



## SCHOOL AGE CARE PEDAGOGY

*Pedagogy – school age care educator’s professional practice, especially those aspects that involve building and nurturing relationships, program decision-making, teaching and learning.*

Educators who use the Framework for School Age Care in Australia (FSAC) or the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) to inform their professional practice with school age children share a common language. This language is built on shared knowledge and goals, theoretical perspectives and innovative practices in providing an education and care program where school-age children ‘are challenged to be curious about what is of interest to them while at the same time developing self-identity and social competencies.’ (Stig Lund cited in DEEWR 2011, p. 3)

Promoting the development of life skills for school-age children through embedding the concepts of the FSAC or VEYLDF into a program where children can ‘engage in quality experiences for rich learning, personal development and citizenship opportunities’ (COAG, cited in DEEWR, 2011, p. 3) emphasises the important role that an educator plays in the ongoing wellbeing, learning and development of children and communities.

When the thought processes that inform an educator’s practice are based on ethical and professional standards, actions and reactions towards professional conduct, relationships, influence and position within communities and society, inform the pedagogical decisions they make about interactions, routines and experiences for school age children to intentionally affect their ongoing, learning and development.

Pedagogical decisions ensure that the holistic nature of an educator’s professional practice is focused on collaborating with all children to make progress in relation to the wellbeing and capabilities of each child.

The FSAC and VEYLDF act to inform these decisions through applying principles of pedagogy to ensure that school age children ‘have choice and control over their learning as they collaborate with educators to extend their life skills and develop dispositions towards citizenship.’ (DEEWR 2011, p. 5)

- secure, respectful, reciprocal relationships
- partnerships
- high expectations and equity
- respect for diversity
- ongoing learning and reflective practice

These principles applied to an educator’s everyday practice with school-age children, inform school-age pedagogy and demonstrate pedagogical leadership, which builds children’s capacity and potential to become effective members of their community.

Effective pedagogical leadership is based on reflections of how relationships, program decision-making, teaching and learning is influenced by professional knowledge and skills, personal styles and values, knowledge of children and families, and awareness of how beliefs and values impact on children’s wellbeing, learning and development. These factors contribute to the development of goals for teaching and learning, standards of professional conduct, and making decisions that always consider how children are affected – that is, what they experience through interactions, routines and events in the education and care services they utilise.



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Creating and contributing to a culture of professional enquiry in which educators act ethically to articulate the rights of school-age children and plan for quality improvement that is based on continuously learning through reflecting on practice, supports the development of goals for teaching and learning that are accountable and strengthen pedagogical practices. This informs families and the community of the standard of professional conduct they can expect from an education and care service for school-age children, and the educators therein, and of the many ways that children display their own wellbeing and capabilities across their own skills and dispositions.

When educators collaborate on shared goals for teaching and learning with children, families and communities, they demonstrate an understanding of children's learning and development, drawing on their own professional practice experience along with contemporary theories and research evidence on children, embedding the concepts of the FSAC and VEYLDF into their program. This enhances the opportunities children have to engage in experiences that are responsive to their needs, interests and choices, which contributes to ongoing learning and development.

Families and communities rely on a professional workforce of educators who acknowledge that what children experience now is important for their future health, development and wellbeing, and who contribute to developing supportive, socially connected inclusive communities for children and their families, ensuring that 'all children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation'. (COAG 2009)

#### REFERENCES



Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 2009, *Investing in the Early Years—A National Early Childhood Development Strategy*, viewed 3 October 2012, [www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/national\\_ECD\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/national_ECD_strategy.pdf).

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Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs December 2008, *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*, declaration made by all Australian Education Ministers, Victoria. 