

**CHC Community Services
Training Package Version 1**

CHCECE011

Provide experiences to
support children's
play and learning

Learner guide

Edition 1

**Training and Education Support
Industry Skills Unit
Meadowbank**



Product Code: 5773

Acknowledgments

The TAFE NSW Training and Education Support Industry Skills Unit, Meadowbank would like to acknowledge the support and assistance of the following people in the production of this learner resource guide:

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Further acknowledgments

A considerable amount of the material in this learner resource has been developed from the following TAFE NSW resource:

CHCPR301C Provide experiences to support children's play and learning version 1 (2012)

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ISBN 978-1-74236-481-0

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About this unit

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to support children's play and learning.

This unit applies to educators working in a range of education and care services.

Underpinning this unit is knowledge of the relevant National Quality Standard quality areas, standards and elements, sections of Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, and aspects of the relevant learning framework, including;

- National Quality Standard – Quality Areas 1, 2, 3 & 5,
- Education and Care Services National Regulation, Parts 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 & 4.5
- Approved Learning Framework – Early Years Learning Framework or My Time, Our Place

Additionally, whilst studying this unit you will need to access a range of other resources and documents, including;

Department of Health and Ageing www.health.gov.au

Elliott, S. 2008, *The Outdoor Playspace Naturally for Children Birth to Five Years*

Unicef <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

ACECQA <http://www.acecqa.gov.au>

Details of, and/or links to all required resources are listed in the resources section at the rear of this Learner Resource. In some cases you will need to use a computer and the internet to access the required resources. Sometimes internet pages can be moved over time – if you have difficulty finding the required resources with the link provided, try a google search, and if that fails, ask your facilitator for assistance.

Section 1 - Understanding development, play and learning

The importance of play and leisure

Play is what children do to learn about themselves, other people and their environment. Play allows children to become whatever they wish. Through play children are able to fulfil fantasies and at the same time acquire and practice new skills. By offering children in our care experiences that provide choice, interest, **enjoyment and challenge we can foster a child's growth across all areas of development.**

Maria Montessori believed that *'play is a child's work.'*

As children play they are learning much about the world around them and themselves. With quality play experiences, we are providing opportunities for children:

- to use up energy and express feelings
- to share their ideas and explore wider options
- to express their feelings and thoughts
- to learn about other people and how they do things in the world
- to learn new skills and refine existing skills
- to work as part of a team both as a leader and follower
- to develop an awareness of themselves and those around them

Play and leisure are an important part of both children's and adults' lives as they provide us with an escape from the everyday pressures of life. Through play and leisure, we can be physically active doing things we enjoy such as playing sport, going for a bike ride or a bushwalk and this contributes to our fitness and health. Play and leisure are therefore a lifelong part of human development.

The National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children and Youth suggest that infants, toddlers, pre-schoolers and school age children be given plenty of opportunities throughout the day to enjoy physically active play.

Play is considered to be so important for children that it is a 'right' according to the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child'.

The number and type of play experiences you can offer children are only limited **by your own imagination and that of the child's.** By ensuring that children are provided with play and learning experiences that are suitable, interest based, exciting, challenging and creative we are ensuring that the children are developing as a 'whole.' This means that all developmental areas are considered.

Development and play

Quality play experiences will encourage and extend **a child's overall development. At the same time the child's level of skill development will affect how children play and the types of play activities they choose.**

As has already been suggested, there is a very close relationship between play **and a child's development.**

According to the Early Years Learning Framework;

"Children's learning is dynamic, complex and holistic. Physical, social, emotional, personal spiritual, creative, cognitive and linguistic aspects of learning are all intricately interwoven and interrelated.

Play is a context for learning that:

- allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness
- enhances dispositions such as curiosity and creativity
- enables children to make connections between prior experiences and new learning
- assists children to develop relationships and concepts
- **stimulates a sense of wellbeing" p9**

Play will allow children to develop skills a broad range of skills and dispositions. Each time a child plays, s/he interacts with others and his/her environment. If you look at **each area of a child's development** in a holistic way, you will gain a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the child in all his/her complexity.

