

Contents

Before you begin	v
Topic 1 Fostering physical development	1
1A Understanding development theories and monitoring physical skills	3
1B Providing physical experiences	18
1C Providing physical challenges and promoting fitness	28
Summary	31
Learning checkpoint 1: Fostering physical development	32
Topic 2 Fostering social development	37
2A Understanding and monitoring social development	39
2B Providing for social interaction	60
2C Encouraging a sense of community and cooperation	75
Summary	80
Learning checkpoint 2: Fostering social development	81
Topic 3 Fostering emotional development	83
3A Understanding emotional development	85
3B Providing challenges and opportunities for success	102
3C Supporting development of independence and identity	106
Summary	119
Learning checkpoint 3: Fostering emotional development	120
Topic 4 Fostering cognitive development	123
4A Understanding cognitive development	125
4B Constructing, sorting and comparing	143
4C Exploring and experimenting	148
4D Using play to experience consequences	157
Summary	165
Learning checkpoint 4: Fostering cognitive development	166
Topic 5 Fostering communication development	171
5A Understanding language development	173
5B Providing for language skills	187
5C Valuing linguistic diversity	203
Summary	208
Learning checkpoint 5: Fostering communication development	209



Topic 1

In this topic you will learn about:

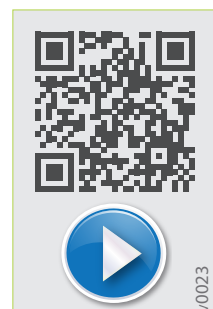
- 1A Understanding development theories and monitoring physical skills**
- 1B Providing physical experiences**
- 1C Providing physical challenges and promoting fitness**

Fostering physical development

Children's physical development is influenced by their genetics, culture and environment. Understanding how children develop and what influences this development helps you provide appropriate environments and opportunities to ensure children reach appropriate milestones for their age and stage of development.

Educators are responsible for ensuring that children in their care have the opportunity to develop in a stimulating and safe physical environment. This requires a program that includes planned and spontaneous activities that are age- and stage-appropriate. Assessment and monitoring provides information you can use to plan and provide appropriate experiences to foster each child's motor skills and fundamental movement skills, challenge their physical skills and abilities, and promote physical fitness.

Watch this video to learn about children's physical development.



The following table maps this topic to the National Quality Standard and *Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia*.

National Quality Standard	
✓	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
✓	Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
✓	Quality Area 3: Physical environment
	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership
Early Years Learning Framework	
Principles	
	Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
	Partnerships
	High expectations and equity
	Respect for diversity
✓	Ongoing learning and reflective practice
Practice	
	Holistic approaches
	Responsiveness to children
	Learning through play
	Intentional teaching
✓	Learning environments
	Cultural competence
	Continuity of learning and transitions
✓	Assessment for learning
Outcomes	
	Children have a strong sense of identity
	Children are connected to and contribute to their world
✓	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
	Children are confident and involved learners
	Children are effective communicators

Fundamental movement skills include skills such as:

- ▶ crawling
- ▶ walking
- ▶ static balancing
- ▶ running
- ▶ jumping, hopping, skipping and leaping
- ▶ catching
- ▶ side galloping
- ▶ overarm throwing
- ▶ kicking
- ▶ dodging
- ▶ two-hand striking.

These fundamental movement skills are used in more specialised, challenging and complex actions needed for play, active games, sports, gymnastics, physical recreation activities and dance.

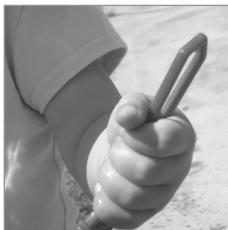
Fine motor skills

Fine motor skills include smaller movements of the body, such as moving the wrists, hands, fingers, feet and toes. These are used for manipulation, movement and hand–eye coordination, and include skills such as:

- ▶ writing
- ▶ turning a page
- ▶ threading
- ▶ clicking fingers
- ▶ pinching clay
- ▶ weaving
- ▶ flipping cards
- ▶ playing the piano.

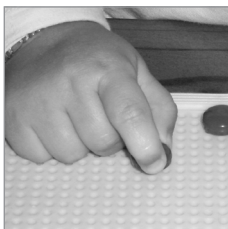
Hand grasp develops in sequence and influences a child's ability to control their activities. Skills like hand grasp are influenced by the environment, so if a child is not provided with opportunities to grasp objects, this skill will not develop well and their dexterity may be poor.

