Module 7  
A community of learners

Professional development and support plays a valuable role in equipping educators to develop relationships with children. Sharing knowledge, having professional conversations, undertaking reflective practice and participating in formal professional learning opportunities supports the work of educators.

Connections to the Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standard

The EYLF highlights the importance of ongoing learning and reflective practice (Principle 5) where professionals can engage in ongoing learning, enquiry and collaboration. This contributes to a culture of ongoing teaching and learning for all educators. Quality Area 4 of the NQS highlights the importance of educators working collaboratively and applying professional standards to their practice.

The NQS asks educators to make a commitment to continuous improvement (Standard 7.2), including the implementation of an effective self-assessment and quality improvement planning process (element 7.2.3). Effective engagement in this module will support this outcome.
“Staff feeling supported professionally and personally is absolutely vital in order for them to be able to do this supportive work in relationship with a child...it’s very important that ECEC educators look after themselves.”

Nichola Coombs, KidsMatter Component 2 Professional Learning Video 7.1
There are many different facets of professional development and support. It can happen in a variety of ways to meet the needs of educators and ECEC services. Reflective practice is a way of keeping children’s social and emotional learning and development at the forefront of what educators do. Record any observations or questions you may have in the space below.

“What personal and professional development, you know, is a really big important component to really good quality early education and care.”

Janet Williams-Smith, KidsMatter Early Childhood Component 2 Professional Learning

**Video 7.2**

**Reflection with intention**

**Activity**

**Professional development and support at our service**

What kind of professional development and support do we already do at our service?

Where are the gaps?

Are there areas of practice that we haven’t looked at for a long time?

How can we work together to support each other in our professional development?
### Scenarios
- e.g., arranging a meeting with a family about a child who has additional needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenarios</th>
<th>Members on our team who can provide support</th>
<th>People/resources outside the ECEC service that can provide support</th>
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| e.g., arranging a meeting with a family about a child who has additional needs | ▪ Service Director  
▪ Educators that have frequent contact with the child and their family | ▪ Inclusion support officer  
▪ Inclusion and professional support program  
▪ Government health websites  
▪ Maternal child and health nurse  
▪ Local community service professional |

### Addressing concerns about a child’s behaviour

### Engaging educators interested in learning about child development

### Supporting children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties

### Revising ECEC service Statement of Philosophy and policies

### Changing the routines at the ECEC service

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### Professional development and support stocktake

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### Moving forward

#### What can you do in your individual practice to encourage professional development and support?

- **Over the next week?**
- **Over the next 12 months?**

#### What can you do as a service to encourage professional development and support?

- **Over the next week?**
- **Over the next 12 months?**

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“Reflective practice really is the only antidote for the complexity of the work that we do as educators.”

Catherine Hydon, KidsMatter Component 2 Professional Learning Video 7.2
What are the strengths that you see in your colleagues?

You might also be interested in...


“Children will not remember you for the material things you provided but for the feeling that you cherish them.”

Richard L. Evans

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Wrapping up

Congratulations on completing KidsMatter Component 2 Professional Learning. We hope you enjoyed the experience and invite you to spend some time reflecting on your learning.

What stands out as your key learnings?

What is something new that you have learned?

Using your own words, how would you explain early childhood mental health?

What role do you think educators play in developing children's social and emotional learning, and children's mental health?

Can you identify changes to your practice from participating in this Professional Learning?