Transition to School

Guide for Early Childhood Education

NSW GOVERNMENT

A positive start to school

Every child will experience their own unique journey when starting school. Along the way, children will learn to adapt to new rules, experience new ways of learning and manage the different expectations of a school day.

This Transition to School Guide, co-created by early childhood educators and teachers, highlights the importance of ensuring a positive start to school for all children. The guide identifies key skills and attributes critical for children to thrive in 21st century learning environments, and provides accompanying sample learning experiences.

A positive start to school has been linked to positive school outcomes in both academic achievement and social competence.[1] Initial success at school has been shown to set off a "virtuous cycle" of achievement and learning, influencing later experiences and having a long-term social and academic impact. Feeling successful in their transition to school equips children to better adjust to further emotional and cognitive demands, both in their school life and beyond.[2]

A child's transition to school experience has also been directly linked to their future success at school and their own sense of self.[3] Children with a strong sense of identity look for, and are open to new challenges. They ask questions and try new things and they know they can contribute to the world around them.

1 Dockett, S., & Perry, B. (2007). *Transitions to School*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press.

2 Fabian, H. & Dunlop, A. W. (2007). *Outcomes of good practices in transition processes for children entering primary school.* Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED522698.pdf

3 OECD. Publishing. (2017). *Starting Strong V-Transitions from Early Childhood Education and Care to Primary Education.* OECD Publishing.

All children are active participants in their transition to school experience.
Transition to School: Position Statement: Charles Sturt University

The importance of relationships

Relationships underpin children's feelings about school. Working collaboratively with children, families, educators, teachers and the community promotes active participation and helps ensure every child is supported as they embark on the next phase of their educational journey.

When educators and teachers proactively engage in a process of shared learning and understanding about each child, the process of starting school can be a smoother one for all involved, with schools better prepared to receive each individual child.

What is school readiness?

School readiness is a broad definition that involves a holistic assessment of a child. Traditionally, the focus has been on a child's age and their general competencies to determine whether a child is ready for school. With greater research, we now understand that there are a range of additional factors which may affect a child's ability to adapt to a new environment. This may include their physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills and general knowledge.[4]

In Dockett and Perry's study, teachers highlighted that children need to have certain skills rather than only specific knowledge to successfully transition to school.[5] For example, this may mean being able to independently use the toilet, dress themselves, recognise their own belongings and pay attention.

Consideration of school readiness extends to the school environment, ensuring the school is ready to receive the child. This includes the school being prepared to provide the necessary support to optimise a child's learning and development. Ready schools are flexible, supportive and guided by strong and positive leadership. Possible indicators of a school's readiness include the existence of processes to plan and monitor a child's transition to school, the adequacy of facilities, the school's approach to student wellbeing, and collaboration between families and teachers.

4 Australian Government. (2019). *Australian Early Development Census* (AEDC). Retrieved from https://www.aedc.gov.au/about-the-aedc.

5 Dockett, S., & Perry, B. (2003). The Transition to School: What's Important? *Educational Leadership*, 60(7), 30-33.

Our vision

There is a significant body of research that emphasises the importance the overall experience of starting school has for every child. As such, the Department is committed to enhancing the transition to school experience to ensure that children are ready for school, and schools are ready for children.

| Department of Education **Strategic Plan** 2018-2022 | **Goal 1** All children make a strong start in life and learning and make a successful transition to school. |

The following section of the document discusses key skills and attributes critical for children to thrive in 21st century learning environments. The accompanying sample learning experiences have been designed to link to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and Early Stage 1 Outcomes, and support children as they move from an early childhood education context to the school environment. The suggested activities are a guide and should be adapted to your unique context, with consideration given to each child's strengths, learning support needs and Individual Learning Plans, to ensure relevance to the children in your care.

Preparing children for 21st century learning
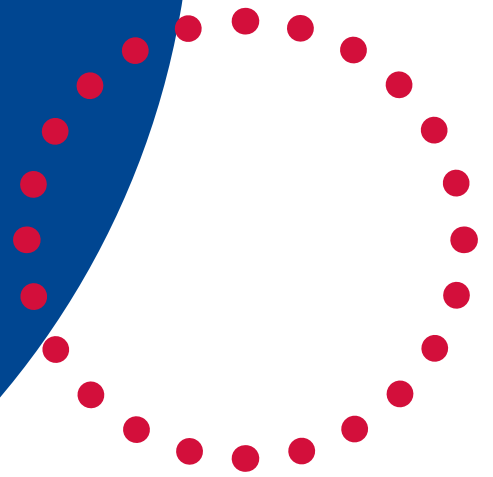
The transition from early childhood education to primary school is where interactions between different education systems, curricula and philosophies occur. Learning experiences that develop key 21st century skills are critical in preparing children for a positive start to school and beyond into adult life.