Hand grasp development



Palmar grasp

A palmar grasp appears once the grasp reflex has disappeared, at around four months. The whole fist is used in this grasp, with the palm covering the object and the fingers intentionally curling around the object. The child is able to let go of the object when they want to.



Pincer grasp

A pincer grasp occurs next as the fingers become more controlled. The pincer grasp is useful for picking up small objects and uses the index finger and the thumb together in a pinching motion.



Tripod grasp

A tripod grasp follows where a thick crayon or piece of food is held with the fingers in a tripod style with two fingers and the thumb.

Practice task 1

1. Use a table similar to the following to monitor a three-year-old child’s physical development. Observe the child throughout a day to identify whether they have developed or are working on the skills listed in the table.

Age of child: Three years		
Physical development	Comments and date	Date recorded as achieved
Dresses and undresses with little help		
Hops, jumps and runs with ease		
Imitates a variety of shapes when drawing; for example, a circle		
Independently cuts paper with scissors		

2. Explain how each of the **four** skills in the table could be influenced by the following.
- a. Social development

- b. Psychological development

Time

To provide time for play and leisure, your plan must be unhurried and uninterrupted. When children are rushed through play, they do not have an opportunity to fully experience the activity and may become frustrated.

Children need time to:

- ▶ make choices
- ▶ become involved
- ▶ change direction
- ▶ become involved again
- ▶ practise and master skills
- ▶ form relationships
- ▶ become independent.

Space

Every play space is different and the availability of indoor and outdoor environments may be limited or constricted by time or the needs of others. However, you can control the space available.

Work with children to think about how space will be used. When planning how to use space, remember the following:

- ▶ Children need hands-on experiences. They need to explore, touch, smell, move, create and build. You need to make these experiences available.
- ▶ Children need choices. Spaces must prompt children to choose an activity that interests them. There must be sufficient play spaces for children to have a choice of two or three activities at any time.
- ▶ Children need challenges. The space you arrange needs to invite children to use their physical skills in a variety of ways.
- ▶ Children need safety and security; they need to feel safe without feeling overprotected. Finding a balance between safety and healthy risk-taking can be challenging.

Aesthetics

An aesthetically pleasing environment means an attractive environment, and refers to how the environment is set up, and how materials and experiences are offered. If experiences are presented with care and look appealing, children will be inclined to try them.

When you set up experiences for children, try to imagine how the child is going to see the experience and identify what messages your set-up will send. An ideal set-up says 'Come and play!'

Other messages you should aim to send are:

- ▶ this space is cared for
- ▶ play is valued and respected
- ▶ it is easy to play here
- ▶ you can change this space and play out your own ideas.

You can send positive messages such as these by ensuring:

- ▶ you use neutral colours that do not overload children's senses
- ▶ the environment is clean, bright and well-prepared
- ▶ materials and furnishings are child-focused
- ▶ all children and parents are made to feel welcome
- ▶ the environment is safe and interesting
- ▶ the environment has boundaries
- ▶ there are inviting and attractive displays and experiences
- ▶ materials are changed according to children's interests
- ▶ safety is important, but children are still able to challenge themselves
- ▶ there are familiar staff.

1C Providing physical challenges and promoting fitness

There is a fine line between providing a challenge and frustrating a child. You are likely to find this balance if you consider the development you have already seen and make activities a little more challenging than this.

Children enjoy being challenged by their experiences, as this engages them in the activity and ensures their skills are applied and being developed.

Challenge is particularly important for gross motor and fundamental skill development, as challenges in these areas help a child to be physically fit and feel motivated. This helps to avoid obesity and promotes the development of a healthy body.



Challenging skills and abilities

Developing challenging activities involves being able to competently extend and expand on a child's current skills. The EYLF principles encourage you to hold high expectations for children's achievement in learning. The Principle: High expectations and equity supports you to see that children are competent and capable, and that you should provide challenges so they can extend their skills.

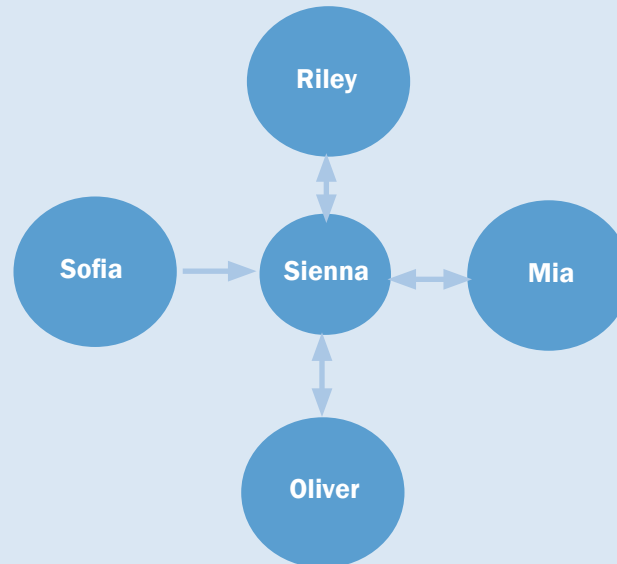
The following table contains some examples of objectives that challenge the child.

What the child can do	What may challenge this child	EYLF outcome
Steve (two years) can pull his shoes on and off.	Steve might be challenged by using the velcro on his shoes himself when dressing and undressing.	Sub-outcome of Outcome 3: Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing
Jessie (three years) can climb to the top of the fort ladder and stand on the top of the fort.	Jessie might be challenged by climbing to the top of the large A-frame, going over the top and climbing down the other side as part of an obstacle course.	

To balance challenge and frustration, it is useful to prepare some ideas for use if needed; these may be useful for spontaneous activity or to increase or decrease the difficulty of a task. This way, you will always be prepared to provide success for children. You can also be led by the children's ideas and their enthusiasm to try new things.

Example**Measuring social interactions against outcomes**

Oliver (an educator) wants to monitor the interactions of Sienna during a 10-minute morning snack time. He uses a sociogram, as this is an effective way to record lots of information about interactions. The sociogram demonstrates that Sienna interacted with Oliver, Mia and Riley. It also shows that Sofia interacted with Sienna, but Sienna did not respond to this communication.



Oliver links Sienna's interactions with the EYLF outcomes. He sees that she:

- ▶ initiated conversations with an educator, which relates to Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity; Sub-outcome: Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- ▶ interacted with a range of people, which relates to Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators; Sub-outcome: Children interact verbally and nonverbally with others for a range of purposes.

Recording development

Records of social skills and development provide you with data you can use to plan and provide appropriate social activities, experiences and interactions.

Children may require encouragement and assistance to develop skills in initiating and developing contact with others. To ensure children are encouraged to interact with a variety of people in a range of ways, you first need to gain an understanding of who the children already interact with and how they do so.

The types of social interaction children may be involved in include exchanging information, achieving goals, solving problems or conflicts, and working together. You need to take into consideration the type of social situation you are monitoring, then choose the most relevant method for recording this.

By monitoring children's social activity you can identify:

- ▶ the way each child interacts with others
- ▶ how their interactions alter when communicating with different people
- ▶ how you can provide for increased interaction
- ▶ how you can support the child to interact with those who are important to their learning and wellbeing
- ▶ the types of activities and experiences that would benefit the child or help them explore areas of interest.

- ▶ answer questions so children learn the information they need to make good choices
- ▶ provide open-ended materials so a range of options and ideas are available for the children to think about and experiment with
- ▶ provide new and stimulating materials so children are busy and involved with their learning
- ▶ use everyday events as a basis for discussing how others may have made decisions, solved problems and dealt with conflict
- ▶ talk about routines and choices so children see options are available and that there are different ways to look at things
- ▶ encourage children to consult each other
- ▶ support parents to provide learning environments at home so children can transfer their skills to other environments.

When you assist children to develop their decision-making, problem-solving and conflict resolution skills, you can:

- ▶ give them a strategy to use when they are faced with decisions, problems and conflicts; for example, breaking the issue into manageable tasks
- ▶ help them identify what issues to tackle and in which order
- ▶ assist them to see other people's points of view.

Cooperative processes

To ensure that decision-making, problem-solving and conflict-resolution processes are cooperative, your interactions must be encouraging. You should make suggestions rather than give directions. You can do this by:

- ▶ encouraging children to interact with each other – introduce open-ended activities; this encourages children to feel important and to develop their own ideas
- ▶ helping children clarify or adapt their shared goals – to successfully make a decision all participants need to have the same or a similar goal; you can help them talk about what they want to achieve
- ▶ involving children who are unlikely to initiate – quieter children are less likely to initiate and state their ideas, so it is critical for you to support their involvement
- ▶ avoiding demonstrating or solving problems for the children – allow the children to think about their options and consider all outcomes.



