BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia

Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments.

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This is Australia's first national Early Years Learning Framework for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

The Council of Australian Governments has developed this Framework to assist educators to provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. In this way, the Early Years Learning Framework (the Framework) will contribute to realising the Council of Australian Governments' vision that:

"All children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation." [1]

The Framework draws on conclusive international evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children's learning and development. It has been developed with considerable input from the early childhood sector, early childhood academics and the Australian and State and Territory Governments.

The Framework forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all early childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. The Framework has been designed for use by early childhood educators working in partnership with families, children's first and most influential educators.

Children:
refers to babies, toddlers and three to five year olds, unless otherwise stated.

The Melbourne Declaration also commits to improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and strengthening early childhood education.

The Council of Australian Governments is committed to closing the gap in educational achievement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade[3]. Early childhood education has a critical role to play in delivering this outcome.

Recognising this, a specific document that provides educators with additional guidance on ensuring cultural security for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families will be developed and made available to educators.

Over time additional resources may be developed to support the application of this Framework.

Play-based learning:
a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.

3 The Council of Australian Governments - Communique - 3 July 2008. *Indigenous Reform - Closing the Gap.*

A VISION FOR CHILDREN'S LEARNING

All children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by *belonging*, *being* and *becoming*. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.

BELONGING

Experiencing *belonging* – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community. *Belonging* acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of *belonging*. *Belonging* is central to *being* and *becoming* in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

"You belong in your house with your family" **– Dong**

BEING

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world.

"If you want to be a mermaid you can imagine" **– Jazmine**

Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present.

BECOMING

Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. *Becoming* reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

"When you keep planting plants you become a gardener" **– Olivia**

ELEMENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

The Framework puts children's learning at the core and comprises three inter-related elements: Principles, Practice and Learning Outcomes (see Figure 1). All three elements are fundamental to early childhood pedagogy and curriculum decision-making.

Curriculum encompasses all the interactions, experiences, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development. The emphasis in the Framework is on the planned or intentional aspects of the curriculum.

Children are receptive to a wide range of experiences. What is included or excluded from the curriculum affects how children learn, develop and understand the world.

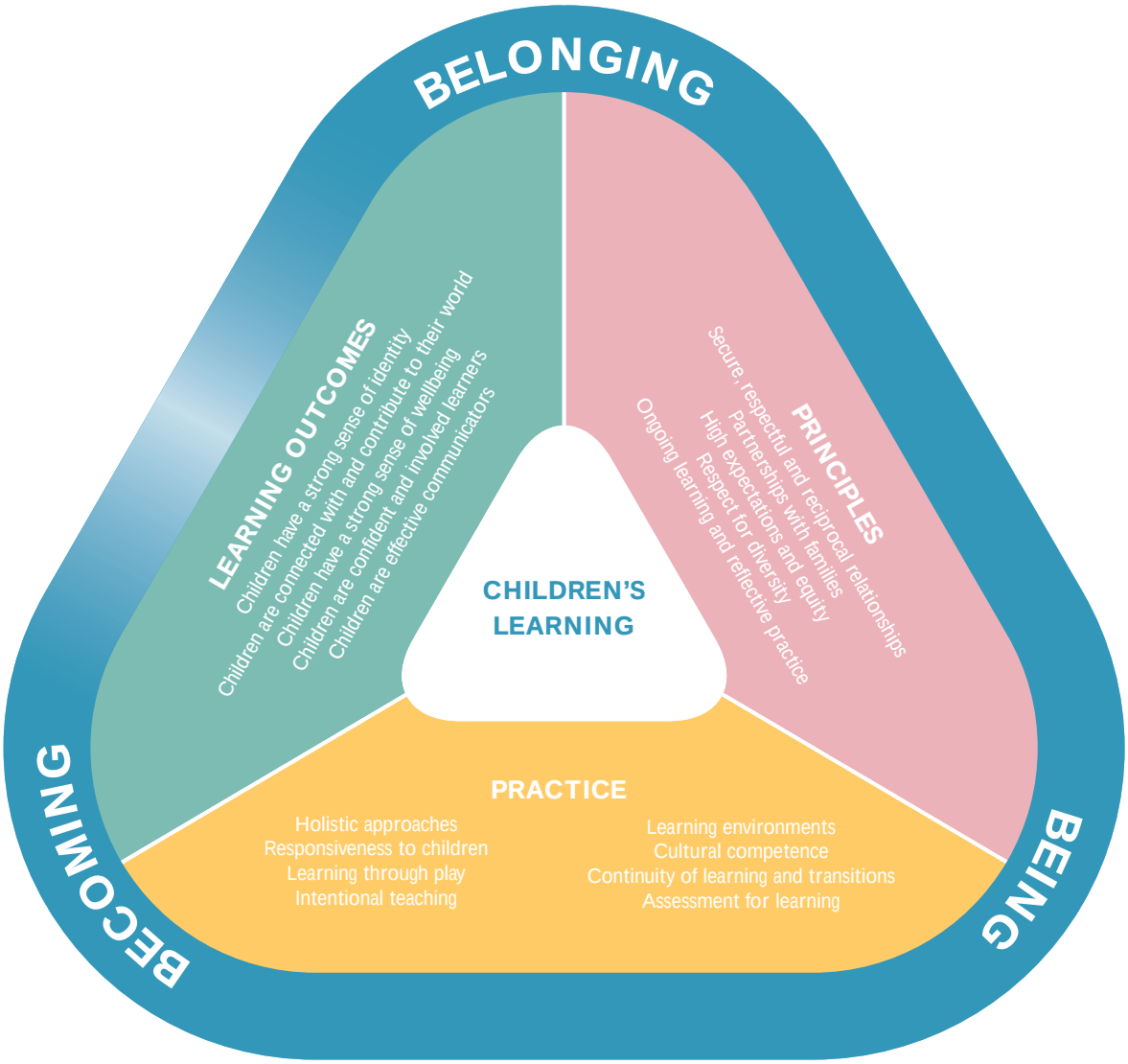
The Framework supports a model of curriculum decision-making as an ongoing cycle. This involves educators drawing on their professional knowledge, including their in-depth knowledge of each child.

