



The Cycle of Planning, Documenting & Evaluating

Planning is an ongoing cycle. Effective forward planning makes for a successful Centre.



Quality Area 1- Educational program and practice

1. REVIEW REVISE PHILOSOPHY

Your service should come together as a team to share your knowledge and beliefs to develop your philosophy.

- How do you embrace different ideas around how Educators work with children?
- What do you have in common?

A good philosophy should be based on theory, research, as well as your own personal beliefs & practice.

- What knowledge do the educators in your setting have regarding your families and your wider community?
- What knowledge do your educators have about the strengths and interests of your children?

2. IDENTIFY INDIVIDUAL & GROUPS OF CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

- Find out what your children's strengths and interests are:
- Find out what the strengths of Educators are and how will you use these. Create a staff profile outlining strengths, interests and talents.
- OOSH Centres should be inclusive- a place where everyone belongs.
- Invite children's input, discuss how do you collect this information?: Staff meetings minutes, Meetings with Educational leader documentation, impromptu discussions, evaluations of activities, documented observations of routines, the environment, children (jottings, program notes, diaries, communication books, children's profiles, discussions with children) Educator's conversations/reflections – reflective journals.

3. CREATE RICH PLAY ENVIRONMENT

Reflect on these questions:

- What does your indoor & outdoor environment look like?
- Does it provide choice for children?
- Is it flexible?
- Is it aligned to your philosophy?
- Do you provide challenge and risk, while still being safe?
- Do you offer engaging experiences for a range of ages?
- Can children be creative, experiment, play freely and access the resources they need play independently?
- Do children feel like they belong?
- Do your children get a say in how the environment is planned? Is it 'home-like'? Is it stimulating?
- Is it rich with play-based materials?
- Do you have different areas?

4. ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR

An Educator's role is to plan and implement programs that support children's play experiences, well-being, development and learning.

Some Educators may need additional support and professional development.

It is the role of the Educational Leader to support and mentor all staff. Think about what skills & qualities you want educators to have.

- Does your staff appraisal identify professional development and support needs of individual staff?
- Do you have an effective staff orientation so Educators know what to do?

5. EVALUATION METHODS

What methods will you choose?

Children having fun at the centre is a great starting point however, services need to evaluate WHAT you are doing and WHY!!

Collaborate with the children, with your outcomes in mind. (Refer to MTOP.)

- What did we do? How did it go? What went well? What didn't go well?
- How could we improve children's experiences next time?
- How does it link to the outcomes?
- How can we learn from this to improve our practice?

This will tell you how your program is contributing to the children's experiences and development.

6. DEVELOP A RICH PLAY-BASED PROGRAM

Your planning should be based on the outcomes in *My Time Our Place*:

Be creative and responsive when you plan experiences based on children's needs and interests - this should be central to your program.

Best Practice programming should be based on contemporary theory/research, educator skills/knowledge, collaborating with children and knowing their interests plus having partnerships with family and culture.

Remember children learn all the time and especially through Educators talking to children, sharing our knowledge with children as well as modeling behavior.

If we create a rich play environment children will seek out learning opportunities, extending their knowledge through play all the time.

How will you document the program?

Here are a few ideas...

- Ideas webs
- concepts maps
- butchers paper with "What happened today?" (spontaneous)
- photographs and words to document *My Time, Our Place* outcomes
- iPads
- facebook group
- display the program (using a program template)

7. IMPLEMENT YOUR PROGRAM

Engage with & support children to fully participate in a range of play experiences.

Listen & respond to children's voices, accommodate spontaneity, natural curiosity, individual needs & interests.

8. EVALUATE PROGRAM – BOTH PLANNED & SPONTANEOUS ACTIVITIES

All planned and unplanned experiences should be evaluated, including routines and incidental moments. Evaluations often focus on activities rather than the play that occurs around the edges.

Is there enough opportunity for children to construct their own play? Gather all of your information (from step 5) analyse it, reflect and then implement any changes that are needed.

Evaluation is not just individual written work. It also includes: group reflection, discussion, and children's evaluations, resources and experiences.

Think about how the service: -

- Gathers feedback from the children, families and educators to help evaluate children's experiences?
- created the play experiences that offer added play value – that is, not just a basic experience but also possibilities for children to take risks, challenge and extend their thinking.
- Planned to extend children's learning & thinking - What learning occurred? What unplanned learning occurred?
- Listens to families? Do you have a variety to ways to entice family's feedback?
- Provides resources and staff?
- Arranges space and was it the right space? Did you allow enough time and was it at the right time of the day?
- Extends children's learning & thinking? How can you build on that experience?
- Allows children to access resources and what entices children to play



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