When focusing on these areas when observing children we are able to establish a good overall picture of the child and their capabilities. We use our knowledge of child development and we take observations of children and use this documentation to help us develop experiences that are relevant to their skills and their interests.

Activity 1.1



Task

The National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children and Youth suggest that infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age children be given plenty of opportunities throughout the day to enjoy physically active play.

Read through the guidelines put together by the Department of Health and Ageing on the website below. Summarise the main points for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/npra-0-5yrs-qanda>

Infants

Activity 1.1 continued

Toddlers

Preschoolers

SAMPLE

Beliefs about child development

When creating a play and learning environment for children that is safe, non-threatening, challenging and stimulating you must be aware of typical patterns of development and some of the basic theories and beliefs about child development and learning.

Jean Piaget believed all children learn through active exploration of their environment. During infancy they grasp, pound, smell, suck, crawl around and over everything and develop the idea that all objects have weight, colour, volume and texture. Early learning occurs as a result of sensory and motor exploration. As children move into the next stage they add to the information gathered in the earlier stage. Pre-schoolers learn through manipulating objects and symbols. As **the children's learning expands so does the importance of the environment and the experiences provided in it.** The richer the environment and the experiences provided, the more opportunities exist for children to interact with others and use a wide range of materials.

Lev Vygotsky sees children as active participants in their learning as does Piaget. However, one major difference is that Vygotsky places a great emphasis on the social interaction that takes place during play. He emphasises the importance of the adult or a more mature peer being there to facilitate play or to **'scaffold' the learning by supporting and extending a child's thinking and abilities** beyond what they could achieve alone.

Erik Erikson provides a framework for understanding children's social and emotional development. In his theory, Erikson outlines eight stages that people must go through from birth to old age. In the age group birth to twelve years, children are expected to go through the first four stages:

- Stage 1: Trust versus Mistrust relates to infants.
- Stage 2: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt relates to toddlers.
- Stage 3: Initiative versus Guilt relates to preschoolers.
- Stage 4: Industry versus Inferiority relates to school-aged children.

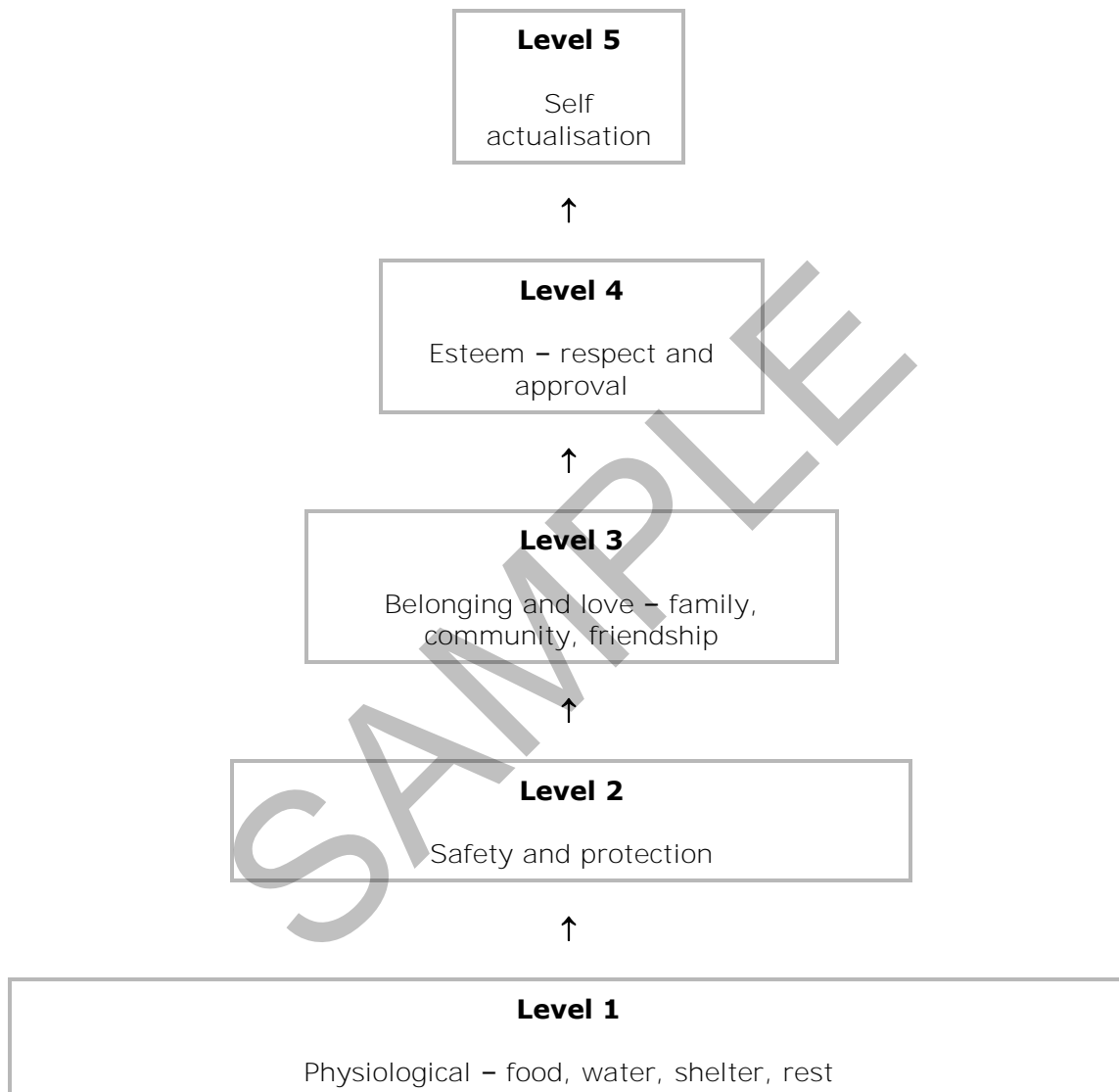
The types of interactions that occur within the environment determine either a positive or negative outcome for the person and will affect the next stage of their development.