To extend the children's ability to make decisions, solve problems and resolve conflicts you can implement a common decision-making strategy. When implementing the six steps of this strategy with children, you can encourage them to work with others to gain a broader view or support them to work through the steps themselves.

1

Define the situation

- ▶ What is the issue? Pick one issue and work on that. Be specific: What is the situation and why does it feel like an issue?
- ▶ What is the decision? Pick one decision and work on that. Be specific: What is the decision about and why do you need to make this decision?

Bear in mind that children:

- ▶ need time to observe, think things through and take note
- ▶ benefit from hands-on experiences in real situations
- ▶ prefer varied levels of autonomy; some children prefer to be completely dependent on the adults around them and others want to be independent
- ▶ may have experienced different levels of responsibility; some children may never have been expected to take any responsibility at home, and others may have been responsible for a wide range of things that are appropriate or inappropriate for their age
- ▶ play and learn best when their family and peers are around
- ▶ like to observe and imitate
- ▶ are very active and enjoy physical activity
- ▶ dislike being singled out
- ▶ are sometimes not used to obeying adults
- ▶ often prefer to experiment and use their initiative in play rather than being directed by others
- ▶ play cooperatively rather than competitively
- ▶ like to persist and practise over and over to succeed at something
- ▶ have varied experiences of sharing – some children will be used to sharing from a very young age, while others may have had limited experience of sharing
- ▶ use body language before words
- ▶ speak their first language before any new or second language and may not speak English – if you work with children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, develop appropriate methods of supporting play and learning in ways that reflect and respect their backgrounds.



Example

Encouraging interaction

In the home corner the educators have placed a sari and a pair of chopsticks. These items are added to the regular items in the areas such as pots and pans, dolls, dress-ups, plates, cups and cutlery. An educator remains close by the area most of the morning so she can listen and observe the children.

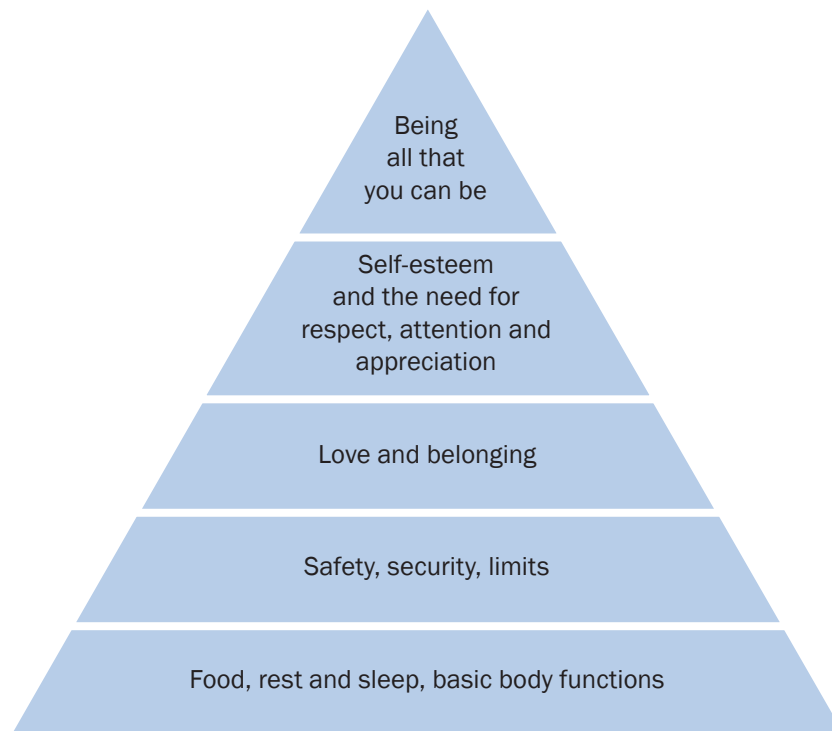
At one time the educator enters the area as a child doesn't know what the chopsticks are. The educator explains that they are used to eat food like a spoon or fork and that if you go to an Asian restaurant you may use them there. She also explains that Ling (a girl of Chinese heritage) uses chopsticks to eat at home and may be able to demonstrate how to use them.