Critical thinking / Problem solving

Creativity

Child

Resilience

Independent learning / Agency
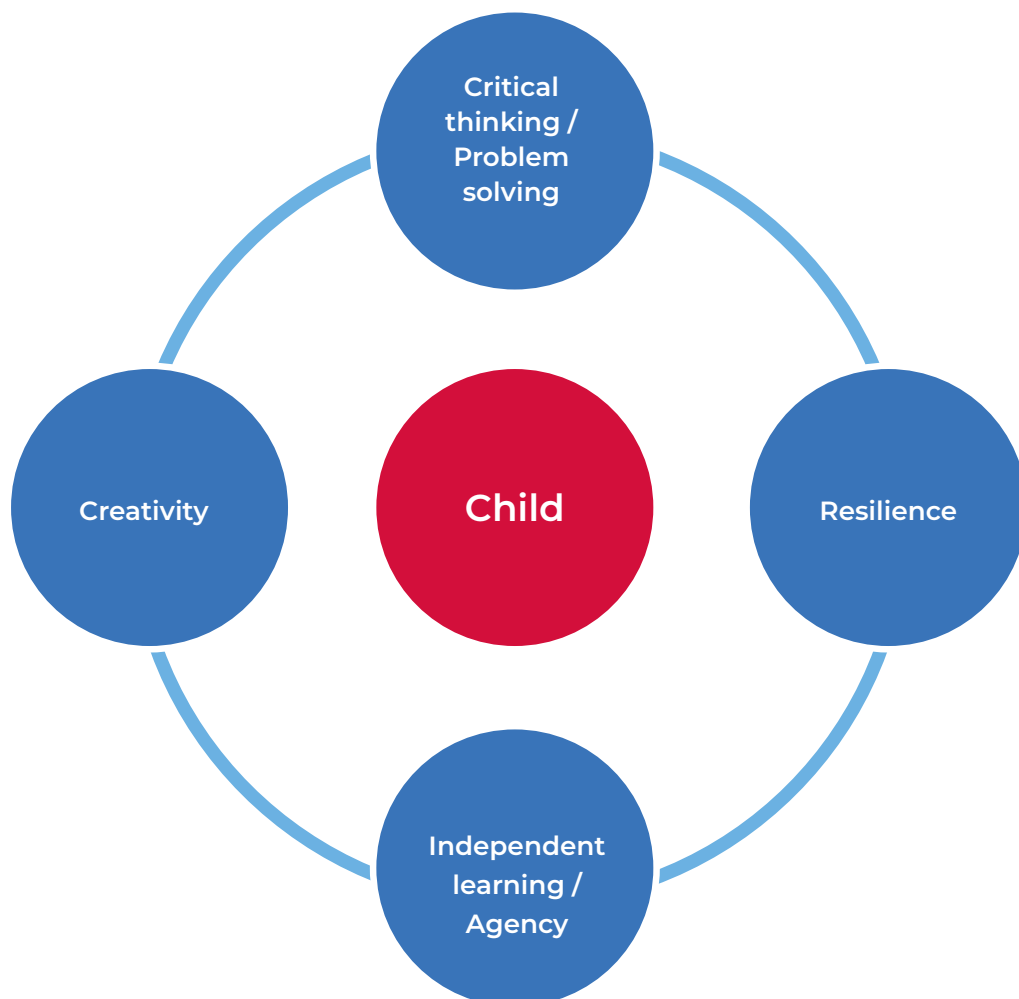
1   Critical thinking / Problem solving

Critical thinking means judging the value of information and figuring out how to solve a problem or make a decision. Critical thinking requires open-mindedness, curiosity and thinking about others' points of view.

Problem solving is the capacity to think through and resolve situations where an answer may not be obvious. Structuring learning around problems to be solved can support a range of cognitive skills, as well as interpersonal skills such as cooperation and communication.

2   Independent learning / Agency

Children who have confidence in their ability to learn will be more motivated to obtain their learning goals. Supporting the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills is likely to enhance a child's beliefs in their abilities. Supporting children's agency means recognising that children have a right to make choices about their own learning. Agency allows children to develop independence, self-esteem, identity and wellbeing.

3   Creativity

Creativity is a way of thinking or acting or making that is original. Resources that can be used in a lot of different ways can provide insight to a child's creativity. Important dispositions that underpin creativity are curiosity, motivation, risk-taking, open-mindedness and the capacity to tolerate ambiguity.

4   Resilience

Personality traits such as perseverance can change over time with the life experience of the child, however, developing persistence and perseverance in a given activity is supported by the learning environment.

Resilience is being able to bounce back from stress, challenge, tragedy, trauma or adversity. When children are resilient, they are braver, more curious and more adaptable. Resilience can promote a sense of self-worth, self-belief, independence and optimism.