Abraham Maslow believes that we have a 'hierarchy of needs' which is outlined in figure 1.1 below. It is based on the idea that we must first have our basic needs met before we can go on to attain higher level needs.

This is just a sample of some of the theories and beliefs about child development **that have shaped caring and learning practices in children's services** for many years. Most services draw ideas from a number of theories and beliefs.

If you would like to know more about these child developmental theorists and their beliefs you should refer to the resource section at the back of this learner guide.

Figure 1.1 Maslow's hierarchy of needs



Parten's stages of play

In the 1930's Mildred Parten observed six categories of play that children progress through. Each stage involves more complexity of play than the previous stage.

They are:

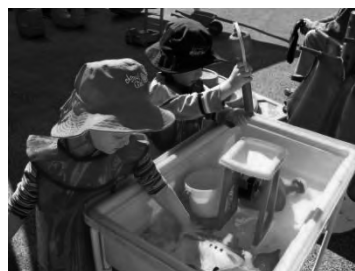
- 1 Onlooker Play** – This is used by children of all ages as they watch other children playing from a distance without joining in. They may later use their observations to imitate the play that they observed earlier.



- 2 Solitary Play** – This is also used by all ages at various times. This type of play occurs when a child is completely absorbed in what they are doing, without demonstrating any awareness of others. This type of play clearly **shows the child's egocentric nature**. Infants and toddlers often engage in this type of play.



- 3 Parallel Play** – This is a common type of play observed in toddlers. Children will play alongside other children usually playing with the same equipment but no meaningful interaction occurs. The child will be focused solely on his/her game.



- 4 Associative Play** – This type of play is more common as a child approaches age 3. Children will now engage in play together sharing equipment and ideas however, this play does not develop into complex role-playing. An example is when children make cups of tea in the sandpit or home corner together.



- 5 Co-operative Play** – Generally seen in children aged 4-5 years. This type of play is co-operative in nature and has leaders, followers and rules. The children interact together having a common goal. The play is more complex with each player having a different role within the plot.



- 6 Competitive Play** – This is seen in school aged children though cooperative play is still common. The children now have rules associated with their play and there are usually winners and losers. For example, board games and running races.

Children will progress through these stages at different times.