



The Framework conveys the highest expectations for all children's learning, development and wellbeing from birth to 5 years and through the transitions to school. It communicates these expectations through the following 5 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.

The Framework provides broad direction for early childhood educators to facilitate all children's learning, development and wellbeing and ensure children are supported, celebrated, and connected to their community. It guides educators in their professional decision-making and assists in planning, implementing and evaluating high quality educational programs and practices in early childhood settings. It also underpins the implementation of relational and place-based pedagogies and curriculum relevant to each local community and all children in the early childhood setting. Relational pedagogy underpins the ways in which educators build trusting, respectful relationships between children, families, other educators and professionals, as well as members of the community. Place-based pedagogy refers to an understanding that educators' knowledge of the setting or context will influence how educators plan and practice.

The Framework is designed to inspire conversations, improve communication and provide a common language about children's learning among children themselves, their families, the broader community, educators, teachers in schools and other professionals including those who work in child and family services, higher education and training organisations.



Elements of the Framework

The Framework puts children's learning at the core and comprises interdependent elements: Vision, Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes (see Diagram 1). All elements are fundamental to early childhood pedagogy and effective 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, development and wellbeing.

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 curriculum decision-making as a continuous cycle of planning, assessment and critical reflection. This involves educators knowing the children, families and community contexts and drawing on their professional knowledge to plan for individual children and groups. These plans are implemented, evaluated and reflected upon to inform further planning.



Working in partnership with children and families, and communities, teachers in schools, and other professionals, educators use the Vision, Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes to guide their planning for children's learning, development and wellbeing. To actively engage children, educators identify children's strengths, choose appropriate teaching strategies and content, design the learning environment, and collaborate with children to co-construct learning. Educators build an engaging child-centred curriculum when they plan, analyse and assess children's learning and critically reflect and evaluate planning and practice for and with children.

Children's learning

The diversity in family and community life in Australia means that children experience *belonging*, *being* and *becoming* in many ways. They bring their diverse experiences, home languages, perspectives, expectations, and cultural ways of knowing, *being* and doing to their learning.

Children's learning is dynamic, complex and holistic. This means that cognitive, linguistic, physical, social, emotional, personal, spiritual and creative aspects of learning are all intricately interwoven and interrelated.

Play-based learning capitalises on children's natural inclination to be curious, explore and learn. Children actively construct their own understandings that contribute to their own learning. In play experiences children integrate their emotions, thinking and motivation that assists to



strengthen brain functioning. They exercise their agency, intentionality, capacity to initiate and lead learning, and their right to participate in decisions that affect them, including about their learning.

Play-based learning:

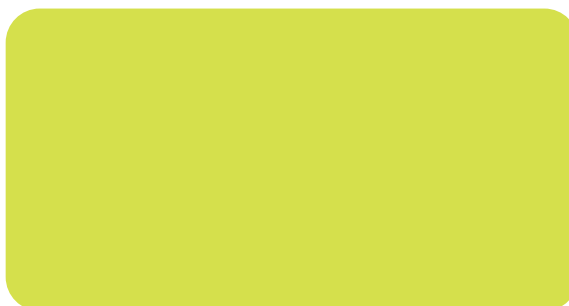
- allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- offers opportunities for multimodal play
- enhances thinking skills and lifelong learning dispositions such as curiosity, persistence and creativity
- enables children to make connections between prior experiences and new learning and to transfer learning from one experience to another
- assists children to develop and build relationships and friendships
- develops knowledge acquisition and concepts in authentic contexts
- builds a sense of identity
- strengthens self-regulation, and physical and mental wellbeing.

Viewing children as active participants and decision-makers opens possibilities for educators to move beyond preconceived expectations about what children can do and learn. This requires educators to understand, respect and work with each child's unique qualities and capabilities.

Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and their families have a significant effect on children's participation in early childhood education, engagement in learning opportunities and success as learners. Children thrive when they, their families and their educators work together in partnership to support their learning, development and wellbeing. Relationships are strengthened when educators recognise and affirm children's home languages and cultural identities and when they create culturally secure and safe places for children and their families.

Children's early learning influences their continuing educational journeys. Wellbeing and a strong sense of connection, optimism, resilience and engagement enable children to develop a growth mindset, and a positive attitude to learning.