Putting it into practice

- Create spaces where children's decisions are important and valued.
- Involve children in decisions that affect daily routines.
- Use language that assists children to express wants, needs and feelings.
- Promote an environment in which children can see they are cared for and supported.
- Let children know it is acceptable to ask for help and provide clear paths for doing so.
- Implement practices that encourage mindfulness.
- Build confidence by helping children to master small steps, and acknowledge strengths, interests and attempts, bravery and effort.
- Nurture optimism and model resilience.
- Enable clear and regular communication about what is happening for the child.
- Provide adjustments that support the child's participation and individual learning needs.

Play-based learning

Play-based learning promotes discovery, creativity, imagination and improvisation in young children. The EYLF highlights the importance of balance between child-led, child-initiated and educator-supported learning experiences. Supporting child-led and child-initiated activities enhances the cognitive, social, emotional and physical aspects of a child's learning, and develops the skills children need to independently explore, solve problems, create and construct meaning within their world.

A play-based and developmentally appropriate curriculum encourages active participation, enables the inclusion of all young children and eases a child's transition from early childhood education to primary school. Research also indicates that children are more enthusiastic about the learning process when some play-based principles are applied.[6]

Play-based learning is a holistic learning approach, which emphasises a child's physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, communication skills and general knowledge.

6 OECD. Publishing. (2017). *Starting Strong V-Transitions from Early Childhood Education and Care to Primary Education*. OECD Publishing.

Useful resources

Dockett, S. & Perry, B. (2014). *Continuity of Learning: A resource to support effective transition to school and school age care*. Canberra, ACT: Australian Government Department of Education. https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/pdf_with_bookmarking_-_continuity_of_learning-_30_october_2014_1_0.pdf.

Early Childhood Intervention Australia (2019). *Transition to School Resource*. http://www.transitiontoschoolresource.org.au.

Mason-White, H., (2013). Supporting Transition to school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children. SNAICC.

OECD. Publishing. (2017). *Starting Strong V-Transitions from Early Childhood Education and Care to Primary Education*. OECD Publishing.

Rosier, K., & McDonald, M. (2011). *Promoting positive education and care transitions for children*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay our respect to Country.

Say hello

NSW
GOVERNMENT

Independent learning / Agency

Critical thinking / Problem solving

Creativity

Child
Focus skills and attributes:

Resilience

Independent learning / Agency
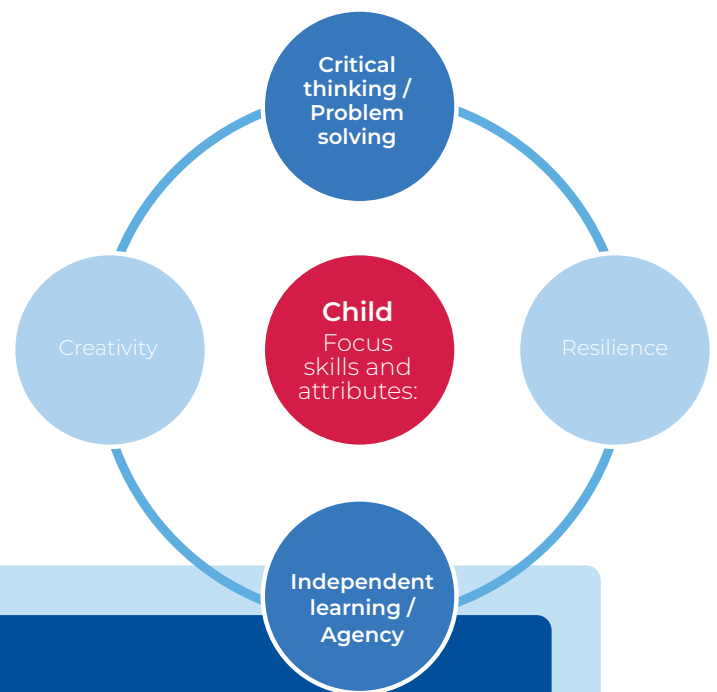
Learning Goal

To develop a sense of agency within children, encouraging them to make their own choices and influence decisions that affect them.

Learning Objectives: (What will children learn?)

- To promote independence and build communication skills so children can express themselves confidently.
- To develop curiosity through meaningful opportunities for inquiry.
- To promote an inclusive, responsive and open-ended learning environment, facilitating autonomy and independence for children.

Suggested Activities

Genuine decision-making

- Trusting that children are competent decision makers can support children's agency.
- Engage children in developing the philosophy of the service.
- Involve children in discussions about service policies, procedures, practices and risk assessments.
- Provide opportunities for children to set learning goals.
- Consider a more democratic system of decision making.
- Consult children on matters that affect them, supporting children's voices.
- Engage children by using communication systems that support the involvement of all children.

Supporting agency: Involving children in decision-making

https://www.acecqa.
gov.au/sites/default/
files/2018-04/QA1_
SupportingAgencyInvolving
ChildreninDecisionMaking.
pdf

Suggested Activities

Responsive environments

Environments are set up in ways that provide children with a variety of resources to choose from and encourage independent choice.

