



# Respect for diversity:

## Play-based learning and intentionality

November 2023

This Respect for diversity 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.**

Each child has a unique way of living, knowing, being and doing that emerges from their social and cultural backgrounds and experiences. When teachers and educators act with reflexivity and intentionality in play-based learning, they are well-positioned to recognise diversity and think deeply about the opportunities and provisions that can be included in the curriculum to foster learning, development and wellbeing for all children.

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

- Recognise that learning and development can occur through many experiences, and there are many different ways to achieve Learning Outcomes for each child. Use resources such as the [early childhood learning trajectories](#) to keep you focused on the underlying learning that is occurring, so that you can recognise teachable moments in diverse contexts and situations.
- Consider how play-based experiences can support children's sense of identity, their rights, and an understanding of equity, inclusivity, and fairness. Understanding these elements can help foster relationships between children that extend their learning and development, and promote social justice.

- Be mindful of each child's unique feelings, thinking, and personalities. Learn about their strengths and needs so you know when and how to respond. Ensure that children have agency and a voice, and are actively involved and represented in play-based learning experiences.
- Recognise the cultural context that educators and teachers bring to the learning environment. By embedding responsive, reflexive practice teachers and educators can examine their own preferences and biases that may impact on the delivery of quality learning opportunities for children from cultural backgrounds different from their own.
- Provide open-ended resources featuring everyday items that can be adapted to meet different learning goals. Include resources and materials that are culturally sensitive and reflect children's everyday experiences in their family and social contexts.
- Consider whether both planned and spontaneous experiences reflect the diversity of children and families at the service, as well as wider communities. The daily program, the setup of the learning environment, and interactions with children throughout the day are all examples of intentional decisions that can support understandings of inclusion, diversity, and living together as community members.

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## Reflection questions

- How can teachers and educators be further supported to *make curriculum decisions that uphold all children's rights to have their cultures, identities, languages, capabilities and strengths acknowledged and valued, and respond to the complexity of children's and families' lives?* (EYLF V2.0, p. 16).
- How do you ensure that both planned and spontaneous play-based learning experiences reflect and respond to each child's way of knowing, being and doing?

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](#).