Working in partnership with families, educators use the Learning Outcomes to guide their planning for children's learning. In order to engage children actively in learning, educators identify children's strengths and interests, choose appropriate teaching strategies and design the learning environment.

Educators carefully assess learning to inform further planning.

Curriculum:
in the early childhood setting curriculum means 'all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development'. [adapted from Te Whariki]

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


BELONGING
BEING
BECOMING
LEARNING OUTCOMES
Children have a strong sense of identity
Children are connected with and contribute to their world
Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
Children are confident and involved learners
Children are effective communicators
PRINCIPLES
Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
Partnerships with families
High expectations and equity
Respect for diversity
Ongoing learning and reflective practice
CHILDREN'S LEARNING
PRACTICE
Holistic approaches
Responsiveness to children
Learning through play
Intentional teaching
Learning environments
Cultural competence
Continuity of learning and transitions
Assessment for learning

EARLY CHILDHOOD PEDAGOGY

The term *pedagogy* refers to the holistic nature of early childhood educators' professional practice (especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships), curriculum decision-making, teaching and learning. When educators establish respectful and caring relationships with children and families, they are able to work together to construct curriculum and learning experiences relevant to children in their local context. These experiences gradually expand children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Educators' professional judgements are central to their active role in facilitating children's learning. In making professional judgements, they weave together their:

- professional knowledge and skills
- knowledge of children, families and communities
- awareness of how their beliefs and values impact on children's learning
- personal styles and past experiences.

They also draw on their creativity, intuition and imagination to help them improvise and adjust their practice to suit the time, place and context of learning.

Different theories about early childhood inform approaches to children's learning and development. Early childhood educators draw upon a range of perspectives in their work which may include:

- developmental theories that focus on describing and understanding the processes of change in children's learning and development over time
- socio-cultural theories that emphasise the central role that families and cultural groups play in children's learning and the importance of respectful relationships and provide insight into social and cultural contexts of learning and development
- socio-behaviourist theories that focus on the role of experiences in shaping children's behaviour
- critical theories that invite early childhood educators to challenge assumptions about curriculum, and consider how their decisions may affect children differently
- post-structuralist theories that offer insights into issues of power, equity and social justice in early childhood settings.

Drawing on a range of perspectives and theories can challenge traditional ways of seeing children, teaching and learning, and encourage educators, as individuals and with colleagues, to:

- investigate why they act in the ways that they do
- discuss and debate theories to identify strengths and limitations
- recognise how the theories and beliefs that they use to make sense of their work enable but also limit their actions and thoughts
- consider the consequences of their actions for children's experiences
- nd new ways of working fairly and justly.

Educators recognise and respond to barriers to children achieving educational success. In response they challenge practices that contribute to inequities and make curriculum decisions that promote inclusion and participation of all children. By developing their professional knowledge and skills, and working in partnership with children, families, communities, other services and agencies, they continually strive to find equitable and effective ways to ensure that all children have opportunities to achieve learning outcomes.

4. Respect for diversity

There are many ways of living, *being* and of knowing. Children are born *belonging* to a culture, which is not only influenced by traditional practices, heritage and ancestral knowledge, but also by the experiences, values and beliefs of individual families and communities. Respecting diversity means within the curriculum valuing and reflecting the practices, values and beliefs of families. Educators honour the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families. They value children's different capacities and abilities and respect differences in families' home lives.

Educators recognise that diversity contributes to the richness of our society and provides a valid evidence base about ways of knowing. For Australia it also includes promoting greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and *being*.

When early childhood educators respect the diversity of families and communities, and the aspirations they hold for children, they are able to foster children's motivation to learn and reinforce their sense of themselves as competent learners. They make curriculum decisions that uphold all children's rights to have their cultures, identities, abilities and strengths acknowledged and valued, and respond to the complexity of children's and families' lives.

Educators think critically about opportunities and dilemmas that can arise from diversity and take action to redress unfairness. They provide opportunities to learn about similarities and difference and about interdependence and how we can learn to live together.

5. Ongoing learning and reflective practice

Educators continually seek ways to build their professional knowledge and develop learning communities. They become co-learners with children, families and community, and value the continuity and richness of local knowledge shared by community members, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders.

Reflective practice is a form of ongoing learning that involves engaging with questions of philosophy, ethics and practice. Its intention is to gather information and gain insights that support, inform and enrich decision-making about children's learning. As professionals, early childhood educators examine what happens in their settings and reflect on what they might change.

Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives. Educators often frame their reflective practice within a set of overarching questions, developing more specific questions for particular areas of enquiry.

Overarching questions to guide reflection include:

- What are my understandings of each child?
- What theories, philosophies and understandings shape and assist my work?
- Who is advantaged when I work in this way? Who is disadvantaged?
- What questions do I have about my work? What am I challenged by? What am I curious about? What am I confronted by?
- What aspects of my work are not helped by the theories and guidance that I usually draw on to make sense of what I do?
- Are there other theories or knowledge that could help me to understand better what I have observed or experienced? What are they? How might those theories and that knowledge affect my practice?