- Include children in the design and layout of the physical space.
- Ensure play spaces are inclusive, safe and multi-functional.
- Have safe equipment shelving at child height, encouraging children to select the materials they would like to use.
- Assist children to function autonomously in distinct learning areas.
- Encourage free flow of activity throughout the day, including free movement between indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Fostering a sense of inquiry

Work closely with children, facilitating opportunities for learning and encouraging individual expression, problem solving and critical thinking.

- Initiate inquiries through questions, problems or ideas.
- Encourage children to hypothesise, theorise and wonder.
- Facilitate learning experiences that can be returned to and lend themselves to active engagement with children.
- Create an 'I wonder' chart to capture the questions children pose that can form the basis of an inquiry.

Open-ended learning

Open-ended resources are resources that have multiple uses and give children the freedom to explore. They inspire creativity and imagination in their own unique way.

Open-ended resources can include loose parts. Loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. Examples include:

- Logs, sticks, branches, leaves, flowers, pinecones, feathers, bark, shells, tyres, crates, recycled materials, containers, tubes, material cut-offs, building materials, manipulatives, dramatic play props.

Consider each child's learning support needs, Individual Learning Plans and required adjustments when implementing transition to school activities.

Creating the perfect play space

https://www.ecrh.edu.au/docs/default-source/resources/ipsp/Create-the-perfect-play-space-learning-environments-for-young-children.pdf?sfvrsn=12

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.2   Children develop emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency.

1.3   Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.

3.1   Children become strong in their social and emotional well-being.

4.1   Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

5.1   Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.

5.3   Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.

Belonging at school
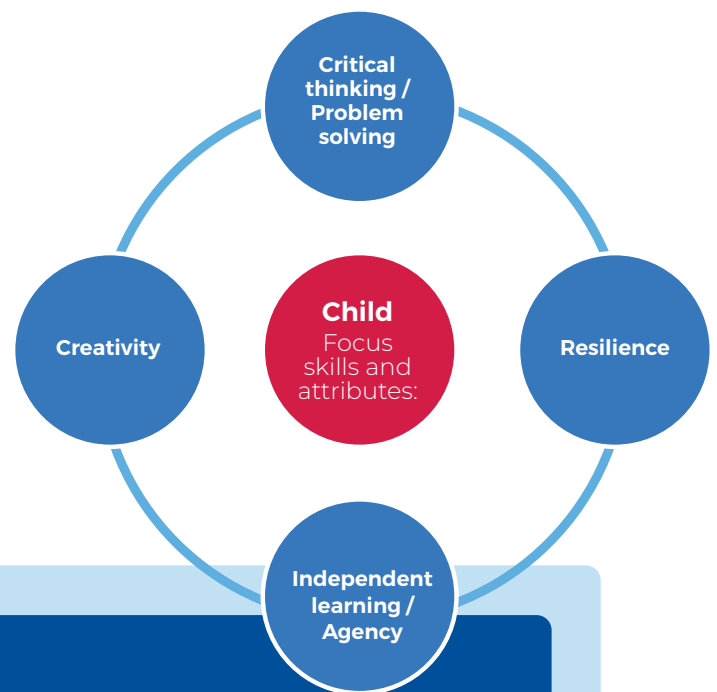
Learning Goal

To develop diverse perspectives within children to encourage greater acceptance, understanding and belonging within their new school environment.

Learning Objectives: (What will children learn?)

- To develop a sense of belonging and identity within the school community.
- To expand children's tolerance, understanding and vocabulary around diversity.
- To foster inclusive behaviour and promote kindness.
- To protect the rights of children in supporting their personal safety.
- To help children understand emotions associated with conflict, encouraging positive interactions in achieving conflict resolution.

Suggested Activities

What is a 'school'?

Explore with children the concept of a school environment.

- What do children currently know about the school environment? What would they like to know and how can you help them find out?
- Help children to discover the extent of school connections, including their place in the wider community, the types of people, experiences and opportunities children might encounter throughout school.
- Build familiarity and encourage curiosity of the school environment.

Literature

- We Love School (Lucie Billingsley)
- Starting School (Jane Godwin and Anna Walker)
- Sumi's First Day of School Ever (Soyung Pak)

Suggested Activities

Respect for diversity

School environments are diverse communities. Acknowledging diversity and reinforcing respect for diversity are key in creating inclusive communities in which all children can belong.

- Explore the concept of similarities and differences. This can include in families, in children, in objects, in animals or characters. Ensure positive language is used to promote and celebrate differences and similarities.
- Encourage questioning from children, and be open and honest in answering.
- Work in partnership with families to develop deeper knowledge.

Social justice

Introducing the concept of social justice allows children to explore real issues in meaningful ways, having a positive impact on children, educators, families and the wider community.

- Introduce concepts of social justice in a thoughtful way to children.
- Choose a focus area or project to research and explore that is relevant to the children in your context – for example, homelessness, asylum seekers and supporting disadvantaged communities.
- Consider taking action as part of the project, and involve families and the broader community. This could include fundraising or research.

