

Educators

Effective partnerships support children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 6.2.2 and understood educators:

1. must be aware of their own beliefs and values and how these could impact each child's access and participation.
2. must know and understand each child's strengths, needs and circumstances eg family situation, home language, culture
3. must work with families to support children's access so there are no barriers to children's participation

1. Educators must be aware of their own beliefs and values and how these could impact each child's access and participation.

We are going to start off with a very interesting concept from Patricia Churchland called the 'spheres of caring'. Patricia and many other neuroscientists say social animals such as humans have brain chemicals that allow them to care for their babies. She also says, the more we feel that we are securely attached and cared for, the more we extend and care for others within our families, the further our 'spheres of caring' reach into our extended family, and into our community and even strangers.



Spheres of caring – the more securely attached we are, the more our sphere of caring extends out.

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Where would you place yourself on the sphere of caring?

Name	What level of the sphere of caring are you?

Let's replace the word children to **'Educators'** in a sentence from the EYLF.

"~~Children~~ **Educators** develop a sense of belonging when they feel accepted, develop attachments and trust those who care for them. When ~~children~~ **Educators** feel safe, secure and supported they grow in confidence to explore and learn." (EYLF 2009, page 20).

How do you feel in relation to the above sentence?

Do you feel:

- A sense of belonging at your service
- Accepted by the other educators
- You can trust your room leader and Nominated Supervisor
- You are confident as an educator
- You are allowed to explore and learn new teaching practices?

How could the way you're feeling affect children's participation? Are there areas that you could improve

upon as a team? Have a discussion with your team of educators and see if your practices could improve.

2. Educators must know and understand each child's strengths, needs and circumstances eg family situation, home language, culture.

Let's take this concept and put it into practice. The element is asking us to know and understand each child's strengths, needs and circumstances eg family situation, home language, culture. Who in your centre:

- are Aboriginals, Torres Strait Islanders or First Nation Peoples
- are recent arrivals in Australia
- have a culturally and linguistically diverse background
- live in isolated geographic locations
- are experiencing difficult family circumstances or stress
- are at risk of abuse or neglect
- are experiencing language and communication difficulties
- have a diagnosed disability—physical, sensory, intellectual or autism spectrum disorder
- have a medical or health condition
- demonstrate challenging behaviours and behavioural or psychological disorders
- have developmental delays
- have learning difficulties
- are gifted or have special talents
- have other extra support needs?

Please list and reflect on how you're supporting these children.

3. Educators must work with families to support children's access so there are no barriers to children's participation

Case studies

Recent arrivals in Australia often find themselves in rural areas as a condition of their visas. There are a group of Nepalese families that relocated to regional NSW. The contrast in their lives from Nepal to the Central West couldn't be greater. Highest mountain range in the world to the flat dry red soil of the Central West. The educators saw opportunities to assist. First they conducted home visits where they got to see the children in their homes. This greatly helped the children that were not settling in to the centre. Second, they held play dates in the park on a weekend. Educators identified a safe park, sent out an invite with location and time and met the families there with stickers to create name tags. The educators were there for an hour to assist with the introductions and ensure the families met the parents of other children. This built relationships and set up other play dates.

Large city service

The educators worked with the local council to ensure they knew the providers within their community. Cultural festivals that were organised by the local councils provided an important inroad to increase the educators' knowledge and to ensure they helped the families to make connections. Other health related connections were made with the assistance of local council including Lady Gowrie, and allied health providers ie the optometrist.

This resulted in the introduction of quiet corners, sensory boxes & calming music with a reflective light on the ceiling. These practices were developed from the resources and a community therapist. The connection and resources ensured the families felt included and had a sense of belonging at the service.

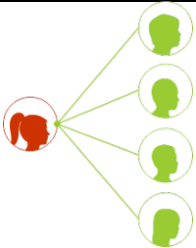
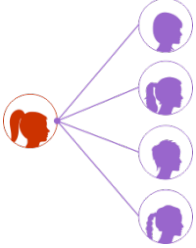
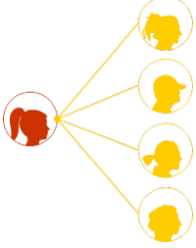
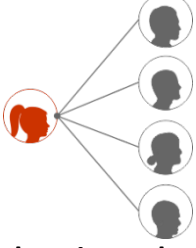
The NQS wants us to ensure we have a great connection to all services in the community that can assist children and families. How can you support these children and families?