Summary

- ▶ As children develop confidence, relationships, responsibility, control of their feelings and the ability to work with others, the understanding you show enables you to provide an environment that meets these growing needs and encourages, supports and challenges their skills.
- ▶ Social development in early childhood is defined by a range of approaches and theories that guide you to identify the milestones that children are expected to achieve and to provide an understanding of why children approach social interaction the way they do.
- ▶ Theories related to social development include: attachment theory, behaviourist theory, ecological approach, friendship theory, moral theory, play stages theory, social learning theory and sociocultural theory.
- ▶ Assessing and monitoring social skills provides you with information from which to plan and implement development experiences appropriate for each child's interests, goals and development stage.
- ▶ A variety of recording methods can be used to collect information about a child's social skills and development.
- ▶ It is important to plan and provide opportunities for different forms of social interaction between children during play. Each child's interests, goals and development stage need to be considered when providing these opportunities.
- ▶ Provided experiences need to be structured in a way that promotes cooperation and conflict resolution.
- ▶ When children feel a sense of community they feel a sense of belonging and develop further understanding of their identity.
- ▶ Offering a variety of experiences in the care environment gives the child options for communicating and for learning. This may include spontaneous social interaction, planned group discussions where children share their ideas and investigate ethical issues, activities requiring cooperation, and opportunities for privacy, solitude or quiet time.

Humanistic theory

Psychology theorist Abraham Maslow identified basic needs that must be met before we progress to satisfying other needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs includes the needs of children and adults.



Once our basic physical needs are met (food, rest, sleep and basic body functions), emotional needs can be addressed. Safety, security and limits allow us to feel that our emotional needs are being met and acknowledged. Love and belonging support our feelings of being needed. Self-esteem and the need for respect, attention and appreciation are directly linked to how we experience and react to feelings, fears and change, and how we feel others will experience and react to these. A child who is emotionally cared for and confident can attempt to be all they can be, including becoming independent and autonomous.

Maslow's theory helps you recognise priorities in caring for children; you must make sure the lower level needs are met before you can help to satisfy the higher level needs. If a child feels insecure and unsafe (second-level needs), they will not feel loved and cared for (third-level needs). They also may not participate fully in the activities you plan and may not develop secure relationships with those in the service. In addition, the child's developmental progress may be affected as they are focused on being safe and secure, rather than being involved and challenged.



Learning checkpoint 3

Fostering emotional development

Part A

Observe a group of children and complete the following tasks:

- ▶ Identify **five** self-help tasks that children participate in throughout the day.
- ▶ For each self-help task, identify emerging skills you may observe if a child was learning to complete this task independently.
- ▶ For each emerging skill, describe one way you could scaffold the child’s learning through play.

You may wish to record your information in a table similar to the following.

Self-help task	Emerging skills	Scaffolding provided through play

Part B

1. Think about children you have worked with and write down a play activity you have planned and provided that demonstrates each of the following characteristics:
 - a. Catered for individual strengths and successes

Process	Characteristic	Example
Animism	The child gives animate characteristics to inanimate things.	Delia gets a paper cut when she turns the page on a book. She tells the educator that the book has 'bitten' her.

You may recognise that some processes from the previous table continue into adulthood. Sometimes this is caused by strong connections formed in early childhood; other times it is due to information that has been repeated to strengthen the conclusion made (such as thinking all games are either lost or won).









Two other abilities that link with preoperational processes are:

- ▶ the child's lack of understanding of the concepts of number, colour, shape and size
- ▶ the child's lack of ability to conserve (realise that two things are the same amount) in relation to number, length, liquid, mass, area, weight and volume.

These limitations are important to consider when developing programs for children and establishing appropriate expectations.

Conservation in relation to number, length, liquid, mass, area, weight and volume is difficult for a preoperational child to understand due to their tendency to think illogically. Indications that a child is unable to conserve can be gained from the way materials are presented. The following table includes examples of preoperational children not understanding that the transformed materials are equal to the original materials – even though only the appearance has changed.

Even if the change in appearance occurs while the child is watching, they will still think the quantities have adjusted due to the different appearance.

Conservation task question	Original presentation	Child's response	Transformed (change in appearance)	Child's response
Number: Is there the same number of dots in each row?		Yes		No, the top row has more.
Length: Are the sticks the same length?		Yes		No, one is longer.
Mass: Is there the same amount of clay in each ball?		Yes		No, one has more.
Area: Are each of these lawns the same size?		Yes		No, one is longer.