Keeping kids safe

Develop support for the rights of children in understanding personal safety and appropriate behaviour.

- Assist children in identifying parts of their body that are private.
- Encourage children to think about five people they trust to help them if they feel scared, sad or upset.
- Help children to use their voices, prompting children to share the things that make them unhappy or scared.

Daisy's First Day

Daisy's First Day

Building belonging
A toolkit for early childhood educators (Australian Human Rights Commission): https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/building-belonging-toolkit-early-childhood-educators-cultural-diversity-and

Literature
Education for Social Justice in Early Childhood (Swadener & Kessler)

SAFE series
https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/training-and-resources/child-safe-resources/safe-series-resources

Suggested Activities

Conflict resolution and anti-bullying

Children experience a range of emotion when they are angry or don't get what they want. Supporting children in their social and emotional development in times of conflict is critical in preventing bullying behaviour.

- Set clear expectations for children.
- Look for early warning signs and assist children in exploring problem solving methods in resolving conflicts.
- Role model positive behaviour.
- Introduce and explore concepts through dramatic play.

Bullying no way
https://bullyingnoway.gov.au

Nurturing friendships

Introduce 'friendship chairs' into the learning environment as a place where children who are lonely can sit. Children should be encouraged to approach the seat and invite whoever is on it to play with them. The seat can promote friendship, kindness and belonging for children.
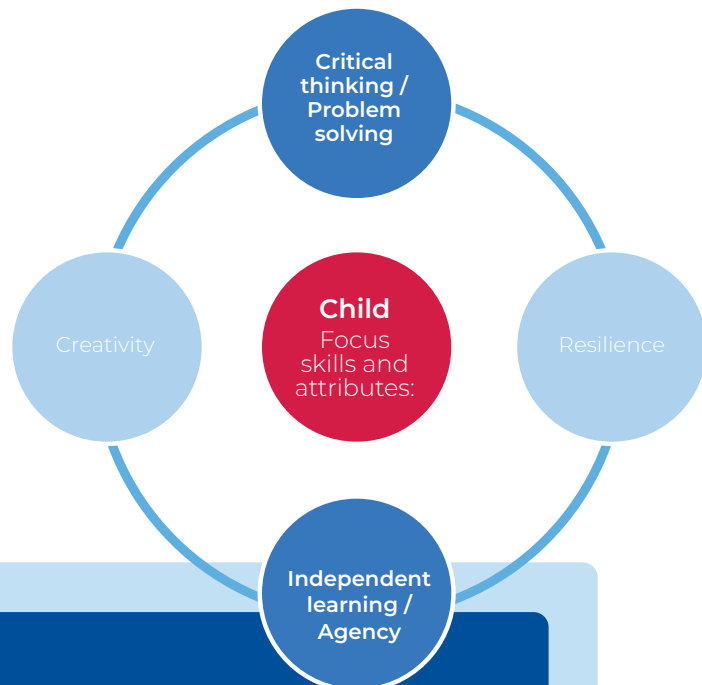
Chairs

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.1   Children feel safe, secure and supported.

1.2   Children develop emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency.

1.3   Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.

2.1   Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an emerging understanding of reciprocal rights and responsibilities.

4.3   Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.

4.4   Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials.

Developing healthy eating habits

Critical thinking / Problem solving

Creativity

Child
Focus skills and attributes:

Resilience

Independent learning / Agency

Learning Goal

To familiarise children with qualities associated with different kinds of food, such as the taste, texture and appearance of food, to increase the likelihood of acceptance of food and better support children in choosing food that is right for them.

Learning Objectives: (What will children learn?)

- To identify the difference between 'healthy foods' and 'sometimes foods'.
- To build confidence in choosing 'healthy foods' and 'sometimes foods' from available options.
- To build knowledge of the expectations of recess and lunch breaks within the school day.
- To experience the taste, smell or look of food that might be unfamiliar to them.
- To develop awareness and respect of food allergies.

Suggested Activities

Developing familiarity with food

Invite children to learn the similarities and differences between foods, considering the possible smell, texture, taste and appearance of different food items.

- Introduce a tasting plate of food items for the children to explore and discuss.
- Create an experience where children can choose the ingredients to make a sandwich (perhaps using image representations for food items). Engage in discussion with children regarding their choices. Supplement with the book 'The Magic Lunchbox', a picture book from NSW Health, as a thought starter.
- Group food into various categories – for example, by colour, sound or letters.

Magic Lunchbox book

https://www.healthpromotion.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Magic-Lunchbox-Book-updated.pdf

Magic Lunchbox educator resource

http://www.healthpromotion.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/CC11691M-ECEC-educator-resource-2018.pdf

Suggested Activities

Lunch box week

Invite children to bring a lunch box for a week to introduce children to the routine expected in a school day.

- Encourage discussion about items found in a lunch box.
- Discuss choices of which foods to eat first out of the options in the lunch box.
- Encourage children to get their own lunchboxes out of their bags and open them up.

