



6.5 Educational Program Policy

Policy number: 6.5
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Reviewed by: Child Care Services

This policy relates to	
National Quality Standards Early Childhood Education & Care	1.1 Program, 1.1.1 Approved learning framework, 1.1.2 Child Centred, 1.1.3 Program learning opportunities, 1.2 Practice, 1.2.1 Intentional teaching, 1.2.2 Responsive teaching and scaffolding, 1.2.3 Child directed learning, 1.3 Assessment and planning, 1.3.1 Assessment and planning cycle

Purpose

The service encourages and supports educators to plan and program to meet individual children's interests and abilities.

Policy

Educational Program

The National Law and National Regulations require an Approved Service to provide a program that is based on an approved learning framework:

- Educators with Beaucare are required to base their planning/programs on the Belonging, Being and Becoming -The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and the My Time, Our Place Framework for School Age Care in Australia.
- The Educational Leader with Beaucare leads the development and implementation of the educational program in the service. This is done in collaboration with coordinators, educators, families, children and community leaders.
- Service Philosophy is developed in collaboration with educators, families, community and service coordinators and incorporated theorist perspectives for the foundation of the educational program.

Assessment of Children's Learning

The learning frameworks outline that educators use an assessment process to gather information about what children know, understand and can do. This information should be analysed by educators to plan effectively for each child's learning. Assessment information can also be used by

educators to reflect on their own values, beliefs and teaching practices, and to communicate about children's learning with children and their families. Assessment documentation must be kept for each child.

Beaucare provides each educator with training and resource information on Belonging, Being and Becoming and My Time Our Place Early Years Learning Framework at initial induction, followed by visits and on-going training on methods to gather assessment documentation. A planning pack based on the Early Years Learning Framework and My Time Our Place is provided to all educators and updated as needed to provide a variety of documentation tools for educators.

Documentation should include:

- Assessments of the child's development needs, interests, experiences and participation in the educational program;
- Assessments of the child's progress against the learning outcomes of the educational program.

For children who are over prep age, this documentation should focus on evaluations of the child's wellbeing, development and learning within the educational program and be reflective of My Time Our Place.

Parents should be informed about the educational program. Regulation 75 requires that:

- Information about the contents and operation of the educational program for the service is displayed at the education and care service premises at a place accessible to parents of children being educated and cared for by the service; and
- A copy of the educational program is available at each family day care residence or family day care venue.

The following information must be given to a child's parents when requested:

- The content and operation of the educational program as it relates to that child;
- Information about that child's participation in the program;
- A copy of assessments or evaluations in relation to that child.

The activities and experiences should:

- Include a balance of activities and learning experiences, including:
 - indoor and outdoor activities; and
 - individual and group activities; and

- Allow, in appropriate circumstances, for supervised periods for the children to rest or sleep; and
- Include opportunities for the children to make choices; and
- Be flexible and responsive to changes in the children’s abilities, interests and skills; and
- Nurture each child’s self-esteem, self-reliance and competence; and
- Be inclusive of children of all abilities; and
- Ensure each child’s social and cultural background is respected and valued; and
- Reflect an understanding of Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and its multicultural heritage; and
- Reflect learning that is valued and expected for children within the family and community cultural context; and
- Be based on a combination of spontaneous, child-initiated, educator-initiated, intentional teaching and family input; and
- Identify children’s shared interests and use this information to plan further collaborative learning opportunities; and
- Include evidence of planned and spontaneous experiences that support children to develop and practice the skills required to participate in group discussions and shared decision making with their peers; and
- Be designed in collaboration with schools, professionals or external support agencies that work with the child/ren.

Home visits by coordinators are used to assist educators to be reflective in their practices and planning for children. Additional training and mentoring with educators is available from coordination staff, the Educational leader and educator leaders in the service. Training and information is provided by the service to assist educators to reflect on their current practices and develop their educational programs for children. Planning is encouraged to include all times of the day including arrivals, departures, and routine times (meals, sleep, transition times) as well as indoor and outdoor playtimes. Educators are encouraged to seek input and feedback from children and families where ever possible to ensure inclusive and reflective practices are occurring. Coordinators record reflections and this becomes part of the critical reflections for future planning with the educator. Coordinator visits are planned for the purpose of critical reflection to occur with coordinators spot checking each other’s work with educators and assessing educator profiles.

In Home Care

National Standards for In Home Care (Section 11) states that “The carer should recognise that play is a primary means of children’s learning and therefore provide them with the opportunity to:

- Explore a variety of experiences, both indoor and outdoor;
- Pursue their own interests;
- Be spontaneous;
- Freely choose activities and solve problems;
- Be involved in imaginative and creative play;
- Explore the world using all their senses.”

Written Weekly Plan

National Standards for In Home Care states “The carer will provide a written weekly plan that encourages the child to engage in early learning through self-directed play, self-discovery, independence and extension of skills and development. The educator is to ensure that programs are child-centred and inclusive of the cultural diversity of the children in care, in an environment free of prejudice. The educators program is to take into account:

- The early learning and developmental needs of individual children;
- The expectations of the children’s parents;
- The weather and the physical environment;
- Suitable materials, toys and equipment required to support the program;
- Quiet/active times and settings.”

Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

National Quality Standards

National Standards for In Home Care

Key Resources

Belonging, Being, and Becoming The Early Years Learning Framework in Australia

Educators Belonging, Being, and Becoming Educator's Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework

Early Years Learning Framework in Action Educators Stories and models for practice

My Time, Our Place Framework for School Aged Care in Australia

Educators My Time, Our Place Educator's Guide to the Early Years Learning Framework

My Time, Our Place Promoting Collaborative Partnerships between School Aged Services and Schools

Assessing for Learning Development in the Early Years using Observation Scales

Reflect Respect Relate Get Up & Grow

Stonehouse. A. (2004) *Family Day Care Dimensions*

Gronlund. G.(2001) *Focussed Portfolios*

Crook & Farmer (2002) *Just Imagine: Creative Play Experiences for Children under 6*

Shores.E. (1998) *The Portfolio Book*

Early Childhood Australia: *Why Play-Based Learning?*

http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/every_child_magazine/every_child_index/why_play-based_learning.html

Family Day Care Australia

www.fdca.com.au

National Quality Standards 2012

Beaucare Family Day Care Philosophy

www.thestrong.org/about-play/play-quotes

www.f2be.com/quotes.htm

www.child-development-guide.com/child-developmetn-theorists.html