Example**Using multiple intelligences with a group of children**

Molly, an educator, knows that her group is interested in insects. She develops a list of activities she can use with the children to extend on their interest and aid the learning of every child in the group by catering for different kinds of intelligence. She also thinks that she might be able to find out more information about each child's strengths by seeing how they react to each of the activities.

Strength	Suitable learning experience
Verbal-linguistic intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Using books relating to insects ▶ Discussing insect information
Logical-mathematical intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Working out how insects eat and what they eat by watching them ▶ Counting how many legs insects have
Spatial-visual intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Looking at pictures of insect species
Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Moving like particular insects ▶ Touching the insects and finding out what they feel like
Musical intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Singing songs about insects
Interpersonal intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Asking others what they know about insects
Intrapersonal intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Talking about information the child knows about insects ▶ Finding out how the child feels about insects
Naturalist intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Finding out where insects live in nature ▶ Exploring and finding insects in the garden

Sociocultural theory

As mentioned in Topics 2 and 3, sociocultural theory, also known as the social constructivist learning theory, builds on Piaget's theory to include learning that is acquired through social interaction. Vygotsky provides a clear picture of how critical learning periods, or windows of opportunity, are influenced by children's social environment and community. The strategies for supporting skills are based on scaffolding or social learning, and require you to consider the zone of proximal development.

Another aspect of Vygotsky's theory, also discussed in Topic 3 in relation to emotional development, is reciprocal teaching. This provides a learning environment where open and frequent interaction occurs between the child and the educator. The educator in this model alternates leadership of the conversation with the child until the child becomes confident in this role and assumes a leadership and instructional role themselves. If children are exposed to new and more skilled activities, they will be encouraged to move forward themselves and attempt to learn new skills.

A number of core principles relate to development. The following table outlines those relevant to cognitive development and explains the link.

The main theories that relate to attention span are presented in the following table.

Theory	How it relates to attention span
Brain development	Attention span and the ability to become engaged and involved in an experience are brain development outcomes. Synapses need to become strong in the area of interest for this to occur, as does the ability to focus thought and ignore other stimulation.
Cognitive theory (Piaget)	<p>Attention span forms a large part of this constructivist theory as thinking, problem-solving and exploration each need the child to focus and use learnt strategies.</p> <p>In the sensorimotor stage, attention is achieved through interest and exploration. The child requires time to use their senses, and support to explore materials more than once.</p> <p>In the preoperational stage, imagination and symbolic thought has emerged, which allows the child to use thought as a companion to their activity or as the activity itself.</p>
Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky)	<p>A child's emerging skills and the scaffolding they are provided with are linked together by attention span. The child must concentrate for some time on the scaffolding in order to benefit from it.</p> <p>This is also true for reciprocal learning, as attention is required between the child and adult or another child to ensure the greatest benefit from the opportunity.</p>
Multiple intelligences (Gardner)	Attention span can be developed by approaching interests and skills via the appropriate intelligence. The child will respond more readily and continue the activity with more interest.

Example

Extending a child's attention span

Leonard's attention span at group time is very low. He becomes agitated and often leaves the group within five minutes.

His educator uses his interest in trains to deliver a group experience. She reads a story about a train and sings a train song. At the end of the group experience, she asks the children questions that will interest Leonard. She asks what the children know about trains and includes specific details that Leonard will know such as, 'What is the name of the part where the smoke comes from?' and 'What powers the steam train?'

At the next group time, Leonard continues full participation for more than five minutes without interruption.

Monitoring cognitive skills

A variety of recording methods can be used to collect information about a child's cognitive development. Skills may include:

- ▶ reasoning
- ▶ developing understanding and explanations
- ▶ critical thinking
- ▶ use of mathematical concepts
- ▶ problem-solving
- ▶ inventing and discovering
- ▶ planning.



4D Using play to experience consequences

There are two main cognitive areas that relate to experiencing the consequences of choices, actions and ideas during play:

- ▶ the manner in which choices, actions and ideas result in feelings
- ▶ consequences resulting from problem-solving and decision-making.

Cognitive development links very closely with all other areas of development. Cognitive skills allow children to think about what they are doing, link what has occurred to a result or consequence, and communicate their thoughts, feelings, attitudes and additional ideas.