Understanding food allergies

It is very important children understand and respect food allergies amongst their peers.

- Reiterate the importance of not sharing food at school, due to the risk of allergies.
- Discuss the types of food that might make our friends sick.
- Create role play opportunity with a doctor's surgery or emergency room.

Refer families to the following websites for more ideas on packing healthy lunches and for great recipe ideas

www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au
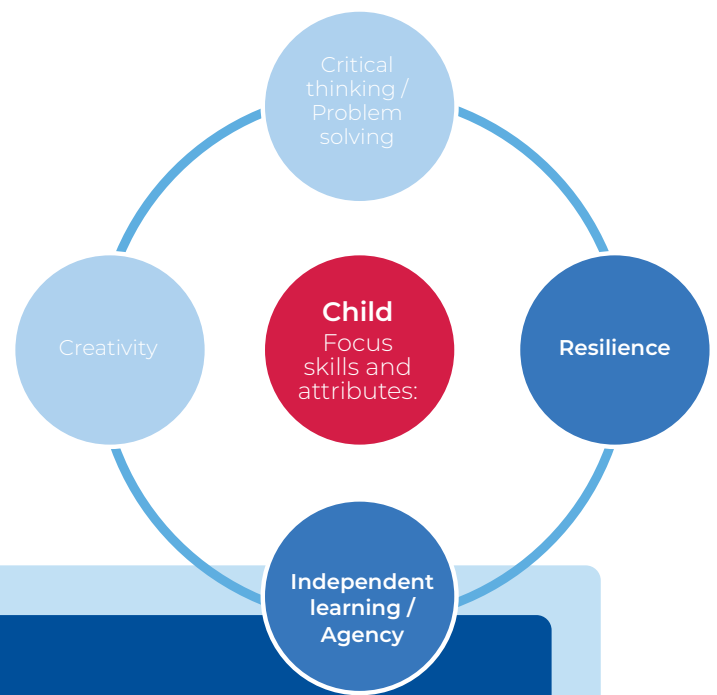
munchandmove.com.au

www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.1   Children feel safe, secure and supported.

1.2   Children develop emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency.

1.3   Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.

2.1   Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an emerging understanding of reciprocal rights and responsibilities.

4.3   Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.

4.4   Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials.

New routines

Child
Focus skills and attributes:

- Critical thinking / Problem solving
- Creativity
- Resilience
- Independent learning / Agency

Learning Goal

To assist children in understanding the routines and practices of the school setting.

Learning Objectives: (What will children learn?)

- To build confidence and skill in communicating with others.
- To develop greater focus during indoor and outdoor time.
- To build a sense of independence.

Suggested Activities

Setting expectations

Knowing what is going to happen next enhances children's security and emotional stability. When children are involved in a good routine, they feel confident and in control. They also learn to develop positive social skills. Examples of setting expectations can include:

- Greeting and farewelling others.
- Importance of turn-taking.
- Participating in group time sessions.
- Washing hands before having a snack.
- Following an ordered sequence of activities.
- Listening to others before responding.

Suggested Activities

First day storybooks

Storybooks are a great way to help children analyse events, ask questions and explore concepts.

- Ask prompting questions about the storyline or individual characters.
- Invite children to express their own perspectives on the concepts covered in the story.
- Follow the journey of individual characters and invite children to document the activities they engaged in throughout the story.
- Bring some of the activities from the story to life, encouraging children to explore them individually or in groups.

First day themed storybooks:

- Daisy's First Day
- Maddie's First Day (Penny Matthews)
- First Day (Andrew Daddo)
- One Keen Koala (Margaret Wild)

Morning baskets

The morning basket activity involves creating a basket of activities for children to engage in. Choosing from the basket every morning supports routine and promotes familiarity.

- Write down a number of activities to put into the basket. The activities should be hands-on and consolidate basic concepts such as letters and numbers.
- Allocate some structured time each morning for children to pick 3-4 different activities to complete.

Basket

Paper for activity cards (laminated if required)

Having fun in lines

Explicitly teaching the skills children will need to line up will reduce a lot of frustration for children and their new kindergarten teacher. Children will need to line up many times a day in their new school routine.

- This activity can be made fun through the use of music, bells or other percussion instruments and by turning the act of lining up into a fun and happy experience.
- Show children videos of the different animals that walk in lines. Some examples include ants, ducks and elephants. Explore why these animals move in lines.
- What are the benefits of moving in a line? For example, you don't get lost, you stay on the path, you move quickly, you don't bump into each other.

Bell

Percussion instrument

Music

Videos of animals walking in line

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.1 Children feel safe, secure and supported.

2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an emerging understanding of reciprocal rights and responsibilities.

