

# Belonging and Identity Tree

## NQS

Element 1.1.1 Curriculum decision making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

## Regs

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## YouTube

For great tips and to see what other centres are doing go to our new YouTube videos.

A family tree is a wonderful starting point to develop a curriculum built around children's identities, their relationships with family and community and the interests, skills and knowledge they have as a result of those relationships.

Here are some steps which will take your family tree from being rated as "Working Towards" to "Exceeding" and some examples of how the tree can be used to build your curriculum.



The following two steps five and six may not fit onto the tree and you will need to "take a cutting" and extend the family branches elsewhere in the room.



Step 1. Rename the Tree.  
(See page 3 for more information)

Step 2. Add Extended Family.  
(See page 3 for more information)

Step 3. Add new "Belonging and Identity leaves"  
(See page 4 for more information)

Step 4. Add new "theorist" leaves.  
(See page 5 for more information)

Step 5. Listen to what the child says about their family.  
(See page 5 for more information)

Step 6. Make an artwork representing families.  
(See page 6 for more information)

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Puss in Boots, QLD.

Every centre has one and it's likely to be rated as a 'WORKING TOWARDS' product. If you want to take your family tree to an exceeding level this is what you need to do.

Step 1. Rename the Tree.

Rename the tree "Belonging and Identity Tree",

Step 2. Add Extended Family.

Beautiful pictures of families only tell half the story. You need to go further and discover more about the families. The above tree from Puss in Boots is wonderful because it also connects the child to their extended family. Add to your tree by adding children's extended family, friends and social connections. Add notes and descriptions of their family life.



Budgewoi Preschool NSW 3D tree.

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1.1.1

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## Step 3. Add new "Belonging and Identity leaves"

"Belonging and Identity leaves". Make some label/leaves, copy some of the EYLF extracts below and add them to the tree.

### "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."

### "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?'"

"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."

"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' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's 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."

### "2. Partnerships

Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families. Educators recognise that families are children's first and most influential teachers. They create a welcoming environment where all children and families are respected and actively encouraged to collaborate with educators about curriculum decisions in order to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful.

Partnerships are based on the foundations of understanding each other's expectations and attitudes, and build on the strength of each others' knowledge. "

*We need to make it obvious to the assessor that we base our curriculum on partnerships and relationship with families and the community. By making a 'Belonging and Identity Tree' we are showing the assessor we have embedded practices that will go towards a rating of 'Exceeding'.*

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## Step 4. Add new "theorist" leaves.'

Copy some of your new theorist information onto leaves and add to the "Belonging and Identity Tree"

For example

From Week 4

*Urie Bronfenbrenner (1917–2005) believed humans create the environments that help shape their own development. Development always occurs in a particular social context and this context can change development. He maintained that human beings can therefore develop those environments to optimise their genetic potential.*

From Week 6

*Bronfenbrenner's work is the foundation of the EYLF. He said families play an important role in children's development. He went further and suggested parent's occupations are a key factor and we should take this into consideration when observing the children.*

From Week 8

*According to Vygotsky (1930-1978), human history is created through the construction and use of cultural tools. Some of these tools are physical things like a hammer. The way it looks and is used has evolved over many generations. What it is and how it's used is not obvious to someone who has never seen one before, or never needed to hammer nails. Each generation adapts the hammer for its own needs. The hammer that we use today is very different from the first one our ancestors used.*

## Step 5. Listen to what the child says about their family.

"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" EYLF

Babies - I remember reading a family weekend sheet to a group of 1 year olds and we discovered Sophie had been to the beach with their labrador dog Sally. Sally had a swim, rolled in the sand and when she was back in the car Sally shook herself and put sand and water all over everyone and the car. While reading the story Sophie started babbling away with great enthusiasm. Sophie was telling me verbally and physically by sitting up excitedly and moving her arms how she 'BELONGS' to her family. Look at this sentence from the EYLF: "relationships with people, places and things and the actions and responses of others".

Children at all ages are communicating how they belong. Our job is to take the time to listen and learn what they are communicating.

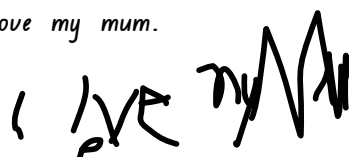
Older Children - write down what they say. If they can, encourage them to write and you underwrite.



*We went to the park with my Mum and my Dad and my Sister and my Dog. I took my bike. I ride it long time.*

Above is an example of underwriting. Child writes first and you write under their writing after they tell you what they wrote. Below is an example of over writing. You write first then the child copies your writing.

*I love my mum.*



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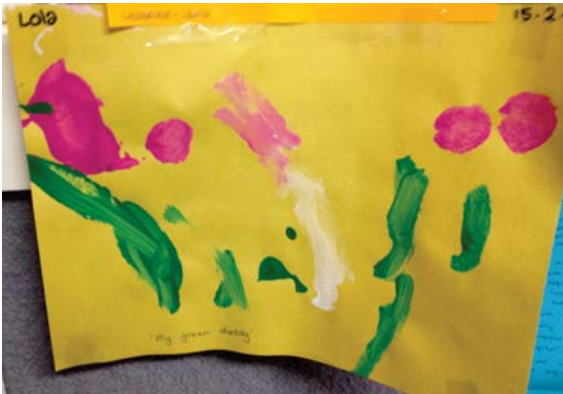
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Step 6. Make an artwork representing families.

Get the children to make a creative artwork representing their family. PLEASE NOTE - If every artwork is the same, same material, same shape, same paper you will get a rating of working towards.



"This is my Daddy, he is green" Lola smiled and giggled. Lola went for the green paint and I asked if she had too much paint on the brush.

Lola said "No, I want it to drip" and then she let the paint drip over the paper. "There all finished" she said and handed me the paper.



Woodville Day Nursery & Kindergarten in SA.



Reflection

Identified Issues This information can go directly onto your QIP.

What did we learn or discover that we are doing well?

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What can we improve on and how can we get there?

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