

A new, national framework for children in school age care

WHAT IS THIS NEW FRAMEWORK ABOUT?

The Framework aims to extend and enrich children's wellbeing and development in school age care settings. It acknowledges that children need a place to engage in a range of play and leisure experiences that allow them to feel happy, safe and relaxed. It also recognises that they need time to interact with friends, practice social skills, solve problems, try new activities and learn life skills.

Children's learning in school age care settings compliments their learning at home and at school. In school age care settings there is great importance placed on relationships and nurturing children's talents and interests.

PLAY AND LEISURE IS FUN

Play and leisure time experiences chosen by children and supported by informed school age care educators promote children's learning and well-being. Children's happiness, optimism and sense of fun are significant to their emotional wellbeing and resilience. In school age care settings, children are actively involved in choosing the range of activities, which will develop their skills and attitudes towards life-long learning. Children will explore common interests and develop friendships as part of belonging to the school age care community.

Play and leisure time is very important to children. Through play and leisure activities they:

- develop relationships with others
- express their personality and uniqueness
- develop curiosity, creativity and problem-solving skills
- make connections between prior experiences and life-long learning
- develop a sense of wellbeing.

TIME AND PLACE

We have developed the Framework to ensure your child receives quality programs in their school age care setting. This is a vital *time* and *place* for them to relax, make friends, engage in personal growth and develop skills and attitudes for healthy living. By using this Framework school age care educators will provide environments that are welcoming places for children and families. They will create vibrant and flexible spaces that are responsive to the welfare and abilities of all children. The vision of the Framework is for all children to feel safe and have enjoyable experiences. It will guide educators to provide play and leisure-based experiences that are engaging and building foundations for life-long learning.

My Time, Our Place focuses on viewing children as active participants and decision makers. Children in school age care programs are given choice and responsibility, and through this learn to make connections between actions and consequences. The Framework acknowledges *time* and *place* as children collaborate with educators to organise activities and experiences that are meaningful to them. Educators and children respect and trust each other, and share decision making about opportunities to support children's needs and interests.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

School age care educators will use this new Framework in a range of school age care settings, including family day care to ensure that your child receives high quality experiences.

The Framework focuses on your child's wellbeing and development. Educators will work with you in order to get to know your child, so that they can create a program that builds on your child's interests and abilities. Educators will also keep you informed about the events and activities in which your child participates.

Through the Framework's five learning goals, educators will assist your child to develop:

- a strong sense of their identity

- connections with their world
- a strong sense of wellbeing
- confidence and involvement in their learning
- effective communication skills.

WORKING TOGETHER

Children thrive when families, educators, schools and the wider community work together in partnership to support children's wellbeing and learning. Within this partnership everyone values each other's contributions and engages in shared decision-making.

As the most important person in your child's life you can make a difference by talking regularly with your child's school age care educator. Information you provide allows educators to link your child's experiences at home, school and within the community with the time they spend together in the school age care setting. This facilitates joint decision-making about your child's school age care experiences.

WHAT CHILDREN SAID ABOUT KEY CONCEPTS IN THE FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL AGE CARE

"I really feel I belong here because there is time for friends, staff really respect you and there is lots to do."

Annabel, Age 9

FIND OUT MORE

This booklet is an introduction to My Time Our Place, Framework for School Age Care in Australia. To find out more visit www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood or ask your child's school age care educator.

Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments.