggestions, encourages involvement and extends learning as they implement the ideas.

Evaluate	Sam reflects on the experiences provided: ➤ The chart is clear and easy to understand. Once the children had completed the chart, they talked about how great it looked. ➤ On Wednesday, some children suggested they go outside before snack time on Wednesday. The group discussed this, agreed, then altered the chart. ➤ At one stage, most of the children were involved and that made it difficult for everyone to participate in decision-making. ➤ There was a concern about sustainability due to some children wanting to laminate all pieces. We talked about plastics in the environment and also the cost of laminating sheets.. The children decided they should be careful with each routine piece.

Practice Task 5

1. Hibba draws a science laboratory on paper. She says she wants to build one. Which of the following experiences and interactions contribute in a meaningful, responsive and respectful way towards the child's learning, development and wellbeing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Tell Hibba that this might be dangerous so she should think of a new idea.
- ☐ Find the materials you think Hibba might need and set them up.
- ☐ Ask Hibba what materials she might need.
- ☐ Work with Hibba to find a space where a science laboratory might be set up safely.

2. Nakita notices the pattern of two types of rocks along the garden edges. Which of the following experiences and interactions contribute in a meaningful, responsive and respectful way towards the child's learning, development and wellbeing? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Provide two different types of pebbles in the sandpit and explore the different patterns that can be made.
- ☐ Discuss the rock patterns and see if Nakita can find other patterns in the garden.
- ☐ Get Nakita to copy a pattern of blocks that you set up and let her know if she gets the pattern incorrect so her skills can improve.
- ☐ Get Nakita to paint rocks.

3. Nilda shows an interest in skin colour. She talks about how her dark skin is different to Jin's pale skin. Which of the following experiences and interactions contribute in a meaningful, responsive and respectful way towards the child's learning, development and wellbeing? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Explain how Jin is from Australia, where most people have white skin.
- [ ] Add skin tone paints to a finger-paint table so children can experiment with mixing the colours.
- [ ] Access a book about the similarities and differences we notice about others and read it with Nilda.
- [ ] Tell Nilda that it is rude to speak about skin colour; it might upset other children.

4. Reflection occurs when you challenge the things you have done. It allows you to evaluate the appropriateness of your thinking according to each experience and use this to inform your future actions and practices

* True * False

Summary

- The aim of analysis is to develop a perspective that leads to planning. These perspectives will be linked to evidence.
- Educators across Australia commonly use the EYLF learning outcomes and sub-outcomes to connect what they notice through observation to language that is consistent.
- By linking information to the approved learning framework outcomes, you are showing an understanding of what you have documented and how this reflects the child.
- You may be asked to add a developmental domain or area.
- When you collect a range of information and attempt to see children from different perspectives, you slowly build a picture of who they are and what they need.
- The information you gain helps form a full picture that shows a holistic view of the child.
- By using the perspectives you have developed, you are able to build on where the child is and develop them in a direction that is positive for them and which includes topics and experiences they enjoy.
- The approved learning framework sub-outcome you link to your observation records can help to guide your planning.
- A responsive environment adapts to reflect children's interests and abilities, stimulates their imagination and encourages participation.
- By including children in setting up activities and experiences, you provide opportunities for discussion and can observe their interactions.

Learning Checkpoint 2
Using observations to inform practice

Part A

1. Link each of the following scenarios to a relevant learning outcome and sub-outcome.

   a. Maisie (four years) is watching Tia and Oliver kicking a ball to each other. Tia says, 'Maisie, do you want to play too? You can have a turn.'

   b. Alfie has been sitting working on a puzzle for some time. He is picking up pieces, trying them and then putting them back down when they don't fit. Niamh approaches asking, 'Would you like some help with that puzzle?' Alfie replies, 'No thanks, I want to do it by myself.'

   c. Lewis is reading the book *We're going on a bear hunt*. As he turns the page, he begins to chant the matching actions, 'Swishy swashy, swishy swashy.' He smiles as he continues to the next page.

   d. Poppy tells Vanita, an educator, that she likes to snuggle in her blanket on cold days and drink warm milk. She says that she cuddles her mum and they put the heater on when it's cold.

   e. Joshua, an educator, asks Layla (aged three), 'Would you like me to make you a bed today?' Layla replies, 'Yes, I'm tired today and want to have a sleep.'

2. Draw a line to match the most suitable perspective based on the developmental domain to each of the images.

* Social development

* Communication development

* Cognitive development

* Emotional development

* Physical development

Part B

Read the case study and then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Maddison, an educator, wants to develop a holistic perspective of Dylan. Maddison has been recording observations and has gathered information on aspects of his development and learning. She will then plan and implement appropriate experiences and interactions based on Dylan's knowledge and interests.

Maddison has made the following observations:

- Dylan knows the names of 10 different dinosaurs.
- Dylan wants to build a volcano like in the Jurassic era.
- Dylan is good at remembering things and can pronounce difficult words.
- Dylan likes dinosaurs and enjoys building things.
- Dylan sometimes finds it frustrating when other children are not familiar with dinosaur names. He will often leave the play and move to a solitary space.
- Dylan often chooses to play in the sandpit or block area.

1. Draw a line to match each aspect of development on the left to the information that Maddison has observed on the right.

* Ideas	* Dylan knows the names of 10 different dinosaurs.
* Skills and strengths	* Dylan wants to build a volcano like in the Jurassic era.
* Reactions to the play environment	* Dylan is good at remembering things and can pronounce difficult words.
* Social interactions	* Dylan can find it frustrating when other children are not familiar with dinosaur names. He will often leave the play and move to a solitary space.
* Knowledge and interests	* Dylan chooses to play in the sandpit or the block area.
* Interests	* Dylan chooses to play in the sandpit or the block area.

2. Maddison wants to plan experiences and interactions based on her perspectives of Dylan's developmental milestones, needs and interests. Which of the following are relevant questions she can ask Dylan? Select all that apply.

- ☐ 'Do you think we could make a volcano in the sand near the dinosaurs? I have a way to make lava.'
- ☐ 'Why don't we all hop on the bus and visit the farm animals?'
- ☐ 'Dylan, what else could we add to these building materials?'
- ☐ 'Would you like to sort these dinosaur pieces or look at them in the magnifying glass?'
- ☐ 'Dylan, it's good to find out about other people and how they live. Maybe Finley will play too.'
- ☐ 'Which dinosaur might you draw first?'

3. Draw a line to match the beginning of each sentence about critical reflection to the correct ending.

* Maddison could reflect on her perspectives of Dylan	* by talking to other colleagues and asking for their perspective.
* If Maddison gathered further information about Dylan she would be ensuring her reflection	* through daily discussions, meetings and including others in the planning process.
* Maddison could gather further information about Dylan	* is meaningful and helps her to develop knowledge of Dylan and his family.