A lively culture of professional inquiry is established when early childhood educators and those with whom they work are all involved in an ongoing cycle of review through which current practices are examined, outcomes reviewed and new ideas generated. In such a climate, issues relating to curriculum quality, equity and children's wellbeing can be raised and debated.

Educators are also responsive to children's ideas and play, which form an important basis for curriculum decision-making. In response to children's evolving ideas and interests, educators assess, anticipate and extend children's learning via open ended questioning, providing feedback, challenging their thinking and guiding their learning. They make use of spontaneous 'teachable moments' to scaffold children's learning.

Responsive learning relationships are strengthened as educators and children learn together and share decisions, respect and trust. Responsiveness enables educators to respectfully enter children's play and ongoing projects, stimulate their thinking and enrich their learning.

Learning through play

Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine. When children play with other children they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings. Play provides a supportive environment where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Play can expand children's thinking and enhance their desire to know and to learn. In these ways play can promote positive dispositions towards learning. Children's immersion in their play illustrates how play enables them to simply enjoy *being*.

Early childhood educators take on many roles in play with children and use a range of strategies to support learning. They engage in sustained shared conversations with children to extend their thinking[5]. They provide a balance between child led, child initiated and educator supported learning. They create learning environments that

natural environments include plants, trees, edible gardens, sand, rocks, mud, water and other elements from nature. These spaces invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature. They foster an appreciation of the natural environment, develop environmental awareness and provide a platform for ongoing environmental education.

Indoor and outdoor environments support all aspects of children's learning and invite conversations between children, early childhood educators, families and the broader community. They promote opportunities for sustained shared thinking and collaborative learning.

Materials enhance learning when they re ect what is natural and familiar and also introduce novelty to provoke interest and more complex and increasingly abstract thinking. For example, digital technologies can enable children to access global connections and resources, and encourage new ways of thinking. Environments and resources can also highlight our responsibilities for a sustainable future and promote children's understanding about their responsibility to care for the environment. They can foster hope, wonder and knowledge about the natural world.

Educators can encourage children and families to contribute ideas, interests and questions to the learning environment. They can support engagement by allowing time for meaningful interactions, by providing a range of opportunities for individual and shared experiences, and by nding opportunities for children to go into and contribute to their local community.

Cultural competence

Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing and living, celebrate the bene ts of diversity and have an ability to understand and honour differences. This is evident in everyday practice when educators demonstrate an ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural competence in a two way process with families and communities.

Educators view culture and the context of family as central to children's sense of *being* and *belonging*, and to success in lifelong learning. Educators also seek to promote children's cultural competence.

Cultural competence is much more than awareness of cultural differences. It is the ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures. Cultural competence encompasses:

- being aware of one's own world view
- developing positive attitudes towards cultural differences
- gaining knowledge of different cultural practices and world views
- developing skills for communication and interaction across cultures.

Continuity of learning and transitions

Children bring family and community ways of *being, belonging* and *becoming* to their early childhood settings. By building on these experiences educators help all children to feel secure, con dent and included and to experience continuity in how to *be* and how to learn.

Transitions, including from home to early childhood settings, between settings, and from early childhood settings to school, offer opportunities and challenges. Different places and spaces have their own purposes, expectations and ways of doing things. Building on children's prior and current experiences helps them to feel secure, con dent and connected to familiar people, places, events and understandings. Children, families and early childhood educators all contribute to successful transitions between settings.

In partnership with families, early childhood educators ensure that children have an active role in preparing for transitions. They assist children to understand the traditions, routines and practices of the settings to which they are moving and to feel comfortable with the process of change.

Early childhood educators also help children to negotiate changes in their status or identities, especially when they begin full-time school. As children make transitions to new settings (including school) educators from early childhood settings and schools commit to sharing information about each child's knowledge and skills so learning can build on foundations of earlier learning. Educators work collaboratively with each child's new educator and other professionals to ensure a successful transition.

Assessment for learning

Assessment for children's learning refers to the process of gathering and analysing information as evidence about what children know, can do and understand. It is part of an ongoing cycle that includes planning, documenting and evaluating children's learning.

It is important because it enables educators in partnership with families, children and other professionals to:

- plan effectively for children's current and future learning
- communicate about children's learning and progress
- determine the extent to which all children are progressing toward realising learning outcomes and if not, what might be impeding their progress
- identify children who may need additional support in order to achieve particular learning outcomes, providing that support or assisting families to access specialist help
- evaluate the effectiveness of learning opportunities, environments and experiences offered and the approaches taken to enable children's learning
- re ect on pedagogy that will suit this context and these children.

Educators use a variety of strategies to collect, document, organise, synthesise and interpret the information that they gather to assess children's learning. They search for appropriate ways to collect rich and meaningful information that depicts children's learning in context, describes their progress and identi es their strengths, skills and understandings. More recent approaches to assessment also examine the learning strategies that children use and re ect ways in which learning is co-constructed through interactions between the educator and each child. Used effectively, these approaches to assessment become powerful ways to make the process of learning visible to children and their families, educators and other professionals.

The ve Learning Outcomes in this Framework, as outlined later, provide early childhood educators with key reference points against which children's progress can be identi ed, documented and communicated to families, other early childhood pedagogy that will suit th

- the extent to which they know and value the culturally speci c knowledge about children and learning that is embedded within the community in which they are working
- each child's learning in the context of their families, drawing family perspectives, understandings, experiences and expectations
- the learning opportunities which build on what children already know and what they bring to the early childhood setting
- evidence that the learning experiences offered are inclusive of all children and culturally appropriate
- not making assumptions about children's learning or setting lower expectations for some children because of unacknowledged biases
- incorporating pedagogical practices that re ect knowledge of diverse perspectives and contribute to children's wellbeing and successful learning
- whether there are suf ciently challenging experiences for all children
- the evidence that demonstrates children are learning
- how they can expand the range of ways they assess to make assessment richer and more useful.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The ve Learning Outcomes are designed to capture the integrated and complex learning and development of all children across the birth to ve age range. The outcomes are:

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

The outcomes are broad and observable. They acknowledge that children learn in a variety of ways and vary in their capabilities and pace of learning. Over time children engage with increasingly complex ideas and learning experiences, which are transferable to other situations.

