Case Study → Community → Theory → Critical Reflection → Complete QIP

Educators

Families are informed about the program and their child's progress.

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 1.3.3 and understood families must be included in decision-making about their child's learning and information provided by the service must:

- be accessible, meaningful and useful
- show children's participation in the program and progress towards learning outcomes
- be shared verbally and through written documentation.

Below is a case study to demonstrate how a service looked at this element, evaluated practices, critically reflected and then made changes.

Evaluating – Is our documentation accessible to families? When looking at this question the service identified two issues. First, most afternoon activities are outside and families collect their child from here. However, there was no program/curriculum displayed outside and educators couldn't go inside to talk to families about the documentation.

Solution – new boards were placed in the outside area and the program/curriculum was placed on them. When parents arrived, the educators directed the parents to look at the boards and educators could explain what was occurring during the day without compromising supervision.

Is your program/curriculum accessible to families at collection time? If not, how can you change it?

Talking to families about the program/curriculum. When the service evaluated the quality of conversations about the program it was quickly identified that nothing other than care was talked about eg how the child had a good session, how much they ate, rested etc. Asking families about what they thought occurred was an eye opener, as it was discovered they had no idea how detailed the routine was and how much learning occurs at before and after school care.

Solution – Educators were trained in how to talk to each parent as they entered the room, building or outside area. First, the educator would smile, say hello, ask about the parent's day, then direct them over to the routine/program/curriculum and pick out some key highlights of learning for the child, which included what the educator taught their child. The routine was broken down into detail, and educators' teaching practice added and displayed with the program, so educators could refer to it and confidently talk about the learning with families.

Where are you at compared to the solution above when it comes to talking to families about learning, not just care? Remember, many parents don't understand their children are learning at the Service

as well as school, so they revert back to care questions.

Evaluating the digital platform – The next part was to measure how much families engaged with the digital platform. They did this by counting likes and the frequency of families' comments. Very quickly it became apparent that it's usually the same families who comment and the actual percentage of families providing feedback was ranging between 5-7%. At this rate, element 1.3.3 is not met. The service checked to see all parents had access to the digital platform. Surprisingly, many did not, or had forgotten passwords, or said there was too much writing in a block and too many photos.

Practice change – Educators systematically showed each parent how to join the digital platform. Then they started tagging the families into the comments. Blocks of writing was broken down into separate ideas/concepts/learning posts and given a catchy heading. More meaningful photos were included and less snapshots. Polls were added to get families commenting, and families were by directly tagged in questions.

What is the percentage of families that use and respond to your digital platform? Are the same families always posting comments back?

Assessing the teaching practice to make sure the documentation is showing progression towards the learning outcomes. For this service, it became clear there was an implied progress towards the learning outcomes, but it could have been better and more obvious.

Solution – Key words were identified to use when documenting: 'Following on', 'extending', 'furthering their interest', 'from the weekend', 'they showed me'. Look at your learning documentation to see if it shows where learning comes from and when (dates), and how learning is extended. If not, identify some documentation examples where these things are not obvious or highlighted, and work together as a team to include these things.

What did you find when evaluating your learning documentation? Does it clearly show how children are progressing towards learning outcomes?

When educators **critically reflected** from their families' perspective to see how they could better communicate with families about their child's learning, they identified that all families are in a rush in the morning and most afternoons.

Solution – Hold parent educator portfolio nights. The service planned four nights over the year with set dates and times at the beginning of the year so everyone knew when these portfolio nights would be. Over the years the times have been adjusted to better suit parents. Currently they're held from 5:30 – 6:30 pm. These nights are a great success and families have the time to sit and talk with educators about their child's progress.

Could parent educator portfolio nights work for your service?

The EYLF and MTOP says "Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives." Pick one of the following reflection points to complete the table below:
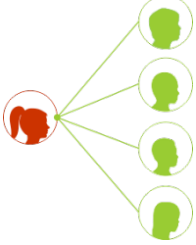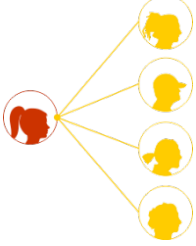
- Could I make it easier for families to understand the information I share with them about their child's learning (included in Improvement example)?
- Do families feel like they can easily approach me to discuss their child's learning?
- Is the way I'm sharing information consistent with families' preferred approach or I am just making it easy for myself?

Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
a child	I wish mum and dad knew more about what I do here.	The EL helped educators review some recent learning documentation and identify what families may find difficult to understand. Alternatives were then discussed. As part of this process educators listed the acronyms used and made a wall display where these were described in full with a brief explanation.
an educator	If I pretend I'm a parent and know nothing about the MTOP, NQS etc, there's a lot of jargon in my documentation, or even my conversations with families, that probably make no sense whatsoever!	
your families	I get a lot of paperwork about what my child learns, but half of it is 'gobbledegook.' I have no idea what they're talking about, and they don't seem that willing to explain it to me.	
theorist and current research	MTOP "(Educators) 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."	

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Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
a child		
an educator		
your families		
theorist and current research		

Complete your QIP

The information you write below can go directly into your QIP or Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) (NSW ONLY)

Instructions

For a **MEETING** QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)	For **Exceeding** the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)
Please give an example of the ways you regularly give families information about their child's participation in the program and progress towards learning outcomes.	*Please explain how all educators' documentation consistently reflects meaningful engagement and communication with families.*
Please explain how the information shared about each child's participation and progress is easy for families to understand.	*Please discuss how all educators regularly reflect, individually and with each other, on whether communication of the education program and children's participation, learning and development is accessible and understandable to families ==(included in QIP strength example)==.*
Please give an example of the way you seek input from families when sharing information about their child's participation and progress.	*Please discuss how all educators consistently engage with families about their child's progress in ways that recognise individual families' circumstances, culture and communication preferences.*
If you cannot answer these questions above the you are not meeting. This means you need to create an improvement plan and make changes to your practice	If you cannot answer these questions above the you are not exceeding. This means you need to create an improvement plan and make changes to your practice

Why are you doing the checklist?

The practices identified in the checklist are what the assessor needs to see you do so they can check you're 'meeting the NQS.' If you embed all the things in the checklist, then you are meeting the Element 1.3.3. If there's something on the checklist that you're not doing, then you need to either adjust your practice to do it, or ask for help and training to do what's on the checklist ie work with your educational leader or room leader who should teach/coach you how to do it.

The checklist keys to use.

E = **Embedded** I do that **ALL** the time
K = I **know** I need to do that, but I don't do it all the time
T = Please **teach** me how to do it or improve my understanding of why I need to do it.

Name Educator 1	
Name Educator 2	
Name Educator 3	
Name Educator 4	
Name Educator 5	

Do you regularly have conversations with families about their child's learning and share positive observations, interactions, progress etc?					
Do you regularly share a child's learning documentation with their family?					
Do you regularly share information about the curriculum and the MTOP with families?					
Do you always try and share information using families' preferred communication method?					
Are you always approachable, and willing to discuss a child's learning with their family at a mutually convenient time?					
Do you reflect on the barriers that may prevent families from understanding their child's learning information and remove these as best you can eg use bilingual educators to share/explain in home languages, consider cultural sensitivities, remove acronyms?					
Do you seek feedback from families about the information shared and the way it's presented, and make changes based on the feedback?					
Are you always mindful of sharing sensitive information in a way that respects the privacy of a child and their family?					
Do you ensure your learning documentation and communication with families supports a consistent learning environment and outcomes for each child?					
Do you exchange information with a child's school to support a consistent approach?					