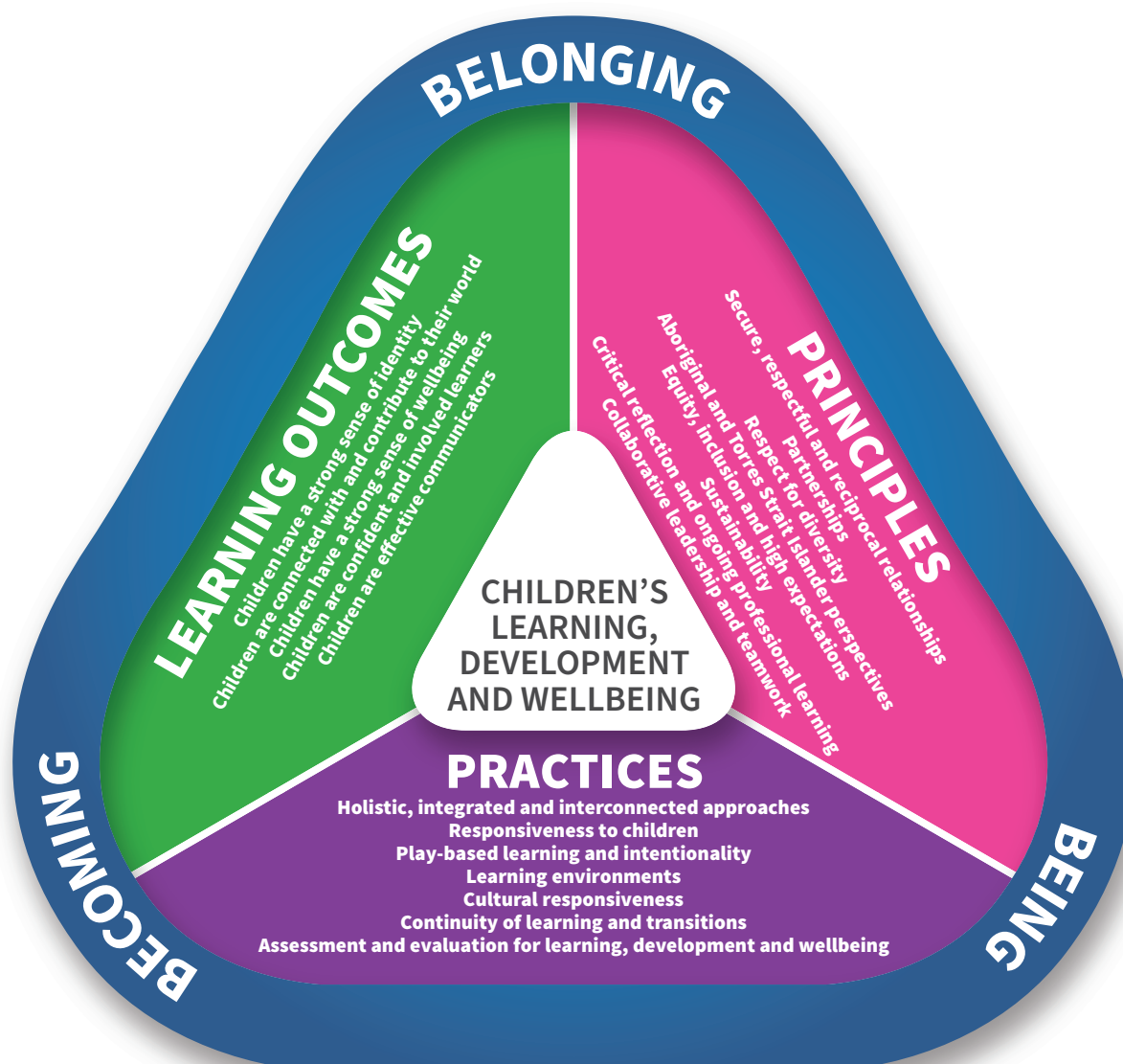
The Learning Outcomes section of the Framework provides examples of evidence of children's learning, development and wellbeing, and the educator's intentional role in extending and enriching children's play, thinking, learning and sense of wellbeing.



ELEMENTS OF THE EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Diagram 1

This diagram shows the integrated connections of the Vision, Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes that centre on children's learning, development and wellbeing. *Belonging*, *Being* and *Becoming* overlap all these elements.





VISION

BELONGING, BEING AND BECOMING

PRINCIPLES	PRACTICES	LEARNING OUTCOMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches • Responsiveness to children • Play-based learning and intentionality • Learning environments • Cultural responsiveness • Continuity of learning and transitions • Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

EARLY CHILDHOOD PEDAGOGY



The term *pedagogy* in this Framework refers to the art, science or craft of educating. It describes the professional knowledge, practices and creativity that educators use to intentionally foster and nurture children's learning, development and wellbeing. When educators establish respectful relationships with children and their families, they are able to work together to use relational and place-based pedagogies that assist in developing curriculum relevant to children in their local context. Using these pedagogies and other child-centred approaches supports curriculum decisions that include children's ideas and reflect their curiosity, allowing them to celebrate their own interests, friendships and express themselves in different ways.

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

- professional knowledge and skills
- contextual knowledge of each child, their families and communities
- understanding that relationships with children and families are critical to creating safe and trusting spaces
- awareness of how their beliefs and values impact children's learning and wellbeing
- knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- personal styles and past professional experiences
- use of all components in the planning cycle.

Alongside their professional knowledge educators draw on their creativity, intuition and imagination, including engaging in critical reflection to evaluate and adjust their practice to suit the learners, the time, place and context of learning.



Different theories, world views and knowledges inform early childhood approaches and practices to promote children's learning, development and wellbeing. Educators draw upon a range of perspectives in their work which may include:

- developmental theories that focus on describing and understanding the influences on, and processes of children's learning, development and wellbeing over time. For example, attachment theory explains children's formation of trusting relationships with important adults; social learning theory focuses on how children observe and imitate the behaviour of others; cognitive theory describes thought processes and how this influences the ways children engage with and understand their world
- 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
- practice theories, such as affordance theory that asks educators to think, for example, about the possibilities for activity that the physical environment offers children. The theory of practice architectures invites educators to think about their sayings (understandings of their practice), their doings (the ways in which they practice) and their relatings (how they relate to others in their practice)
- ancestral knowledges are ways of knowing and understanding shared through history and culture, in the written, oral and spiritual traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- place-based sciences that foster community connections in ways that build on local (children, families, communities and educators) funds of knowledge (experiences and understandings) that assist in building thriving learners and communities
- critical theories that invite educators to challenge assumptions about curriculum, and consider how their decisions may affect children differently
- feminist and 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 and other perspectives to identify strengths and limitations
- recognise how theories, world views and other knowledges assist in making sense of their work, but can also limit their actions and thoughts
- consider the voices of children, their families and their communities in their decision-making
- consider the consequences of their actions for children's experiences
- consider who is included and who is excluded or silenced by ways of working
- find new ways of working fairly, justly and inclusively
- consider the ecosystems in which children live and learn.