3.1 Children become strong in their social and emotional well-being.

3.2 Children develop increasing responsibility for their own health and physical well-being.

4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

Suggested Activities

Balancing

Good balance underpins a child's ability to successfully avoid obstacles and perform fundamental motor skills. Activities to develop balance could include:

- Balance beams, such as logs or planks of wood.
- Stop / start games such as musical statues or traffic lights.
- Balancing objects while moving, such as small bean bags.
- Running, skipping or galloping.
- Use of stepping stones in the outdoor learning environment.

Balance beam
Music
Bean bags
Stepping stones

Spatial awareness

Developing spatial awareness allows children to navigate their environment. Spatial awareness can be developed through:

- The use of wheeled resources – such as bikes, trikers and scooters.
- Obstacle courses – climbing, crawling, jumping and weaving.
- Parachute games.
- Ball games.

Consider each child's learning support needs, Individual Learning Plans and required adjustments when implementing transition to school activities.

Bikes
Scooters
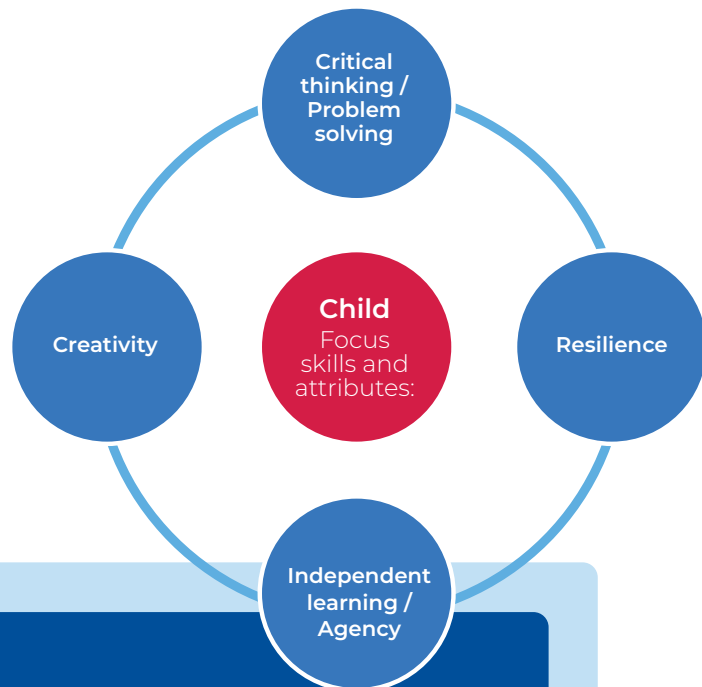**Tyres**
Hoops
Cones
Parachute
Variety of balls

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.

3.2 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

4.3 Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.

What to expect in a school day

- Critical thinking / Problem solving
- Creativity
- **Child** Focus skills and attributes:
- Resilience
- Independent learning / Agency

Learning Goal

To introduce children to the different types of routines they might encounter in a normal school day and to normalise the feelings associated with spending a full day at school each day.

Learning Objectives: (What will children learn?)

- To develop the foundations of self-help skills, including hand and finger strength, control, using language, planning and sequencing.
- To introduce children to the range of emotions that may be felt as they move to their new school environment, including developing an understanding of each emotion and the language to express the emotion.
- To set the expectations of the routine associated with the school day.

Suggested Activities

Introducing the concept of a school day

Invite children to read the book 'Daisy's First Day'.

- Prompt a discussion about what children know about the school day.
- Invite them to hypothesise about what they might experience in a normal school day.
- Explore the types of questions they may have – what do they wonder about the school day?
- Research with children the answers to their questions – perhaps turning a question into an inquiry project the whole group can engage with.

Daisy's First Day

Daisy's First Day

Suggested Activities

A full range of emotion

Emotions can be interweaved into a number of learning experiences.

- Set up a dramatic play area representing a school based classroom. Observe / engage in imaginative play and explore the emotions that children may experience through the use of role play.
- Invite children to draw a portrait of themselves showcasing a range of emotions – for example, happy, sad and excited. Children may wish to utilise a mirror to explore how these emotions look on their own faces.
- Regularly discuss with children the names of various emotions – for example, through the use of emotion flashcards. This will help children recognise different emotions and helps them learn the language to express the emotion.
- Set up a provocation using loose parts around expressing emotion. Provide a range of colours in the materials to assist children in representing emotion through colour, for example bright colours for happiness, reds for anger.

Puppets
School uniforms
Daisy's First Day
Emotion flashcards
Mirror
Art supplies
Loose parts

My first day

Invite children to document their own expectations about the school day.

- This could be compiled into a book for the room / class library for children to read and reflect on throughout the year.
- A range of media could be used to enhance the experience, such as photographs, illustrations, audio and video.

Camera (video / image)
Computer
Art supplies
Daisy's First Day

Creating a school day

Organise a 'school day' to mimic what happens at school. The day may include activities such as roleplaying, dressing up in school uniforms, using a board, and ringing a bell at morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

- Use this as an opportunity to connect with families and to learn about which schools children will be attending.
- Encourage children to practise dressing / wearing their school uniform.