Learning in relation to the outcomes is in uenced by:

- each child's current capabilities, dispositions and learning preferences
- educators' practices and the early childhood environment
- engagement with each child's family and community
- the integration of learning across the outcomes.

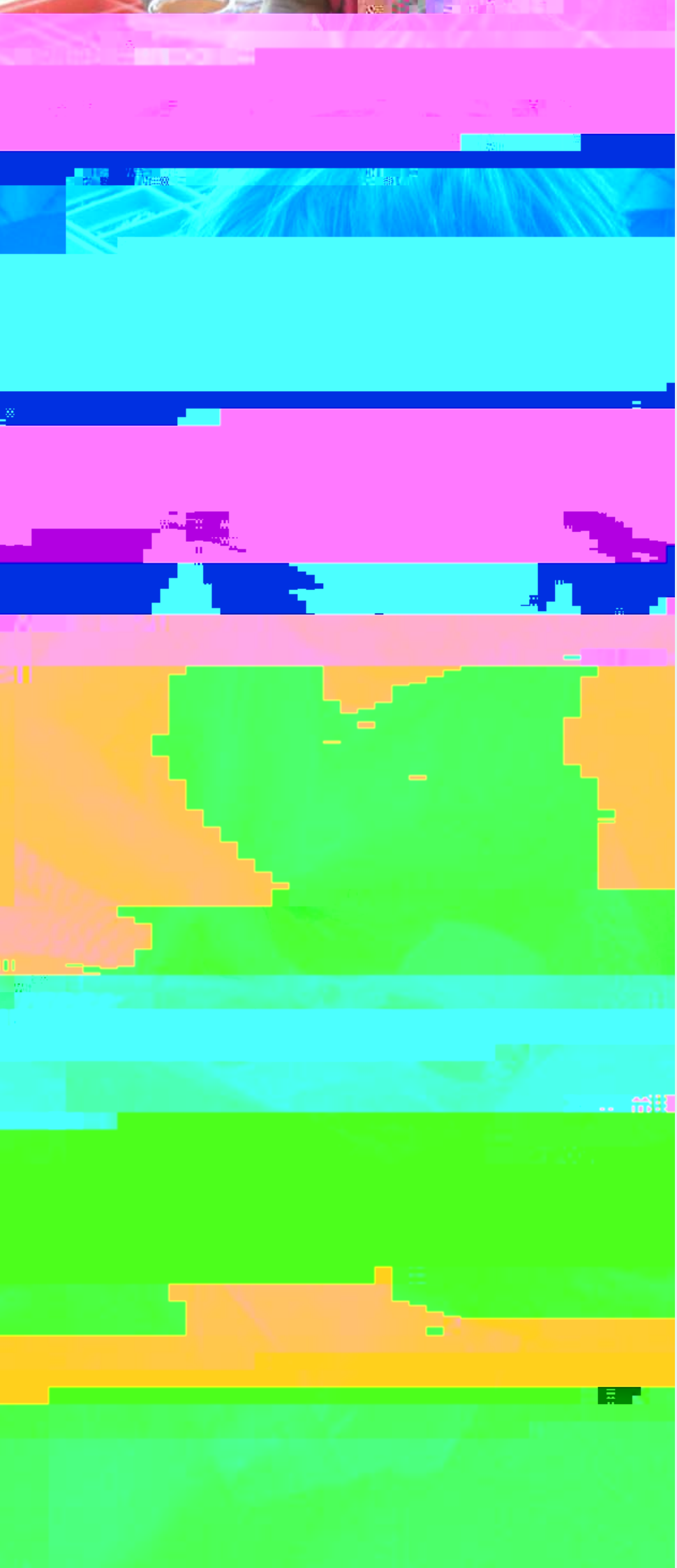
Children's learning is ongoing and each child will progress towards the outcomes in different and equally meaningful ways. Learning is not always predictable and linear. Educators plan with each child and the outcomes in mind.

The following Learning Outcomes demonstrate how the three elements of the Framework: Principles, Practices and Outcomes combine to guide curriculum decision-making and assessment to promote children's learning.

Key components of learning in each outcome are expanded to provide examples of evidence that educators may observe in children as they learn. Examples of practice to promote children's learning are also included.

There will be many other ways that children demonstrate learning within and across the outcomes. Educators understand, engage with and promote children's learning. They talk with families and communities to make locally based decisions, relevant to each child and their community. There is provision for educators to list speci c examples of evidence and practice that are culturally and contextually appropriate to each child and their settings.

The points described within each outcome are relevant to children of all ages. Knowledge of individual children, their strengths and capabilities will guide educators' professional judgement to ensure all children are engaging in a range of experiences across all the Learning Outcomes in ways that optimise their learning.



OUTCOME 1:
CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY

Belonging, *being* and *becoming* are integral parts of identity.

Children learn about themselves and construct their own identity within the context of their families and communities. This includes their relationships with people, places and things and the actions and responses of others. Identity is not fixed. It is shaped by experiences. When children have positive experiences they develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected, and feel a sense of *belonging*. Relationships are the foundations for the construction of identity – 'who I am', 'how I belong' and 'what is my influence?'