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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:

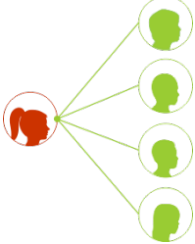
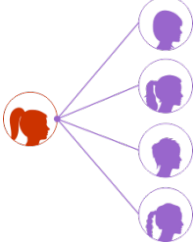
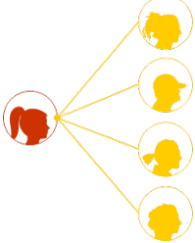
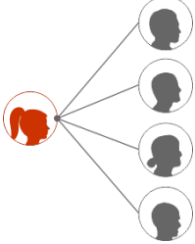
- Could you do more to help families connect with local inclusion and support agencies and services?
- Do your critical reflections effectively identify barriers to children’s participation? **(included in Improvement example)**
- Do you consider each child’s unique circumstances (eg family situation) and needs to ensure they can fully participate when planning activities and experiences? **(included in Improvement example)**

Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
 <p>a child</p>	I’d love to go on the excursion to the zoo but I know I’ll have to miss out (Matty).	Miss Clara expressed her views to the team when there was no authorisation note for Matty to go on the excursion. The RL asked her whether she thought they may be other reasons for Matty’s non-attendance, and went on to explain the heavy financial burden the family was experiencing due to Sara’s illness. Miss Clara realised she hadn’t considered the family’s individual circumstances, and had let her attitudes and values impact Matty’s participation in the program. She went and spoke to the NS to see if they could temporarily help the family financially and discussed local organisations that may be able to help them financially through their current situation.
 <p>an educator</p>	Zoom entry’s not that expensive, so all children should be able to go. I’m sure parents could cook at home rather than buy takeaway if money’s tight. (Miss Clara)	
 <p>your families</p>	I’d love to let Matty go on the excursion but we just can’t afford it what with all Sara’s medical expenses and car rego which is due.	
 <p>theorist and current research</p>	NQF Guide Element 6.2.2 “Educators’ attitudes, beliefs and values about inclusion are key factors for successful inclusion.”	



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 you do more to help families connect with local inclusion and support agencies and services?
- Do your critical reflections effectively identify barriers to children’s participation?
- Do you consider each child’s unique circumstances (eg family situation) and needs to ensure they can fully participate when planning activities and experiences?

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



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)
<i>Please give a recent example of how you used your knowledge of a child's family circumstances to support their access, inclusion and participation in the program.</i>	<i>Please give an example of how you and your team consistently maintain ongoing collaborative community partnerships and link with community support agencies to enhance children's access, inclusion and participation in the program.</i>
<i>Please give an example of how you used your knowledge of a child's interests, learning style, strengths and abilities to support their access, inclusion and participation in the program.</i>	<i>Please give an example of how you and your team purposefully consider opportunities to enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing, including looking for new links or partnerships which enhance children's and families' outcomes. (Included in QIP strength)</i>
<i>Please give an example of the way you adapted the environment, activities, routines or transitions to facilitate the inclusion and participation of all children. Include details of any input from other professionals/ therapists.</i>	<i>Please discuss how community partnerships contribute to a culture of inclusiveness and sense of belonging at the service.</i>
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

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Checklist

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 6.2.2. 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 actively promote equity, inclusion, diversity and challenge stereotypes in your curriculum and interactions with children (Sect 3 National Law)?					
Do you know and understand each child's strengths, needs and circumstances eg family situation, home language, culture and plan activities and experiences using this knowledge?					
Do you critically reflect though a child's/family's eyes and make changes which help children feel welcome and engaged eg changes to indoor and outdoor spaces, communication practices?					
Do you critically reflect with your team to identify barriers to children's participation and make appropriate changes?					
Do you critically reflect on your beliefs and values to ensure children, including those with additional needs, are not limited by any artificial barriers you construct?					
Do you discuss any concerns you have about a child's inclusion and participation with the Educational Leader/Room-Group Leader/Nominated Supervisor?					
Does your documentation show each child's sense of belonging eg participation in all activities, confident collaboration with educators and other children?					
Do you share information about each child with team members, the Educational Leader, Room/Group Leaders or Nominated Supervisor to promote children's access and participation?					
Do you confidently work with families, professionals and specialists from inclusion/support agencies to support all children's participation eg implement individual support plans?					
Do you help families locate and contact support services where relevant?					
Do you confidently take and receive referrals from other inclusion/support agencies?					
Do you ask for professional development in relevant areas where required to provide improved outcomes for children, including those with additional needs?					

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