School uniform or sports uniform
Hat
Shoes

Suggested Activities

Creative writing

Invite children to engage in a shared creative writing experience extending the concept of Daisy's First Day.

- What other scenarios might Daisy encounter as she continues through her school journey?
- How can these scenarios be turned into a storybook to extend the storyline of Daisy's First Day?

Paint
Pencils
Crayons
Paper
Daisy's First Day

Adventures with Daisy – the mascot

Daisy the Koala can become your class / preschool room mascot.

- Daisy the mascot can help build connections between early childhood education settings and schools.
- Daisy can accompany children on school visits or orientation.
- Daisy can spend weekends with children, using photographs to share the experiences they had together.

Stuffed koala toy (multiple if needed)
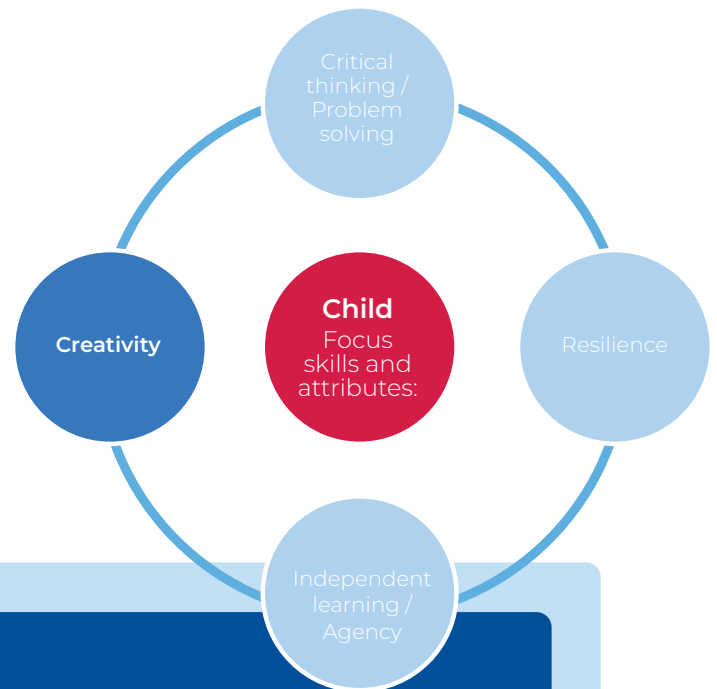**Daisy's First Day**

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.3   Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.

1.4   Children learn to interact in relation with others with care, empathy and respect.

2.2   Children respond to diversity with respect.

5.1   Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.

5.2   Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts.

5.3   Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.

Music education

Critical thinking / Problem solving

Creativity

Child Focus skills and attributes:

Resilience

Independent learning / Agency

Learning Goal

To expose children to high quality music in a variety of genres.

Learning Objectives: (What will children learn?)

- To develop musical skills in the areas of singing, rhythm, listening and movement.
- To introduce music as an avenue for creative expression and a mode of communication.
- To promote social skills, numeracy, language and literacy skills, motor skills and flexible thinking.

Suggested Activities

Beat and rhythm

Beat forms the foundation of music. Keeping time with the beat is important for musical acquisition. Beat and rhythm can be explored by:

- Clapping rhythmic patterns that match words of a song or rhyme.
- Investigating longer and shorter sounds.
- Assigning sounds to words of a song and encouraging the children to play their sound when they hear their word.
- Introducing songs with actions.
- Inviting children to make up their own beats and patterns using body percussion.

Handheld percussion

Suggested Activities

Rhythm and numeracy

Rhythms are numerically connected to the beat. Music is built on recurring beats which marks out time in equal portions. Numeracy can be explored through rhythm, including:

- Counting beats, use actions to help develop memory and coordination.
- Counting sounds.
- Number based songs.
- Recognising patterns.

Handheld percussion

Movement and physical coordination

Movement experiences help children to develop coordination, balance, control, flexibility, spatial awareness and strength.

- Dancing helps children learn how their body can move.
- Experiment with travelling motions, such as walking, sliding and jumping.
- Introduce new movements like twisting, bobbing and bending to utilise different muscle groups.
- Encourage children to learn set dance moves improves their listening and understanding skills.

Musical literacy

Allowing children to explore and distinguish between different sounds that objects can make builds phonological awareness, conversation and social skills.

- Encourage exploration of sounds using different everyday objects.
- Focus children's attention on how to make different sounds, including higher, lower – louder and softer.
- Choose books that can be sung with children to develop interactions with texts through gesture, sounds and words.
- Invite children to create their own songs. This can be a collaborative or individual exercise and involve other elements of language such as rhyme, patterns and repetition.

Different materials that will produce sounds when moved / hit (for example, metal spoons, wood blocks, wind chimes, musical jars, pots and pans)

Links to Approved Learning Frameworks

Early Years Learning Framework:

1.3   Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.

4.1   Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

4.3   Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.

5.3   Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.

5.4   Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work.