In early childhood settings children develop a sense of *belonging* when they feel accepted, develop attachments and trust those that care for them. As children are developing their sense of identity, they explore different aspects of it (physical, social, emotional, spiritual, cognitive), through their play and their relationships.

When children feel safe, secure and supported they grow in confidence to explore and learn.

The concept of *being* reminds educators to focus on children in the here and now, and of the importance of children's right to be a child and experience the joy of childhood. *Being* involves children developing an awareness of their social and cultural heritage, of gender and their significance in their world.

Becoming includes children building and shaping their identity through their evolving experiences and relationships which include change and transitions. Children are always learning about the impact of their personal beliefs and values. Children's agency, as well as guidance, care and teaching by families and educators shape children's experiences of *becoming*.

OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY

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

Children feel safe, secure, and supported

This is evident, for example, when children:

- build secure attachments with one and then more familiar educators
- use effective routines to help make predicted transitions smoothly
- sense and respond to a feeling of belonging
- communicate their needs for comfort and assistance
- establish and maintain respectful, trusting relationships with other children and educators
- openly express their feelings and ideas in their interactions with others
- respond to ideas and suggestions from others
- initiate interactions and conversations with trusted educators
- con dently explore and engage with social and physical environments through relationships and play
- initiate and join in play
- explore aspects of identity through role play

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- acknowledge and respond sensitively to children's cues and signals
- respond sensitively to children's attempts to initiate interactions and conversations
- support children's secure attachment through consistent and warm nurturing relationships
- support children in times of change and bridge the gap between the familiar and the unfamiliar
- build upon culturally valued child rearing practices and approaches to learning
- are emotionally available and support children's expression of their thoughts and feelings
- recognise that feelings of distress, fear or discomfort may take some time to resolve
- acknowledge each child's uniqueness in positive ways
- spend time interacting and conversing with each child

Add your own examples from your context:

OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY

Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency

This is evident, for example, when children:

- demonstrate increasing awareness of the needs and rights of others
- be open to new challenges and discoveries
- increasingly co-operate and work collaboratively with others
- take considered risk in their decision-making and cope with the unexpected
- recognise their individual achievements and the achievements of others
- demonstrate an increasing capacity for self-regulation
- approach new safe situations with con dence
- begin to initiate negotiating and sharing behaviours
- persist when faced with challenges and when rst attempts are not successful

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- provide children with strategies to make informed choices about their behaviours
- promote children's sense of belonging, connectedness and wellbeing
- maintain high expectations of each child's capabilities
- mediate and assist children to negotiate their rights in relation to the rights of others
- provide opportunities for children to engage independently with tasks and play
- display delight, encouragement and enthusiasm for children's attempts
- support children's efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate
- motivate and encourage children to succeed when they are faced with challenges
- provide time and space for children to engage in both individual and collaborative pursuits
- build on the culturally valued learning of individual children's communities
- encourage children to make choices and decisions

Add your own examples from your context:

OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY

Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities

This is evident, for example, when children:

- feel recognised and respected for who they are
- explore different identities and points of view in dramatic play
- share aspects of their culture with the other children and educators
- use their home language to construct meaning
- develop strong foundations in both the culture and language/s of their family and of the broader community without compromising their cultural identities
- develop their social and cultural heritage through engagement with Elders and community members
- reach out and communicate for comfort, assistance and companionship
- celebrate and share their contributions and achievements with others

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- promote in all children a strong sense of who they are and their connectedness to others – a shared identity as Australians
- ensure all children experience pride and con dence in their achievements
- share children's successes with families
- show respect for diversity, acknowledging the varying approaches of children, families, communities and cultures
- acknowledge and understand that children construct meaning in many different ways
- demonstrate deep understanding of each child, their family and community contexts in planning for children's learning
- provide children with examples of the many ways identities and culture are recognised and expressed
- build upon culturally valued approaches to learning
- build on the knowledge, languages and understandings that children bring
- talk with children in respectful ways about similarities and differences in people
- provide rich and diverse resources that re ect children's social worlds
- listen to and learn about children's understandings of themselves

OUTCOME 2:
CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

Experiences of relationships and participation in communities contribute to children's *belonging, being and becoming*. From birth children experience living and learning with others in a range of communities. These might include families, local communities or early childhood settings. Having a positive sense of identity and experiencing respectful, responsive relationships strengthens children's interest and skills in *being* and *becoming* active contributors to their world. As children move into early childhood settings they broaden their experiences as participants in different relationships and communities.

Over time the variety and complexity of ways in which children connect and participate with others increases. Babies participate through smiling, crying, imitating, and making sounds to show their level of interest in relating to or participating with others. Toddlers participate and connect with other toddlers through such gestures as offering their teddy to a distressed child or welcoming a new child enthusiastically. Older children show interest in how others regard them and understandings about friendships. They develop understandings that their actions or responses affect how others feel or experience *belonging*.

When educators create environments in which children experience mutually enjoyable, caring and respectful relationships with people and the environment, children respond accordingly. When children participate collaboratively in everyday routines, events and experiences and have opportunities to contribute to decisions, they learn to live interdependently.

Children's connectedness and different ways of *belonging* with people, country and communities helps them to learn ways of *being* which re ect the values, traditions and practices of their families and communities. Over time this learning transforms the ways they interact with others.

OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

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

This is evident, for example, when children:

- begin to recognise that they have a right to belong to many communities
- cooperate with others and negotiate roles and relationships in play episodes and group experiences
- take action to assist other children to participate in social groups
- broaden their understanding of the world in which they live
- express an opinion in matters that affect them
- build on their own social experiences to explore other ways of being
- participate in reciprocal relationships
- gradually learn to 'read' the behaviours of others and respond appropriately
- understand different ways of contributing through play and projects
- demonstrate a sense of belonging and comfort in their environments
- are playful and respond positively to others, reaching out for company and friendship
- contribute to fair decision-making about matters that affect them

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- promote a sense of community within the early childhood setting
- build connections between the early childhood setting and the local community
- provide opportunities for children to investigate ideas, complex concepts and ethical issues that are relevant to their lives and their local communities
- model language that children can use to express ideas, negotiate roles and collaborate to achieve goals
- ensure that children have the skills to participate and contribute to group play

OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

Children respond to diversity with respect

This is evident, for example, when children:

- begin to show concern for others
- explore the diversity of culture, heritage, background and tradition and that diversity presents opportunities for choices and new understandings
- become aware of connections, similarities and differences between people
- listen to others' ideas and respect different ways of being and doing
- practise inclusive ways of achieving coexistence
- notice and react in positive ways to similarities and differences among people

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- re ect on their own responses to diversity
- plan experiences and provide resources that broaden children's perspectives and encourage appreciation of diversity
- expose children to different languages and dialects and encourage appreciation of linguistic diversity
- encourage children to listen to others and to respect diverse perspectives
- demonstrate positive responses to diversity in their own behaviour and in conversations with children
- engage in interactions with children that promote respect for diversity and value distinctiveness
- explore the culture, heritage, backgrounds and traditions of each child within the context of their community
- explore with children their ideas about diversity

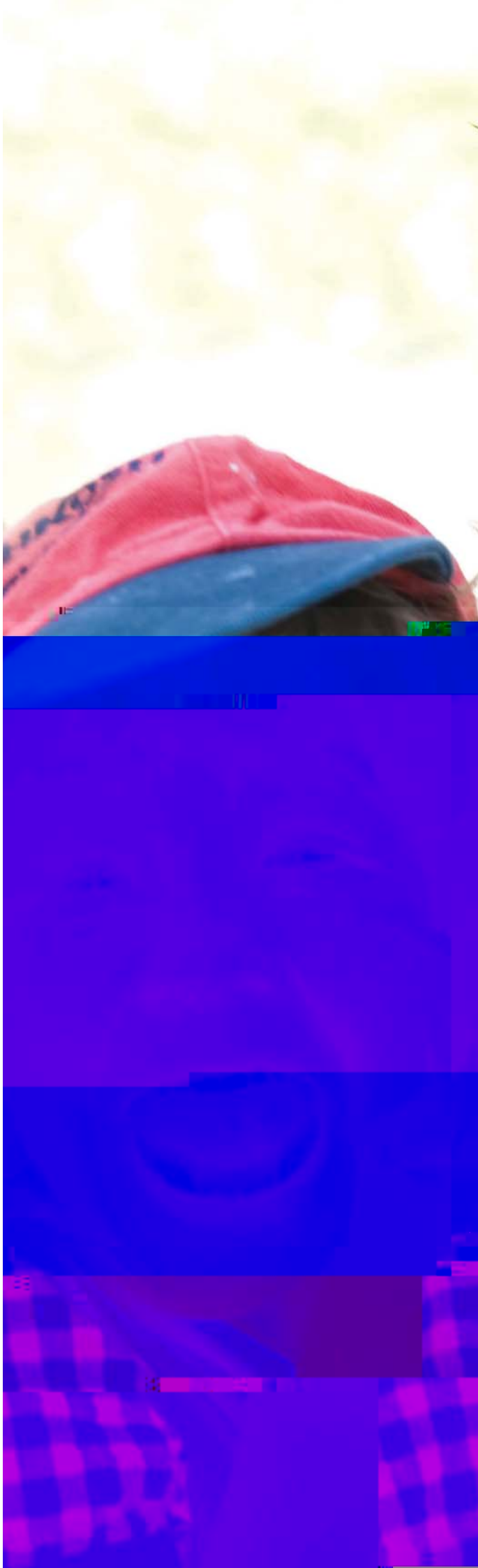
Add your own examples from your context:

OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

This is evident, for example, when children

- use play to investigate, project and explore new ideas
- participate with others to solve problems and contribute to group outcomes
- demonstrate an increasing knowledge of, and respect for natural and constructed environments
- explore, infer, predicipate 0 increasing knowledge of, and respect for natural and constructed environments



OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

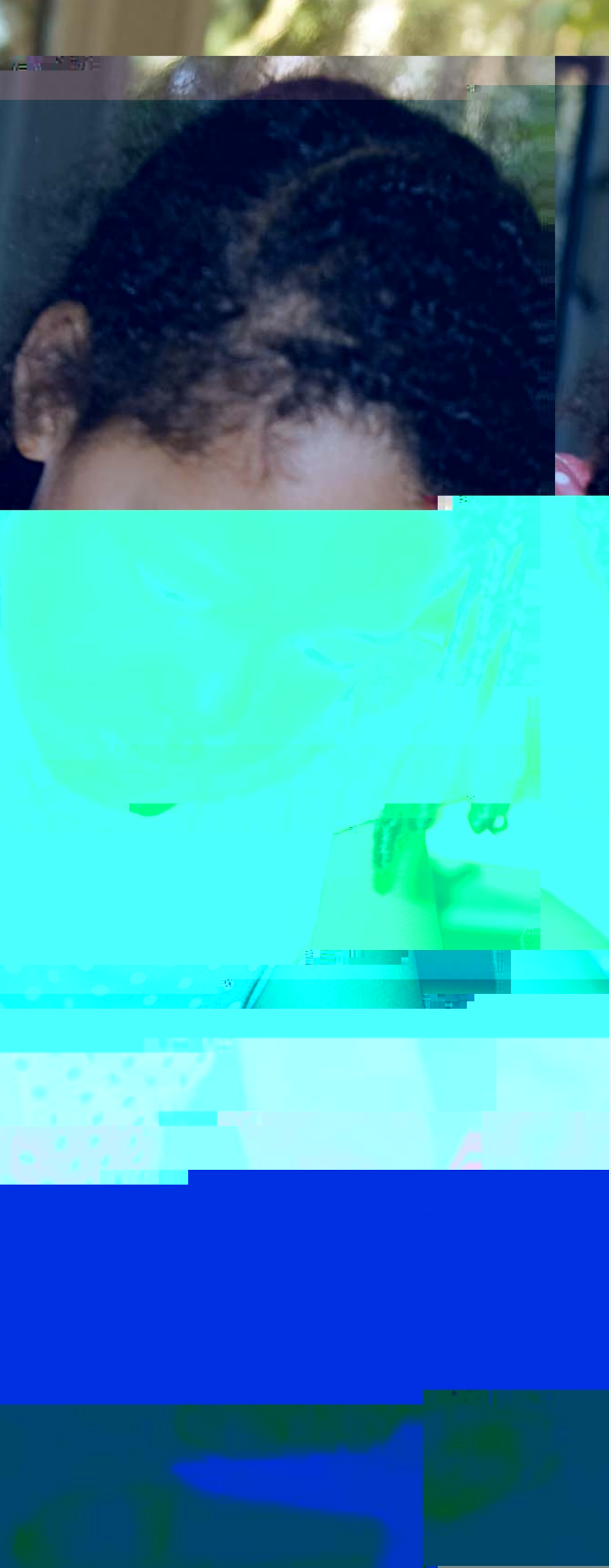
This is evident, for example, when children:

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

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- plan for and participate in energetic physical activity with children, including dance, drama, movement and games
- draw on family and community experiences and expertise to include familiar games and physical activities in play
- provide a wide range of tools and materials to resource children's fine and gross motor skills
- actively support children to learn hygiene practices
- promote continuity of children's personal health and hygiene by sharing ownership of routines and schedules with children, families and the community
- discuss health and safety issues with children and involve them in developing guidelines to keep the environment safe for all
- engage children in experiences, conversations and routines that promote healthy lifestyles and good nutrition
- consider the pace of the day within the context of the community
- model and reinforce health, nutrition and personal hygiene practices with children
- provide a range of active and restful experiences throughout the day and support children to make appropriate decisions regarding participation

Add your own examples from your context:



OUTCOME 4:
CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS

A sense of security and sound wellbeing gives children the con dence to experiment and explore and to try out new ideas, thus developing their competence and becoming active and involved participants in learning. Children are more likely to be con dent and involved learners when their family and community experiences and understandings are recognised and included in the early childhood setting. This assists them to make connections and to make sense of new experiences.

Children use processes such as exploration, collaboration and problem solving across all aspects of curriculum. Developing dispositions such as curiosity, persistence and creativity enables children to participate in and gain from learning. Effective learners are also able to transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another and to locate and use resources for learning.

In a supportive active learning environment, children who are con dent and involved learners are increasingly able to take responsibility for their own learning, personal regulation and contribution to the social environment. Connections and continuity between learning experiences in different settings make learning more meaningful and increase children's feelings of *belonging*.

Children develop understandings of themselves and their world through active, hands-on investigation. A supportive active learning environment encourages children's engagement in learning which can be recognised as deep concentration and complete focus on what captures their interests. Children bring their *being* to their learning. They have many ways of seeing the world, different processes of learning and their own preferred learning styles.

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

Educators' knowledge of individual x0.

OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS

- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, con dence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and re exivity
- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, 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

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

This is evident, for example, when children:

- express wonder and interest in their environments
- are curious and enthusiastic participants in their learning
- use play to investigate, imagine and explore ideas
- follow and extend their own interests with enthusiasm, energy and concentration
- initiate and contribute to play experiences emerging from their own ideas
- participate in a variety of rich and meaningful inquiry-based experiences
- persevere and experience the satisfaction of achievement
- persist even when they nd a task dif cult

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- recognise and value children's involvement in learning
- provide learning environments that are exible and open-ended
- respond to children's displays of learning dispositions by commenting on them and providing encouragement and additional ideas
- encourage children to engage in both individual and collaborative explorative learning processes
- listen carefully to children's ideas and discuss with them how these ideas might be developed
- provide opportunities for children to revisit their ideas and extend their thinking
- model inquiry processes, including wonder, curiosity and imagination, try new ideas and take on challenges
- re ect with children on what and how they have learned
- build on the knowledge, languages and understandings that children bring to their early childhood setting
- explore the diversity of cultures and social identities
- promote in children a strong sense of who they are and their connectedness to others – a shared identity as Australians

Add your own examples from your context:

OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS

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

This is evident, for example, when children:

- engage with and co-construct learning
- develop an ability to mirror, repeat and practice the actions of others, either immediately or later
- make connections between experiences, concepts and processes
- use the processes of play, re ection and investigation to solve problems
- apply generalisations from one situation to another
- try out strategies that were effective to solve problems in one situation in a new context
- transfer knowledge from one setting to another

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- value signs of children applying their learning in new ways and talk about this with them in ways that grow their understanding
- support children to construct multiple solutions to problems and use different ways of thinking
- draw children's attention to patterns and relationships in the environment and in their learning
- plan for time and space where children can re ect on their learning and to see similarities and connections between existing and new learning
- share and transfer knowledge about children's learning from one setting to another, by exchanging information with families and with professionals in other settings
- encourage children to discuss their ideas and understandings
- understand that competence is not tied to any particular language, dialect or culture

Add your own examples from your context:

OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS

OUTCOME 5:
CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

Communication is crucial to *belonging, being* and *becoming*. From birth children communicate with others using gestures, sounds, language and assisted communication. They are social beings who are intrinsically motivated to exchange ideas, thoughts, questions and feelings, and to use a range of tools and media, including music, dance and drama, to express themselves, connect with others and extend their learning.

