



# Partnerships:

## Play-based learning and intentionality

November 2023

This Partnerships practice resource is part of a series of 8 practice resources for Play-based learning and intentionality in early childhood education and care services (ECEC). Each resource is aligned with the Principles of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF V2.0).

**Before using this resource, read the [Introduction: Play-based learning and intentionality](#). The introduction provides insights into the importance of intentionality in play-based learning in quality, evidence-based ECEC practice with cultural responsiveness at its heart.**

Partnerships between families, teachers and educators, and other professionals provide a strong foundation for learning and help to promote equity, diversity and inclusion. Taking time to build partnerships assists you to develop deeper understandings of diverse values, beliefs, and preferences. Partnerships can be formed when educators and teachers work to develop their reflexive practice and cultural responsiveness. Building partnerships with the wider community and its members, also helps children develop awareness of the world and their place within it, including connections to Country and culture.

**Strategies for intentionality within play-based learning that can support this Principle include:**

- Promote culturally responsive practices through critical reflection and reflexive practice. Focusing on understanding what is known, how it is known and why it is known is fundamental to creating the space where effective partnerships, rich experiences with children, families and communities can occur.
- Partner with children and their families to learn more about their interests, values, intentions, and aspirations. This knowledge can help to create a curriculum that reflects and responds to each family's funds of knowledge, including the skills and knowledge that each child brings with them from home.

- Collaborate with children, families and other professionals to determine priorities for children's learning and development and use these understandings to inform curriculum and pedagogical decision-making. Use resources such as the [early childhood learning trajectories](#) to help identify areas of learning and development that you can focus on together, to build towards the Learning Outcomes.
- Extend partnerships to include families, teachers and educators, and other support professionals who have a strong understanding of the child, such as child health nurses, speech pathologists and occupational therapists (with appropriate consent). Consider how collaboration can inform intentionality when working with children with additional needs.
- Build partnerships of trust and authenticity over time with local Elders and community members to create culturally safe and welcoming environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Actively include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and community in developing, implementing and evaluating the program.
- Consider how connections with the wider community can help children to develop a sense of belonging and to understand more about the people in their community. Connections with the community could include participating in community events, engaging in intergenerational play experiences or having local community members visit the service. These partnerships can also help others to recognise children as active, agentic community members.

The EYLF V2.0 (p. 15) notes that:

Ethical partnerships are formed when information is shared responsibly, and educators take safety precautions to ensure children's right to privacy and protection. Educators know children engage with popular culture, media and digital technologies so they build partnerships with families and others to keep children safe and families aware of e-safety information.

## Reflection questions

- How do you strengthen partnerships with families that enable you to build deeper understandings of each family's interests, values, skills, and funds of knowledge?
- How might the commitment to building and maintaining collaborative partnerships be added to or strengthened in your individual or service philosophy?

This practice resource is part of a series of 8 Play-based learning and intentionality resources including:

- [Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships](#)
- [Partnerships](#)
- [Respect for diversity](#)
- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives](#)
- [Equity, inclusion and high expectations](#)
- [Sustainability](#)
- [Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning](#)
- [Collaborative leadership and teamwork.](#)

Before using the other resources in this series, read the [Introduction: Play-based learning and intentionality](#).

They link to the [early childhood learning trajectories](#) suite of resources including the [Learning trajectories user guide](#), [Evidence report](#) and the [Assessment for children's learning practice resources](#).