

# Building a sound understanding of intentional teaching in play-based learning for early years education

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Educators need to integrate teaching and learning with a balanced approach of both child-led and adult-led learning in a play-based curriculum. “Play-based learning and intentionality” is an educator’s practice in Australia’s Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 (EYLF) (Australian Government Department of Education 2022). It involves using intentional strategies to support young children’s learning and development as part of the educational program. To implement this practice, educators need a sound understanding of intentionality and research-informed best practice for supporting play-based learning. Intentionality will involve planning a curriculum that is age appropriate based on children’s needs, interests, strengths, skills and dispositions for learning.

The following questions relate to principles, practices and learning outcomes for children in the EYLF. Use them to reflect on your intentional teaching strategies for planning and promoting play-based learning.

## Intentional teaching principles

In what ways are you intentional (deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful) in your decisions and actions to:

- » build secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children and their families?
  
- » promote partnerships with families and the wider community?
  
- » demonstrate respect for diversity?
  
- » promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives?
  
- » foster equity, inclusion and high expectations for children?
  
- » promote sustainability?
  
- » engage in critical reflection and ongoing professional learning?
  
- » promote collaborative leadership and teamwork?

## Intentional teaching practices

In what ways are you intentional when you:

- » plan holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches to support play-based learning?
- » demonstrate responsiveness to children?
- » plan for play-based learning?
- » set up inspiring learning environments for children?
- » promote cultural responsiveness to children and their families?
- » foster continuity of learning and effective transitions for children?
- » plan assessment and evaluation for the learning, development and wellbeing of children?

## Intentional teaching learning outcomes

How do you intentionally plan for children to:

- » have a strong sense of identity?
- » connect with and contribute to their world?
- » have a strong sense of wellbeing?
- » be confident and involved learners?
- » be effective communicators?

## Reflect by digging deeper

Intentional teaching involves a balance of both child-led learning and adult-led learning. How do you reflect this balance in your practice?

» How do you talk about intentional teaching in a play-based curriculum to colleagues and families?

» In what ways do you promote intentional teaching in a play-based curriculum?

» How do you intentionally foster children's voices in a play-based curriculum?

» How do you intentionally enact the principles and practices of the EYLF?

Reference: Australian Government Department of Education (2022) *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (V2.0)*. Australian Government Department of Education for the Ministerial Council.