Children's use of their home languages underpins their sense of identity and their conceptual development. Children feel a sense of *belonging* when their language, interaction styles and ways of communicating are valued. They have the right to be continuing users of their home language as well as to develop competency in Standard Australian English.

Literacy and numeracy capabilities are important aspects of communication and are vital for successful learning across the curriculum.

Literacy is the capacity, con dence and disposition to use language in all its forms. Literacy incorporates a range of modes of communication including music, movement, dance, story telling, visual arts, media and drama, as well as talking, listening, viewing, reading and writing. Contemporary texts include electronic and print based media. In an increasingly technological world, the ability to critically analyse texts is a key component of literacy. Children bene t from opportunities to explore their world using technologies and to develop con dence in using digital media.

Numeracy is the capacity, con dence and disposition to use mathematics in daily life. Children bring new mathematical understandings through engaging with problem solving. It is essential that the mathematical ideas with which young children interact are relevant and meaningful in the context of their current lives. Educators require a rich mathematical vocabulary to accurately describe and explain children's mathematical ideas and to support numeracy development. Spatial sense, structure and pattern, number, measurement, data argumentation, connections and exploring the world mathematically are the powerful mathematical ideas children need to become numerate.

Experiences in early childhood settings build on the range of experiences with language, literacy and numeracy that children have within their families and communities.

Positive attitudes and competencies in literacy and numeracy are essential for children's successful learning. The foundations for these competencies are built in early childhood.

OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

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

This is evident, for example, when children:

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

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- engage in enjoyable interactions with babies as they make and play with sounds
- are attuned and respond sensitively and appropriately to children's efforts to communicate
- listen to and respond to children's approximations of words
- value children's linguistic heritage and with family and community members encourage the use of and acquisition of home languages and Standard Australian English
- recognise that children enter early childhood programs having begun to communicate and make sense of their experiences at home and in their communities
- model language and encourage children to express themselves through language in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes
- engage in sustained communication with children about ideas and experiences, and extend their vocabulary
- include real-life resources to promote children's use of mathematical language

Add your own examples from your context:

OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

This is evident, for example, when children:

- use language and engage in play to imagine and create roles, scripts and ideas
- share the stories and symbols of their own culture and re-enact well-known stories
- use the creative arts such as drawing, painting, sculpture, drama, dance, movement, music and storytelling to express ideas and make meaning
- experiment with ways of expressing ideas and meaning using a range of media
- begin to use images and approximations of letters and words to convey meaning

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- build on children's family and community experiences with creative and expressive arts
- provide a range of resources that enable children to express meaning using visual arts, dance, drama and music
- ask and answer questions during the reading or discussion of books and other texts
- provide resources that encourage children to experiment with images and print
- teach children skills and techniques that will enhance their capacity for self-expression and communication
- join in children's play and co-construct materials such as signs that extend the play and enhance literacy learning
- respond to children's images and symbols, talking about the elements, principles, skills and techniques they have used in order to convey meaning

Add your own examples from your context:

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

OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

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

This is evident, for example, when children:

- identify the uses of technologies in everyday life and use real or imaginary technologies as props in their play
- use information and communication technologies to access images and information, explore diverse perspectives and make sense of their world
- use information and communication technologies as tools for designing, drawing, editing, re ecting and composing
- engage with technology for fun and to make meaning

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- provide children with access to a range of technologies
- integrate technologies into children's play experiences and projects
- teach skills and techniques and encourage children to use technologies to explore new information and represent their ideas
- encourage collaborative learning about and through technologies between children, and children and educators

Add your own examples from your context:

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Active learning environment: an active learning environment is one in which children are encouraged to explore and interact with the environment to make (or construct) meaning and knowledge through their experiences, social interactions and negotiations with others. In an active learning environment, educators play a crucial role of encouraging children to discover deeper meanings and make connections among ideas and between concepts, processes and representations. This requires educators to be engaged with children's emotions and thinking. *(Adapted from South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) Framework, General Introduction, pp10 & 11).*

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

Attuned: "Attunement includes the alignment of states of mind in moments of engagement, during which affect is communicated with facial expression, vocalisations, body gestures and eye contact". (Siegel, 1999).

Children: refers to babies, toddlers and three to ve year olds, unless otherwise stated.

Community participation: taking an active role in contributing to communities.

Co-construct: learning takes place as children interact with educators and other children as they work together in partnership.

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

Critical reflection: re ective practices that focus on implications for equity and social justice.

Curriculum: in the early childhood setting curriculum means 'all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development'. [adapted from Te Whariki].

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

Early childhood settings: long day care, occasional care, family day care, Multi-purpose Aboriginal Children's Services, preschools and kindergartens, playgroups, creches, early intervention settings and similar services.

Educators: early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings.

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

Intentional teaching: involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have 'always' been done that way.

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

Children's involvement can be recognised by their facial, vocal and emotional expressions, the energy, attention and care they apply and the creativity and complexity they bring to the situation. (Laevers) *A state of flow* Csikszentmihayle cited in *Reflect, Respect, Relate* (DECS 2008).

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