Consequences can be natural; that is, a natural result of something that happens. Other consequences can be logical, positive or negative.

Consequences and feelings

The ideas that children express often relate to their feelings. Feelings are the consequence or outcome of occurrences and/or interactions. Once children are old enough, it is useful for them to start labelling these feelings so that they become familiar with them and consider how they have occurred. This means that they will be identifying what the emotional consequence of behaviour or another action feels like. If children gain an in-depth knowledge of their feelings, they will be able to recognise these sooner and manage them appropriately. You can also help them to see that actions and choices create consequential feelings by reminding them; for example, by asking, 'Miguel, how does it feel to achieve that?' or 'How does it feel when your idea works differently to what you expect?'

Some common feelings that you may encounter in children are described in the following table.

Common feelings	Explanation
Excitement	This may be the consequence of positive outcomes such as an experiment working, a hypothesis being proven or a reconstruction being successful. Many young children lose control of this positive emotion and can become overexcited or extremely reactive.
Anger	Each child will express anger differently and sometimes the appropriate expression is difficult to identify. Nonetheless, children need to be aware that anger must be expressed in a way that does not hurt others or the environment. Children may feel anger if others interfere with their ideas or a hypothesis turns out to be incorrect.



Topic 6

In this topic you will learn about:

6A Encouraging inquiry, challenges and experimentation

6B Guiding the learning process

6C Sharing information and collaborating about assessments

Fostering an environment for holistic learning and development

The EYLF views the child as a capable learner who experiences a range of developmental areas.

To effectively implement holistic learning environments, educators need to:

- ▶ collaborate about assessments and evaluation
- ▶ share information with colleagues about child development and wellbeing
- ▶ recognise spontaneous teachable moments
- ▶ ensure a balance between child-initiated and educator-supported learning

Watch this video about fostering a child's development.



6B Guiding the learning process

As an educator, you have the ability to participate in the learning processes of children. There are a number of ways you can support children to learn from their play and structured activity. You can:

- ▶ scaffold learning and development
- ▶ recognise spontaneous teachable moments
- ▶ balance child-initiated and educator-supported learning
- ▶ promote a sense of belonging and connectedness
- ▶ facilitate diverse contributions from families.



Scaffolding learning and development

Scaffolding is integral to many of the concepts covered in this learner guide. It is a consistent strategy used to support children to develop their emerging skills.

Scaffolding, part of sociocultural theory, relates to the actions and efforts that support a child to learn to use new skills. The theory, developed by Vygotsky, is an important part of being a receptive educator, and describes an important part of pedagogy.

When you monitor learning, you find out whether a child is ready to learn or work independently. You then provide a range of support ideas to enable the child to learn and develop until they have the skills you are focusing on.

Example

Using scaffolding to help a child learn

Greg, one year old, is pulling at his shoe, trying to remove it. Helen, an educator, notices his actions and puts scaffolding strategies into place:

- ▶ She makes sure his shoe is loose so that he can pull it off easier.
- ▶ She talks to him about the actions of pulling off his shoe, gives encouragement and acknowledges his efforts.
- ▶ She suggests that Greg watches his peers to see how they are taking their shoes off.
- ▶ She suggests that his mum provides him with velcro shoes so that he can more easily learn the skill.

Recognising spontaneous teachable moments

Spontaneous teachable moments occur throughout the day. A teachable moment is when you recognise a learning opportunity that you can provide guidance for. The following are some examples of spontaneous teachable moments:

- ▶ A child is watching a bird. You see this as a spontaneous teachable moment to support them to learn what type of bird it is, where it lives and what it eats.
- ▶ A child is painting using different colours. You see this as a spontaneous teachable moment to talk about colour and experiment with mixing colours.

Fostering an environment for holistic learning and development

Part A

1. Plan an inquiry experience that provides opportunities for children to explore, experiment, test and investigate. Ensure the experience:
 - ▶ encourages children to try new ideas and take on challenges
 - ▶ provides resources and materials that offer challenge, intrigue and surprise
 - ▶ includes an opportunity for sustained shared conversation
 - ▶ provides an appropriate level of challenge where the children are encouraged to explore, experiment and take risks in learning.

Include the following in your plan:

- ▶ the name of the experience
- ▶ the age of the children involved
- ▶ the materials you used
- ▶ the set-up
- ▶ how you would carry out the experience.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.