

# Connection.

Experiencing connection is fundamental to our existence as human beings. From a very young age, we seek connection through family, community, culture and place. Connection is central to community and learning as it allows us to be our authentic selves, to be present and to be engaged. Drawing on the early years learning framework, we recognise the importance of the here and now, of being, of building and maintaining relationships with others, and participating in life's joys and challenges (Belonging, Being, Becoming, The EYLF for Australia).

## We promote connection with children by:

- Providing a safe and secure environment.
- Creating opportunities for children to work in small groups, and by encouraging their communication and collaboration.
- Supporting children to develop a strong identity and sense of belonging.
- Empowering children to take ownership of their environment and learning.
- Offering open-ended, play-based learning experiences founded on children's interests and needs.
- Developing nurturing relationships based on principles of trust, respect, care and compassion.
- Praising children's participation in the program, routines and transitions, and sharing these experiences with families.
- Sharing mealtimes with children to support understanding and create positive attitudes to food and nutrition.
- Sharing eagerness, laughter and excitement with children.

## We promote connection with families by:

- Acknowledging families as partners in children's learning and encouraging their involvement in the children's program and the service as a whole.
- Taking time to establish trusting relationships with families, identifying what matters to them and be responsive to their needs.

## We promote connection as an organisation by:

- Offering continuity of care that supports safe, secure and trusting relationships with familiar educators.
- Creating a work environment where educators have a high level of trust in their peers and the organisation's recruitment practices.
- Prioritising practices that support and nurture children holistically, focussing on all elements of their health and wellbeing.
- Ensuring consistent practices for checking and monitoring qualifications, certifications, checks and references of all educators and staff.
- Employing appropriately qualified and experienced educators and early childhood teachers who share a genuine commitment to supporting children and families
- Engaging a dedicated pool of educators to fill casual staff vacancies to maintain continuity of care for children and families.
- Encouraging a high level of communication between parents, educators and management.



# Community.

As we become connected, we share common goals, dreams and experiences. We develop stronger self-identities and a sense of belonging to our families and communities. This is what makes us whole; the ability to rely on ourselves and others, to trust and to respect, to contribute and to be impactful in our own lives and those of others. Drawing on the early years learning framework, we recognise children's belonging; first to a family, to a cultural group, to a neighbourhood and a wider community including that of the early childhood setting (Belonging, Being, Becoming, The EYLF for Australia).

## **We promote community with children by:**

- Teaching children about the broader community, finding connections with local places, spaces and people.
- Creating opportunities to contribute to the service and to the broader community.
- Having ongoing discussions that promote diversity and inclusion.
- Welcoming the community to our service through partnerships with local agencies.

## **We promote community with families by:**

- Providing opportunities for families to become involved in the program, and encouraging their feedback to develop and extend this from/to the home environment.
- Being open and receptive to conversations with parents about their children, about their practices and actioning parental requests and agreements.
- Taking the time to learn about families' needs and providing appropriate support and referral.
- Keeping families consistently informed about the program and their children's learning and development in a meaningful and accessible way.
- Working with children and families to identify their community connections and contributing to causes that are important to them.

## **We promote community as an organisation by:**

- Supporting charities and community causes which are important to our children and families.
- Participating in forums, boards and community groups to offer expertise in early childhood.
- Demonstrating our personal and professional commitment to local and global issues through embedded practices.



# Learning.

Our opportunities for learning grow as we connect and become part of our community. Learning flourishes when we feel safe and supported, valued and worthy, and become open to new possibilities. Drawing on the early years learning framework we recognise children becoming; growing in their self-identities, their knowledge and skills, their abilities to understand and manage concepts, ideas and relationships (Belonging, Being, Becoming, The EYLF for Australia).

## We promote learning with children by:

- Using the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) to underpin our practice and explicitly linking the learning outcomes to learning experiences and documentation.
- Creating inspiring children's environments and experiences, and celebrating the wonders of nature and humanity.
- Offering learning opportunities that are fun and inspiring, and extending these through inquiry-based approaches.
- Focussing on dispositions for learning in our intentional teaching practices.
- Seeking continuous feedback from families about the learning that is relevant to their child and supporting children in this process.

## We promote learning with families by:

- Engaging in conversations with families that focus on children's care, learning and development.
- Documenting and displaying the children's program in a way that is relevant to families.
- Providing families with information about the quality improvement plans of the service and inviting them to participate.
- Providing families with information about community events, resources and services that can support them in parenting roles.
- Keeping families informed about changes at the service.
- Working with families and their support teams to provide an inclusive environment for all children.

## We promote learning as an organisation by:

- Providing mentoring and support to all educators and Directors through the Director of Teaching and Learning role.
- Supporting our teams to attend network meetings to share information and develop professional practice.
- Maintaining and providing resources to keep informed of current trends in early childhood education.
- Supporting our Educational Leaders and Early Childhood Teachers to attend relevant sector meetings in order to develop their mentoring roles.
- Teaching and supporting students.
- Encouraging our Directors to attend relevant sector meetings to support the development of best practice for their service.
- Supporting management teams to attend broader industry forums to remain informed of current initiatives and changes, and their respective impact on the sector.
- Providing professional development opportunities and training in-house and externally for educators and staff.
- Having comprehensive policies and procedures that inform our practice and ensuring these are regularly reviewed and communicated to our educators, children and families.
- Consistently participating in a quality improvement process.

